

OPINION 6
NEHRU'S BLUNDERS
THAT COST INDIA DEAR

WORLD 8
LAB-GROWN BLOOD GIVEN TO PEOPLE
IN WORLD-FIRST CLINICAL TRIAL

MONEY 10
'TAXPAYERS SHOULD CHECK
AIS QUARTERLY'

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*Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

SC upholds Centre's 10% quota to EWS



The five-Judge Bench that gave a 3:2 majority decision, which set aside 50% quota limit fixed under Mandal Commission judgment in Supreme Court on Monday. PTI

Bench set aside 50% cap on reservations

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A divided Supreme Court on Monday upheld the Centre's 10 per cent reservation for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) in admissions in educational institutions and Government jobs. The five-judge Bench gave a 3:2 majority decision, which set aside the 50 per cent quota limit fixed under the Mandal Commission judgment. Interestingly, Chief Justice U U Lalit concurred with the dissenting judge Justice S Ravindra Bhat, who opposed

excluding the poor from the SC, ST and OBC communities from the EWS quota. Justices Dinesh Maheshwari, Bela M Trivedi and JB Pardiwala upheld the EWS quota, passed through 103rd Constitutional Amendment in 2019. The Bench headed by the Chief Justice delivered four judgments on 40 petitions against the Amendment that was passed after the Centre decided to grant quota to the economically marginalized sections. The majority judgment said that treating EWS as a separate category is reasonable classification and the 50 per cent ceiling on the total reservation under the Mandal judgment is "not inflexible." Justice Maheshwari, who read the judgment for himself, said the 103rd Constitutional

Amendment cannot be said to breach the basic structure of the Constitution. He said reservation is an instrument of affirmative action so as to ensure an all-inclusive march towards the goals of an egalitarian society and it is a means of inclusion of any class or section so disadvantaged. "Reservation is an instrument of affirmative action by the State so as to ensure an all-inclusive approach. It is an instrument not only for the inclusion of socially and educationally backward classes. Reservation for the EWS does not violate basic structure on account of 50 per cent ceiling limit because ceiling limit is not inflexible," Justice Maheshwari, who was called upon to pronounce the operative part of his judgment first, said. *Continued on Page 2*

- EWS reservation upheld by Supreme Court in 3:2 majority judgment.
- Justices Dinesh Maheshwari, Bela Trivedi and JB Pardiwala upheld 10% EWS Reservation excluding SC, ST & OBC
- Justice S Ravindra Bhat who dissented said introducing reservation for EWS is permissible but excluding SCs, STs and OBCs as they enjoy pre-existing benefits is to heap fresh injustice.
- Chief Justice U U Lalit concurred with minority judgment of Justice Bhat.
- Upholding the EWS, the majority judgment said treating EWS as a separate category is reasonable classification and 50% ceiling on the total reservation under the Mandal judgment is "not inflexible."

SC frees 3 facing death in rape-murder case

The woman was raped, brutalised and killed in 2012 for turning down a proposal

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday acquitted three men sentenced to death for the gangrape and murder of a 19-year-old woman in Delhi's Chhawla area in 2012. In its order, the court said that the "appellants accused were deprived of their rights to have a fair trial". The three men are accused of abducting, gangraping and brutally killing the woman in February 2012. Her mutilated body was found three days after she was abducted. In 2014, a trial court awarded death penalty to the three accused, terming the case as "rarest-of-rare". The judgment was later upheld by the Delhi High Court.

Speaking about the trial court order, the Supreme Court said the courts cannot convict the accused on the basis of moral conviction or suspicion alone. "It may be true that if the accused involved in the heinous crime go unpunished or are acquitted, a kind of agony and frustration may be caused to society in general and to the family of the victim in particular. However, the law does not permit the courts to punish the accused on the basis of moral conviction or on suspicion alone," the top court said.



According to the prosecution, the woman worked in Gurgaon's Cyber City area and belonged to Uttarakhand. She was returning from her workplace and was near her home when the three men abducted her in a car. When she didn't

return home, her parents lodged a missing person report, the prosecution said, adding that the woman's mutilated and decomposing body was found in a village in Rewari, Haryana.

The police found multiple injuries on the woman's body. Further investigation and autopsy revealed she was attacked with car tools, glass bottles, metal objects, and other weapons. She was also raped, they said. Police arrested the three men involved in the crime and said one of the accused allegedly took revenge after the woman turned down his proposal.

Have lost will to live, SC has let us down: Parents of Chhawla gangrape victim

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

We have not just lost the battle but also the will to live," said the mother of the Chhawla gangrape-cum-murder victim as she broke down following the Supreme Court's decision on Monday to acquit all the three accused. The victim's father said the apex court had "let them down" and they had lost faith in the judiciary after fighting for justice for their daughter for over 11 years. He also alleged that the system is taking advantage of their poverty. "We lost the battle...I was living with this hope...I have lost my will to live. I thought my daughter would get justice,"

the victim's mother said, breaking into tears.

The father of the victim said, "It has been 11 years since we have been running from pillar to post. The lower court also announced its verdict. We were relieved. From High Court also we were given assurance. But Supreme Court let us down."

"What was supposed to happen with criminals ultimately happened with us."

"The law and order system in our country is not for poor people. If this had happened with a rich influential person or a politician, would they also have faced the same fate like us? Overall, it's like taking advantage of poverty," he said.

CAPSULE

COURT PAVES WAY FOR ARMS DEALER'S RETURN

New Delhi: A court in the United Kingdom has allowed for the extradition of arms dealer Sanjay Bhandari to India. Bhandari faces money laundering and tax evasion charges in India and is being investigated by CBI and ED.

TWITTER FIRES 90% OF INDIAN STAFF

New Delhi: Twitter Inc. fired more than 90% of its staff in India over the weekend — part of global reductions by new owner Elon Musk — severely depleting its engineering and product staff in a potential growth market. The company employed just over 200 people in India, and the cuts left it with just about a dozen staff, people familiar with the matter said.

NOW, MAJOR LAYOFFS COMING AT META TOO

New York: After job cuts at Twitter, Facebook's parent company Meta is planning to begin "large-scale layoffs" this week in what could be the largest reduction to date at a "major technology corporation in a year that has seen a tech-industry retrenchment," a media report said. The WSJ reported that the layoffs at Meta are expected to affect thousands and could come as soon as Wednesday.

'HINDU' IS DIRTY PERSIAN WORD: CONG LEADER

Belagavi (K'taka): Stirring up controversy, Karnataka Congress Working president Satish Jarkiholi has claimed that the word 'Hindu' is Persian and has a very dirty meaning. He also said that "a word and a religion from elsewhere is being forcefully imposed on people here.

Excise scam accused Arora seeks pardon, wants to turn witness

Court to decide on Nov 14 whether to allow CBI to make Sisodia's close aide an approver

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A Delhi court will decide on November 14 whether to allow the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to make businessman Dinesh Arora, the 'close aide' of Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, an approver in the Delhi excise policy case. Special Judge MK Nagpal will also hear arguments on Arora's plea to grant him pardon in the matter and allow him to become a witness in the case. During the hearing, the



Dinesh Arora

accused told the court that he was ready to make "true disclosure voluntarily" about the case and that he wanted to be an approver. In response to the court's query, Arora said, "There is no pressure or threats by the CBI or anyone else."

Arora's counsel also moved an application for in-camera proceedings, saying it is a sensitive matter and the media

should be kept out at this early stage. The CBI did not oppose the application for the in-camera proceedings. Earlier, the court had granted anticipatory bail to Arora after the CBI did not oppose the bail plea. The CBI, had stated that Arora joined the investigation and disclosed certain facts which were vital for the probe and hence, "the CBI has no objection if the anticipatory bail is granted to the applicant by this court."

In August, the CBI had registered a case in the alleged excise policy scam and issued a Look Out Circular (LOC) against eight suspects named as accused in the case.

Among the accused public servants are Sisodia, then Excise Commissioner Arva Gopi Krishna, Deputy Commissioner Anand Tiwari and Assistant Commissioner Pankaj Bhatnagar. *Cont on Page 2*

Delhi schools, Govt offices to reopen as AQI improves

BS-III petrol, BS-IV diesel vehicles still face GRAP curbs

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government on Monday decided to reopen primary school classes from November 9 and revoke the order asking 50% of its staff to work from home in view of improvement in the city's air quality. However, plying of BS-III petrol and BS-IV diesel four-wheelers in Delhi will remain banned under stage III of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP). Curbs under Stage IV of the GRAP to check rising air pollution were lifted in Delhi on Monday lifted by the Delhi Government a day after the Commission for



Air Quality Management (CAQM) asked for its citing improvement in air quality, which has been in the "very poor" category since Saturday.

After a high-level meeting following the CAQM's order, Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai said the primary schools will reopen on November 9 and outdoor activities are once again permitted within the school. The ban on

vehicles entering Delhi has now been lifted, and Delhi's Government offices can now open to their full capacity.

However, the restrictions imposed under GRAP-III and the ban on private construction and demolition operations will remain in place. School principals have welcomed the Delhi Government's decision to restart primary classes. *Continued on Page 2*

Big relief to Soren in mining lease row

SC allows plea of J'khand Govt, Soren; nixes HC order

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a big relief to Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren, the Supreme Court on Monday allowed the appeals filed by him and the State Government against a High Court order accepting the maintainability of PILs for a probe in the mining lease issue. The top court also set aside the Jharkhand High Court's June 3 order. "Satyamev Jayate," Tweeted Soren, after the Supreme Court's ruling.

"We have allowed these two appeals and have set aside the June 3, 2022 order passed by the Jharkhand High Court, holding that these PILs were



not maintainable," the Bench comprising Chief Justice U U Lalit and Justices S R Bhat and Sudhanshu Dhulia. The apex court had earlier restrained the High Court from proceedings with the PILs seeking a probe against Soren in the mining lease issue.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the State Government, had earlier submitted that the High Court had decided on maintainability even before all the documents were placed before it. *Continued on Page 2*

'Builders to pay 8% interest to authorities for delay in payment'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

From now on, builders have to shell out an eight per cent interest for every delayed payment to the authorities, the Supreme Court said on Monday. The court recalled its 2020 order while hearing the Amrapali case, where due to insolvency cases, the interest part of payment was shelved.

The order was passed by the Bench comprising Chief Justice U U Lalit and Justices S Ravindra Bhat and Bela Trivedi. In September, Senior advocate R Venkataramani, a court-appointed receiver in the Amrapali homebuyers case (current Attorney-General), told the Supreme Court that 11,858 flats will be delivered in two to three months to the homebuyers, of which 5,428 units will be handed over for possession in October. *Continued on Page 2*

Sena, NCP may join Cong's Maha yatra



PNS ■ NEW DELHI/MUMBAI

The Bharat jodo yatra of the Congress crossed into Maharashtra on Monday evening after spending 12 days in Telangana. Congress allies Shiv Sena and NCP are likely to show their presence in the Rahul Gandhi-led Yatra which will begin its Maratha phase from Tuesday. Rahul Gandhi will cover 382 km on foot during his 14-day Maharashtra yatra and will be touring five districts, including Buldhana, Akola, Hingoli and Washim,

Court tells Twitter to block INC handles

Bengaluru/New Delhi: A Bengaluru court on Monday directed Twitter to temporarily block handles of Indian National Congress and its 'Bharat Jodo Yatra', in a copyright infringement suit initiated by MRT Music alleging that the handles illegally used sound recordings of film *KGF-Chapter 2*. *Contd on Page 2*



The Chief Justice of India (CJI) Justice Uday Umesh Lalit with CJI-designate Justice DY Chandrachud and other dignitaries during a farewell ceremony organised for Justice Lalit by the Supreme Court Bar Association, at the Supreme Court premises in New Delhi, on Monday. PTI

Imported cheetahs in Kuno kill 1st prey

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The two male cheetahs brought to the Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh from Namibia have made their first kill within 24 hours of their release from a quarantine zone.

Officials supervising the 'Cheetah re-introduction project' in the country have termed it as the first step towards resettlement of the predators in the wild.

Cheetah Project head SP Yadav said that the cheetahs — Freddie and Alton — hunted down a spotted deer either on Sunday night or in the early hours of Monday. Yadav also heads the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), an autonomous body set up to strengthen tiger conservation in the country.

This was the first hunt of the two African cheetahs since they were brought to India along with six others in mid-September. *Continued on Page 2*



This should allay worries that the transcontinental shifting may have dulled their prey-hunting capabilities. "So far they have been fed in the quarantine. The independent kills by them, however, after their release in the bigger enclosure show their killing instinct. This indicates their survival instinct and criteria to become independent in the wild," explained Yadav, adding that the wild cats are being monitored regularly. *Continued on Page 2*

HC notice to Guj Govt on Morbi bridge tragedy

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD
The Gujarat High Court on Monday took suo motu cognisance of the Morbi bridge collapse tragedy and issued notices to the State Government and local authorities and also sought a status report in the matter by November 14.

The British-era suspension bridge on the Machchhu river in Morbi collapsed on October 30, claiming 135 lives.

The bridge was thrown open for the public on October 26 after seven months of repair work by a private firm.

"We have taken a suo motu

(on their own) cognisance of the Morbi incident. But for the vacation, we would have sat on the same day itself," a division bench of Chief Justice Arvind Kumar and Justice Ashutosh Shastri said addressing Advocate General Kamal Trivedi. The bench took cognisance of the incident on the basis of a newspaper report.

It issued notices to the State Government through the chief secretary, state home department, commissioner of municipalities, Morbi municipality, district collector and the State Human Rights Commission and relisted the matter on November 14.

Kerala Gov attacks State Govt for seeking Constitutional lawyer's advice to 'oust' him

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Kerala is all set to witness a unique battle between the Governor and the Left Democratic Front Government in the State as Arif Mohammed Khan on Monday morning ridiculed the inefficiency of the administration to take on him legally. "I never knew the State administration was incompetent to the core."

"They have sought the advice of a constitutional expert in New Delhi by paying a consultation fee of ₹45 lakh to find ways and means to oust me," the Governor told media persons at Ernakulam on Monday.

He was referring to media reports which said that the Kerala Government has sought

the services of Supreme Court's veteran lawyer Fali S Nariman by paying a consultation fee of ₹45 lakh to tame him legally.

Interestingly, Monday is the last day the Kerala High Court has given to the eight vice-chancellors of the State to give their replies to the show cause notices issued to them by the Governor asking them why their services should not be terminated in the backdrop of the October 21 Supreme Court verdict disqualifying the vice-chancellor of the Kerala Technical University from holding office.

"Let me go through the replies sent by them and then I'll let you know what is the next course of action," said the Governor.

'Guv's speeches violate Constitutional propriety'

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The CPI(M) late Monday evening retorted to the charges made by Kerala Governor Arif Mohammed Khan against Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan in the harshness of language. "The Governor speaks like a Fascist. He is a Fascist," thundered M V Govindan, the party's Kerala Secretary and the polit bureau member.

Speaking to mediapersons, Govindan said the Governor's

words violate Constitutional propriety and limits of all public decency. "His language does not augur well for the position he occupies. Who is he to ask certain media houses to get out of the media meet?", asked Govindan.

The Governor while speaking to media persons at Ernakulam Guest House had asked the official mouthpieces of the CPI(M) and Jama-at-Islam to get out as he "was not interested in speaking to party cadres masquerading as journalists".

NIA raids 3 spots in Kerala in PFI conspiracy case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Monday conducted searches at three locations in Malappuram district of Kerala in connection with the PFI conspiracy case.

The case pertains to the criminal conspiracy hatched by the office bearers, members and cadres of Popular Front of India (PFI) having its registered office in New Delhi and Unit Offices/Area Offices/Zonal Offices/State Offices all over India, along with others, who are involved in raising or collecting funds from within India and abroad through banking channels, Hawala and donations for committing or getting

committed, terrorist acts in various parts of India including States of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi, the NIA said. It was also revealed that the accused persons were conducting training camps for terrorist activities at various locations across the country.

Searches were earlier conducted at 39 locations across the country on September 22 and 20 accused persons have been arrested so far in the case.

During the searches conducted on Saturday, incriminating materials including digital devices and documents have been seized. Further investigations in the case are in progress, it added.

'Builders to pay 8% interest to authorities for delay...'

From Page 1
Recently the apex court was informed that only 4,981 of the approximately 46,000 Amrapali homebuyers have received possession of their flats in the three years since the Supreme Court entrusted the developer's unfinished projects to the State-owned NBCC (formerly National Building Construction Corporation) in July 2019.

The top court has been monitoring the cases related to the embattled real estate company after many homebuyers approached it alleging malpractices and non-delivery of homes or flats.

Amrapali Group's ex-directors Anil Kumar Sharma, Shiv Priya, and Ajay Kumar were put behind bars on the top court's order in 2019 and multiple cases have been lodged against them for allegedly diverting homebuyers' money.

Recently, Sharma was granted bail in some cases. He was facing more than 30 cases, including charges for money laundering under PMLA.

Previous month, while granting bail in many cases, the top court asked him to approach the PMLA for bail.

In 2019, the apex had given a go-ahead to the Government-owned National Buildings Construction Corporation (NBCC) to start the process of completing two stalled Amrapali housing projects.

Delhi schools...

From Page 1
Entry of trucks into Delhi will be allowed and the ban on linear projects such as highways, flyovers, and roads has been lifted," he added.

Rai further said petrol BS III and diesel BS-IV vehicles will remain banned. "The restrictions for these two categories of vehicles were imposed as per Stage III of Grap. Therefore, we are not lifting them as all Stage III measures are still being followed. The exemptions for diesel vehicles are only those vehicles that are involved in essential or emergency services," said Rai. There are estimated to be around 300,000 BS IV diesel vehicles and around 200,000 BS III petrol vehicles in Delhi.

Rai said the restrictions that were put in place during

the third phase of GRAP will still be in effect. "Private construction and demolition would also be prohibited inside Delhi, with the exception of projects relating to the railway, metro, airport bus terminal, national security, defence, hospitals, and other facilities of national importance," he added.

At least 500 brand-new environmental buses have been ordered to be operated. During this time our emphasis will be on mechanical road sweeping and water spraying in Delhi.

The fire brigade vehicles will continue to be used for water sprinkling at hot spots. It will be our endeavour that the pollution level which is decreasing in Delhi continues," Rai said.

Rai further said petrol BS III and diesel BS-IV vehicles will remain banned. "The restrictions for these two categories of vehicles were imposed as per Stage III of Grap. Therefore, we are not lifting them as all Stage III measures

are still being followed. The exemptions for diesel vehicles are only those vehicles that are involved in essential or emergency services," said Rai. There are estimated to be around 300,000 BS IV diesel vehicles and around 200,000 BS III petrol vehicles in Delhi.

The minister said there has been a rapid improvement in the air pollution situation in Delhi and farm fires have also reduced. "Therefore, it has been decided to lift the curbs imposed under stage four of the Graded Response Action Plan in compliance with the direction from the Commission for Air Quality Management," he said.

As the air pollution in Delhi-NCR ameliorated over the last two days, the Centre's air quality panel Sunday directed authorities to lift the ban on plying of non-BS VI diesel light motor vehicles in the region and the entry of trucks into the capital imposed under the final stage of the Graded Response Action Plan.

Court tells Twitter...

From Page 1
It also directed Twitter to take down three links from its platform and further ordered it to block the twitter handles of INC and Bharat Jodo Yatra. The court ruled that prima facie materials established that if the alleged illegal use of sound records was encouraged, MRT would suffer an irreparable injury and the same would also lead to encouraging piracy at large.

"Plaintiff has specifically produced a CD showing the side by side file i.e., original version of his copyrighted work with that of the illegally synchronized version.

These prima facie materials available before this court at this stage establishes that if the same is encouraged plaintiff who is in the business of

acquiring cinematography films, songs, music albums etc., will be put to irreparable injury and further same leads to encouraging the piracy at large," the special commercial court stated.

The court, via an order of ex-parte injunction, restrained the defendants from unauthorised and illegally using the copyrighted work owned by MRT till the next date of hearing.

Counsel for MRT contended that since the respondents were illegally using their music and infringing their rights, it was necessary to appoint a Commissioner to inspect and conduct an electronic audit and to preserve the infringing material on INC's Twitter account and Bharat Jodo Yatra's Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and Facebook accounts.

The Court agreed with the same and stated that the object of granting injunction would stand defeated if a commissioner was not appointed.

ED opposes AAP Min Jain's bail application in court

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Opposing the bail application of AAP minister Satyendar Jain, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) Monday told the court that the companies under investigation were "only paper companies, they did not earn any income and did not have any intrinsic value" and that co-accused Vaibhav Jain and Ankush Jain were the AAP leader's dummies. Appearing for the ED, Additional Solicitor General (ASG) SV Raju said that Jain was the kingpin who was not only involved in "converting black money to white" but also in tampering of evidence, while opposing his bail in a money laundering case.

Delhi doctors back MBBS students protesting Govt's policy in Haryana

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

To express their solidarity with MBBS students in Haryana's Rohtak protesting a policy that mandated them to pay a bond fee of around ₹10 lakh during admission, doctors at various government-run hospitals in Delhi on Monday wore black ribbons.

The Federation of Resident Doctors' Association (FORDA) has given a call for the nationwide black ribbon protest, saying it was in response to the alleged police action against MBBS students of a medical college in Rohtak who were protesting against the "new bond policy".

Excise scam accused Arora...

From Page 1
Apart from this there are nine private persons/businessmen and two companies.

The FIR was registered on a reference from the office of Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena routed through the Union Home Ministry.

The agency has alleged that Sisodia and other accused public servants recommended and took decisions on the excise policy 2021-22 without the approval of competent authority with "an intention to extend undue favours to the licencees post tender".

Big relief to Soren...

From Page 1
Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for Soren, had questioned the credentials of the PIL petitioner. Additional Solicitor General SV Raju, appearing for the Enforcement Directorate, had said criminal petitions should not be thrown out on technical grounds.

BJP national vice president and former Jharkhand Chief Minister Raghubar Das in February this year claimed Soren abused his position and granted himself the favour of a mining lease, an issue involving both the conflict of inter-

est and corruption. He also alleged violations of provisions of the Representation of People Act. Taking cognisance of the controversy, the Election Commission sent a notice to Soren in May seeking his version on the mining lease issued in his favour when he held the Mining and Environment portfolios.

Owning a lease violates Section 9A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, which deals with disqualification for government contracts, etc. EC sources had said. The issue is still pending with the poll panel. The pleas before the Jharkhand High Court had sought a probe into alleged irregularities in the grant of mining lease as also the transactions of some shell companies allegedly linked to the chief minister's family members and associates.

is already touring Marathwada and the yatra would also be passing through the region.

"The possibility of Aaditya Thackeray attending the Bharat Jodo Yatra cannot be ruled out. Coincidentally, he is also touring the region (Marathwada) and attempts are being made to see if he can join the padyatra," Ahir, who is also the spokesman of the party, said in Mumbai.

"The idea behind Bharat Jodo Yatra is to bring everyone together and knowingly or unknowingly, people from every section of the society are supporting it. This is to be welcomed if they are coming to Maharashtra," the Sena leader said. Sources said Priyanaka Chaturvedi, also a former Congress spokesperson, may join the junior Thackeray.

Both the Shiv Sena and Congress are together now in

Sena, NCP may join Cong's...

From Page 1
Last week, Maharashtra Congress in-charge HK Patil, Congress legislature party leader Balasaheb Thorat and former CM Ashok Chavan, met Uddhav Thackeray and Pawar inviting them to join the Bharat Jodo Yatra.

Sources said that while there is still uncertainty about former Maharashtra CM Uddhav Thackeray joining at any point due to his health conditions, Aditya Thackeray has made up his mind to join Rahul. Shiv Sena leader Sachin Ahir said Aaditya Thackeray

Opposition in the State after the BJP usurped power joining hands with the breakaway faction of the Shiv Sena led by incumbent CM Eknath Shinde.

Both the parties along with NCP are fighting against the Centre's propelled ED and CBI raids on their leaders including Shiv Sena MP and spokesman Sanjay Raut who continues to be in judicial custody for over a month now.

Pawar too is set to join hands with Rahul in the yatra this week. In case his health does not permit it, then his daughter and NCP Lok Sabha MP Supriya Sule and NCP state unit president Jayant Patil will definitely participate at some point of time.

The party has also invited several political parties including Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar, RJD supremo Lalu Yadav, SP leaders from across

the states and leaders, organisations to take part in one of the largest movements for unity of the nation.

The Yatra entered Nanded in Maharashtra Monday evening after exiting Telangana following an event where President of the Congress' Telangana unit Revanth Reddy handed over the national flag to his Maharashtra counterpart Nana Patole at the border of the two states. Before this a public meeting was organised in Menuru village of Madnour Mandal in Jukkal Constituency bidding farewell to the yatri which was addressed by Rahul.

The Bharat Jodo Yatra commenced on September 7 from Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu. Rahul Gandhi completed the marathon walk in Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, before entering Telangana.

It had said the three issues suggested by the then attorney general for the decision "broadly" covered all the aspects relating to the petitions on the constitutional validity of the decision to grant the reservation.

"Whether the 103rd Constitution amendment Act can be said to breach the basic structure of the Constitution by permitting the State to make special provisions, including reservation, based on economic criteria," read the first issue framed. The second legal question was whether the constitutional amendment could be said to breach the basic structure by permitting the state to make special provisions concerning admissions to private unaided institutions.

"Whether the 103rd Constitution amendment can be said to breach the basic structure of the Constitution in excluding the SEBCs/OBCs, SCs/STs from the scope of EWS reservation," the third issue, to be adjudicated upon by the bench, read.

Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha cleared the bill on January 8 and 9 in 2019 respectively and it was then signed by then President Ram Nath Kovind. The EWS quota is over and above the existing 50 per cent reservation to SCs, STs and Other Backward Classes (OBCs).

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS
CHANGE OF NAME
I, Sandhya Kumari, D/o Sh. Bhageshwar Singh, R/o House No.6, Gali no. 14, A-Block, Baba Colony, Burari, Delhi-110084. I have change my name Sandhya to Sandhya Kumari for all future purposes.
PD(9019)A

Imported cheetahs in Kuno...

From Page 1
Yadav said that the two male predators were released in a larger enclosure of 98 hectares from a quarantine zone on Saturday.

However, another forest official said that it was too early to celebrate as the "pinnacle of success" for any reintroduction,

is reproduction. "If you have reproduction occurring, that means the animals have settled in. They're settled enough that they can raise young," he said.

The other six cheetahs -- Savannah, Sasha, Obaan, Asha, Cibili and Saisa -- remain in the quarantine zone. "We will try to release all of them in the bigger enclosures by November 15," Yadav said.

The five females and three males were brought to India as part of Project Cheetah to reintroduce the big cats in the wild, more than 70 years after it went extinct in the country.

SC upholds Centre's...

From Page 1
Justices Trivedi and Pardiwala concurred with the views of Justice Maheswari and said the quota in jobs and admissions on the sole economic criteria did not violate the basic structure of the Constitution.

They were also of the same view in dismissing the vehement submissions that the 50 per cent ceiling on the total reservation as envisaged in the Mandal judgment was inviolable and held that its alleged breach did not violate the basic structure.

Justice Maheswari, at the outset of the pronouncement, referred to the questions which were deliberated upon by the bench saying that the first issue was whether the 103rd Constitution Amendment was violative of the basic structure for providing reservation solely on the basis of economic criteria.

"Whether the amendment is violative of the basic structure for excluding the poor

among the SC/ST/OBC categories from EWS Quota," he said, adding that the third question was if the amendment violated the basic structure for breaching the 50 percent ceiling limit of quota. The majority opinion answered the three questions in the negative.

Justice Trivedi said that the State was empowered to take "an affirmative action" by providing reservation for the EWS category and "it cannot be said to be unreasonable classification". "Treating EWS as a separate class would be a reasonable classification. Just as equals cannot be treated unequally, unequals cannot be treated equally. Treating unequals equally violates equality under the Constitution," she said in her separate but concurring verdict.

Justice Trivedi said that the amendment created a separate class of EWS and the exclusion of socially and economically backward classes

(SEBCs) cannot be said as "discriminatory or violative of the Constitution". Justice Trivedi and Pardiwala, however, said that there was a need to have a time-span for such reservations as they cannot be continued for all the time. Both the judges said the reservation is meant to secure social justice but it should not continue for indefinite time so that it becomes vested interest.

This is for the second time Chief Justice of India belongs to minority judgment. First was then Chief Justice JS Khehar was part of the minority judgment in Triple Talaq ban case. The CJ, on his last day of presiding court proceedings, was in minority with Justice S Ravindra Bhat when the three Judges Justices Dinesh Maheshwari, Bela M Trivedi and J B Pardiwala upheld the EWS quota.

The dissenting Judge Justice Bhat said that the idea of reservation to EWS is appreciable, but the exclusion of poor of SCs, STs, and OBSs from its ambit the Amendment practices "constitutionally prohibited forms of discrimination". Justice Bhat, who pronounced the verdict at the fag end, said that the quota on the ground of economic criteria was not "per se not violative", but it has to go due to the exclusion of poor of SCs, STs, and OBSs from its ambit.

However, by excluding the poor among SC/ST/OBC from economically backward classes ..., the 103rd Amendment practices constitutionally prohibited forms of discrimination," Justice Bhat said in his minority view. "Our Constitution does not permit exclusion and this amendment undermines the fabric of social justice and thereby the basic structure.

"This amendment is deluding us to believe that those getting social and backward class benefits are some how better placed. This court has held that 16(1) and (4) are facets of the same equality principle... The exclusion is based on social origin which destroys the equality code," the minority verdict said.

The apex court had on September 27 reserved the verdict on the legal question of whether the EWS quota violated the basic structure of the Constitution after hearing a battery of senior lawyers, including the then Attorney General K K Venugopal and Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, in a marathon hearing that had lasted for six-and-half-days.

The bench, on September 8, had framed three broad issues for adjudication arising from the pleas challenging the Centre's decision to grant 10 per cent reservation to EWS in admissions and jobs.

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Office of The Chief Engineer M.P.P.W.D Bridge Construction Zone Bhopal (M.P.)
Tender Notice
NIT No-04/CRF/2022-23/C.E. (Bridge Zone) Date 03.11.2022
Online Tender for mentioned below are being invited. The Tender have been uploaded on the mptenders. system of Public Works Department on the Portal www.mptenders.gov.in Tender details are as below:-

S. No.	Tender No.	District	Nature of Work	Name of Work	Call No.	Cost of Project (PAC) (Rs. in Lacs)	(EMD Fee/ Tender Fee) All Tender Document & Other Submission
1	2022-PWDRB-230717_1	Shivpuri	Bridge Work	Construction of High Level Bridges on Lukwasa Chandanpura Ougharpur Road Across Keldhara River in KM 13/6 & Karai River in KM 16/6 in District Shivpuri the State of Madhya Pradesh on EPC mode.	First	480.11	Online Only
						Total	480.11

The document can only be purchased online from the above website after making online payment. The last date & time for purchase of Document on line is Dated 19/12/2022 up to (17:30.) Detailed NIT and other details can be viewed on the above mentioned portal. Amendments to NIT, if any, would be published on website only, and not in newspaper.

Chief Engineer
Bridge Construction Zone
Bhopal

दो गज की दूरी, मास्क है जरूरी।
G-18964/22

BJP, AAP spar over Suresh's fresh letter to L-G

Suresh in his third letter requests L-G for CBI enquiry into his allegations

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP and the AAP sparred over the jailed conman Suresh Chandrashekhar's third letter to Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena demanding an inquiry by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) into his allegations of threat and pressure from jailed AAP Minister Satyendar Jain. In the letter the conman given the details of the 'deals' done at AAP Minister Kailash Gahlot's farmhouse with the consent of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. He also went on to request



the L-G to allow him to file an FIR in the matter. The BJP on Monday slammed Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and demanded a CBI probe into Suresh's claims that he had bribed the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP). Addressing a press conference, Delhi BJP president Adesh Gupta also demanded the transfer of jailed AAP minister Satyendar Jain from Delhi to a prison in either Uttar Pradesh or Haryana. The BJP leader said a



party delegation will soon meet Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena in this connection. BJP MP Parvesh Verma, too, demanded Jain's transfer to a prison in any state except the AAP-ruled Punjab. "If Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia gets arrested in the liquor scam as Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal claims, he too should not be kept in any Delhi jail," Verma said. Leader of Opposition Ramvir Singh Bidhuri also



demanding a thorough investigation into the Suresh's allegations against AAPians. Terming the conman's letter fake, AAP leader Saurabh Bhardwaj alleged that the BJP is resorting to its "old tactics of spreading lies" as the Gujarat and Delhi municipal elections are nearing. He alleged that the BJP is taking help from jailed conman Suresh Chandrashekhar to "repeat the same tactics" and in a bid to win the elections. "As

the elections are nearing, the BJP is resorting to its old tactics of spreading lies. Right before the Punjab elections, they brought Kumar Vishwas and alleged that Arvind Kejriwal was involved with nefarious and anti-social elements. And now, they are taking help of jailed conman like Suresh Chandrashekhar to repeat the same tactics," he said. Bhardwaj further claimed that the BJP can make "random allegations" in order to win the upcoming elections. In the letter, the conman requested that a CBI inquiry should be conducted and that he be permitted to register an FIR because "the pressure is getting too much and any undue event may take place before the truth about AAP is exposed." The conman went on to

say that it is not just about Satyendar Jain, but that Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal and Kailash Gahlot have been deeply engaged in all of the cases involving him. "I have read the news and seen that Mr Arvind Kejriwal has tweeted that BJP is putting me forward during election times and he wrote that I am the country's biggest thug, which is misleading and diverting from the issue," Suresh alleged. In the letter, Suresh has made a fresh accusation against Delhi Health Minister Satyendra Jain and former Director General of Prison, Sandeep Goyal, alleging that he has been getting "severe threats" from the jail administration on behalf of Jain and sacked DG. "...that now I will be taught a serious lesson, and also I will be shown stars by

AAP party workers when produced to courts, for what I have done. They said I will have to pay the price now," he said, listing out the alleged threats. "I am (not) intimidated by them, but requesting to direct the CBI to initiate an urgent investigation in detail and allow me to file FIR for the same, as the pressure is getting too much and any undue event may take place, before that the truth about AAP should be exposed, as the matter is not only about Satyendar Jain but also Arvind Kejriwal and Kailash Gahlot are also a part of all the episodes that have taken place," the letter reads. "The matter is much more than what meets the eye, I have in the month of August 2022 itself have given a part statement regarding the same to CBI AC-V during the probe of some other case of mine," the

conman added. He reiterated his claim that Kejriwal took Rs 50 crores from him to expand AAP in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, alleging that he was instrumental in former Bengaluru police commissioner Bhaskar Rao's AAP joining. In his second letter, Suresh has alleged that Kejriwal asked him to collect Rs 500 crore for the party. The AAP, however, has dismissed his charges. Earlier, Chandrashekhar had written an open letter to the media alleging, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) convenor and Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal took Rs 50 crores from him in the promise of a Rajya Sabha seat. He had alleged that Kejriwal contacted him through Jain. After his first letter, Tihar DG Sandeep Goyal was removed from his post and was ordered to report to Delhi Police headquarters.

Govt reopens primary classes from tomorrow

BS-IV diesel vehicles will remain banned till Nov 13, entry of trucks allowed

Revokes order on 50 per cent cap on staff to work from home

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Movement of BS III petrol and BS IV diesel vehicles in Delhi will remain banned till November 13, while trucks will be allowed to enter the national Capital, according to officials. As the city's air quality improved, the Delhi government on Monday also decided to reopen primary classes from November 9 and revoke the order that asked 50 per cent of its staff to work from home. "BS-III petrol and BS-IV diesel four-wheelers in Delhi will remain banned under

on Monday. The transport department, in an order, said the vehicles found plying in violation of the rule will be prosecuted under the Motor Vehicles Act, which could invite a fine of Rs 20,000. Vehicles deployed for emergency services, and government and election-related work do not come under the ban's purview. "As per the directions provided under Stage III of revised GRAP, there will be a restriction to ply BS-III petrol and BS-IV diesel light motor vehicles (four-wheelers) in the jurisdiction of NCT of Delhi. The above directions will remain enforced till November 13 or downward revision in GRAP stage, whichever is earlier. The restrictions will continue beyond November 13, if CAQM (Centre for Air Quality Management) orders GRAP-III and above restrictions," the

CAQM orders anti-smog guns at construction, demolition sites

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) has asked pollution control boards in Delhi-NCR to ensure deployment of anti-smog guns at construction and demolition sites in view of poor air quality in Delhi. The CAQM has also recommended other measures, such as the use of wind breakers, dust barrier screens, covering of construction material and its debris, and proper disposal of construction wastes, including transportation in covered vehicles, at these sites. The panel noted that these sites are a major and consistent source of air pollution in Delhi-NCR. "At least one anti-smog gun necessary for a total construction area between 5,000 to 10,000 square metre. Two anti-smog guns for area between 10,001 to 15,000 square metre. "For construction area between 15,001 to 20,000 square metre, at least three anti-smog guns are necessary. At

least five anti-smog guns should be deployed for a total construction area above 20,000 square metres," the statement from CAQM said. "Dust from the C&D activities is a major and consistent source of air pollution and contributes adversely to the spike in PM2.5 and PM10 levels in the NCR. Use of treated water to mitigate large quantities of dust generated at C&D sites through use of anti-smog guns, sprinklers etc. with prescribed wet suppression, wind breakers, dust barrier screens, covering of construction material and C&D debris, proper disposal of C&D wastes including transportation in covered vehicles etc. are some of the steps that are essentially to be followed by C&D projects in the NCR," it said. It has directed the pollution boards of NCR and the Delhi Pollution Control Committee to ensure continuous use of anti-smog guns at these sites. According to the survey, a section of the car owners expressed displeasure at the CAQM move. Nearly 11 per cent of them said they will violate the ban and face the consequences, while 25 per cent said they will switch to public transport. Another 49 per cent diesel car owners said they had access to vehicles which did not come under the ban and will use those instead.

No place for 'revdi politics' in India, Puri taunts AAP

Minister launches video vans of BJP's electoral campaign

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Taking a dig at the chief minister Arvind Kejriwal, Union Housing and Urban Affairs minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Monday said that India will become a developed country by 2047 as per the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi where there is no place for 'revdi politics'. Puri was speaking after flagging off a fleet of video vans as part of the BJP's electoral campaign. Union minister Meenakshi Lekhi, Delhi BJP president Adesh Gupta and other senior party leaders were also present at the event. "Under the Modi government, India has become the fifth largest economy of the world and is slated to be the third largest in a few years. According to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision, India has to become a developed country by 2047, in which anarchism and 'revdi politics' have no place," Puri underlined. The housing and urban affairs minister said the central government is committed to make Delhi one of the best capitals in the world. Attacking the Arvind Kejriwal-led city government, the minister said the dispensation did not allow the implementation of various welfare schemes of the Centre in Delhi. "Before elections, they (AAP) start talking about freebies..." he alleged. The word 'revdi' (sugar candy with sesame) was used by Modi in one of his speeches, referring to freebies like free water and electricity promised by political parties ahead of polls.



Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri flags off vehicles for campaigning of upcoming Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) election, in New Delhi on Monday. BJP Delhi President Adesh Gupta, party leaders Harsh Vardhan, Gautam Gambhir and others are also seen. Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

AAP launches 'Kude Par Jansamvad' drive

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEWDELHI

Ahead of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), the AAP on Monday launched 'Kude Par Jansamvad' campaign to reach out to Delhiites about their woes regarding BJP's garbage mismanagement. The campaign will start on November 8 till November 20 on 13,682 booths in the national capital. In a joint press conference with Delhi environment minister Gopal Rai, AAP leader Durgesh Pathak said, "the party will conduct Jansamvad at all 13,682 booths of Delhi from November 8 to November 20. It has appointed more than 600 spokespersons for the dialogue, they've also been given training for outreach.

During the Jansamvad, the public will be asked five important questions related to garbage including, will the responsibility of cleaning the garbage again be given to the BJP which has failed in the last 15 years or to AAP which has proven its merit?" Giving the details about the questions that will be asked by the public from the party spokesperson in Jansamvad, Pathak said that the questions are First, do you often see garbage piled up in our gali-mohallas? Do you face problems because of the garbage? Does the garbage ever get cleaned up? "Second, when you step out of your house do you see litter all over the way or not? Third, have you seen the three garbage mountains of BJP, have you thought about the condition of

the residents there? Fourth, do you know that the BJP is planning to develop such landfills in every Vidhan Sabha? Do you want Garbage Mountains in your locality?" said pathak. "Fifth and last Question, will BJP who failed at cleaning garbage in 15 years clean it now or will AAP and CM Arvind Kejriwal clean it?" he said. Lashing out at BJP, Gopal Rai said that they are "directionless" and they don't even have agenda in forthcoming MCD elections. Taking a dig at the saffron party for their slogan 'Seva Hi Vichar, Nahi Khokle Prachar', Rai said that they only talk of seva and khokhla prachar but, if they really had done it then they done have make their incumbent councillors sit out of elections.

One candidate files nomination from Green Park ward

NEW DELHI: As the nomination for the MCD polls began on Monday, only one person has filed his nomination from ward 150 (Green Park). Meanwhile, a total of 219916 illegal banners and hoarding were removed by the 24 teams of the MCD, following the direction of the SEC, ahead of the civic polls. Polling for the Civic polls will be held on December 4 and the votes will be counted on December 7. According to State Election Commission, a total of 219916 illegal banners and hoarding were removed by the 24 teams of the MCD, following the direction of the SEC, ahead of the civic polls. In all the 12 administrative zones of the Corporation, the teams have removed 219916 banners out of which 99401 removed on Monday, 49774 were taken out on Sunday and 70741 were removed on Saturday. The enforcement teams have removed 18848 banners and hoarding in Shahdara South Zone which is highest, while City SP zone witnessed lowest removal of poster 1723. "4282 banners and hoardings were removed in Rohini Zone, while 7553 were taken out in Civil Line Zone," it said.

LG orders filling of 117 vacancies in DSSSB

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

There are 30,000 posts lying vacant mainly in the education and health department of Delhi government since 2013 is expected to be expedited following the directions of the Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena to fill 117 vacancies in Delhi Subordinate Services Selection Board (DSSSB). The process to recruit these 117 people is expected to be completed within two weeks. According to DSSSB sources, these posts have been lying vacant since as long as 2013, due to the lackadaisical attitude of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government, which has been preferring to appoint contractual employees against permanent government vacancies. Sources said that with these 117 people onboard, the process to fill up the 30,000 vacant positions in the Delhi government, some of which are lying vacant since 2013, will be expedited. These posts were created by a decision of the lieutenant governor in May and consist of deputy secretaries, section officers, assistant section officers, senior assistants, junior assistants, legal



assistants and peons. "Their recruitment is in the final stages and will be completed within two weeks. Once these posts are filled, the DSSSB will be fully staffed and we can expect it to expedite the process of efficiently conducting examinations and interviews to select the 30,000-odd candidates for various government departments, including health and education," sources said. The 30,000 pending vacancies include those of teachers, nurses, paramedical staff, physical training instructors and technicians. Sources at Raj Niwas said that the LG, right after taking over had expressed serious concern and displeasure over unduly and inordinately delayed vacancies in



several government departments of critical importance to the people of Delhi. He had also flagged the issue of filling up of such permanent vacancies on a contractual basis, which often led to favoritism in appointments, misappropriation of government money in the name of ghost employees and ultimately an unconstitutional deterrent to the equal right of employment provided to the citizens of Delhi and the country, vide the Constitution of India. The DSSSB is mandated to select candidates for Group 'B' (non-gazetted) and Group 'C' for government departments, Municipal Corporation of Delhi, New Delhi Municipal Corporation and other government undertakings.

RERA orders Vatika Ltd to refund money to 28 allottees

PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM

The Haryana real estate regulatory authority (RERA), Gurugram, ordered Vatika Limited to refund money to 28 allottees with interest at the prescribed rate. The order has come in the backdrop of a project in which the promoter failed to commence construction even at the primary level. The court said that the promoter Vatika will have to pay the loan amount to respective banks also if or in case the same is availed by the allottees. "Since the project has been abandoned by the promoter the allottees are entitled to the refund of the amount paid by them to the promoter against the allotment of their units with interest at the prescribed rate of 10.25 per cent per annum from the date of each payment till the date of actual realisation within the timelines as prescribed under the rule 16 of the Rules 2017," said the RERA court. The court said, "However while depositing sale consideration of the allotted units, some of the allottees raised loans from the different financial institutions and the same was paid to the promoter. While refunding the amount deposited by the allottees who raised loans against the allotted units the promot-



er would be liable to pay that amount with interest up to date to those financial institutions and the remainder, if any, would be paid back to the allottees." The case pertains to a real estate project 'Turning Point' of Vatika Limited located at sector 88-B, Gurugram. Vatika Limited obtained a licence from the DTCP in 2013 to develop Turning Point - a residential group housing project. The court observed, "After its launch by the promoter units in the same was allotted to different persons on different dates and that too for variable sale consideration. Though the due date for completion of the project and offer of possession of the allotted units was mentioned as the validity of the registration certificate being September 15, 2025, after the expiry of more than four years from the booking there is no physical work progress at the site except for some digging work." So, keep-

ing in view all these facts 28 allottees of the project approached the authority seeking a refund of the paid-up amount besides compensation by taking a plea that the project has been abandoned. Keeping in view the complaints, the authority marked an enquiry into the affairs. The authority directed the enquiry officer to report also about the compliances of the obligations by the promoter regarding the project and more specifically having regard to 70 per cent of the amount collected from allottees of the project minus the proportionate land cost and construction cost whether deposited in the separate RERA account as per the requirement of the Act of 2016 and Rule 2017. The enquiry report mentioned, "There is hardly any progress regarding development such as the construction of the site." Dr KK Khandelwal RERA chairman said, "Such offences are unacceptable. The

promoters cannot take allottees for granted after realising their hard-earned money. RERA has to act as per the law and ensure allottees' money is safe and they get also compensation for mental trouble." Meanwhile, Vatika in a statement said, "Vatika has invested approximately 2168 crores in the project but there is no access due to the ongoing work on Dwarka expressway. In addition, sector roads or internal roads have not been constructed by GMDA. Therefore, Instalments are not being raised by the company for the last few years. The company has not only refunded but also reallocated clients to other projects with mutual consent and acceptance. The company is most compliant with the prevailing rules and has always been most considerate to all its stakeholders including its customers. The company has voluntarily applied for deregistration of the project."

Rebels queer Cong, BJP's pitch in HP polls

20 BJP leaders to contest as independents, 12 Cong rebels to fight against official picks

DEEPAK K UPRETI ■ NEW DELHI

Rebels have queered the pitch for both the BJP and the Congress in Himachal Pradesh that goes to polls on November 12.

Out to buck the trend of the hill State of not electing a party for a second consecutive term, the BJP finds that its move to give tickets to candidates, backed by surveys, has resulted in 20 party leaders turning rebels and filing their nominations as independents.

The BJP could, however, draw some comfort from the fact that its main rival, Congress, is also not without the share of rebels with as many as 12 filing nominations to contest against the official candidates.

The poll campaign has peaked with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday holding two back to back rallies even as BJP president JP Nadda and union ministers Amit Shah, Rajnath Singh, Anurag Thakur among others have been touring the State for the last few months addressing public rallies covering the nerve centre of the 68 strong Assembly seats in the state.

From the Congress its general secretary Priyanka Gandhi has been leading from the front with his

brother and former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi busy with his 'Bharat Jodo Yatra.' Priyanka has concentrated on the Kangra district which returns 15 of the total 68 Assembly MLAs to the Himachal assembly.

The Congress on Saturday released its manifesto and promised 10 guarantees to the state's people including employment to 5 lakh youth, 300 units of free electricity and monthly compensation of ₹1500 to women besides restoring the old pension scheme and conceding demands of apple growers. The last two promises have made the BJP leaders more anxious with just a week left for the polls.

Congress-led Rajasthan, AAP-ruled Punjab and JMM-Congress-RJD coalition in Jharkhand have already announced their decision to implement the old pension scheme. A large number of pensioners in Himachal Pradesh want the old pension scheme to be re-implemented in the state.

The BJP has sought to counter the Congress's doles by offering 3 free LPG cylinders, bicycles to 6 to class 12 girls, scooty to girls in higher education and GST to be limited to 12 per cent for apple growers. This apart, the saffron manifesto promised

implementation of Uniform Civil Code in the state.

The BJP rebels are protesting ticket allocation "based on surveys" and threatening to spoil the victory margins of party nominees including in Bilaspur, the home district of Nadda.

The BJP has denied tickets to 11 sitting MLAs. Additionally, ticket allotment to two Congress turncoats has resulted in the BJP adding two more to the list of rebels. Congress defectors Pawan Kajal and Lakhwinder Rana will contest on BJP ticket from Kangra and Nalagarh seats respectively.

Though BJP has managed to placate some of the MLAs denied tickets, rebels are in the fray in Mandi, Bilaspur, Kangra, Dharamsala, Jhanduta, Chamba, Dehra, Kullu, Hamirpur, Nalagarh, Fatehpur, Kinnaur, Anni, Sundernagar, Nachan and Indora.

The BJP earlier this week expelled five leaders for anti-party activities, including four former MLAs and a party vice president. All five are contesting as Independents from their constituencies.

Apart from the six expelled leaders, some prominent BJP rebels who are fighting the polls despite party

pressure include former secretary and media in-charge Praveen Sharma in Mandi and Kulbhash Chand Chaudhary in Kangra. Nadda has been making vigorous efforts to placate the rebels and managed to persuade three leaders to withdraw from the race.

In Chief Minister Jairam Thakur's home district of Mandi too rebel leaders like Gian Chand, former minister Roop Singh's son Abhishek Thakur and Praveen Sharma are posing problems for the BJP.

The advantage of the BJP is that it has already projected Jairam Thakur as its CM for a second term while it has not been the case with the Congress and the AAP.

The anti-incumbency, however, is a worrying factor in a close contest with expected thin margin of victories.

The Congress poll campaign has relatively started late and has still remained low key like in Gujarat, another poll-bound state.

The BJP had won 44 seats in the 2017 elections, restricting the Congress Party to 22 seats. At present, the Himachal Pradesh legislative assembly has 45 BJP MLAs, while Congress has 22 and CPI(M) has one MLA.

Demonetisation led to fall in economy, PM yet to take responsibility for this epic failure: Cong

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and former party chief Rahul Gandhi on Monday attacked Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday over his government's 2016 demonetisation move, saying the PM is yet to acknowledge this "epic failure" that led to the "fall of the economy" and that BJP brought back poverty over its larger claims of bringing back black money to the country.

Kharge's remarks, a day before demonetisation's sixth anniversary, said that the currency with the public has jumped to a new high of Rs 30.88 lakh crore as of October 21.

"Demonetisation was promised to free the country of black money. But it destroyed businesses and ruined jobs. 6 years after the 'masterstroke' the cash available in public is 72% higher than that in 2016," Kharge said in a tweet.

"PM is yet to acknowledge this epic failure that led to fall of economy," the Congress president said.

Rahul Gandhi who is undertaking Padyatra on Bharat Jodo Yatra said in a statement that the taller claims of Modi to bring back black money has flattened and that with his demonetisation he brought back poverty in the country.

"In order to restore economy, the King demolished the entire economy of the nation. Economy weakened, unemployment augmented but terrorism increased," Rahul said in a tweet message.

Mamata Govt provides safe haven to terrorists: Opp a day after alleged Al-Qaeda operative held

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

A day after Moniruddin Sheikh an alleged Al Qaeda operative and a college student was arrested from Mathurapur in the outskirts of Kolkata the Bengal Opposition parties trained their guns at Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for making Bengal a safe haven for terrorists and criminals.

The State Special Task Force arrested Moniruddin after receiving information from another arrested terrorist mole Azizul.

"This is not the first time a terror mole was arrested from Kolkata outskirts ... the arrest proves that the State police has literally failed to deal with terror operatives who have literally infiltrated a number of districts ... police are inoperative because they have to listen to their political bosses," said BJP national vice president Dilip Ghosh adding "Bengal is sitting on a powder keg."

"There is nothing much that the Mamata Banerjee Government can do about terror activities in Bengal of their own political compulsions ... they need votes and in lieu of that they have to ignore many incidents that are taking place in villages and particularly a number of madarsas of the State," Ghosh a former Bengal BJP president said.

Ghosh's statement came close on the heels of the arrest of Amiruddin another terrorist from Ramban area of Jammu and Kashmir.

DRDO launches submersible platform at NPOL, to give boost to self-reliance in Defence

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Giving a boost to self-reliance, Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) launched Hull Module of Submersible Platform for Acoustic Characterization and Evaluation (SPACE) facility at Naval Physical and Oceanographic Laboratory (NPOL) Kochi recently.

It is a state-of-the-art testing and evaluation facility for sonar systems developed for use by the Indian navy onboard various platforms, including ships, submarines and helicopters, defence ministry officials said here on Monday.

The SPACE facility is based on the concept design and requirements projected by the NPOL and constructed by

Larsen and Toubro (L&T) Shipbuilding, Chennai. This will be mainly utilized for evaluating sonar systems, allowing for quick deployment and easy recovery of scientific packages such as sensors and transducers.

The SPACE is one-of-a-kind facility in the world. The uniqueness of this facility lies in the specially designed submersible platform, which can be lowered up to depths of 100 meters using a series of synchronously operated winches.

The design and construction of the platform meet all the statutory needs of Indian Register of Shipping and the vessel classifying authority and strictly adhere to the inspection and registration criteria as per Kerala Inland Vessel Rules, they said.

J&K SI, CRPF cop among 4 held in SI job scam in Valley

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has arrested four persons, including a Jammu and Kashmir police assistant Sub-Inspector (SI) and a CRPF constable, in connection with SI recruitment scam in the Union Territory.

The CBI has arrested Ashok Kumar, ASI, Jammu and Kashmir Police, Surender Singh, Constable, CRPF, and two private individuals -- Pradeep Kumar, packing in-charge at the printing press where papers were getting printed and one Bajinder Singh.

All the accused were summoned to Jammu where they were arrested and produced before a special court after questioning, officials said.

The CBI probe in the scam has revealed that ₹20-30 lakh were allegedly paid by some aspirants to get advance copies of the papers, they said.

India talks to Pak officials to ensure safety of Sikh pilgrims

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In an effort to ensure safety and land security of Sikh pilgrims, the Indian High Commission in Pakistan is coordinating with the local authorities in Pakistan. Pilgrims are travelling there for Gurburab celebrations on the occasion of Guru Nanak Dev's birthday on Tuesday. The first Sikh guru was born at Nankana Sahib there.

A consular team from the Indian High Commission in Islamabad is on the ground to take care of the pilgrims' needs and facilitate their safe travels to several gurdwaras in Pakistan during the week-long birth anniversary celebrations of Guru Nanak Dev.

Several jathas or groups of pilgrims, comprising around 2,418 Sikh devotees crossed the Attari-Wagah border on Sunday to make the pilgrimage to Nankana Sahib in the Punjab province of Pakistan.

5 held in UP after video of cops assaulting women protesters goes viral

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Ambedkar Nagar police registered a case and arrested five persons on Monday, including women, for allegedly attacking the police and a team of officials from the district administration that had gone to erect a boundary wall in Wazidpur area on Sunday, officers said.

The action was taken after a video of a male police personnel beating up women, many of whom were Dalits, using lathi in Ambedkar Nagar went viral on Sunday, sparking fresh allegations of police brutality in the Yogi Adityanath-ruled State.

edly staging a protest on Sunday against the alleged vandalism of a Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar statue in Jalalpur town the previous day. The video also shows cops flogging and hurling abuses at the women and a woman police personnel pulling at the hair of a protester.

The police have denied the allegations. According to the police, the district administration decided to erect a boundary wall after unknown persons threw ink on a statue of Dr BR Ambedkar at the spot two days ago. A few local residents who were allegedly using the land for private purposes were against erecting the wall, they added.

**बलिहारी कुदरत वसिआ ।
तेरा अंत न जाई लखिआ ॥१॥**

Govt. of Haryana | **75 Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav**

Heartiest Greetings
to all on the occasion of
Prakash Utsav
of
Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji
Tuesday, November 8, 2022

"On the special occasion of the Parkash Purab of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, I recall his pious thoughts and noble ideals. His vision of a just, compassionate and inclusive society inspires us."

- Narendra Modi

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PAPER WITH PASSION

Pyrrhic victory

Govt has won EWS quota case in the Supreme Court but the victory may be difficult to handle

The Supreme Court's verdict, allowing a 10 per cent quota in jobs and education institutions for the poor or economically weaker sections (EWS), is a major victory for the Narendra Modi Government which had brought it before the 2019 general elections. The Government stands vindicated on a critical issue. But the split judgment cannot be called a win for our democracy as well, for a red line has been crossed—the 50 per cent cap on reservations. It may be recalled that even the most enthusiastic social justice warriors in the Mandal era did not cross that line. Former prime minister VP Singh, who inaugurated the era, did not propose to augment the quota percentage; he wanted 27 per cent reservation for other backward classes (OBCs), thus taking the total to 49.5 per cent. The EWS quota was aimed at the category of people not belonging to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, or OBCs; in effect, it sought to cover the so-called upper castes. It was immediately contested by various petitioners. Justices Dinesh Maheshwari, Bela M Trivedi, and JB Pardiwala favoured the quota, whereas Chief Justice UU Lalit and Justice S Ravindra Bhat dissented. The verdict implies that neither the EWS quota nor the breach of the 50 per cent cap can be regarded as a violation of the basic structure of the Constitution.



In his dissent, Justice Bhat said: "Amendment practices constitutionally prohibited discriminations and strikes at the heart of the quality code. Allowing breach of the 50 per cent cap set on reservation can lead to further infractions which can result in compartmentalisation." He hit the nail on the head: the kind of politicians we have, only an incorrigible optimist would say that there would be no more demands for reservations as all sections have been covered; our leaders will find or invent new pretexts for more reservations. The 50 per cent cap was a good compromise between social justice and merit. But the Bharatiya Janata Party, after losing Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh Assembly elections at the fag-end of 2018, opted for short-term political gains and brought the 103rd Constitutional Amendment introducing the EWS quota. It didn't occur to the saffron party that reservation politics was not its strong point, for it is predicated upon the assumptions which are uncharitable to Hindu society. This is the reason that the RSS, nucleus of the saffron family, is uncomfortable with caste-based quotas. The country has witnessed a large number of agitations by various castes and communities demanding reservations, many of which went violent. At a time when the employment scenario is grim and government jobs are at premium, more quota stirs cannot be ruled out; and now that the cap has been breached, there can be demands to include more groups. Neither the Government nor the BJP would like to face such an eventuality. But, if it happens, they would have no one but themselves to blame. The Government has won but it's a pyrrhic victory.

PICTALK



Devotees cover Yamuna river with saarees during 'Chunari Manoran' on the occasion of 'Kartik Purnima', in Mathura. PTI

Rupee goes digital

The launch of e-rupee is quantum leap in digital currency and could revolutionise monetary system

The Indian rupee is now available in its digital avatar, albeit with limited scope. With the launch of digital rupee by the Reserve Bank of India, the country has taken one more definite step towards digitization of Indian currency. Though there was hesitation initially in the government about digital currency based on block chain technology. When the government banned crypto currencies, which are also in the same league, many people thought that India would be left out in the digital race of currencies. Though the crypto still remains banned in India but the government has finally decided to launch its own. The digital rupee would enable people to make digital payments through UPI without a bank account. They could avail the e-wallet provided by the Reserve Bank. India has one of the most technologically-evolved currencies in the world, and the e-rupee will enable digital payments and improve financial inclusion which may be a boon to millions as the digital payment system would eliminate leakages completely. A central bank digital currency (CBDC) can play a key role in instilling confidence of the people in the digital currency unlike crypto currencies which do not enjoy backing of any central bank.

The rollout of the e-rupee has been one of the most sought-after developments, since its announcement in the FY23 Union budget. The digital rupee is a big bold step the journey toward digital payments. The initiative has started in the low volume, high-value wholesale (interbank) segment from where learning would be used to roll out reliable, built-to-scale retail payments. The pilot involves nine banks, including the SBI, the Bank of Baroda, the HDFC Bank, the Yes Bank, the Kotak Mahindra Bank, and the ICICI Bank, settling secondary market transactions in government securities. If the soft launch of e-rupee is successful it would soon see a full rollout. The digital rupee is expected to boost the reach of payment and financial needs of a wider category of users while ensuring transparency and low operational cost, and in this regard, it is encouraging to witness the RBI's support for innovation in creating a world-class digital ecosystem. If the e rupee becomes a popular mode of digital payments it would pave the way for other crypto currency to become legit. E-rupee could be a game changer in monetary system which has is opaque, cash dependent, and highly-inefficient.

Nehru's blunders that cost India dear

Nehru's left-leaning ideology and his equations with Sheikh Abdullah could be the reason for his two blunders on China and Kashmir



PRAFULL GORADIA

Union minister Kiren Rijju has done well to bring into public focus Jawaharlal Nehru's mistakes in Kashmir as well as his handling of China policy. The blunders have cost India incalculably in blood, money, and prestige. Nehru had three gurus, namely, his father Motilal, Gandhi, and Krishna Menon. Motilal would have pointed out to his son that a quarter of India's population was Muslim and an undivided sub-continent today could be well over 40 per cent. Until May 1947, it was not certain that there would be Partition. Jawaharlal was, therefore, modeled to lead Muslims; the Hindus were bound to fall in line behind a Brahmin willy-nilly. So much so, that even his wedding invitation card was printed in Urdu. This model came useful even after Partition for Nehru needed Muslims as the larger chunk of his vote bank. One has to recall that Sardar Vallabh Patel was the Congress party's unanimously elected choice to be its President and then Prime Minister.

In any case, Gandhi was the Congress' role model for being pro-Muslim to the hilt. He even went to the extent of becoming President of the Khilafat Committee soon after World War I when the new reformist and revolutionary Turkish leader Kemal Mustafa as well as the victorious British dethroned and exiled the Caliph of all Sunni Islam and also the Sultan of the defeated Ottoman Empire. India had nothing to do with Turkey; indeed, Mohammed Ali Jinnah, then a prominent Congress leader—the day of his championing the Muslim separatist cause was still years away—kept away from the Khilafat Movement. But Gandhi would not be dissuaded from championing the cause of Islamic obscurantism.

Krishna Menon was the third in Nehru's trinity of gurus. He was a closet communist whom Nehru leaned on for ideological guidance in defence and foreign affairs. It was he who convinced Nehru that China, a socialist



country led by Mao Zedong would not clash with India on the battlefield. At most, it could differ on policy issues. In any case, India should project itself as a socialist power. That would match the country's stance of being anti-imperialist in the light of its history, and be in tune with its aspiration to lead the Third World. This advice was music to Nehru's ears. Little did Jawaharlal anticipate that in 1956, Britain and France would attack Colonel Nasser's Egypt, and only a few months later Khrushchev's Soviet Union would brutalize its satellite Hungary with tanks and guns. As a Third World leader and a personal friend of Nasser, India's Prime Minister condemned the Anglo-French invasion in the bitterest of words. But Nehru was non-plussed when Hungary was attacked. He had to say something critical and therefore said: "Violence seldom solves anything. We hope that the dark clouds over Budapest would clear before long".

Similarly, the Indian prime minister was so taken aback by the Chinese aggression in 1962 that he was driven to tears while speaking on All India Radio: "My heart goes out to the people of Assam" he said. Nehru's words



KRISHNA MENON WAS THE THIRD IN NEHRU'S TRINITY OF GURUS. HE WAS A CLOSET COMMUNIST WHOM NEHRU LEANED ON FOR IDEOLOGICAL GUIDANCE IN DEFENCE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS

conveyed the impression that Assam was lost. In Hindi, he said: "Assam khatre mein hai."

Jawaharlal Nehru's blunders in Kashmir should be attributed to his friendship and fraternity with Sheikh Abdullah, the latter was popularly called "Lion of the Valley". He was popular only among those who spoke the Kashmiri language. Once one crosses over to Muzaffarabad or Mirpur, where Punjabi is spoken, the Abdullah writ does not run. It was, therefore, the Sheikh's advice to Nehru to not include those areas in his planning. Which, according to the late Prof. BalrajMadhok was the reason for India agreeing to a ceasefire, as it were, on the orders of the United Nations. That is how Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (POK) was born on the last midnight of 1948. The responsibility for obeying the United Nations was attributed to the last Viceroy Mountbatten.

Prof. BalrajMadhok, who grew up in Iskardu, where his father was in state service, consistently resented the fact that such personal likes and dislikes should influence national policies. Nevertheless, that was the beginning of the war of blood and money, which should conclude before long,

with the abolition of Article 370. The idea of a separate flag and constitution for Kashmir was also Sheikh Abdullah's insistence. To facilitate their introduction Article 370 was inserted as a Cabinet decision by Nehru. It never had the approval of India's Parliament. Sheikh Abdullah was such a favourite of Nehru that when he was released from Tihar Jail, he was driven straight to the Prime Minister's residence at Teen Murti, where he stayed until Nehru died. In contrast, Maharaja Hari Singh, who was disliked by the Sheikh, was dethroned and sent to Mumbai, although he remained a titular king of Kashmir.

Another of Nehru's weaknesses was a contradiction between the animosity of Pakistanis, the 'Kashmiriyat' of J & K, which had to be assuaged, and the Indian Muslims who had to be kept happy for their votes. As a result, it was difficult to think clearly and Nehru certainly did not do so. In the process, India's national interests were dispatched to the backwaters of confusion.

(The writer is a well-known columnist, an author and a former member of the Rajya Sabha. The views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

GAINS FOR THE BJP IN BYE ELECTIONS

Sir — Of the seven constituencies that went to the by-elections recently in six states, the BJP has bagged three. The party has made considerable inroads in Telangana where the winning margin for KCR is low. It is a decisive win for the BJP. The BJP is also gaining ground in the south. In Bihar too the Nitish factor has had little or no effect. Moreover, this cannot be taken as a prelude either for the Gujarat or 2024 general elections where the yardstick is entirely a different one.

But it is also a fact that the bye elections do help gauge the mood of the public especially if they are held before the general elections. Though general elections 2024 are still at least one and a half year away and a lot can happen during this time. But the opposition parties would need to put their act together and work in unison to make a mark. Congress party has taken the lead by starting Bharat Jodo Yatra and others could replicate the same or something similar in which they connect with the people. Indeed it would be interesting to see a general election fought by a united opposition against the BJP which is banking upon the Modi factor and has limitless resources. The opposition should stick to its basic ideology to connect with the voters and convince them about their programs and policies.

Sravana Ramachandran | Chennai

BALLOT OVER BULLET

Sir — On 15 November World Population turns eight billion. In July 2023, India will be World's largest population. In 2024 World's largest democracy goes to the polls. (MAHATY-OHAR) and the purpose of any festival is to unite people from all walks of life. People straight from the hospital in wheelchairs, or stretchers, differently abled, just married, young and old, ferried in boats across rivers, and have climbed mountains to vote. Apropos The story of Shyam saran Negi, born on 1 July 1917 in Kalpa, Himachal Pradesh, a retired schoolteacher cast the first vote in

EC's controversial announcement



The Election Commission of India's out-of-the-blue announcement for the by-polls in the Samajwadi Party's bastions, Mainpuri and Rampur, to be held on December 5 has caught all the leaders as well as aspirants in the fray including those from the ruling BJP, unawares given the fact that they were already busy gearing up preparations for the

the 1951 general election in India - the nation's first election since the end of the British raj.

Himachal Pradesh went to polls 5 months early because of the weather. And Negi who cast his first vote on October 25, 1951, voted in every general election, believed to be India's oldest voter at 106. He also made a special appearance in the Hindi film "Sanam re". This reiterates Don't Vote Your Caste but Cast Your Vote. The Ballot is more powerful than the bullet.

TS Karthik | Chennai

BRIDGE COLLAPSE, LESSONS LEARNED

Sir — Experts at IIT Delhi made a statement that the main reason behind accidents such as bridge collapses is not a technical fault but it's due to human negligence and greed. Modern technology is available in the country to build bridges and flyovers. However, such accidents happen when technical aspects are ignored. On October 30, nearly 141 peo-

ple died while over 178 were injured in Gujarat's Morbi town when a suspension bridge over the Machchu river collapsed. Earlier in West Bengal, an incident of collapse of an under-construction bridge had come to the fore. Even at that time, there were serious allegations of negligence in construction work. According to the information, Morbi Municipality had entrusted the repair and maintenance of the bridge to a private company named 'Oreva Group' for 15 years. The company is accused of negligence in maintenance and nine people have been so far arrested. Investigation revealed that out of Rs 2 crore allotted for the renovation of the Morbi bridge, the company had spent only Rs 12 lakh, and the rest pocketed the public money. There should be stringent checks and balances so that no bridge collapses in future.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai
Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

Modi gets so much respect abroad because he is the prime minister of the country of Gandhi, where the roots of democracy run deep.



Rajasthan CM —Ashok Gehlot



Chinese leader —Xi Jinping

For us, love from the community was extremely important and the approval we have found from the community (LGBTIQA) makes us feel that what we had done is right.



Actor —Bhumi Pednekar



Winning a medal for your country is special. Many are saying this is a very good victory, and of course it is, but I want to perform more on the senior circuit. There is celebration, but I have to focus on my next match

Badminton player —Sankar Muthusamy

Party will soon take action against those who were given notices by the AICC for indiscipline, whatever decisions are to be taken, the AICC would take them very soon.



Congress leader —Sachin pilot

FIRST COLUMN

WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH IS IMPORTANT

Managers must pay attention to mental health of employees



DR JYOTI KAPOOR

Alka Sharma (name changed), a communications professional, used to be in a bad mood and involved in a series of arguments with her family at home. She was becoming increasingly more reactive to situations that probably didn't need any reaction. She was constantly suffering from body aches and excessive headaches. All these were obvious signs of significant stress that Alka was ignoring.

Upon investigation, the workplace mental well-being expert found out that she was suffering from extreme levels of stress. Alka is not the only one. There are many who are going through workplace mental health issues but are ignorant about it.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), 15 per cent of working-age Indian adults live with a mental disorder. In a recent Deloitte survey, 47 per cent of professionals are going through workplace-related stress which is the biggest factor affecting their mental health. These worrisome data stresses the need for putting a special impetus on workplace mental health.

Key to work-related factors that affect mental health of employees is the poor management and communication practices. Kind and engaging communication is the key to a healthy workplace. It also enhances



the management-employee relationship. On the other hand, when communication is poor, it unnecessarily causes stress and creates issues like workplace-related stress and mental health challenges.

Also critical is the lack of support for employees from managers. Employees feel overwhelmed and unmotivated when the managers don't assist them in resolving work-related challenges. Managers, for example, should set an example on how to complete tasks that are unclear to employees rather than expecting them to figure them out on their own.

Additionally, the performance stress adds to the woes. The unprecedented job loss during the coronavirus pandemic has put extra pressure on the minds of the employees. It has been seen that employees are under unreasonable pressure to perform at peak levels all of the time. It causes an increase in workload and work hours, as well as additional stress and emotional exhaustion.

Negative effects of poor mental health in the workplace are also evident. We all undergo mental health issues. When things are going well, we have a sense of purpose and believe we can handle whatever challenges come at us. But, just like our physical health, our mental health experiences ups and downs. Therefore, creating awareness of potential mental health issues in the workplace is essential for fostering an inclusive workplace.

Physical capability and daily functioning are also impaired under the stress conditions. Poor mental health has a significant impact on daily life and physical capability of employees. It paves way for social anxiety and reduction in cognitive performance and working memory.

The stress at workplaces also leads to poor decision-making. Impulse control, unhealthy thoughts, and poor decision-making are some of the effects of poor mental health. When the decision making power is poor, it also leads to missed meetings, showing up late, dropping commitments, or not adhering to company policies. Demotivation and lack of focus are caused by poor mental health. When there are mental health issues in the workplace, our thoughts wander or become preoccupied with our problems. All these make it difficult to regulate our thoughts and emotions.

The first step in promoting good mental health in the workplace is to raise awareness of the workplace-related mental health issues and how it can hamper the productivity of an employee. When companies support and promote mental health for those who are suffering or who are simply not thriving, all employees benefit.

(The author is Founder and Senior Psychiatrist, Manasthali)

Nano fertiliser move can be a game changer

Nano fertilisers not just promise to cut down subsidy burden but also improve the income of farmers



UTTAM GUPTA

Inaugurating function of the two-day "Kisan Samman Sammelan" at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) on October 17, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced two major policy initiatives -- "One Nation, One Fertiliser" scheme under which all fertiliser manufacturing and market companies will sell all subsidised fertilisers under a single brand Bharat; and promote use of liquid nano fertilisers.

While the government intends to use "One Nation, One Fertiliser" scheme to reduce the criss-cross movement of fertilizers that will eventually help reduce freight subsidy bills and make quality fertilizer available at lower cost, adoption of liquid nano urea is meant to help attain self-sufficiency and help farmers enhance their income, besides ensuring minimal impact on the environment.

The Centre controls the maximum retail price (MRP) of urea, at a low level unrelated to the cost of production, which is higher. The excess of cost over MRP is reimbursed to the manufacturer as a subsidy, which varies from unit to unit depending on its cost. The movement and distribution of urea is also controlled under the Fertilizer (Movement) Control Order, 1973. The cost of transportation from the plant/port up to the retailer is reimbursed under a uniform freight policy.

For non-urea fertilizers, the government fixes 'uniform' subsidies on a per nutrient basis for all manufacturers and importers. They must deduct the subsidy amount from the cost while fixing MRP. Although they are free to move and distribute these fertilizers, 20 per cent of the material is under movement control to service under-served areas. They get reimbursement for freight cost for movement by rail.

The requirement of all fertilizers for each cropping season i.e. kharif (April to September) and rabi (October to March) is assessed by the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation (DoAC) in consultation with Department of Fertilizers (DoF), states, railways and fertilizer manufacturers. It is broken down month-wise.

The movement and distribution of all fertilizers is monitored through the online web based "Fertilizer Monitoring System (FMS). When a decision on who will supply urea (or any other fertilizer), how much quantity and where is taken by the government in consultation with all stakeholders, including the manufacturers and even the movement is tracked on real time basis, it is naive to believe that there would be criss-cross movement.

It is hard to fathom how asking all suppliers to sell fertilizer under one brand will help in eliminating criss-cross movement, if any. At the same time, by rendering individual company brands



THE EFFICIENCY OF NANO UREA IS MORE THAN 80 PER CENT AS COMPARED TO AROUND 40 PER CENT OF CONVENTIONAL UREA. NANO BOTTLES ARE EASILY PORTABLE. IT INCREASES YIELD BY 3-16 PER CENT

(The author is a policy analyst)



redundant, it will penalize firms which have invested heavily in building brands in a territory which could face a free for all.

The idea of a uniform pan-India brand may have been prompted by the fact that fertilizer products have fixed nutrient content as specified under the Fertilizer Control Order (FCO); for instance, urea has 46 per cent 'N'. But, this is a fact known for ages; it doesn't take away from the fact that a brand testifies to the quality of the product and the whole package of support services offered by the firm.

Modi referred to the practice of higher margin offered by some manufacturers to retailers for pushing their brand. Under the existing dispensation, the government allows a uniform distribution margin which gets covered under subsidy. Any amount higher than this is not permissible. There is no way a Bharat brand can help reining in such violations.

As for the second initiative, nano urea is urea in the form of a nanoparticle containing nitrogen particles of 20 - 50 nanometer size. Soil nutrient in liquid form provides nitrogen to plants as an alternative to conventional urea. A 500 ml bottle of nano urea is equivalent to a 45 kg bag of conventional urea.

The efficiency of nano urea is more than 80 per cent as compared to around 40 per cent of conventional urea. Nano bottles are easily portable. It increases yield by 3-16 per cent and addi-

tional income for farmers is estimated around Rs 2400/- to 5700/- per acre. Its use causes less soil, water and air pollution.

Will this technology deliver? On a close look, some grey areas catch attention. First, normally urea is applied in two dosages: one, basal application being even spreading of solid fertilizers over the entire field before or at sowing or planting; two, top dressing which involves applying fertilizer directly to the leaves as opposed to in the soil. Nano urea is meant to replace conventional urea only in top dressing even as basal application is entirely in solid form.

This means that the benefit of 80 per cent efficiency (albeit of nano urea) will be available to only just 50 per cent of the total quantity of fertilizer applied. Hence, the effective efficiency achievable would be 60 per cent (80x0.5 + 40x0.5). In other words, the efficiency gain with use of nano urea would be 20 per cent more instead of 40 per cent higher as revealed by a plain reading of numbers.

Second, the increase in yield with use of nano urea is reported to be in the range of 3-16 per cent. The higher end of the range may look impressive, what if the farmer gets stuck with the lower end? An increase of 3 per cent in yield doesn't take us very far.

Third, the most crucial factor is cost and price to the farmer. While the cost of importing 45 kg of conventional urea is Rs 3000/-

, the price to the farmer is Rs 242/- the difference being made up by subsidy from the Centre. For nano urea, even as the farmer pays more or less the same i.e. Rs 240/- for 500 ml bottle, the producer doesn't get any subsidy support.

Naturally, he won't be selling at a loss. In other words, the cost of the bottle would be around Rs 240/- only. This may sound puzzling when one considers that the basic material for making nano urea is none other than conventional urea (nano urea contains by weight 85 to 99.98 per cent of conventional urea, 0.01 to 5 per cent of quinuhydrone, 0.01 to 10 per cent of calcium cyanamide besides micro non-nitrogen plant nutrients and micro nitrogen containing compounds). The puzzle is solved the moment one looks at the following.

Whereas a 45 kg bag of conventional urea contains 46 per cent 'N' or 20 kg (45x0.46), 500 ml bottle of nano urea has 4 per cent 'N' or 20 grams (500x0.04). The latter with a mere 20 grams can achieve what the former does with 20 kilograms. It is for agricultural scientists to authenticate whether nano urea can accomplish such a feat. If it can, the government can save a whopping about Rs 55,000 crore in subsidy annually on 9 million ton of urea import [(2758x22.22x9)/2758/(3000-242) is subsidy per 45 kg bag, 22.22 number of bags in a ton] that will be replaced by 198 million bottles of nano urea requiring no subsidy.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

HE HAS MISLED THE PEOPLE OF DELHI AND THE NATION. HE USED ANNA HAZARE TO COME TO POWER AND LATER LEFT HIM. HE CAN MISLEAD ANYONE TO GRAB POWER.
— BJP SPOKESPERSON SYED ZAFAR ISLAM



THEY HAVE SAID IF YOU LEAVE GUJARAT AND DON'T CONTEST THERE, WE WILL SPARE BOTH SATYENDAR JAIN AND SISODIA AND DROP ALL CHARGES AGAINST THEM.
— DELHI CM ARVIND KEJRIWAL

India is right on \$100 bn to developing countries

Emissions are locale specific. India should also tackle vehicle emission and not succumb to western pressures

The greenhouse gas global warming and climate change are being used by green lobbies that have turned it into big business, raking in bigger profits in the West. Climate change is a regular geophysical phenomenon and nobody has ever been able to stop it, and India has taken the most sensitive stand of 'phasing down' coal that needs to be extended to the entire climate concern at COP27 at Sharm el-Sheikh in Egypt.

Emissions are locale specific. The Climate Accountability Institute of UK's Carbon Majors study finds that only 100 companies have contributed 72 per cent or one trillion tonnes of emissions globally since 1988. At the COP26, India was among the nations which insisted that in



SHIVAJI SARKAR

the Glasgow Climate Pact coal be "phased down" and not "phased out", citing the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities when tackling climate change. In a similar vein, India should also tackle vehicle emission and not succumb to western pressures.

India is right but it can go further to state that man is too weak to change the global climate. Yes, warming of the environment has been largely a western propagation. The natural factors are constant. Even glaciers directly affect the landscape in many ways, shaping and reshaping earth's surface. Environment Minister Bhupendra Yadav says he would stress on \$100 billion yearly assistance to developing countries to meet climate targets as insisted by the West.

Geological records show that there have been a number of variations in the earth's climate. There are many natural factors, including the changes in sun, emissions from volcanoes, variation in earth's orbit and level of carbon dioxide. It is changed by volcanic eruptions, variability in the orbit of the earth and shifts in earth's crust or plate tectonics. Every volcanic eruption emits millions of tons of pollutants. Not just ash and dust but also carbon dioxide: one of the strongest greenhouse gases on our planet. In the largest cases, a single volcanic plume, lasting only hours, might add many millions of tons of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere. Individual volcanoes add more carbon dioxide to our atmosphere than human activity.

The unprecedented drought in Europe and parts of America that dried up major rivers is a natural phenomenon and no man, even without lighting up a single fire could have stopped it. Had it been so there would not have been Manu or Noah's ark in the face of the great flooding.

A new report 'The Big Con', compiled by Global Forest Coalition and Friends of the Earth International and Corporate Accountability, outlines a disturbing collusion between polluters and policy makers. The emerging reality is that green-house gases are nothing compared to the natural causes for heating up the earth. The worst sufferers are the 46 least developing countries (LDC), says the United Nations Conference for Trade

and Development.

The West has a different approach. It says global warming is the long-term heating of Earth's surface observed since the pre-industrial period (between 1850 and 1900) due to human activities, primarily fossil fuel burning, which increases heat-trapping greenhouse gas levels in earth's atmosphere. It does not want this term replaced with "climate change".

There are known such phenomena in seven different glacial and interglacial ages. Even renewable energy, the latest fad, is known to cause tremendous pollution whether wind, solar or hydro. Renewable energy often requires more land than fossil fuel production, with infrastructure fragmenting or even

eliminating high-quality wildlife habitat, according to Christopher E Moorman, professor of fisheries, wildlife and conservation biology at South Carolina University.

Solar is supposed to generate 34600 tonnes of junk every year by 2030 in India alone, according to the National Solar Energy Federation of India. The global volume of wind blade waste will be a million tonnes by 2035 from 30,000 tons in 2021, according to Bloomberg. It is partly recyclable at a high cost. But wind panels made of composites are neither biodegradable nor can be recycled. As per a US study by 2050 it would be cumulative 2.2 million tons and occupy one per cent of the landfill area. Hydro has several haz-

ards, including the water being turned turbid, sinking a large area and weight that slows down the earth rotation as the 'China's Three Gorges Dam'.

Lithium-ion batteries contain metals such as cobalt, nickel, and manganese, which are toxic and can contaminate water supplies and ecosystems if they leach out of landfills apart from fires. The lithium itself is hazardous. Climate change and warming are much wider issues beyond the scope of the COP, which should have gone into the core to save the earth instead of superficially treating it. Or it can also mull if there is a repeat of Noah's great flood that would be due to man-made gases or climatic factors. Let it not be a business proposition at the graveyard.

(The author is a policy analyst)

Kyiv region still struggles 6 months after Russian retreat

AP ■ MOSCHUN



Standing amid the wreckage of his home, Vadym Zherdetsky shows photos on his phone of how it once looked: handsome rooms, a hand-carved wooden bed and a chest of drawers he intended to leave to his grandchildren.

The town was recaptured from Russian forces in April, but Zherdetsky's house, like many others in the Kyiv region, remains in ruins.

"Everything changed. Our lives changed," the 51-year-old said, wiping away tears. "Thank God it was only property, and we are alive and healthy. ... I don't know where our kids and grandkids will live. I don't know anything."

More than six months after Russian forces retreated from the towns around Kyiv, residents of those communities are still struggling to rebuild their lives.

An estimated 1 million people — half the number who fled the region — have returned, according to local authorities. But many no longer have jobs, cannot afford to fix their houses and say they need more assistance.

Nearly USD 350 billion is needed for reconstruction across the war-ravaged country, and that amount is expected to grow, according to a report issued in September by Ukraine's government, the European Commission and the World Bank.

Burdened with the fighting and frequent Russian attacks on the country's power system, the Ukrainian government strains to carry out the most urgent repairs to civilian residences.

This month it plans to send 1,000 crews to do as much work as possible before winter, including fixing 117 high-rise buildings in the Kyiv region, the area's military administration said.

People submit photos of their destroyed homes to a government app to receive compensation.

However, large-scale reconstruction — such as the USD 300,000 that Zherdetsky estimates is needed to repair his house — has yet to begin.

Moschun, with a population of about 1,000, was hit hard at the start of the war. Approximately 37 people were killed and 160 homes destroyed, residents say. The town was occupied by Russian troops for

nearly six weeks. Walking through the debris, Zherdetsky nostalgically points to the carefully constructed archways he designed to allow two of his grandchildren to ride through on their scooters at the same time, he said.

He and his wife have moved to a cramped space above a convenience store they own on the edge of town. He's now earning about 10 times less than he did before Russia's invasion because prices have spiked and people don't have money to spend, he said.

The drop in income has prevented him from buying building materials and warm clothes ahead of winter, he said.

Reconstruction is challenging, especially since 60 per cent of the country's budget is allocated for the war, Oleksiy Kuleba, head of the Kyiv region military administration, told

The Associated Press. "The Kyiv region is bombed with missiles and drones ... We understand that everything is not happening as quickly as we would like, but 28,000 objects were damaged in the region. We will rebuild them all," said Kuleba, who said housing is a priority.

Moscow is targeting Ukraine's energy infrastructure to drive the nation into the cold of the impending winter. Since early October, it has destroyed approximately 40 per cent of the country's energy system, forcing Ukraine to impose rolling blackouts while racing to stabilize the grid.

The strikes drew a warning from the mayor of Kyiv, who said that residents should be prepared for the worst this winter, including the threat of having no electricity, water or heat.

Worried that the energy system will not hold, the government is urging Ukrainians who fled the country not to return until after winter, said Iryna Vereshchuk, the minister for the reintegration of the Russian-occupied territories.

Analysts warn that displaced people should be cautious about going back to areas around Kyiv that have been regained by Ukraine because some are not yet fully secure, especially with Russia's military buildup in neighbouring Belarus, which poses a risk of a renewed invasion from the north.

In the quest for assistance, Ukraine "still struggles to mobilise donors for rapid rebuilding and necessary security measures," said Orysia Lutsevych, head of the Ukraine forum at Chatham House, a London-based think tank.



Russian authorities: Power back on in occupied Kherson

AP ■ KYIV

Russian-appointed authorities say they are working to partially restore power in the occupied Ukrainian city of Kherson following what they have called a Ukrainian terrorist attack on power lines.

The southern city in the region that Moscow illegally annexed in September was cut off from power and water supplies on Sunday following damage to three power lines.

Kirill Stremousov, deputy head of the pro-Kremlin administration of the partially occupied Kherson region, said Monday that "power and connectivity is being partially restored" in Kherson city.

The alleged attack occurred on the Berislav-Kakhovka power line, and Russian state media reported on Sunday that the Kakhovka hydroelectric power station had also been damaged by Ukrainian strikes.

Ukrainian officials have not responded to the allegations.

Stremousov has repeatedly called for civilians to evacuate from Kherson — which lies on the western bank of the Dnieper River — to Russian-controlled territory on the eastern bank in

anticipation of a major Ukrainian counteroffensive to retake the strategic port city.

Last month, Ukraine's Southern Operational Command reported that occupying Russian forces in the Kherson region had been purposefully shutting off electricity and water and depriving the population of internet access in order to force them to evacuate.

Tens of thousands of civilians have already left the regional capital after being ordered to evacuate the area in October in the face of the Ukrainian counteroffensive which has retaken numerous settlements in the region. Yet on Monday, the region's Russian-installed administration announced it was halting "the movement of civilian vehicles across the Dnieper by water and pontoon ferry," citing "increased military danger" and threats to civilians.

Meanwhile, in another annexed region, Donetsk, Russian-installed officials accused Ukrainian forces of shelling the regional capital, also called Donetsk, with HIMARS rocket launchers early on Monday.

The city's Kremlin-backed mayor, Alexei Kulemzin, said a

fire broke out in an administrative building of the Donetsk Railways, but that the blaze had been contained and there were no casualties.

Ukrainian authorities have not commented on the incident.

The city of Donetsk has been controlled by Russian-backed separatists since 2014.

In territory held by Ukraine, Russia has been repeatedly targeting power infrastructure.

Ukraine's state-owned electricity grid operator Ukrenergo on Monday announced power outages in the capital Kyiv and the surrounding region, as well as in the Chernihiv, Cherkasy, Sumy, Kharkiv, Poltava and Zhytomyr regions.

The deputy head of Ukraine's presidential office, Kyrylo Tymoshenko, said that Russian strikes in the Zaporizhzhia region targeted civilian objects including as a cultural centre, farmers' warehouses and private residences.

The official noted that the Zaporizhzhia region — also illegally annexed by Russia in September but not fully controlled by Russian forces — was shelled 52 times over the past 24 hours, and one person was killed.

China bristles as UK Minister arrives in Taiwan for trade talks

PTI ■ BEIJING

China on Monday hit back at British Trade Policy Minister Greg Hands over his visit to Taiwan for talks with senior officials defying Beijing's warnings not to have official contacts with Taipei, saying the UK is going back on its commitment to the one-China policy.

The two-day visit, which began on

Monday, bears political significance as it's the first trip by a high-level British official since Prime Minister Rishi Sunak took office last month amid reports that he may toe a hardline against China.

The British minister's visit to Taipei follows the August tour of US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to Taiwan, the first by an American top leader in 25 years — prompting Beijing to resort to

large-scale unprecedented military drills in the Taiwan Strait, which included the firing of missiles over the self-ruled island.

China claims Taiwan as part of its mainland and its integration with the mainland is part of avowed objective of Chinese President Xi Jinping who was elected as the head of the ruling Communist Party of China for a record third term last month.

Much on the expected lines, Beijing reacted angrily to Hands' visit, saying that it violates the one-China principle to which London is a signatory.

"There is only One-China in the world and Taiwan is an inalienable part of China's territory," Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian told a media briefing here Monday.



China rejects any country having diplomatic ties or any official interactions with Taiwan," he said. The one-China principle is the

political foundation for UK-China relations, he said.

The UK should "respect China's position and stop official interactions with Taiwan and stop sending wrong signals to Taiwan's independent forces," Zhao said.

He also warned Taiwan's ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) headed by Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen.

"We also make it clear to DPP authorities that any attempt to seek independence by soliciting external support is doomed to fail," he said.

Sunak was expected to follow a strong policy towards China as he previously labelled it as one of "the biggest, long-term threats to Britain", and promised to get tough on Beijing.

North Korea: Missile tests were practice to attack South, US

AP ■ SEOUL

North Korea's military said on Monday its recent barrage of missile tests were practice to "mercilessly" strike key South Korean and US targets such as air bases and operation command systems with a variety of missiles that likely included nuclear-capable weapons.

The North's announcement underscored leader Kim Jong Un's determination not to back down in the face of his rivals' push to expand their military exercises. But some experts say Kim also used their drills as an excuse to modernise his nuclear arsenal and increase his leverage in future dealings with Washington and Seoul.

North Korea fired dozens of missiles and flew warplanes toward the sea last week — triggering evacuation alerts in some South Korean and Japanese areas — in protest of massive US-South Korean air force drills that the North views as an invasion rehearsal.

US and South Korean officials responded they would further enhance their joint training events and warned the North that the use of nuclear weapons would result in the end of Kim's regime.

"The recent corresponding military operations by the Korean People's Army are a clear answer of (North Korea) that the



more persistently the enemies' provocative military moves continue, the more thoroughly and mercilessly the KPA will counter them," the General Staff of North Korea's military said in a statement carried by state media.

It said the weapons tests involved ballistic missiles loaded with dispersion warheads and underground infiltration warheads meant to launch strikes on enemy air bases; ground-to-air missiles designed to "annihilate" enemy aircraft at different altitudes and distances; and strategic cruise missiles that fell in international waters about 80 kilometres (50 miles) off South Korea's southeastern coastal city of Ulsan.

The North's military said it also carried out an important test of a ballistic missile with a special functional warhead missioned with "paralysing the operation command system of the enemy."

Financial results table for M/S BHARAT BHUSHAN FINANCE & COMMODITY BROKERS LIMITED, covering Q3 2022 and YTD 2022.

PUBLIC NOTICE regarding property matters of Mrs. Kajal Pandey.

PUBLIC NOTICE regarding property matters of Mr. Jitender Chauhan.

PUBLIC NOTICE regarding property matters of Mr. Jitender Chauhan.

Ship refuses to leave Italy port until all migrants are off

AP ■ CATANIA, (ITALY)

The captain of a charity-run migrant rescue ship refused Italian orders to leave a Sicilian port Sunday after authorities refused to let 35 of the migrants on his ship disembark — part of headline directives by Italy's new far-right-led government targeting foreign-flagged rescue ships.

Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni's two-week-old government is refusing safe port for four ships operating in the central Mediterranean that have rescued migrants at sea in distress, some as many as 16 days ago, and is allowing only those identified as vulnerable to disembark.

On Sunday, Italy ordered the Humanity 1 to vacate the port of Catania after disembarking 144 rescued migrants, including with children,



more than 100 unaccompanied minors and people with medical emergencies.

But its captain refused to comply "until all survivors rescued from distress at sea have been disembarked," said SOS Humanity, the German charity that operates the ship. The vessel remained moored at the port.

Later Sunday, a second charity ship arrived in Catania, and the vetting process was being repeated with the 572 migrants aboard the Geo Barents ship operated by Doctors Without Borders.

PERFECTPAC LIMITED

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EXTRACT OF UN-AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND HALF YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2022

Financial results table for PERFECTPAC LIMITED, covering Q3 2022 and YTD 2022.

NOTES: 1. The above unaudited financial results were, subjected to limited review by the Statutory Auditors of the Company...

Lab-grown blood given to people in world-first clinical trial

PTI ■ LONDON

Scientists in the UK have infused blood cells grown in a laboratory into people in the first such clinical trial in the world. If proven safe and effective, manufactured blood cells could in time revolutionise treatments for people with blood disorders such as sickle cell and rare blood types, the researchers said.

It can be difficult to find enough well-matched donated blood for some people with these disorders, they said.

The team, including researchers from the University of Cambridge in the UK, said the blood cells were grown from stem cells from donors. The red cells were then transfused into healthy volunteers.



This is the first time in the world that red blood cells that have been grown in a laboratory have been given to another person as part of a trial into blood transfusion, they said.

"We hope our lab grown red blood cells will last longer than those that come from blood donors," said chief investigator Cedric Ghevaert, a professor at

the University of Cambridge and NHS Blood and Transplant.

"If our trial, the first such in the world, is successful, it will mean that patients who currently require regular long-term blood transfusions will need fewer transfusions in future, helping transform their care," Ghevaert said in a statement.

The trial is studying the lifespan of the lab grown cells compared with infusions of standard red blood cells from the same donor.

The lab-grown blood cells are all fresh, so the trial team expect them to perform better than a similar transfusion of standard donated red cells, which contains cells of varying ages, the researchers said.

If manufactured cells last longer in the body, patients

who regularly need blood may not need transfusions as often, reducing iron overload from frequent blood transfusions, which can lead to serious complications, they said.

"This challenging and exciting trial is a huge stepping stone for manufacturing blood from stem cells," said Ashley Toye, a professor at the University of Bristol.

"This is the first-time lab grown blood from an allogeneic donor has been transfused and we are excited to see how well the cells perform at the end of the clinical trial," Toye said.

For the foreseeable future, manufactured cells could only be used for a very small number of patients with very complex transfusions needs, the researchers said.

PANT MIGHT BE NEEDED IN GAMES AHEAD, HINTS DRAVID

Dharmasena, Reiffel named on-field umpires for India-Eng semis
PTI ■ DUBAI

The International Cricket Council on Monday announced the match officials for the semifinals of the T20 World Cup with Kumar Dharmasena and Paul Reiffel named the on-field umpires of the India versus England contest in Adelaide. Chris Gaffaney will be the third umpire for the India-England game on November 10. Marais Erasmus and Richard Illingworth will be the on-field umpires in the first semifinal between New Zealand and Pakistan in Sydney on November 9 with Richard Kettleborough being the third umpire. The final will be played at the MCG on November 13. "Appointments for the 13 November final at the Melbourne Cricket Ground will be advised once the outcome of both semi-finals are known," said the ICC in a statement.

and they're part of the World Cup means that we have a lot of confidence in them. It means that anytime they can be called on to play in the XI.

"Yes, you can only play 11 at a time and some people sometimes miss out and don't have to play, but again, Rishabh is someone that as a lot of you would have been seeing, has been travelling with us.

"He's been batting a lot in the nets, he's been hitting a lot of balls, doing a lot of fielding practice and sort of keeping practice and keeping himself ready. The opportunity came for us today (Sunday) to give him an opportunity," he reasoned.

In fact, Dravid was happy about Pant's intent against left arm spinner Sean Williams but the execution was wrong.

"Obviously, it didn't kind of work out today, but absolutely no - - I'm not bothered about that at all because I think he took the right option.

"His role was to take on the left-arm spinner which was there, and sometimes it comes off and sometimes it doesn't."

Pant being a left hander also gives the team variations among specialist batters.

"Sometimes it gives us the opportunity, as well, to play Rishabh, keeping obviously this game in mind as well but just keeping the future in mind, just opening up our options.

"I think everyone is available for selection; just because somebody missed out on this game doesn't mean that we can't go back to him and we can't decide on -- we might go the same way. We might go a dif-



ferent way, as well," said Dravid trying to put his guard up on the potential change in the playing XI.

DRESS REHEARSAL

Dravid said that skipper Rohit Sharma intentionally took batting after winning toss as they wanted to defend looking at the semifinal in Adelaide.

"Couple of the things that we did want to achieve was to try and bat first if we got the opportunity.

"Obviously, we needed to win the toss for that. Just because, honestly we had bowled first against Pakistan when we came here, we just wanted to experience what it was to sort of set a score in these kind of conditions."

He also wanted his batters to get full 20 overs of batting.

"Also, we felt that if we batted first, it would give us an opportunity to play 20 overs and just get into that ability of still trying to get a par-plus score batting first."

PLACE FOR YUZI?

Dravid is not the one to give away playing eleven but said he would go into the game with an open mind considering shorter dimensions of the Adelaide Oval.

Asked about trying out Yuzvendra Chahal, Dravid said: "Like I said earlier, I think we have a completely open mind about everyone in our 15. We believe anybody who comes into the 15 will not potentially make us weaker, the kind of squad we've picked."

BALL IS GRIPPING

Dravid will take a call after seeing the Adelaide track as Bangladesh versus Pakistan saw spinners playing a major role.

"Again, we'll have to go there and see. I watched some of the games today and I know the tracks were slow and they gripped and they turned a bit.

"We might be playing on a completely new strip in Adelaide, and the strip we played with against Bangladesh, to be honest, did not spin. It was, again, a different kind of wicket, and it was played at Adelaide, as well."

"Of course, if it's slow we'll play according to those situations. If we think it might play differently, then we'll have to put up a squad to match that," he concluded.

Malan doubtful for India semis

PTI ■ ADELAIDE

England batter Dawid Malan is a doubtful starter for his side's T20 World Cup semifinal against India on Thursday after picking up an injury during the team's final Super 12 game.

Malan sustained a groin injury in England's four-wicket win over Sri Lanka on Saturday. The former world No. 1 T20I batter hobbled off the field during the Sri Lankan innings and did not return to bat in England's run chase.

Vice-captain Moeen Ali said Malan's injury doesn't look good. "He is a big player and has been for a number of years," Ali



told the 'BBC'. "He has been one of our best players. I don't know but it's (Malan's injury) doesn't look great."

England, who finished second in their Super 12 Group 1, will clash with Group 1 toppers India on Thursday.

"It doesn't get bigger and better than playing India anywhere in the world because of the crowds and they are such a big side and force in cricket," Ali said.

Phil Salt, the only spare batter in the squad, is the likely replacement if Malan does not take the field.

Everyone would love to see India-Pak in final: Watson



PTI ■ SYDNEY

The anticipation, drama, energy and fan-involvement is completely different in an India-Pakistan game and the possibility of a dream T20 World Cup final between the two biggest rivals in cricket has got former Australia all-rounder Shane Watson excited. The Asian rivals have already clashed once in the much talked-about Group stage match of the ongoing tournament at the iconic Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG), where Virat Kohli conjured up one of the greatest T20 knockouts.

The close match had mil-

ions of fans glued to their TV sets while the ones who watched the heart-stopping action unfold before their eyes at the venue, considered themselves the luckiest.

Now that the two teams have reached the semifinal stage, albeit by taking contrasting routes, an India-Pakistan title clash is being anticipated.

The Asian rivals have already clashed once in the much talked-about Group stage match of the ongoing tournament at the iconic Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG), where Virat Kohli conjured up one of the greatest T20 knockouts.

The close match had mil-

"I unfortunately missed that first (Super 12) game at the MCG, as I commented the game previously between Australia and New Zealand."

Watson said he knows what he missed and would love to see a re-match.

"But from all reports, all the people that went along to that game said it was something very special and the game was obviously an amazing game to watch on TV as well. They played in the T20 World Cup final in 2007 and everyone would love to see it again," he said.

New Zealand look a settled side with a smooth run while Pakistan have huffed and puffed to the semifinals.

However, Watson feels Pakistan will be a dangerous side in semifinals.

"There are certain times in all tournaments where a team just falls across the line and somehow finds its way into the finals and then goes on to win it," Watson noted.

"Especially when they weren't expecting to make the semis because of the way they played at certain times throughout this tournament."

"The freedom they are going to have after not expecting much in the middle of the tournament, so the freedom they are going to have is going to be very dangerous for the Kiwis," he said.

Kohli named ICC player of month for October



PTI ■ DUBAI

Star batter Virat Kohli was on Monday named the ICC Men's Player of the Month for October following a series of stellar performances during India's charge to the T20 World Cup semifinals in Australia.

Pakistan's veteran all-rounder Nida Dar won the honour in the women's category thanks to her sensational form in their Asia Cup campaign. Dar edged out the Indian duo of Jemimah Rodrigues and Deepti Sharma, who produced impressive displays in the same tournament which their side won.

Both Kohli and Dar were declared winners following a global vote conducted among

media representatives, ICC Hall of Famers, former international players and registered fans.

Kohli won his first Player of the Month award after scoring 205 runs with the bat, showcasing the full array of his batting talent throughout October.

Apart from scoring a brilliant half-century against Netherlands in Sydney, he produced an unforgettable innings in the stunning victory over Pakistan in front of a capacity crowd at the MCG to kick off their campaign in style.

The India talisman secured the award after being nominated for the first time, edging out a competitive field which included South African finisher David Miller and the in-form Sikandar Raza of Zimbabwe, who both enjoyed key contributions at the T20 World Cup in Australia.

"It is a great honour for me to have been voted the ICC Men's Player of the Month for October. Being chosen as the standout player by fans across the globe as well as the panel makes this accolade even more special for me," Kohli said in an ICC release. "I want to pay tribute to the other nominees who performed so well during the month and also to my teammates, who continue to support me to perform to the best of my ability."

I mastered scoop shot while playing rubber-ball cricket: Suryakumar

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Suryakumar Yadav's outrageous scoop shot off Zimbabwe pacer Richard Ngarava became a talking point in the T20 World Cup and the attacking Indian batter says he achieved mastery over the unorthodox stroke after years of practice with rubber ball.

Suryakumar mesmerised the 82,000-strong MCG crowd with his stroke-making ability on Sunday. His unbeaten 61-run knock off just 25 balls powered India to an imposing 186 for 5.

The 32-year-old struck four sixes and six boundaries during that breathtaking knock.

One shot that stood out was from the last ball of the Zimbabwe innings. Going down on one knee, Suryakumar picked up a Richard Ngarava full toss from outside the off stump and scooped it on the right of fine leg for an unthinkable six.

The audacious shot became instant hit with the likes of Ravi Shastri and legendary batter Sunil Gavaskar lauding it.

"You got to understand what the bowler is going to bowl at that time, which is a little predetermined at that moment. I have practiced that stroke a lot when I used to play rubber-ball cricket," Suryakumar, the world number one T20 batter, said on Star Sports show 'Follow the Blues'.



"So, you got to be thinking that the bowler is thinking at that time and if the field is in, I just back myself to go there. You got to know how long the boundary behind is. When I stand there, I feel it's just 60-65 meters and with the pace of the ball I just try and time it, take it on the sweet spot of the bat and if it hits, it just goes out there."

While scoring his half-century, Suryakumar went past 1000 runs in T20 Internationals in 2022.

The 32-year-old is the first Indian to achieve the feat and only the second player to do so. Pakistan opener Mohammad Rizwan had finished with 1326

runs last year.

Suryakumar also spoke about how he handles pressure situations.

"When I go into bat, I just I just try and look for a few boundaries or even if I don't get that, I just try and run as hard as possible between wickets. If you have to bat with Virat bhai then you have to run hard as well."

"I try and do that, hit it in the gaps and run hard. But I know what strokes I need to play at that time. I try and play lot of percentage cricket. My strokes are sweeps, over cover, and cuts, if I am succeeding in that, I just take the game ahead from there."

Kohli's straight six off Rauf will go down as one of most remembered shots in T20 WC history: Ponting

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Virat Kohli's sensational straight six off a super quick Harris Rauf delivery will go down as one of the best shots played in T20 World Cup history, reckons Australian legend Ricky Ponting.

The special six in extreme pressure was followed by a flick over fine leg, reducing the equation to 16 off the final over in one of the most memorable Indo-Pak contests ever.

With Kohli staying unbeaten on a magical 83 at the other end, R Ashwin hit the winning runs off the final ball, as India pulled off a win for the ages.

The two sixes from Kohli has already become part of cricketing folklore and Ponting, too, looked back fondly at those outrageous strokes, especially the first one.

"I'm not sure what all the fuss is about," Ponting said in his inimitable style before raving

ing over the first six.

"It's going to go down as one of the most remembered and talked about shots probably in - I won't say white-ball cricket history - but certainly T20 World Cup history," he told the T20 World Cup website.

Babar Azam was forced to bowl left-arm spinner Mohammad Nawaz in the 20th over after Rauf, Naseem Shah and Shaheen Afridi finished their quota. Kohli himself had admitted that he had to find those two sixes off Rauf to keep his team in the game.

"They would have known, having done the calculations, that it was going to have to be the spinner that was going to bowl the last over. That just goes to show how important the last two balls of the 19th over were," said Ponting.

"They had to get boundaries on those two or the game was done. What had sort of happened in the over previous



as well, Virat was setting up for something that was going to be full.

"You're setting up something for that full, that he could smack back down the ground off the front foot.

"He was almost half through his swing and then the length is not there, and he was good enough to hold his shape and find the middle and hit it far enough to get it not just over the fence," he said referring to

Kohli's moment of magic.

Ponting, who is third in the all time run getters list behind only Sachin Tendulkar and Kumar Sangakkara, said on a lighter note that he never attempted what Kohli execut-

ed in his illustrious career.

"I didn't do it," Ponting said with a laugh.

"I mean, it wasn't on the back foot, it was just a backfoot length ball. He sort of loaded up, his footwork was quite neutral when he hit it."

Ponting feels Kohli's supreme fitness also allowed him to attempt that stroke.

"He stood up on top of the bounce of the ball, and there's a certain degree of skill involved in that but you've got to look at the strength involved in a shot like that as well."

"All that strength came through his core. You've got a steady base and the power to create and play that shot from there, comes through your core. We've seen him with his cricket gear off, he's pretty fit."

"There's a lot of other players that just wouldn't have been strong enough through their core to do something like that but he's one of the guys that can," he concluded.

Gunathilaka denied bail, SLC suspends him from playing

PTI ■ SYDNEY/COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's Danushka Gunathilaka was on Monday denied bail by a local court in Sydney after being charged with sexual assault of a woman while his country's cricket board suspended him from all forms of the game with immediate effect.

The 31-year-old Gunathilaka, who was arrested in the wee hours of Sunday ahead of the Sri Lankan team's departure from Australia, attended the hearing via video link in Downing Centre Local Court from Surry Hills cells.

Gunathilaka was handcuffed and wearing a grey T-shirt and blue jeans during his virtual attendance at the hearing, according to a report in 'Sydney Morning Herald'.

His lawyer Ananda Amarathana made a bail application during the "closed court" hearing and magistrate Robert Williams refused it.

"Certainly, we are consider-

ing an application to the Supreme Court and that will be done as soon as possible," Amarathana was quoted as saying in the report.

The Sri Lankan team had left Australia without Gunathilaka after being eliminated from the T20 World Cup on Saturday. Amarathana said he understood "some team officials remained in the country."

In Colombo, Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC), which has been instructed by the country's government to launch an enquiry into the incident, suspended him.

"The Executive Committee of Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) decided to suspend national player Danushka Gunathilaka from all forms of cricket with immediate effect and will not consider him for any selection after being informed that Mr. Gunathilaka was arrested and charged with sexual assault of a woman in Australia," the board said in a statement.