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**NARUKA BAGS
SILVER IN
MEN'S SKEET
11 SPORT**

NIA tightens noose on Khalistanis

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

In a multi-State clampdown against Khalistanis and the terrorists-gangsters-drug smugglers syndicate, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Wednesday conducted synchronised raids in several places and detained a number of suspects linked to Canada-based "listed terrorist" Arsh Dalla and his cohorts, including dreaded gangsters. Dalla is operating his cartel through a network of gangsters in India.

A total of 53 locations were raided during the day-long operation, which started early on Wednesday. State Police forces provided the necessary support and assistance in the raids.

The search operation spanned the six States of Punjab, Delhi, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand and the Union Territory of Chandigarh.

During the raids, the NIA seized pistols, ammunition, large numbers of digital devices and incriminating materials.

Besides Arsh Dalla, others covered in the NIA raids are notorious gangsters Lawrence Bishnoi, Sukha Duneke, Harry Maur, Narender alias Lali, Kala Jatheri and Deepak Tinu among others.

The searches follow a recent intelligence input against gangster Lawrence Bishnoi, a criminal mastermind with a notorious track record, who has

been linked to several high-profile crimes, including the murder of renowned Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala and threats issued against Bollywood actors Salman Khan, officials said.

Recent intelligence inputs suggest an alarming development in Bishnoi's illicit activities suggesting he has established a direct line of communication with Nasir Khan, an operative of Pakistan Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).

"The connection suggests that Bishnoi and his gang might be diversifying their criminal portfolio by procuring weapons with the help of Pakistan Intelligence Operatives (PIOs) and making use of these weapons for furthering gangster activities in the region," reads the Intelligence report.

Bishnoi's gang is notorious for involvement in extortion and killings but the recent revelation of links with Pakistan-based entities suggests a "strategic shift in the gang's operational focus."

"The gang's involvement in arms smuggling represents a significant escalation in their criminal activities and poses a considerable risk to the nation's security. The potential backing by Pakistan ISI operatives also indicates a concerning overlap between organised crimes and geopolitical adversaries, enhancing the threat profile of Bishnoi's operations," the report warned.

The latest round of search-



Police personnel outside a residential premises during a raid by National Investigation Agency in Dehradun on Wednesday PTI

es were the seventh in the series of such crackdowns launched by NIA following the registration of five cases since August 2022, including the two new cases registered against Organised Criminal Gangs in July 2023. The cases relate to conspiracies of targeted killings, terror funding of pro-Khalistan outfits and extortion by the gangsters, many of whom are lodged in various jails or are operating from various foreign countries, including Canada, Pakistan, Malaysia, Portugal and Australia and the United States among others, officials said.

"The focus of today's raids, aimed at dismantling the terror-gangster-drug smuggler nexus, was on weapon suppliers, financiers and logistics providers associated with various hardcore gangs and their operatives. These gangs are working with drug smugglers and terrorists based out of other countries, including Pakistan, the UAE, Canada, Portugal, etc," the NIA said in a statement.

NIA investigations so far have revealed that the conspiracies under investigation were being hatched in jails of different States and were being ex-

ecuted by an organised network of operatives based abroad. Notable among such conspiracies were the sensational killing of Maharashtra builder Sanjay Biyani, mining trader Mehal Singh and international Kabaddi player Sandeep Nangal Ambia in Punjab last year.

Many of the criminals and gangsters who were earlier leading gangs in India have fled abroad in recent years and are now pursuing their terror and violence related activities from there, the NIA probe has unraveled.

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Extrajudicial killing is not India's policy: Jaishankar

PTI ■ NEW YORK

In the wake of Canada's allegations about India's "potential" involvement in the killing of a Khalistani separatist on its soil, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said that New Delhi conveyed to Ottawa that it is not the Government of India's policy and it is open to looking at "specific" and "relevant" information in the case.

Jaishankar made the comments in a conversation at the Council on Foreign Relations in New York on Tuesday after addressing the UN General Assembly session.

"Yes, I do have a comment. I will share with you very frankly what we told the Canadians," Jaishankar said when asked if he had any comment on recent allegations by Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau that "agents" of the Government of India are linked to the killing of Khalistani extremist Hardeep Singh Nijjar on Canadian soil on June 18.

"One, we told the Canadians that this is not the Government of India's policy," Jaishankar said.

"Two, we told the

Canadians saying that look, if you have something specific, if you have something relevant, let us know. We are open to looking at it," Jaishankar said while responding to a question from former US Ambassador to India and CFR Distinguished Fellow Kenneth Juster, in his first public comments on the issue.

Jaishankar asserted that one must also understand the context because the "picture is not complete" without the context of it.

"You also have to appreciate that in the last few years, Canada actually has seen a lot of organised crime relating to the secessionist forces, organised crime, violence, extremism. They're all very, very deeply mixed up," he said.

"We have actually been badgering the Canadians, we have given them a lot of information about organised crime leadership, which operates out of Canada. There are a large number of extradition requests. There are terrorist leaders who have been identified," he said, adding that one has to understand that there is an "environment out there," he said.

"That is important in a way

to factor in if you have to understand what is going on out there. And our concern is that it is really been very permissive because of political reasons. So, we have a situation where actually our diplomats are threatened, our consulates have been attacked and often comments are made about 'there is interference in our politics'. And, a lot of this is often justified as saying, well, that is how democracies work," Jaishankar said.

When asked by Juster whether the Government of India will cooperate with Canada if there are specific pieces of evidence provided to it, Jaishankar said, "If somebody gives me something specific, it doesn't have to be restricted to Canada, but if there is any incident which is an issue and somebody gives me something specific, as a government I would look at it. Of course, I would look at it."

When asked about reports that intelligence about the killing was shared amongst the Five Eyes, Jaishankar said, "I'm not part of the Five Eyes. I'm certainly not part of the FBI. You are asking the wrong person."

Cracks in INDIA Bloc

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ NEW DELHI

A "difference of opinion" has surfaced in the Opposition INDIA bloc over the venue for its fourth meeting. The Congress is insistent that the meeting should take place in a city within the poll-bound States of Madhya Pradesh or Chhattisgarh.

However, INDIA bloc parties like the Samajwadi Party, the JD(U), the NCP, and others are advocating for the meeting to be held in Delhi, sources said.

According to sources, the Samajwadi Party has cited their reasons for the choice of venue, arguing that it should not create an impression that the Congress, as the grand old party, is attempting to assume an elder brother role in the Opposition alliance.

The Congress sources have refuted this argument, emphasising that any victory by a member of the coalition will undoubtedly bolster and contribute to the success of the INDIA bloc.

The Opposition bloc has so far conducted three meetings with the first at Patna, coordinated by senior JD(U) leader and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, followed by Bengaluru where the Congress wrested power from the BJP this year,

and then at Mumbai under arrangements by the MVA alliance partners — the Congress, the NCP and the Shiv Sena.

During the alliance's meeting in Mumbai, there was a general consensus that the forthcoming gathering of the INDIA bloc should take place in Bhopal, coinciding with the inaugural joint public rally featuring leaders from various Opposition parties.

In the first coordination meeting of the INDIA bloc, the discussion revolved around organising the third meeting in the national Capital, with coordination led by AAP convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal.

However, soon after the coordination committee meeting at NCP leader Sharad Pawar's residence in Delhi where it was announced that a joint rally will be held at Bhopal, it stood cancelled at the backdrop of massive controversy over the Sanatan Dharma row fuelled by its alliance partner DMK leaders.

"The modalities and date of the meeting are yet to be finalised, however, it is likely that it can be held sometime in the first fortnight of October. Delhi was also considered among the venues in the last meeting but Bhopal remains the preferred one for many

leaders," said a top Congress source.

In Madhya Pradesh, the Congress emerged victorious in the previous Assembly elections and held the Government for a year and a half.

However, it faced a setback when a faction of its party MLAs defected to the BJP, resulting in the formation of a new Government. The State is set to hold elections later this year, alongside neighbouring Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan, both of which currently have Congress-led Governments.

Just as the Samajwadi Party and the JD(U) expressed their dissatisfaction with the media boycott call by the INDIA bloc, these same parties are now opposing the Congress' initiative to host the fourth meeting in the Lake City of Madhya Pradesh. The alliance members believe that the grand old party has a stronger electoral advantage in the Assembly polls there.

"The Congress attitude is still the elder brother type. They did in the media boycott call and we had to rally behind it," a JD(U) leader told *The Pioneer* over phone from Patna.

Already Nitish seems to be increasingly out of sync with the RJD on its "backward versus forward" politics.

See Page 4: INDIA Bloc in tatters in Bengal

Shooters do India proud

PTI ■ HANGZHOU

Young star Sift Kaur Samra stole the show with a gold medal in the women's 50m rifle 3 position event as Indian shooters set the range ablaze by securing as many as seven medals at the Asian Games here on Wednesday.

In the same event, Ashi Chouksey, who was in contention for a silver, settled for bronze with a score of 451.9, while Esha Singh claimed silver in the women's 25m pistol event with a total of 34.

On her way to silver, Esha upstaged her senior Manu Bhaker who finished a disappointing fifth after topping the qualification.

Samra produced some excellent shooting to claim the yellow metal with a world and games record score of 469.6. She also became the first Indian shooter to win gold in rifle 3 position.

Earlier, the triumvirate of Bhaker, Esha and Rhythm Sangwan fired in tandem to shoot the gold medal in the women's 25m pistol team event, as Indian shooters dominated proceedings at the Hangzhou Shooting Range Hall.

In the day's last shooting final, Anant Jeet Singh Naruka claimed the silver medal in



Shooter Sift Kaur Samra poses for photos with her gold medal during the presentation ceremony of the women's 50m rifle 3 positions event at the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou in China on Wednesday PTI

men's skeet event, adding to the team bronze he won alongside Angad Vir Singh Bajwa and Gurjoat Khangura.

Naruka finished his last round with 10/10 to end his event with an impressive 58/60 but it was still not good enough

for gold as Kuwait's Abdullah Alrashidi equalled the world record with a perfect 60/60 to finish on top of the podium.

Nasser Al-Attiya of Qatar bagged the bronze with 46. Manu, Esha and Rhythm totalled 1759 to finish on top of

the podium and help the country clinch its fourth gold medal in the ongoing sporting extravaganza. This was the second gold medal for India in shooting in these Games.

Meanwhile, the Indian team of Angad Vir Singh



Bajwa, Gurjoat Khangura and Anant Jeet Singh Naruka bagged the team bronze medal in the men's skeet event.

The trio shot a total of 355 to settle for the third position. The hosts China won the gold medal while Qatar claimed the silver.

The Indian women's team, however, crashed out of the skeet event by finishing in the fourth position behind Kazakhstan, China and Thailand.

In the women's 3P event, host nation China's Qiongyue Zhang crashed what could have been an India one-two, by winning the silver with a score of 462.3.

Before her triumph in the final, Samra broke the Asian Games record in qualification with a total score of 594 (out of 600) along with China's Xia Siyu, who finished on top by virtue of higher inner 10 scores (closer to the centre of the target.)

Continued on Page 2

Canada's weird reasons on India travel advisory

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

During Justin Trudeau's tenure, Canada has taken a diplomatic disagreement with India to an unprecedented level. The Canadian Government has provided peculiar explanations to its citizens, urging them to exercise caution when visiting India.

The reasons — strange and exaggerated — include extreme weather conditions, frequent train accidents, forced marriages, incidents of rape and sexual assaults in yoga centres and ashrams, as well as the overall poor road conditions across the country.

This travel demarche has been issued at a time when India and Canada find themselves entangled in a diplomat-

ic dispute over the killing of Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar in Canada.

"Forced marriage affecting foreigners occurs, sometimes without the affected person's prior knowledge or consent and some Canadians have been forced into marital arrangements and have been detained against their will," reads the advisory.

"They have been subjected to threats, intimidation and violence by family members," claimed the advisory uploaded on Canada's official website travel.gc.ca.

Highlighting women's safety issue, it warned that reports of rape and assault against foreign women have increased. "You should be particularly vigilant in Delhi, Goa, and at

yoga centres, ashrams and other places of spiritual retreats. If you are travelling to India to meet someone you have other- wise only met online, you may be the victim of a scam," it warned.

"Be alert to attempts at fraud by persons who profess friendship or romantic interest over the internet," it said. "Crimes committed against women frequently occur in India. Foreign women are often the target of unwanted attention. Staring, verbal abuse, groping, and other forms of sexual harassment can occur anywhere, including in tourist sites and areas. Attackers sometimes act in a group," it said, adding, credit card and ATM frauds also occur.

According to the advisory,

India is prone to extreme weather events such as avalanches, cyclones, dust storms, earthquakes, floods, landslides and extreme temperatures that can occur in both spring and summer.

Advising people to limit their activities outdoors, the advisory said smoke haze and other types of air pollution can be extremely hazardous in urban areas and cities like Delhi.

"It is typically at its worst in winter. In rural areas, air quality can be affected by agricultural burning. Dust storms also occur across northern India," it said.

The advisory further said demonstrations/mass gatherings, general strikes, "bandh" or "hartal," take place frequently.

"Even peaceful demonstrations can turn violent at any time. They can also lead to disruptions to traffic and public transportation. Stampedes have occurred during mass gatherings, including religious ceremonies, and resulted in deaths and injuries. Local authorities may impose curfews and other restrictions at short notice. Avoid areas where demonstrations and large gatherings are taking place," it advised.

The advisory also cautioned that road conditions and road safety are poor throughout the country. Most roads, including major highways, are poorly maintained.

"There is severe traffic congestion. Driving conditions may be hazardous during the rainy season, and some roads

can become impassable. India has an extensive passenger train system. Rail accidents are common, mostly due to poor maintenance. Thefts are frequent on certain train lines," it said.

The advisory warns people against travelling to States like Gujarat, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home State, Punjab and Rajasthan, which share borders with Pakistan, due to presence of "landmines".

The advisory said petty crime, such as pick-pocketing and purse snatching, is common.

"Criminals may target foreigners, especially in major cities and tourist areas. Petty crime frequently occurs on public transportation and overnight trains, it said.

However, serious crime against foreigners is less frequent, but incidents do occur, it cautioned.

The Canada Government advisory also warned that tourist areas and airports are of particular concern where scammers particularly target foreigners.

"Scams involving the exportation of jewels, gemstones, carpets, and other items have occurred. Taxi drivers may approach you, offering money to export such items," it said.

Amid the diplomatic row over the killing of Nijjar, Canada has further updated its travel advisory for its citizens in India to "remain vigilant and exercise caution".

Tensions flared between

the two countries after Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's explosive allegations of a "potential" involvement of Indian agents in the killing of Khalistani extremist Nijjar, 45, on his country's soil on June 18 in British Columbia. India had designated Nijjar as a terrorist in 2020.

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

New Delhi also announced temporarily suspending issuance of visas to Canadian citizens in view of "security threats" faced by its High Commission and consulates in Canada.

Hire doorstep officers to assist infirm pensioners: Govt to banks

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

With reports of several pensioners in their late nineties, immobile or bedridden and hence facing difficulty in visiting the facilities to collect their pensions, the Centre has woken to the cause and directed the pension disbursing banks to depute doorstep executives to such pensioners submit their life certificates.

All pensioners have to give a life certificate (proof that they are alive) annually to continue receiving pension. There are about 69.76 lakh Central Government pensioners.

An order issued by the Department of Pension and Pensioners' Welfare (DoPPW) also asked all banks to create awareness about the convenience of obtaining the life certificate digitally by using the face authentication technology by super senior pensioners (those aged 80 and above).

In view of the digital life certificate through face authentication technology, it is now possible for every citizen to submit a digital life



certificate (DLC) either from home using an Android smartphone or at the bank branch, said the order dated September 25.

"It is suggested that all banks may utilise the various platforms for creating awareness of the convenience of obtaining a life certificate by using the face authentication technology," it said.

Banks can facilitate the submission of life certificates by deputing doorstep banking executives, said the order. They can widely publicise the methodology for submitting DLC by pasting information posters at branches

and ATMs, it added.

Banks may send SMS/emails/WhatsApp messages to the pensioner with a link to the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for face authentication to empower the super senior pensioner to submit their life certificate through face authentication technology using their Android phone, the order said.

The DoPPW has also asked the banks to circulate the SOP on DLC through face authentication via email among their concerned officials to enable them to get familiar with the usage of this

technology.

"Necessary instructions may be issued to all the bank branches to make suitable arrangements for submission of life certificates by the super senior pensioners/family pensioners aged 80 and above from 1st October of every year," the order said.

The Centre had in 2019 asked banks to allow senior pensioners aged 80 and above to give their life certificates with effect from October 1 every year instead of November. The remaining pensioners below the age of 80 years have to give their life certificate in November.

Navy to unveil updated 'indigenisation roadmap'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

With special stress on self-reliance, the Indian Navy will unveil an updated new "indigenisation roadmap" next week with a focus on specific initiatives to achieve self-reliance in acquiring various critical technologies and platforms to boost its overall military might.

The roadmap will be released at the second edition of the annual 'Swavlamban' seminar to be held on October 4 and 5, Navy officials said on Wednesday. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to attend the conclave.

At a media briefing, Vice Chief of the Naval Staff Vice Admiral Sanjay Jasjit Singh said the Navy resolved to develop 75 technologies at the Swavlamban seminar last year and the aim has been achieved.

"Last year, in the presence of the Prime Minister, the Indian Navy had committed to develop at least 75 technologies as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav," he said.

The Vice Chief said the Navy has invested considerable time and efforts towards realising this commitment. "Today, I can say with confidence that



the Swavlamban initiative has gained critical mass, and is gathering continuous momentum. And, I am happy to inform you that the promises made last year have been fully met, and even surpassed in some cases," he said. These technologies will be showcased during the upcoming Swavlamban seminar.

An updated "Indian Navy indigenisation roadmap", a document titled 'Swavlamban 2.0' and new challenges for the industry are planned to be released at the seminar, said another senior official.

The Navy will showcase the new technologies that include swarm drones of various categories as well as applications of robotics and artificial intelligence at the seminar. Vice Admiral Singh said over the past year, each and every proposal received by the Navy has been examined, processed and pursued by dedicated teams of

officers to ensure that the force has an array of "trials cleared products", which are consequently ready, or nearly-ready, for induction.

"We have already obtained Acceptance of Necessity for 12 such cases, worth close to 1500 Crores, and procurement orders for products worth 200 crore amongst these have already been signed. In the coming weeks, we are looking to conclude many more such contracts," he said.

The Navy is encouraging development of new products under the 'Sprint' initiative that was launched at the Naval Innovation and Indignation Organisation (NIO) Seminar in July last year.

These products are being developed under the innovation scheme of the Ministry of Defence and Technology Development Acceleration Cell of Indian Navy.

Shooters do India...

From Page 1
Chouksey had a total of 590 and qualified in sixth position. Manini Kaushik finished 18th with a score of 580. The trio of Samra, Chouksey and Manini claimed the team silver in the women's 50m rifle 3 position event with a total score of 1764 in the qualification.

In the pistol qualification, Manu topped the qualification after finishing the last rapid-fire series with 98.

In the women's 25m pistol, the Chinese bagged the team silver with 1756, while the shooters from South Korea settled for the third position with 1742.

They claimed the top prize minutes after the trio of Chouksey, Manini and Samra combined to shoot a total of 1764 points in the qualification and finish second on the podium in women's 50m rifle 3 position event.

Hosts China won the gold with an aggregate score of 1773, while South Korea bagged the bronze with a total score of 1756.

Samra and Chouksey qualified for the finals as well by finishing second and sixth respectively, while Kaushik bowed out in the individual event by finishing 18th.

Drunk loco pilot on phone crashes train into platform

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Use of mobile phone by a drunk loco pilot caused a train accident on Tuesday at Mathura Railway Station averting a major mishap by the Delhi bound EMU local.

A joint report of train incident, in which an electric multiple unit (EMU) train broke the buffer dead end and entered platform number 2, has found that the staffer was watching his mobile phone while handling the train and was mildly drunk and five staffer have been suspended in this regard.

The report, according to the sources, while narrating the prima facie reason of the incident, said that according to the Crew Voice & Video Recording System, after the train arrived at the platform, a staffer named Sachin entered the DTC cab (engine) while watching his mobile phone.



It said while carelessly putting his bag on the throttle of the engine, he again got busy on his mobile. The throttle, due to the pressure of the bag, went into forward position and let the EMU move towards the platform. "It broke the dead end of the platform and half of the coach climbed onto the elevated portion of platform number 2, leading to breakdown of OHE (overhead wire)."

The report also said that a breathalyzer test conducted on Sachin showed a reading of 47

mg/100 ml which is considered to be mildly drunk. "He has been sent for a medical test in which his blood sample will be taken to find out the exact level of alcohol consumption," a source from the Agra Railway Division, said.

DRM Tej Prakash Agrawal suspended five persons including Sachin in connection with the incident. Of the other four, Harbhajan Singh, Brajesh Kumar, and Kuljeet are technical staff and Govind Hari Sharma is a loco pilot.

91 Indian varsities make it to World University Rankings

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A record 91 Indian universities have made it to the World University Rankings announced by the Times Higher Education (THE) magazine, with the top performing Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore, returning to the global 250 for the first time since 2017.

Ninety-one Indian universities in the list is a significant increase from last year's 75 even though top Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) boycotted the rankings for the fourth consecutive year.

India has also become the fourth best represented nation in the 2024 rankings, up from the sixth last year.

According to the rankings announced by the London-based THE magazine on Wednesday, the second best performing universities in India are: Anna University, Jamia Millia Islamia, Mahatma



Gandhi University, Shoolini University of Biotechnology and Management Sciences. The are all in the 501-600 band.

Two IITs — the Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati and Indian Institute of Technology (Indian School of Mines) Dhanbad — moved up two bands to join the world's top 800 universities, from 1001-1200 to 601-800.

While Anna University in Chennai moved up from 801-1000 band last year to the 501-600 band, Aligarh Muslim University moved up from the 801-1000 band last year to the 601-800.

IAS officer Rinku who emptied stadium to walk her dog forced retired

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 1994-batch AAGMUT (Arunachal Pradesh-Goa-Mizoram and

the athletes informed the media that they used to train until 8.30 pm. However, due to the IAS couple's orders, they were forced to

Union Territory) cadre officer, Rinku Dugga — posted as Principal Secretary, Indigenous Affairs in Arunachal Pradesh — has been compulsorily retired by the Government.

Dugga, who along with her IAS husband Sanjeev Khirwar, who is also 1994 batch officer, had come under intense criticism last year when in May it had come to light that the bureaucrats had ordered for the athletes practising on the tracks to vacate the facility as their dog had to be taken on a walk.

The VVIP culture had come under heavy criticism from the people and the government had also taken note of the incident.

When this news surfaced,

wrap up their training by 7 pm, which caused disruptions to their routines. Khirwar had initially denied the allegations, stating that they were "absolutely incorrect."

According to sources, the orders were issued to compulsorily retire IAS officer Rinku Dugga on the basis of her "track record."

Dugga has been retired compulsorily under the Fundamental Rules (FR) 56(j), Rule 48 of Central Civil Services (CCS) Pension Rules, 1972 after an assessment of her service record, the sources said.

The Government has the right to retire any Government servant "if it is of the opinion that it is in the public interest to do so," they said.

NDMC to set up 350 EV charging points

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) has decided to set up 350 public electric vehicle charging points.

The NDMC, in its Council Meeting, also discussed the framing and amendment of Recruitment Rules (RRs) for different posts in the civic body.

"The indicative scope of work for setting up Public EV charging stations includes selective quantities/locations for installation of Public EV charging stations that will be provided to the PSUs in the initial stage.

"Further allocation of quantities/locations will be decided by the NDMC considering the performance para-

meters delivered by the PSUs," NDMC vice-chairman Satish Upadhyay said.

Collaborating with the PSUs on promoting electric vehicles, including two-wheelers, in the NDMC area was also approved by the council, he said.

The NDMC approved the signing of MoU between the NDMC and HLL Infra Tech Services Ltd., Rajasthan Electronics & Instruments Limited (REIL) and Kerala State Electronics Development Corporation Limited (KELTRON) for setting up of public charging related infrastructure pertaining to National Electric Mobility Program in NDMC, he added.

There are 100 public EV charging stations in the NDMC



area already. NDMC member Kuljeet Singh Chahal said the entire investment in the installation, operation, and maintenance of EV charging stations shall be borne by PSUs.

"NDMC shall provide space, electricity connection and all other clearance to the PSUs for the installation of EV charging infrastructure. All PSUs shall give as land rental of ₹1 per unit against energy

consumption for charging of e-vehicle to NDMC, apart from the electricity bill," Chahal said.

Additional revenue shall be generated through outdoor advertisement on public EV charging stations, which will be shared between NDMC and the PSUs i.e. 60 per cent for NDMC and 40 per cent for PSUs.

Chahal also alleged Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, who is also a member of the NDMC, has not attended three consecutive council meetings on July 27, August 23 and September 27.

"An advice is being sought from the law department to get the seat of Kejriwal vacated as member, NDMC as per Section 8 of the NDMC Act due to not attending three consecutive

meetings," he added. Despite being an MLA of New Delhi constituency, Kejriwal remains absent from such meetings and is not taking any interest, Chahal said.

If the law department advises so, a proposal to cancel Kejriwal's seat will be moved in the next council meeting, he said. No immediate reaction was received from either the Delhi government or the Aam Aadmi Party on the matter.

The NDMC also passed a special vote of thanks to acknowledge the successful organisation of the G20 Summit.

During the meeting, a proposal to ensure that the services of contractual workers continue till they attain the age of 60 was also approved.

India-China relations have been in 'abnormal state' since Galwan clash, says Jaishankar

PTI ■ NEW YORK

Relations between India and China have been in an "abnormal state" since the 2020 Galwan clash and it is a "possibly longer than medium-term issue", External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said here.

If the two biggest countries of the world have that degree of tension between them, "it has consequences for everybody else", he asserted during a conversation at the Council on Foreign Relations to a question about India-China relations.

"You know, one of the pleasures of dealing with China is that they never quite tell you why they do things. So you

often end up trying to figure it out. And it's always, there's certain ambiguity out there," Jaishankar said.

"It is very hard to try to be normal with a country which has broken agreements and which has done what it has done. So if you look at the last three years, it's a very abnormal state," the minister added.

"Contacts have been disrupted, visits are not taking place. We have of course this high level of military tension. It has also impacted the perception of China in India," he said.

"So I think there's both an immediate issue, as well as a medium-term issue, possibly longer than medium-term issue out there," Jaishankar said.

The External Affairs Minister outlined a historical perspective on the relations between Delhi and Beijing, adding that it has never been easy.

"It's had a war in 1962. It's had military incidents after that. But after 1975, there's never been a combat fatality on the border, 1975 was the last time," he said, adding that in 1988, India normalised the relationship more when then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi went to China.

Jaishankar further pointed out that in 1993 and 1996, India made two agreements with China to stabilise the boundary, which is disputed. "So there's a negotiation going on."

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of our client that Mrs. Sunila Bhatia is owner of Entire First Floor without roof rights, (the said floor), Built on Property bearing No. C-12711, Old No.12711 & Built on Plot No.711, admeasuring 100 Sq. Yds, out of Khata No.3052/12 min. & Khata No.2053, Situated at Gali No.3, Ganesh Nagar-II, in the area of Village Shekarpur Khos, Delhi-110092. "Said Property" by virtue of Sale Deed dt. 27.02.2023, having registration No.1480, executed by Mr. Rajeev Chak & Mr. Rav. Chak. All persons are hereby informed that above mentioned owner want to sell entire First floor without roof rights of the said property and someone want to purchase the same by taking Home loan from our client, if anybody has any objections upon the said property/floor, he/she sale & mortgage & ownership of Mrs. Sunila Bhatia, kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 10 days of the present.

Office of the Superintending Engineer
3rd Circle, Public Works Department, Pithoragarh
Email : sepwdp@rediffmail.com

Letter No. : 5913 / 984 C-03 (Yata 'A')/2023 Dated : 27/09/2023

National Competitive Short Term E-Tender Notice
The Superintending Engineer 3rd Circle, Public Works Department Pithoragarh invites tender through E-Tendering (Two Bid System) on behalf of "Hon'ble Governor of Uttarakhand" for following Road Safety works. All other information will be available from date 04-10-2023 at 5.00 PM onward on website <http://www.uktenders.gov.in>

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Earnest Money (in Lac)	Cost of Tender (Rs.)	Validity of Tender (day)	Period of Completion (months)	Contractor's Category of Registration
1	Provincial Division PWD Pithoragarh Installation of Crash barrier, Parapets, Delinators, Sign boards etc. on Devalthal-Kanalichina Motor road (16.00 km) of Block Kanalichina District Pithoragarh under Road Safety.	4.65	5000+ 18% GST	120	06	Category 'B' & Above for Road works in any State Govt./ Govt. of India/Govt. undertaking.
2	Provincial Division PWD Pithoragarh Installation of Crash barrier, Parapets, Delinators, Sign boards etc. on Pithoragarh Jhulaghat Motor road (SH-98) (34.00 km) in District Pithoragarh under Road Safety.	3.18	5000+ 18% GST	120	06	Category 'B' & Above for Road works in any State Govt./ Govt. of India/Govt. undertaking.

Note :- Tender should be registered in category as above and shall fulfill the conditions as mentioned in Engineer in Chief, PWD, Uttarakhand office order no. 380/02- /2017-20 Dated 31-08-2020.

NIA tightens noose...

From Page 1

"These criminals have been engaged in planning and commissioning serious crimes, including contract and revenge killings, in association with criminals lodged in jails across India. These groups have been carrying out targeted killings and raising funds for attacks and other nefarious activities through smuggling of drugs and weapons, hawala and extortions," the agency further said.

The spotlight on these gangs has become sharper after reports of several prisons becoming havens of the newly resurged in violence and murder inside Goindwal jail in Punjab. Some of the locations where raids were conducted during the day included: Amritsar, Morga, Fazilka, Ludhiana, Mohali, Faridkot, Barnala, Bhatinda, Ferozepur, SAS Nagar, Amritsar and Jalandhar districts of Punjab.

In Haryana, the searches were conducted in Rohtak, Sirsa, Fatehabad and Faridabad districts. Likewise, Sri Ganga Nagar, Jhunjhunu, Hanumangarh and Jodhpur districts of Rajasthan were covered in the search operation. Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh, Dehradun

and Udhamsingh Nagar districts of Uttarakhand besides the South-east district of Delhi/ NCR (National Capital Region) and Chandigarh were also part of the coordinated action against the Khalistani terrorists and the terrorist-gangsters-drug cartel.

NIA had earlier conducted similar raids at over 370 locations, leading to seizure of 38 arms, including four lethal weapons, along with 1,129 rounds of ammunition.

Till now, the NIA has frozen 87 bank accounts and attached 13 properties, besides seizing 331 devices, 418 documents and two vehicles.

Two absconders have been declared as designated individual terrorists, and 15 accused declared as Proclaimed Offenders and Interpol Red Corner Notices (RCNs) issued against nine others as a result of NIA's concerted efforts to destroy and dismantle the deadly nexus between terrorists like Dalla and dead-end gangsters and drug smugglers. Further investigations are on to dismantle such terror, violence and extortion networks as well as their funding and support infrastructure, the agency added.

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS

CHANGE OF NAME

I, TOSID S/O MEHANDI HASAN R/O H.NO. R-185/4 GALI NO.9 RAMESH PARK LAXMI NAGAR DELHI-110092, have changed my name from Tousif to Tosid for all future purposes.

PD(169)A

CBI to probe CM's residence renovation irregularities

RAKESH K SINGH ■
NEW DELHI

In fresh trouble to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, the CBI has registered a Preliminary Enquiry to look into alleged "irregularities and misconduct" by unidentified public servants of the Delhi Government in connection with the construction of a new official residence for him.

Amid the ongoing probe in the Delhi liquor scam in which Kejriwal's deputy Manish Sisodia is undergoing judicial custody for a year, the PE could lead to registration of a Regular Case or FIR if the allegations are buttressed with prosecutable evidence in the matter, officials said.

The PE is the first step to ascertain if the allegations have prima facie material evidence to proceed with a regular FIR.

In its letter to the PWD on Monday, the anti-corruption branch of the CBI has demanded records related to the approval and recommendation of its officials related to alteration, tender documents and bids submitted by contractors, officials said.

The agency has sought documents related to approval of building plans and requests from the client for inclusion of superior specifications like modular kitchen, marble flooring and other ornamental work, they said.

It also asked the PWD to deposit records related to payments made to the contractor

AK Builders and consultant to the project besides several other connected documents.

In April, reports had surfaced suggesting a total of ₹44.78 crore against a sanctioned amount of ₹43.70 crore was spent on "addition/alteration" of Kejriwal's government accommodation on 6, Flagstaff Road in Civil Lines.

The money was spent in six tranches between September 9, 2020 and June 2022, documents revealed.

According to documents, the total expenditure included ₹11.30 crore on interior decoration, ₹6.02 crore on stone and marble flooring, ₹1 crore on interior consultancy and ₹2.58 crore on electrical fittings and appliances.

An amount of ₹2.85 crore



was spent on the fire fighting system, ₹1.41 crore on wardrobe and accessories fitting and ₹1.1 crore on kitchen appliances.

A separate amount of ₹8.11 crore of the sanctioned amount of ₹9.99 crore was spent on the camp office of the Chief Minister at his official resi-

dence, it showed.

The BJP and the Congress had attacked the Aam Admi Party for the alleged extravagant expenditure on the CM's residence, citing Kejriwal's promises to live in an ordinary house like a common man once he comes to power.

"We welcome the enquiry.

As with all earlier enquiries in all other matters so far, nothing will come out in this. It is a desperate attempt of the BJP to malign AAP. The BJP has put in all its efforts to eliminate the Aam Admi Party," the Aam Admi Party said in a statement.

AAP further said, "Today, in the entire country, only the Aam Admi Party is seeking votes by doing excellent work in the fields of education and healthcare. However, the BJP does not want the poor to have access to good education and better healthcare facilities. This will lead to the defeat of the BJP's politics of religion and caste. That's why the country's best Education and Health Ministers, Manish Sisodia and Satyendra Jain, have been put in jail."

Now, all investigating agencies have been deployed to encircle Kejriwal. "But the love and blessings of 2 crore people of Delhi are with Arvind Kejriwal. So far, more than 50 cases have been filed against him, and investigations have been carried out. Nothing was found in any of them. Nothing will be found in this either. No matter how many investigations the BJP conducts, Kejriwal will continue to fight for the welfare of the common people," it added.

Leader of Opposition in the Delhi Assembly Ramvir Bidhuri Singh said the Kejriwal government has money to splash ₹50 crore for renovation of his bungalow but it does not have money for the upkeep of Delhi road and provide pen-

sion grants to the DTC employees. Even the marshals under the civil defence department have been protesting for several days as the Government has not released their salary.

Kejriwal has been occupying the official residence- at 6 Flagstaff Road in the Civil Lines area after becoming Chief Minister in 2015. It also has the Chief Minister's camp office spread over a 5,000 square metre area, officials had said.

Earlier, a senior PWD official had said, "It was not renovated and a new structure has come up in place of the old structure. His camp office is also there. The expenditure is around ₹44 crore but what is to be noted is that the old structures have been replaced with new ones."

32 students of city Govt's forces school crack NDA

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Setting a new milestone, 32 students of Shaheed Bhagat Singh Armed Forces Preparatory (SBAFP) School, run by the Delhi Government, have cleared the National Defence Academy (NDA) written examination this year.

Of them, nine are girls. A total of 76 students of the SBAFP School have appeared for the NDA entrance test this year. The school was inaugurated by the Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in August, 2022. The chief minister has applauded students of SBAFP School for clearing the National Defence Academy (NDA) entrance exam.

Taking to social media platform 'X', Kejriwal on Wednesday wrote, "Delighted to share that 32 students from Delhi's Shaheed Bhagat Singh Armed Forces Preparatory School have cleared the NDA exam, one of the highest num-



ber from any school across the country."

"In just one year Delhi's Armed Force Preparatory school has shown excellent results. I am sure that more and more students from Delhi will now clear the NDA exam and make our country proud as future officers. Delhi will always be ready to serve the nation," he added. The result of the NDA entrance exam is available on the official website of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), upsc.gov.in.

Appreciating the efforts of students, Education Minister Atishi said the he vision of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal behind starting AFPS seems to be getting fulfilled within a year. He started the school to provide opportunities to children from underprivileged backgrounds to become military officers and serve the nation.

It's a tremendous achievement that out of our 76 students who took the exam, of which 32 students cleared the written exam." Encouraging the students, she told them to put in double the effort to turn their dream of being army officers into reality.

"Currently, there are a total of 237 students enrolled in classes 9th, 10th, and 12th in this school. In class 12th, there are a total of 76 students, all of whom have taken the NDA examination, and out of these, 32 students have passed the written exam," she said.

According to Education Minister Atishi, additionally, this school of the Kejriwal government now stands second after the Uttarakhand-based Sainik School, Ghorakhal (established in 1966), in terms of the number of students who have passed the NDA exam. This school is spread over 14 acres and is equipped with all state-of-the-art facilities. It is part of the Delhi government's School of Specialized Excellence and is recognized by the Delhi Board of School Education.

85.5 per cent turnout at DU teachers polls

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A total of 85.5 per cent of 9,500 eligible voters exercised their franchise in the Delhi University Teachers' Association (DUTA) elections held on Wednesday in which the prime contenders are the National Democratic Teachers Front (NDTF) and the Democratic United Teachers' Alliance (DUTA).

This time, around nine teachers' organisations from different ideologies have formed an alliance named 'Democratic United Teachers' Alliance'.

The alliance includes groups like Democratic Teachers Front (DTF), AAP-backed Academic for Action and Development Delhi Teachers' Association (AADTA), Indian National Teachers Congress (INTEC), Delhi Teachers' Initiative (DTI), Samajwadi Shikshak Manch (SSM) and others.

Divyang tied to pole, beaten to death on suspicion of theft

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 26-year-old man died after he was allegedly tied to a pole and thrashed by some people who suspected him of being a thief in northeast Delhi's Sunder Nagri.

According to police, the incident took place on Tuesday morning at G4 block of the locality. The victim was identified as Israr Ahmed, 26, who was tied to a pole and beaten with sticks in the Sunder Nagri area. The video of the incident, which is in wide circulation on social media now, shows Israr tied to a pole as the men take turns to hit him with sticks.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (northeast) Joy Tirkey said, fruit vendor Abdul Wajid (60), a resident of Sunder Nagri, lodged a complaint claiming that his son Israr died after being assaulted by some people on suspicion of theft.

"We got a call around 10:45 pm on Tuesday from a man that his son was killed. We reached the spot and saw that the body of the 26-year-old Israr



was kept outside their home. We got to know that he was beaten up by a few people in the morning because they thought Israr was a thief. Maybe he was tied up and beaten. It is also being said that Israr was mentally challenged but it is not confirmed yet. He succumbed to his injuries in the evening. We have registered a case of murder," Tirkey said.

According to Wajid, when he reached his house on Tuesday evening, he saw his son lying outside, writhing in pain. There were injury marks all over his body, the DCP said.

Israr told his father that around 5 am, some youngsters caught him near G4 block and accused him of stealing. They

then tied him to a pole and thrashed him with sticks. He said the assailants lived near the G4 block, Tirkey said.

Their neighbour Aamir brought Israr home in a rickshaw and at around 7 pm, he succumbed to injuries, the officer said.

Wajid informed the police and the body was shifted to GTB Hospital where an autopsy will be conducted, the DCP said.

According to the preliminary investigation, the victim was mentally challenged, police said. He was tied to an electric pole and assaulted by the perpetrators as he could not give satisfactory answers to their questions, they said.

Senior bureaucrats not following orders, Delhi Government tells SC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government on Wednesday told the Supreme Court that senior bureaucrats were not carrying out orders of the elected Government while urging for an urgent hearing on its plea against the contentious law giving the Lieutenant Governor's (L-G) an upper hand in matters related to transfers and postings of senior officials in the national Capital.

A bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra was urged by senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, appearing for the Delhi Government, that the matter be listed before a five-judge Constitution bench for urgent hearing.

"I can't express the agony of the (Delhi) administration," the senior lawyer said. Senior advocate AM Singhvi, representing the Delhi government, said, "There is extraordinary urgency in this case. The civil servants are not following



orders." To this, Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud said, "There are two seven judges benches next week and then there are couple of Constitution benches."

"There are older Constitution bench matters. We are listing and there are two seven-judge bench matters also coming up. All these are also important and are pending for years," the CJI said, adding it may be listed after some time.

The bench, however, asked Singhvi and Additional Solicitor General Sanjay Jain to sit together and decide the legal questions to be decided by the Constitution bench in the services row.

Speaker directs reinstatement of axed Fellows

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In compliance with the Delhi High Court orders, Speaker Ram Niwas Goel has directed the reinstatement of professionals engaged as fellows and associate fellows with the Delhi Assembly Research Centre whose contracts were terminated recently.

Meanwhile, the Delhi High Court on Wednesday said it will pass an order on October 3 on whether to modify its interim direction for continuation of services of professionals engaged as fellows with

the Delhi Assembly Research Centre whose contracts were terminated by the assembly secretariat.

Dealing with an application filed by the legislative assembly secretariat and other authorities concerned seeking vacation of the interim order passed earlier this month, Justice Subramonium Prasad said, "List for order on October 3. Let me think over it."

Earlier, Speaker Ram Niwas Goel has directed the reinstatement of professionals engaged as fellows and associate fellows with the Delhi Assembly Research Centre whose contracts were termi-



nated recently.

"Thus, in view of the decisions of the Supreme Court and Article 14 of the Constitution of India, and to avoid burdening the court with unnecessary litigation, I hereby reinstate the Fellows, Associate Fellows and

Secretariat.

The Delhi High Court had last week directed that the services of these DARC fellows be continued till December 6 and stipends paid to them.

The Legislative Assembly Secretariat had issued orders for disengagement of 116 fellows under the Delhi Assembly Research Centre (DARC) Fellowship Programme in August, days after Parliament passed a Bill related to services matters in the national capital.

Earlier on Wednesday, the respondent authorities argued the order cannot be sustained in view of the absence of sanction for the posts by the lie-

tenant governor and the pendency of the issue regarding control of services before the Supreme Court.

The counsel for the petitioners opposed the application and said the scope of the present petition and the matter pending before the top court did not overlap, and the petitioners were just "caught between two behemoths".

Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena recently terminated the services of around 400 "specialists" appointed by the Arvind Kejriwal Government, a move the AAP dispensation termed "unconstitutional"

Mega cleanliness drive to be launched covering 25 roads

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for "Swachhata Hi Seva 2023 Campaign", a mega cleanliness drive will be launched in the national Capital covering 25 major roads, along the lines of the G-20 preparedness involving 61 roads, recently.

In a meeting chaired by Delhi Lt Governor (LG) VK Saxena on Wednesday, the civic agencies were told to identify 25 stretches across the city, in addition to the Dwarka sub-city where mass cleanliness drive will be carried out from October 1, when "EkTareekh, EkGhanta, EkSath" mass cleanliness drive, led by Prime Minister Modi, will be conducted at all public places across the country.

All civic agencies including MCD, PWD, DDA, NDMC and others will come together to clean and beautify these 25 roads, just as the 61 roads, identified during the G-20 Summit, were cleaned, repaired and beautified in a record time with coordinated and sustained efforts of all stakeholders.

Subsequently, the LG will make surprise visits of these stretches during night hours to take stock of the cleanliness drive.



500 locations across the Capital that will be cleaned as part of the campaign.

Senior officials including the Deputy Commissioners have been assigned the responsibility of implementing and supervising over the cleanliness drive on a daily basis and upload the photographs of the works done on the website of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

As part of the exercise, senior officials of the concerned agencies will identify and inspect the roads and issue necessary instructions for sanitation, repair/maintenance and upkeep and greening of these stretches.

The LG told the officials to overcome any jurisdictional issue and contribute positively to the campaign. Saxena particularly asked the civic agencies to maintain highest level of sanitation and hygiene in and around the hospitals and dispensaries that are frequented by thousands of patients and their families

LG approves critical road infrastructure, redevelopment

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Lieutenant Governor (LG) Vinai Kumar Saxena on Wednesday approved critical road infrastructure and redevelopment plans during the 68th Meeting of the Governing Body of Unified Traffic and Transportation Infrastructure Planning and Engineering Centre (UTTIPEC).

These projects will help ease the traffic the traffic situation and improve mobility, transport and transit in the city, officials said adding Saxena stressed upon the need for factoring in the latest technologies available internationally before formulating and finalising any project by the UTTIPEC.

He also asked for comprehensive prospective planning, with regards to projected traffic volumes, population and residential localities to be taken into account, before finalising the proposals.

Saxena also directed that all future projects brought for approval be affixed with the fixed timelines for their implementation.



(ROB) at the Railway, Level Crossings number 12 and 18 at Kirari and Ghehra respectively and Road Under Bridge (RUB) at Narela Mandi Railway Level Crossing number 16 at Narela.

The Railway Lines in these

stretches have an average of about 100 trains passing every day and every time a train passes the Level Crossing is closed for at least 06 minutes (10 hours a day), causing huge traffic jam, congestions, time loss and air pollution.

These ROB and RUB to be constructed by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi, will help address the traffic situation in the heavily congested and populated North-West Delhi areas, that include Kirari, Kanjhawala, Ghehra, Bawana and neighbouring Bahadurgarh.

Mukherjee Nagar PG Blaze: All evacuated

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Thirty five people, one of them a four-year-old girl, were rescued by firemen from a blaze that engulfed a women's paying guest facility in an apartment in Northwest Delhi's Mukherjee Nagar area on Wednesday evening.

According to officials from the fire department, five persons, including the girl, were taken to hospital since they had inhaled fumes.

While the fire department sent 20 firetenders to the site, only eight could reach the spot because of traffic congestion and narrow lanes.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said he is



monitoring the situation. According to the fire department, they received information about the blaze in the Signature Apartments at 7:47 pm, and rushed 20 fire tenders to the spot.

"Things are under control... There is no casualty and everyone has been evacuated," Delhi Chief Fire Service Officer Atul Garg told PTI around 9.30 pm.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF DELHI
HORTICULTURE DEPARTMENT (HQ) II
E-1 BLOCK, 16TH FLOOR, DR. S.P.M. CIVIC CENTRE, J.L. NEHRU MARG, NEW DELHI-110002

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Online Open Tenders are invited under single stage-Two Bid system from experienced and financially sound Manpower Companies/Agencies/Firms for supply of Manpower in Horticulture Deptt. MCD as per Tender No. 2023_MCD_169062_1, issued vide No. DDH/(HO)/II/MCD/2023-24/D-961/NIT No. 25, Dated 27.09.2023, Estimated Amt.: Rs. 5 Crore, Tender Cost: Rs. 2360/-, EMD: Rs. 10 Lac, Contract Period: One Month, Last Date of Bid Submission is 04.10.2023 upto 6:00 PM, Opening of Technical Bids 05.10.2023 at 11:00 AM. For e-tendering Bidding Documents with detailed terms & conditions can be downloaded from the website <https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app> OR MCD website www.mcdonline.nic.in. For online tender the helpdesk Nos. are 011-23227413 & 011-23227414 or mail to: mcd-ilthelpdesk@mcd.nic.in. All details of Revisions, Clarifications, Corrigendum, Addendum, Time Extension etc., if any, in respect of this tender will be uploaded on MCD website only & will not be published in newspaper(s) separately. Interested Bidders should regularly visit the website to keep themselves regularly updated for the tender.

Sd/-
Dy. Director (Hort.)/HQ-II
Phone: 011-23226613

RO No. 48/DPI/MCD/2023-24

BJP may field Central Ministers in four other States also

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Given the fact that close contests are expected in the upcoming Assembly polls, the BJP may strategically soon announce candidates for Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Telangana with "surprise" inclusions in line with Madhya Pradesh Assembly list.

The BJP's move to field three Union Ministers and several senior Members of Parliament in the upcoming Madhya Pradesh Assembly elections may be repeated in the four other State Assembly polls, including Rajasthan, where the BJP hopes to cash in on "anti-incumbency" against the Ashok Gehlot-led

Congress.

Rajasthan voters traditionally not repeating a government twice has also made BJP optimistic of winning the election as it is also working hard to keep its house in order in the desert state.

The factional division in the Rajasthan unit and former two-time Chief Minister Vijaya Raje's tug of war with Union minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat are expected to be "neutralised" by fielding "heavy weight" Central ministers and MPs who would impact on the assembly segments other than their own, sources said.

The entry of senior leaders in the assembly poll would also be done to positively tilt caste

equations - Rajputs, jats, SC, STs - in the state, according to sources.

Working on the MP model, the party may include Central Minister and Jodhpur MP Shekhawat, Minister of state for law, Arjun Ram Meghwal, Rajsamand MP Diya Kumari, and Jaipur (Rural) MP Rajyavardhan Rathore.

Despite Raje wanting to be projected as the Chief Ministerial candidate, the Central leadership has made it amply clear that as in the case of Madhya Pradesh, the elections in the state will be contested under a "collective leadership" with Prime Minister Narendra Modi being the main engine of the poll cam-



paign, they said.

With the likely induction of senior leaders in the assembly fray, there could be more claimants to the CM post in Rajasthan as may be the case in Madhya Pradesh also where three top Central ministers have been fielded as assembly candidates.

BJP had recently appointed Arjun Meghwal, a backward class leader, the convener of BJP's Election Manifesto committee, for Rajasthan.

In Madhya Pradesh - Union Minister for agriculture, Narendra Singh Tomar, will be

contesting from Dimani; Pralhad Patel, minister of state for food processing from Narsinghpur; and minister for state for rural development, Faggan Singh Kulaste who has been given a ticket from Niwas, a seat reserved for STs.

All three are now 'competitors' to the incumbent four-time CM Shivraj Singh Chauhan. Tomar and Kulaste have been fielded from the assembly seats won previously by the Congress.

In Telangana also, MPs, including Union Minister and State Chief GK Reddy, are expected to enter the electoral fray where BJP is seeking to be the main opposition party vis-à-vis the current Chief Minister

KC Rao's 'Bharat Rashtira Samithi, even though the Congress has now emerged as the main challenger to the ruling dispensation.

Union Minister and BJP's Rajasthan election in-charge Pralhad Joshi said his party would soon announce the list of candidates for Rajasthan, but did not confirm that it may include bigwigs from the Centre.

He said that the BJP has given tickets in Madhya Pradesh to its leaders in that state but the Congress Party 'does not have a leader.' "This is the problem of the Congress party," he said.

"We are going to win with a huge majority in Madhya

Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. Rahul Gandhi himself has admitted that they are losing in Rajasthan," the BJP leader said.

On Sunday, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi had said that as of now the Congress is certainly winning Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, probably winning Telangana, and there is a 'very close' contest in Rajasthan that the party believes it will be able to win.

Prime Minister Modi on Monday visited Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan which would go to the polls along with Chhattisgarh, Telangana and Mizoram, before December - and blamed the Congress for making them lag-gard states.

INDIA Bloc in tatters in Bengal

Cong playing second fiddle to BJP: TMC

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The Indian National Democratic Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) looks to be in tatters from the beginning in Bengal not only with the Left Front categorically declaring its no-truck formula with the Trinamool Congress but also the latter fighting an ongoing war of words with the primary INDIA constituent Congress accusing the tri-colour party's Bengal unit of playing second fiddle to the BJP.

A day after Chowdhury accused Mamata Banerjee of making fun trips to Baner and splurging taxpayers' money for her personal reasons at a time when Dengue was wreaking havoc in Bengal, TMC leader

and Minister Dr Shashi Panja hit back saying, "by making such statements Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury is only weakening the INDIA alliance ... I don't know whether he is hitting out at the Alliance itself."

Chowdhury had earlier questioned how Banerjee paid her hotel bills in Madrid. "We have heard that the Chief Minister does not take her salary. She earns her sustenance from the sale of her books and from her paintings. If that is so then how she could afford to stay at a hotel in Madrid that costs Rs 3 lakhs per day" the Congress MP from Behrampur asked.

The counterattack from Panja came hours after TMC spokesperson Kunal Ghosh attacked Chowdhury saying, "he is sounding like a BJP man ... he seems to have a plan to weaken the INDIA alliance ... by his statement it is clear that he playing the B Team of



the BJP in Bengal ... his party leadership should take note of this."

Ghosh said that the Congress high command "should reign in Chowdhury if they really want the Alliance to work well."

Ghosh's hard-hitting statement notwithstanding Chowdhury attacked the Chief Minister once again saying, the "dengue situation in Bengal is manmade ... rather I will call it Mamata made ... rather we can also call it government-sponsored dengue."

While the TMC and the Pradesh Congress traded fire,

the second most visible Congress leader in the State Kaustav Bagchi on Wednesday sprung a second surprise by walking alongside senior BJP leader Suwendu Adhikari in a protest rally of recruitment scam victims.

While the Pradesh Congress leadership remained tightlipped on Bagchi who has from the very beginning protested against the Congress joining hands with Mamata Banerjee "who has literally decimated the Congress in Bengal by engineering defections and whose goons daily attack, loot and rape our grassroots workers" the Congress odd ball said he was walking for a cause and not with any person.

"I have walked in a rally which has no flags ... I have no problem with Suwendu Adhikari - despite him being a BJP leader and promoting different ideology - insofar as he

is fighting for a cause that relates to the people," Bagchi a lawyer-turned-politician said provoking the TMC once again to draw the attention of the national leadership.

"We will expect the Congress leadership to take note of these issues in Bengal if they really are serious about the INDIA alliance," Ghosh said even as NCP leadership too asked the two parties to refrain from open war of words like this.

Meanwhile, TMC sources said that Mamata Banerjee would embark on a tour of other States beginning with Assam where she would campaign for the INDIA alliance.

According to sources TMC Assam leader Ripun Bora had a meeting with party general secretary Abhishek Banerjee where it was decided that the Bengal Chief Minister would embark on a tour of Assam in the month of November.

SC tags plea seeking FIR against Udhayanidhi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday tagged a plea, which has sought registration of an FIR against Tamil Nadu Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin over his "eradicate Sanatan Dharma" remark, with another similar pending petition. A bench of justices Aniruddha Bose and Bela M Trivedi was hearing a plea seeking direction for registration of an First Information Report (FIR) against Udhayanidhi Stalin and DMK leader A Raja for their comments on Sanatan Dharma.

On September 22, the top court had agreed to hear a separate plea filed by Chennai-based lawyer B Jagannath seeking registration of an FIR against Udhayanidhi Stalin and



others over his "eradicate Sanatan Dharma" remark, which the petitioner likened to hate speech. Udhayanidhi Stalin, who is also an actor, is the son of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and ruling DMK chief M K Stalin.

The plea filed by Delhi-based advocate Vineet Jindal came up for hearing before the bench on Wednesday. "We will not issue notice but we will tag it," the bench told the counsel

appearing for the petitioner. The lawyer appearing for Tamil Nadu argued that the plea was "public interest litigation in the nature of publicity interest litigation".

He said the top court had last week issued notice on the other petition having similar prayer and there was no need to have another such plea. "Instead of taking notice, we will take it up on that day," the bench said, adding, "The question of entertaining itself, we will take it up that day".

Termining it an "unfortunate scenario", the state's counsel said in this matter, several writ petitions have been filed in different high courts and it becomes difficult for the State. "You have the appropriate remedy under the Constitution," the bench observed, adding, "We are only tagging it".

Fresh SC bench to hear Naidu's plea for quashing FIR in ₹371-crore scam

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A new bench of the Supreme Court will hear on October 3 former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu's petition for quashing the FIR against him in the alleged ₹371 crore scam in the State's Skill Development Corporation as Justice SVN Bhatti on Wednesday recused himself from hearing it.

Senior advocate Siddharth Luthra, appearing for the TDP leader, rushed to a bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud after Justice Bhatti, who was sitting with Justice Sanjiv Khanna, recused himself from hearing his petition.

"We will list it before an appropriate bench on Tuesday," said the bench, which also comprised justices JB Paridwala



and Manoj Misra. The apex court also made it clear that it cannot restrain the trial judge from dealing with the prosecution's plea seeking further police custody of the TDP leader.

Naidu was arrested on September 9 for allegedly misappropriating funds from the Skill Development Corporation when he was the Chief Minister in 2015, causing a purported loss of Rs 371 crore to the State exchequer. His judicial remand has been extended by the trial court till October 5.

India, US hold 2+2 dialogue to strengthen logistics cooperation

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI/WASHINGTON

Given the robust ties between the two countries with focus on defence and security, officials of India and US held discussions on opportunities to further strengthen interoperability and logistics cooperation during the India-US 2+2 Intersessional Dialogue.

Underscoring the transformative momentum in the India-US relationship, the officials late Tuesday in Washington also discussed combined maritime engagements in the Indian Ocean Region, as well as expanded cooperation in the space and cyber domains, the Pentagon said.

The Indian delegation was led by Additional Secretary



Vani Rao of the Ministry of External Affairs and Joint Secretary Vishwesh Negi of the Ministry of Defence, it said. The American side was led by Assistant Secretary of Defense for Indo-Pacific Security Affairs Ely Ratner and Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Donald Lu. "The officials also discussed regional security developments and

strategic priorities across the Indo-Pacific region," a statement said.

The 2+2 Intersessional Dialogue advanced a wide range of ambitious initiatives across the breadth of the US-India partnership, including defence and security, emerging technologies, people-to-people ties, clean energy, and supply chain resilience, the Pentagon said.

3-day Indo-Pacific Army Chiefs meet held by Indian Army ends

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A three-day Indo-Pacific Armies Chiefs Conference (IPACC) organised by the Indian Army with the US Army as the co-host, culminated here on Wednesday. The event witnessed participation from 30 countries and provided an opportunity for the delegates to exchange ideas and views on security and other contemporary issues of mutual interest, with core efforts directed to promote 'Peace and Stability' in the Indo-Pacific region.

The event commenced with a call-on by General Randy George, the Chief of Staff (COS) of the US Army to General Manoj Pandey, Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) Indian Army on September 25. Both Chiefs discussed



issues of mutual interest and shared views on contemporary issues.

The next day, the Chiefs and the Heads of Delegations laid wreath at the National War Memorial paying homage to our fallen heroes. This was followed by a Joint Press Brief by the COAS Indian Army and COS of the US Army.

The COAS Indian Army

remarked that the region is not only a cauldron of cultures, histories, resources and opportunities but also a theatre of complexities and challenges. The COS of the US Army highlighted the role of land power and said it not only contributes to the shared security of the region but land power is also the decisive force in dealing with crises.

PUBLIC NOTICE

ICICI Bank Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005

Notice U/s. 13(2) of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 is being issued by ICICI Bank Ltd. (underlying pool assigned to ICICI Bank by Dewan Housing Finance Ltd.) in relation to the enforcement of security in respect of a housing loan facility granted pursuant to a loan agreement entered into between DHFL and the following borrower(s) who have defaulted in repayment of principal and interest of loans facility obtained by them from secured creditor and loans have been classified as Non-Performing Assets (NPA). A notice was issued to them on their last known addresses, however, it has returned un-served and hence, they are hereby notified by way of this public notice.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ Loan Account Number (DHFL Old LAN & ICICI New LAN) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset/ Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice (Rs.)	NPA Date
1.	Kanchan Siyo, Kalpana Siyo, Property No 1445, Second Floor, Gali No13, Govindpuri Kalka Ji, Near Hanuman Mandir, Delhi, Delhi- 110019. Loan No. 13300000723, A/C No. QZDEL00004997902	Plot No-1085, Second Floor, Khasra No-931085, Delhi.	15/03/2023/ Rs. 13,88,170/-	12/09/2022

The steps are being taken for substituted service of notice. The above borrower/s and/or their guarantors (as applicable) are advised to make the payments of outstanding within period of 60 days from the date of publication of this notice else further steps will be taken as per the provisions of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.

Date : September 27, 2023
Place : Delhi/NCR
Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

PUBLIC NOTICE

ICICI Bank Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005

The following borrower/s have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from the Bank and the loans have been classified as Non-Performing Assets (NPA). A notice was issued to them under Section 13 (2) of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act-2002 on their last known addresses, however it was not served and hence they are hereby notified by way of this public notice.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ (Loan Account Number) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset/ Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice (Rs.)	NPA Date
1.	Ganga Prasad Joshi/ Sunita Joshi- LBJA100002441078- 234B Pocket-C, Mayur Vihar Phase-2, Chilla Saroda Khadar, East Delhi, Delhi- 110091	Flat No 608, 6th Floor, Coral Radha Krishna, Plot No 8, Under Nizi Khatdari Scheme "Green Triveni", Village Ninder, Sikar Road, Tehsil Amer, Jaipur, Rajasthan- 303101	August 03, 2023 Rs. 42,28,359/-	31/03/2019

The steps are being taken for substituted service of notice. The above borrower/s and/or their guarantors (as applicable) are advised to make the payments of outstanding within period of 60 days from the date of publication of this notice else further steps will be taken as per the provisions of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.

Date : September 27, 2023
Place : Delhi
Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

Chhattisgarh Government withdraws plea challenging ED's action against officials

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Chhattisgarh Government withdrew from Wednesday the Supreme Court its plea challenging the Enforcement Directorate's action against State Government officials in money laundering case. The money laundering case lodged in 2022 stems from an FIR registered on a complaint by the Income Tax department over allegations of illegal collection of levy on coal as well as attempts to influence public servants through corrupt means in Chhattisgarh.

The ED charged a "massive scam" took place between 2019 and 2021 in coal transportation in Chhattisgarh as part of which a "cartel" of politicians, officers and others was allegedly running a parallel system of extorting illegal levy. In its plea, the Chhattisgarh Government argued that the ED, on the basis of the FIR lodged in Bengaluru, registered an Enforcement Case Information Report (ECIR) in Raipur on September 29, 2022

and started an investigation against State Government officials.

Chhattisgarh standing counsel Sumeer Sodhi told a bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and SVN Bhatti on Wednesday he has instructions to withdraw the plea. The bench allowed the State Government to withdraw the petition and recorded Sodhi's submission. The petition demanded the court to declare the ED's action illegal, without jurisdiction and unconstitutional.

The State Government had earlier this year filed a suit challenging the constitutional validity of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) alleging that central investigating agencies are being misused to "intimidate, harass and disturb" the normal functioning of the non-BJP State Government.

The Bhupesh Baghel-led Congress government filed the original suit challenging the law under Article 131 of the Constitution which empowers a state to move the Supreme Court directly in matters of dispute with the Centre or any other State.

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

ICICI Bank Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd., Office Number 201-B, 2nd Floor, Road No 1 Plot No-B3, WIFI IT Park, Wagle Industrial Estate, Thane, Maharashtra- 400604

Whereas

The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation, Re-construction 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.	Priyansu Garg/ Mani Garg/ LBHPU0000233844/ LBHPU00005331835/ LBHPU00004370047	House No. Nagar Palika W 2/1034, First Floor, Plot No. 32 Part Of Khasra No. 309, Mohalla Prahlad Nagar Hapur, Pargana Tehsil And District, Hapur, Gaziyabad Uttar Pradesh / September 22, 2023	March 23, 2023/ Rs. 11,91,087/-	Ghaziabad / Hoshangabad/ Hapur

The above-mentioned borrower(s)/ guarantor(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 27, 2023
Place : Ghaziabad
Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

PUBLIC NOTICE

ICICI Bank Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005

Notice U/s. 13(2) of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 is being issued by ICICI Bank Ltd. (underlying pool assigned to ICICI Bank by Dewan Housing Finance Ltd.) in relation to the enforcement of security in respect of a housing loan facility granted pursuant to a loan agreement entered into between DHFL and the following borrower(s) who have defaulted in repayment of principal and interest of loans facility obtained by them from secured creditor and loans have been classified as Non-Performing Assets (NPA). A notice was issued to them on their last known addresses, however, it has returned un-served and hence, they are hereby notified by way of this public notice.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ Loan Account Number (DHFL Old LAN & ICICI New LAN) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset/ Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice (Rs.)	NPA Date
1.	Jagat Jeet Singh, Rekha, House No. B E 40 B, Hari Nagar, Maya Puri, Delhi, S O South West Phase-2, Chilla Saroda Khadar, East Delhi, Delhi- 110091	House No. 16, First Floor, Sai Ji Homes, Comprised In Khata No. 51/102, Khasra No. 173(4-0), 174(4-0), 177(4-0), 178(3-19), 414/160(2-10), 416/161(2-18), 587/172(0-18), As Per Jamabandi Year 2015-2016, Krishna Enclave Colony, Village Saddhemajra, Hadbasat No. 12, Tehsil Derabassi, District S.A.S. Nagar, Punjab	29/08/2023 Rs. 13,57,670/-	10/04/2023

The steps are being taken for substituted service of notice. The above borrower/s and/or their guarantors (as applicable) are advised to make the payments of outstanding within period of 60 days from the date of publication of this notice else further steps will be taken as per the provisions of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.

Date : September 27, 2023
Place : Delhi/ NCR
Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

Varanasi gets Best Smart City Award in North Zone

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Varanasi has written a new chapter of development with heritage as it has received the 'Best Smart City Award' in the North Zone on Wednesday when at a programme organised in Indore (Madhya Pradesh) by the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Municipal Commissioner and CEO of Varanasi Smart City Shipu Giri was honoured by President Draupadi Murmu on Wednesday.



President Draupadi Murmu giving Best Smart City Award in North Zone to Varanasi MC Shipu Giri in Indore (MP) on Wednesday.

Varanasi was selected as the best smart city out of more than 30 smart cities of North Zone including Agra, Lucknow, Dehradun, Srinagar and Shimla. An exhibition has also been organised in this event, which was inaugurated on Tuesday by Kaushal Kishore, Minister of State, Ministry of Urban and Housing Affairs. Major works of Varanasi were displayed in the exhibition.

Centre, Machhodari Model School, modern development of streets of Varanasi, Integrated City Command Centre and Colony Parks were also showcased through 360 degree virtual reality tour. Benia Bagh, development of ancient streets etc have also been demonstrated. According to reports received here, a huge crowd of visitors gathered at the stall of Varanasi

Smart City to see the growth journey of 'Brand Banaras'. Dr D Vasudevan, Chief General Manager (CGM) of Varanasi Smart City, called this award an honour of the people of Varanasi. The project undertaken by Varanasi Smart City has been completed within the stipulated time frame and with quality. This is being taken full care of even in the Gatimaan

project. He said that a scheme worth Rs 1,017.69 crore was approved in Varanasi Smart City in 2018, the work of which has been completed. State-of-the-art development has been done in many areas of the city. At the same time, work on three projects worth Rs 329 crore is in progress. It is likely to be completed by March 2024, he added.

CM praises Prayagraj police for best use of latest tech

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has applauded the role of Prayagraj police for making the best use of latest technology (Artificial Intelligence (AI)/Machine Learning (ML)-based traffic enforcement solutions for vehicle tracking) and inter-district coordination in nabbing an inter-state gang of robbers.

The CM's praise came during an online review meeting held recently. The meet was also attended by Commissioner of Police Ramit Sharma who briefed the CM about the use of technology in cracking the case.

The Prayagraj police had recently arrested four key members of a Katihar (Bihar) based gang, who had executed two loots in UP, including Prayagraj and Sitapur, on September 12 and 15 respectively.

Explaining about the technology that helped cops in tracing out the escape route, Sharma told reporters "We took the advantage of the AI/ML based traffic enforcement solutions technology that helps in vehicle tracking. The Prayagraj police with the help of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) camera and Red Light Violate Detection (RLVD) traced the escape route of robbers who had executed a ₹7 lakh loot near MG Road under Civil Lines police station in the city on September 12."

"After tracking their bike's registration and through CCTV network, police found that the robbers had entered the city from Varanasi. Then the Prayagraj police coordinated with their Varanasi, Lucknow, Kanpur, Agra, Sitapur and Barabanki counterparts and shared information to tighten the noose around the law breakers," Sharma added.

Similarly, various police teams assigned to crack the incident also coordinated with each other and seniors with the help of Integrated Control and Command Centre (ICCC). The police also took help from different toll plazas and hotel industry to find out their exact route and stay details. The CP added that a group of four robbers on two separate bikes in a bid to dodge cops had escaped on two different routes i.e Prayagraj-Kanpur and Prayagraj-Lucknow. However, one was spotted moving to Kanpur and Lucknow with the help of ICCC, he added.

Sharma said the ICCC facilities at Varanasi, Lucknow, Prayagraj and Sitapur helped in tracking the route of criminals. Moreover, the Operation Trinetra (that involves installing CCTVs) also helped cops to ascertain the identities of the criminals.

7 kids hurt in terrace collapse

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

As many as seven kids sustained injuries after they were trapped under the debris of a collapsed terrace in Parsara village under Kokhraj police station of Kaushambi. The injured kids - Aditya (12), Riya (8), Sneha (10), Aryan (6), Kanak (8), Shreyansh (10) and Kashish (10) were taken to the district hospital, Manjhanpur, from where doctors referred Aditya and Shreyansh to Prayagraj for better treatment.

The incident took place when a group of children were playing under the dilapidated terrace attached to a wall. "Some kids climbed the terrace following which it collapsed trapping the kids. They were pulled out with the help of locals and taken to Manjhanpur hospital. Two of them were later referred to the SRN hospital in Prayagraj for better treatment," Kaushambi SP Brijesh Kumar Srivastava said.

It is alleged that after seeing the status the teacher got angry, called the student and threatened to get her name removed from the college. After this the student committed suicide at home. The family members were continuously visiting the police station to register a case against the teacher but the police allegedly scolded them and sent them away. When MLA Harshvardhan Vajpayee took cognizance of the matter, a case was registered against the teacher on the Tuesday.

CHC Misirpur Supdt given adverse entry

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The Superintendent of Community Health Centre (CHC) Misirpur has been given adverse entry for not giving proper response regarding low institutional delivery in block Kashi Vidyaapeeth. This was ordered by the Chief Development Officer (CDO) Himanshu Nagpal while presiding over a meeting of the District Health Committee at Vikas Bhawan here on Tuesday.



CDO Himanshu Nagpal holding a meeting of District Health Committee in Varanasi on Tuesday.

In the meeting, information was obtained regarding the status of payment under Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY). Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr Sandeep Chaudhary said that payment of 266 beneficiaries of last year is pending in the district. The CDO expressed displeasure over the non-payment of last year's pending payments in the district under the JSY and directed all the medical officers in charge to ensure that all the beneficiaries are paid.

able to provide item-wise information about the amount spent. He was directed to attend the upcoming meetings with complete information. Similarly, block account managers Harhua and Pindra were taken to task for laxity in their work and directed to take strict action. The CDO also sought the information about Seva Pakhwada of Ayushman Bhava campaign. The CMO said that about 500 units of blood were collected in the blood donation camp organised during the Ayushman Bhava campaign.

The CDO said that all the medicines should be kept as per the standards in the health and wellness centres (HWCs) including the district hospitals so that the patients do not have to purchase medicines from outside. Apart from this, displeasure was expressed over at least four antenatal check-ups and less identification of complicated deliveries in the RCH portal. He laid emphasis on safe delivery of women with high risk pregnancy (HRP) at all the FRUs in the district. Apart from this, the CDO conducted a thorough review of all the programmes.

guidelines prescribed for this campaign, all the blocks should conduct the same as per the department-wise microplan. While reviewing the programme, it was directed that the report should be sent to the district headquarters on time. The CDO said that the programmes to be conducted on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti should be organised in 100 per cent gram sabhas.

The CDO also reviewed the progress of Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI) 5.0, which was conducted in the month of September. While receiving information about the progress of the currently running Ayushman Bhava campaign, he directed that as per the

The superintendents of all government hospitals, all ACMOs, Deputy CMOs, Divisional Accounts Manager, Senior Finance and Accounts Officer, DCPM, incharge medical officers and other medical officers were also present in the meeting.

BLW employees pledge for clean food, water



Employees taking a pledge for clean food, water at BLW in Varanasi on Wednesday.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

A campaign was run in Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW) on Wednesday with awareness and pledge of clean food, water and environment and 'no use of single waste plastic'. The employees improved the workplace by offering shramdaan. As per the guidelines of the Ministry of Railways, a cleanliness campaign was conducted in the Officers' Guest House, Officers' Rest House and Office Canteens in the series of Swachhta Pakhwada-2023 being organised from September 16 to 30. Under the cleanliness campaign, along with a thorough inspection of the catering units and food facilities available in the canteens, high quality cleaning arrangements were also tested. The food and beverages available in the canteens were inspected and necessary guidelines were given for cleanliness.

water and environment and also the availability of separate dustbins for dry and wet wastes. During the drive, the ill effects of single use plastic were explained and people were encouraged not to use it and to use only cotton bags. Various types of posters and messages related to cleanliness were also displayed in BLW Officers' Guest House, Officers' Rest House and office canteens. Earlier, under the ongoing Rajbhasha Fortnight, various programmes are also being organised in BLW. In this direction, a seminar on Bhartendu Smriti Hindi Original Composition was organised at the Hall of Fame. The programme was presided over by BLW's Chief Rajbhasha Officer and Chief Mechanical Engineer (SE) Neeraj Jain.

The subject was introduced by Senior Rajbhasha Officer Dr Sanjay Kumar Singh. Public Relations Officer (PRO) Rajesh Kumar and others were also present. In the seminar, many BLW employees mesmerised the officers and employees by reciting their own poetry. Alok Kumar Singh, Vikas Pandey, Naval Kishore Gupta, Dr Sunita Tiwari, Amlesh Srivastava, Karuna Singh, Om Prakash Chanchal, Nitu Prakash Jaiswar, Bijendra Kumar, Arvind Pratap Singh and many others took part in the programme.

In the same direction, a technical seminar and Hindi workshop was organised at BLW's Technical Training Centre (TTC). Junior translator Alok Kumar gave detailed information about the technical aspects of e-Office and Unicode. Junior translator Dr Shashi Kant Sharma talked in detail about the use of punctuation marks in Hindi, technical words, full forms, foreign expressions as well as common mistakes in Hindi. The programme was conducted by senior translator Amlesh Srivastava, while the vote of thanks was proposed by senior translator Vinod Kumar Srivastava.

Air show to impact operation of flights

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The air show to celebrate the Air Force Day will impact the operation of flights from different cities to Prayagraj between October 3 and October 8. The mega air show will be organised on October 8 and is likely to be attended by President Draupadi Murmu. Authorities have already cancelled flights from Indore, Raipur, Lucknow and Dehradun. Besides 76 other flights will be cancelled between the given dates. Although the main event is on October 8, flight operations at Prayagraj airport will remain affected from October 2 itself. On October 6 there will be a full dress rehearsal of the event. The Indigo has released information about the cancellation of 76 flights during this period. Apart from this, timings of flights operated by Alliance Air have been changed and will

be delayed by one hour. At present flights to Bhubaneswar, Delhi and Mumbai are allowed from October 2 to October 8. Although this may also change later but Prayagraj-Dehradun, Prayagraj-Indore, Prayagraj-Raipur, Prayagraj-Lucknow will remain cancelled for seven consecutive days. Likewise, Prayagraj-Bengaluru service will also remain cancelled on October 3, 5 and 8 and will operate only on October 2, 4, 6 and 7. The Prayagraj-Bhopal flight will also remain cancelled on October 3, 5 and 7 and will operate on the rest of the intervening days. On the 91st foundation day of India Air Force (IAF) an air show is being organised by the IAF at Sangam. While a number of flights operating from Prayagraj Airport are being cancelled, a radius of three kilometres around Bamrauli Air Station has been declared as 'no flying zone'.

कार्यालय अधिशासी अभियन्ता, केन्द्रीय मण्डल, उत्तराखण्ड जल संस्थान, जल भवन, बी ब्लॉक, नेहरू कॉलोनी, देहरादून। दूरभाष (का.) : 0135-2676260 (Extn-15) ईमेल : eecs-ujs-uk@nic.in

पत्रांक : 478/ई-निविदा / 2023-24 दिनांक : 27.09.23

ई-निविदा सूचना

उत्तराखण्ड जल संस्थान की ओर से केन्द्रीय मण्डल, देहरादून द्वारा निम्न कार्य हेतु ई-निविदा, दूर-विह सिस्टम (संकीर्ण) विह एवं कामिस्थल विह) आधार पर निम्नानुसार आमंत्रित की जाती है।

निविदा क्र.	कार्य विवरण	प्रारंभिक राशि	ई-निविदा प्रारंभ करने की तिथि एवं समय	ई-निविदा अंतिम करने की तिथि एवं समय	ई-निविदा खोलने की तिथि एवं समय	ई-निविदा खोलने की तिथि एवं समय	बिना सील के बिना	बि-विह सीलिंग की तिथि एवं समय
1	गार्मिक दर अनुभव पर, Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning (SITC) of Domestic tamper proof water meters compatible to existing software as per standard conforming to IS: 779-1994/IS:2373-1981/ISO: 4064/OIML R 49 or EEC/MID certification mark shall be with protection class of IP68 for AMR water meter with 2 years warranty of installed water meter including all accessories as and when required at different towns anywhere in Uttarakhand का।	11,05,000.00	03.10.2023 from 11:00 a.m. to 18.10.2023 upto 5:00 p.m.	11.10.2023 from 11:00 a.m. to 18.10.2023 upto 5:00 p.m.	19.10.2023 upto 5:00 p.m.	20.10.2023 at 11:00 a.m.	120 days	09.10.2023 at 11:00 a.m.
4/ 23-24	अर्जा- 1. EIC/MID or IS:779-1994/IS:2373-1981/ISO: 4064/ OIML R 49 certificate holder manufacturers or dealers/firm/contractor authorized by the manufacturer are allowed to participate in this tender. Authorization letter should not be older than 01 month. 2. The preference will be given to the water meter manufacturers. Manufacturer must have supplied minimum 5000 water meter to government/semi gov/PSU in last seven years i.e 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23.	45,000.00	03.10.2023 from 11:00 a.m. to 18.10.2023 upto 5:00 p.m.	11.10.2023 from 11:00 a.m. to 18.10.2023 upto 5:00 p.m.	19.10.2023 upto 5:00 p.m.	20.10.2023 at 11:00 a.m.	120 days	09.10.2023 at 11:00 a.m.

अर्जा- Only manufacturers of ISI marked Manhole Covers having BIS license for IS: 12592/2002 in relevant category are allowed to take part in this tender.

ई-निविदा से सम्बन्धित समस्त जानकारी व शर्तें उत्तराखण्ड की वेबसाइट <http://ujs.ux.gov.in> एवं निम्नलिखित वेबसाइट <http://ujs.ux.gov.in> पर ऑन लाइन देवी/प्राप की जा सकती है।

अधिशासी अभियन्ता

REGD A/D/DASTI/AFFIXATION/BEAT OF DRUM
OFFICE OF THE RECOVERY OFFICER DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL - I, DELHI, 4th FLOOR, JEEVAN TARA BUILDING, PARLIAMENT STREET, NEW DELHI-110001.
SALE PROCLAMATION
T.R.C. NO.24/ 2022 (R. C. No 133/2020)
ICICI BANK LIMITED VS SANT INDERMANI TRANSPORT
PROCLAMATION OF SALE UNDER RULE 38, 52(2) OF SECOND SCHEDULE TO THE INCOME TAX ACT, 1961 READ WITH THE RECOVERY OF DEBTS DUE TO BANK AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS ACT, 1993.
(CD1) SANT INDERMANI TRANSPORT
 Through its proprietor Suresh W/O JITENDER SINGH S/O SATBIR SINGH, KHASRA NO. 6/15 AND 6/16 SHIV MANDIR COLONY, GALI NO. 6, SAFIABAD ROAD, NARELA, NORTH WEST DELHI -110040.
(CD 2) JITENDER SINGH
 S/O SATBIR SINGH, KHASRA NO. 6/15 AND 6/16 SHIV MANDIR COLONY, GALI NO. 6, SAFIABAD ROAD, NARELA, NORTH WEST DELHI-110040.

Whereas Recovery Certificate No. T.R.C. NO. 24/ 2022 (R. C. No 133/2020) drawn by the Presiding Officer, Debts Recovery Tribunal-III for the recovery of a sum of Rs. an amount of Rs. 29,91,148.23/- along with pendente lite and future interest has become due against you (Jointly and severally/ Fully/Limited) and from the Certificate Debtors together with costs and charges as per recovery certificate and transferred to DRT (T.R.C. NO. 24/ 2022 (R. C. No 133/2020).

Sr.No.	Description of property	Reserve Price	EMD
1.	EICHER PRO 6037, Chassis bearing No. HR46E6541 (BODY AND CHASSIS BOTH)	Rs.9.80 LAKH	ONE Lakh

- Notice is hereby given that in absence of any order of postponement, the movable as under shall be sold by e-auction and bidding shall take place through "Online electronic Bidding" through the website <http://dt.auctiontiger.net> on 12.10.2023 between 12.00 pm and 01.00 pm with extensions of 10 minutes duration after 01.00 PM, if required. The EMD shall be paid through Demand Draft/Pay Order in favor of Recovery Officer, DRT-I, Delhi-A/c (T.R.C. NO. 24/ 2022 (R. C. No. 133/2020) along with self-attested copy of Identity (voter I-card/Driving license/passport) which should contain the address for future communication and self-attested copy of PAN Card must reach to the Office of the Recovery Officer, DRT-I, Delhi latest by 04.10.2023 before 5.00 PM in AUCTION BID FORM as enclosed.
- The EMD received thereafter shall not be considered. The said deposit be adjusted in the case of successful bidders. The unsuccessful bidder shall take return of the EMD directly from the Registry, DRT-I, Delhi after receipt of such report from e-auction service provider/bank/financial institution on closure of the e-auction sale proceedings. The envelope containing EMD should be super-scribed "T.R.C. No. 24/ 2022 (R. C. No 133/2020)" along with the details of the sender i.e. address, e-mail ID and Mobile Number etc.
- Prospective bidders are required to register themselves with the portal and obtain user ID/password well in advance, which is mandatory for bidding in above e-auction from M/s. C 1 India Pvt. Ltd., Udyog Vihar, Phase 2, Building No. 301, Gurgaon, Haryana (India) Tel. 91 7291981124/25/26, contact person Sh Vinod Chauhan, Mobile No. 9813887931, e-mail support@bankeauctions.com, website <https://www.bankeauctions.com>.
- Details of concerned bank officers/Helpline numbers etc. are as under:-

Name & Designation	Email & Phone Nos.
Mr. Mohit Chadhaa, Manager	mohit.chadhaa@icicibank.com Mobile No. 9650957770

- What is proposed to be sold are the rights to which the certificate debtors are entitled in respect of the properties. The properties will be sold along with liabilities, if any. The extent of the properties shown in the proclamation is as per the Recovery Certificate schedule. Recovery Officer shall not be responsible for any variation in the extent due to any reason. The properties will be sold on 'as is where is' and 'as is what is' condition. Intending bidders are advised to peruse copies of title deeds available with the Bank and also check the identity and correctness of the property details, encumbrances, etc.
- The property can be inspected by prospective bidder(s) before the date of sale for which the above named officer of the bank may be contacted.
- The undersigned reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids if found unreasonable or postpone the auction at any time without assigning any reason.
- EMD of unsuccessful bidders will be received by such bidders from the Registry of DRT-I, an identification/production of identity proof viz., PAN Card, Passport, Voter's ID, Valid Driving License or Photo Identity Card issued by Govt. and PSUs. Unsuccessful bidders shall ensure return of their EMD and, shall immediately contact the Recovery Officer, DRT-I, Delhi/Registry, DRT-I, Delhi or the Bank.
- The sale will be of the property of the above named CDs as mentioned in the schedule below and the liabilities and claims attaching to the said property, so far as they have been ascertained, are those specified in the schedule against each lot.
- No officer or other person, having any duty to perform in connection with sale, however, either directly or indirectly bid for, acquire or attempt to acquire any interest in the property sold.
- The sale shall be subject to the conditions prescribed in the Second Schedule to the Income Tax Act, 1961 and the rules made there under and to the further following conditions. The particulars specified in the annexed schedule have been stated to the best of the information of the undersigned, but the undersigned shall not be answerable for any error, mis-statement or omission in this proclamation.
- The amount by which the biddings are to be increased shall in multiple of Rs. 10,000 (Rs. Ten Thousand only). In the event of any dispute arising as to the amount of bid, or as to the bidder, the lot shall at once be again put up to auction.
- The Successful/Highest bidder shall be declared to be the purchaser of any lot provided that further that the amount bid by him is not less than the reserve price. It shall be in the discretion of the undersigned to decline acceptance of the highest bid when the price offered appears so clearly inadequate as to make it inadvisable to do so.
- Successful/ highest bidder shall have to prepare DD/Pay order for 25% of the sale proceeds favoring Recovery Officer, DRT-I, Delhi, A/c, T.R.C. No. 24/2022 (R. C. No 133/2020) next working days after close of e-auction and after adjusting the earnest money (EMD) and sending/depositing the same in the office of the Recovery Officer so as to reach within 3 days from the close of e-auction failing which the earnest money (EMD) shall be forfeited.
- The Successful/Highest Bidder shall deposit, through Demand Draft/Pay Order favoring Recovery Officer, DRT-I, Delhi A/c T.R.C. No. 24/ 2022 (R. C. No 133/2020) the balance 75% of the sale proceeds before the Recovery Officer, DRT-I or before 15th day from the date of sale of the property, exclusive of such day, or if the 15th day be Sunday or other holiday, then on the first day after the 15th day along with the poundage fee @ 2% upto Rs. 1,000 and @ 1% on the excess of such gross amount over Rs. 1000/- in favor of Registrar, DRT-I Delhi. (In case of deposit of balance amount of 75% through post the same should reach the Recovery Officer as above.)
- In case of default of payment within the prescribed period, the property shall be resold, after the issue of fresh proclamation of sale. The deposit, after defraying the expenses of the sale, may, if the undersigned thinks fit, be forfeited to the Government and the defaulting purchaser shall forfeit all claims to the property or to any part of the sum for which it may subsequently be sold.

SCHEDULE OF PROPERTY

Lot No.	Description of the property to be sold with the names of the co-owners where the property belongs to the defaulter and any other person as co-owners.	Revenue assessed upon the property or any part thereof	Details of any encumbrance to which property is liable	Claims, if any, which have been put forward to the property, and any other known particulars bearing on its nature and value.
1.	EICHER PRO 6037, Chassis bearing No. HR46E6541 (BODY AND CHASSIS BOTH)			No information received

Given under my hand and seal on 14.09.2023. (Rajesh Kumar) Recovery Officer-I, DRT-I, Delhi

AUCTION BID FORM (T.R.C. NO.24/ 2022 (R. C. No 133/2020)
 (Read the terms and conditions of sale carefully before filling-up and submitting the bid)

- Name(s) of Bidder (in Capital):
- Father's/Husband's Name:
- Postal Address of Bidder(s):
- Phone/Cell Number:
- E-mail ID:
- Bank Account No.,
- Bank & Branch Name
- D.D.No., Date:
- Date of submission of bid:
- PAN Number:

I declare that I have read and understood all the terms and conditions of auction sale and shall abide by them. I also undertake to improve my bid by at least one bid incremental value notified in the sale notice if I am the sole successful-bidder.



FIRST COLUMN

HOW TO GET HELP FROM GOD?

To begin with, accept the 'Karmaphala' principal' — "what we sow we reap"



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

We have to make suitable efforts to do that. God is unlike our parents, who are obliged to help, especially when we are quite young. In the case of God, we have to deserve His help. If it wasn't so, God would be obliged to help everyone. Even parents stop helping as children become self-supporting, except to guide, as required. Therefore, we have to get rid of this false impression that God will help no matter what. Yes, He will if we become deserving. In this article, I will detail some thirty ways we can successfully do that, and which are mostly simple.

The first one has to be following dharma because it is most dear to God. God even incarnates to re-establish dharma. (The Bhagavad-Geeta 4.7) Dharma is the bedrock upon which the creation is based. Don't we know what social and other norms are? Then, we must not cross their 'Maryada' (limits). The second one is to be dutiful because this is the only right given to us. (2.47) Goodness must follow in our behaviour. We must be headed towards purity, as practised by yogis. (5.11) We should try to remember God because He is everything. (7.19) This will lead to 'dhyana' — the process of meditation.

Now I take up processes involving others. The first one has to be charity. All of us have something to spare, whether material objects or personal time. Human birth demands that we become useful to others. How else can the creation go on? We must help/serve others and others will do likewise.

The next group of acts are when we directly address God. The first one has to be praying, which comes to us naturally, whenever we are in trouble; even children pray when fearful. We should express our thanks if God responds. Shouldn't we be highly obliged? If God still does not respond, it is time to seek forgiveness and begin repenting for sins done in the past. Shouldn't we wonder about God's non-response and what we must do to deserve His help? Gradually, we must begin giving our minds and intelligence to God. What does this mean? Simply stated, God must be brought into our psyche; we must begin to think about God.



By now we would have become humble enough to do 'namaskar' to God giving up our highly bloated ego; visit a nearby temple to have 'darshan' of God. These places are generally highly charged with spiritual energy, which will help us to become God-conscious. We can begin worshipping God in our homes. We can begin by choosing a photo of God in whatever form attracts us the most; God has multiple forms. Similarly, we can start chanting God's name or mantra, whatever appeals to us. All these will lead to our becoming inquisitive about God's instructions, as detailed in bona fide scriptures like the Geeta. We can try to do whatever God wishes us to do (16.24), which will ensure God's pleasure. By now, we would have become highly deserving of God's help, because we in effect would have taken God's shelter.

This takes us to another level. God takes charge of our lives; He begins to use us as His 'nimitta' (instrument). Our lives will begin to become greatly fulfilling. God will get everything done and we will get credit. We will become very useful and highly satisfied. 'Tapasya' will begin to come naturally, which will qualify us for more gains, because in the spiritual domain also, the 'karmaphala principle' works, the only difference being: in this case our acts are spiritual. The word 'yogi' will no longer be a distant concept, we will become one. Sky is the limit then, as Sanjaya of the Mahabharata fame has described, "Where there is the yogeshwar Shri Krishna and where there is the archer Arjuna (in our case us), there will be 'saubhagya' (opulence), victory, wealth and definite principles (morality)".

(The writer is an educator, views are personal)

Punjab is reeling under socio-economic distress



AS MITTAL

Without sustainable economic growth, local employment generation, and self-reliance, Punjab's well-being will continue to be a challenge



It's worrisome that Punjab only receives 45 paise for every rupee it contributes to the Centre's tax kitty. This is especially concerning when comparing it to states like UP and Bihar, which receive Rs 1.80 and Rs 1.20, respectively. This revenue-sharing disparity is a significant contributor to the socio-economic distress experienced by Punjab. As a landlocked border state, it's even more crucial for Punjab to overcome this fiscal distress since India's and Pakistan's bilateral trade also halted through the Wagah-Attari route majorly affected Punjab's economy only. The said cost-effective cross-border route can directly short-connect to Europe, a big potential to catalyse the Punjab economy as strong as the economy of Southern-Western States, because of near to seaports.

Being far away from the seaports is one of the major disadvantages that Punjab is struggling with, and has a crippling impact on industrial growth. Secondly, adjoining the sensitive Pakistan border not only halted the trade but Pakistan led to illegal arms supply and drug terror scuffed the social fabric and law and order of Punjab. Keeping these two major geographical disadvantages centre stage till any central government has not compensated Punjab as it faces odd challenges in comparison to other states. Not even a fair share of tax kitty given, the Rural Development Fund (RDF) and Mandi Fee of Rs 5337 crore have not been released for long. Thus, how long does a fiscally distressed state government alone take forward the most development and welfare-oriented expenditure?

When a state's economy weakens, its people and progress suffer together. This is evident in the current crisis in India-Canada relations, as Punjab's economic distress has led to a migration of its human resources to Canada. Unfortunately, this migration has created a breeding ground for radicals and anti-Indian khalistan extremist activities on Canadian soil, a globalised challenge that has gone unaddressed. The Canadian connection to khalistani is longstanding. Since the mid-80s, there has been a significant exodus of Punjabi youth to Canada, where they often



WHEN A STATE'S ECONOMY WEAKENS, ITS PEOPLE SUFFER. PUNJAB'S ECONOMIC DISTRESS HAS LED TO A MIGRATION OF ITS HUMAN RESOURCES TO CANADA

(The author is vice-chairman of Sonalika group, vice-chairman of the Punjab Economic Policy and Planning Board, and chairman of ASSOCHAM Northern Region Development Council. Views expressed are personal)

do odd jobs to sustain themselves. Unfortunately, some of these young people become prey to anti-India extremists.

It is not good to allow a lop-sided economic development of a sensitive state like Punjab. It has its serious repercussions. If we fail to ensure holistic development, then we will be accused of inefficiencies in handling human resources. Unemployment is a multi-faceted problem exacerbating the distressed places associated with poorer mental health, crime and drug abuse. There is enough evidence of drug abuse and distress in the law-and-order situation, that an issue of brimming, can be ascribed directly to unemployment.

Punjab, which used to be a prosperous and progressive state even during its toughest time, is currently facing a significant problem of uncontrolled unemployment due to distressed farming and an imbalanced industrial base. This has resulted in Punjab's GDP growth rate dropping to 6%, which is lower than the national growth rate of 7.24% in 2022-23. Punjab is currently ranked at the 19th position, whereas it ranked first in GDP among the states in 1981 and fourth in 2001. Interestingly, UP and Bihar, which were once part of the economically sick states known as 'BIMARU' (Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh), are now fast-growing economies. UP achieved an impressive growth rate of 16.8%, with a GDP of Rs 20.48 lakh crore in 2022-23, while Bihar's growth rate was 10.98% with a GDP of Rs 7,45,310 crore.

It is crucial to acknowledge that Punjab has immense potential that should not be overlooked when compared to the Southern and Western states. Presently, Punjab's contribution to the country's tax kitty stands at approximately 3%, and it only receives 1.8% of

the divisible pool of taxes allocated by the Fifteenth Finance Commission. In contrast, the Western and Southern states contribute 67% to the central exchequer but only receive a meagre 3-4%. While their argument may appear valid, it is essential to consider that the Southern and Western states account for 53% of India's total factories and have the advantage of being closer to seaports, which can drive economic growth and result in more contributions to the central exchequer. Punjab's sluggish growth may dampen overall economic sentiments, but it still holds enormous potential for growth and contribution to the country's economy.

Undoubtedly, Punjab has the potential to contribute 10-15% as it possesses a strong capable and committed entrepreneurial spirit to overcome this economic distress. This spirit has been evident in the past when it overcame the challenges of the partition of India in 1947 and 13 years of militancy in the mid-80s to mid-90s. Within a few years of these events, Punjab was able to rehabilitate its economy and become the richest state in India in the 80s. Today, Punjab seeks a fair interface without any political interference to compete on a level playing field and strengthen its economy, ultimately reducing unemployment.

It is important to consider Punjab's significant contribution to national food security. However, the large areas and population figures of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar provide them with additional leverage from the central tax pool. It is concerning that Punjab only received 1.8% of the Rs 8,16,649 crore distributed by the centre to the states during 2022-23. In contrast, Uttar Pradesh received the highest share at 18% (Rs 1,46,525 crore) and Bihar received the second-highest share

at 10%. This highlights why Punjab and other states argue that they are not receiving a fair share of funds, despite contributing more to the exchequer.

During the fiscal year 2022-23, Punjab contributed a sum of Rs 32,800 crore to the central taxes fund, which included CGST, income tax, corporation tax, wealth tax, union excise duty, customs, and service tax. However, in return, the state only received Rs 14,756 crore. This has led to Punjab raising the issue with the Fifteenth Finance Commission, as it believes it deserves a fair share of central tax. Despite its efforts, Punjab has been unable to secure an amendment to the Finance Act.

Constitutionally, the purpose of the finance commission is to create some kind of 'equalization' among advantaged and disadvantaged states. From the point of view of equalization, the adoption of population figures as one of the criteria of devolution needs to be justified. Therefore, the constitution provides for a fair share of union revenue to be devolved to the states to address this issue.

The Way Forward:

In a federal structure, the central government needs to prioritise the improvement of economic conditions and livelihood prospects for the people of Punjab, which are facing unique challenges in comparison to other states.

It is crucial to take a comprehensive approach that ensures employment opportunities and social respect regardless of demographic and political differences. Without sustainable economic growth, local employment generation, and self-reliance, Punjab's well-being will continue to be a challenge, which is indispensable for the overall well-being of our nation.

Goat-rearing can be an excellent source of livelihood in rural Bihar

To provide livelihood, the government should provide adequate training and information to landless, marginal farmers about the goat farming schemes

Anita Devi, a 40-year-old resident of Hussainpur village, located about 65 kilometres from the Muzaffarpur district in Bihar, lost her husband two years ago. Left with no means to support her family of seven, including four daughters and two sons, she started goat farming to earn a livelihood. She faced criticism when she began rearing goats as a woman farmer. However, Anita resisted because her motivation to provide for her family kept her going. She had started with just two goats. Today, she has eight adult goats and 20 young ones. Goat rearing enabled her to protect her family and improve her financial status.



SIMRAN KUMARI

(The writer is a student from rural Bihar; views expressed are personal)

Alongside manual labour, agriculture-based employment like cattle, poultry, ducks, and goat farming is a crucial source of income, especially for economically disadvantaged individuals like landless, small-scale farmers, agricultural labourers, and socially oppressed individuals. According to the latest 2019 Livestock census, India has a population of 150 million goats, the second largest in the world. In around half a million remote villages, 70 million farmers are involved in the goat farming business. The primary income from Goat farming comes from milk, which has a production of about 42000 Kgs and meat production, which stands at 8500 Kgs.

Like Anita Devi, Goat farming is an excellent means of self-employment for many rural women. Around rural areas in Muzaffarpur, many women earn their livelihoods through goat farming, becoming breadwinners for their families. 35-year-old Champa Devi, resident of the same village as Anita, also supports her three daughters and two sons by raising goats.

In other instances, older women in the village claim that their sons and daughters-in-law have stopped providing for them in their old age. These women have, therefore, started rearing 2-4 goats to earn a living. These women leave for the fields in the morning to



graze their goats and only return in the evening.

Goat farming is a hard job, especially during the monsoons. It can be a challenge to find adequate fodder for the goats. The farmers rely on bananas, bamboo, and Banyan leaves to keep the cattle alive. People invest their capital into it. Even

after that, we see an increasing number of women who raise goats in the village. It has become a source of livelihood for many families.

Various non-governmental and government organisations run programs to strengthen the village economy through agriculture-based employment like cattle, poultry, ducks, and goat farming. The Bihar government provides subsidies up to 60% for promoting goat farming. Under the Integrated Goat and Sheep Scheme, there is a provision for subsidising ten goats plus one buck, and 40 goats and two bucks. The government also provides financial aid to disadvantaged communities like Scheduled Caste/Schedule Tribe and

Other Backward Classes. These continuously disadvantaged groups get up to 60% subsidy, while the rest get 50%.

In addition, the capital investment required for raising 20 goats with one buck is about two lakhs, and farmers can take a loan from the bank for this purpose. This process of approving loans goes through the Department of Animal Husbandry in consultation with the bank. After that, subsidies get deposited into the beneficiaries' bank accounts in two instalments. However, because of a lack of awareness, many rural families do not know these schemes, leading women farmers like Anita and Champa to take loans with

high interest rates to start goat farming. On top of that, due to their lack of training, it is difficult for farmers to acquire high-quality breeds.

To promote livelihoods, the government should provide adequate training and information to landless, marginal farmers, and labourers about the goat farming schemes. Details about these schemes should be available in the Panchayat office or Gram Sabha. Ward members should be responsible for disseminating information about these programs to goat farmers. Only then women in vulnerable situations will be able to continue goat farming as a career and give themselves and their families a better future.

Wedding hall fire in Iraq kills 100, hurts 150

AP ■ MOSUL (IRAQ)

A raging fire seemingly caused by fireworks set off to celebrate a Christian wedding consumed a hall packed with guests in northern Iraq, killing 100 people and injuring 150 others as authorities warned Wednesday the death toll could still rise.

Authorities said that flammable building materials also contributed to the latest disaster to hit Iraq's dwindling Christian minority. In the fire's chaotic aftermath, officials offered conflicting death tolls and security officials said they had detained staff at the wedding hall as part of their investigation.

The fire happened in the Hamdaniya area of Iraq's Nineveh province, authorities said. That's a predominantly Christian area just outside of the city of Mosul, some 335 kilometres (205 miles) north-west of Baghdad. There was no official word on the cause of



People gather at the site of a fatal fire, in the district of Hamdaniya, Nineveh province, Iraq on Wednesday. A fire that raced through a hall hosting a Christian wedding in northern Iraq killed multiple people, authorities said Wednesday. AP/PTI

the blaze, but the Kurdish television news channel Rudaw aired footage showing pyrotechnics shooting flames up from the floor of the event and setting a chandelier

afire. Multiple witnesses, including 50-year-old wedding attendee Faten Youssef, said the fire started as the bride and groom began their slow dance.

The flames raced through plastic decorations and the ceiling started collapsing, she said. "Flames started falling on us," Youssef told The Associated Press. "Things were

falling down and blocked the way to the exit." She said her family found their way out through a kitchen, after the family struggled through smoke and flames and her son failed to kick through a jammed exit door.

It wasn't immediately clear if the bride and groom were among those hurt.

Survivors arrived at local hospitals in bandages, receiving oxygen, as their families milled through hallways and outside as workers organized more oxygen cylinders. Some of those burned included children. Ambulance sirens wailed for hours after the fire as paramedics brought out the injured.

Extravagant wedding ceremonies are common in Iraq, like many countries in the Middle East. Families often invite hundreds of relatives and members of the broader community, spending heavily on spectacular ceremonies with elaborately decorated

halls, music and entertainers, often including pyrotechnics.

Casualty figures fluctuated in the hours after the incident.

An initial Health Ministry statement, carried by the state-run Iraqi News Agency, said the blaze killed over 100 people and injured 150. Health officials in Nineveh province put the death toll at 114, while Iraqi Interior Minister Abdul Amir al-Shammari later put the death toll at 93.

A Health Ministry official, speaking to the AP at midday Wednesday on condition of anonymity as he did not have authorization to talk to journalists, said that 30 bodies have been identified by their relatives, but the rest are so badly burned that will require DNA identification.

He put the death toll at 94, with around 100 people still receiving medical treatment. "The death toll is expected to rise as some are in critical condition," he said.

'US soldier Travis, who crossed into N Korea, is in American custody'

AP ■ SEOUL

The American soldier who crossed into North Korea two months ago is in American custody, two US officials said Wednesday. One official said that Pvt Travis King was transferred to US custody in China. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss King's status ahead of the US announcement.

Earlier, North Korea said it would expel King. That announcement surprised some observers who had expected the North to drag out his detention in the hopes of squeezing concessions from Washington at a time of high tensions between the rivals.

The North's official Korean Central News Agency reported that authorities have finished their questioning of King but did not say when officials plan to expel him or where.

King, who had served in South Korea, sprinted into North Korea while on a civilian tour of a border village on July 18, becoming the first American confirmed to be detained in the North in nearly five years.

At the time he crossed the border, King was supposed to be heading to Fort Bliss, Texas, following his release from prison in South Korea on an assault conviction.

On Wednesday, the state news agency said that King confessed to illegally entering the North because he harbored "ill feeling against inhuman maltreatment and racial discrimination" within the US Army and was "disillusioned about the unequal US society." It has attributed similar comments to King before, and verifying their authenticity is impossible.

"The relevant organ of the DPRK decided to expel Travis King, a soldier of the US Army who illegally intruded into the territory of the DPRK," the state news agency said, using the initials of North Korea's formal name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. US officials have said that King has been declared AWOL, which can be punished by time in the brig, forfeiture of pay or dishonourable



discharge, with the severity based on the amount of time away and whether the service member was apprehended or returned on their own. Following weeks of silence, North Korea confirmed in August that it had detained King, 23, and was investigating the circumstances surrounding his border crossing.

In an interview last month with The Associated Press, King's mother, Claudine Gates, said her son had "so many reasons" to want to come home.

"I just can't see him ever wanting to just stay in Korea when he has family in America. He has so many reasons to come home," she said.

King, who is from Wisconsin, was among about 28,000 US troops stationed in South Korea as a deterrent against potential aggression from North Korea. US officials had expressed concern about King's well-being, citing the North's harsh treatment of some American detainees in the past. Unauthorised crossings across the Demilitarized Zone separating the Koreas are extremely rare. The few Americans who crossed into North Korea in the past include soldiers, missionaries, human rights advocates or those simply curious about one of the world's most cloistered societies.

North Korea's decision to release King after 71 days appears relatively quick by the country's standards, especially considering the tensions between Washington and Pyongyang over the North's growing nuclear weapons and missile program and the United States' expanding military exercises with South Korea.

Leader of Spain's conservatives loses first bid to become PM

AP ■ MADRID

The leader of Spain's conservatives failed Wednesday in his long-shot first bid to become the country's next prime minister when he fell short of the votes he needed in the Spanish parliament to form a government. As expected, Popular Party leader Alberto Núñez Feijóo came up four votes shy of the necessary absolute majority of 176 votes in his favour. Feijóo will try again on Friday when the bar is lowered and he needs only more "yes" than "no" votes from parliament's 350 lawmakers.

The Popular Party holds 137 seats in the Madrid-based Congress of the Deputies, the most of any party. But even with backing from the far-right Vox's 33 lawmakers and two from small conservative parties representing Navarra and the Canary Islands, Feijóo only reached 172 votes in his favour to 178 against him.

Spain's July 23 national election left the parliament highly fragmented with its legislators spread between 11 different parties, setting the stage for a difficult path to power for any party. If Feijóo fails to win approval on his second attempt, acting Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez would get a shot at staying in the Moncloa Palace. The centre-left Socialist leader would have to round up enough support of lawmakers from a group of competing leftist, regionalist and separatist parties from Catalonia and the Basque Country. The parliament debated Feijóo's bid to become prime minister for several hours on Tuesday and on Wednesday morning before the vote. The debate, however, was dominated by the possibility that Sánchez is considering accepting demands from Catalan separatist parties that Spain grant an amnesty for hundreds, possibly thousands, of people who participated in a failed 2017 secession bid by northeast Catalonia. Sánchez, who has pardoned several high-level Catalan separatists, has kept quiet on the possibility of an amnesty, and only said that he wants to continue "normalising" relations with the northeast region where tensions have decreased in recent years.

6 climate activists take on European nations

AP ■ STRASBOURG

Six young people argued that governments across Europe aren't doing enough to protect people from climate change at the European Court of Human Rights on Wednesday in the latest and largest instance of activists taking governments to court to force climate action.

Legal teams for the 32 nations — which includes the 27 EU member countries, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Norway, Russia and Turkey — questioned the admissibility of the case as well as the claim that the plaintiffs are victims of climate change harm.

But lawyers representing the young adults and children from Portugal said the nations they're suing have failed to adequately address human-caused warming and therefore violated some of the group's fundamental rights.

Barrister Sudhanshu Swaroop, a counsel for United Kingdom, said national governments understand the threat

of climate change and its challenges and are determined to tackle it through international cooperation.

He said the plaintiffs should have gone through national courts first, and stressed that since they are not nationals of the countries they are attacking, other than Portugal, the European Court of Human Rights cannot have jurisdiction.

"There was no attempt by the applicants to invoke, let alone exhaust domestic remedies," agreed Isabelle Niedlispacher, a legal expert for Belgium.

Pleading on behalf of the young people, Alison Macdonald told the judges about the urgency to tackle the "biggest crisis that Europe and the world" have perhaps faced, and that they should play a bigger role in helping control planet-warming emissions. "It cannot be within a state's discretion whether or not to act to prevent catastrophic climate destruction," she said.

US allows Israeli citizens to travel to America visa-free

AP ■ WASHINGTON

The Biden administration is admitting Israel into a select group of countries whose citizens are allowed to travel to the United States without getting a visa in advance.

The decision announced Wednesday comes despite Washington's concerns about the Israeli government's treatment of Palestinian Americans and marks a major accomplishment for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who has sparred frequently with the Biden administration.

Under the waiver programme, Israelis will be able to travel to the US for business or leisure purposes for up to 90 days without a visa simply by registering with the Electronic System for Travel Authorisation. But even if they are authorised to travel under that system, US officials at the airport can still bar them from entering the country. Israel had been facing a

Saturday deadline, the end of the US government's budget year, to gain admission to the programme without having to requalify for eligibility next year.

The Department of Homeland Security administers the programme, which currently allows citizens of 40 mostly European and Asian countries to travel to the US for three months without visas.

Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said the agreement, after more than a decade of work, "will enhance our two nations' collaboration on counterterrorism, law enforcement and our other common priorities" and make the allies more secure.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken, in a joint statement with Mayorkas, cited enhanced "freedom of movement for US citizens, including those living in the Palestinian Territories or travelling to and from them." Israel's admission has been a priority for successive Israeli leaders. It comes as

Netanyahu is facing months of mass protests against his proposed remake of Israel's judicial system that critics say will make the country less democratic.

Countries that want to take part in the visa programme have to meet three critical benchmarks.

Israel met two of those benchmarks over the past two years: a low percentage of Israelis who applied for visas and were rejected and a low percentage of Israelis who have overstayed their visas. Israel had struggled to meet the third, for reciprocity that essentially means all US citizens, including Palestinian Americans, must be treated equally when travelling to or through Israel.

Claiming national security reasons, Israel has long had separate entry requirements and screening processes for Palestinian Americans.

Many complained that the procedures were onerous and discriminatory.

Azerbaijan says 192 of its troops were killed in last week's offensive

AP ■ BAKU

A total of 192 Azerbaijani troops were killed and 511 were wounded during Azerbaijan's offensive in Nagorno-Karabakh last week, the country's Health Ministry announced on Wednesday. It also said that one Azeri civilian died in the hostilities. Nagorno-Karabakh officials said earlier that at least 200 people on their side, including 10 civilians, were killed and over 400 were wounded in the fighting.

The military operation allowed Azerbaijan to reclaim full control over the breakaway region that was run by separatists for about 30 years.

Tens of thousands of ethnic Armenians — more than a third of the region's population — have already left. More are likely to follow after separatist troops agreed to lay down arms and Azerbaijan lifted a

10-month blockade of the road linking the territory to Armenia.

Azerbaijan and separatist officials have held two rounds of talks on the "reintegration" of Nagorno-Karabakh and its ethnic Armenian population into the mainly Muslim country, but how exactly it would happen remains unclear.

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

During a six-week war in 2020, Azerbaijan took back parts of Nagorno-Karabakh along with surrounding territory that Armenian forces had claimed during the earlier conflict.

In December, Azerbaijan imposed a blockade of the only road connecting Nagorno-Karabakh with

Armenia, alleging that the Armenian government was using the road for mineral extraction and illicit weapons shipments to the region's separatist forces.

Armenia charged that the closure denied basic food and fuel supplies to Nagorno-Karabakh's approximately 120,000 people. Azerbaijan rejected the accusation, arguing the region could receive supplies through the Azerbaijani city of Aghdam — a solution long resisted by Nagorno-Karabakh authorities, who called it a strategy for Azerbaijan to gain control of the region.

Some 42,500 people, or about 35 per cent of Nagorno-Karabakh's ethnic Armenian population, had left for neighbouring Armenia as of Wednesday morning, according to Armenian authorities. Hours-long traffic jams were reported on Tuesday on the

road linking Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia.

An explosion at a gas station near the region's capital Stepanakert, where people were queuing to fuel up their cars before leaving for Armenia, on Monday night killed at least 68 people, according to Nagorno-Karabakh's human rights ombudsman Gegham Stepanyan.

Another 290 were wounded, and a total of 105 were considered missing as of Tuesday evening, he said.

The Armenian Health Ministry on Wednesday said 237 people wounded in both the hostilities last week and the gas station explosion on Monday had been evacuated by ambulance and helicopter from Nagorno-Karabakh.

They're receiving necessary treatment, and the process of evacuating the injured continues, the ministry said.

UK authorities first drug consumption room

AP ■ LONDON

Scottish authorities on Wednesday approved a 2.3 million-pound (\$2.8 million) pound drug consumption room, the first government-backed place in the UK where users can take illegal drugs such as cocaine and heroin under the supervision of medical staff.

Local officials in the Scottish city of Glasgow on Wednesday approved the facility, which had long been delayed by political disagreements.

Authorities hope the pilot project will help tackle drug misuse problems in Scotland, which has the highest drug death figures in Western Europe and saw almost three times the rate of drug poisoning deaths compared to the UK average in 2021. The facility, which will start recruiting staff next year, was first proposed in 2016 following an

HIV outbreak in Glasgow among people who injected drugs in public places. It's backed by the Scottish government, although some lawmakers have raised concerns about the impact on local residents and businesses.

Proponents, including Scotland's drug and alcohol policy minister Elena Whitham, say evidence from more than 100 similar facilities worldwide, including in Germany and the Netherlands, show they work to save lives and reduce overall costs to health services.

The centre will be staffed by trained health care professionals and offer a hygienic environment where people can consume drugs they obtained elsewhere.

Officials say people can't share drugs with others in the facility, and that health and social workers at the centre will offer advice and support on recovery and welfare.

Churchill's Old War Office launched as luxury hotel

PTI ■ LONDON

The Old War Office (OWO) of Britain's World War II era prime minister Winston Churchill opened its doors as a brand-new luxury hotel in London with a glittering launch event, complete with surprise musical performances by musicians Lord Andrew Lloyd Webber and Andrea Bocelli.

Princess Anne — the Princess Royal, the sister of King Charles III, officially unveiled the plaque for the OWO after a tour of the hotel with Hinduja Group co-chairman GP Hinduja on Tuesday evening. British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak also made a quick stopover, along with parliamentarians, entrepreneurs, hoteliers and stars of film and television. The Indian-origin Hinduja Group conglomerate and the UK's richest family had acquired the landmark on Whitehall, opposite Downing Street, over eight years ago and tied up with Raffles Hotels to transform the building into an extravagant hub complete with luxury residences, restaurants and spas. "We have always been working to see what best we can do between India and the UK because we believe our responsibility is to act as a bridge between the host country and the motherland," said GP Hinduja.

"It took us eight years and in these eight years we had a lot to do, but finally this iconic building has been converted into peace and solace, not World Wars. It is the legacy not only of the Hinduja Group but London as a great destination. Everyone who lands in London will first come here to see what it is," he said. After the launch event, which also showcased the food of 3-Michelin-starred chef Mauro Colagreco as the chef partner for the OWO, the hotel will welcome its first guests starting this Friday.

UN asked to declare 'gender apartheid' as Af women's mental health worsens

AP ■ UNITED NATIONS

The UN's most powerful body must support governments seeking to legally declare the intensifying crackdown by Afghanistan's Taliban rulers on women and girls "gender apartheid", the head of the UN agency promoting gender equality said Tuesday.

Sima Bahous, executive director of UN Women, told the Security Council that more than 50 increasingly dire Taliban edicts are being enforced with more severity, including by male family members. That is exacerbating mental health issues and suicidal thoughts especially among young women and is shrinking women's decision-making even in their own homes.

"They tell us that they are prisoners living in darkness, confined to their homes with-



out hope or future," she said. Under international law, apartheid is defined as a system of legalized racial segregation that originated in South Africa. But a growing consensus among international experts, officials and activists says apartheid can also apply to gender in cases like that of

Afghanistan, where women and girls face systematic discrimination.

"We ask you to lend your full support to an intergovernmental process to explicitly codify gender apartheid in international law," Bahous urged the 15-member council, including its five permanent

members: the United States, Russia, China, Britain and France.

There is no existing international law to respond to "mass, state-sponsored gender oppression," Bahous said. But she said the Taliban's "systemic and planned assault on women's rights... must be named, defined and proscribed in our global norms so that we can respond appropriately."

The Taliban took power in August 2021 during the final weeks of the US and NATO forces' pullout from Afghanistan after 20 years of war. As they did during their previous rule of Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001, the Taliban gradually reimposed their harsh interpretation of Islamic law, or Sharia, barring girls from school beyond the sixth grade and women from almost all jobs, public spaces, gyms

and recently closing beauty salons.

The Security Council meeting on UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' latest report on Afghanistan took place on the final day of the annual meeting of world leaders at the 193-member UN General Assembly.

On Wednesday, Zabihullah Mujahid, the main spokesman for the Taliban government, slammed the council meeting for focusing on domestic Afghan matters of "women's education and their work" instead of issues such as security, peace and stability.

"It was necessary to discuss the end of the blacklist in the United Nations, the removal of sanctions, the release of seized assets," Mujahid said on X, formerly known as Twitter. He said the UN gathering should also have discussed "the recog-

niton of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan" as the Taliban call their government.

No country has recognized the Taliban, and the assembly's credentials committee hasn't either, primarily over its effort to relegate women to their homes and failure to form an inclusive government. This has left UN recognition with the now-ousted previous government led by Ashraf Ghani. For the third year, its representative did not speak at the high-level gathering.

Bahous said that over the past year, UN Women collaborated with the UN political mission in Afghanistan known as UNAMA and the UN International Office for Migration to interview over 500 Afghan women.

Among their key findings, she said: 46% think the Taliban should not be recognised under

any circumstances; 50% think the Taliban should only be recognised after it restores women's and girls' rights to education, employment, and participation in government.

The women interviewed said the dramatic shrinking of their influence on decision-making, not just at the national or provincial level but also in their communities and homes, is driven by increased poverty, decreasing financial contribution and "the Taliban's imposition of hyper-patriarchal gender norms," Bahous said.

In a grim sign of women's growing isolation, she said, only 22% of the women interviewed reported meeting with women outside their immediate family at least once a week, and a majority reported worsened relations with other members of their family and community.

Kakar admits military influence to continue in Pakistan polity

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Underscoring the inevitable role of the army in Pakistan, caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar has admitted that the country's military will continue its hold in politics unless civic delivery institutions are strengthened in the coup-prone country. The powerful Army, which has ruled coup-prone Pakistan for more than half of its 75-plus years of existence, has hitherto wielded considerable power in matters of security and foreign policy.

their leadership is beholden to the almost nefarious relationship with the military?

"As far as the civil-military relationship and its imbalance is concerned, I personally view it as a pure government structure. Pakistani politicians, all the political leadership, have had a marital alliance with this military institution for their own specific interests," the caretaker prime minister said.

"And once they are out of power, it is one of their favourite mantras to criticise and shift the onus of their own failures in terms of governance and pinpoint the reason behind that failure as an imbalance between the civil and military relationship," he pointed out.

"Unfortunately, in our case, the civilian institutions who (sic) are responsible for the service delivery at the behest of the government or state, are performing quite poorly in last three-to-four decades.... be it in our health services, be it in our education services, be it our disaster management, be it our tax revenue collection," he said, adding, "So, when there is poor governance challenge, the only institution which has the organizational capability left with us is military."

"So anyone who is leading the government has to rely on



the day-to-day basis on the challenges of government and engage them to do that delivery part," the leader from the Balochistan region said.

He also offered a remedial measure: "If somebody is genuinely interested that the military should not meddle in the affairs of the state structure, then we need to enhance the capability of these civilian institutions." The question about the military's influence had earlier stemmed from another question about the alleged US involvement in former prime minister Imran Khan's ouster.

Kakar promptly dismissed it as a "conspiracy theory" that is common in all kinds of political cultures. Khan was ousted from power in April 2022 after losing a no-confidence vote, which he had then

alleged was part of a US-led conspiracy targeting him because of his independent foreign policy decisions on Russia, China, and Afghanistan.

Khan is also facing more than 140 cases across the country and faces charges like terrorism, violence, blasphemy, corruption, and murder. Observing that they (Khan's party) themselves had "retreated and they retrieved that allegation themselves in a couple of months, Kakar said, "How would I, or anyone else, believe in such a conspiracy when people who brought it to public domain backtracked from it (sic)?"

Kakar said his government, even if a caretaker dispensation, has ensured that "no one, whether it is the USA or any other power, meddles in our domestic affairs." "We are a sovereign nation. We do things according to our own interests. Whether that was a good decision or a bad decision to oust Imran Khan's government, but all we know is for the last many, many, many years, that was the only way and time that he was ousted constitutionally. There was no military coup. That was all constitutional and lawful," Kakar asserted.

9 killed in blast as kids play with rocket shell in Pak's Sindh

Karachi (PTI): At least nine people, including five children, of the same family were killed on Wednesday when a rocket launcher's shell exploded at a house when the kids were playing with the ammunition in Pakistan's Sindh province, police said.

Kashmore-Kandhok Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Rohil Khosa said children found a rocket shell while playing on the ground and brought it home where it exploded, killing nine people, including five children, two women, and two men, of the same family. He said besides the casualties five others were injured in the explosion and rushed to hospital. "This is an area on the riverine belt and the rocket shell must have been left there by dacoits who hide out deep into the riverine belt areas," Khosa said.

The SSP said the police had reached the site and further investigation was underway and an "emergency" had been declared at the Kandhok Civil Hospital. Pakistan Peoples Party's Chairman and former foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said in a tweet that the riverine areas of Sindh and Punjab had become a safe haven to many criminal gangs and urged the government to clear the region from such elements.

Iran launches imaging satellite into orbit amid tensions with the West

AP ■ DUBAI

Iran claimed on Wednesday that it successfully launched an imaging satellite into space, a move that could further ratchet up tensions with Western nations that fear its space technology could be used to develop nuclear weapons.

Iran's Communication Minister Isa Zarepour said the Noor-3 satellite had been put in an orbit 450 kilometres (280 miles) above the Earth's surface, the state-run IRNA news agency reported.

It was not clear when exactly the launch took place. There was no immediate acknowledgment from Western officials of the launch or of the satellite being put into orbit.

The US military did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Iran has had a series of failed launches in recent years.

Zarepour said the aerospace arm of Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard, which has had success in launching satellites in the past, had carried out the most recent launch.

Authorities released footage of a rocket taking off from a mobile launcher without saying where the launch occurred. Details in the video corresponded with a Guard base near Shahroud, some 330

kilometres (205 miles) north-east of the capital, Tehran. The base is in Semnan province, which hosts the Imam Khomeini Spaceport from which Iran's civilian space program operates. The Guard operates its own space program and military infrastructure parallel to Iran's regular armed forces and answers only to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

It launched its first satellite into space in April 2020. But the head of the US Space Command later dismissed it as a "tumbling webcam in space" that would not provide vital intelligence. Western sanctions bar Iran from importing advanced spying technology.

The United States has alleged that Iran's satellite launches defy a UN Security Council resolution and has called on Tehran to undertake no activity related to ballistic missiles capable of delivering nuclear weapons. The US intelligence community's 2022 threat assessment claims the development of satellite launch vehicles "shortens the timeline" for Iran to develop an intercontinental ballistic missile because it uses similar technology.

Iran has always denied seeking nuclear weapons, and says its space program, like its nuclear activities, is for purely

civilian purposes. US intelligence agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency say Iran abandoned an organised military nuclear program in 2003.

Over the past decade, Iran has sent several short-lived satellites into orbit and in 2013 launched a monkey into space. The program has seen recent troubles, however. There have been five failed launches in a row for the Simorgh program, another satellite-carrying rocket.

A fire at the Imam Khomeini Spaceport in February 2019 killed three researchers, authorities said at the time. A launchpad rocket explosion later that year drew the attention of then-President Donald Trump.

Tensions are already high with Western nations over Iran's nuclear program, which has steadily advanced since Trump five years ago withdrew the US from the 2015 nuclear agreement with world powers and restored crippling sanctions on Iran.

Efforts to revive the agreement reached an impasse more than a year ago. Since then, the IAEA has said Iran has enough uranium enriched to near-weapons grade levels to build "several" nuclear weapons if it chooses to do so.

Pak inches closer to holding polls

Lists of prelim delimitation of constituencies published

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan on Wednesday inched closer to the holding of the much-awaited general elections as the country's chief election body published the lists of preliminary delimitation of constituencies. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) had announced it would hold the election in the last week of January after finalising the setting up of electoral districts in the light of the data of the census, which was held earlier

this year. In a press release, the ECP said that the report of preliminary delimitation has been uploaded on the commission's website and can be accessed by the public, where maps of the delimitation are also available.

"The publication of the preliminary constituencies will continue for 30 days from Sept 27 to Oct 26," it said, highlighting that objections to the preliminary constituencies can be made by the voters of the concerned constituency. The through representations would be in the form of representations addressed to the commission's secretary and be submitted to the ECP Secretariat in Islamabad by October 27.

"The ECP will take decisions on these representations from Oct 28 to Nov 26 after hearing the positions of the

respective parties," the release said. The final list of constituencies would be published on November 30, followed by issuance of the elections schedule and polling.

The completion of the delimitation brings ECP closer to holding polls by the last week of January, as planned by the body. A specific date for the elections is yet to be announced. The ECP earlier stated 54 days were required to let the candidate file nominations, their scrutiny and final approval as well as time for election campaign. That is why it said that the elections would be held in the last week of January. The initial listing of electoral districts is the first major step to fulfill the commitment to hold polls by the end of January.

The National Assembly

was dissolved on August 9 and constitutionally, the elections should be held within 90 days but the process was delayed by the ECP due to the delimitation exercise which became mandatory in the wake of the new census held this year. The previous government just days before the end of its term endorsed the results of the census which obligated the ECP to set up a new electoral district on the basis of the latest population. The move led to fears that the polls meant to be held within 90 days may be delayed till next year as the delimitation process would take about four months to complete. The National Assembly consists of 266 general seats and 60 seats reserved for women. Ten seats have also been reserved for non-Muslims.

Russia accuses Ukraine's Western allies of helping attack its Black Sea Fleet HQ

AP ■ KIVY

Russia on Wednesday accused Ukraine's Western allies of helping plan and conduct last week's missile strike on the Black Sea Fleet's headquarters in annexed Crimea.

"There is no doubt that the attack had been planned in advance using Western intelligence means, NATO satellite assets and reconnaissance planes and was implemented upon the advice of American and British security agencies and in close coordination with them," Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said at a briefing.

Moscow has repeatedly claimed that the US and its NATO allies have effectively become involved in the conflict by supplying weapons to

Ukraine and providing it with intelligence information and helping plan attacks on Russian facilities. The accusation came the day after video appeared to show the fleet's commander, Adm Viktor Sokolov, was still alive despite Ukraine's claims — without providing supporting evidence — that he was among 34 officers killed in Friday's strike on the port city of Sevastopol.

The Crimean Peninsula, which Russia illegally annexed from Ukraine in 2014, has been a frequent target since Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered a full-scale invasion of Ukraine 20 months ago. Crimea has served as the key hub supporting the invasion and has increasingly come under fire by Ukraine.

Ukraine said the strike

that put a large hole in the main building of the headquarters had wounded 105 people, though those claims could not independently be verified.

Russia initially said one serviceman was killed but quickly retracted that statement and said the person was missing. Moscow has provided no further updates and has not commented directly on Sokolov's status.

The Ministry of Defence, however, posted video Tuesday showing Sokolov among other senior officers attending a video conference with Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu. Sokolov did not speak in the clip shown.

Ukraine's Special Operation Forces posted a statement Tuesday saying its sources claimed Sokolov was among the dead, many of

whom had not yet been identified. It said it was trying to verify the claim after the video surfaced.

Sokolov was shown speaking to journalists about the Black Fleet's operations in a video posted on a news channel linked to the Russian Defence Ministry.

It wasn't clear when the video was recorded. The video didn't contain any mention of the Ukrainian attack on fleet headquarters.

Zakharova's statements follow comments made Tuesday by Dmitry Medvedev, the deputy head of Russia's Security Council, who said the arrival of American-made Abrams tanks in Ukraine and a US promise to supply an unspecified number of long-range ATACMS missiles would push NATO closer to a direct conflict with Russia.

Philippines says it will remove any barrier China installs in disputed South China Sea

AP ■ MANILA

Philippine forces would dismantle any floating barrier that China's coast guard may install in the disputed South China Sea, a Philippine admiral said Wednesday after Manila infuriated China by removing one such obstruction in a contested shoal. Philippine officials strongly condemned the installation last week of a 300-metre (980-foot)-long barrier by Chinese coast guard vessels at the entrance to the lagoon of Scarborough Shoal as a violation of international law and the country's sovereignty. The barrier has prevented a swarm of Filipino boats from entering the rich fishing area, they said. The shoal lies within the Philippines' exclusive economic zone just west of the main Luzon Island, but has been occupied by China since 2012 as part of a push by Beijing to lay claim to virtually the entire

South China Sea.

On Monday, the Philippine coast guard said it has complied with an order by President Ferdinand Marcos Jr to launch a covert operation to remove the rope and net barrier held up by small buoys in the mouth of the shoal. China reacted on Tuesday by asking the Philippines "not to make provocations or seek trouble."

"Huayang Island is China's inherent territory," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said in a news briefing in Beijing on Wednesday, referring to the Chinese name for Scarborough.

"What the Philippines (has) done is nothing but a farce that entertains itself. China will continue to safeguard territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests of Huangyan Island."

Philippine Vice Adm Alberto Carlos, who heads the military's Western Command in charge of overseeing the

South China Sea, told journalists he was concerned that the Chinese coast guard may also install a similar floating barrier at the entrance to Second Thomas Shoal, which is occupied by a small Philippine navy contingent on a long-grounded warship but has been surrounded by Chinese coast guard ships. "My concern is, if they also put a barrier in Ayungin...we also have to remove the barrier," Carlos told journalists, using the Philippine name for Second Thomas Shoal. "Whatever they install, we will remove." Under Marcos, who took office last year, the Philippines has intensified efforts to fight China's increasingly aggressive actions in one of the world's most hotly contested waters. The Philippine coast guard now often invites journalists to join its territorial patrols in an effort, it says, to expose China's bullying in the busy waterway.

Pakistan receives first shipment of LPG from Russia

Islamabad (PTI): Pakistan has received the first shipment of liquefied petroleum gas from Russia, marking the cash-strapped nation's second major Russian energy purchase.

The shipment of 100,000 metric tonnes of LPG was delivered by Russia to Pakistan through Iran's Sarakhs Special Economic Zone, the Russian embassy in Islamabad said on Tuesday. However, it did not provide details on Iran's involvement, and it was not immediately clear how much the LPG cost or if it was situated at the port of Karachi. The Russian embassy said consultations are on for the next shipment.

Tuesday's shipment comes after Pakistan received its first-ever delivery of Russian crude oil in June under a deal struck between the two countries earlier this year.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This notice is hereby given to general public that Mrs. Pooja Bansal and Mrs. Manita Bansal who claimed to be the owner and possession of First Floor (without roof rights), Property No. 43, area measuring 139.35 Sq. Meters, Khosla No. 28, 29, Roshni Sanyal Park, Khajuri Khas, Hauz Khas, Delhi through Sale Deed dated 29.06.2022, Doc. No. 5752, duly regd. SRO-VIII Delhi from Mr. Binod Bhushan Mehta, Mr. Sushel Bhushan Mehta, Mr. Rakesh Kumar Mehta and Mr. Sanku Kumar Mehta and they have become the owner of the said aforesaid property by virtue of Relinquishment Deed dated 12.07.2022, Doc. No. 13 against his Plot No. 136 area measuring 100 sq. yds. Out of Khosra no. 29/15 Dist. Faridabad Haryana. And whereas he has lost the following original document pertaining to the said property read with FR dated 05.06.2019. 1. Original Sale Deed dated 22.05.1995 executed by Smt. Puspita in favour of Smt. Puspita Duvvedi as Doc. No. 2193. All persons having any claim against or in respect of the said Property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage (equitable/registered or otherwise), gift, trust, inheritance, family arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnership, possession, lease, sublease, tenancy, license, lien, charge, pledge, assignment or otherwise, however, are hereby requested to notify the same in writing to us with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned below within 7 days from the date hereof, failing which the claim or claim, if any, of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned.

Kamal Kant Gupta (Advocate)
Unit No. FF-2, First floor, Mahalaxmi Metro Tower
Sec-4, Vashi, G.B., U.P., Mob. 9910065391

Notice is hereby given that my client Puneet Kumar is in process to availing loan from Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited against his Plot No. 136 area measuring 100 sq. yds. Out of Khosra no. 29/15 Dist. Faridabad Haryana. And whereas he has lost the following original document pertaining to the said property read with FR dated 05.06.2019. 1. Original Sale Deed dated 22.05.1995 executed by Smt. Puspita in favour of Smt. Puspita Duvvedi as Doc. No. 2193. All persons having any claim against or in respect of the said Property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage (equitable/registered or otherwise), gift, trust, inheritance, family arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnership, possession, lease, sublease, tenancy, license, lien, charge, pledge, assignment or otherwise, however, are hereby requested to notify the same in writing to us with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned below within 7 days from the date hereof, failing which the claim or claim, if any, of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned.

Kamal Kant Gupta (Advocate)
Unit No. FF-2, First floor, Mahalaxmi Metro Tower
Sec-4, Vashi, G.B., U.P., Mob. 9910065391

APPENDIX IV-A [See proviso to rule 8(6)]

Sale Notice for sale of Immovable Property
E-Auction Sale Notice for sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described Immovable Property mortgaged to **Indiabulls Housing Finance Ltd. [CIN: L65922DL2005PLC136029] ("Secured Creditor")**, the constructive possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of the Secured Creditor, will be sold on "as is where is", "as is what is" and "whatever there is" basis on 31.10.2023 from 02.00 P.M. to 04.00 P.M., for recovery of **Rs. 21,19,171/- (Rupees Twenty One Lakh Nineteen Thousand One Hundred Seventy One Only)** pending towards the Loan Account No. HHLDMT00453825, by way of outstanding principal, arrears (including accrued late charges) and interest till 22.09.2023 with applicable future interest in terms of the Loan Agreement and other related loan documents(s) w.e.f. 23.09.2023 along with legal expenses and other charges due to the Secured Creditor from **MANOJ KUMAR and DURGESH**.

The Reserve Price of the Immovable Property will be **Rs. 16,00,000/- (Rupees Sixteen Lakh Only)** and the Earnest Money Deposit ("EMD") will be **Rs. 1,60,000/- (Rupees One Lakh Sixty Thousand Only)** i.e. equivalent to 10% of the Reserve Price.

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY
FLAT NO. FF-302 (M. I. G) HAVING COVERED AREA 51.09 SQUARE METERS EQUIVALENT TO 550 SQUARE FEET ON FIRST FLOOR (FRONT LH) (WITHOUT ROOF RIGHTS) CONSTRUCTED UPON PLOT NO. A-7/2 (SITUATED IN DLF ANKUR VIHAR, PARGANA & TESHIL LONI, DISTRICT GHAZIABAD, GHAZIABAD - 201102, UTTAR PRADESH.

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided on the website of the Secured Creditor i.e. www.indiabullshomeloans.com. For bidding, log on to www.auctionfocus.in

Date : 23.09.2023
Place : GHAZIABAD

NOTICE

Kotak
Kotak Mahindra Bank

Locker hired by **Mr. Sanjay Kumar Singh** having address at **K-33 Corner Lajpat Nagar-2 New Delhi-110024** with Lajpat Nagar-2 Branch of **Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd.** situated at **A-47, Lajpat Nagar-2 New Delhi-110024** has rent in arrears for the last 4 years.

All the 3 letters sent to **Mr. Sanjay Kumar Singh** calling upon him to clear the dues of the rent has returned unserved and he is not contactable.

It is hereby informed that despite this notice if the said locker dues are not cleared by **Mr. Sanjay Kumar Singh** within **90 days** from the date of this notice, break open of the said locker will be done on **December 28, 2023** at around **12 p.m**

Kotak
Kotak Mahindra Bank

NOTICE

Locker hired by **Ms. Davinder Kaur** having address at **J-6-80 First Floor, Rajouri Garden New Delhi - 110027** with Branch of **Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd.** situated at **J-12/19 Rajouri Garden, New Delhi-110027** remains unoperated for the last 10 years.

All the 3 letters sent to **Ms. Davinder Kaur** calling upon her to operate the locker has returned unserved and she is not contactable.

It is hereby informed that despite this notice if the said locker is not operated by **Ms. Davinder Kaur** within **90 days** from the date of this notice, break open of the said locker will be done on **December 28, 2023** at around **12 p.m**

Kotak
Kotak Mahindra Bank

NOTICE

Locker hired by **Mr. Rohit Natvarlal Soni /Mrs. Hetal Rohit Soni** having address at **E-59 2nd Floor, Lajpat Nagar-2, New Delhi - 110024** with Lajpat Nagar-2 Branch of **Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd.** situated at **A-47, Lajpat Nagar-2 New Delhi-110024** has rent in arrears for the last 4 years.

All the 3 letters sent to **Mr. Rohit Natvarlal Soni /Mrs. Hetal Rohit Soni** calling upon them to clear the dues of the rent has returned unserved and they are not contactable.

It is hereby informed that despite this notice if the said locker dues are not cleared by **Mr. Rohit Natvarlal Soni /Mrs. Hetal Rohit Soni** within **90 days** from the date of this notice, break open of the said locker will be done on **December 28, 2023** at around **12 p.m**

Kotak
Kotak Mahindra Bank

NOTICE

Kotak
Kotak Mahindra Bank

Locker hired by **Mr. Davinder Kaur** having address at **J-6-80 First Floor, Rajouri Garden New Delhi - 110027** with Branch of **Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd.** situated at **J-12/19 Rajouri Garden, New Delhi-110027** remains unoperated for the last 10 years.

All the 3 letters sent to **Ms. Davinder Kaur** calling upon her to operate the locker has returned unserved and she is not contactable.

It is hereby informed that despite this notice if the said locker is not operated by **Ms. Davinder Kaur** within **90 days** from the date of this notice, break open of the said locker will be done on **December 28, 2023** at around **12 p.m**

Kotak
Kotak Mahindra Bank

NOTICE

Locker hired by **Mr. Rohit Natvarlal Soni /Mrs. Hetal Rohit Soni** having address at **E-59 2nd Floor, Lajpat Nagar-2, New Delhi - 110024** with Lajpat Nagar-2 Branch of **Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd.** situated at **A-47, Lajpat Nagar-2 New Delhi-110024** has rent in arrears for the last 4 years.

All the 3 letters sent to **Mr. Rohit Natvarlal Soni /Mrs. Hetal Rohit Soni** calling upon them to clear the dues of the rent has returned unserved and they are not contactable.

It is hereby informed that despite this notice if the said locker dues are not cleared by **Mr. Rohit Natvarlal Soni /Mrs. Hetal Rohit Soni** within **90 days** from the date of this notice, break open of the said locker will be done on **December 28, 2023** at around **12 p.m**

Kotak
Kotak Mahindra Bank

APPENDIX IV-A [See proviso to rule 8(6)]

Sale Notice for sale of Immovable Property
E-Auction Sale Notice for sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described Immovable Property mortgaged to **Indiabulls Housing Finance Ltd. [CIN: L65922DL2005PLC136029] ("Secured Creditor")**, the constructive possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of the Secured Creditor, will be sold on "as is where is", "as is what is" and "whatever there is" basis on 31.10.2023 from 02.00 P.M. to 04.00 P.M., for recovery of **Rs. 55,59,543/- (Rupees Fifty Five Lakh Fifty Nine Thousand Five Hundred Forty Three Only)** pending towards the Loan Account No. HLAPO00349016, by way of outstanding principal, arrears (including accrued late charges) and interest till 22.09.2023 with applicable future interest in terms of the Loan Agreement and other related loan documents(s) w.e.f. 23.09.2023 along with legal expenses and other charges due to the Secured Creditor from **Bale Ram @ Balram Singh and Kaushalya @ Koshiya**.

The Reserve Price of the Immovable Property will be **Rs. 69,25,000/- (Rupees Sixty Nine Lakh Twenty Five Thousand Only)** and the Earnest Money Deposit ("EMD") will be **Rs. 6,92,500/- (Rupees Six Lakh Ninety Two Thousand Five Hundred Only)** i.e. equivalent to 10% of the Reserve Price.

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY
PROPERTY BEING RESIDENTIAL PLOT NO. D - 366 AREA MEASURING 50 SQUARE METERS EQUIVALENT TO 60 SQUARE YARDS, BLOCK - D IN THE RESIDENTIAL COLONY KNOWN AS "SUSHANT LOK PHASE - II", SITUATED IN VILLAGE GHATA, TESHIL SOHNA, DISTRICT GURUGRAM, GURUGRAM - 122001, HARYANA AND WHICH IS BOUNDED AS FOLLOWS:
NORTH : PLOT NO. D-365 EAST : ROAD
SOUTH : PLOT NO. D-367 WEST : PLOT NO. D-370

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided on the website of the Secured Creditor i.e. www.indiabullshomeloans.com. For bidding, log on to www.auctionfocus.in

Date : 23.09.2023
Place : GURUGRAM

Authorized officer
Indiabulls Housing Finance Limited

3 astronauts return to Earth after a year in space

AP ■ CAPE CARNIVAL

A NASA astronaut and two Russian cosmonauts returned to Earth on Wednesday after being stuck in space for just over a year. American Frank Rubio set a record for the longest US spaceflight — a result of the extended stay.

The trio landed in a remote area of Kazakhstan, descending in a Soyuz capsule that was rushed up as a replacement after their original ride was hit by space junk and lost all its coolant while docked to the International Space Station.

What should have been a 180-day mission turned into a 371-day stay. Rubio spent more than two weeks longer in space than Mark Vande Hei, who held NASA's previous endurance record for a single

spaceflight. [Russia holds the world record of 437 days, set in the mid-1990s.]

The Soyuz capsule that brought Rubio and cosmonauts Sergey Prokopyev and Dmitri Petelin back was a replacement launched in February. Russian engineers suspect a piece of space junk pierced the radiator of their original capsule late last year, midway through what should have been a six-month mission. Engineers worried that without cooling, the capsule's electronics and any occupants could overheat to dangerous levels, so the craft returned early.

There wasn't another Soyuz to launch a fresh crew until this month. Their replacements finally arrived nearly two weeks ago. "No one deserves to go home to their families more than you," the space station's

new commander, Denmark's Andreas Mogensen, said earlier this week. Prokopyev told ground controllers throughout the descent that all three were feeling good. They experienced more than four times the force of gravity as their capsule streaked through the atmosphere and came to a touchdown in the barren Kazakh steppes. Helicopters moved in with recovery crews to fetch the astronauts.

Sensex rebounds from early lows

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark Sensex rebounded from early lows to settle higher by 173 points on Wednesday following buying in Reliance Industries, Larsen & Toubro and ITC and positive trends in Asian and European markets.

The 30-share BSE Sensex rose by 173.22 points or 0.26 per cent to settle at 66,118.69 with 20 of its components ending in the green and 10 closing lower.

The index opened lower and fell further to a low of 65,549.96 in morning trade. However, buying in Reliance, L&T, Infosys and Maruti helped it recover losses. Later, it jumped 226.8 points or 0.34 per cent to a high of 66,172.27.

The Nifty gained 51.75 points or 0.26 per cent to end at 19,716.45. It moved between a low of 19,554 and a high of 19,730.70 in day trading.



Among the Sensex firms, Larsen & Toubro, ITC, Sun Pharma, Maruti, Reliance Industries, Axis Bank, IndusInd Bank and Hindustan Unilever were among the gainers. Titan, State Bank of India, ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank, Tata Steel and Nestle were the major laggards.

"The market inched higher in the second half, driven by positive openings in European markets. Concerns about global interest rates and elevated oil prices are being balanced by several domestic factors, such as promising economic growth prospects and the potential for strong earnings, which validate the premium valuation," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

Persistent outflows of foreign funds and rising US bond yields are expected to keep the broader indices in bleak terrain, in the near term, Nair added.

Ajit Mishra, SVP - Technical Research, Religare Broking Ltd said that markets remained volatile but ended higher due to recovery in select heavyweights.

"The impending rebound in select heavyweights like Reliance and ITC largely contributed to the recovery," Mishra said, adding that the scheduled monthly expiry of derivative contracts would keep the volatility high.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.76 per cent and smallcap index jumped 0.68 per cent.

Among the indices, capital goods jumped 1.14 per cent, healthcare climbed 1.13 per cent, industrials (0.97 per cent), FMCG (0.77 per cent), realty (0.70 per cent), IT (0.48 per cent) and teck (0.43 per cent).

Bankex, consumer durables and oil & gas were the laggards.

In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong ended in the green. European markets were trading mostly in positive territory. The US markets ended lower on Tuesday.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.98 per cent to USD 94.88 a barrel. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 693.47 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data.

Implementation of NFSA, LPG subsidy to be evaluated

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Niti Aayog is looking to hire a technical consultant to evaluate the implementation of the National Food Security Act (NFSA) and LPG subsidy to ensure benefits are reaching eligible beneficiaries.

The government think tank's Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO) has floated a tender to select a technical consultant for "Central Coordinating Agency for Evaluation of the National Food Security Act and LPG Subsidy".

"The government implements one of the largest public food and nutritional safety nets in the world through the National Food Security Act (NFSA), enacted in 2013.

"...However, despite the large public expenditure, gains in the food security and nutritional outcomes in India have been slow, with the country accounting for roughly 30 per cent of the global burden of hunger," DMEO said in the RFP (request for proposal) document.

The National Food Security Act provides a legal mandate for the distribution of foodgrains at subsidised prices, cooked meals, take-home rations, and food security allowance through a network of schemes — namely the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), and Mid-Day-Meal (MDM) scheme.



The cost of implementing the food subsidy under TPDS was Rs 4,22,618.11 crore in 2021 (Revised Estimate). The cost of implementing MDM and ICDS was Rs 12,900 crore and Rs 17,252.21 crore (Revised Estimate), respectively.

According to the DMEO report, "More than 1/3rd of children less than 5 years are stunted (35.5 per cent, NFHS-V, 2019-20), one-quarter of adolescents aged 10-14 years have low body-mass-index (BMI) for their age (24 per cent, CNNS, 2016-18), and more than half of all women aged 15-59 years and 15-19 years are anaemic (57 per cent and 59.1 per cent, NFHS-V, 2019-20)".

Elaborating on the rationale behind the evaluation of the LPG subsidy, DMEO further said that India is the third largest energy consumer in the world after China and the US.

"The current consumption of LPG in India has risen to 12.3 per cent of total petroleum products compared to 1.13 per cent of kerosene. The ongoing schemes will potentially increase the usage of LPG further, thus, making their evaluation imperative," it added.

DMEO also said the demand for oil and gas has been burgeoning over the years with rising population, economic growth, and concomitant demand for cleaner energy.

To meet future energy demands, a market-determined price mechanism (MDPM) was introduced through price deregulation, which allowed the refineries to stipulate refinery gate prices of petroleum products that would compete with prices of imported products, it added.

DMEO pointed out that the LPG subsidy not only reflects the policy makers' cognizance of the need to augment the transition from traditional cooking fuel, such as firewood and dung cake to cleaner cooking fuels but also to provide them to a majority of the underserved population — mostly from rural areas and economically weaker sections — at subsidised rates.

AMNS India's Hazira project to be started by 2026: Mittal

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

ArceLorMittal executive chairman Lakshmi N Mittal on Wednesday expressed confidence that AMNS India's Hazira project, which is under expansion, will be commissioned by 2026.

In October last year, ArceLorMittal's arm AMNS India had stated that it will invest Rs 60,000 crore to scale up capacity of its steel plant at Hazira to 15 million tonnes (MT).

"We have full confidence that with the cooperation of the Centre and Gujarat government, we will be able to commission the project by 2026, Mittal said here while speaking at the celebrations of 20 years of 'Vibrant Gujarat' summit.

Hazira expansion project is moving at a fast pace and over 20,000 people are involved in the project construction, he said.

"It is our target to double our production capacity in the first phase and then triple...We will also make advance products for technology," he said, adding it would help India reduce imports and become self-reliant.

The company is also committed for sustainability, he said.

He also said that because of the 'Vibrant Gujarat' summit, different states are organising investor summits and this is helping India attract foreign investments.

Today India is termed as the fastest growing economy in the world and global firms are keen to invest in the country.

He added that the successful G20 Summit has further enhanced the image of India.



The summit not only reflected India's diplomatic and organisational success, but also showed India's image as a global consensus builder.

Talking about the state, Mittal said that Gujarat is a leading industry state as it has presence of industries from varied sectors such as petrochemicals, automobile, pharma, port, textiles, electric vehicles, green hydrogen and semiconductors.

The state, he said, provides reliable infrastructure, stable policy environment, and professional administration.

In January 2022, he said the company signed an agreement with the state to invest over Rs 1 lakh crore.

Further, he said that at a time when India is attracting the eyes of the world, there is a need to focus on talented manpower and industry 4.0.

Speaking at the event, Welspun Chairman B K Goenka said that the investor summit in Gujarat has helped in increasing investments and promoting socio-economic development in the state.

The Vibrant Gujarat summit has become like WEF (World Economic Forum), where top global industry leaders participate.

He added that Kutch is going to be the capital of green hydrogen.

The next Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit is scheduled from January 10-12 next year in Gandhinagar. Takashi Suzuki, Director General, JETRO - The Japan External Trade Organisation, said that Japan contributes significantly to the 'make in India' initiative.

"We plan to invite a Japanese business delegation focusing on semiconductor electronics...In November," he said, adding, "we would like to show every new opportunity and happening in Gujarat to attract them."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi initiated the Summit during his tenure as the chief minister of the state in 2003 with the aim of making Gujarat a leader on the global map of industry



Adani Ports to buy back another \$195 mn of bonds

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone will prepay USD 195 million of debt due in 2024 as the conglomerate helmed by Gautam Adani looks to boost investors' confidence post being targeted by a US short-seller.

In a stock exchange filing, APSEZ said it will buy back USD 195 million of bonds due in 2024 using its cash reserves. Out of the USD 520 million principal outstanding, USD 325 million will be left after the buyback, it said.

The company board "has approved tranche II of the tender offer to purchase for cash up to USD 195 million in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding 3.375 per cent senior notes due 2024 which represents 30 per cent of the principal amount of the notes," it said.

In May, the company had bought back its July 2024 bonds for cash USD 130 million in aggregate of the principal amount and stated that it would buy back 20 per cent of the principal amount of the bonds in each of the next four quarters.

In the second tranche of this, the company is now proposing to purchase up to USD 195 million of bonds. This represents 30 per cent of the principal amount of the bonds (USD 650 million). After USD 130 million buyback in May, USD 520 million remained outstanding.

The buyback tender is open till October 26, the filing said.

Adani Group has been attempting to rebuild investors' confidence since Hindenburg Research in a January 24 report accused it of accounting fraud and improper use of offshore tax havens for stock manipulation.

The group has denied all allegations. The company has engaged Barclays Bank, DBS Bank, Emirates NBD Bank PJSC, First Abu Dhabi Bank PJSC, Mizuho Securities (Singapore) Pte Ltd, MUFG Securities Asia Singapore Branch, SMBC Nikko Securities (Hong Kong) and Standard Chartered Bank to serve as deal managers for the offer. The company will pay accrued interest, in respect of any notes purchased in the tender offer.

Rupee snaps two-day fall, recovers 6 paise against \$

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee on Wednesday staged a recovery after two days of steep losses to end 6 paise higher at 83.22 (provisional) against the US dollar on positive cues from domestic equity markets.

However, selling pressure from foreign equity investors amid elevated levels of American currency and surging crude oil prices weighed on the local unit, forex traders said.

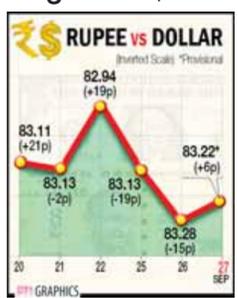
At the interbank foreign exchange, the domestic unit opened at 83.23 and traded in a narrow range of 83.18 to 83.24 against the greenback. It finally settled at 83.22 (provisional), registering a gain of 6 paise from its previous close.

The rupee lost 34 paise in the past two sessions. It closed 15 paise lower at 83.28 against the dollar on Tuesday, a day after registering a decline of 19 paise.

The downward movement of the rupee was attributed to a strengthening dollar amid a record rise in US Treasury yields. Also, the US dollar surged to a ten-month high level after a Federal Reserve policymaker hinted at a prolonged interest rate hike cycle.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, rose 0.05 per cent to 106.28.

Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, were trading 0.87 per cent higher at USD 94.78 per barrel.



Churchill's Old War Office launched as luxury hotel by Hinduja

PTI ■ LONDON

The Old War Office (OWO) of Britain's World War II era prime minister Winston Churchill opened its doors as a brand-new luxury hotel in London with a glittering launch event, complete with surprise musical performances by musicians Lord Andrew Lloyd Webber and Andrea Bocelli.

Princess Anne - the Princess Royal, the sister of King Charles III, officially unveiled the plaque for The OWO after a tour of the hotel with Hinduja Group co-chairman GP Hinduja on Tuesday evening.

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak also made a quick stopover, along with parliamentarians, entrepreneurs, hoteliers and stars of film and television.

The Indian-origin Hinduja Group conglomerate and the UK's richest family had acquired the landmark on Whitehall, opposite Downing Street, over eight years ago and tied up with Raffles Hotels to transform the building into an extravagant hub complete with luxury residences, restaurants and spas.

"We have always been working to see what best we can do between India and the UK because we believe our responsibility is to act as a bridge between the host country and the motherland," said GP Hinduja.

"It took us eight years and in these eight years we had a lot to do, but finally this iconic building has been converted into peace and solace, not World Wars. It is the legacy not only of the Hinduja Group but London as a great destination. Everyone who lands in London will first come here to see what it is," he said. After the launch event, which also showcased the food of 3-Michelin-starred chef Mauro Colagreco as the chef partner for The OWO, the hotel will welcome its first guests starting this Friday.

Raffles London at The OWO, as it is officially known, has been developed in partnership between the Hinduja Group and French multinational hospitality group Accor.

"When we came to Whitehall, the team were blown away by the size and beauty of this majestic building. No expense has been spared in bringing it back to its former glory and paying homage to its heritage, whilst breathing new life into it.

Along with Raffles London at The OWO, we hope to create a legacy that is both timeless and unsurpassed," said Sanjay Hinduja, who has overseen the project.

IGST on ocean freight exempted from Oct 1

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government has exempted payments made for goods imported through ocean freight from 5 per cent integrated GST with effect from October 1.

The Finance Ministry has notified changes to the IGST Act with regard to payment of integrated GST on 'ocean freight' on imported goods with effect from October 1. Currently, importers are required to pay 5 per cent GST under the Reverse Charge Mechanism.

KPMG Indirect Tax Head & Partner Abhishek Jain said the amendments proposed are aligned with the apex court's ruling in the case of Mohit Minerals and help explicitly mention the government's alignment to the position. "While this has been issued prospectively, the industry has been seeking and successfully claiming refund of taxes already paid for the past period, where credit has not been availed," Jain added.

Giving its ruling in the Mohit Minerals case, the Supreme Court in May last year had held that since the Indian importer is liable to pay IGST on the 'composite supply', comprising of supply of goods and supply of services of transportation, insurance, etc in a CIF (Cost Insurance Freight) contract, a separate levy on the Indian importer for the 'supply of services' by the shipping line would be in violation of the GST Act.

In the Mohit Minerals case, the company challenged the validity of the CBIC notification regarding the levy of IGST on ocean freight in the Gujarat High Court.



Fire risk forces Hyundai, Kia to recall 3.4 mn vehicles

AP ■ DETROIT

Hyundai and Kia are recalling nearly 3.4 million vehicles in the US and telling owners to park them outside due to the risk of engine compartment fires.

The recalls cover multiple car and SUV models from the 2010 through 2019 model years including Hyundai's Santa Fe SUV and Kia's Sorrento SUV.

Documents posted Wednesday by the US safety regulators say the anti-lock brake control module can leak fluid and cause an electrical short, which can touch off a fire while the vehicles are parked or being driven.

The automakers are advising owners to park outdoors and away from structures until repairs are done.

Dealers will replace the anti-lock brake fuse at no cost to owners. Kia says in documents that it will send notification letters to owners starting Nov 14. For Hyundai the date is Nov 21.

Messages were left early Wednesday seeking comment from both companies.

Moody's downgrades Vedanta Resources

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Moody's Investors Service has downgraded the rating of Vedanta Resources Ltd because of the elevated risk of debt restructuring over the next few months, as the firm has not made progress on refinancing its upcoming debt maturities.

Moody's said it has downgraded to Caa2 from Caa1, the corporate family rating (CFR) of Vedanta Resources Limited (VRL).

At the same time, Moody's has maintained a negative outlook.

"The downgrade reflects the elevated risk of debt restructuring over the next few months because VRL has not made any meaningful progress on refinancing its upcoming debt maturities, in particular the USD 1 billion bonds maturing each in January 2024 and August 2024," said Kaustubh Chaubal, a Moody's Senior Vice President and lead analyst on VRL.

VRL's credit quality is constrained by its weak liquidity because of large refinancing needs and interest expenses amid tightening financing conditions in global capital markets, the agency noted.

"The company continues to face challenges in refinancing its debt, a reflection of reduced appetite for the lending community, and a key credit concern," the rating agency said.

"VRL's Caa category CFR reflects the company's unsustainable capital structure, aggressive risk appetite and weak financial management."

Balmer Lawrie plans to expand revenue streams

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Balmer Lawrie & Company will engage a consultant to study the feasibility of entering new business areas, such as the production of ethanol and green hydrogen, to expand its revenue streams, a top official of the firm said on Wednesday.

The diversified PSU, under the administrative control of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, currently has eight strategic business units with industrial packaging and logistics services being the key revenue generators of the company.

The Kolkata-headquartered company recorded an annual turnover of Rs 2,380 crore in the last financial year.

"We are in the process of engaging a consultant to study the feasibility of entering new areas of businesses like manufacturing of ethanol and green hydrogen and doing third-party logistics (3PL).

"The company has ambitious targets and growth plans. The study will find out whether we have the capability and bandwidth to enter these new lines of businesses", Balmer Lawrie Chairman and Managing Director Adika Ratna Sekhar told reporters after the company's AGM here.

The company aims at garnering a revenue of Rs 3,000-4,000 crore in the next two years, and Rs 5,000 crore in the next three to four years, he said, adding that there is a need to increase the revenue streams to meet these targets.

IN BRIEF

RUG UTSAV: CELEBRATION OF ARTISTRY, CRAFTSMANSHIP
New Delhi: Annual Rug Utsav started on September 27 offering interactive sessions with talented weavers, besides exclusive discounts on a wide array of rug categories. Jaipur Rugs organised the event to support education through the JR Meritorious Scholarship Program. We have always prioritised the pursuit of happiness and bringing light to the lives of our weavers, said Yogesh Chaudhary, Director, Jaipur Rugs.

WORLD HEART DAY DRIVE
New Delhi: In celebration of World Heart Day, MediBuddy, a major digital healthcare platform, has invited individuals to take a moment to reflect on their heart health and encourage everyone to #HeartYourOwnHeart. "Your heart is your most vital organ, and it deserves all the care and attention it can get. The campaign urges people to Eat Heart-Healthy, Get Active, Quit Smoking, Manage Stress, Regular Check-ups," said Saibal Biswas of MediBuddy.

TATA POWER TO SET UP 41 MW CAPTIVE SOLAR PLANT
New Delhi: Tata Power Renewable Energy will set up a 41 MW captive solar plant at Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu, for TP Solar's new greenfield 4.3 GW solar cell and module manufacturing facility, the company said.

Travel & tourism sector sees 44 per cent jump in hiring in Aug: Report

PTI ■ MUMBAI

With the country witnessing a boom in the travel and tourism sector, the industry saw a 44 per cent growth in hiring demand in August, compared to the same month last year, a report said on Wednesday. This optimistic growth can be attributed to increased disposable incomes and higher spending on leisure and business travel in the country, a report by foundit (formerly Monster APAC & ME) said.

Pre-pandemic trends indicate that the travel and tourism sector experienced a robust 16 per cent growth in 2019, however, with the pandemic-related disruptions, travel restrictions and lockdowns, there was a 47 per cent fall in job postings in 2020 and 27 per cent dip in 2021.

While the industry began to bounce back with a marginal 3 per cent growth in hiring in 2022, it has dramatically recovered this year, as people regained confidence in travel, the report stated.



The foundit report is based on the data as of August 2023. The report also includes annual data comparisons for the period August 2023, against August 2022.

"The travel and tourism industry has truly bounced back from the pandemic with a boom, driven significantly by the government initiatives focused on infrastructural development and heritage promotion.

"India has also opened its doors by allowing 100 per cent foreign direct investment (FDI) for tourism construction projects, and participation in the G20 summit has further bolstered sustainable tourism in the country," foundit, a Qness company, CEO Sekhar Garisa said.

NARUKA BAGS SILVER IN MEN'S SKEET



This is also my first Asian Games medal," he added. He said the day's performance was his best. "You need to imagine what your targets would be. I tried to break the targets in my head. I have to make a vision of how I have to break them. "But it all depends on the particular day. Everyone performing at the highest level would tell you, on the day if you are shooting well and your rhythm is going on, anyone can win. It is just about the rhythm and experience counts," he added. He said the humidity at the Fuyang Yinhu Sports Centre Range was energy-sapping. "Throughout the day, you are mentally exhausted but you need to keep going," Naruka added. Earlier in the day, the trio of Naruka, Bajwa and Khangura shot a total of 355 to win the team bronze. Hosts China won the gold medal while Qatar claimed the silver. The Indian women's team, however, crashed out of the shotgun skeet event by finishing in the fourth position behind Kazakhstan, China and Thailand.

PTI ■ HANGZHOU
India's Anant Jeet Singh Naruka claimed the silver medal in men's skeet event at the Asian Games here on Wednesday, adding to the team bronze he won alongside Angad

Vir Singh Bajwa and Gurjoat Khangura. Naruka performed well and looked on course to win the gold, having not missed a shot until the business end of the final. Naruka finished with an impressive 58/60 but it was still not good enough for gold as Kuwait's Abdullah Alrashidi equalled the world record with a perfect 60/60 to finish on top of the podium. Nasser Al-Attiya of Qatar bagged the bronze with 46. "I lost my rhythm a bit in the middle. Later, I recovered. It was a good competition.

INDIAN TRIO SHOOT GOLD



Gold medalist Indian shooters Esha Singh, Rhythm Sangwan and Manu Bhaker pose for photos during the presentation ceremony of women's 25m pistol rapid team event at the 19th Asian Games, in Hangzhou, China, Wednesday

Sarvanan wins bronze; sailors end campaign with one silver, two bronze

PTI ■ NINGBO
Indian sailor Vishnu Sarvanan won a bronze, the country's first-ever medal in the men's dinghy ILCA-7 event at the Asian Games here on Wednesday. Sarvanan finished with a net score of 34 points to miss the silver medal by just one point in the gruelling 11-race competition. South Korea's Jeemin HA took the second spot with 33 points. Singapore's Jun Han Ryan Lo claimed the gold with a net score of 26. Lack of wind, however, denied India a medal in women's single dinghy ILCA-6 event where Nethra Kumanan had to settle for a disappointing fourth place finish after race No 12, which was to be the final one in the category, was cancelled. After the penultimate race, Nethra (41 net points) was three points behind Singapore's Jing Hua Victoria Chan (38). But she eventually failed to secure a podium finish as race 12 could not be held and the event was cancelled. Nevertheless, the Indian sailors matched their 2018 Asian Games feat of one silver and two bronze medals here.



Earlier on Tuesday, 17-year-old Neha Thakur grabbed a silver, while Eabad Ali claimed a bronze, India's first-ever medal in the men's windsurfer RS:X event. In sailing, the competitor's worst score (which is equivalent to their respective positions) from all the races is subtracted from the total points to determine the net score. The one with the lowest net score is adjudged the winner. Sarvanan had a total score of 48 and his worst race was No. 8, where he finished last in the 13-competitor field after retiring because of a technical foul. So, he ended up with 14 points with the addition of one penalty-point in race No. 8. Sarvanan, thus, finished with 34 net points by subtracting 14 points from his overall score of 48, just one-point behind Jeemin, who took the silver. A reigning National champion since 2017, Sarvanan finished second as the second-best Asian at the Tokyo Olympics by virtue of his 20/25 overall finish.

Nikhat sails into quarters; Shiva, Sanjeet bow out



PTI ■ HANGZHOU
Earlier, Shiva, who received a first round bye, was beaten by Kuldaev's relentless attacks and pace in a draining pre-quarterfinal bout. It is a shocking defeat as Shiva was a strong medal contender. Kuldaev started off aggressively, as his onslaught caught Shiva off guard. The Indian took a few seconds to regroup and connect his powerful hooks. But at a slight height disadvantage, Shiva was forced to fight from a distance with the judges ruling the first round 4-1 in favour of Aksat. The 21-year-old from Kyrgyzstan continued his attacks in the second round. He kept throwing punches which didn't necessarily connect but it forced Shiva to defend. Shiva was more patient with his punches, which cost the Assam boxer the second round. Trailing, Shiva tried his best to land a flurry of punches in the final three minutes but his younger opponent stepped back and defended easily. In the second Indian bout of the day, Sanjeet found it tough to respond to the 2022 super heavyweight Asian Champions' punches and was forced to go into a defensive mode. Trailing 0-5, Sanjeet lost his balance after being struck by Mullojonov's punch, which got him an eight count.

Indian men in quarters in basketball 3x3

PTI ■ HANGZHOU
The Indian men's 3x3 basketball team continued its winning streak, progressing to the quarterfinal with a dominating win over Macao in a Pool C game at the Asian Games here on Wednesday. Sahaj Pratap Singh Sekhon scored a maximum of 10 points in the match and helped India beat Macao 21-12. Macao's only positive in the match was Hou In Ho, who scored five points in the match. India had previously defeated Malaysia by 20-16 on the first day of the event. India will face last-edition gold medallist China in their next match on Friday, while the women will take on China later in the day.



Sathiyani-Batra, Harmeet-Sreeja pairs enter mixed doubles pre-quarters

PTI ■ HANGZHOU
India's G Sathiyani and Manika Batra stormed into the mixed doubles pre-quarterfinals of the table tennis competition in the Asian Games here on Wednesday. Sathiyani and Batra defeated Thailand's Napat Thanmathikom and Suthasini Sawattabut 10-12, 11-8, 11-3, 11-8. Later, Harmeet Desai teamed up with Sreeja Akula to overcome Macao's Chi Cheng Cheong and Hui Li Seak 12-10, 11-7, 11-7 to also enter the last 16 stage. Sathiyani and Batra made a rather cold start to the match losing the first game 10-12. Perhaps, stung by the loose game they dished out, the



Indian pair showed more purpose in the second game. The Thai duo tailed their Indian counterparts 6-6 but Sathiyani and Batra upped their game when it was needed the most. Napat could not return Sathiyani's fierce forehand when India were leading 10-8, as India levelled the scores. Sathiyani and Batra had little trouble in quelling the challenge of Thai players in the third set, winning it quite easily 11-3.

In the fourth game, India were comfortably leading 10-5, but the Thai pair made a mini comeback winning three points in a row. However, Suthasini could not connect with a forehand properly as India won the point and the match. Harmeet and Sreeja faced some stiff resistance from Macao's Chi and Hui in the first game before winning it 12-10. But the Indian duo did not face any meaningful challenge from their opponents in the next two games. In the men's doubles event, India's Manav Thakkar and Manush Shah survived some close moments before beating Thailand's Napat Thanmathikom and Sitisak Nuchchart 11-8, 8-11, 11-6, 7-11, 12-10.



Hriday, Anush, Divyakriti to enter individual dressage final

PTI ■ HANGZHOU
India's Hriday Vipul Chheda, Anush Agarwalla and Divyakriti Singh continued their fine show and moved into medal contention after qualifying for the individual dressage final of equestrian at the Asian Games here on Wednesday. Astride his horse Chempro, Hriday topped the qualification round with total score of 73.883, while Anush, riding Etro, finished fourth with score of 71.706. Riding Adrenalin Firofod, Divyakriti Singh finished 11th with score of 67.676, while Sudipti Hajela was eliminated. The top 15 riders in qualifying progress to the final. The quartet of Hriday, Anush, Divyakriti and Sudipti on Tuesday claimed a historic team dressage gold, breaking a 41-year-old jinx at the continental event.

David Beckham advances to men's sprint quarterfinal

PTI ■ HANGZHOU
India's David Beckham Elkatochoongo shone in the cycling track, making the quarterfinal in men's sprint event at the Asian Games here on Wednesday. On a difficult track of at the



CSC Velodrome, David edged out his Kazakhstan rivals Sergey Ponomaryov and Andrey Kazchugay in final repechage to confirm his last-eight place. Earlier in the final heat, David edged out Ponomaryov by 0.188 seconds to make the

last-eight. Ronaldo Singh Laitonjam however failed to progress losing to Andrey Chugay of Kazakhstan in the 1/16 final repechage round. David and Ronaldo had come up with timings of 10.030s and 10.086s to take ninth and 13th positions respectively and make the 1/16 finals. In women's keirin, India's Shushikala Agashe (+1.087) finished fifth in her heat to fail to qualify for the semifinals, while Triyasha Paul (+1.109) narrowly missed qualification after finishing at third spot in her heat.

Sangita hits hat-trick as India blank Singapore 13-0 in women's hockey

PTI ■ HANGZHOU
Young striker Sangita Kumari slammed a hat-trick as a dominant Indian women's hockey team scored goals at will to thrash lowly Singapore 13-0 in its opening Pool A match at the Asian Games here on Wednesday. While the Indians pumped in as many as eight goals in the first two quarters, the Singaporeans did show some resistance after the halfway break as they conceded just five goals. Sangita (23rd, 47th, 56th) scored thrice, while Navneet Kaur found the net twice in the 14th minute. Uditia (6th), Sushila Chanu (8th), Deepika (11th), Deep Grace Ekka (17th), Neha (19th), Salima Tete (35th), Monika (52nd) and Vandana Katariya (56th) were the other goal scorers. India will take on Malaysia in their next pool match on Friday. "It was a good performance, we are happy with the result. The young girls comple-

mented the seniors well. It made our job easy," skipper Savita said after the match. "We are taking match-by-match here. Our next focus is on Malaysia, we have ode day gap in which we will prepare and study Malaysia's game. We will just focus on our plans. "There is also Korea in our pool and they are a very good team but we will try to win and top the pool. Our mindset is right, everybody knows why they are here. Our target is to qualify (for Olympics) directly," she added.



The gulf between India and Singapore was evident as the Savita Punia-led side mounted attack after attack to score eight goals in the opening two quarters. The Indians' relentless attacks resulted in a heap of penalty corners and they managed to convert five of them. India took the lead in the sixth minute when Uditia scored from a penalty corner with a slap shot. Two minutes later, they were awarded a penalty stroke and Sushila made no mistake. Penalty corners came thick and fast for the Indians and Deepika tripled the lead with a perfect flick. Navneet scored two quick goals a minute from the first quarter -- first from a penalty corner and then a field goal seconds later. Navneet snatched the ball from a defender and then dodged past the Singapore goalkeeper -- with fine stick work to push the ball in. Deep Grace then joined the party scoring with a slap shot from a penalty corner before Sangita scored a fine field goal

after one-two with Lalremsiami. Neha then converted a penalty corner to go into the half-time with a healthy 8-0 lead. The Indians continued in the same trend after the change of ends and kept up the pressure on Singapore's defence with continuous attacks. The Singaporeans showed some fight in defence in the last two quarters but still India managed to pump in five more goals to make a perfect start to their campaign.

Australia beat India by 66 runs to score a consolation win in 3rd ODI

PTI ■ RAJKOT

Australia avoided an unprecedented series whitewash after registering a 66-run victory over India in the third ODI here on Wednesday. Chasing a massive 353 to win, India were restricted by Australia to 286 in 49.4 overs. India however won the three-match series 2-1.

The Aussies motored to 352 for 7 after Mitchell Marsh (96), Steve Smith (74), Marnus Labuschagne (72) and David Warner (56) made impact knocks. Jasprit Bumrah took three for 81 and emerged the most successful among Indian bowlers. India made a fist of chase through captain Rohit Sharma (81) and Virat Kohli (56), but soon fizzled against the off-spin of Glenn Maxwell.

Earlier, Mitchell Marsh's stroke-filled 96 and Marnus Labuschagne's polished 72 took Australia to a commendable 352 for 7 against India in the third and final ODI here on Wednesday.

While Marsh missed reaching triple figures by a whisker, Australia's batters came good collectively in what will be their last official ODI before the start of the World Cup.

David Warner had himself to blame for his dismissal after a fiery 56 off 34 balls (6x4s, 4x6s), but he set the tone for Australia early on.

Steve Smith also put brakes on his poor run of scores to make a rapid 74 and towards the end, Labuschagne upped the ante with his 58-ball knock to help Australia post their challenging score. Labuschagne also became Australia's top run-getter in the ongoing calendar



year. On a hot and humid day, drinks were brought out more often than not between change of over while batters dropped down to their haunches, turning out to be quite a laborious effort for the Australian batters after their captain chose to bat.

Marsh took the attack to Jasprit Bumrah (3/81 in 10 overs), hitting two fours and a six and forcing India to take off the solitary slip since there was no early movement on offer.

Warner too shrugged off a slow start to hit Mohammed Siraj for two imperious sixes as Australia seized early

three fours and two sixes to collect 19 runs — he gave that many in two separate overs — which finally forced India to bring Kuldeep Yadav (2/48) into the attack.

While India found it difficult to penetrate owing to a placid surface, the Australian pair of Marsh and Smith amassed 137 from 119 for the second wicket.

However, the Australian pair did struggle owing to the heat and humidity late in the afternoon and increasingly looked for boundaries while sacrificing the doubles.

For the second time this year and against the same opponent, Marsh came close to bringing up only his second ODI century but missed it by four runs.

All the hard work of getting close to the mark while braving the conditions went in vain when Marsh hit straight to Krishna at cover off Kuldeep.

Smith perished soon after as Siraj pinned him in front of the wickets for 74 off 61 balls, including eight fours and a six.

Alex Carey (11) had a short stay as he misjudged a slower ball from Bumrah to chip it straight to Virat Kohli at cover in the 37th over.

Bumrah, mixing his deliveries well in this spell, cleaned up Glenn Maxwell (5) for his second wicket of the game but one that also dented Australia's hopes of acceleration in the remaining overs.

Australia's slide continued as Kuldeep had Cameron Green (9) caught at long on, but Labuschagne and Pat Cummins put on 46 to take them to their overall fourth highest ODI total against India.

Tough to look beyond Shreyas in WC playing XI: Azharuddin



PTI ■ HYDERABAD

Former captain Mohammad Azharuddin can't look beyond Shreyas Iyer in India's playing eleven in the ODI series against Australia, as he is expected to replace Axar Patel in the squad if the latter doesn't regain full fitness. He gave a good account of his skills in the first two ODIs before being rested for the final game in Rajkot.

The wily off-spinner also has Azhar's vote.

"Ashwin is someone who should be in the team. It is not very easy to line up against him as he has got a lot of variations. The team has already been announced. It remains to be seen whether Axar is in there or not.

"Good competition always brings the best out of the players. Shreyas is an exciting player and he really batted well the other day after losing out on games due to his back issues. He is very positive with his intent and looks to score all the time.

"He can make a big impact in the game. It is very hard to look past him unless you are looking for a left-hander in the middle, then Ishan comes into picture. However, I feel Shreyas has done enough," Azhar told PTI on Wednesday.

"Shami has been doing well for a long time. Shardul too has done alright in the limited chances he has got. But you don't require everyone to bat in the 11. Shami has also batted well at times.

"Shardul is a bowling all-rounder not a batting all-rounder. When you already have Haridk Pandya you don't need Shardul in the playing eleven," he said.

For him, the Indian player to watch out for will not be Rohit Sharma or Virat Kohli, as he has put his money on Shubman Gill.

Gill has been in sensational form over the past 12 months and has racked up five ODI hundreds this year.

"This time, Gill will be the main player for India. Obviously, the others around him are also batting well. If he can give India a good start it will set the ball rolling," said Azhar.

'Pressure will be on India'

Considering India have not won an ICC event since 2013, Azhar feels the team is bound to feel the pressure of not being able to win knock-out games over the past decade.

"It is going to be a very competitive world cup. India have a very good team. Grounds will be full as India are hosting after a long time." Asked if India are peaking at the right time following the Asia Cup title and series win over Australia, Azhar said: "I really don't understand this peaking business. When you are playing you are playing well, doesn't matter whether you are peaking or not peaking.

"Sometimes you lose two three matches even after peaking and that has happened with this team. Rather than thinking about all of this, one should focus on the game, rather than thinking about semis and finals straightaway.

"Yes, there will be a lot of pressure to win an ICC tournament which we have not won for a long time. I am sure the boys are fully aware of that," he said.

His home city of Hyderabad will be one of the 10 venues staging the World Cup games. But Azhar is disappointed that Hyderabad is not hosting an India match.



Williamson likely to play World Cup warm-up matches

PTI ■ CHRISTCHURCH

New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson is set to return from a long injury layoff in his side's World Cup warm-up matches, starting in India this week.

The star batter hasn't played any cricket since March when he ruptured the ACL (anterior cruciate ligament) in his right knee while fielding for Gujarat Titans in the IPL. He underwent surgery in April.

"The plan is to be involved in the warm-up games. There is a strong desire to be involved as much as I can," Williamson said ahead of the team's departure to India.

"Basically, it's just wanting to progress what I am doing now - the running, the fielding, time in the middle with the bat."

New Zealand will take on Pakistan and South Africa in World Cup warm-up matches on September 29 in Hyderabad and October 2 in Thiruvananthapuram respectively.

They play England in the tournament opener in Ahmedabad on October 5.

Asked if he was still experiencing discomfort, Williamson said: "Not a huge amount.

"Although the load is going to keep increasing, so there is a little bit of an unknown. But it has felt pretty good really in the last few weeks."

"Although it's going well, you still have days that vary a little bit. So it's working through those warm-up games to get as much out of it as I can, and as a team, without bothering it too much," he added.

Williamson had played a crucial role in New Zealand's campaign in 2015 and 2019 editions when they reached successive finals.

Talking about the most difficult aspect of his recovery, Williamson said: "Not so much the sprinting, more the slowing actually. From sprinting, the braking, a little bit of a change of direction. It's all been part of the plan, and introducing it towards the end of recovery."

Nepal batters break three world records in T20Is

PTI ■ HANGZHOU

Nepal batters smashed three world records en route to becoming the first team to amass a 300-plus total in T20Is, in the Asian Games here on Wednesday. Kushal Malla, a 19-year-old left-handed batter, struck the fastest-ever T20I hundred in 34 balls, eclipsing David Miller and Rohit Sharma's joint previous record (35 balls).

Batting at No 3, Malla smashed 12 sixes and eight



fours to remain unbeaten on 137 and power Nepal to the highest-ever T20I score of 314 for 3

against Mongolia, who opted to field. Their No 5 batter Dipendra Singh Airee also rewrote the record books, blasting a nine-ball fifty that bettered Yuvraj Singh's 16-year-old record.

Yuvraj took 12 balls for his fifty en route to scoring 58 in the World T20 match against England on September 19, 2007.

The previous record for the highest innings total in a T20I was held by Afghanistan, who had amassed 278 for 3 against Ireland on February 23, 2019.

Our ambition is to become biggest T20 league outside IPL: SA20 Commissioner Graeme Smith

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The kind of generational Indian T20 stars that IPL has produced in the last one and half decades has set the template to follow for a new franchise competition like SA20, former South Africa captain and commissioner of league Graeme Smith said on Wednesday.

"Our ambition is to be the biggest league outside India," Smith told PTI ahead of the second season's auction.

The SA20 comprises six franchises — MI Cape Town, Joburg Super Kings, Durban Super Giants, Paarl Royals, Pretoria Capitals, Sunrisers Eastern Cape, all of which are owned by the owners of IPL teams.

"I think IPL was there in the beginning. It took a couple of years to develop a number of generational stars and work within BCCI managed to create



numbers for a league outside the IPL. It gives us the ability to attract quality players," he said.

et. "The Season 1 exceeded all the expectations. We had such a limited amount of time to get up and running and we were able to attract six partners like six global franchises," said Smith.

As the league's commissioner, Smith has worked tirelessly with his team to deliver a product that is acceptable in the market. "Apart from the commercial side, it was important to bring some positivity back to South African cricket and see the fans flock to the stadium.

"Most importantly, the cricket in season 1 was outstanding. Some local young talent really stood up, global stars shone through and it was a very successful season," he said.

In Season 2, each franchise can buy up to 15 players with six uncapped ones, which will also help South Africa promote its own local talent, beneficial to the national team in future.

App revolutionises fantasy sports

Mumbai: The newly launched free-to-play app, by Sports engagement platform BeBeta, prioritises community, unity, and sportsmanship over traditional betting. With personalised content and real-time updates, it offers fans an engaging platform for Cricket, Football, and Kabaddi ahead of the Cricket World Cup.

We believe that sports are best enjoyed with friends, and at BeBeta, we're committed to delivering an extraordinary experience that fosters a sense of belonging within a winning team, said Meet Shah, CEO & Founder of BeBeta.

Spain routs Switzerland in first home match since Women's WC title

AP ■ CORDOBA (SPAIN)

Spain's women's team received the support of a record crowd in its first home match since winning the World Cup title.

A crowd of 14,194 saw Spain rout Switzerland 5-0 in the Nations League on Tuesday, surpassing the previous record of 11,209 fans for a women's national team match in Spain, which was achieved in a friendly against the United States last year.

The local crowd, which did not fully fill the 21,000-capacity Nuevo Arangel Stadium in Cordoba, showed their support for the players who have been fighting against sexism since their world title was tarnished by a scandal sparked by the former Spanish soccer federation president, Luis Rubiales, kissing player Jenni Hermoso on the lips during the World Cup awards ceremony.

Players boycotted the national team but eventually a deal was reached with the federation and government mediators for significant reform in the beleaguered federation.

A banner shown by fans in Cordoba read "Your fight is our pride. You are not alone."

Before the match, players from both teams got together



and held a banner with the words "Se Acabo" — Spanish for "this is over" — followed by "Our fight is the global fight."

The "Se Acabo" slogan was started by Hermoso's teammate

Alexia Putellas, Spain's star player, and has been a rallying call amid the scandal. New coach Montse Tomé left Hermoso out of the squad "as a way to protect her."

Players also wore wristbands with the "Se Acabo" slogan, and raised their wrists while posing behind the banner.

The national team showed off the World Cup trophy to the fans, with Putellas and Irene Paredes raising it in front of the home crowd.

"We were excited about being able to celebrate with the fans," said Aitana Bonmati, who scored twice on Tuesday.

"It was an atypical week but we were able to overcome everything. The players showed that they are professionals."

Spain's first match after the World Cup was a 3-2 comeback win at Sweden in the Nations League last week.

India continues winning streak at Badminton World Junior

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian team continued its winning streak at the badminton World Junior Championships with an impressive 5-0 win over Brazil in Spokane, USA on Wednesday.

In the opening match, the mixed doubles pair of Samarveer and Radhika Sharma triumphed over Joaquim Mendonça and Maria Clara Lopes Lima 21-14, 21-17 to give India a 1-0 lead.

In the boys' singles match, Lokesh Reddy Kalagotla faced a formidable opponent in Renan Melo, who lost the first game 17-21 but fought back resiliently in the second game.

Lokesh managed to get the upper hand and ultimately won the second game by 24-22 to wrap up the match.

In the girls' singles section, Devika Sihag cruised to victory



by defeating Maria Eduarda Oliveira 21-9, 21-6 in just 18 minutes.

In the boys' doubles category, Divyam Arora and Mayank Rana emerged victorious against Joaquim Mendonça and João Mendonça Taveira 21-19, 21-10.

Girls' doubles pair of Venana Kalagotla and Shriyanshi Valishetty then displayed their coordination on way to an impressive 21-13, 21-11 win over Maria Clara Lopes Lima and Maria Eduarda Oliveira.

Later in the day, group D leaders India will next face Germany, who is second in the group. The outcome of this match will decide who tops the group. The team that finishes on top will face the winner of group C in the quarter-finals on September 28.