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INDIA TO BE BHARAT

Murmu's 'President of Bharat' title in invite to G20 leaders to dinner sparks debate

RAKESH SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Invitations for a G20 dinner, sent out by President Droupadi Murmu, restyling her position as "President of Bharat" instead of the customary "President of India", triggered a massive outcry on Tuesday. The Opposition alleged that the Centre is planning to drop "India" and stick with just "Bharat" as the country's name.

Dubbing the move as divisive and a distortion of history, the Opposition claimed that the Government was scared of the INDIA bloc. Union Ministers and ruling party leaders, however, hailed the move, saying the name Bharat is even part of the Constitution.

The move also fueled speculation that the issue of changing the name of the country could come up during the five-day special session of Parliament beginning September 18.

"Bharat" has been used as the name of the country in some of the documents relating to the G20, and the move was part of the conscious decision of the Government, sources said.

"Bharat is the official name



President Droupadi Murmu interacts with the teachers visiting 'Amrit Udyan' from various states on Teachers' Day, at Rashtrapati Bhavan on Tuesday

PTI

of the country. It is mentioned in the Constitution as well as in the discussions of 1946-48," reads a booklet prepared for G20 delegates.

As Union Ministers Dharmendra Pradhan and Giriraj Singh shared their respective G20 dinner invitations from Murmu for Saturday at Bharat Mandapam, the venue for the G20 summit of world leaders, the Congress slammed the Government, saying it was trying to destroy history.

However, senior BJP leaders and Union Ministers cheered the move by

Rashtrapati Bhavan. Union Minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar asked the Opposition what the problem is with using "President of Bharat" as our country is also Bharat.

The invitation led the Opposition to charge that the move was reflective of the BJP being scared of the INDIA bloc.

Several Opposition leaders shared Article 1 of the Constitution, which states that "India, that is Bharat, shall be a Union of States," and also the provision that refers to the country's president as the

"President of India."

Congress chief spokesman Jairam Ramesh said in a social media post, "So the news is indeed true. Rashtrapati Bhavan has sent out an invite for a G20 dinner on Sept 9th in the name of 'President of Bharat' instead of the usual 'President of India'."

"Now, Article 1 in the Constitution can read: Bharat, that was India, shall be a Union of States. But now even this Union of States is under assault," Ramesh alleged.

In another post, he said the BJP was the one that had come up with the "India Shining"

campaign, to which the Congress response was "Aam Aadmi ko Kya Mila".

"Also, remember that it was the BJP that came up with Digital India, Start-Up India, New India, and so on, to which the Congress' response was the Bharat Jodo Yatra, the first anniversary of whose launch is the day after tomorrow," he said.

West Bengal Chief Minister and TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee said, "We all know India is Bharat, but the world knows us as India." What suddenly changed was that we should use only Bharat, she quipped.

Her Tamil Nadu counterpart MK Stalin too lashed out at the Government over the issue, saying that after "non-BJP forces united to dethrone the fascist BJP regime" and aptly named their alliance INDIA (Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance), now the BJP wants to change 'India' for 'Bharat'.

Stalin himself is embroiled in a controversy over a remark "eradicate Sanatan Dharma" made by his son Udaynidhi, who is a minister in the Tamil Nadu cabinet.

While Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal asked whether the BJP would change the name of Bharat if the Opposition alliance INDIA rechristened itself Bharat, NCP president Sharad Pawar said no one has the right to change the country's name.

Continued on Page 2

Biden to arrive on Thursday for G20

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

US President Joe Biden has tested negative for COVID-19 and will travel to India on Thursday to attend the G20 Summit during which he will have a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the White House said on Tuesday.

The announcement comes a day after First Lady Jill Biden tested positive for COVID-19 on Monday.

President Biden was tested for the virus on Monday following his wife's positive test, but his results were negative.

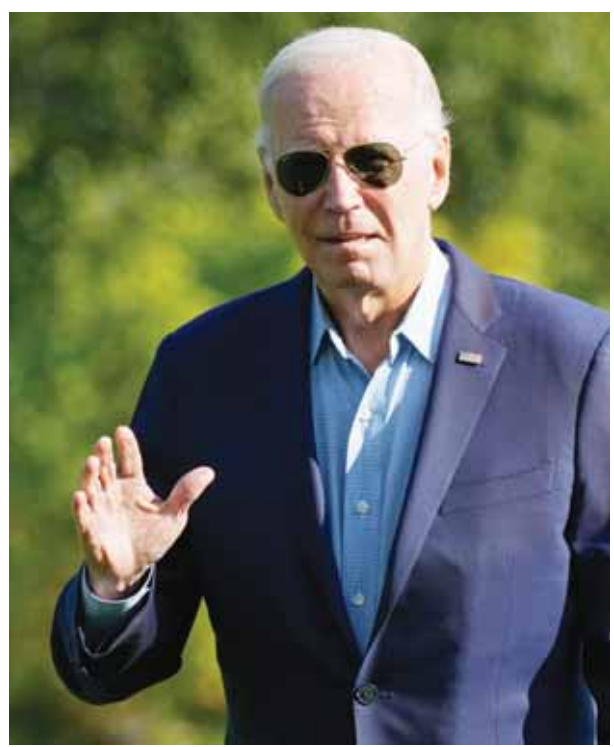
The US President will travel to India on Thursday to attend the G20 Summit, National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan told a press conference at the White House.

Jake said President Biden will participate in a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Modi.

The US President will participate in the official sessions of the G20 Summit on Saturday and Sunday, he said.

Biden is scheduled to hold a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Modi on September 8 on the sidelines of the summit, as previously announced by the White House.

Meanwhile, France announced on Tuesday President Emmanuel Macron's participation in the summit and stated that it will be an opportunity to make progress



in implementing joint responses to major global challenges.

Macron's office said the president will travel to Delhi to participate in the G20 Summit on September 9 and 10, following which he will leave for Bangladesh for a bilateral visit.

In a statement, it said the summit will enable Macron to continue his ongoing dialogue with his counterparts from every continent to com-

bat the "risks of fragmentation" of the world.

World leaders who have already confirmed their participation in the upcoming G20 Summit include Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, and Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

Dharma war rages on No lockdown during G20: Police

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI/CHENNAI

The call made by Udhayanidhi Stalin, the Tamil Nadu Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs and the son of Chief Minister MK Stalin, to abolish and "eradicate Sanatana Dharma" from India has sparked a major controversy. The BJP and the RSS assert that this move is aimed at the division of India and an attempt to Balkanise the nation.

Meanwhile, the newly formed Opposition INDIA bloc is apprehensive about the "difference of opinion among the stakeholders".

The remarks of the DMK leader have triggered a second-day row, with BJP leaders and Union Ministers criticising the Opposition bloc INDIA. They question whether its recent meeting in Mumbai aimed to target the Hindu religion, while the Congress maintains that it respects all religions but acknowledges others' freedom to express their views.

Sources indicate that the leaders at the INDIA bloc's strategy meeting, held ahead of



Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge chairs the floor leaders meeting of Opposition INDIA alliance at his residence in New Delhi on Tuesday

PTI

the Special Session of Parliament at Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge's residence on Tuesday evening, were concerned about the controversy. They resolved to avoid making statements that could hurt the sentiments of any region in the country and instead focus on discussing the achievements of their respective governments and the failures of the Modi Government at the Centre.

Continuing their offensive against the Opposition alliance INDIA over Udhayanidhi's Sanatan Dharma remark, the BJP on Tuesday compared the

DMK leader's controversial comments to Hitler's characterization of Jews. They stated, "Uday Stalin's meditated comment is unadulterated hate speech and a call for the genocide of 80 percent of the population of Bharat, who follow Sanatan Dharma. The Congress and INDI alliance's support for Stalin's bile is most disconcerting," as posted on social media.

The ruling party at the Centre alleges that there is a disturbing similarity between how Hitler characterised the Jews and how Udhayanidhi described Sanatan Dharma.

Continued on Page 2

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police clarified on Tuesday that the National Capital will remain open during the G20 Summit, with the exception of a portion of the area under the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC).

All medical shops, grocery stores, milk booths, and vegetable/fruit shops will continue to operate throughout Delhi, including New Delhi. The police, in various posts on the microblogging site X, assured that essential services such as milk booths and hospitals will remain functional in the New Delhi area.

"The entire Delhi is open. Only a small part of the NDMC will have restrictions... We want to emphasise that restrictions are limited to a small portion of the NDMC area. Do not believe in rumors," stated the Delhi Police in one post.

In another post, the police clarified that although commercial activities are banned between September 8 and 10, all essential services, such as milk booths, medical shops, hospitals, and other services falling under the essential cat-



egory, will remain operational in the New Delhi area.

Government employees, media personnel, medical practitioners, and paramedics will be allowed to use both private and government vehicles within the Controlled Zone.

The Delhi Traffic Police has compiled a list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) about traffic regulations in the city during the G20 Summit. However, the police noted that despite sharing the traffic advisory on social media handles and the Delhi Traffic Police

website, they are still receiving numerous queries.

General traffic, including all types of commercial vehicles and buses already present in Delhi, will be allowed on the Ring Road and the road network beyond the Ring Road towards the borders of Delhi.

Passengers will be able to travel to the airport, railway stations, and ISBTs as these facilities will remain operational during the G20 Summit. Bonafide residents and authorised vehicles will be permitted to move within the New Delhi

districts. In the New Delhi district, all online delivery services, except for medicines, will be suspended during the G20 Summit, as announced by the Delhi Police on Monday.

"Essential services, such as postal and medical services, as well as sample collections by path labs, will be allowed throughout Delhi. Commercial activities will not be permitted in the New Delhi area, and online delivery services will also be prohibited, except for medicine deliveries," stated Special Commissioner of Police (Traffic) SS Yadav on Monday. Valid permissions granted for essential services will be honored, he added.

The Delhi Police has commenced vehicle checks at various locations across Delhi for G20 Summit scheduled for September 9 and 10. Surprise checks were conducted at India Gate and other parts of the city between Monday night and early Tuesday.

Police personnel were observed conducting thorough vehicle inspections. Special Commissioner of Police (Law and Order) Deependra Pathak

assured that adequate arrangements have been made to ensure that Delhi residents do not encounter any inconvenience during the G20 summit. He emphasised the real-time coordination between the police, Central agencies, and the Special Branch.

"Whenever we receive any information or assessments, we organise accordingly. Our primary focus is to ensure that citizens do not face any inconvenience, but we also request citizens to cooperate with the police personnel," he stated.

"G20 is a highly prestigious summit for India and Delhi, and we take great pride in it. The Delhi Police has the responsibility for safety, security, and maintaining law and order, and we see it as a challenge. We are planning it with professional excellence and executing it on the ground."

"We have different segments of the Delhi Police with specific roles for the summit area. In addition, we have the responsibility for maintaining law and order in other parts of the city, and we have made plans and are conducting rehearsals for that," he added.

A glimpse into 'Bharat, the Mother of Democracy' at G20

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

To present India as an ancient land with a modern vision, the Centre released a set of two booklets on Tuesday: "Bharat, The Mother of Democracy" and "Elections in India." These booklets trace India's history from 6,000 BCE and will be handed over to the dignitaries visiting the national capital for the G20 summit.

According to one of the booklets included in the documents at the G20 summit, the Modi Government is highlighting how Bharat has been the mother of democracy since historic times.

The "Bharat, the Mother of Democracy" booklet, which contains 26 pages, describes that Bharat is the official name of the country, as mentioned in the Constitution and discussions from 1946-48. It features the bronze statue known as "the dancing girl," believed to be from the Indus Valley civilisa-

tion, which existed around 5,000 years ago. The statue is described as a symbol of confidence, with the girl appearing "self-assured and looking at the world eye-to-eye, independent, and liberated."

The booklet further discusses the oldest scriptures, the four Vedas, and delves into the civilisational value system incorporating political, societal, and educational principles. It also describes democratic elements found in epics.

The booklet explains that in Bharat, which is India, seeking the consent of the people in governance has been a part of life since the earliest recorded history. According to Indian ethos, democracy comprises values such as harmony, freedom of choice, freedom to hold multiple ideas, acceptability, equality, governance for the welfare of the people, and inclusivity in society.

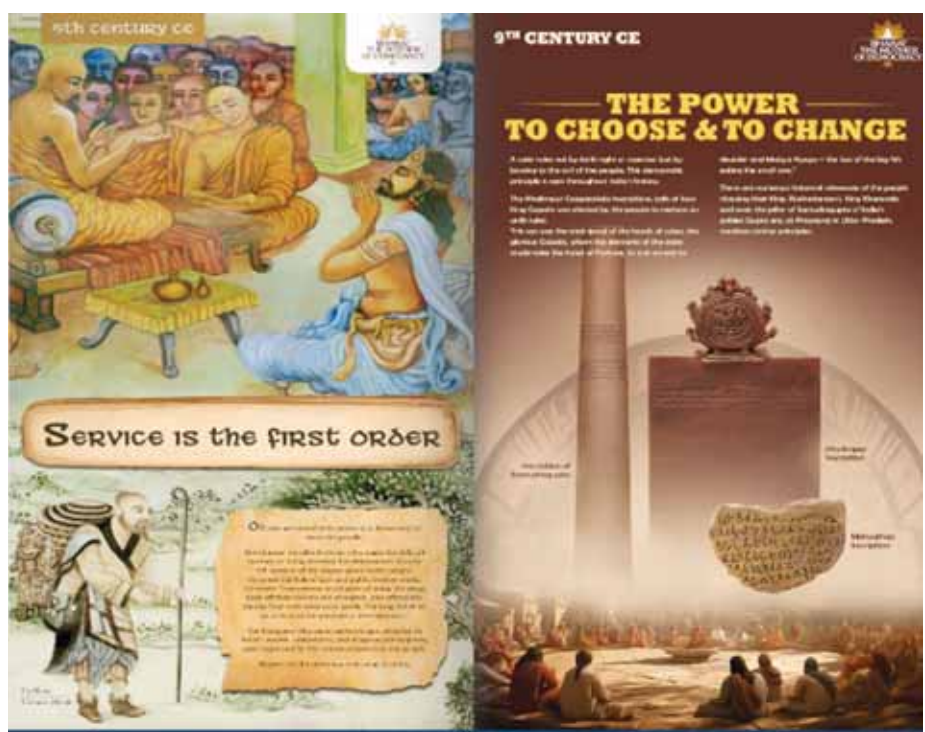
The booklet cites democratic elements even in the times

of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, emphasising that governance for the welfare of the people has been a central feature of thought in India since time immemorial. In the Ramayana, it mentions that Lord Ram was chosen as king after his father sought approval from his council of ministers.

Similarly, in the Mahabharata, the patriarch Bhishma, on his deathbed, imparted lessons on good governance to Yudhishtira.

The booklet also explores the principles of Buddhism that influenced India's democratic ethos through the rule of several kings, including Ashoka, Chandragupta Maurya, and Chhatrapati Shivaji. It also mentions Krishna teaching the Bhagwad Gita to Arjuna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra.

The booklet provides references to historical events and rulers who practiced democra-



tic values. It explains that Akbar was "the understanding monarch," Chhatrapati Shivaji left a "legacy of loktantra," and Emperor Ashoka held elections for ministers every five years.

Furthermore, it discusses how Shivaji promoted governance with representatives who were aware of their duties, ensuring equal rights for the people. Shivaji's "legacy of loktantra" was continued by his successors, and the booklet describes how he appointed eight ministers who represented governance through decentralisation. It states that even the king could not overrule their counsel.

The booklet also highlights Emperor Akbar as the understanding monarch who introduced the doctrine of "Sulh-i-Kul" (universal peace) as a tool against religious discrimination.

The exhibition on the democratic traditions of India

will showcase its history from the "Vedic period to the modern era." The textual content, along with audio, will be presented in "16 global languages," including English, French, Mandarin, Italian, Korean, and Japanese.

The history of India's democratic ethos will be summarised and retold through 26 interactive screens arranged in multiple kiosks.

"Upon their arrival in the exhibition area, heads of state, delegates, and other guests will be greeted by an AI-generated 'avatar' that will provide them with a concise overview of the exhibition," the source said.

A replica sculpture of the Harappan girl, placed on a rotating elevated podium, will stand in the centre of the hall in the exhibition area. The actual height of the object is 10.5 cm, but the replica was created to be 5 feet in height and 120 kg in weight in bronze.

High turnout in bypolls

PTI ■ LUCKNOW/AGARTALA



High voter turnout was recorded in most of the six Assembly constituencies in seven States where the by-election was held on Tuesday. The counting of votes is on September 8 for the by-election — seen as a litmus test for the opposition alliance INDIA against the BJP-led NDA ahead of the assembly polls in five states later this year and the 2023 Lok Sabha election.

Dhanpur and Boxanagar seats in Tripura, where the Congress had extended support to the CPI(M), the turnout was around 76 per cent. Six persons were injured in a stray incident of violence in the State. Puthuppally in Kerala, where the INDIA bloc constituents were up against each other, the turnout was around 76 per cent and nearly 73 per cent respectively. The by-election saw the INDIA alliance also putting up a united front in the Ghosi constituency in Uttar Pradesh, where the voting was moderate at around 50.30 per cent, and in Jharkhand's Dumri where a total of 64.84 per cent of 2.98 lakh voters exercised their franchise. Uttar Pradesh's Bageshwar, where the main contest is between the BJP and the Congress, saw 55.44 per cent voting. Out of the seven seats, three (Dhanpur, Bageshwar and Dhupguri), were held by the BJP and one each by the SP (Ghosi), CPI(M) (Boxanagar), JMM (Dumri) and the Congress (Puthuppally). In

Uttar Pradesh, the Ghosi seat fell vacant after the resignation of SP MLA and OBC leader Dara Singh Chauhan, who rejoined the BJP.

While the ruling BJP-led NDA has fielded Chauhan, Samajwadi Party candidate Sadhakar Singh has got the support of the Congress and Left parties. Chauhan was a minister in the previous BJP government headed by Yogi Adityanath. He resigned from the Council of Ministers on January 12, 2022 and switched to the SP.

The Akhilesh Yadav-led party has alleged misuse of official machinery and has written to the Election Commission on the matter. It claimed that Muslim voters were being prevented from exercising their franchise in some places. Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak rejected the SP's allegations, claiming that the opposition party was fearing defeat in the bypoll. Police said six persons were injured when they were allegedly attacked by some villagers at Mohanbogh in Dhanpur Assembly constituency in Tripura.

Dhupguri Assembly by-election peaceful

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KOLKATA

Quite in contrast to what happened in the recently concluded Panchayat elections, Tuesday's Dhupguri Assembly by-elections in Jalpaiguri district of North Bengal was by far peaceful Election Commission sources said.

Little more than 75 per cent of voters had exercised their franchise till reports last came in at 5 pm, Jalpaiguri district magistrate said. The vote percentage was likely to go up as hundreds of voters were still standing in queues.

The election was necessitated because of the death of the sitting BJP legislator. The seat is witnessing a tri-cornered fight among BJP, TMC and the Left backed by the Congress. Meanwhile, the BJP lodged a

complaint with the Election Commission against Additional Superintendent of Police, Wangden Bhutia, who allegedly intimidated party candidate Tapasi Roy, sources said.



Mamata fumes over 'President of Bharat'

Tomorrow they will change Tagore's name too, Mamata hits out at Centre

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday lashed out at the BJP Government for not only changing India's history but also fiddling with its name as such.

Referring to the mentioning of the term Bharat — and not India — in the presidential invitation card for the G20 Summit dinner, Banerjee said “We all call our country 'Bharat', what is new in this? But the name 'India' is known to the world...our country is known all over the world as India... What happened sud-



denly that they had to change the name of the country?” Alleging that this was the way how the Government was changing everything that belonged to India and “everything that is Indian” to “suit” their own political line, Banerjee said “they are changing the history of the country... they are changing the names of the historical monuments... tomorrow they will change the name of Gurudev (Rabindranath) Tagore... they will change the heritage and the inclusive culture of the country.” The Chief Minister who also lashed out at State Governor C.V. Ananda Bose for subverting the ideas of federalism by making unauthorised interference in the field of education said she would not tolerate such things happening in Bengal.

Questioning the “novelty” of the idea of dropping India for the word Bharat, Banerjee said “We all call our country 'Bharat', what is new in this? But the name 'India' is known to the world...our country is known all over the world as India... What happened sud-

RSS raises alarm over Udhayanidhi's hate speech

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The call given by Udhayanidhi Stalin, Tamil Nadu Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs who is also the son of Chief Minister MK Stalin to abolish and eradicate Sanatana Dharma from India has snowballed into a major controversy as the RSS has declared that it was a move aimed at vivisection of India as well as an attempt to Balkanize

the nation. “The call for eradication of Sanatana Dharma has serious meanings. This is in continuation of the North-South dialogue held at Thiruvananthapuram in June which was inaugurated by Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan,” said J Nandakumar the Sangh ideologist at New Delhi on Tuesday. He said Udhayanidhi's statement is yet another proof of the DMK's

intention to secede from India and form a separate Tamil nation. “A move has been underway for decades in Tamil Nadu to cut India into two pieces, North and South India. This was being held very secretly till now. But Udhayanidhi Stalin's declaration for the genocide of Sanatana Dharma is an open challenge and battle cry addressed to the soul of Bharat Matha,” he said while address-

ing a prelude to the media conclave planned by Kesari, a nationalist weekly. Prof KG Suresh, Vice-Chancellor, Mahan Lal Chaturvedi University, who delivered the keynote address said that the media should come forward to highlight the anti-national activities taking place in Kerala. “The Southern State has become a safe haven for terrorists, extremists as well as those engaged in secessionist

movements. This should be exposed lest we will end up in a major disaster,” said Prof Suresh. Intelligence officials pointed out that the DMK's dream project of a separate Dravidian Nation incorporating Tamil Nadu, the north and north east of Sri Lanka was still there in the party's agenda. If more south Indian States join the DMK, it would make Stalin happy.

BSES
CORRIGENDUM
Annuling of BSES Long Term Tender
No.HOD (PMG)/2023-24/119 Date: 06.09.2023
Due to un-avoidable circumstances BRPL has annulled RfQ no- HOD (PMG)/2022-23/1429 dated 30.8.2022 and subsequent addendum's thereof. The corrigendum is uploaded on website mentioned below
www.bsesdelhi.com & www.mstcecommerce.com Head PMG (BRPL)
Regd. Off: - BSES Rajdhani Power Limited, BSES Bhawan, Nehrū Place, New Delhi-110019
Corporate Identification No. - U40109DL2001PLC111527, Telephone No. - +91 11 4920 7235
Website - www.bsesdelhi.com

मध्य प्रदेश पुलिस अवासर एवं अधोसंरचना विकास निगम
कार्यालय परियोजना यंत्री, भद्रभाद्र रोड संभाग क्रमांक-02 भोपाल
Mob. No. : 9425601534, ई-मेल : bhopaldivision2@gmail.com
क्र.-मप्रपुआअविनि/568/पच/भोपाल-02/तशा/2023 भोपाल, दिनांक : 01.09.2023
प्रेस विज्ञप्ति
पुलिस मुख्यालय की चयन एवं भर्ती शाखा कार्यालय का निर्माण कार्य श्यामलाल हिस्स भोपाल के निर्माण कार्य हेतु निविदा क्रमांक-08/2023-24 ऑनलाइन निविदा क्रमांक-MPPHCL/TENDER No. 2023_MPPHC_304049_1 आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा प्रपत्र दिनांक 15.09.2023 समय 5.00 बजे तक ऑनलाइन से खरीदे जा सकते हैं, विस्तृत निविदा सूचना एवं अन्य विवरण Portal : https://mptenders.gov.in पर देखे जा सकते हैं।
म.प्र. माध्यम/111794/2023 परियोजना यंत्री

ED summons Nusrat in housing scam

Will drop bomb on September 11 in job scam case: ED's lawyer

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KOLKATA



Come September 11 the Enforcement Directorate investigating the recruitment scam — that has seen many top Bengal politicians going to jail — will drop a bombshell making news as big as the World Trade Centre attack, the Agency lawyer on Tuesday told the Calcutta High Court. The Agency's claim comes a day after Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee slammed the Centre for using the central agencies like ED and

down the spine of the ruling party politicians who perpetrated the recruitment scam Justice Ganguly — often referred to as “people's judge” — promptly directed the ED lawyer to pull the “WTC” even as he fixed September 11 as the next date of hearing.

Meanwhile, in a parallel development, the ED on Tuesday sent a notice to TMC MP and Bengali actress Nusrat Jahan to appear at its office in relation to a housing scam. Jahan has been asked to appear before the ED officials at CGO complex at New Town off Kolkata.

Acting on a complaint filed by BJP leader Sankudeb Panda the Agency had earlier registered a case against Jahan. In his complaint Panda alleged that the TMC's Basirhat MP had duped the people of several lakhs of rupees on the promise

of selling them apartments. As per the complaint, Nusrat Jahan was the director of a real estate company, Seven Sense International, which took money from 429 employees of the Indian Overseas Bank, promising 1,000 square feet apartments on the outskirts of Kolkata.

As the apartment buildings never materialised the actress resigned her post before becoming the MP. Two other directors of the company have also been summoned by the ED.

Though she earlier told the media that she had returned the entire money to the company she could not reply to the documentary evidence showing how she had broken the rule by borrowing tens of lakhs of rupees from the construction company of which she was a director.

Bereaved kin of Rajouri labourers given job letters

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU



After a long wait of more than three years, the next of kin of three Rajouri-based labourers were handed over the appointment letters by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha here at Raj Bhawan on Tuesday.

The three labourers identified as Mohd Abrar (25), Mohd Imtiyaz (20), and Mohd Abrar (16), were killed during an encounter in Amshipora village of Shopian on July 18, 2020. The trio had gone there to earn their livelihood.

According to a handout issued by the office of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, “the appointment letters were handed over to the next of kin of three civilians killed in Shopian in July 2020.” “The appointment letters on compassionate grounds were handed over to Mtr. Shareen Akhter,

wife of Sh Mohd Abrar, a resident of Tarkassi, Kotranka, Rajouri; Mohd Arif, brother of Mohd. Imtiyaz, resident of Dhar Sakri Kotranka, Rajouri, and Farayaz Ahmed, brother of Sh Mohd Abrar of Kotranka Rajouri,” the handout stated. The Lt Governor also handed over the appointment letter under SRO-43 to Neeta Devi, widow of Chager Kumar of Dhandal, Ramnagar Udhampur who was killed in an IED blast in Udhampur in 2022. The Lt Governor interacted with the family members of the deceased civilians and assured all possible assistance by administration in future.

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE
Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005
Whereas The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.
As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Bank Limited.
Sr. No. Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.) Name of Branch
1. Pavnesh/LBDEH00005929336 Tower-B, Mayur Vihar, Sahasradhara road, Dehradun-248001/ Sep 02, 2023 February 24, 2023/ Rs.95,00,766/- Delhi/ NCR/ Dehradun
The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/ guarantors(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.
Date : September 06, 2023 Authorized Officer ICICI Bank Limited
Place : Delhi/NCR

Office of The Chief Engineer M.P.P.W.D Bridge Construction Zone Bhopal (M.P.) Tender Notice
NIT No- 26/C.E.(Bridge Zone) /2023-24 Date 01.09.2023
Online Tender for mentioned below are being invited. The Tender have been uploaded on the mptenders. system of Public Works Department on the Portal www.mptenders.gov.in Tender details are as below:-
S. NO. Tender No. District Nature of work Name of work Call No. Cost of Project (PAC) (Rs. In lack) (EMD Fee /Tender Fee) All Tender Document & Other Document Submission
1 2023_PWDRB_303914_1 Khargone Bridge Work Construction of High Level Bridge Including Approach Road across Veda Raver in K.M 6/10 to 7/2 on Kasrawad Pipalgaoan Road. Distt- Khargone. Second 1581.87 Online Only
2 2023_PWDRB_303916_1 Damoh Bridge Work Construction of Submersible Bridge Across Sonar River On Sitangar-Mangola Road Including Approach Road, Protection Work and H.P. Culvert Distt. Damoh. Second 1358.06 Online Only
3 2023_PWDRB_303917_1 Sagar Bridge Work Construction of High Level Bridge across Dehar River in KM 2/2 on Badgan-Parraka Road Including approach Road and Protection Work Distt. Sagar. Second 913.61 Online Only
4 2023_PWDRB_303918_1 Panna Bridge Work Construction of Submersible Bridge Across Ken River on Umarhat-Menha Road Including Approach Road, Protection Work and H.P. Culvert. Distt. Panna. Second 842.48 Online Only
Total 4696.02
The document can only be purchased online from the above website after making online payment. The last date & time for purchase of Document on line is Dated 15/09/2023 up to (17:30) Detailed NIT and other details can be viewed on the above mentioned portal. Amendments to NIT, if any, would be published on website only, and not in newspaper.
Chief Engineer PWD Bridge Construction Zone Bhopal
G-19227/23

NIA raids 8 places in 5 districts of UP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Tuesday conducted raids at eight locations in five districts of Uttar Pradesh in connection with its ongoing probe into a Naxal case.

The raids were conducted in Prayagraj, Varanasi, Chandauli, Azamgarh and Deoria districts. As per official sources in the anti-terror agency, the raids were conducted in connection with NIA Case no. RC-01/2023/NIA/LKW revival of NRB of CPI (Maoist) case. Multiple NIA teams carried out searches simultaneously in the residential and office premises of the suspects.

Coinciding with the coordinated operations launched against the Maoists in all the Left-wing extremist-affected states in the country.

Meanwhile, the sources said that NIA was taking major action in the CPI terror funding case. An NIA team has arrived for further investigation in a case related to Naxal activities in Uttar Pradesh. The NIA team had received information that Naxalites were being funded by luring the youth.

Reports said NIA raided a house in Mahamanapuri Colony, Varanasi, on Tuesday morning. The NIA team interrogated two girls belonging to a student organisation in the house. During this time, the

entire area was sealed and movement from the side of the house was stopped.

NIA action was going on in Uma Nagar town of Deoria. The NIA team was present at the house of Dr Ramnath Chauhan, who is the national general secretary of Janwadi Kranti Dal. A huge number of police forces were deployed outside the house.

Chauhan held various positions in the Samajwadi Party, Bahujan Samaj Party and is currently the national general secretary of Rashtriya Janwadi Kranti Dal.

The NIA team reached his house at 5 am on Tuesday. Although Chauhan was not at home, his family members were interrogated.

INDIA TO BE BHARAT

From Page 1

RJD leader and a member of Rajya Sabha Manoj Jha said the BJP is jittery because of the INDIA alliance. PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti said the BJP was using its majority in Parliament to treat the entire country as its “fiefdom.”

Trashing the Opposition charge, the BJP reacted with delight to the G20 dinner invitation that referred to Droupadi Murmu as the “President of Bharat,” saying the use of the Hindi name for the country underscores its “civilisation march,” and rejected the Opposition's charge.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma posted on the microblogging site X, “Republic of Bharat — happy and proud that our civilisation is marching ahead boldly towards Amrit Kaal.” Netizens too went on an overdrive over the political slugfest, with the lyrics “Bharat Ka Rahane Waala Hoon, Bharat Ki Baat Sunata Hoon,” a popular song from Manoj Kumar starrer *Purab Aur Paschim* trending on X with the hashtag “Bharat” (in Hindi and English). Megastar Amitabh Bachchan took to X and simply wrote, “Bharat mata ki jai.” He also shared a tricolor emoji with the post.

contemp. “We urge the Supreme Court to take suo motu notice of contempt, ensuring accountability for the inaction of the State Government of Tamil Nadu, and take decisive steps to prevent the inducement of hate speech, preserving public order and peace, and we request you to take immediate appropriate actions,” the letter stated. The RSS declared that this move was aimed at the vivisection of India and an attempt to Balkanize the nation. J Nandakumar, the Sangh ideologist and author of several books on the ideology, stated, “The call for genocide against Sanatana Dharma has serious implications.

Dharma war rages on

From Page 1

They draw a parallel, saying, “Like Hitler, Stalin Jr also demanded that Sanatan Dharma be eradicated... We know how Nazi hate culminated in the Holocaust, killing approximately 6 million European Jews and at least another 5 million Soviet prisoners of war and other victims.” A day earlier, several top BJP leaders and Union Ministers had questioned the Opposition leaders’ “silence” regarding the controversial remarks, alleging these comments were part of a deliberate design to create tensions in society and malign the country.

In his address at a meeting of the Tamil Nadu Progressive

Writers and Artists Association in Chennai last week, the DMK leader likened Sanatan Dharma to coronavirus, malaria, and dengue, stating that such things should not be opposed but destroyed. However, he later claimed that he had not called for violence against the followers of Sanatan Dharma.

While Congress leaders themselves remained divided, with one section defending Stalin and another calling for respect for all religions, other Opposition members queued up to condemn the remarks days after they shared the dais in Mumbai during the third meeting of the India bloc. During that meeting, it was decided to move forward

with contesting the Lok Sabha elections, which are due in less than a year.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, emphasizing his adherence to “Sanatan Dharma,” stressed the importance of respecting every religion. He stated, “I am from Sanatan Dharma. Many of you also belong to Sanatan Dharma. I feel we should respect each other's religion and not speak ill against it. It is not right. Everyone should respect each other's religion,” during a press conference.

TMC supremo and West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee has already expressed her sentiments for Sanatan Dharma, saying she herself is a practi-

tioner of the same. Furthermore, over 260 eminent citizens, including former judges and bureaucrats, have written to Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud, urging him to take cognizance of Udhayanidhi's “eradicate Sanatan Dharma” remark.

In a letter to the CJI, the signatories, including former Delhi HC judge S N Dhingra, asserted that not only did Junior Stalin make a hate speech, but he also refused to apologize for his remarks. The letter emphasized the need for action to preserve the secular character of the country and warned that any delay in taking action on “very serious issues” would invite the court's



(Left to right): The walls of bridges and buildings in the national Capital have been covered in colourful paintings ahead of the forthcoming G20 Summit. (R) Young people take selfies with some of the sculptures in Delhi.

Ranjana Dimri/Pioneer

Will BJP rename Bharat if INDIA rechristens itself 'BHARAT': CM

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Amid a controversy over G20 dinner invites purportedly sent on behalf of the 'President of Bharat', Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday asked how the BJP could change the name of the country just because an alliance is being called 'INDIA'.

Terminology reports of the Centre's attempt to rename 'India' as 'Bharat', Kejriwal said the BJP is thinking that with the change of name, the Opposition alliance might lose some votes.

"Is it a joke?", the CM said during a Press conference in the national Capital over induction of 400 e-buses in Delhi.

"If an alliance of some parties becomes INDIA, would they change the name of the country? The country belongs to 140 crore people, not to a party. Let's assume if the INDIA grouping renames itself Bharat, would they rename Bharat as BJP then?"



What's this joke? The BJP is thinking that their vote count will decrease so they should change the name of Bharat," the CM added.

"There is no official information about it but I have heard rumours. Why is this happening? Some parties have come together to form the INDIA bloc. If INDIA alliance changes

"Their response to the INDIA alliance shows that they are quite flustered. They released the gimmick of 'One Nation, One Election' to divert attention. How can they conduct a 'One Nation, One Election'? How will it benefit people? How will it benefit you, and your family? Will it lead to a reduction in price rise, unemployment?" he asked.

On another controversy that DMK leader Udhayanidhi Stalin triggered with his remarks on Sanatan Dharma, Kejriwal said people must respect all religions.

"I am from Sanatan Dharma. Many of you also belong to Sanatan Dharma. We should respect each other's religion and not speak wrong against it," he said.

Udhayanidhi had on September 2 likened Sanatan Dharma to coronavirus, malaria, and dengue and said such things should not just be opposed but destroyed.

PM10, PM2.5 levels fell up to 45% in 9 years: Rai

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Ahead of the G20 Summit, the Delhi Government on Tuesday claimed the PM10 and PM2.5 levels have declined by an average of 45 per cent in the last nine years.

Speaking to reporters after a meeting with officials of the environment department, Environment Minister Gopal Rai said that in a "big relief" for Delhiites, the PM10 and PM2.5 levels have declined by an average of 45 per cent in the last nine years.

Citing data Rai said that over the nine years from 2014 to August 2023, the PM10 level has declined by 42 per cent. It was 324 in 2014, 295 in 2015, 303 in 2016, 277 in 2017, 277 in 2018, 230 in 2019, 187 in 2020, 221 in 2021, 223 in 2022 and 188 until August 2023. Similarly, the PM2.5 level has declined by 46 per cent — 149 in 2014, 133 in 2015, 137 in 2016, 130 in 2017, 128 in 2018, 112 in 2019, 101 in 2020, 113 in 2021, 103 in 2022 and 81 in 2023 (till August) — the Minister said while showing a chart.



Rai said that work on a 'Winter Action Plan' to tackle any rise in air pollution levels has begun. The levels of particulate matter (PM) 10 and 2.5 usually start increasing from the last week of October and attain a peak in November when temperature plummets, requiring measures to check the poor quality of air, he added.

"There is news of big relief for Delhi's people. The PM 10 and PM 2.5, which are two

important parameters of air quality and determine the level of air pollution in Delhi, have registered a downward trend since 2014 due to efforts of Delhi's people and the government," the minister said.

This year, the winter action plan will focus on stubble and garbage burning, vehicular and dust pollution, monitoring of pollution hotspots, a dialogue with the Centre and neighbouring states, a "green war

room" and a green app, among others, Rai said.

The level of particulate matter (PM) 10 and 2.5 usually start increasing from the last week of October and attain their peak in November, when the temperature plummets, requiring measures to check the poor quality of air, he added.

However, the AAP government, under the leadership of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, is determined to bring it further down, he asserted.

He said on September 12, the city government would hold a meeting of experts from 24 organisations associated with pollution mitigation and take their opinion for preparing the winter action plan.

Also, a meeting of 28 departments and agencies will be held on September 14 to seek their feedback on ways to tackle high levels of air pollution during the winter season, Rai added.

Based on the key points outlined in the winter action plan, specific responsibilities will be given to various departments during the meeting scheduled for September 14, he said.

Surprise carcade rehearsal creates traffic snarls in city

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Commuters across the national Capital found themselves grappling with significant traffic disruptions on Tuesday during peak hours due to a carcade rehearsal conducted by the Delhi Police in preparation for the forthcoming G20 Summit.

Unlike the rehearsals on Saturday and Sunday, Tuesday's rehearsal was unannounced, although smaller in scale, and caught motorists by surprise.

Earlier in the day, authorities had issued a notice informing Delhiites that traffic conditions were likely to be impacted in various parts of New Delhi until 2 PM, and they advised commuters to plan their journeys accordingly. Commuters from Gurugram also faced traffic jams on several stretches.

"Due to carcade rehearsal and special traffic arrangements, some congestion is expected on Bhairon Marg, Bhairon Road, Ring Road, Mathura Road, C-Hexagon, Sardar Patel Marg and Gurgaon Road till 2 PM. Commuters are advised to plan their journey accordingly," the traffic police said in a post on X.

Outer Ring Road near Indraprastha Park, C-Hexagon and Sardar Patel Marg were among the other road stretches that saw congestion on Tuesday.

Delhi Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj targeted Lieutenant-Governor VK Saxena over the traffic congestion in the city.

"I don't understand what Delhi Traffic Police has done, Delhi people are facing traffic jams everywhere. This police function was the only thing which LG saab had to handle, but it's causing lot of inconvenience to common people of Delhi (sic)," he wrote on X.

Ankita Singh, who was travelling from Noida to New Delhi, said traffic on the Outer Ring Road stretch near Indraprastha was heavier than usual and Vikas Marg was also congested. It took Singh around one hour to reach her destination, which usually takes her around half an hour.



The commuters travelling from Gurugram to Delhi could face traffic snarls through Tuesday due to the carpeting work being carried out on stretches of the road between Delhi airport and New Delhi district in preparation to welcome guests for the G20 Summit. "Carpeting work is being carried out on some stretches of the road between the airport and the New Delhi district. Since the work is expected to continue till evening, we advise commuters to use the metro for swift movement," a senior Delhi traffic police officer said.

Another commuter Ishita Singh, who was travelling from Gurgaon to Chanakyapuri in Lutyens' Delhi, said she, too, was stuck in a traffic jam and the road repair work at Sardar Patel and other locations added to her inconvenience.

Commuters also complained of facing traffic congestion in several other areas, including Africa Avenue Road, Sarita Vihar, near Zakir Hussain College and Bhera Enclave underpass. Commuters also complained of jams in several other parts of the city, from Delhi-Meerut Expressway to Mukarba Chowk.

While commuters complained about police barricades and checking causing jams at several other stretches of roads in the city, police attributed them to the morning hour traffic and the intensified checking as part of security measures in view of the summit.

Delhi gets 400 more e-buses



(Left) Delhi Lieutenant-Governor VK Saxena, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot flag off 400 new electric buses during a ceremony at IP Depot-5 (Right) BJP supporters hold placards outside the IP Depot during the flag-off ceremony of the 400 new electric buses.

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi L-G VK Saxena and Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday flagged off 400 electric buses, taking the number of such buses to 800 in the national Capital. The flag-off happened at the Indraprastha Bus Depot.

In a post on X, Saxena said these 400 buses were the first tranche of the 1,500 electric buses being provided by the Centre under the FAME-II scheme for creating a robust and green public transport infrastructure in Delhi. "Of the 1,500 buses under this scheme, 921 buses are being provided with FAME-II subsidy of Rs 416.82 crore borne by the Central Govt. For the remaining 579 buses, GNCTD will bear the subsidy of Rs 262.04 crore," he said in a series of posts. "These electric buses will go a long way in fight-

ing and mitigating air pollution in the city, besides providing comfortable & safe transport to the people of Delhi," he said.

Later in a post on X, Kejriwal explained the break up of the budget outlay for the buses. Weighing upon the finance incurred by the Government, Kejriwal stated, "The Central Government provides subsidy on 921 Buses. On each bus, we will get a subsidy of approximately Rs.45 lakhs, and accounting for 921 buses it will be a subsidy of Rs. 417 crores. Each bus has a life cycle of 12 years.

"The total spending on these 921 buses would be Rs 4092 crores of which Rs 417 (10% of the total) would be provided by the Central Government.

"The remaining 90% financial burden would be incurred by the Delhi Government. Our target is to introduce a total of

8,000 electric buses on the roads of Delhi by the end of 2025. At that time there will be more than 10,000 buses in Delhi, of which 80 per cent will be electric. "Very soon Delhi will also be known all over the world for its excellent electric buses."

"The number of electric buses has now gone up to 800 in Delhi. I want to congratulate Delhiites on this," Delhi Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot said at the flagging off event. Highlighting their features, Kejriwal said the buses can run up to 225 km on a single charge, have ramps for the differently abled, and are equipped with CCTV cameras and panic buttons for women's safety.

"These buses provide two-way communication with the control room and each bus has a GPS unit for live tracking. The buses are equipped with disc brakes, and fire detection and suppression systems," he said.



Union Minister Anurag Thakur inspects the arrangements at the International Media Centre ahead of the G20 Summit, in New Delhi.

State-of-the-art media centre unveiled for G20

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) shared a glimpse of the International Media Centre in the Pragati Maidan Complex, which is set to host thousands of journalists and media persons from across the world. On Tuesday, Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur reviewed the preparations at the International Media Centre at the Bharat Mandapam complex for the G20 summit and said a mini-India will come alive there. He took stock of readiness of the media centre from where proceedings of the G20 meetings will be broadcast to the world.

Earlier, Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Arindam Bagchi shared the video on X and wrote, "Here is a glance of the International Media Centre

as it stands ready to welcome media persons for the upcoming G20 Summit. Watch as we take you on a walkthrough."

The video shows workers giving the finishing touches to the International Media Centre at Bharat Mandapam, the venue of the Leaders' Summit. The state-of-the-art centre boasts spacious halls, nine work zones, studios, four media briefing halls, six interview rooms, around 1,300 workstations, and open workspaces for journalists who will be covering the G20 Summit. There are also designated zones for Embassy Press officials and foreign officials. High-speed internet, an international broadcasting centre, lounges, recreational zones, media booths, live reporting positions, a help desk, medical room are the other facilities available at the centre.

Delhi Court summons Kejriwal's wife for violating Representation of People Act

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A city court has summoned Sunita Kejriwal, the wife of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, for allegedly violating the law by getting herself enrolled in the voters list of two Assembly constituencies. Metropolitan Magistrate Arjinder Kaur summoned Sunita Kejriwal as an accused on November 18 on an application moved by BJP leader Harish Khurana.

The BJP leader has alleged in his complaint that Sunita has violated provisions of the Representation of the People (RP) Act.

"After considering the testimony of the complainant and other witnesses, this court is of the considered opinion that a prima facie case is made out against accused person namely Sunita Kejriwal, W/o Arvind

Kejriwal, for the alleged commission of the offences punishable under Section 31 of the Representation of People Act, 1950. Hence, the accused be summoned accordingly," the judge said in an order passed on August 29. The offence attracts a maximum punishment of imprisonment for two years.

Khurana claimed Sunita was registered as a voter on the electoral rolls of Sahibabad Assembly constituency (parliamentary constituency Ghaziabad), UP, and also Chandni Chowk Assembly constituency in Delhi, which was in violation of Section 17 (no person to be registered in more than one constituency) of the RP Act.

He claimed she was liable to be punished for the offences under Section 31 of the Act which deals with making false declarations.

LG seeks clarification on Govt's proposal for hike in circle rates of agricultural land

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Lieutenant-Governor VK Saxena has sought some clarification from the Delhi Government on its proposal seeking a hike in circle rates for agricultural land in the national Capital. Returning the proposal to the Delhi Government, the Raj Niwas said the file was silent on the rationale and the manner for classification of villages in the Green Belt for the purpose of differentiated rates. Earlier, the AAP Government has claimed that the proposal to hike circle rates for agricultural land has been halted by the L-G.

"The Governor has perused the proposal of the Dept at pre pages and before forming an opinion, has desired that following points may please be clarified: "(1) The proposed rates are based on the report dated 15.04.2017 of a Working Group constituted for capturing rates of Agricultural Land and since 2017 a number of villages have been unbanded." It appears this has resulted in overlapping of some villages in the categories of Urbanised and Green Belt Villages in respect South-West of district. "(2) The file



is also silent on the rationale and the manner for classification of villages into Green Belt for the purpose of differentiated rates circle." The LG office said that there were differences in rates in SW Distt for rural and urban villages. "In rampant situations, where portions of the same village are rural as well as urban, with almost no existent demarcation." "Will it not provide corruption breeding discretion to officials?" the L-G office said.

The Kejriwal government had sent the file for approval to increase the circle rate by up to 10 times for agricultural land to L-G, who instead of giving approval, sent it back with two objections.

"Consequently, the wait for Delhi's farmers for the increase in the circle rate has

extended. It is noteworthy that on August 7, the Kejriwal government decided to increase the circle rate for agricultural land in Delhi after 15 years.

Proposed circle rates of agricultural land in Delhi: South Delhi and New Delhi Rs 5 crores per acre; North Delhi, West Delhi, North West, and South West Delhi Rs 3 crores per acre; Central and South East Delhi Rs 2.5 crores per acre; Shahadra, North East, and East Delhi Rs 2.25 crores per acre.

AAP government sources said that this is not the first time that Saxena returned the file without approval. The Lt Governor has previously halted several initiatives in the interest of the public, including sending government school teachers to Finland for training and offering free yoga classes.

Delhi L-G Saxena has previously halted several initiatives in the interest of the public, including sending government school teachers to Finland for training and offering free yoga classes," the sources said.

They said that Revenue Minister Atishi had presented the proposal to increase the circle rate for agricultural land before Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, who had immediately approved it.

MCD gets 5 acres of Okhla land for waste management infra

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Lieutenant-Governor VK Saxena has approved the allotment of five acres of land in Okhla to the MCD for setting up solid waste management facilities.

According to Raj Niwas officials, following the approval aimed at enhancing the city's waste management infrastructure, the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) will oversee the transfer of lease rights and possession of five acres out of the 20-acre land parcel.

The 20-acre land parcel was originally allocated to the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) on a perpetual lease basis. This transfer will adhere to the provisions outlined in the Master Plan for Delhi 2021 (MPD-2021), the officials said.

"The request for this land allocation came from the MCD Commissioner to the Vice-Chairman of the DDA on October 10 last year. The LG's approval underscores the condition that the MCD must honour all terms and conditions specified in the Demand-cum-Allotment letters issued by the DDA to NDMC, as well as the lease deeds executed with NDMC," an official said.

The land parcel allotted to MCD also has structures like administrative block, workshop, staff quarters, and a park which would help MCD cut cost on developing it.

The LG has been insisting that land allotment for any developmental or infrastructure projects in Delhi is not held ransom to red tape and delays, the officials said.

What's agenda of Parliament special session, INDIA asks Centre

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Opposition group India bloc on Tuesday sought to know from the Centre the agenda of the Special Session of the Parliament convened later this month. The floor leaders of the parties met at the Strategy Meeting for the special session and desired to know the purpose of the five day session and demanded that there should be some transparency so that country knows the real motive whatever it is.

Top Congress leaders led Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge, TMC's Derek O'Brien, NCP leader Supriya Sule, AAP

leaders Raghav Chadha and Sanjay Singh, Samajwadi Party leader Ram Gopal Yadav, DMK leaders Tiruchi Shiva and TR Baalu, RJD leader Manoj Jha, JDU President Lallan Singh, Shive Sena (Udhav) Sanjay Raut, the Left parties MPs were amongst the other present in the meeting held at Kharge's residence.

"The Citizens have the right to know from government its business. It's their government, its their Parliament so why to do things so surreptitiously if at all its for welfare of the country. Why is BJP scared so much in making things public related to Parliament. They are rattled

just by the formation of the coalition known India and are in panic mode," said Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi briefing about the India meeting late evening.

Sources said the meeting decided to participate in the Special session but the core issues concerning the people of the country including inflation, unemployment will be reiterated in the Parliament with India bloc demanding discussion on range of issues. In the wake of controversy erupted over the Sanatan Dharma eradicate remark by a DMK member, members suggested to restrain talking to media in this age of social media dominance

and only keep highlighting achievements of their respective governments and counting in failures of the BJP governments.

Talking to media after the meeting Baalu and Siva informed the members expressed concern on reference to 'Bharat' in G20 Summit invitation cards, "We have discussed the matter. They are taking up each and every matter together. Letter will finally be sent to the Prime Minister. After we named our alliance INDIA, BJP is scared. Now they have dropped the name. Soon, after the elections, they will drop their power and leave India to us to rule the country,"

the duo DMK leaders said.

Before the India meeting, Congress held its own Parliamentary strategy group meeting at the residence of Congress Parliamentary Party (CPP) chairperson Sonia Gandhi. Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury including other important leaders attended the meeting.

However former party chief Rahul Gandhi who was recently reinstated as Lok Sabha MP gave it a miss since he left for his scheduled one week Europe visit. Earlier he was supposed to leave on September 3 but he delayed his visit as his mother Congress

president Sonia Gandhi was taken ill and admitted to the hospital. She was later discharged from the hospital.

There has been speculation that the government may bring a number of legislative items such as legislation on sub-quota in the 27% OBC reservation after the Rohini Commission has submitted its report to the President.

On Tuesday, there was buzz that the government could bring in legislation to rename the country Bharat. Some Opposition parties also expect the government to bring the women's reservation bill in the special session. The alliance is working in cohesion with each

other and is planning to take on the BJP unitedly on various fronts as well as the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. The alliance has functioned together during the recent Monsoon session of Parliament too.

Earlier the Congress parliamentary party identified the latest revelations on the Adani Group, economic issues such as unemployment and price rise, the natural disaster in Himachal Pradesh and the ongoing instability in Manipur as its agenda for the upcoming special session of Parliament.

The party also made it clear that they will press for debate on the issues that are important for the country. "We

are not going to listen to Modi chalisa for five days," said Congress chief spokesman Jai Ram Ramesh in his media briefing. Ramesh said Congress has decided to participate in the special session, but the party's will keep on insisting the discussions revolve around issues that directly affect the people.

"Whenever special sessions are called, opposition parties are informed about the agenda. On a broader level, discussions take place between the government and the Opposition and an agenda is made. This is the first time a special session is called but the government is not revealing its agenda," said Ramesh.

SC reserves verdict on Art 370

PNS NEWS ■ DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday reserved its verdict on a batch of pleas challenging the abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution which bestowed special status on the erstwhile state of Jammu & Kashmir.



Meanwhile National Conference MP Mohd Akbar Lone filed an affidavit asserting he reiterates the oath taken while being sworn in as an MP to preserve and uphold the provisions of the Constitution of India and to protect the country's territorial integrity.

A five-judge bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud reserved the verdict after a marathon 16-day hearing. The bench, also comprising Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul, Sanjiv Khanna, BR Gavai and Surya Kant, heard the rejoinder arguments of senior advocates Kapil Sibal, Gopal Subramanian, Rajeev Dhavan, Zaffar Shah, Dushyant Dave and others on the concluding

day of the hearing. The top court said if any lawyer appearing for the petitioners or respondents wishes to file a written submission can do so in the next three days.

The submission should not extend beyond two pages, it said. In the course of the hearing over the past 16 days, the top court heard Attorney General R Venkataramani, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, senior advocates Harish Salve, Rakesh Dwivedi, V Giri and others on behalf of the Centre and the intervenors defending the abrogation of

Jammu & Kashmir assembly in 2018 kicked up a massive row during the constitution bench hearing on abrogation of Article 370. At the end of the proceedings, senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for Lone, submitted the affidavit and the Bench said it will examine it.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, objected to the content of the affidavit which said, "That I am a responsible and dutiful citizen of the Union of India. I have exercised my right to approach this court through Article 32 of the Constitution.

"That I reiterate the oath taken while being sworn in as Member of Parliament to preserve and uphold the provisions of the Constitution of India and to protect the territorial integrity of India." Mehta urged the top court to read what was not written in the affidavit and said Lone had expressed no remorse in affidavit for his alleged conduct.

India rejects remarks of UN experts on Manipur

PNS SERVICE/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI/UNITED NATIONS, GENEVA

Taking exception to comments made by United Nations (UN) experts on Manipur, India has rejected the remarks and termed them "unwarranted, presumptive and misleading." New Delhi also asserted that situation in the Northeast state is peaceful.

In the note verbale issued late Monday to the Special Procedures Branch of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Indian mission underscored that the situation in Manipur was peaceful and stable and the Indian government was committed to taking requisite steps to maintain peace and stability.

"The Government is also committed to protecting the human rights of the people of India, including the people of Manipur," it said. "The Permanent Mission of India completely rejects the news release as it is not only unwarranted, presumptive and mis-

leading but also betrays a complete lack of understanding on the situation in Manipur and the steps taken by Government of India to address it," said the Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva.

India's response came after a group of UN experts raised alarm about reports of "serious human rights violations and abuses" in Manipur, including alleged acts of sexual violence, extrajudicial killings, home destruction, forced displacement, torture and ill-treatment.

Rejecting the news release by the Special Procedure Mandate Holders (SPMH) titled 'India: UN experts alarmed by continuing abuses in Manipur', the Permanent Mission of India expressed disappointment and surprise that the SPMHs chose to issue the press release without waiting for the 60 days period for the Indian government to respond to a joint communication issued on the same topic on



August 29, 2023. The Indian mission expressed hope that in the future, the SPMH would be "more objective" in their assessment, based on the facts.

It hoped that the SPMH would "refrain from commenting on the developments, which have no relevance to the mandate given to them by the Council and abide by the established procedure for issuing news releases and wait for inputs sought from the Government of India before doing so."

The Indian mission reiterated that India is a democratic country, with an abiding commitment to the rule of law and to promoting and protecting the human rights of our

people. "Indian law enforcement authorities and security forces are committed to dealing with law-and-order situations strictly in accordance with the principles of legal certainty, necessity, proportionality and non-discrimination," it said. In their news release, the UN experts had said they were "appalled" by the reports and images of gender-based violence targeting hundreds of women and girls of all ages, and predominantly of the Kuki ethnic minority.

"The alleged violence includes gang rape, parading women naked in the street, severe beatings causing death, and burning them alive or dead," the experts said.

Swamy writes to TN Guv on Udhayanidhi's speech

BJP leader seeks action against Stalin's son under Sections 153A, 153B



1860," said Swamy in his complaint to Governor of Tamil Nadu. Swamy accused Udhayanidhi for creating an environment of fear in the minds of Sanatan Dharma believers and inciting violence against them.

"In this connection, I intend to initiate a Criminal Complaint against the above named person. The Accused is a public figure having major public outreach, following, and viewership.

The offending statement made by the Accused has successfully reached millions of people, and has influenced countless persons, creating an environment of fear in the Sanatan Dharma community, even more so, since the political party of the Accused is the ruling Government in Tamil Nadu.

The statements of the Accused published have created a traumatizing atmosphere of fear, alarm, threat, insecurity and helplessness among believers of the Sanatan Dharma, especially in Tamil Nadu. "The stereotyping of a particular section of the population and stigmatising it has created an atmosphere of

hatred which is intended to generate aggression, and incite violence and riots against them. For the filing of the said complaint your sanction is required under Section 196 of the Criminal Procedure 1973.

Therefore, it is requested that you may kindly accord for the prosecution for the Accused who has committed various offences against public tranquility, in the interest of justice, and in exercise of your constitutional prerogative," said Swamy to Tamil Nadu Governor seeking sanction to prosecute Udhayanidhi for the controversial speech and utterances against Sanatan Dharma.

BJP lauds 'President of Bharat' reference in G20 invite

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Tuesday lauded 'President of Bharat' reference in G20 dinner invitation saying it underscores country's civilisational march in the 'Amrit kal'. A resolution to rename India as Bharat may be brought in by the government during Parliament's forthcoming special session that is scheduled from September 18-20.

The Constitution of India currently refers to country as "India, that is Bharat. This may now be changed to only "Bharat". The BJP responded with delight to a G20 dinner invitation which described Droupadi Murmu as "President of Bharat", saying the use of the Hindi name for the country

underscores its "civilisation march", and rejected the opposition's objections to it.

Union ministers Dharmendra Pradhan and Giriraj Singh later posted on X pictures of their invites. Sharing a picture of his invite, Pradhan used the hashtag '#PresidentOfBharat' and said, "Jana Gana Mana Adhinayak Jaya He, Bharat Bhagya Vidhata". Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said, "Republic of Bharat- happy and proud that our civilisation is marching ahead boldly towards Amrit Kaal."

Dismissing the opposition's criticism, he said, "The name Bharat is mentioned in the Constitution and the country has been known by it for thousands of years. Our coun-

try was Bharat, is Bharat and will remain Bharat." "In this Amrit Kaal people want that their country's name should be known as Bharat. Why should it have an English name. What is the problem of the Congress? 'India' word was used by British. The original name is Bharat," Sarma said. Their own

prince, he said, in a sarcastic reference to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, named his foot-march as "Bharat Jodo Yatra". Union Minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar said that "our country is Bharat and there should be no doubt about this". The Congress has a problem with everything, he said. The

Minister of State for Electronics and IT also said that he fails to understand the issue in writing Bharat instead of India. Responding to Congress' allegation that the government was trying to manipulate the Constitution, he said the Congress has issues with everything.

Gandhara sculptures, Chola bronzes to be showcased at NGMA exhibition

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Nearly 400 artefacts, including prized Gandhara sculptures, Chola Bronzes and rare manuscripts, are part of a special exhibition that will open at the NGMA on September 9 to welcome spouses of various heads of state who will gather here for the G20 summit.

Remains of a chariot dating back to the period of 2500 BC-1800 BC and unearthed by a team of archaeologists in 2018 from the Sanauli excavation site in Uttar Pradesh and rare Mexican scrolls will also be displayed thematically to showcase India's rich culture and its shared connection with G20 member countries and invited nations, official sources said.

The visiting guests will also inaugurate the exhibition at the National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), they said. The exhibition, 'Roots and Routes', explores India's civilisational heritage, ethos and its inter-connectedness. It traces cultural marvels through Indian sagas based on archaeological artefacts, literature, numismatics, epigraphy and paintings, weaving a narrative that is truly diverse and rich, officials said.

"The project was conceived in the last several months and nearly 80-85 per cent of the artefacts for the exhibition were sourced from cultural institutions outside Delhi.

The most prized display perhaps are the Gandhara and Mathura art pieces, Amravati friezes, and Chola bronzes," a source said. Artefacts have been sourced from Indian Museum in Kolkata; Government Museum in



Chennai; Government Museum in Chandigarh; Asiatic Society in Kolkata; Government Museum in Mathura; National Museum in Delhi; NGMA; National Library in Kolkata; and Archaeological Survey of India site museums at Sarnath in Uttar Pradesh, Nalanda in Bihar, Nagarjunakonda in Andhra Pradesh and Sanchi in Madhya Pradesh; and Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts in Delhi.

"The continuous dialogue between 'roots' and 'routes' takes centre stage in this exhibition, presenting voices, thoughts and relatable stories," the source said.

The British-era Jaipur House, home to the NGMA, was recently renovated and is being decked up to welcome the VVIP guests. Security personnel have been deployed at the gallery, which will open to the public again after the summit ends on September 10. Spouses of heads of state will also be treated to a special lunch at the iconic Jaipur House, sources had said earlier.

Executive Director of GAIL arrested in ₹50L bribery case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has arrested an Executive Director of GAIL in connection with the alleged Rs 50 lakh bribery case in which money changed hands to favour some contractors in the gas pipeline projects.

Along with Executive Director (Projects) KB Singh of Gas Authority of India Ltd. (GAIL), four others have also been arrested, including Director of Vadodara-based

Advance Infrastructures Surender Kumar, officials said. It is alleged that the bribe was paid for favouring the company in two GAIL pipeline projects - Srikakulam to Angul and Vijaypur to Auraiya.

The CBI had received input about the bribe exchange following which, it launched an operation on Monday and made the arrests, they said. Earlier, the CBI registered a case against an Executive Director (Projects), GAIL, Noida, a private company

based at Vadodara and its Director; a Chief General Manager, GAIL, a Senior General Manager of MECO Limited and others.

It was further alleged that the Director of private company had arranged the bribe amount of Rs 50 lakh, through two private persons. It was also alleged that the bribe of Rs 50 lakh would be delivered to ED of GAIL. In a trap operation, agency arrested Executive Director and private person after delivery of the bribe.

Vistara staff take wheelchair away from sick elderly man at IGIA

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Close on the heels of an appalling incident surfacing on social media in which Vistara airline staff left a visually-impaired elderly passenger unattended while the rest of the travelers were boarded on August 31, another incident involving an elderly couple has surfaced. The incident that took place on August 25 involves 83-year-old SS Upadhyaya, who is unable to walk due to multiple surgeries and a recent head injury. Upadhyaya and his 78-year-old wife had to travel to Delhi from Mumbai for a family function. Because of Upadhyaya's health condition they had requested for a wheelchair for him, which was duly provided by the airline at a price. However, once they land-

ed in Delhi, by the Mumbai-Delhi flight UK 960, the aged couple was left alone at the arrival waiting area at IGIA and the wheelchair was also taken away from him. The staff told them that they needed the wheelchair for other passengers and were unable to wait for their vehicle, which was stuck in traffic, to arrive. The old couple somehow struggled and made their way from the arrival lounge to their vehicle when it arrived, which was quite a long walk for them along with their luggage.

According to their son-in-law, R David, who was the one who picked the couple up from the IGIA, "Basic courtesy should have been extended to ensure that they reached their vehicle comfortably and there was somebody to assist them with their luggage." When a complaint was

made Vistara responded, "We are deeply sorry to hear about your concerns regarding wheelchair assistance. Upon receiving your complaint, we conducted a thorough investigation into the issue you raised and would like to inform you that the customers asked the staff to take them to Gate no.2 at arrival's exit.

The staff took them to Gate no. 2 and waited for approximately 10 minutes. Due to stringent security regulations at the airport, our staff is not permitted to escort passengers beyond the exit gate. This limitation is in place to ensure the safety and security of all passengers and visitors within the terminal.

Since private vehicles are not permitted in arrivals and keeping in mind the situation, staff assisted and took them to

multi-level parking-1, and the same was communicated to the customers. We note that it was taking longer for you to reach the parking area hence the staff took the customer's permission and dropped them to the Level-1 visitor sitting area. It is disheartening to learn that they felt unattended and we would like to offer our sincerest apologies for any distress this may have caused.

Please rest assured that we take this matter very seriously, and we are committed to addressing your concerns and improving our services. Thank you for your patience and understanding. Regards Bhavna Tiwari Manager- Customer Engagement" Interestingly the incident with visually-impaired passenger took place just a few days after this incident.

Karad: Our target is to uplift street vendors through SVANidhi Yojana

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Union Minister of State for Finance Dr Bhagwat Kishanrao Karad said that our target is to uplift all the poor street vendors with PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (SVANidhi) Yojana which was launched by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi on June 1 in 2020 with an aim to re-establish the street vendors after the Covid pandemic period. He was addressing the conference of the Northern Zone of the PM SVANidhi Yojana here on Tuesday as the chief guest.



Union Minister of State for Finance Dr Bhagwat Kishanrao Karad inaugurating zonal conference of PM SAVNidhi Yojana in Varanasi on Tuesday.

The meeting was organised by the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs with the aim of achieving the basic mantra of prosperity from SVANidhi Yojana. At the beginning of the conference, while highlighting the yojana, he said that under the scheme, street vendors and traders are given a loan of Rs 10,000 in the first, Rs 20,000 in the second and Rs 50,000 in the third installment. Welcoming all the people participating in this seventh zonal conference in this holy city of Varanasi, Karad also talked about the Antyodaya scheme of the PM.

ing the concerned officers to get information about the house/family members of the rich beneficiaries from SVANidhi Yojana and whatever their needs should be fulfilled through various schemes of the government. "Only if we all move towards one goal, we can uplift the weaker sections of the society and this is our main objective of this scheme," the Union Minister said.

"The government's target is to provide the benefit of this scheme to 50 lakh people, against which till now more than 45 lakh people have been given the benefits," he said, ask-

than 50 crore Jan Dhan accounts have been opened and approximately Rs two lakh crore have been deposited in these accounts," he said. Finance Secretary, UP Government, SMA Rizvi, while welcoming the guests on behalf of the state government, said the UP is continuously securing the first position in SVANidhi Yojana. "The state government is continuously promoting digital payments under this scheme, in which digital payments are being made by 5.65 lakh vendors and so far 21.63 lakh people among the families of the beneficiaries of this scheme in UP have received the benefits of various schemes of the government," he said.

In the conference, Joint Secretary (Housing and Urban Ministry) Rahul Kapoor, Director SUDA Anil Pathak, Divisional Commissioner (Varanasi) Kaushal Raj Sharma, Special Secretary (Urban Development) Anil Kumar, Additional Director SUDA Anand Shukla, National General Secretary of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Arvind Menon and senior officers of State Bank of India (SBI) and all public/private sectors banks were also present.

37 retired teachers honoured in BHU

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

On the occasion of the birth anniversary of Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, renowned philosopher, thinker, former Vice-Chancellor (V-C) of Banaras Hindu University (BHU) and former President of India, Teachers' Day celebration was organised in an emotional manner at Dr KN Udupa auditorium of BHU here on Tuesday. On this occasion, about 37 retired teachers of universities and schools were honoured by presenting them with angavastram, bouquets and mementos. The chief guest of the ceremony was eminent agricultural scientist and Chancellor of Rani Lakshmi Bai Central Agricultural University, Jhansi and former BHU V-C Prof Panjab Singh.



A retired teacher being honoured by chief guest Prof Panjab Singh and V-C Prof SK Jain on Teacher's Day at BHU in Varanasi on Tuesday.

In his address, Prof Singh said that retired teachers are an important link of the university and Teachers' Day is a ceremony to remember the contribution made by teachers in the field of education. 'Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan was a great teacher, philosopher and thinker, he is reflected as a guide for all of us,' said Prof Singh, adding that knowledge is very important. 'It should be used for more and more positive works. Teachers' life is always connected with social and cultural works. He said that BHU is the mother institution of many institutions as the teachers of the schools are also honoured on this occasion. BHU has always contributed to the development of the nation. The alumni of this place are hoisting the glory of the university all over the world,' he said.

established with the coordination of ancient and new knowledge and the teachers have played an important role in its development. 'The contribution of teachers is in preparing the society and the future generation,' Prof Jain said, adding that there has been a significant change in the global scenario since some time ago. 'The universities in India need to be further enriched as the battle is now being fought with technology and not with force,' he said and added that there is a huge responsibility on the teachers, so in the present perspective the place of teachers has become more important. At the beginning of the programme, Rector Prof Vijay Kumar Shukla gave the welcome address. The chief guest and V-C honoured the retired teachers on the occasion. On behalf of retired teachers, Prof Sadanand Shahi of Hindi department and Prof Preeti Lahiri of Mahila Mahavidyalaya (MMV) presented their views. The programme was conducted by Dr Aarti Nirmal, teacher of the English department and the vote of thanks was given by the Dean of Students Prof Anupam Nema. Meanwhile, the day was also celebrated at various universities, colleges, schools and other educational institutes of the city.

Purvanchal exports banana plant derivatives to UAE

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

For the first time, Purvanchal (eastern UP) has exported banana plant derivatives to the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Not only fruits and vegetables but also its leaves and flowers were exported. The first consignment was exported from Ghazipur to the UAE. Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) Chairman Abhishek Dev virtually flagged off the consignment from Lal Bahadur Shastri International (LBSI) Airport at Babatpur in Varanasi on Monday.



APEDA officers flagging off consignment of banana plant derivatives to UAE from Varanasi on Monday.

Banana fruits, flowers and leaves are mostly exported from South India. Now the farmers of Purvanchal are also making their place in the foreign market in this agricultural product also. There has been

an increase of 10 metric tons in exports in August this year compared to the month of August last year. According to APEDA, due to the initiatives and encouraging policies of the Yogi government and the hard work of the farmers, now the banana leaves and flowers of Purvanchal have started making inroads in foreign countries. "With the help of the Yogi government, APEDA is making fruits and vegetables available in the foreign market. Ghazipur's banana will travel abroad with its leaves and flowers," said the Deputy General Manager (DGM) of APEDA's Varanasi Regional Office Dr CB Singh, adding that it was for the first ever export of banana's fruits, flowers and leaves. He said that apart from this, Amda, Karonda, Bhindi and Parwal have also been exported to the UAE in recent time. In August 2022, 81 metric tons of vegetables and fruits were exported from Varanasi airport, while last month, the export was increased to 91 metric tons. The APEDA has increased exports with the help of the state government by opening an office in Varanasi in the year 2020. APEDA had sent green chillies to Britain for the first time in April 2020 during the corona pandemic period.

NIA team raids several areas of Prayagraj

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

A 14-member team of NIA conducted raids in several areas of Prayagraj on Tuesday. The team has kept social activist and PUCL Uttar Pradesh Secretary Seema Azad and her husband Vishwavijay under house arrest. Search operation was conducted in the house located in Rasoolabad since 5 am. The laptop, mobile, literature and poems of Seema Azad and her husband have been confiscated. A large number of police force was deployed outside the house. When Vishwavijay tried to talk to the media, he was stopped by policemen. Vishwavijay alleged that the government is doing harassment in the name of NIA. Earlier, the NIA team

camped in Prayagraj for several days. The information about this mission, which was kept very secret, was not even given to the local police. The officers of the National Investigation Agency have stayed in the circuit house. Police and administrative officials have denied having any information in the matter. Social activist and journalist Seema Azad was sentenced to life imprisonment by the trial court on charges of sedition. Seema was arrested at the railway station in February 2010 on reaching Allahabad from Delhi. The police had booked Seema Azad and her husband for sedition. A large number of Naxalite literature was claimed to have been recovered from them. At that time human rights organisations had also

launched a movement for the release of Seema Azad. Later Seema Azad was granted bail by Allahabad High Court. Seema also brings out a magazine named 'Dastak' to raise the voice of people. OVER BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION: The main obstacle has been removed for ensuring smooth and timely construction of the Chheeki road over bridge near Prayagraj Chheeki railway station. Defence officers agreed in black and white to hand over 14,000 sq mt land to the Bridge Corporation. Chief Project Manager Bridge Corporation Manoj Agrawal confirmed that the Defence Ministry officials have agreed to hand over the land for the construction of over bridge and land acquisition work will be completed

within a couple of days to start construction work at the earliest. Chheeki is a very busy station and the railway gate near this station remains closed for most of the time to let the trains pass. The road users have to wait for hours together to see the gate open. The Railway Ministry has plans to develop and beautify stations in Prayagraj where Mahakumbh is to be held in January-February 2025. Chheeki station is also being developed further to ensure entry and exit from both sides of the stations and for this the aforesaid over bridge was badly needed. The approach road of Chheeki station, which was in poor shape, is being widened while the entry and exit from the other side also will ease the flow of passengers.

Importance of teachers in student's life emphasised

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The Teachers' Day was celebrated with great zeal and zest at Girls' High School and College. The school's atmosphere was filled with joy and contagious energy as students organised a special celebration for their teachers. The event was organised by the students of classes XI and XII with the theme of "Hawaii."



The celebration included various performances such as singing, instrumental renditions, dances and skits, all aimed at reminiscing the days when teachers were students themselves. The students put in a lot of effort to create a vibrant and entertaining atmosphere. In addition to the performances, a few games were conducted specifically for the teachers to bring out the inner child in them. Principal Rev Dr V Eusebius appreciated the dedi-

icated efforts of the teachers in playing a catalytic role in the holistic development of every student. She addressed the teachers on the occasion

emphasising the importance of teachers in a student's life. In her address to the entire school, she encouraged the students to show respect and gratitude

towards their teachers and commended the entire staff for their exemplary contribution to the school's phenomenal success.

Extensive fogging, anti-larvae spraying exercise launched

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The joint teams of Health department and Prayagraj Municipal Corporation (PMC) have launched extensive fogging and anti-larva spraying exercise after dengue and chikungunya cases were reported in the city. The city has reported five chikungunya cases, including three in Kalindipura and two in Preetam Nagar and 33 dengue cases (currently only four active cases) till now. District Malaria Officer AK Singh told reporters that as many as 135 cycle-mounted fogging machines and 12 vehicle-mounted machines have been pressed into service for fogging and anti-larva spraying. Besides, 50 domestic breeder checker (DBC) have also been

engaged to conduct door-to-door checking. Moreover, 12 spot workers have also been engaged for anti-larva spraying. Also, seven malaria inspectors and 19 sanitary inspectors have been roped in to conduct regular checking of fogging and anti-larva spraying exercise. "We have been urging citizens to drain or fill places, such as potholes in and around their residences where water collects and turns breeding ground for mosquitoes (dengue larvae). Domestic unused coolers are found to be main spots behind dengue mosquito breeding ground in many localities like Rajapur, Allahapur, Chota Baghara, Preetam Nagar and Kalindipuram," Singh said. He added an awareness campaign has already been launched in city pockets to

eradicate mosquitoes breeding sites. Authorities have also been focusing on deserted plots in different parts of the city, including low-lying areas on the banks of Ganga where accumulating water often turn into breeding spots. 5 NEW TEACHERS RECRUITED IN AU MASS COMM DEPT: Five new teachers have been recruited in the Journalism and Mass Communication department of Allahabad University (AU) after a long gap of 40 years. Apart from this 30 teachers from 10 departments have got promotion under the Career Advancement Scheme (CAS) at AU. The decision was taken in the Executive Council on Sunday. In the meeting chaired by Vice-Chancellor Prof Sangita Srivastava, the sealed

envelope containing the recommendations of the Selection Committee held for appointing teaching faculty for the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication was opened. Those who were selected for the teaching positions in the department included Harinath Kumar, Ram Avtar Yadav, Ravi Suryavanshi, Amit Sharma and Shiv Gopal as assistant professors. Along with this promotions through CAS too were approved by the EC. This include teaching faculty from the Department of Geology, Centre of Food Technology, Centre for Globalisation and Development Studies, Faculty of Law, Department of Anthropology, Faculty of Commerce, Centre of Bioinformatics, etc

Sampoorna Samadhan Diwas organised

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

The Sampoorna Samadhan Diwas was organised at all the tehsil headquarters on Monday due to local holiday in the district on Kajali festival on Saturday. Out of 313 cases 12 could be disposed of on the spot and teams were formed for disposing of the remaining cases. At Sadar tehsil District Magistrate (DM) incharge CDO Srilaxmi VS and Additional Superintendent of Police (City) Srikant Prajapati heard the grievances of the people. A complainant Vipat Ram of Kakarha village under Padari police station complained that despite repeated requests the revenue staff was not carrying out measurement on which the staff was directed to dispose of the case without inordinate delay and inform about the action. Out of 118 applications only three could be disposed of on the spot. At Lalganj tehsil Additional District Magistrate (ADM/F&R) Shiv Pratap Shukla presided over the day and heard the grievances. Out of 109 applications one was related to a demand made by

Gopal Singh of Barkach village to connect his area with Varanasi by Roadways bus. The ADM assured him to forward the application to the official concerned. The ADM was accompanied by Lalganj subdivisional magistrate (SDM) Bharat Lal Saroj and other officials concerned. At Madihan tehsil the cases were heard by SDM Yugantar Tripathi and at Chunar tehsil by SDM Navneet Sehra. REVIEWED: Deputy Inspector General (DIG), Police, Vindhyachal range, RP Singh while reviewing the works of SOG, surveillance and SWAT of the range in a meeting on Monday asked the officials concerned to prepare a database related to wanted criminals of the past 10 years so that further crime could be checked. Such direction was issued by him He said that it was the responsibility of the staff concerned to gather information related to crime, especially liquor smuggling, cattle and drug smuggling etc. and initiate steps to control such crimes. ARRESTED: In the joint operation of SOG/surveillance

team and team of Ahraura police station an inter-district gang was busted, its six members were arrested and 11 bikes were recovered. Giving details at Police Lines on Monday Superintendent of Police (SP) Abhinandan said during the review of crime he was informed that four cases of theft of bikes were registered at Ahraura police station. The police was tipped off by an informer about the deal of stolen bikes. The police rushed to the spot and nabbed three persons along with three bikes. During interrogation they confessed that they were associated with an inter-district gang and on their identification three more persons were nabbed along with eight more bikes. The accused identified as Diwakar Yadav of Khaasdeh village, Lala Yadav of Ahraura Deeh, Prajwal Mishra of Judai village, Sonu Gaud of Sariya village, all residents under Ahraura police station, Rahul alias Rakesh of Bhadawal village under Jamalpur police station, Mirzapur and Jitendra Yadav of Lohra village under Mugsalsarai police station, Chandauli were sent to jail.

Along with bikes the police recovered a countrymade gun and cartridge from Diwakar. The teams led by incharge SOG/surveillance Madhav Singh and SO Ahraura Kumud Shekhar Singh were awarded a cash reward of Rs 25,000 by the SP. Meanwhile the Madihan police arrested an accused of rape on Monday. A woman had lodged a named FIR on August 8 this year 2023 alleging that the accused had raped her minor sister. After registering the case SHO Shailesh Rai handed it over to a team for working it out. On being tipped off by an informer the police team raided a place and arrested the accused of Darhim village on Monday and sent him to jail. Besides the Dehat Kotwali police on Monday arrested an accused of raping a minor girl. One person had lodged a named FIR on July 4 this year alleging that the accused had enticed his minor daughter away. During investigation the police found evidence of rape and the section under POCSO Act was added. Since the case was lodged, the accused was at large but was nabbed on Monday and sent to jail.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Calculated risk

Speculation is rife about the reasons for the Chinese President's absence from G20 Summit

Even before it could be formally declared open, the G20 Summit — a crucial global forum for economic coordination — is making news due to Chinese President Xi Jinping's sudden and inexplicable decision to stay away. Though Russian President Vladimir Putin would also not attend the conclave, his absence is easily explained with the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war. However, the impending absence of the Chinese President has raised eyebrows and a flurry of speculation over its implications. China, as one of the world's foremost economic powerhouses, plays a pivotal role in G20 discussions. Therefore, Xi's absence sends the disconcerting signal that China may be retreating from its traditionally active role on the global stage. Another line of argument could be that Xi is wary of the possibility of US President Joe Biden taking the opportunity to embarrass him at the international event over China's numerous misadventures in international affairs. Also, he might be trying to imply that China doesn't need a West-sponsored forum or



it has no obligation to act according to its diktat. It could also be a way to show its defiance against the US policies towards it. However, Xi's absence raises questions about China's commitment to multilateralism. Though the Chinese Premier would attend the G20 meet, it is common knowledge how centralised the Chinese government is. However, it appears far-fetched that Xi's decision has anything to do with India being the host. Though bilateral relations are strained, especially after China again showed Arunachal Pradesh as its territory, but it is seldom a valid reason in diplomacy to skip a world event. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has downplayed it, saying it is the position that countries take which matters, not who represents them.

Another factor for Xi's absence could be the ongoing geopolitical tensions. China has been involved in various disputes with neighbouring countries, including India, and its relations with the US and other western powers remain strained. One point of view is that President Xi's decision to skip the G20 Summit may be a strategic move to avoid potential confrontations or criticisms at the global stage. But by abstaining from such events, nations risk escalating tensions and missing opportunities for peaceful resolution. Besides, China's absence also puts a question mark on its commitment to addressing global issues such as climate change. The G20 has been a crucial platform for discussions on climate action, with nations pledging to reduce emissions and transition to renewable energy sources. President Xi's absence casts doubts over China's commitment to these goals, which are essential for combating climate change. His decision to skip the G20 Summit would not have any effect on G20 per se but it does raise questions about China's commitment to global cooperation, multilateralism and addressing pressing global challenges. The world will be watching closely to see how this absence shapes the summit dynamics and the future of global cooperation.

PICTALK



A student of Shivaji Shikshan Sanstha is dressed as Lord Krishna during Dahi Handi festival in Mumbai

PTI

India's drive for nature conservation

Reviving borewells, harnessing solar power and embracing data-driven solutions is need of the hour, writes Kiran Ramaraj

Breaking a 50-year-old rainfall record, Himachal Pradesh, this year, witnessed unprecedented destruction as relentless rainfall caused devastating floods. Experts label it a 'man-made catastrophe' of the Himalayas, attributing the destruction to soil vulnerabilities, failed drainage systems, debris dumping in rivers, and unchecked illegal mining at riverbeds.



These environmental challenges further compound erratic weather patterns attributed to climate change.

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research reports that 54% of India's total area faces high to extremely high water stress, and 29% of the country's land suffers from degradation, impacting the lives of nearly 600 million Indians. Deforestation also poses a significant concern, with around 3,34,000 hectares of primary rainforest lost. Despite efforts to curb unauthorised tree cutting, development pressures lead to substantial losses as land is diverted for industrialization, roads, and irrigation projects. As per a Lancet study, this results in severe pollution, causing over 2.3 million premature deaths, including 1.6 million from air pollution and more than 500,000 from water pollution.

To shape a world where nature thrives and future generations flourish, collective action is key. Policymakers and government agencies wield significant influence in facilitating the adoption of sustainable practices among farmers and rural communities. By considering behavioural factors like beliefs, social background, and knowledge, policymakers can design effective policies.

Today, farmers are encouraged to embrace sustainable techniques through financial support in the form of subsidies and incentives. Notable success stories like the 'Zero Budget Natural Farming' initiative in Andhra Pradesh' and the

'Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana' exemplify the transformative impact of such endeavours, resulting in enhanced yields, cost savings, and ecological resilience.

Initiatives, such as the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, and Soil Health Card Scheme, offer indispensable financial and technical support to farmers which can lead to increased crop yields, reduced input costs, and improved water quality. Addressing the pressing issue of water scarcity, schemes like the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana promote the adoption of efficient irrigation practices. Parallely, the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha Evam Utthaan Mahabhayan (PM KUSUM) scheme and the Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission (JNNSM) are playing a crucial role in promoting renewable energy and solar pumps in India.

These government-led initiatives, coupled with stakeholder collaborations, have fostered the growth of India's start-up ecosystem. These start-ups now spearhead groundbreaking solutions,

from optimizing water usage to promoting sustainable practices, forging a powerful transition from vision to action.

One such example is Urdhvam which has designed and developed Bore Charger, a sustainable technology to revive failing and low-yielding borewells with very low investment. By increasing the water-yielding capacity of existing borewells and replenishing water in deep confined aquifers, the enterprise contributes to the conservation of water resources. BoreCharger increases the recharge rate of a borewell by 2 to 20 times, improves quantum by 4 to 60 lakh litres and enhances longevity by 1 to 6 months along with better water quality.

Start-ups, as drivers of innovation, play a significant role in implementing sustainable strategies. Uniting both public and private efforts, India can make significant strides in sustainable development. This approach will prevent man-made catastrophes while also promoting economic growth.

(The writer is Associate Sector Lead, Climate Action)

Remembering my friend Chandan

Chandan Mitra was a sophomore, a dog lover and, yes, a damn good editor: The man I knew before he became the editor of The Pioneer

Chandan, I met when he was Resident Editor, Hindustan Times in the early 1990s when I was full of reporting on Nepal. In those days, I had not graduated to the edit page of HT. Chandan let me into the pages of HT with my news and analysis pieces. One that especially broke news was on Sumdorong Chu with the late Shri Jaswant Singh of BJP asking: "Why are we vacating our territory". The question is being asked now by Congress on why we have surrendered territory in East Ladakh to China. Chandan's advice to me then was: "General, look beyond Nepal".

The most beautiful and scintillating Ritu Beri, then a rising star in the fashion world in its infancy in India at the time, helped to cement our relationship. She became an icon and in many ways, still is. But Chandan is no longer around to admire her talent. Chandan established his mark as a journalist at HT, sharpening his own and other's political instincts. My association with The Pioneer predated Chandan becoming its editor-in-chief. Vinod Mehta then editor took my first article titled: "Too Early to Blame LTTE" which was patently an inaccurate assessment of Prabhakaran and his warped thinking on Eelam. With a brief break from The Pioneer, I returned to the edit page when Chandan took charge and I am perhaps the longest-lasting contributor to the edit page.

Chandan's political career in BJP came at a time when my friends and associates in the party included Maj Jaswant Singh who was my batchmate at the National Defence Academy and George Fernandes who invariably rose to support the underdog and tried to rescue me from the shenanigans of the establishment. Chandan chose to part from the BJP when the current dispensation elected to change the rise of India from a liberal democratic framework to the majoritarian Gujarat model. Most of the Vajpayee team was marginalized which included Chandan. But while still there, he followed a middle path. As the convenor of the longest-run-



ning India-Pakistan Track II dialogue under the auspices of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Berlin, I got him to join the first 'breaking the ice' seminar at Kathmandu in 2003 following the terrorist attack on Parliament in December 2001 and the one-year long Operation Parakram that followed.

Since the Kathmandu seminar, Chandan attended several other India-Pakistan dialogues initially as a journalist and later as BJP Member of Parliament. His understanding of Pakistan was very special as he had friends across the Radcliffe Line. Pakistan was different under President Gen Pervez Musharraf. It was the most eventful period in India-Pakistan relations when LoC was generally violence-free and the Army was able to construct the fencing. Infiltration was reduced by 55 per cent and by April 2007, the backchannel interlocutors had arrived at the four-point Kashmir formula. I recall we were at Bangkok's Park Hotel for the annual India-Pakistan dialogue when Chandan, having met Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's special envoy, Satinder Lambah,

CHANDAN WAS VERY SUSPICIOUS ABOUT THE KASHMIR FORMULA AND HIS HUNCH PROVED CORRECT WHEN IN 2008, MUMBAI HAPPENED

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

'ONE-ELECTION NATION' NOT FEASIBLE

Sir — The Union government constituted a panel headed by a former President of the nation to explore the feasibility of the "One Nation, One Election" plan — the concept of synchronizing the timing of Lok Sabha, State Assembly, and local bodies elections. According to the government's version, "ONOE" will lead to saving public money, which is only a fraction of the government's budget expenditure. While floating this important idea impacting the entire nation, the BJP has not shown inclination towards taking other parties on board. In fact, the idea of 'One Nation, One Election' does not align with the concept of federalism, as it is established on the notion that the entire nation is "one," contradicting the context of Article 1 of the Constitution, which envisages India as a "Union of States." Thus, it would be a blatant attempt to undermine the federal structure of the country.

SK Khosla | Chandigarh

CONTROLLED ACCESS TO RTI

Sir — The Right to Information Act is essential for the rights of every citizen belonging to the nation to access government-oriented schemes, their costs, and benefits to the localities. However, controlled access or denial of the RTI may have a negative impact on the government and administrative mentality. Being part of the strongest democracy, every citizen has fundamental rights that cannot be denied. Considering the recent norms of the Digital Data Protection Act 2023, there is complete provision for providing personal data. This will somehow hamper social audits and combat corruption within the administration. The RTI activists take great risk to bring to fore the administrative lapses and help the common man fight the system which is not always forthcoming with the information that people need to exercise their rights.

Dimple | Kanpur

Pollution mitigation



A country that prioritizes pollution mitigation efforts values the lives of its citizens and is sure to develop its other faculties and grow even bigger. Only healthy citizens can acquire greater wealth and wisdom, which can catapult the country to the summit. However, the recent Air Quality Life Index report released by the University of Chicago this week reveals disturbing realities: fine particulate air pollution (PM_{2.5}) is estimated to shorten an average Indian's life expectancy by 5.3 years. In Delhi, it's a stagger-

ing 11.9 years. The report further states that air pollution reduces the lifespan of Western Europeans by 5.3 months. The economic losses due to pollution-related deaths and morbidity in 2019 amounted to nearly USD 37 billion.

Exposure to unhealthy amounts of particulate matter is detrimental to people's lungs and hearts, posing an even greater risk to the survival of a large section of people in the country. Reducing carbon footprint requires bringing diverse sections of people, businesses, the middle and working classes, and a variety of professionals on the same page, especially in reengineering transportation and framing sustainable development strategies.

What has kept the pollution problem unaddressed is the lack of unflinching political resolve, even when the judiciary has pulled up or prodded government agencies time and again. A country aspiring to be a \$5 trillion economy can ill afford to neglect people's well-being. The concerns flagged by the University of Chicago should not be brushed under the carpet, and a concrete master plan for pollution control at all levels must be put in place on a war footing.

Vijay Singh Adhikari | Almora

ONE NATION, ONE INCOME

Sir — No praise is enough for RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav for proposing "One nation, one income" instead of pursuing "One nation one language/religion/ party / leader / election". Yes, instead of pursuing the parochial, divisive imperialist agenda of "Hindi-Hindu-Hindustan" in this secular, heterogeneous nation or zealously working for an "Opposition-mukt" polity in this constitutionally democratic country by artificially creating a personality cult and immersing in absolute non-issues like simultaneous polls everywhere (what would happen if the government in the Centre or any state of the nation collapses before completion of the 5-year term; another round of polls all around the country?); indeed, great ser-

vice would be rendered to the nation if all citizens are assured of a similar or one income, thereby placing all Indians on an absolute egalitarian platform of dignity and economy.

Billions of fellow citizens are starving and bereft of the minimum amenities of life to which all human beings are entitled; yet another section has to remain perturbed about how to squander their never-ending resources and charter planes to get engaged by exchanging rings up above the sky! Why not change this vulgar picture of supreme inequality by ensuring "One nation one income" as brilliantly suggested by Yadav!

Kajal Chatterjee | Kolkata

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



FIRST COLUMN

THE ROLE OF AN ADMINISTRATOR

An honest and disciplined administrator can boost efficiency and provide a healing touch



RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUNJ JI

Every organisation or institution in the world has several people working to fulfil its aims and objectives or to achieve its goals. Hence, the proper functioning of these organisations or institutions necessitates good administration because no organisation or institution, worth its name, can function well without a good administrator. An administrator, who is also called a bureaucrat, manager or executive, has to set up goals and targets and maintain the work schedule as well as the efficiency of the team that is working under him. He has to work out a functional system of personnel management and to see that there is proper coordination among various parts and that the functionaries work as a team and have job satisfaction.

Thus the work of an administrator or a bureaucrat requires a multi-splendored personality with many qualities because he/she has to handle not just goods but human beings too who have their sensibilities, sensitivities, perceptions and emotions. He should, therefore, have many qualities of head and heart that would enable him to handle matters with great acumen, skill, alacrity, understanding, efficiency and responsibility. However, if an administrator is short-tempered, volatile, depressive, melancholic, repressive and inconsiderate, he can lead the whole establishment into trouble or ruins. Therefore, an administrator must be jovial, friendly, dignified & bubbling with energy and enthusiasm, to lead his/her organisation from progress to more progress. So, a lot depends on the qualities and the personality of the Administrator or the executive, because nothing will move properly and quickly unless he moves in the right direction. This is thus the pivotal position.



A recent study done by sociologists in India revealed that most of the Administrators in public or private establishments live under extreme pressures from various directions and also under positive and negative pressures from within. Due to their multifarious responsibilities and pivotal position, they have to face bitter criticism and even blame and brick bats, resulting from jealousy, the rivalry of some and genuine or false dis-satisfaction of others. For all these and various other reasons, he/she, therefore, is required to be equipped with qualities which provide to him the security of armour and the source of mental, moral and spiritual strength and can work as an in-built fountainhead of the joy of work. Experience has shown that only a spiritually oriented administrator can maintain the much-needed balance between humility and dignity or tenderness and toughness, love and law and cheer and care.

Such a character, by his/her sterling character, strong sympathy and love for mankind, can inspire trust and love in others. People find joy in working with such a person. They value such an executive of the organisation and have love and admiration for him. Today, the world needs nothing more than enhancement of these qualities in the administrator, the top brass or the executive of an establishment, because that's the urgent need of the hour. People want bureaucrats to cut short lengthy procedures and delay in decisions. Their attitude of help and kindness or proper consideration can win them great public goodwill and high appreciation which are no less an attainment and a life satisfaction that one cherishes. Their clean conscience and clean hands can build a clean society without the necessity of religious discourse. Such honest & disciplined people can thus give a healing touch to an ailing administration and give the public great confidence, relief and respite which would be most helpful in building a safe, better and healthy society.

(Writer is a spiritual educator & popular columnist for publications across India, Nepal & UK)

Farmers hit hard by rice export restrictions

India is the world's largest rice exporter; sudden export restrictions on rice could damage India's reputation as a reliable supplier to the world



AS MITTAL



Farmers who have already been hit hard by crop losses due to floods are facing further challenges due to restrictions on rice exports. The government recently tightened restrictions on basmati exports, setting a minimum price of US\$1200 per metric tonne. Any export contracts below this price will be evaluated by a committee established by the Agricultural & Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEEDA) for clearance. The reason behind these restrictions is to prevent exporters from evading white rice export bans by misclassifying non-basmati varieties as basmati. However, quality-conscious global markets such as the UK are using DNA fingerprinting to verify the authenticity of basmati branding and to detect any adulteration with other rice varieties.

It is important to consider the previous two moves that aimed to discourage rice exports when evaluating the current decision. In July, the government banned the export of non-basmati rice, and on August 25, a 20% export duty was imposed on parboiled rice. These measures will have a significant impact on farmers, particularly those from Punjab and Haryana, who play a significant role in basmati export. They will face a double blow, as they are expected to lose around 10-12% of their crops due to flooding in some areas, and they will also be unable to benefit from the high export price of rice. The export ban means that farmers cannot take advantage of the global demand-supply scenario, which has caused rice prices to surge internationally (Rice Price Index reached 130 in August 2023) since September 2011.



THIS YEAR'S RECORD-BREAKING BASMATI PRICES IN THE GLOBAL MARKET MAY LEAD TO DOMESTIC PRICES OF UP TO RS 4500/QUINTAL

(The Author is Vice-Chairman Sonalika Group, Vice-Chairman of the Punjab Economic Policy and Planning Board and Chairman of ASSOCHAM Northern Region Development Council; views are personal)

The government is taking steps to control domestic food inflation, particularly due to concerns over a potential harvest shortfall caused by heavy rains and floods in key rice-growing states during the Kharif season. Maintaining stable inflation is crucial for India's macroeconomic stability. However, restricting rice exports may negatively impact farmers, especially those who are already vulnerable. To address this issue, state governments may need to exempt market and rural development fees on basmati exports to help farmers cope with potential losses.

To prevent agricultural produce from being restricted or banned for export, the central government must purchase it at a fair price. This price, known as the export parity price, represents what farmers would have received if they had been able to fulfil their export contracts. The government can then sell this stock in the market to keep prices stable, although this will come with a fiscal cost. However, any short-term expenses can be balanced out by savings in other areas. Additionally, using export parity prices has long-term benefits, since limiting farm income can make farmers less willing to support agricultural reforms that require upfront costs and provide long-term benefits.

India has been the world's largest rice exporter for more than a decade, contributing about 19% of its agricultural exports.

However, sudden export restrictions on rice could damage India's reputation as a reliable supplier to the world. Despite this, there is still a strong demand for Indian rice because it is cheaper than international prices. As a result, India saw record exports of 2.22 crore tonnes in 2022-23, which accounted for over 40% of the world's total rice shipments. The non-basmati varieties make up the largest share of India's rice exports, with 1.77 crore tonnes worth Rs 51,089 crores. Additionally, India has exported 45 lakh tonnes of basmati rice earning Rs.38,524 crores during 2022-23, with Punjab contributing 45% of the share.

High Hope fetches record rice acreage in Punjab:

Punjab farmers have achieved a remarkable feat this year, despite facing challenges such as flooding in July and August and a slight reduction in paddy cultivation across 20 of 23 districts. They have surpassed all previous records in the current Kharif season by cultivating a whopping 31.93 lakh hectares of rice, including 5.87 lakh hectares of basmati, which is the highest ever in the history of Punjab. This achievement is particularly significant as the international prices of rice are currently at an all-time high.

However, to maintain ecological balance, the Central Ground Water Board had recommended that Punjab limit its ordinary rice

area to 18-20 lakh hectares and bring around 8-10 lakh hectares under basmati aromatic rice. This would allow for diversification from non-basmati to basmati and tap into new global markets such as Benin, China, and Senegal. In the long term, this could be a lucrative opportunity for Punjab.

This year's record-breaking basmati prices in the global market may lead to domestic prices of up to Rs 4500/quintal. This has encouraged farmers to diversify from traditional crops towards the export potential of basmati, which can supplement their income and benefit the environment. To maintain the quality of produce, farmers in basmati-distinct districts should consider selecting export-oriented basmati varieties, using suitable soil for cultivation, ensuring quality irrigation water, implementing demand-driven quality control measures, and using cost-effective and eco-friendly production methods to conserve the agro-ecosystem.

Northern parts of Punjab have favourable agro-climatic conditions and should focus on producing export-quality basmati varieties with higher yields and lower water consumption while maintaining the traditional basmati-rice aroma and minimizing the residue of restricted pesticides. Farmers must be incentivized and intensively trained in various aspects of producing quality basmati.

Infrastructure boost is driving India's economic growth

India is striving to create an infrastructure that endures while minimising its ecological footprint; the results are impressive

Over the past 76 years since independence, progress in infrastructure development has shown a steady rise, constructing essential assets needed for the country across various areas like transportation, housing, commercial development, communication, and sanitation. With a keen focus on strengthening its infrastructure, India has been transforming its cities, towns, and villages into centres of creativity, connectivity, and economic energy. India is on the path of major change in the field of infrastructure over the next 25 years, guided by Prime Minister Modi's goal to transform India into a developed nation by 2047.



ABODH KUMAR

(The writer is a Professor, the Department of Economic Studies and Policy, Central University of South Bihar)

the foundation for any advanced economy. The Union Budget 2023-24 reflected the government's dedicated push for infrastructure development. The budget featured a plan to extend the 50-year interest-free loan to the state government for another year. The extension motivates the state governments to invest in infrastructure and take supportive policy actions. The allocated amount has been notably increased to Rs. 1.3 lakh crore. In addition, the budget for building infrastructure was raised by 33%, to Rs 10 lakh crore. This amount made up 3.3% of the GDP, three times higher than the allocation in 2019-20.

The Budget 2023 also included the establishment of a new Finance Secretariat to

enhance the chances for private investments in various infrastructure projects. This initiative is aimed at encouraging more private funding in areas like railways, roads, urban infrastructure, and power, benefiting all involved parties.

The term "Amrit Kaal," which means the "Era of Nectar," signifies the government's goal to establish prosperous urban areas with contemporary facilities. Within Amrit Kaal, infrastructure stands as the foundation, propelling economic progress, societal advancement, and ecological sustainability. The Budget 2023-24 is aligned with the vision of Amrit Kaal, as it allocates substantial funds for boosting infrastructure development, further support-

ing the transformation of cities into thriving, modern, and sustainable hubs.

Key Infrastructure Projects: India's achievements in the realm of infrastructure are evident in the implementation of several ambitious projects that have reshaped the country's landscape. The Bharatmala Project is one of the major projects. This road development initiative has connected far-flung regions, reduced travel time and boosted trade and tourism. It exemplifies the government's commitment to improving connectivity across the nation. Launched in 2017, the Bharatmala Project aims to construct 34,800 kilometres of highways at an estimated cost of over ₹5.35 lakh crore. The Gati Shakti and Industrial

Corridors are another major infrastructural project undertaken. Implemented in 2019, the main objective of the project is to ensure integrated planning and implementation of basic infrastructure projects over the next four years, with a focus on expediting on-groundwork, cost reduction, and employment generation.

With the Sagarmala Project, the Indian government aims to improve port facilities and connectivity, thereby stimulating trade and coastal economies. It aligns ports with road, rail, and water networks, bolstering maritime prowess. The Indian Railways have also witnessed massive capacity expansion through line doubling and electrification. Additionally, the Vande Bharat Trains are a major suc-

cess. An epitome of Make in India, the Vande Bharat trains have transformed the way India travels.

Sustainable Infrastructure: The integration of sustainable practices within India's infrastructure paradigm is a testament to the nation's awareness of environmental concerns. By emphasizing renewable energy, eco-friendly construction methods, and waste management, India is striving to create an infrastructure that endures while minimizing its ecological footprint.

RITES Limited, a public-sector undertaking under the Ministry of Railways, stands as a key player in leveraging India's sustainable infrastructure landscape. Sustainable infrastructure has a plethora of

benefits, as it not only ensures environmental sustainability but also fosters economic and social processes.

It goes without saying that to realise the aim of reaching a US\$5 trillion economy by 2025, India's infrastructure development is pivotal. India's journey towards robust infrastructure development has been nothing short of extraordinary. Various schemes and policies, such as the National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) and the PM Gati Shakti Master Plan, are taking the infrastructure landscape of the country to great heights. With key projects implemented and innovative ones set in motion, India's infrastructure growth remains an instrumental force in propelling the nation's economic prosperity.

HK's top court rules in favour of recognising same-sex partnerships

AP ■ HONG KONG

Hong Kong's top court ruled Tuesday that the government should provide a framework for recognising same-sex partnerships in a landmark decision for the city's LGBTQ+ community. The ruling did not grant full marriage rights to same-sex couples but was a partial victory for prominent pro-democracy Jimmy Sham, who had fought a five-year legal battle over the recognition of same-sex marriage registered overseas.

Sham married his husband in New York in 2013, and argued that Hong Kong's laws, which don't recognise foreign same-sex marriage, violate the constitutional right to equality.

Equality advocates said the judgment was a step forward and will have strong implications for the lives of the LGBTQ+ community and the financial hub's reputation as an inclusive place to stay and work. Judges at the top court, by a majority, declared in a written ruling that the government is in violation of its positive obligation to establish an alternative framework for legal recognition of same-sex partnerships, such as registered civil partnerships or civil unions. "The absence of legal recognition of their relationship is apt to disrupt and demean



their private lives together in ways that constitute arbitrary interference," Justice Patrick Keane wrote. The court suspended its declaration for two years to give the government time to comply with its obligation. But the judges unani-

mously dismissed Sham's final appeal on other grounds related to same-sex marriage and recognition of overseas same-sex unions. Currently, Hong Kong only recognises same-sex marriage for certain purposes such as taxation, civil service benefits and dependent visas. Many of the government's concessions were won through legal challenges in recent years and the city has seen a growing social acceptance towards same-sex marriage. Surveys showed 60 per cent of the respondents showed support for same-sex marriage in 2023, up from 38 per cent in 2013, according to a report issued by researchers at The University of Hong Kong. The Chinese University of Hong Kong and the University of North Carolina School of Law in May.

In a previous hearing, Sham's lawyer Karon Monaghan argued that the absence of same-sex marriage in Hong Kong sent a message that it's less worthy of recognition than heterosexual marriages. Jerome Yau, a co-founder of non-governmental organisation Hong Kong Marriage Equality, said the ruling sent a clear signal that same-sex relationships deserve some form of recognition and that it would help enhance Hong Kong's reputation. "This judgement, we believe, will go a long way in

attracting young talent coming to Hong Kong to work and live," he said. Hong Kong resident Travis Chow, who has a same-sex partner, said he had wondered about their future but the judgement prompted him to think seriously about the option of staying in Hong Kong in the long run. "This is absolutely happy and encouraging," he said. The court decision was an important step for equality for the LGBTQ+ community in Asia, said gender studies scholar Suen Yiu-tong at the Chinese University. But Suen admitted he was disappointed that the court did not recognize same-sex marriage. Sham has been in custody

after being charged under a Beijing-imposed national security law following massive pro-democracy protests in 2019. The law has been used to arrest and silence many other pro-democracy activists as part of a crackdown on dissent in the former British colony. Sham is the former convenor of Civil Human Rights Front, which was best known for organizing the annual protest march on the anniversary of Hong Kong's handover to Chinese rule on July 1, 1997, for years. The group also organised some of the biggest political protests that roiled the city in 2019 but was disbanded in 2021 under the shadow of the security law.

50 security forces killed in Burkina Faso

AP ■ DAKAR (SENEGAL)

More than 50 security forces were killed and dozens wounded during intense fighting with jihadists in northern Burkina Faso, the army said Tuesday. Seventeen soldiers and three dozen volunteer fighters, who assist the military, were killed in Koumbri commune in Yatenga province on Monday, the army said in a statement. Several dozen of the Islamic militants also were killed, as part of an operation to try push back the jihadis from Koumbri so that displaced people

could return, the army said. "This act of extreme cowardice will not go unpunished. Every effort is being made to disable the remaining terrorist elements on the run," the statement said. The West African nation has been ravaged by growing jihadi attacks linked to al-Qaeda and the Islamic State group that have killed thousands, displaced more than 2 million people and pushed tens of thousands to the brink of starvation. The violence has divided a once peaceful nation, leading to two coups last year and increased attacks, which

are encircling the capital, Ouagadougou. Approximately half of the country is outside of government control, conflict analysts say. Since the first coup in January 2022 the number of people killed by jihadis has nearly tripled compared with the 18 months before, according to a report by the Africa Centre for Strategic Studies. "This violence, coupled with the geographic spread of extremist activities effectively surrounding Ouagadougou, puts Burkina Faso more than ever at the brink of collapse," the report said.

Turkiye, Greece agree to resolve old disputes

AP ■ ANKARA

The foreign ministers of Greece and Türkiye agreed on Tuesday to revive high-level contacts between their countries and seek "new approaches" to problems as part of efforts to improve ties between the two NATO allies who are at loggerheads over a string of decades-old disputes. Discussions between Greece's Giorgos Gerapetritis and Türkiye's Hakan Fidan were held in a more friendly climate triggered by Greece sending assistance to Türkiye following a devastating earthquake earlier this year, and Türkiye offering condolences after a deadly train accident in Greece. "We have entered a new and positive period in our relations with Greece," Fidan told journalists at the end of their talks. "We reiterated our belief that our problems will be resolved through a constructive dialogue between the two neighbours and allies." The meeting came as Ankara, in the throes of an economic downturn, is seeking a reset of its often-troubled relations with Western nations. It follows a rare meeting between President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis on the sidelines of a NATO summit in Vilnius in July. According to a "roadmap" unveiled by the two ministers, Mitsotakis and Erdogan would meet again on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in New York on September 18, followed by



Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis

a meeting of high-level officials in October. The sides would also hold talks on a series of confidence-building measures and revive a stalled high-level cooperation council meeting. Greece and Türkiye are at odds over territorial claims in the Aegean Sea, energy exploration rights in the eastern Mediterranean and ethnically split Cyprus, among other issues. Tensions flared in 2020 over exploratory drilling rights in areas of the Mediterranean Sea — where Greece and Cyprus claim exclusive economic zones — leading to a naval standoff. "We evaluated our problems concerning the Aegean and the eastern Mediterranean in a comprehensive manner," Fidan said. "We agreed on bringing new approaches to the solution of the problems."

Gerapetritis said: "We agreed to continue with the positive agenda." Tuesday's cordial atmosphere was a contrast to a meeting two years ago when the previous Greek and Turkish foreign ministers traded accusations during a joint news conference in Ankara. In recent years, Türkiye has accused Greece of deploying troops on Aegean islands close to the Turkish coast in violation of treaties. Greece says it needs to defend the islands against a potential attack from Türkiye, noting Türkiye has a sizeable military force on the western Turkish coast. Turkish officials said continued militarisation of the islands could lead to Türkiye questioning their ownership while Erdogan went as far as to threaten to send missiles to Athens.

Israeli military raid kills Palestinian

Jerusalem (AP): Israeli troops killed a Palestinian man during an army raid in the occupied West Bank on Tuesday, Palestinian health officials said, the latest incident in a yearlong wave of violence that has surged to levels unseen in the territory in some two decades. Israel has pressed on with near-nightly raids in the West Bank and amid a spike in attacks by Palestinians against Israelis in recent weeks, including a car-ramming at a major West Bank checkpoint and a shooting at a car wash. The military said troops destroyed an explosives stockpile in the Nour Shams refugee camp in the northern West Bank on Tuesday. During the operation, soldiers came under attack from armed gunmen and returned fire, the army said. The Palestinian health ministry said that a 21-year-old man died from a bullet wound to the head. No Palestinian militant groups immediately claimed him as a member. A video of the incident released by the military appeared to show a massive fireball erupting from a building. Another unconfirmed amateur video appeared to show an explosion beneath an Israeli military bulldozer. Palestinian assaults against Israelis have spiked in parallel to Israel's intensification of arrest raids in the West Bank.

Chief Engineer, Uttarakhand Rural Roads Development Agency, First Floor, Directorate of Panchayatiraj, Opp-IT Park, Sahastadhara Road, Dehradun.

Ref. No. 1111/11-02(xix)-2/ITCO/URRDA/23 Dated: 04.09.2023

PRADHAN MANTRI GRAM SADAK YOJANA (PMGSY) e-Procurement Notice-13/2023-24

The Chief Engineer, URRDA on behalf of Governor of Uttarakhand invites the item rate bids in electronic tendering system for construction of Bridges under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana in the Districts of Haridwar & Pauri for 05 number of packages with estimated cost totalling to Rs. 35.05 Crore including their maintenance for Five years from the eligible contractors registered with PWD/CPWD or equivalent.

Date of release of Invitation for Bids through e-procurement: 06.09.2023.

Availability of Bid Documents and mode of submission: The bid documents are available online and should be submitted online in www.pmgstyendersuk.gov.in. The bidder would be required to register in the web-site which is free of cost. For submission of the bids, the bidder is required to have Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized Certifying Authorities.

The bidders are required to submit original affidavit regarding correctness of information furnished with bid document as per provisions of Clause 4.4 (b) (ii) of ITB with the **CONCERNED CIRCLE OFFICES, mentioned in SBD/MBD, only up to or before the time and date of the submission of the Bids (for World Bank funded works) and on a date not later than three working days after the opening of technical qualification part of the bid (for Regular PMGSY Works)**, either by registered post or by hand, failing which the bids shall be declared non-responsive. No Physical documents will be accepted after the closing date and time of submission of bids.

Last Date/Time for receipt of bids through e-Procurement: 20.09.2023 01:00 PM

For further details please log on to www.pmgstyendersuk.gov.in.

Chief Engineer, URRDA, Dehradun

* Non Registered bidders may submit bids, however, the successful bidders must get registered in appropriate class with appropriate authorities before signing the contract.

Note : For e-Procurement for any sort of queries 0135-2608125 number may be contacted 10:00 AM to 05:00 PM.

IST LIMITED
CIN: L33301HR1976PLC008316
Registered Office: Dharuhera Industrial Complex, Delhi Jaipur Highway No. 8, Kapriwas, Dharuhera, Dist. Rewari - 123102, Haryana
Tel: (91) 1274 - 267346, 267347, 267348, 267419, 267420 Fax: 01274-267444
Website: www.istindia.com; E-mail: cs@istindia.com

NOTICE OF THE 47th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, REMOTE E-VOTING INFORMATION AND BOOK CLOSURE

NOTICE is hereby given that the 47th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Members of the Company is scheduled to be held on Friday, the 29th day of September, 2023 at 11:30 a.m. at the Registered Office of the Company at Dharuhera Industrial Complex, Delhi - Jaipur Highway No. 8, Kapriwas, Dharuhera, Dist. Rewari - 123102, Haryana to transact the business as set out in the Notice dated 28th August, 2023 convening the said AGM.

In terms of the provisions of Section 101 and Section 136 of the Companies Act, 2013 read along with Rule 18 of the Companies (Management and Administration) Rules, 2014, including any amendment thereto, the Notice setting out the business to be transacted at the 47th AGM along with the Explanatory Statement pursuant to Sec. 102(1) of the Companies Act, 2013 and the Annual Report of the Company for the financial year 2022-23 have been sent through electronic mode to those shareholders whose e-mail IDs are registered with the Companies/Depository Participants on Tuesday, 5th September, 2023 and to all other Members, whose e-mail IDs are not registered with the Company/Depository Participants or to members who holds shares in physical mode at their Registered Address in permitted manner on Monday, 4th September, 2023. The dispatch of the Notice in both the mode have been completed on 5th September, 2023.

In compliance with Section 108 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with Rule 20 of the Companies (Management and Administration) Rules, 2014, as amended from time to time, and Regulation 44 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, the Company is offering the remote e-voting facility to all its Members, holdings shares as on the cut-off date i.e. 23rd September, 2023 to enable them to cast their vote electronically in respect of the business as set out in the Notice of the 47th AGM of the Company. The Company has allied assistance for remote e-Voting from National Securities Depository Limited (NSDL) to provide remote e-voting facilities which can be accessed at the website www.evoting.nsdl.com.

The Company has appointed Mr. Vinod Kumar Aneja, Company Secretary in whole-time practice, New Delhi as the Scrutinizer to scrutinize the voting process in a fair and transparent manner.

The members are informed that:

- The Business as set out in the Notice of the AGM may be transacted through voting by electronic means;
- The remote e-voting shall commence on Tuesday the 26th day of September, 2023 (9.00 A.M.);
- The remote e-voting shall end on Thursday, the 28th day of September, 2023 (5.00 P.M.);
- The cut-off date for determining the eligibility to vote by electronic means or at the AGM is Saturday, the 23rd day of September, 2023;
- Any person who acquires shares of the Company and become Member of the Company after the dispatch of the Notice of the AGM and holds shares as on the cut-off date i.e. Saturday, 23rd September, 2023 may obtain the login ID and password by sending a request at evoting@nsdl.co.in or to the Company's Registrar - Mas Services Limited at info@masserv.com / sm@masserv.com;
- The members may note that the:
 - The remote e-voting module shall be disabled by NSDL at 05:00 PM on Thursday, the 28th day of September, 2023;
 - The facility of voting through Ballot Papers will be made available at the AGM for members present at the Meeting;
 - Members who have cast their votes by remote e-voting prior to the AGM may attend the AGM but shall not be entitled to cast their vote again;
 - Only the Members whose names are recorded in the Register of Members or in the Register of Beneficial Owner maintained by the Depositories as on the cut-off date i.e. 23rd September, 2023 shall be entitled to avail the facility of remote e-voting facility as well as voting using Ballot Papers at the AGM. A person who is not a member as on the cut-off date should treat this Notice for information purposes only.
- The Notice of the AGM and the Annual Report for the financial year 2022-23 are available on the website of the Company at: <https://istindia.com/wp-content/uploads/isthem/assets/pdf/annualreport-2023.pdf>
- For any grievances/queries/clarification relating to e-voting, the Members may refer the Frequently Asked Questions ("FAQs") and e-voting manual available at www.evoting.nsdl.com or call toll free no. 1800-222-990. Members can also contact the Company's Registrar and Share Transfer Agent - Mas Services Limited, having their office at T-34, 2nd Floor, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase II, New Delhi - 110020, Email id: info@masserv.com / sm@masserv.com, contact no. 011-26387281, 26387282, 26387283 to resolve any grievances;

Notice is hereby also given pursuant to Section 91 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with Companies (Management and Administration) Rules, 2014 and Regulation 42 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulation, 2015, that the Register of Members and the Share Transfer Books of the Company will remain closed from Saturday, 23rd September, 2023 to Friday, 29th September, 2023 (both days inclusive) for the purpose of Annual General Meeting.

For IST Limited
Sd/-
Bhupinder Kumar
Company Secretary

Date : 05.09.2023
Place : New Delhi

SUPERIOR FINLEASE LIMITED
CIN: L74899DL1994PLC081995
Regd. Off: NS-92, Rajpal Enclave, Najafgarh, Near Arjun Park Bus Stand, New Delhi-110043; Email id: superiorfinlease@gmail.com; Phone No.: +91-9953798335
Website: <http://www.superiorfinlease.com>

NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING E-VOTING INFORMATION AND BOOK CLOSURE

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting ("AGM") of Superior Finlease Limited ("the Company") is scheduled to be held on Friday, 29th September, 2023 at 2:00 p.m. through Video Conferencing ("VC")/Other Audio-Visual means ("OAVM") to transact the business as set forth in the Notice of the AGM dated 31st August, 2023.

In view of the continuing Covid-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs ("MCA") has vide its circular dated 5th May, 2020 read with circulars dated 8th April, 2020 and 13th April, 2020 and SEBI Circular dated 12th May, 2020 (collectively referred to as "Applicable Circulars"), the Company has decided to conduct the AGM of the Company through VCO/AVM.

In compliance with the aforesaid Applicable Circulars, the Notice of the AGM along with the Annual Report for the Financial Year 2022-2023 has been sent only through electronic mode to those Members whose email addresses are registered with the Registrar and Share Transfer Agent i.e. Skyline Financial Services Limited ("RTA") of the Company and Depositories. The dispatch of Notice and Annual Report of the AGM through emails has been completed on 6th September, 2023. The Notice of AGM and the Annual Report for the Financial Year 2022-2023 is available on the website and can be downloaded from the Company's website i.e. <http://www.superiorfinlease.com/>, the Bombay Stock Exchange of India Limited ("BSE") i.e. <https://www.bseindia.com/> and the Metropolitan Stock Exchange of India Limited ("MSE") i.e. <https://www.mse.in/>. Alternatively, Members can send email to the Company at: superiorfinlease@gmail.com or the Company's RTA at: admin@skylinert.com to obtain the same.

Members may note that the Register of Members and Share Transfer Books of the Company shall remain closed from Saturday, 23rd September, 2023 to Friday, 29th September, 2023 (both days inclusive) for the purpose of reckoning shareholders for the purpose of AGM.

Manner for registering email addresses with the depositories for procuring user id and password and registration of e-mail ids for e-voting for the resolutions set out in this notice:

- In case shares are held in physical mode, please send a request to the RTA at admin@skylinert.com providing folio No., Name of shareholder, scanned copy of the share certificate (front and back), PAN (self-attested scanned copy of PAN card),AADHAR (self-attested scanned copy of Aadhar Card) for registering email address.
- In case shares are held in dematerialized mode, please contact your Depository Participant (DP) and register your email address and bank account details in your demat account, as per the process advised by your DP.
- Alternatively, Shareholder/Member may send a request to evoting@nsdl.co.in for procuring user id and password for e-voting by providing above mentioned documents.

Voting through electronic means

- In compliance with the provisions of Section 108 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with Rule 20 of the Companies (Management and Administration) Rules, 2014 (as amended) and Regulation 44 of SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations 2015 (as amended), and Applicable Circulars, the Company is providing facility of remote e-voting to its Members in respect of the business to be transacted at the AGM. The Company has engaged the services of NSDL as authorized e-voting agency and has made necessary arrangements with them for facilitating voting through electronic means. In order to cast votes through remote e-voting, the members may visit the website <https://www.evoting.nsdl.com>.
- The cut-off date for the purpose of voting (including remote e-voting) is Thursday, 21st September, 2023.
- The remote e-voting facility will be available during the following period after which the portal shall forthwith be blocked and shall not be available by NSDL:

Commencement of remote e-voting	09:30 A.M. (IST) on Tuesday, 26 th September, 2023
End of remote e-voting	05:00 P.M. (IST) on Thursday, 28 th September, 2023
- During the above period, Members holding shares either in physical form or in dematerialized form, as on Thursday, 21st September, 2023 i.e. cut-off date, may cast their vote electronically. Members who have acquired shares after the date of dispatch of Notice through electronic means and before cut-off date may obtain the User ID and Password by sending a request at evoting@nsdl.co.in or admin@skylinert.com or superiorfinlease@gmail.com.
- Members who have cast their vote by remote e-voting prior to the AGM may also attend/participate in the AGM through VCO/AVM but shall not be entitled to cast their vote again. The detailed procedure and manner for remote e-voting is available on www.evoting.nsdl.com and in the AGM Notice.

Procedure for attending the AGM through VCO/AVM

Members are provided with a facility to attend the AGM through VCO/AVM by the Company. The link for VCO/AVM is available in the notice of the AGM. Those Members, who will be present in the AGM through VCO/AVM facility and have not cast their vote on the Resolutions through remote e-voting and are otherwise not barred from doing so, shall be eligible to vote through e-voting system during the AGM.

In case of any query, you may refer the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Shareholders and e-voting user manual for Shareholders available at the downloads section of www.evoting.nsdl.com or contact NSDL on: 022- 4886 7000 and 022- 2499 7000 or send a request to at evoting@nsdl.co.in.

For Superior Finlease Limited
Sd/-
Pragati Agrawal
Company Secretary

Date: 6th September, 2023
Place : New Delhi

'Climate change eating away Africa's GDP'

AP ■ NAIROBI

Climate change is "relentlessly eating away" at Africa's economic progress and its time to have a global conversation about a carbon tax, Kenya's president declared Tuesday as the first Africa Climate Summit began. "Those who produce the garbage refuse to pay their bills," President William Ruto said. The African continent of more than 1.3 billion people is losing 5 per cent to 15 per cent of its GDP growth every year to the widespread impacts of climate change, according to Ruto. It's a source of deep frustration in the region that contributes by far the least to the global problem. The summit's opening speeches included clear calls to reform the global financial structures that have left African nations paying five times more to borrow money than others, worsening the debt crisis for many.

Africa has more than 30 of the world's most indebted countries, Kenya's cabinet secretary for the environment, Soipan Tuya, said. The US government's climate envoy, John Kerry, acknowledged the "acute, unfair debt." He also said 17 of the world's 20 countries most impacted by climate change are in Africa — while the world's 20 richest nations, including his own, produce 80 per cent of the world's carbon emissions that are driving climate change. Kenya's president said Africa's 54 countries "must go green fast before industrialising and not vice versa, unlike (richer nations) had the luxury to do," Transforming Africa's economy on a green trajectory "is the most feasible, just and efficient way to attain a net-zero world by 2050," he said.

Climate finance is key, speakers said, with richer nations' promise of USD 100 billion a year in climate finance to developing countries still unfulfilled. Ruto said the summit declaration will "firmly encourage" everyone to keep their promises. The United Arab Emirates, which will host the next United Nations climate meeting, announced it plans to invest USD 4.5 billion in Africa's "clean energy potential." The African continent has 60 per cent of the world's renewable energy assets, and more than 30 per cent of the minerals key to renewable and low-carbon technologies. One goal of the summit is to transform the narrative around the continent from victim to assertive, wealthy partner. Africa's GDP should be revalued for its assets that include the world's second-largest rainforest and biodiver-

sity, said the president of the African Development Bank, Akinwumi Adesina. "Africa cannot be nature-rich and cash-poor," he said. But divisions are evident around the issue that was little mentioned in the opening speeches and yet at the heart of the tough conversations ahead: Fossil fuels. The African Development Bank president said Africa must use its natural gas resources along with renewable energy sources. "Give us space to grow," he said. Ruto, however, has criticised the "addiction" to fossil fuels as his country now gets more than 90 per cent of its energy from renewables. "We don't have to do what the developed countries did to power their industries. It will be harder to use renewable energy exclusively, but it can be done," said one local summit attendee, Martha Lusweti.

'Kim to meet Putin this month'

AP ■ WASHINGTON

US official said Monday that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un may travel to Russia soon to meet with President Vladimir Putin as the Kremlin tries to acquire military equipment for use in its war in Ukraine. The official, who was not authorised to address the matter publicly and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity, said the US expects Kim will make the trip within the month. The official said the US isn't sure exactly where or when the meeting would take place, but the Pacific port city of Vladivostok would be a likely possibility given its relative proximity to North Korea.

'UK's Oppn Labour Party pledges to cut hidden remittance fees'

PTI ■ LONDON

Britain's Opposition Labour Party has pledged to clamp down on costly hidden fees associated with international remittances from the UK to countries such as India as it makes its pitch to voters in the lead up to a general election, expected next year. Shadow foreign secretary David Lammy hosted a special "Connecting Communities" reception here Monday evening where he hailed the contributions made by Indian businesses to the UK economy as a "huge success story." Joined by shadow women and equalities secretary Anneliese Dodds, the senior shadow minister of Guyanese heritage highlighted the contribution of Britain's diverse diaspora communities, through business, culture, art, food and music, social action and community engagement. "Unlike the Tories who seek to pit communities against each other in divisive culture wars, the next Labour government will value the enormous contribution of Britain's diverse communities both at home and abroad," said Lammy. "The positive impact of diaspora communities to fighting poverty and inequality through remittance payments is too often overlooked. Costly hidden fees on these payments put financial pressure on families in Britain already struggling to make ends meet in the Conservative cost of living crisis. In government, Labour will set the goal of reducing the obstacles and costs to cross border payments, keeping money in the

pockets of Britain's communities and allowing them to build on their contribution to Britain's impact in the world," he said. Remittance payments are defined as international transfers sent from households in the UK, typically to support friends and families overseas. The World Bank has estimated the value of these payments from the UK at USD 10.7 billion in 2022. According to the Labour Party, hidden fees estimated to cost nearly half a billion pounds a year are putting additional pressure on families in the UK already struggling with the cost-of-living crisis. "We're now at a stage where there are over a thousand Indian businesses contributing over a billion to the UK economy.

Pak army chief steps in to address eco crisis

PTI ■ KARACHI

Signalling the powerful military's key role in Pakistan, Army chief General Asim Munir has held a series of meetings with the business community...

Pak hopes Saudi crown prince will make stopover during India visit

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan is pushing for a visit of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who is expected to travel to India later this week...

PTI president re-arrested soon after court suspends his detention

Islamabad (PTI): Parvez Elahi, the president of former prime minister Imran Khan's party...

Pastor shot at in Pak's Punjab

PTI ■ LAHORE

A pastor was shot at and wounded by an unknown assailant in Pakistan's Punjab province, weeks after a number of churches and Christian homes were burnt down...

Aus lawmakers head to US to lobby against Julian Assange extradition efforts

Canberra (AP): A group of Australian lawmakers said Tuesday they would travel to Washington this month to lobby the United States to abandon its efforts to extradite WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange...

Plea seeking prevention of Musharraf 6 years ago from leaving country disposed

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD



Just leave it to the Almighty now, a judge at Pakistan's Supreme Court remarked on Tuesday while disposing of a petition filed six years ago to place now-deceased military dictator Pervez Musharraf on the Exit Control List (ECL) to prevent him from leaving the country...



In December 2019, a special court found Musharraf guilty of high treason and sentenced him to death. However, the punishment was never carried out. Musharraf, the architect of the Kargil War in 1999 who ruled Pakistan from 1999 to 2008, died after a prolonged illness at the American Hospital in Dubai on February 5 this year...

China to deploy most powerful Wide Field Survey Telescope this month

Beijing (PTI): China will soon put into operation a wide-field survey telescope, set to be the most powerful sky survey telescope in the Northern Hemisphere, that will help scientists monitor dynamic astronomical events and carry out the time domain astronomical observation research, the official media reported on Tuesday...

China to deploy most powerful Wide Field Survey Telescope this month

nomical observation research, according to the observatory, Xinhua news agency reported. Measuring 2.5 meters in diameter, the Wide Field Survey Telescope (WFST) is now the largest time-domain survey facility in the Northern Hemisphere, it said. "After the WFST becomes fully operational, we can use it to detect some very faint and distant celestial signals, including those from distant galaxies and galaxy clusters outside the Milky Way," said Lou Zheng, chief engineer of the observatory's Qinghai observation station. It will become the most powerful sky survey telescope in the Northern Hemisphere, said Kong Xu, the project's chief

designer at the University of Science and Technology of China. "The use of the WFST will greatly improve China's near-Earth object monitoring and early warning capabilities." In 2022, the telescope was nicknamed after the ancient Chinese philosopher Mozi, or Mozi, who is said to be the first in history to conduct optical experiments. Construction of the telescope project started in July 2019 in Lenghu Town, which has an average altitude of approximately 4,000 meters. The town is also known as China's "Mars Camp" due to its eerily eroded desert landscape that resembles the surface of the red planet.

4 Pak youths sentenced to death for blasphemy

Lahore (PTI): A Pakistani court has handed down death sentences to four youths for committing blasphemy on social media, the country's top investigating agency said on Tuesday. Additional District Sessions Judge (Rawalpindi) Ahsan Mahmood Malik sentenced the four to death on Monday for posting blasphemous material on Facebook. Each of them has also been handed a 28-year jail term for committing blasphemy against the Quran as well, the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) said. However, a fifth sus-

4 Pak youths sentenced to death for blasphemy

pect, Usman Liaqat, was handed seven years of imprisonment. Muhammad Amin, Wazir Gul, Faizan Razaak, and Muhammad Rizwan, who are in their 20s, were handed death sentences by the Additional District Sessions Judge on Monday for posting blasphemous material against the Prophet on Facebook," the FIA said.

Run of special express trains

Advertisement for special express trains with a table showing train numbers, routes, and dates. Includes details for 04071/04072 New Delhi-Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra-New Delhi Gati Shakti Special Express Train (2 Trips).

UN food agency drops aid to another 2 mn hungry people in Af due to cash shortfall

AP ■ ISLAMABAD

The UN food agency said Tuesday it must drop another 2 million hungry people from food assistance in Afghanistan this month due to a massive funding shortfall. The action means that 10 million people will be cut off from the agency's support this year in the country, the World Food Programme said in a statement. The new cuts mean the agency will be able to provide food assistance to about a fifth of the 15 million people who need it in

have imposed harsh measures since seizing Afghanistan in August 2021 as US and NATO forces were pulling out after two decades of war. Among their actions, the Taliban have prohibited Afghan women from working at local and non-governmental organisations. Aid agencies have been providing food, education, and health care support to Afghans in the wake of the Taliban takeover of August 2021 and the economic collapse that followed. The ban was extended to employees of the United

Nations in April. The measures have triggered a fierce international uproar, increasing the country's isolation at a time when its economy has collapsed and its humanitarian crisis grows more grim. In April and May, the WFP said it was forced to cut off 8 million people from food assistance. WFP is often the last lifeline for women, who are increasingly being pushed out of society and facing dwindling options for making a living and feeding their children.

Advertisement for BABA FARID UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES, FARIDKOT. Includes contact information and details about admissions and facilities.

Advertisement for VERKA requesting proposals for accounting work. Includes details about the company and the specific job requirements.

Advertisement for MOULIN COMMERCIAL LIMITED. Includes details about a public meeting and financial information.

Advertisement for APPENDIX- IV A regarding sale of immovable property. Includes details about the property and the sale process.

Advertisement for the sale of an apartment. Includes details about the property's location, size, and features.

Advertisement for Northern Railway featuring a table with train routes and schedules, and information about services and contact details.

'RBI committed to bring down inflation'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das on Tuesday said the central bank is firmly focused on bringing down inflation to 4 per cent and remains prepared to undertake policy responses to deal with supply shocks, which have become more frequent with profound implications.

The current episode of high global inflation and preceding overlapping shocks of the pandemic and Russia-Ukraine war have raised significant issues and challenges for the conduct of monetary policy, the governor

said in a speech on 'Art of Monetary Policy Making: The Indian Context' at Delhi School of Economics (DSE) Diamond Jubilee Distinguished Lecture.

He said the monetary policy framework in India has evolved in line with the developments in theory and country practices, the changing nature of the economy and developments in financial markets. Within the broad objectives, the relative emphasis on inflation, growth and financial stability has, however, varied across monetary policy regimes since independence.



Das listed out steps the central bank took to deal with the situation created in the wake of the COVID pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war.

Following the outbreak of the war, the central bank raised the policy rates by 250 basis points since May 2022.

"After a near-zero policy rate for a prolonged period, central banks in these (advanced) economies started raising interest rates aggressively in 2022, which contributed to stress in certain banks in these economies. In contrast, our battle against inflation is not constrained by financial stability concerns. In fact, even during the COVID phase, we continuously took measures to strengthen financial stability," the governor said.

The Reserve Bank, he said, has

adopted a prudent approach and taken several initiatives to revamp the regulation and supervision of banks, NBFCs and other financial entities by developing an integrated and harmonised architecture.

"Our banking system remains resilient and healthy with improved capital ratios, asset quality and profitability," he said.

Das said the RBI's experience in recent years shows that supply shocks have become more frequent with profound implications for inflation management and anchoring of inflation expectations.



BSE-listed firms' market valuation hits all-time high of ₹316.6 lakh crore

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
The market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies hit a fresh all-time high of Rs 316.64 lakh crore on Tuesday as the benchmark Sensex logged its third day of rally amid strong macroeconomic data.

The BSE benchmark index climbed 152.12 points, or 0.23 per cent, to settle at 65,780.26 on Tuesday. During the day, it gained 203.56 points, or 0.31 per cent, to 65,831.70.

In three days, the benchmark index has gained 948.85 points, or 1.46 per cent.

Helped by the optimistic trend in equities, the market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms reached a new lifetime peak of Rs 3,16,64,085.18 crore.

Investors' wealth also went up by Rs 7 lakh crore in the three days of market gain.

"While markets extended gains for the third straight session, the mood was more or less range-bound with a positive bias as US markets were shut on Monday and investors preferred to take selective bets. One needs to be watchful about the sharp volatility in rupee, which could impact FII flows going ahead," Shrikant Chouhan, Head of Research (Retail), Kotak Securities Ltd, said.

India's services sector activity eased in August but growth rates for new orders remain elevated, as services firms indicated the sharpest upturn in new export business which acted as a catalyst for firms to expand their workforces as well as output, a monthly survey said on Tuesday.

Despite falling from 62.3 in July to 60.1 in August, the seasonally adjusted S&P Global

India Services PMI Business Activity Index indicated one of the strongest increases in output seen since mid-2010.

Manufacturing activities in India gained momentum in August as new orders and output increased at the quickest rates in nearly three years, according to a survey released on Friday.

GST collections grew 11 per cent to over Rs 1.59 lakh crore in August on the back of improved compliance and reduced evasion, with experts forecasting higher mop-up to continue in the upcoming festive season.

In Asian markets, Tokyo settled in the green, while Seoul, Shanghai and Hong Kong ended in the negative territory. European markets were trading on a mixed note in early deals. The US markets were closed on Monday.

Sun Pharma emerged as the biggest gainer from the Sensex pack, climbing 2.12 per cent, followed by ITC, Titan, Bajaj Finance, Nestle, Infosys, L&T, JSW Steel, Reliance Industries and Kotak Mahindra Bank.

UltraTech Cement, Maruti, HDFC Bank, NTPC, Wipro and State Bank of India were among the laggards.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge jumped 1.09 per cent, and smallcap index gained 0.61 per cent.

"Strong domestic factors are providing crucial support for Indian equities, allowing them to maintain their strength despite attempts by weak global peers to disrupt the mood," Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services, said.

RATHI STEEL AND POWER LIMITED

CIN-L27109DL1971PLC005905
Regd. Office: 24/1-A, Mohan Cooperative Industrial Estate, Mathura Road Vihar, New Delhi-110044, web: www.rathisteelndpower.com e-mail: investors@rathisteelndpower.com Tel: 011-45092400

NOTICE OF 52nd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, BOOK CLOSURE AND ELECTONIC VOTING INFORMATION OF RATHI STEEL & POWER LIMITED

Annual General Meeting: Notice is hereby given that the 52nd Annual General Meeting of the members of the Company will be held on Friday, September 29th, 2023 at 10.00 A.M. through Video Conferencing ("VC") / Other Audio Visual Means ("OAVM") for the purpose of transacting the business mentioned in the notice. Notice of the said AGM, e-voting instructions and Annual Report for the year 2022-23 have been sent to the members of the company electronically whose email-ids are registered with the depositories. The said Notice, e-voting instructions and Annual Report for the year 2022-23 have also been sent in physical mode to all other members at their registered address by way of permitted mode. A copy of Annual Report 2022-23 along with the AGM notice and the Instructions for Electronic Voting (e-voting) will also be made available on the website of the company (www.rathisteelndpower.com).

Book Closure: Notice is also hereby given that pursuant to the Section 91 of Companies Act, 2013, read with Rule 10 of the Companies (Management and Administration) Rules, 2014 and other applicable provisions, if any, and in compliance with SEBI LODR Regulation, 2015 with the Stock Exchanges, that the Register of Members and Share Transfer Books of the Company will remain close from September 23, 2023 to September 29, 2023 (both days inclusive) for the purpose of Annual General Meeting of the Company scheduled on September 29, 2023 at 10.00 A.M. through Video Conferencing ("VC") / Other Audio Visual Means ("OAVM").

Electronic Voting Information: Members holding shares either in physical form or in dematerialized form, as on cut-off date September 22, 2023 may cast their vote electronically on the ordinary and special businesses as set out in the Notice of the 52nd Annual General Meeting through electronic voting system of NSDL. All the members are informed that (a) the ordinary business and special business as set out in the notice of the 52nd AGM may be transacted by electronic voting (b) the date of completion of sending of notice of 52nd AGM is September 07, 2023 (c) voting through electronic means shall commence at 09:00 AM on September 26, 2022 and ends at 05:00 PM on September 28, 2023 (d) voting through electronic means shall not be allowed beyond 05:00 PM on September 28, 2022 (e) Notice of the 52nd AGM will be made available on the company's website i.e. www.rathisteelndpower.com and on NSDL website i.e. https://www.evoting.nsdl.com (f) for process and manner of electronic voting, members may go through the electronic voting instructions or in case of any queries/grievances connected with the e-voting, members may refer the frequently asked questions (FAQ's) for shareholders and the e-voting user manual for the shareholders available at the download section of https://www.evoting.nsdl.com/ or alternatively can contact at email id of company investors@rathisteelndpower.com.

By order of the Board
For and on behalf of M/s Rathi Steel and Power Limited
S/-
(PREM NARAIN VARSHNEY)
Managing Director
DIN: 00012709

Place: New Delhi
Date: 05.09.2023

MODI RUBBER LIMITED

CIN: L25199UP1971PLC003392

Registered Office: Modinagar - 201204; Dist. Ghaziabad, (U.P.)

Corporate Office: 4-7C, DDA Shopping Centre, New Friends Colony, New Delhi-110025

Website: www.modirubberlimited.com; Email: investors@modigroup.net; Phone: +91-11-47107398

NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that the 50th Annual General Meeting ("AGM") of the members of Modi Rubber Limited ("Company") will be held on Friday, the 29th September, 2023 at 11:30 a.m. (IST) through Video Conferencing ("VC")/Other AudioVisual Means ("OAVM") facility provided by Mas Services Limited to transact the business set out in the Notice convening the AGM.

Notice of AGM and Annual Report: In compliance with general Circular No. 02/2021 dated January, 13 2021 read with circulars dated April 8, 2020, April, 13 2020 and May 5, 2020 and all other applicable laws and circulars issued by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA), Government of India and Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), to transact the Ordinary and Special businesses as set out in the Notice. The Notice setting out the business to be transacted at the AGM together with the Integrated Annual Report of the Company for the year 2022-23 has been sent on 05.09.2023 through electronic mode only to the members whose email address is registered with the Company / Depository Participant(s). The Notice and the Integrated Annual Report are also available on the Company's website at www.modirubberlimited.com and on the website of the Stock Exchanges, i.e. BSE Limited and National Stock Exchange of India Limited at www.bseindia.com and www.nseindia.com respectively.

E-voting: The Company is providing to the members, the facility to cast their vote(s) on the business as set out in the Notice of the AGM through remote e-voting facility ("remote e-voting") as well as during the AGM to those members who could not cast their vote(s) by remote evoting. Members are requested to note the following:

- The company has fixed 22nd September 2023 as the 'Cut Off date' to ascertain the eligibility of members to vote by remote e-voting or by e-voting at the AGM.
- A person, whose name is recorded in the register of members or in the register of beneficial owners maintained by the depositories as on the cut-off date i.e. 22nd September 2023 only, shall be entitled to avail the facility of remote e-voting or for participation and voting at the AGM.:
- the remote e-voting period shall be available as under:
Commencement of remote e-voting : from 09:00 a.m. (IST) on Tuesday 26th September 2023
End of remote e-voting : till 05:00 pm (IST) on Thursday, 28th September 2023
- any person, who acquires shares of the Company and becomes a member of the Company after dispatch of the Notice and holds shares as on the cut-off date, may obtain the login ID and password, by sending a request at evoting@nsdl.co.in. However, if the person is already registered with NSDL for remote e-voting then he/she can use their existing User ID and password for casting the vote.
- the members who have cast their vote by remote e-voting prior to the AGM can also attend/participate in the AGM through VC / OAVM but shall not be entitled to cast their vote again at the AGM.
- the remote e-voting module shall be disabled by NSDL after 5.00 p.m. (IST) on 28th September 2023. The votes once cast by the member, cannot be changed subsequently.
- those members, who intend to participate in the AGM through VC / OAVM facility and could not cast their vote on the resolutions through remote e-voting and are otherwise not barred from doing so, shall be eligible to vote through e-voting during the AGM.
- the manner of voting for members holding shares in dematerialized mode, physical mode and for members who have not registered their email address has been provided in the Notice of the AGM. The notice will also be available on the website of the Company at www.modirubberlimited.com. Members are requested to carefully read all the Notes set out in the Notice of the AGM with respect to instructions for joining the AGM, manner of casting vote etc. Contact details: In case of any queries relating to e-voting, the members may refer to the FAQs for members and e-voting user manual for members available at the download section of www.evoting.nsdl.com or call on toll free no.: 1800-222-990 or send a request at evoting@nsdl.co.in.

The members are requested to note the following contact details for addressing queries/grievances, if any:

MAS Services Limited Phone No. +91-11-2638 7281 82, 83
T-34, IInd Floor, Okhla Industrial Area Fax no.+91-11-2638 7384
Phase-II, New Delhi - 110020 E-mail: info@masserv.com

By order of the Board of Directors

S/-
(S K Bajpai)

Place : New Delhi
Date : 05th September, 2023

Head - Legal & Co. Secretary

Soonicorn Ventures gets Sebi nod to launch ₹250 crore angel fund

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Investment firm Soonicorn Ventures on Tuesday said it has received Sebi's approval to introduce an alternate investment fund with a corpus of Rs 250 crore.

The newly approved angel fund will have an additional Rs 250 crore available as a green-shoe option, bringing the total fund capacity to Rs 500 crore, the firm said in a statement.

"Soonicorn Ventures (SV), the Gurugram-based investment technology platform, has received regulatory approval from the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to introduce an Angel Fund, operating as a Category-I Alternate Investment Fund (AIF)," it added.

SV has a sector-agnostic approach to invest-

ments and will allocate investments ranging from Rs 50 lakh to Rs 4 crore in startups at the initial funding stages.

The platform has been investing in promising sectors, such as Drone Technology, B2B SaaS, Electric Vehicles (EV), Financial Technology (FinTech), Supply Chain Logistics and others.

Soonicorn Ventures' portfolio startups include Zypp, Zingbus, Samosa Party, SupplyNote, AutoNxt etc.

"The newly approved Angel Fund is sized at an impressive Rs 250 crore, with an additional Rs 250 crore available as a green-shoe option, bringing the total fund capacity to Rs 500 crores. This substantial allocation underscores SV's commitment to nurturing and empowering early-stage startups in India," the statement said.

'Pre-sanctioned credit lines on UPI will aid in accelerating transactions'

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank's announcement to allow banks to issue pre-sanctioned credit lines on the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) system will aid in accelerating the growth in transactions, UCO Bank MD and CEO Ashwani Kumar said on Tuesday.

"According to the recent National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) data, UPI transactions have touched 10 billion in a month, and in 18-24 months, it is expected to touch 20 billion.

"But with the RBI's announcement of a credit line available to UPI, I think days are not far that...Transactions will

accelerate further," Kumar said while speaking in a panel discussion "Leveraging Digital Infrastructure for transformation in lending & payments" at the three-day 'Global Fintech Fest 2023'.

Because this has been a demand from customers for a long time and once this is made available, the adoption of UPI will be huge, he said, adding that the banks then have to bring in technology to make it available to their customers. The apex bank on Monday said the UPI System will also include pre-sanctioned credit lines issued by banks for transactions.

Earlier, only the deposited amount could be transacted through the UPI System.

In a circular, RBI said, "Under this facility, payments through a pre-sanctioned credit line issued by a Scheduled Commercial Bank to individuals, with the prior consent of the individual customer, are enabled for transactions using the UPI System".

Kumar further said India is talking about cross-border transactions and the internationalisation of the rupee, and here, the payments bank will have a significant role to play.

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das on Monday said that the adoption of Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) or digital currency can help in making cross-border payments more efficient.

Over 6 crore ITR filings processed for assessment year 2023-24

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

As many as 6.98 crore tax returns have been filed for income earned in 2022-23 fiscal and out of them, more than 6 crore filings have been processed, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said on Tuesday.

The CBDT — the apex decision making body in matters of income and corporate taxes — said the department is not able to process certain Income Tax Returns (ITRs) for want of certain information/action on the part of taxpayers.

Of the total ITRs filed, about 14 lakh are yet to be verified by taxpayers while the department has sought further information from another 12 lakh taxpayers, for which requisite communication has been sent through their e-filing accounts.

Besides, certain ITR filers are yet to validate their bank accounts.

"As on September 5, 6.98 crore ITRs for Assessment Year 2023-24 have been filed, of which 6.84 crore have been verified. Of these, more than 6 crore ITRs, or 88 per cent of the total verified ITRs, have been processed," the CBDT said in a statement.

Refunds have been issued for more than 2.45 crore filers for AY 2023-24.

The average processing time of ITRs after verification has been reduced to 10 days for returns filed for AY 2023-24 compared to 82 days for AY 2019-20 and 16 days for AY 2022-23. "The Income Tax Department is committed to processing the ITRs in a speedy and efficient manner," the CBDT said.

With regard to 14 lakh ITRs, which are yet to be verified, the CBDT said failure to verify the returns causes delays.

Exide's lithium-ion cell project secures ₹2,000 crore line of credit from banks

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Exide Industries Ltd's Rs 6,000 crore lithium-ion cell manufacturing project has secured a line of credit of Rs 2,000 crore from banks.

Exide's wholly owned subsidiary, Exide Energy Solutions Limited, will be taking the credit facility for rolling out its lithium-ion cell manufacturing and associated projects, which are coming up near Bangalore, a

company official said. Exide has extended a corporate guarantee in favour of five banks for the sanctioned line of credit, the company informed the stock exchanges.

The five lenders are ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank, Axis Bank, HSB Bank, and Kotak Mahindra Bank. The subsidiary will utilise the funds in tranches. Earlier, Exide MD and CEO Subir Chakraborty had said that the estimated project cost

for the first phase would be Rs 4,000 crore, with a capacity of 6 GWh (gigawatt hour). The total project capacity of the project is 12 GWh.

Exide Industries has also applied for regulatory approvals for the merger of its wholly-owned subsidiary Exide Energy Private Limited (EEPL) with Exide Energy Solutions (EESL) to bring all lithium battery business entities under a single roof. EEPL has a 1.5 GW fully

automated lithium-ion battery packs and modules manufacturing plant at Prantij, Gujarat. EESL is the promoter of the lithium cell plant.

The construction of the greenfield lithium-ion cell manufacturing project at Bangalore is in full swing and we expect to commence the first phase by the end of next year (2024-25), Chakraborty told shareholders at the recent company's annual general meeting.

Adobe partners with Ministry of Education for digital skills curriculum; to reach 2 crore students by 2027



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Computer software company Adobe on Tuesday said it has partnered with the Union Education Ministry to provide schools with Adobe Express-based curriculum and training, with an aim to reach 2 crore students and 5 lakh educators across India by 2027.

The company said the partnership was announced at a signing ceremony by Union Education minister Dharmendra Pradhan during the G-20 Leaders' Summit in India.

"In the time of digitisation, new ideas, new innovation and creativity, this partnership is going to create a new standard and benchmark for students," said Dharmendra Pradhan,

Minister of Education, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Government of India.

K-12 schools across the country will get free access to Adobe Express Premium as part of the partnership.

The curriculum, training and certification will be rolled out based on Adobe Express tools with topics like creativity, generative AI, design, animation, video and other emerging technologies. Educators will receive Adobe Creative Educators certification upon completing the training.

"Digital literacy is a core tenet at Adobe and our partnership with India's Ministry of Education is another important step in our longstanding commitment to education and empowering India's students to make an impact in the world," said Mala Sharma, VP and GM, Global Education and Adobe Express, Adobe.

The American multinational technology company joined hands with All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) to empower 75,000 faculty in 10,000 higher education institutes with access to Express in 2022.

BUSINESS BRIEF

LOGISTICS & SUPPLY CHAIN'S FOOTHOLD TO EXPAND
NEW DELHI: Logistics and supply chain management solutions Softlink Global Pvt Ltd has embarked on a remarkable journey to expand its horizon in the global map. It has already established presence in South East Asian with a market share of 23.5 per cent. "Softlink stands on the brink of a calculated disruption, a meticulously orchestrated leap into a reimagined landscape."

DIGITAL AWARENESS PLATFORM FOR INSURANCE
NEW DELHI: Lords Mark Insurance Broking Services Pvt Ltd announced the launch of their innovative digital platform "Bimaakavach" providing Life Insurance, Health Insurance and General Insurance policies. The platform provides expert opinion to redefine the insurance landscape.

POWERGRID GETS DIRECTOR (PERSONNEL)
NEW DELHI: Dr Yatindra Dwivedi has assumed the charge of Director (Personnel) of Power Grid Corporation of India Limited on 31 August 2023. Prior to his joining as Director (Personnel), he worked as Executive Director (HR) handling challenging and flagship works & delivered results consistently in dynamic business environment.

PFC SIGNS LOAN AGREEMENT
NEW DELHI: Power Finance Corporation Limited (PFC) & Assam Petrochemicals Limited (APL) signed a loan agreement on 4.09.2023 for extending a term loan of Rs 1229 crore for implementation of 500 tonnes per day Methanol Plant including their 11 MW Captive Power Plant at Namrup and 200 TPD Formalin Plant including their Captive 0.90 MW power plant at Boitamari in Assam State at an estimated project cost of Rs 1827 crore.

POWERGRID WORKSHOP HELD
NEW DELHI: On September 1 an interactive workshop was organised for awareness among the employees on the theme "Public Interest Disclosure and Whistleblower Protection Resolution, 2004" (PIDPR) as a part of Vigilance Awareness Week, 2023 at POWERGRID, Northern Region-1, RHQ, Faridabad Office.

ALCARAZ MOVES INTO US OPEN QUARTER-FINALS

AP ■ NEW YORK

Carlos Alcaraz stayed firmly on course to defend his US Open title on Monday as he reached the quarter-finals with a straight-sets win over Italy's Matteo Arnaldi.

Alcaraz eased past the 61st-ranked Arnaldi 6-3, 6-3, 6-4 under the roof on Arthur Ashe Stadium and will face 2020 runner-up Alexander Zverev for a place in the semi-finals.

Alcaraz has a 2-3 record against Zverev, who appears to be regaining his best form after a horror ankle injury at last year's French Open. "Against Sascha (Zverev), the head-to-head as well is really, really close. We've played great matches."

"He's playing really, really well. This year he's finding his top level again." Alcaraz is the first man to make the last eight or better in his first three US Open appearances since 1980.

The 20-year-old is bidding to become the first man since Roger Federer in 2008 to successfully defend the US Open after winning the title for the first time last year. "I put out all the pressure that people put on you, on the defending champions. I just delete it and focus on my own game," said Alcaraz.

He broke midway through the opening set and then twice in the second, stylishly charging into a two-set lead with a delicate forehand on the run past an outstretched Arnaldi. Arnaldi pounced on his first opportunity to break Alcaraz early in the third set only to see his advantage erased the following game.

Alcaraz ripped a sensational cross-court forehand to bring up three match points on Arnaldi's serve at 4-5 and closed out victory inside two hours.

"I think the intensity from the beginning until the last ball. I played a really solid match, less mistakes," said Alcaraz.

"I'm really happy with the performance in general."

Alcaraz had strapping around his left thigh for the first time in the tournament, but the top seed allayed any fears he was struggling with injury.

"It's really tough playing in a Grand Slam. You play tough



matches during two weeks. For me it's normal that some pains came to your body, and you have to take care about it," he said.

"It's nothing serious, it's just for prevention. I mean, I felt a little bit that pain on the left leg, but as I said nothing serious. Just taking care about it."

ZVEREV OUTDUELS SINNER

Alexander Zverev defeated Jannik Sinner in a late-night five-set US Open marathon to line up a quarter-final with defending champion Carlos Alcaraz.

German 12th seed Zverev outlasted Sinner 6-4, 3-6, 6-2, 4-6, 6-3 in a gruelling 4hr 41min match which finished at 1.39am local time Tuesday on a muggy night in New York.

Zverev claimed his second win over the sixth-seeded Italian in three years at Flushing Meadows and advanced to a third quarter-final here after the longest US Open match of his career.

"I guess I can say I'm back. This is what I live for, this is what I absolutely love to do," Zverev said in an on-court interview.

"Last year when I wasn't able to play this is exactly the kind of moments I missed."

Zverev, the 2020 US Open runner-up, missed last year's tournament after suffering a horror ankle injury at Roland Garros.

"I actually don't know how I managed that. I was completely done in the fourth set. I was extremely tired. In the fifth set

I somehow found it again," said Zverev. "This is one of the best moments of my career, after my comeback and everything. I'm looking forward to what comes next."

The 26-year-old Zverev has a 3-2 record against world number one Alcaraz, winning their only Grand Slam meeting in the 2022 French Open quarter-finals, and is regaining his best form. "I'm here to play. That's what I love doing. I don't know how it'll end up but I'll give it my absolute best like I always do," he said. "I'll fight till the last moment. I'll be ready."

MEDVEDEV VS RUBLEV

Daniil Medvedev will play Russian compatriot and close friend Andrey Rublev in the US Open quarter-finals after defeating Australian 13th seed Alex de Minaur in four sets on Monday.

Third seed Medvedev fought back from a set down to brush De Minaur aside 2-6, 6-4, 6-1, 6-2 as he bids to add a second US Open crown following his maiden Grand Slam title in New York two years ago.

"The conditions were some of the most brutal we've ever played," Medvedev said of the hot and humid conditions in Louis Armstrong Stadium.

"There was one moment where I thought I'm not going to be able to play until the end, it's so tough."

"But I looked across the net and noticed he was slowing down too, so I thought okay, I can do this."

The 27-year-old Medvedev, a winner of four hard-court titles this season, is through to the last eight of the US Open for the fourth time in five years.

He beat Rublev in straight sets at the same stage of the tournament in 2020 and holds a 5-2 record over his friend who is the godfather of his daughter Alisa, born in October last year.

"We're really close friends," said Medvedev. "Even if on the court we're big competitors... I think nothing is going to come between us to separate us in real life."

"We're really close. I mean, we share a lot of let's call it interests and stuff like this."

US Open fan ejected after Nazi anthem furore

AP ■ NEW YORK

A fan was ejected from the US Open on Monday after Germany's Alexander Zverev protested about the words of a Nazi-era anthem being shouted from the stands.

Zverev was serving in the fourth set of his last 16 victory over Italy's Jannik Sinner on the Arthur Ashe Stadium when the drama unfolded.

The 12th-seeded Zverev approached chair umpire James Keothavong to complain about the

alleged catcall.

"He just said the most famous Hitler phrase there is in this world," Zverev told the umpire. "This is unbelievable."

Keothavong consulted with security officials in an attempt to identify the culprit.

Eventually a man wearing a blue baseball cap was singled out and ordered to leave the arena.

Zverev later told reporters he had heard the fan singing the opening words of Germany's Nazi-era



anthem — "Deutschland Uber Alles". "He started singing the anthem of Hitler that was back in the day - Deutschland Uber Alles - it was a bit too much," Zverev said.

"He was getting involved in the match for a long time and I don't mind it. I love when fans are loud, I love when fans are emotional but I think me being German, and not really proud of that history, it's not really a great thing to do."

"And him sitting in one of the front rows, a lot of people heard it.

If I just don't react I think it's bad from my side."

Zverev however said he did not let the incident rattle him, and he duly went on to complete a memorable victory.

"Look for me it's not a very smart guy, the guy who did it," Zverev said. "At the end of the day I said what I said, the umpire said 'Okay we're going to get him out' and that's what he did."

"It's his loss because he didn't get to watch the final two sets."

Alexander-Arnold d Grealish ruled out of England duty due to injury issues

AP ■ LONDON

Jack Grealish and Trent Alexander-Arnold were forced to withdraw from the England squad for upcoming games against Ukraine and Scotland due to injury on Monday.

Grealish missed Manchester City's 5-1 win over Fulham on Saturday, while Alexander-Arnold was forced off with a hamstring problem after starring on Sunday in Liverpool's 3-0 victory over Aston Villa. "The pair reported to St. George's Park on Monday but have since withdrawn from the Three Lions squad following checks on injuries sustained prior to camp," the English Football Association said in a statement.

England face Ukraine in Wroclaw, Poland on Saturday in a Euro 2024 qualifier before taking on Scotland in a friendly to mark the 150th anniversary of the first fixture between the nations on September 12th in Glasgow. No player has been added to Gareth Southgate's squad.

The Three Lions are well on course to qualify for Euro 2024 after taking maximum points from their first four qualifiers.

Brazil drop Antony over ex-girlfriend assault claim

AP ■ SAO PAULO

Manchester United winger Antony was dropped from Brazil's squad for upcoming World Cup qualifying games on Monday following allegations of assault made against him by an ex-girlfriend.

The Brazilian Football Confederation (CBF) said in a statement that Antony had been stood down in order to "preserve the alleged victim, the player, the Brazil team and the CBF."

Arsenal forward Gabriel Jesus will replace Antony in the squad for the games against Bolivia on September 8 and Peru on September 12. Antony, 23, on Monday denied physically assaulting ex-girlfriend Gabriela Cavallin in a statement on Instagram, stating he was the "victim of false accusations."

"I can calmly affirm that the accusations are false, and that evidence already produced and that will be produced will show that I am innocent," Antony said.

The denial came after Brazilian press reports published WhatsApp messages reputedly between Antony and Cavallin in which the player allegedly threatens his ex-partner.

In one of the conversations



Antony then appears to reply "sorry" in response.

Cavallin is also shown in one photo with an apparent head wound. Antony said in his Instagram post that his relationship with Cavallin was "tumultuous, with verbal abuse on both sides."

However he denied assaulting her. "I never practiced physical aggression," he said.

"At each moment, she presents a different version of the accusations," Antony added. "I am confident that the ongoing police investigations will prove the truth," he concluded.

Sanchez, Ndombele leave Spurs for Galatasaray

AP ■ LONDON

Colombian international defender Davinson Sanchez has joined Galatasaray from Tottenham, the Premier League club confirmed on Monday as Tanguy Ndombele also signed for the Istanbul giants on loan.

Sanchez, 27, made 207 appearances for Spurs since

joining from Ajax for a then club record £42 million (\$53 million) in 2017.

He was also joined at the Turkish side by another Tottenham outcast Ndombele, the two teams announced.

The French midfielder had not featured for Spurs this season after spending last term on loan at Napoli, winning the Serie A title.

Sabalenka powers into US Open quarter-finals

AP ■ NEW YORK

Aryna Sabalenka celebrated her ascent to the pinnacle of women's tennis by powering into the quarter-finals of the US Open on Monday with a straight sets win over Russian Daria Kasatkina.

Sabalenka, who is guaranteed of becoming the new world number one next week following Iga Swiatek's fourth round exit on Sunday, cruised into the last eight with a 6-1, 6-3 victory over the 13th seed.

The Belarusian will play China's Zheng Qinwen on Wednesday for a place in the last four.

Sabalenka, who lost in the semi-finals of last year's US Open, is targeting her second Grand Slam title of the season after winning the Australian Open in January.

The 25-year-old from Minsk said after her win she was delighted to have secured the No.1 ranking — but admitted she would have preferred to have beaten Swiatek in the final in New York.

"Honestly I had no doubt she was going to make it to the final — I really wanted to have this battle with her and decide everything on court," Sabalenka said of outgoing No.1 Swiatek.

"I was sad she lost, but it means a lot to me. I've been pushing myself all this year to reach this goal. It's unbelievable, it's something crazy, I still can't believe it."

ZHENG BEATS JABEUR

Rising Chinese star Zheng Qinwen reached her first Grand Slam quarter-final on Monday at the US Open after knocking out last year's runner-up Ons Jabeur, describing it as a "breakthrough" win after enduring her share of frustration this sea-



son. The 20-year-old Zheng's blend of power and precision overwhelmed a weary Jabeur, her 6-2, 6-4 victory sending the 23rd seed through to a meeting with incoming world number one Aryna Sabalenka.

"Honestly the feeling was fantastic, especially in that moment. I feel this is like important win for me. Like you say, it's a breakthrough," said Zheng.

"I always been waiting this moment to happen. Honestly, at beginning of year I'm thinking it's going to happen very fast."

"Because I'm focusing that moment too much about the result and I lost little bit the patience of myself, that's affect a lot to my tennis part."

She earned the WTA newcomer of the year award in 2022, winning her debut at all four majors and making a run to the French

Open last 16 before losing in three sets to eventual champion Iga Swiatek.

But Zheng had won just two Grand Slam matches this season before carving out a bit of history in New York, where she and Wang Xinyu became the first two Chinese players to reach the fourth round at the same US Open.

While Wang lost to Roland Garros finalist Karolina Muchova on Sunday, Zheng became only the fourth Chinese woman to make the last eight at Flushing Meadows — following in the footsteps of Wang Qiang, Peng Shuai and Li Na.

Zheng is one of the "Li Na generation" of young players who took up tennis after the success of China's first Grand Slam singles champion, who won the French Open in 2011 when Zheng was eight.

Henderson 'sorry' for hurting LGBTQ community over Saudi move

AP ■ LIVERPOOL

England midfielder Jordan Henderson has apologised for upsetting the LGBTQ community with his move to Saudi Arabia but said playing in the Gulf state is a "positive thing".

The former Liverpool captain, a vocal supporter of gay rights, was fiercely criticised over his switch to the Saudi Pro League in July. Henderson, in an interview with The Athletic, said he could understand the frustration and anger directed towards him.

"There can be a lot of criticism, a lot of negativity around me as a person, and that was difficult to take" he said.

"But I just feel as though, because I do care about different causes that I've been involved in, and different communities... I do care. And for people to criticise and say that I'd turned my back on them really, really hurt me."

The Al-Ettifaq player added: "All I can say is that I apologise, I'm sorry that I've made them feel that way. But I haven't changed as a person."

Henderson said he would not rule out wearing rainbow laces to show support for LGBTQ people but added he would not "disrespect the religion and culture in Saudi Arabia".

And he argued that his move to the Gulf state, where he has been reunited with former Liverpool team-mate Steven Gerrard, who is manager of Al-Ettifaq, is "positive".

"People know what my values and values were before I left and still do now," he said. "And I think having someone with those views and values in Saudi Arabia is only a positive thing."

The 33-year-old, who was last week named in Gareth Southgate's England squad for upcoming internationals, denied that money was the incentive



behind his move.

He said eye-watering salary figures quoted in the press of £700,000 (\$879,000) a week were over-inflated.

"That was the hardest thing," he said. "People will see this club come with loads of money and he's just gone, 'Yeah, I'm going'. 'When in reality that just wasn't the case at all. People can believe me or not, but in my life and my career, money has never been a motivation. Ever."

Henderson said he had not felt "wanted" by Liverpool, who have overhauled their midfield, and was attracted by a new challenge.

"Stevie never mentioned money," he said. "Everything I spoke to Stevie about was football and the project. And he actually said he didn't want to get involved in any of the money stuff."

"It was all about what we could do together to achieve something special and build a club and build the league."

Spain's men's national team denounce Rubiales

AP ■ MADRID

Spain's men's national team on Monday denounced the "unacceptable behaviour" of the country's suspended football chief Luis Rubiales over his infamous World Cup kiss.

Rubiales, 46, has defied expectations and refused to resign as president of the Spanish football federation (RFEF) after forcibly kissing Jenni Hermoso on the lips following Spain's victory in the Women's World Cup.

Atletico Madrid's Alvaro Morata read out a statement on behalf of the entire team congratulating their female counterparts on "a historic" achievement. He said the men's team "expressed their solidarity with



the women players and deplored that their success had been tarnished" by Rubiales at the August 20 prize giving ceremony in Sydney.

Morata added: "We want to denounce the unacceptable behaviour of Mr Rubiales, who has not lived up to the institution he represents."

"We are firmly on the side of the values enshrined in sport."

"Spanish football should be the source of respect, inspiration, inclusivity and diversity, and should lead by example in its behaviour both on and off the pitch."

Hermoso has joined a mass strike of women players, saying she did not consent to the kiss.

Women players' union Futpro, Hermoso and 80 other players have said they would not accept an international call-up "if the current leadership continues" at the RFEF.

Rubiales has stood firm in refusing to stand down from his post "because of a little consensual kiss", provoking widespread indignation.

KL, Ishan find place in India's WC squad

PTI ■ PALLEKELE

The inclusion of wicket-keeper-batter KL Rahul, whose fitness was under scrutiny, headlined the announcement of India's 15-member World Cup squad on Tuesday, as the selectors strived for all-round balance.

Chief selector Ajit Agarkar said there was no concern about Rahul's fitness, though he did not travel to Sri Lanka for India's group stage Asia Cup matches.

Rahul is scheduled to reach Sri Lanka ahead of India's Super 4 matches, starting on September 9 against Pakistan.

Agarkar said the 31-year-old managed to prove his fitness at the NCA on both batting and wicket keeping counts.

The selectors also named Ishan Kishan as the second wicketkeeper-batter, and captain Rohit Sharma did not rule out the possibility of playing both Kishan and Rahul in the 11 if the situation warrants so.

The selection of both Rahul and Kishan meant that there was no place for Sanju Samson, who is currently in Sri Lanka as a travelling reserve for the Asia Cup.

Shreyas Iyer, who played against Pakistan in the Asia Cup, occupied one spot in the middle-order, and there was a two-way tie for the remaining position between Suryakumar Yadav and Tilak Varma.

However, Suryakumar was preferred over the youngster despite the former not having a good run in the ODIs.

The 32-year-old flourished in the three-match ODI series against West Indies recently, but the selectors took into account the Mumbaier's ability



to explode with the bat.

In view of the players who missed out on the selection such as Samson and Tilak, Rohit said the management at times will have to take tough calls for the benefit of the team.

"It is not a bad thing when people are fighting for their spots. The challenges increase and it (the selection) gets hard-

er. But we have to see who is in form, who the opposition is and which player can benefit the most in those circumstances.

"It happens all the time. We have seen in cricket that you have to make tough choices to ensure the team gets what it needs," said Rohit during the press conference to announce the India World Cup squad.

On the bowling front, the selectors went on expected lines picking up Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj and Mohammed Shami as three frontline pacers.

Bumrah has recently returned from a long injury lay-off during the T20I series against Ireland, and he is also a part of India's Asia Cup

squad.

However, pacer Prasidh Krishna could not find a place, though he might get a chance to show his wares in the ongoing Asia Cup.

Vice-captain Hardik Pandya and Shardul Thakur will give India the option of two more pacers.

As expected, India opted for left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav, Ravindra Jadeja and Axar Patel, the left-arm spinners, in the squad.

Hence, veteran leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal continued to be on the sidelines, while the absence of R Ashwin and Washington Sundar ensured that India will not have the services of an off-spinner during the World Cup.

Rohit said the decision to go ahead with Thakur and Axar aligned with the team's desire to attain as much balance as possible.

"We need to create that depth (in batting and bowling) as it was lacking in our team for the last few years. When we talk about depth in batting, that No. 9, No. 8 positions become very crucial," said Rohit.

The Indian captain also hoped that players like Thakur and Axar will be able to provide some crucial runs in the back-end of the innings which at times can be a deciding factor.

"In the first game here (against Pakistan) we saw that we fell short in the backend. We want tailenders to contribute too.

"Another 10-15 runs in that game would have made a difference. It is the margin between winning and losing. We have spoken to them and told them to don that role too in the WC," said Rohit.

The India squad: Rohit Sharma (Captain), Shubman Gill, Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, KL Rahul (wk), Ishan Kishan (wk), Suryakumar Yadav, Hardik Pandya (vice-captain), Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Kuldeep Yadav, Shardul Thakur, Mohammed Shami, Mohammed Siraj, Jasprit Bumrah.

Hardik's form will be crucial for us: Rohit on India's World Cup bid

PTI ■ PALLEKELE

India captain Rohit Sharma said on Tuesday that the form of Hardik Pandya will be crucial for the team in its attempt to win an elusive ICC trophy.

The premier all-rounder, who has been named vice-captain of the World Cup-bound squad, has been saddled with leadership duties at various levels.

Pandya had led India in the second and third ODIs against West Indies in the absence of rested Rohit and is also the leader of the side in the shortest format.

"His form will be crucial to us. He's a guy who does both the things (batting and bowling), and that's important.

"In the last year or so he has come up with the bat and his bowling has been good too. That's important for us," said Rohit after chief selector Ajit Agarkar named a 15-member squad for the mega event in India.

Rohit was also pleased with Pandya after the latter made a composed fifty in India's Asia Cup opener against Pakistan on Saturday here.

Pandya and Kishan constructed a century stand to rescue India from a precarious

position 66 for 4 and carried the team to 266 in a rain-marred match.

"You saw the quality in the last game against Pakistan. Ishan and Hardik put their hands up and scored well. Obviously, with bowling too he's great. He has bowled well in the last year and a half for us.

"The way he batted in the last game showed that he has a very mature head on his shoulders. These are good signs for us," said Rohit.

Rohit has not forgotten that India's record in the multi-nation tournaments is not up to the scratch in the last few years with the last ICC trophy coming way back in 2013.

But he hoped that the ODI format will give his side a bit of breathing space and a chance to comeback even if the start goes awry.

"The 50-over format is different, especially where you play nine league games and semifinals and finals -- 11 games. There's always chance for you to make a comeback.

"The format gives you more time to think about strategy and what you're going to execute as a team. You have lesser time in T20 format. Yes, the ODIs does give you a little more breathing space," said Rohit.

Dravid is among all time greats but he could never read me: Muralitharan

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Rahul Dravid features in Muttiah Muralitharan's list of great batters who could not find a way to read him.

Speaking at an event here on Tuesday, Sri Lankan legend Muralitharan said while several Indian batters including Sachin Tendulkar, Virender Sehwag and Gautam Gambhir read his bowling, current India head coach Dravid did not.

"He (Sachin Tendulkar) read me very well. Not many people can do (that). (Brian Lara had success but he never hit me also," Muralitharan said during the trailer launch trailer of his biopic titled '800'.

"I know a few people, like Rahul Dravid, he is one of the greatest players but he never read me. Sachin and (Virender Sehwag) and (Gautam Gambhir) would read. Even in my team some people read and some did not."

The legendary Tendulkar, who was present on the occasion, recalled his first meeting with the spin wizard.

"I remember meeting him for the first time in 1992-93, and we have continued to be good friends.

"He just loved bowling and the whole world knew he had a big turner. You make him bowl on an expressway and he would turn the ball. No matter how the surface is.



"He had developed the 'doosra' but spent a lot of time practicing it in the nets. For 18 months he continued practicing the 'doosra' in the nets before he bowled the first ball in international cricket. The reason for that was he should not lose his original strengths and the qualities that he possessed," Tendulkar added.

Muralitharan returned the compliment.

"What he (Sachin) has done in cricket, nobody can do. It is a fact. It is impossible for someone to get into First-Class cricket at 15 years, getting a Test hundred at 16-17 years (of age). Another Sachin Tendulkar won't be born in my life (time)," Muralitharan added.

Asia Cup 2023: Super Four, final matches to stay in Colombo

PTI ■ COLOMBO

The Asian Cricket Council (ACC) on Tuesday decided to keep the Asia Cup Super 4 and final matches in Colombo itself as the weather in the Sri Lankan capital has shown signs of improvement.

It has been speculated over the last few days that the Super 4 and final games of the Asia Cup could be shifted to Hambantota after heavy rains lashed Colombo.

The PTI has been informed

that the ACC held parleys with Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC), hosts Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) and the official broadcaster before arriving at the decision to keep the matches in Colombo itself.

The broadcaster too has explained the difficulties to relocate their equipment and staff to Hambantota, a deep Southern district, at such a short notice.

In fact, it was SLC who suggested Hambantota as an alternate venue for the five Asia Cup Super 4 matches and the final as



the city has been experiencing a drought over the last few weeks.

The Sri Lanka-leg of Super 4 will be started with a game

between India and Pakistan on September 10 at the R Premadasa Stadium.

This will be the second time India will take on Pakistan in the Asia Cup.

The league match between the two sides was rained off after India made 266 all out, courtesy fifties from Ishan Kishan and Hardik Pandya. The ACC also briefly dabbled with the idea of shifting the matches to Pallekele and Dambulla only to abandon it later.

While Pallekele too has

been experiencing heavy rains, the Rangiri International Stadium in Dambulla is under maintenance to install new floodlights and a few other facilities.

Both of India's group matches were affected by rain.

The much anticipated India-Pakistan clash at the Pallekele stadium in Kandy was called off after one innings due to heavy downpour on Saturday, while India's match against Nepal on Monday was also truncated due to rain.

Teams expressed concerns about playing ODIs in UAE heat: Jay Shah

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Asian Cricket Council (ACC) president Jay Shah on Tuesday attributed the body's decision to host Asia Cup matches in Sri Lanka on teams' reluctance to play ODIs in the UAE heat and abrupt changes at the top of Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB).

Shah defended the move after former PCB president Najam Sethi's recent comments in which he mentioned that during his tenure he had suggested that the 2023 Asia Cup be staged in the UAE instead of Sri Lanka, parts of which are experiencing heavy rainfall.

In a statement, Shah said: "The Asia Cup 2022 edition was played in the UAE in the T20 format. It's important to emphasize that the dynamics of



a T20 tournament cannot be directly compared to those of a 100-over One-day format.

"In this context, ACC members received feedback from their respective high-performance teams, expressing concerns about playing One-day matches in the UAE in the month of September. Such a

schedule could have potentially led to player fatigue and an increased risk of injuries, particularly right before the all-important ICC Cricket World Cup."

The ACC has come under criticism after fans were denied what could have been a thrilling finish to the highly-

anticipated match between India and Pakistan at Pallekele on Saturday. Incessant rain led to a washout of the second innings, leaving the two teams to share a point each.

"All the full members, media rights holder, and in-stadia rights holders were initially hesitant to commit to hosting the entire tournament in Pakistan. This reluctance stemmed from concerns related to the security and economic situation prevailing in the country," Shah said further.

"In my capacity as ACC President, I was committed to finding a viable and mutually agreeable solution. To this end, I had accepted the hybrid model that was proposed by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) in collaboration with the ACC management.

Najmul out of Asia Cup with injury

AP ■ LAHORE

Top-order batsman Najmul Hossain Shanto was ruled out of the remainder of the Asia Cup on Tuesday with a hamstring injury and faces a race to be fit for the World Cup.

Najmul is the leading scorer at the Asia Cup with 89 and 104 against Sri Lanka and Afghanistan respectively to help Bangladesh into the last four.

Najmul felt some discomfort in his left hamstring during his innings against Afghanistan in Lahore on Sunday, Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) said.

"The player had complained of hamstring pain during batting and could not field. We had an MRI scan

done confirming a muscle tear," team physio Bajjedul Islam Khan said.

"As a precaution, Shanto will not take any further part in the tournament and will be returning home to start rehab and prepare for the World Cup."

Najmul is Bangladesh's top run-scorer in 2023 across all formats with 1,078 runs, including four hundreds and five fifties.

News of his injury came a day after batsman Liton Das was declared fit to join the squad having recovered from a fever that forced him to miss the Asia Cup group-stage matches.

Bangladesh have also lost frontline seamer Ebadot Hossain while Mehdi Hasan Miraz retired hurt.

Proteas announce ODI WC squad

PTI ■ DURBAN

South Africa has announced their 15-member squad for the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023.

Cricket South Africa has named their 15-member playing squad for the marquee event, on Tuesday, 5 September, which will be led by their regular ODI skipper Temba Bavuma.

A notable name in South Africa's World Cup mix is right-arm pacer Gerald Coetzee, who made his international debut earlier this year. In his two ODI appearances to date, Coetzee has taken five wickets, including a three-wicket haul on his

ODI debut.

The squad comprises experienced batters such as Quinton de Kock, Reeza Hendricks, Heinrich Klaasen, Aiden Markram, David Miller, and Rassie van der Dussen.

The pace attack will be spearheaded by Kagiso Rabada and includes the likes of Anrich Nortje and Lungi Ngidi among other fast-bowling talents.

Given that the tournament is taking place in India, spinners are expected to play a vital role due to the suitable subcontinental conditions. South Africa boasts outstanding spinners in Keshav Maharaj and Tabraiz Shamsi, who are well-equipped to excel in this role.

De Kock to retire from ODIs after World Cup

PTI ■ JOHANNESBURG

South Africa wicketkeeper-batter Quinton de Kock will retire from ODI cricket after the upcoming 50-over World Cup in India. The announcement of de Kock's impending retirement from ODIs was made by Cricket South Africa (CSA) in 'X', formerly Twitter.

"Quinton de Kock has announced his retirement from ODI cricket following the conclusion of the ICC @cricketworldcup in India," the CSA wrote. De Kock's decision to retire came minutes after CSA named a 15-member South Africa squad for the World Cup, to be led by Temba Bavuma.

The 30-year-old de Kock stunned the cricketing world in December 2021 by announcing his sudden retirement from Test cricket, insisting that he wants to spend more time with his young family.

The left-handed batter was rested from the recently-concluded T20I series against Australia which South Africa lost 0-3.

But, he is expected to feature in the five-match ODI series against Australia, starting September 7. De Kock played 54 Tests and scored 3300 runs with a best knock of 141 not out. He also represented South Africa in 140 ODIs and 80 T20 Internationals, amassing 5966 and 2277 runs respectively.

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Former India cricketer Virender Sehwag on Tuesday urged the BCCI to have 'Bharat', instead of India, inscribed on the jerseys of the national team players in the upcoming ODI World Cup.

Sehwag tagged BCCI secretary Jay Shah and suggested that the players wear a jersey with Bharat written on it.

"I have always believed a name should be one which instills pride in us. We are Bhartiya, India is a name given by the British and it has been

long overdue to get our original name 'Bharat' back officially.

"I urge the BCCI (secretary) Jay Shah to ensure that in this World Cup our players have Bharat on our chest," Sehwag posted on X. In another post, he wrote, "Team India nahin #TeamBharat. This World Cup as we cheer for Kohli, Rohit, Bumrah, Jaddu, may we have Bharat in our hearts and the players wear jersey which has 'Bharat' @JayShah."

Sehwag, a swashbuckling opener of his time, also cited examples of other nations who had changed their names.

"In the 1996 World Cup, Netherlands came to play in the World Cup in Bharat as Holland. In 2003, when we met them, they were 'The Netherlands and continue to be so. Burma have changed the name given by the British back to Myanmar. And many others have gone back to their original name," he added in another tweet.

It has been reported that the central government is considering changing India's name to 'Bharat' in the special session of Parliament which is scheduled from September 18 to 22.