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Nation Awards its Artists SC says No to same

National Awards for Indian Cinema

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

President Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday conferred the prestigious Dadasaheb Phalke award upon famous actor Waheeda Rehman. She became the eighth woman artiste to receive the award, the highest recognition in the field of Indian cinema. The 85-yearold actor dedicated it to her "dear film industry" and its various departments.

The President presented the award to Rehman during the 69th National Film Awards ceremony, held at Vigyan Bhawan. The veteran, who received a standing ovation from the A-list gathering as she walked to the stage, said filmmaking is a collaborative process.
"I feel very honoured and

humbled... But whatever I have achieved today, it is because of my dear film industry. Luckily, I got to work with top directors, producers, filmmakers, technicians, writers, dialogue writers, music directors and musicians," Rehman said in her acceptance speech.
"I got a lot of support, respect

and love from them," she said, also crediting the make-up artists, hair and costume

...Which is why I am sharing this award with all the departments of the film industry.



President Droupadi Murmu after presenting the Dadasaheb Phalke Award to actor Waheeda Rehman during the 69th National Film Awards at Vigyan Bhavan in New Delhi on Tuesday

very beginning. A film is not ity in her personal life too," the made by just one person, we need each other," she added. President Murmu praised Rehman for championing women empowerment through her roles and life.

"I am elated to honour Waheeda Rehman ji with Dadasaheb Phalke award. I congratulate Waheeda ji. With her art and personality, she has reached on top in the film industry. She has made a name They gave me a lot of respect, for herself as a woman of dig-support and love from the nity, confidence and original-

President said.

Murmu also spoke about how Rehman refused to change her name as a newcomer in the film industry when it was common for actors to opt for a different screen name.

"In her movies, she played roles of women who broke shackles. Waheeda ji has set the example that women have to take the initiative when it comes to women empowerment," she added.

prestigious honour by a five members jury comprising close friend and last year's Dadasaheb awardee Asha Parekh, actors Chiranjeevi, Paresh Rawal, Prosenjit Chatterjee and filmmaker Shekhar Kapur.

The actor made her debut in Hindi films opposite Dev Anand in Guru Dutt's 1956 film "CID" and went on to build a stellar career of over five decades, including classics "Pyaasa", "Kaagaz ke Phool" Rehman was selected for the and "Chaudhvin Ka Chand",

"Guide" as well as later hits such as "Kabhi Kabhie" and "Khamoshi".

The announcement of the Dadasaheb Phalke honour coincided with the birth centenary of her "Guide" and "CID" co-star Dev Anand on September 26, 2023.

Rehman, who forayed in cinema with the 1955 Telugu films "Rojulu Maraayi" and "Jayasimha", has worked in more than 90 films across languages. In the 2000s, she appeared in "Om Jai Jagdish", "Rang De Basanti", "Delhi-6" and "The Song of Scorpions". Film actor producer Devika Rani was the first Dadasaheb Phalke awardee. Other female artists to have received the honour are Sulochana, Kanan Devi, Durga Khote, Lata Mangeshkar, Asha Bhosle and Asha Parekh.

Alia Bhatt made a fashion statement at the awards ceremony by repeating her ivory wedding saree as she attended the ceremony with actor husband Ranbir Kapoor. Alia won the best actress National Film Award for her performance in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's "Gangubai Kathiawadi".

Alia shared the best actress award with Kriti Sanon, who also wore a ivory saree. Kriti is receiving the award for her work in Hindi film "Mimi" while her co-star Pankaj Tripathi won the best supporting actor award for his role in

sex marriage The CJI said the court can't

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday unanimously refused to accord legal recognition to same sex marriage under the Special Marriage Act, ruling that it is within Parliament's ambit to change the law for validating such

The top court, however, recognised equal rights for queer people and their protection, while calling for sensitisation of the general public so they don't face discrimination.

The apex court, while passing four separate verdicts, was unanimous in holding that there is "no unqualified right" to marriage, and same sex couples can't claim it as a fundamental right under the Constitution. The bench headed by Chief

Justice DY Chandrachud was critical of the Centre's stand that the pleas for legal validation of same sex marriage was reflective of an urban elitist concept. Queerness is neither an urban

nor an elite concept or characteristic, said the apex court, which pronounced the verdicts on 21 petitions seeking legal sanction for same sex marriages.

It, however, differed on certain aspects, especially on the applicability of adoption rules for queer couples.

The five judges bench comprising the CJI, and Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul, S Ravindra Bhat, Hima Kohli and PS Narasimha concurred on the main issue

that the court can't accord legal validation to same-sex marriage under the Special Marriage Act, and said the task has to be performed by Parliament. However, Justices Bhat, Kohli

and Narasimha, in two separate

judgments, differed with the

CJI and Justice Kaul on certain legal aspects. The CJI said adoption regulations are held to be void as they are discriminatory towards the right to adopt as a couple.

queer people and denied them Differing with the CJI's opinion, Justice Bhat held that just because queer couples are not allowed to adopt a child does not mean that the regulations are void. The LGBTQIA++ persons, who had won a major legal bat-

tle in 2018 in the Supreme Court which decriminalised consensual gay sex, had moved the apex court seeking validation of same-sex marriage and consequential reliefs such as rights to adoption, enrolment as parents in schools, opening of bank accounts and availing succession and insurance benefits. However, the SC left all these for Parliament to decide. The CJI, whose views were supported by Justice Kaul in a separate verdict, recorded the Centre's submission that it will set up a committee headed by the cabinet secretary to examine the administrative steps that could be taken for addressing "genuine humane concerns" of same-sex couples without going into the issue of legalisan age they cannot fully coming their marriage. prehend the consequences.

make law but only interpret it and it is for Parliament to change the Special Marriage Act. Agreeing with the views of the CJI and Justice Kaul, Justice Bhat said the Constitution does not grant a fundamental right to marry. At the outset, Justice Chandrachud said there are four judgments — by himself, Justices Kaul, Bhat and Narasimha— in the matter. Directing the Centre, states and Union Territories (UTs) to ensure the queer community is not discriminated against, the CJI said queer is a natural phenomenon known for ages and is neither urban nor elitist.

with the CJI on grant of certain rights to queer couples. 'Non-heterosexual and heterosexual unions must be seen as both sides of the same coin," Justice Kaul said, adding legal recognition of non-heterosex-

Justice Kaul said he agrees

ual unions is a step towards marriage equality.
The CJI said it is for Parliament to decide whether there is a need for a change in the Special Marriage Act regime. "This court can't make law. It can only

interpret it and give effect to it," he said. While reading out the operative portion of his verdict, Justice Chandrachud directed the Centre, States and UTs to take steps to sensitise the public about the rights of queer people and ensure that sex reassignment surgeries are not performed on inter-sex children at

TMC silent on its Party MP

SAUGAR SENGUPTA KOLKATA

The Trinamool Congress 1 continues to remain tightlipped on the cash-forqueries charges brought against its MP Mahua Moitra with some senior leaders prisupremo and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's views that she should be left to "clean the mess she has created, if at all she has created it".

And as a measure to do so, Moitra on Tuesday filed a defamation suit against BJP MP Nishikant Dubey who had written letters to two Union Ministers and Speaker Om Birla charging her with accepting bribes from one business conglomerate in lieu of asking questions against its rival group: In this case the

A senior party leader and a State Cabinet Minister said all the party leaders were expected to follow the "austere lifestyle and valued principles of Mamata," and if anyone "deviates" from that then "it is for that person to explain her

take any responsibility". Earlier Dubey had alleged that

Moitra had taken bribes from a business house to ask questions in the Lok Sabha against its rival the Adani group.

"constitutes a serious criminal breach of trust as well as a violation of India's national secu-The TMC MP, however, put up

gations leveled against her were malicious and untrue. The Speaker is known to have referred the matter to the Ethics Committee. Moitra on Tuesday filed a defamation case against BJP Dubey before the Delhi High Court. A Supreme Court

advocate has also been made a party in the suit. The reason behind the top TMC leadership distancing itself from the Moitra case, or in the least not openly backing her are three-fold, insiders

conduct... the party will not Moitra has often earned the wrath of senior TMC leaders most of whom have no sym-

Even party supremo Mamata Dubey claimed "if the claims rebuked her for crossing jail in connection with recruittheir supporters. Secondly, the Chief Minister

who is desperate to showcase some investment in Bengal post her Singur movement a brave front saying she is ready for any kind of probe that drove away the Nano car factory of the Tata Motors and iterating that all the allefrom the State during the Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee regime is not willing to enter into an issue where the Adanis are involved.

pathy for her now.

Remember the Adani group has offered to construct a deep sea port at Tajpur in East Midnapore district," a senior Bengal Minister said, adding Moitra had gone too far across asking questions against them in her bid to politically corner the BJP.

"If Mamata is not happy with her on certain issues this is perhaps the one of them," said the TMC leader, adding the

Firstly, as a straight-talker, TMC has privately conveyed to the Adanis that Moitra's stance would not reflect on what the TMC thought about

And finally when a number of has on a couple of occasions its senior leaders are already in Bengal ruling outfit does not want to get embroiled in more number of such issues "particularly when Moitra is not a mass leader and a dispensable leader", a TMC sympathiser and a political analyst said. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla has referred the "bribe-forquery" complaint made by BJP MP Nishikant Dubey against Moitra to the Ethics Committee of the lower

> Dubey alleges that Moitra accepted "bribes" from a businessman in exchange for posing questions in Parliament. He has urged Birla to establish an "inquiry committee" to thoroughly investigate these accusations. The Ethics Committee of the Lok Sabha is presided over by BJP member Vinod Kumar Sonkar.



Netherlands captain Scott Edwards plays a shot during the ICC Men Cricket World Cup 2023 match between South Africa and Netherlands at HPCA Stadium in Dharamshala on Tuesday

Low pressure over BoB by Oct 20

System unlikely to affect Durga Puja

PNS BHUBANESWAR

 ${f A}$ low-pressure area is likely to form over the Bay of Bengal (BoB) around October 20, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) forecasted on Tuesday.

"A cyclonic circulation lies over southeast Bay of Bengal and adjoining Andaman Sea extending up to 4.5 km above mean sea level. It is likely to move west-northwestwards and under its influence, a low pressure area is likely to form over Central parts of Bay of Bengal," the IMD said.

However, the system is unlikely to play spoilsports in the Durga Puja festivities in Odisha. The predicted low-pressure area is likely to move westwards towards north Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh coasts with low probability of further intensification into depression, the IMD said.

However, the Regional Office of the IMD here hasn't issued rainfall warning for the State

30 poor families denied basic amenities NHRC asks Dhenkanal DM to submit ATR in 8 wks

RAJESH BEHERA BHUBANESWAR

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has directed the district Collector of Dhenkanal to take appropriate action within 8 weeks and submit report on the alleged matter of 30 poor families in Naradamunda village,(Ward No 4) under Kankadahada Block who were deprived of basic amenities including houses under Awas Yojana.

The NHRC passed the order acting on a petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer and rights activist Radhakanta Tripathy.

Tripathy in his petition said that more than 130 poor persons of 30 families in Naradamunda hamlet have been deprived of basic human rights due to apathy of the



district administration and State authorities.

All these poor families have been living in thatched, dilapidated houses. Though the families belong to vulnerable

strata of society, they have failed to get houses under the Central or State housing schemes meant for these poor villagers. Due to lack of all-weather connectivity ambulance, fire brigade cannot

reach and the thatched houses of the villagers are prone to fire tragedy. The villagers also are forced to live under the fear of elephant attack also.

The residents of the villages are yet to be ensured with safe drinking water, playgrounds, open-air theatres, all weather roads, primary healthcare, education under RTE Act, and construction of toilets for each household under the Swachcha Bharat Abhiyan, Tripathy pointed The petitioner prayed the

Commission to investigate the case in detail by a team of officials and direct the Chief Secretary, Government of Odisha, district Collector, Dhenkanal and also Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, to act over the issue immediately.

Bhubaneswar to be beggar-free before Puja

PNS BHUBANESWAR

Ahead of the festive season, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) on Tuesday decided to make the city beggar-free. The decision was taken at a meeting of the civic body chaired by its Commissioner Vijay Amruta Kulange.

Beggars will no longer be allowed to seek alms along roadsides or near temples. To enforce this, three dedicated squads have been formed. If a beggar is found on the streets, a squad will take him/her away.

These squads will conduct regular patrols in their respective areas of jurisdiction, ensuring that begging activities are not taking place near places of worship during festivals.



Colony, Dakkua and Niladri

Vihar. Each centre can

accommodate up to 100

beggars. Furthermore, in some instances, beggars have been reunited with their families after discussions with their relatives. The BMC has sternly warned that any family found sending a previouslyabandoned member back to beg will face strict

consequences.

'Huge kickback made in rural water supply work'

Congress demands Lokayukta probe **NALINI SAHU** BHUBANESWAR

The Congress on Tuesday brought serious charges of corruption and nepotism in award of rural water supply work contracts and sought a probe by the Lokayukta

Addressing a Press conference here, OPCC Campaign Committee chairperson Bijay Kumar Patnaik said the tender process of the Odisha Government for awarding the work contracts is highly tilted in favour of non-Odia work contractors.

"In the past few years, the Odisha Government has awarded work contracts worth over Rs 35,000 crore for rural



drinking water supplies. However, 96% of these work contracts have been given to non-Odia contractors hailing from States like Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. It's because the annual turnover of a firm to be eligible to get a work contract of Rs 100-crore project was fixed at Rs 262 crore. Such a hefty turnover

benchmark was deliberately fixed to deny the Odia contractors the opportunity to qualify for the work contracts," said Patnaik.

He cited a number of examples where small work contracts were put together as one project so as to enable the outside contractors to bid for

suspect

kickbacks behind such dubious deals. We demand a proper probe Lokayukta. Or else, we'll knock at the door of Lokayukta," said he.

PCC president Sarat Pattanayak said he doubts if the government had examined the expertise of outside contractors and the works executed by them.

"As many projects were not completed as per the schedule, their costs have substantially escalated, causing unwarranted losses to the State exchequer," said he.

"One wonders why the government did not go for global tenders. Is it because it wanted to favour a handful of contractors?" asked Pattanayak.

CM honours Kishore with Rs 1.5 cr



BHUBANESWAR

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Tuesday felicitated Odisha's Javelin star Kishore Kumar Jena with a cash award of Rs 1.5 cr for his stellar performance in the recent Asian Games 2023 in Hangzhou, China, where he bagged a Silver medal bringing

laurels to the State and nation and sealed his berth in the upcoming Paris Olympics

Secretary (5T) VK Pandian also congratulated Kishore for his exemplary journey and wished him for his upcoming

Kishore thanked the CM for recognising his achievement.

Kishore, who hails from Puri, has become a shining example in the world of athletics. In the build-up to the Asian Games he impressed with a 5th place finish at the Athletics

Championships in Budapest for which he was recognised with a cash award of Rs 50 lakh by the CM.

Valuables worth 1 cr looted from apartment

Proving the notion wrong that apartments are safe in Bhubaneswar, burglars targeted a number of flats at an apartment under the Infocity police station in the city.

As per reports, thefts were reported from four flats of Rajvatika Apartment in the city. Despite the presence of security guards, the miscreants managed to enter the apartment and decamp with gold ornaments, cash and other valuables from the four flats.

looted the valuables after gaining entry by breaking the grille and locks of the flats. It was claimed that the burglars decamped with gold ornaments and other valuables worth Rs 1 crore.

Local residents said the miscreants gained entry into the apartment by scaling the boundary wall.

Following the burglaries, senior police officials reached the apartment and initiated a probe with the help of forensic experts and a dog squad.

HC admits Anubhav's petition, issues notice to Varsha

 $T_{
m he\ Orissa\ High\ Court\ on}$ Tuesday admitted a petition filed by actor and politician Anubhav Mohanty, in which he has challenged the verdict of Family Court, Cuttack over the divorce plea filed by him against his actress-wife Varsha Priyadarshini.

The High Court also issued a notice to Varsha in this regard. It asked the lower court to submit all records related to

The next hearing of the petition was scheduled for November 9.

The Family Court had on September 22 rejected Mohanty's divorce petition. It had also rejected the plea for

restitution of conjugal rights filed by Varsha.

the Family Court had said, "The petitioner (Anubhav Mohanty) has failed to establish preponderance of respondent (Varsha Priyadarsini) refused and avoided for consummation of their marriage and caused mental cruelty to the petitioner by her conduct towards himself and his family

members. As the petitioner has failed to substantiate his pleadings, he is not entitled to get a decree of divorce in his favour in the interest of social

"At the same time, though the respondent is claiming restitution of conjugal rights, she has also made unsubstantiated allegations against the petitioner. As revealed from her evidence she is under the protection of police and she has filed some other cases against the petitioner, which are subjudice. Therefore, allowing the prayer of restitution is not safe while the wife is not feeling secure in the house of the petitioner," it had

a long distance. As the shopkeepers drew the

Vegetables sale to stop in city from Oct 20!

Association has warned of stopping the sale of vegetables in the capital from October 20 protesting lack of a proper road for arrival of vegetable-laden vehicles to the Unit-I market

Association president Kabiraj Swain said the road leading to the Unit-I vegetable market has been occupied by a puja pandal, for which the vehicles carrying vegetables are unable to reach the market. It has forced the traders to carry vegetables to their shops from

attention of the Unit-I Traders' Association towards

the matter, they were advised to use another road located in a residential area in the vicinity. However, the residents opposed the movement of the vegetableladen vehicles in the locality, In view of the issue, the

association has decided to stop selling vegetables from October 20, he added.

Tiger census in Similipal begins

A tiger census commenced at the Similipal National Park in Mayurbhanj district on Tuesday and would continue till the end of this month,

official sources said.

Similipal Tiger Reserve Director Dr Prakash Chand Gogineni said, "The census is being carried out in 173 beats of 16 ranges in the Tiger Reserve Project and Baripada, Rairangpur and Karanjia Forest Division areas It will be held from 9 am to 4 pm everyday till October 31. Camera trapping will be done between November and January. Pugmarks and stool samples will be collected for DNA sampling. Eventually, all data will be submitted to the government in the form of a report."

Notably, confusion has been prevailing over the number of tigers in Similipal for the last



few years. Recently, national media had reported that Similipal housed 20 tigers.

On the other hand, the Forest Department has seized several tiger hides while it is yet to be ascertained whether those belong to the big cats of Similipal or not.

The ongoing census is expected to bring clarity over the number of tigers in

'BJD not saviour but perpetrator of crimes against women' **NALINI SAHU** BHUBANESWAR



nvolvement of some ministers and MLAs in sexual exploitation of women have surfaced on many occasions. Besides, names of ruling party leaders have come up in mysterious deaths of some women and female children," said BJP spokesperson Sonali

Quoting a woman from Nimapara who recently alleged that she was coaxed by some BJD leaders to come to



the Bhubaneswar residence of former Minister Samir Ranjan Dash for some "special mindfresh interactions," the BJP leader said this speaks how BJD leaders stoop low to satiate their sexual desire.

"Dharmendra Sahoo, a BJD

leader of Nimpara, was forced commit suicide as Samir Ranjan Dash literally coaxed his wife to have relationship with him," alleged Sahoo.

Sahoo also named BJD MLAs Srikanta Sahoo, Divya Shankar Mishra, Arun Sahoo, Jyoti Pangigrahi, Braja Pradhan and Bijaya Shankar Das and said they have also committed crimes of various natures against women.

There was, however, no reaction from the BJD to Sahoo's charges.

In Khordha

5-yr-old boy dies as truck hits scooter

Mother critically injured

KHORDHA

A five-year-old boy died and his mother was injured after a truck hit a scooter at Bhaliabadi Chhack on National Highway-57 in Khordha district on Tuesday.

The deceased was identified as Binayak Das, an LKG student at a private school in Khordha town.

According to reports, Baijayanti Das of Gandhi Padia was returning home along with her son from school by her scooter when a speeding tanker truck hit the twowheeler from th rear..

While Baijayanti sustained injuries after falling off the scooter, the truck ran over her son killing him on the spot.

Locals managed to catch the truck driver, who was trying to flee from the spot following the incident.

The injured woman was rushed to the District Headquarters Hospital (DHH), from where she was

referred to Bhubaneswar. The Town police seized the body of the boy and sent if for postmortem.

Later, irate locals staged a road blockade, demanding a speed breaker on the main road. Police rushed the spot and are trying to pacify the agitators to clear the road.

Puri king unveils 2-day Divya Sangam



Congregation of saints for world peace,

brotherhood PURI

Puri King Dibyasingha Deb inaugurated a two-day spiritual celebration on Tuesday. Organised by Sri Gopinath Gaudiya Mutt, around thousand spiritual leaders, practitioners, devotees and followers from several parts

of the world joined the religious conclave named as Divva Sngam.

President of Mutt Bodhyan Swami presided over the conclave. Religious exponents like Rohini Nandan Das, Suniti Nandan Das, Baman Swami and Barah Swami were on dais.

Divya Sangam was a transformative marking the 125th appearance anniversary of Bhakti Pramod Puri Goswamy and 150th advent of Bhakisidhant Pravubuad. The objective of the event

is to unite and honour the spiritual legacy of Sanatan Dharma which also aims to bring together diverse cults of Hinduism so as to achieve a larger goal of peace and universal fraternity in the ongoing war in middle-east.

UP CM Yogi Adityanath and Defence Minister Rajanath Singh who were to attend the concluding session, cancelled their visits due to elections in four States.

Integrated Teacher Edu Program begins at IIT BBS Students selected via National Common

Entrance Test BHUBANESWAR

The Indian Institute of Technology Bhubaneswar has introduced a 4-year B.Sc-B.Ed Integrated Teacher Education Program (ITEP) from the 2023-24 academic year.

The classes for the first batch of 50 students from different States of India commenced from October 17. The students were selected via National Common Entrance Test (NCET) conducted by the National Testing Agency

The IIT Bhubaneswar is one among the two IITs, including IIT Kharagpur, to start the



programme this year. The istitute has offered the Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) with Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) in Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics and Economics. Students will complete their studies within a condensed timeframe of four years, unlike the conventional five-year duration mandated by the current B.Ed. curriculum.

To maximise the effectiveness of this new programme, separate interactive orientations were held for the students, their parents and associated faculty. IIT, Bhubaneswar Director Prof Shreepad Karmalkar, along with experts, highlighted the unique

In contrast to students of other programmes, the $assessment\, of\, ITEP\, students\, will$ include a component involving demonstration of teaching skills in all courses undergone by them. A majority of ITEP students are women though there is no reservation for women in the programme.

ITEP is an initiative by the

National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) under the Union Ministry of Education to ensure that outstanding students enter the teaching profession at the school level. ITEP will be available to all students who choose teaching as a profession after passing the exit examination of Higher Secondary (10+2) in

any discipline (Science/ Humanities/ Commerce/ Others). The primary objective of ITEP is to equip the teachers of tomorrow with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively teach students at the various stages of formal education following the revised educational framework outlined in the National Education Policy (NEP)-2020. A student undergoing this programme will be grounded in Indian values, languages, knowledge, ethos, tribal traditions and well versed in latest advances in education and pedagogy.

The ITEP at IIT Bhubaneswar includes various subjects like Art Education (performing and visual), Sanskrit Language and Yoga along with the core subjects.

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NHRC seeks ATR on students' death in Bhadrak, B'swar

he National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has sought Action Taken Reports (ATRs) from the district Collector and Superintendent of Police of Bhadrak and Secretary, Department of School and Mass Education, Government of Odisha on the death of two students in Bhadrak and Baleswar districts this month.

The NHRCpassed two separate orders acting on two petitions filed by Supreme Court lawyer and rights activist Radhakanta Tripathy.

The petitioner has drawn the attention of the court regarding a tragic incident on October 4, 2022 due to negligence of the Engineering department and the school authorities, in which a minor student of Class-I, Asit Nayak (aged-6 years) died in the school. One Notice Board (Soochana Phalaka) fell on him in the Uchapada Primary School in Gadiali Panchayat under Dhamnagar block in Bhadrak

district. Alleging negligence, failure and inaction of the concerned authorities for poor quality of work, taking stringent action against the percent culture rampantly prevalent in works of engineers despite vigilance raids and lack of student safety, Tripathy requested the NHRC for impartial investigation with heavy compensation to the bereaved family members of the deceased student and ensuring safe envi-

10th class, who died after being allegedly beaten up by a ronment for the students. teacher at his school on Octo-The NHRC took cogniber 7, 2023. The shocking in-

zance of the matter as serious

allegations of violation of hu-

man rights are there. The

NHRC sought Action Taken

Report in the matter within

four weeks, positively, failing

which the Commission shall

be constrained to invoke co-

ercive steps u/s 13 of PHR Act-

In the second case, Tripathy

alleged another student of

1993, the order warned.

cident of corporal punishment was reported from Bansidhar Vidyapitha, a school at Kuligaon under Khantapada police limits in Baleswar district. He requested for urgent intervention in the matter to ensure justice.

The NHRC transmitted the case to the Secretary, School and Mass Education Department, with the directions to look into the allegations and submit an Action Taken Report within four weeks, for perusal of the Commission.

2 of family drown in river in JSpur

Two member of a family drowned in Devi river at Baredia village under the Biridi police station in Jagatsinghpur district on Tuesday while the victims were taking part in the tenth-

The deceased were identified as Rinku Pal

According to reports, the family members of BSF Jawan Satya Ranjan Pal, who was killed in an accident, were observing his tenth-day rituals. After the completion of the rituals at home, the deceased jawan's three brothers went to the Devi river near their village to take bath. While bathing, the trio slipped into deep waters and went missing.

Getting information, Fire Services persondeclared them brought dead.

day rituals of a relative.

and Swadesh Pal of Baredia village.

nel reached the spot and launched an operation and rescued the three. While one of them was out of danger, the other two were rushed to Adaspur Government Hospital but the doctors

INBRIEF BBSR-GUWAHATI FLIGHT FROM OCT 29

Bhubaneswar: IndiGo is all set to operate direct daily flights between Bhubaneswar and



formed on Tuesday. The Bhubaneswar-Guwahati 6E 6913 flight will depart from the Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) in Bhubaneswar at 1.25 pm and arrive at 2.55 pm at Guwahati. The passengers will reach the destination in just 1.30 hours at a cost of Rs 6,358. In the return direction, the Guwahati-Bhubaneswar 6E 6914 flight will take off from the Guwahati airport at 3.35 pm and reach Bhubaneswar at 5.20 pm. The airfare for the journey has been fixed at Rs 6,389.

SHREEMANDIR SAMACHAR' ENGLISH **EDITION RELEASED**

Puri: An English edition of the monthly magazine 'Shreemandi Samachar' published by the Shreemandir administration was unveiled by Shree Jagannath Temple Administration Chief Administrator Ranjan Kumar Das here on



Tuesday. In the magazine, details about the rituals of the Jagannath Temple, donations and other information have been provided. Among others, Nitti Administrator Jitendra Kumar Sahu, Development OSD Ajay Kumar Jena, Works OSD Asish Kumar Subudhi, Executive Engineer, Culture Promotion OSD Sudhanshu Sekhar Padhi and Public Relations Officer Jitendra Naryan Mohanty were present.

MP AMAR PATNAIK RECEIVES KALINGA **SAURABH AWARD**

Puri: The Sports and Culture Centre, Puri felicitated Rajya Sabha member and eminent educationist Dr Amar Patnaik by conferring



the Kalinga Saurabh Award, 2023 on him here on October 15. Kishore Jena, who won the silver medal in the recent Asian Games, was conferred with Kalinga Kreeda Ratna Award. The award was received by his father. The Sports and Culture Centre is involved in multiple outreach programmes to create awareness about critical issues. Its president Damodar Pradhani is a former Special Secretary to the Government of Odisha.

SATYANAGAR LADIES 'FORUM'S HEALTH DRIVE

Bhubaneswar: Ensuring good health one test at a time! The Satya Nagar Ladies' Forum



(SNLF) partnered with the Apollo Hospital here for haemoglobin test, promoting better wellbeing of the community.

BJD CELEBRATES NAVEEN BIRTHDAY IN JAGATSINGHPUR

Jagatsinghpur: The district BJD unit celebrated Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's 78th birthday by organising a blood donation camp,



distributing books and fruits, and cutting the cake at old age home on Monday. Total 104 units of blood were collected. Municipality

BJD unit president Priyabrata Mohapatra coordinated the event. The BJD fraction led by Amarendra Das celebrated the occasion by distributing books and fruits among inmates of the Sishu Ashram.

3 BENGAL MEN HELD FOR GANJA PEDDLING IN BALESWAR

Baleswar: Acting on a tipoff, police conducted a raid at the Baleswar bus-stand, seized ganja and arrested three persons from a West Bengal-bound bus on Tuesday. Police seized the contraband from six shoulder bags which the accused were carrying. The accused were identified as Sagar Ghosh, Talu Biswas and Swadhin Mandal of Krishnanagar, Nadia of West Bengal. They had boarded the bus at Chhatia in Jajpur district. Co-passengers informed police about their suspicious activities.

CYBERCRIME AWARENESS DRIVE ENDS IN B'PUR

Brahmapur: The closing ceremony of Cybercrime Awareness Programme of Brahmapur was conducted at the SP Office, Brahmapur. IG, Southern Range Satyabrata



Bhoi joined as chief guest of the occasion. A police team visited schools and colleges and created awareness among students on cyber crimes. Quiz competitions were conducted and 40 winners and 36 runners up were selected. The IG awarded the winners and encouraged the participants and police personnel who participated in the awareness drive.

ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF PARADIP PRESS MEDIA

Paradip: On Sunday, the annual celebration of the Paradip Press Media was held being presided over by its president Basant Kumar Sahu and coordinated by senior journalist Chitta Swain. Guests included Tathagata Satpathy,



who emphasised the authenticity of print media in delivering news. Prof Pradeep Satapathy was the keynote speaker and Baba Lalatendu Keshari guest of honour. A welcome speech was delivered by Karmeswar Swain. The occasion also featured a silent tribute in memory of the late journalist Mahendra Parida. A vote of thanks was offered by Ajit Das.

SARADIYA SAHITYA ASARA HELD IN PARADIP

Paradip: On October 15, a Saradiya Sahitya Asara was held here, courtesy Sambada Sahitya Ghara. The function was presided over by columnist and president of SSG, Paradip branch Akshay Kumar Rout. The event featured poet



and feminist Savita Mahapatra as chief guest. Chief speaker was Saroj Kumar Pattnaik, secretary of monthly magazine "Parada". Prasant Kumar Rout, Secretary of Sambada Sahitya Ghara, delivered the welcome speech. Local poets recited their poems. Sanghamitra Swain, secretary of Monalisa Sahitya Sansada and vice-president of SSG, offered a vote of thanks.

EX-ASI OF POLICE GETS 2-YR RI

Rourkela: The Special Judge, Vigilance, Sundargarh on Monday convicted a former Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) of Police in a graft case and sentenced him to two years' rigorous imprisonment. The court also directed the convict to pay a fine of Rs 3,000 and n default to undergo another two months' RI. The convict, Udayanath Swain (71) of Dhenkanal district had been caught taking a bribe of Rs 5,000 from a dumper owner while he was posted at the Balinga outpost under the Hemgir police station of Sundargarh district in 2002. The Vigilance Directorate would now move the competent authority for stoppage of pension of Swain.

Double tragedy Contractor drowns in canal in Kalahandi In the second incident, a driver

Driver found dead in submerged car in Puri

BHAWANIPATNA / PURI

Two persons drowned in separate incidents in Kalahandi and Puri districts on Monday. Their bodies were retrieved on Tuesday.

In the first incident, a youth drowned in Reta canal near Gudialipadar village under the Bhawanipatna Sadar police station of Kalahandi. The deceased was identified as Pritish Panigrahy, a wellknown contractor of the town.

The youth had left his house and told his family that he was going to a nearby canal to take a bath. As he

CM urged to

AUROBINDA DAS ■ ROURKELA

Many organisations in-

cluding Sachetan Nagarika

Manch have been fighting

from for early completion of

the much awaited Talcher-

Bimlagarh rail line. Accord-

ingly, the 52km rail line from

Talcher to Khamar work is in

progress but from the

Bimlagarh side no work has

started due to inordinate de-

interfere

did not return home for hours, his family tried to contact him over his mobile phone. ButPritish didn't respond.

Later, police reached the spot and found the youth's spectacles dresses, and his mobile phone on its embankment.

A team of Fire Services personnel launched a frantic search to trace the missing youth, which was stopped after the fall of night. However, Pritish's body was fished out in Tuesday morning.

Bhawanipatna Sadar police seized the body and sent it to hospital for postmortem. Police have initiated a probe into the incident to ascertain the actual cause of Pritish's unof a car battled for life for nearly 12 hours and drowned. The incident was reported from a place near Kotakana Chhak on New Jagannath Road in Kanas in Puri.

Purusottam Tripathy, a resident of Puri Sadar police station area.

of the vehicle and died, some locals

Locals spotted the car driver when they had gone to the spot in the morning. Later, they recovered the body and informed the police

Deogarh district will be com-

But besides land acquisition,

another hindrance has arisen

in the progress of the work at

Palalahada Assembly segment

as the local BJD MLA and his

followers are creating chaotic

situations by threatening the

contractors to stop the work.

That is why while the linking

activity from Sunakhani -

Parabil - Khamar is in progress

but the work from Khamar -

Palalahada is halted.

pleted by November 2023.

The deceased was identified as

The i car probably skidded off the road and got submerged in rainwater at a low-lying area on the roadside. The man could not come out

Contractors threatened by BJD MLA's goons!

Though the Angul Collector has suggested to start the work and file FIR in the local Police Station against the hooligans, the contractors do not dare to lodge any complaint with local police as the local MLA belongs to the ruling party. In this regard president, Sachetan Nagarika Manch Bimal Bisi and general secretary PP Ray have urged the intervention of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik.

quently, they have stopped the

According to a letter of acquisition of Sundargarh and

lay in land acquisition by the

That is why the district ad-

ministration of the concerned

area through which the rail line

will pass through have been

urged again and again to com-

plete the land acquisition by

the end of October, 2023 so

that the project will be com-

Though it is not possible to

stick to the time line but the

way it has been undertaken it

is expected that the total land

pleted by March 2026.

district administration.



On Int'l Day of Rural Women PNS SUNDARGARH

L he Dalmia Bharat Group has announced to have empowered 18,000 women, on the International Day of Rural Women on Sunday.

Through the establishment of Self-Help Groups (SHGs), these women are provided essential skill training and access to vital resources for sustainable livelihood development. In collaboration with

various organisations like NRLM, NABARD, etc. Dalmia Bharat organises various training initiatives like micro-enterprise development, handicraft production and others in both farming and non-farming sectors. All these activities are conducted in communities settled around their regions of operation across 12 States in India with an aim to upskill rural women, diversify their income sources and provide access to formal

credit systems. Two notable initiatives in

Odisha include Project Hastakala - upskilling women artisans and enterprise development via mushroom cultivation in communities surrounding its facilities in Cuttack, Rajgangpur, and Lanjiberna Mines.

Dalmia Bharat has enabled over 10,000 women in Odisha to become financially independent earning a monthly income ranging from Rs 4,000 to Rs 8,000, significantly improving their individual wellbeing and the ability to support their families.

Puri dist admn's callousness Eligible field staff names not recommended for RI post

SAROJ KUMAR MISHRA PURI

A wave of discontent is noticeable among the Revenue Inspectors (RI) circle throughout the State and especially in Puri, wherein the RIs are discriminated against their clerical counterparts.

Deputy Chief Engineer, East

Coast Railway to the district

Collector, Angul, it is revealed

that the three contractors, such

as Shanti Construction

Sambalpur Pvt. Ltd., Nanda

Infra Construction Pvt. Ltd.

And BKD-SEC-SMT-JV are

engaged in the project. But

unfortunately, the local MLA

or his supporters have threat-

ened the site in-charges of the

respective contractors sepa-

rately between October 9 and

13 to stop the work or face the

dire consequence. Conse-

It is pertinent to mention here that the district administration of Puri has failed to recommend the names of the otherwise eligible RI candidates with an ulterior motive, while recommending the names of clerical staff for the ORS services. The attitude of Puri district administration has raised eyebrows among the officialdom and the discerning intelligentsia.

This year too is going to be no exception. While the Board of Revenue has categorically mentioned to recommend the name of the field

staff RIs having 36 months CCRs/ PARs out of 60 months, the Puri District Administration has kept the above communication in its cold storage. The Board of Revenue authorities have also made it clear that the above 36 months CCRs/PARs may not be consecutive and not necessarily be of outstanding nature.

While the Government in the Department of the Revenue is facilitating for the smooth recommendation, the district Collector and ADM of Puri are not recommending the names of the otherwise eligible RI personnel, throwing cold water on the hopes of the prospective candidates, their eligibility notwithstanding.

A retired bureaucrat told "The Pioneer" that the lapses are a gross violation of natural justice perpetrated on the young field staff Rls.

Olympic Values Education Prog = Odisha school students meet IOC prez Bach

created by them PNS BHUBANESWAR

In a heartwarming event that exemplified the true spirit of the Olympic Games, five schoolchildren from Odisha Government schools had the unique opportunity to interact with International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Thomas Bach.

This exceptional meeting was organized as a part of the Olympic Values Education Programme (OVEP), which



abled them to embrace the core values of the Olympics but had lives of young students across also motivated them to in-They expressed how the crease their physical activity programme had not only enand participation in sports.

journey and the importance of Olympic values in today's world. Their inquisitive minds and enthusiasm were truly inspiring. In a touching gesture, the

IOC Session' that they had dili-

ciated Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik for his initiatives in sports and youth empowerment, and partnership with the IOC on the OVEP and Odisha Ridley Forest Project (under which Odisha is contributing one million forest plantations with involvement of the local communities).

Sports and Youth Services Secretary R Vineel Krishna, Olympic Champion and founder, ABFT, Abhinav Bindra were present on the occasion.

Rs 25L worth country liquor seized PNS BALESWAR

In Baleswar –

As much as 35,000 litres of fermented liquor, locally known as 'Poch', hidden in a pond was seized during a joint raid by excise and police officials in Baleswar district on Tuesday. As per reports, the illegal

country liquor manufacturing units were operating in the

Puruna Baleswar area for several days. After receiving tipoff from reliable sources, the joint raid was conducted. A huge quantity of country

liquor worth Rs 25 lakh buried in the pond was seized during the raid. Police also seized materials worth lakhs of rupees which were used for brewing the liquor.

"A huge quantity of fermented liquor was hidden in

facturers had planned to sell it in the local market during the festive season. The fermented liquor was buried in the pond covered with weeds as the road leading to the place was narrow. We received the information about the development from a reliable source and conducted the joint raid under a special drive," said a senior police official.

the pond and the illegal manu-

gently prepared. Bach appre-During the interaction, the children had the opportunity to ask President Bach questions about his own Olympic

children presented the IOC President with artwork they had created, showcasing their understanding of the Olympic values, as well as a comprehensive report on the 'Model

Plans afoot to send Indian on Moon by 2040

With the Chandrayaan-3 successfully landing spacecraft on the south pole of the moon and setting new bar for the Indian space enter-prises, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday Indian Space asked Organisation (ISRO) to set up an Indian Space Station by 2035 and send the first Indian to the moon by 2040. India's first human space flight-

Gaganyaan- is now expected to take off in 2025, a PMO statement said after the Prime Minister held a meeting with the ISRO Chairman S Somanath here. The Gaganyaan mission entails sending two astronauts to low earth orbit.

Modi's directions for future missions came during a briefing by the ISRO Chairman on the progress of the 'Gaganyaan mission', which is to have its first demonstration flight of the crew escape system on October 21, and other initiatives.

During the meeting, the Prime Minister outlined the future of India's space exploration endeavours and urged scientists to work towards interplanetary missions, including a Venus



Lander and also explore the moon in greater detail.

"Building on the success of Indian space initiatives, including the recent Chandrayaan-3 and Aditya L1 missions, the Prime Minister directed that India should now aim for new and ambitious goals, including setting up the 'Bharatiya Antariksha Station' (Indian space station) by 2035 and sending first Indian to the Moon by 2040," the statement

To realise this vision, the Department of Space will develop a roadmap for Moon explo-

ISRO's moon exploration plans will comprise a series of Chandrayaan missions, developing a new rocket - the Next Generation Launch Vehicle (NGLV), building a new launchpad and setting up human-centric Laboratories and associated technologies.

The Department of Space presented a comprehensive overview of the Gaganyaan Mission, including various technologies developed so far such as human-rated launch vehicles and system qualification.

entails sending two astronauts to low earth orbit, was originally planned for launch in 2022. However, the Covid pandemic It was noted that around 20 and the complexity of the mission led to delays and the first major tests, including three

(HLVM3) are planned.

October.

First demonstration flight of the

Crew Escape System Test Vehicle is scheduled on 21

Prime Minister Modi expressed

confidence in India's capabilities

and affirmed the nation's com-

mitment to scaling new heights

in space exploration. The

Gaganyaan mission, which

human space flight was expect ed to take place in the second half of 2024.

near the unexplored south pole of the moon on August 23. landing on September 2, India launched a spacecraft to study the Sun from a place called the Lagrange Point (L1), situated about 1.5 million kilometers from the Earth.

The Aditya L-1 mission will study the solar atmosphere, solar magnetic storms, and their impact on the environment around the Earth.

The Department of Space presented a comprehensive overview of the Gaganyaan Mission, including various technologies developed so far such as human-rated launch vehicles and system qualification.

Army to buy military systems to boost capabilities along LAC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

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

The Army has already issued the request for information (RFI) or initial tenders for procurement of the fast patrol boats, LCAs and integrated surveillance and targeting systems, sources said here on

should be between 13-14 "rugged and versatile so as to metres and maximum speed facilitate seamless execution not less than 20 knots. The of small team insertion, sur-LCAs are generally used for veillance, reconnaissance and ferrying troops. The last date patrolling" and that they to respond to the initial tenshould be capable of operatders for fast patrol boats as ing across a varying matrix of well as the LCAs is November terrain and conditions. 28.The integrated surveillance and targeting systems are being procured for use by It said the indigenouslydeveloped boats should have

> areas. According to the RFI, the systems are being procured under the 'buy Indian' category and they must have 60 per cent indigenous content.

mechanised forces in border

From Tuesday's meeting, it has emerged that the Gaganyaan In an effort to further enhance its operational launch will now take place in capabilities in border areas, Besides Somanath, Minister of including Ladakh, where ten-State in the Prime Minister's sion persists at the Line of Office Jitendra Singh, Principal Actual Control (LAC), the Secretary to the Prime Minister Army has rolled out a process to procure six fast patrol boats, eight landing craft assault (LCA) and 118 inte-P K Mishra and other officials were present during the meet-The meeting chaired by the Prime Minister came after India's successful soft landing grated surveillance and targeting systems. The fast patrol boats are being procured primarily for sur-Tuesday. The RFI for fast patrol boats and river basins. It said the length of the LCAs veillance in large water boduncrewed missions of the ies, including the Pangong Orbiter Mission and a Mars ration, it said. Within 10 days of the lunar Human Rated Launch Vehicle lake in eastern Ladakh. said the vessels should be

Maharana Pratap's descendant, son of Karni Sena founder join BJP

Vishvaraj Singh Mewar, a descendant of celebrated Mewar king Maharana Pratap Singh and Bhawani Singh Kalvi, son of Karni Sena founder Lokendra Singh Kalvi, joined the BJP on Tuesday, as the party gears up for the Rajasthan Assembly polls scheduled for November 25. They joined the party in the presence of Rajasthan BJP president CP Joshi, Union Minister

son Anil Baluni. Both leaders after joining the Both leaders after joining the BJP praised the party, with Mewar asserting that people should support the capable and foresighted leadership of Prime Minister Narendra

Arjun Ram Meghwal, its

national general secretary Arun

Singh and BJP chief spokesper-

Meghwal expressed confidence that people of Rajasthan will elect the BJP to power, voting



Kalvi has also been a well known polo player, while Mewar's father Mahendra Singh Mewar was elected to Lok Sabha on a BJP ticket from Chittorgarh in 1989.

Both are from the Rajput community, which is an important voting segment in Rajasthan. The BJP has sought to reassure Rajputs after Narpat Singh Rajvi, a five-time MLA and son-in-law of party stalwart Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, hit out at the party leadership after he was denied a ticket this

Bagchi appointed India's permanent representative to UN

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

 $E_{\text{Spokesperson Arindam}}^{\text{xternal Affairs Ministry}}$ Bagchi has been appointed India's permanent representative to the United Nations (UN) and other international organisations in Geneva. He will succeed Indra Mani Pandey, who is set to return to New Delhi.

Bagchi, a 1995-batch Indian Foreign Service (IFS) official, took over as spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in March 2021 and deftly handled a number of critical issues and developments including the eastern Ladakh border row, India's Covid-19 response and New Delhi's G20 presidency.

'Arindam' Bagchi (IFS:1995), presently Additional Secretary in the Ministry of External



Affairs, has been appointed as

Ambassador/Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations and other International Organisations in Geneva," the MEA said in a brief statement on Monday. "He is expected to take up the assignment shortly," it said. Earlier, Bagchi served as ambas-

sador to Croatia and deputy high commissioner to Sri Lanka. He also had a stint in the Prime Minister's Office as a director as well as at India's permanent mission at the UN in New York.

Rajnath announces cash rewards to jawans who won Asian Games medals

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

 $R^{
m ecognising}$ the stellar performance of athletes from the Armed forces in the recently concluded Asian Games, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday announced cash reward of ₹25 lakh to Gold medal winners, ₹15 lakh to silver medal awardees and ₹ten lakh to bronze medal winners. He also said medals and performance will inspire the country's youth.

The Defence Minister made these assertions here in a function to felicitate the medal winners, participants and support staff from the Armed Forces, who took part in the recently concluded 19th Asian Games at Hangzhou, China. He interacted with a total of 76 players and staff.

On behalf of his Ministry, Rajnath announced cash prizes to the Armed Forces personnel, who brought laurels to the country and once again proved



al event, by bagging 16 individual medals (3 Gold, 6 Silver and 7 Bronze) and eight team medals (2 Gold, 3 Silver and 3 Bronze) at the Games.

A contingent of 88 soldiers, including three sportswomen, participated in 18 disciplines at the Games. In his address, the defence minister lauded the efforts of the players, including those who gave their best, but could not win the medals. He reminded them of Flying Sikh Milkha Singh, who missed a medal in the 400-metre race in the 1960 Olympics in Rome by a whisker, but became a guiding star of Indian athletics. Milkha Singh is an inspiration for all even today, he said. Rajnath exuded confidence that these medals and perfor-

a maximum speed of 29 knots

(at sea state level 2) with

The initial tender for LCAs

said they are planned to be

deployed for search and res-

cue operations in Creek area

eight people on board.

mance will inspire the country's youth to come forward in sports. You are not just representing a medal, but are also representing a narrative of excellence of Indian society. You are a great medium to provide inspiration to the youth," he told the players.

Rajnath also pointed out that the performance of the players reflected the image of a rapidly growing and powerful 'New India'. "Many studies show that the progress in sports of any nation is more or less proportional to the economic prosperity of that country.

'In this context, as India is becoming an economically strong nation, our medals are also increasing in every field," he said.

The Defence Minister asserted that the Government is making relentless efforts to develop sports culture in India. "On one hand, we have worked to increase awareness about sports among the youth through Fit India and Khel India campaigns; on the other, through the Target Olympic Podium Scheme, we are committed to increasing India's medal count in the Olympics.

Today, our country is taking steps to host the Olympic Games in 2036. I am confident that with the support of the Government, our athletes will take India to the top of the medals tally through their hard work, dedication and passion,"

neutral measures for hospitals

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian healthcare sector **1** was responsible for more than 9 per cent of all India's commercial electricity consumption in 2019-20 fiscal, a first-of-its-kind nationwide Government survey of over 600 health institutions across the States has said and suggested a wide-ranging carbon neutral measures including mandating of green building bye-laws among others to make the hospitals climate smart to help achieve the country's net Zero target by 2070. Thousands of hospitals, health

centers and entire health systems around the world are already implementing climatesmart health care strategies. Titled 'Towards Climate-Smart

Hospitals: Insights From A National Hospital Energy Consumption Survey' it found that the penetration of on-site solar PV is 17 per cent in private and 11 per cent in public hospitals. In public hospitals the maintenance of the solar PV plant was not effectively conducted even as some of the healthcare facilities surveyed indicated that the solar PV plants' components needed detailed repairing and replacement.

It was also observed that the healthcare facilities are not using solar PV systems as a source for backup and are relying only on diesel generators during the hours of power supply failure to provide criti-

cal services. Under the aegis of the National Programme on Climate Change and Human Health (NPCCHH), the exercise in 18 states with diverse climate zones was conducted to understand the quantity and quality of energy consumption in different types of healthcare facil-



ities. It noted that there was a wide variation in hospital-level energy intensities (measured in Energy Performance Index (EPI) and Annual Energy Use per Bed (AEUB) between and within hospital typologies.

"The large EPI diversity can be attributed to factors related to energy efficiency such as the energy efficiency of end-use equipment/appliances and behavioural energy efficiency, and factors unrelated to energy efficiency such as differences in air-conditioned areas, levels of medical services provided, hours of active use, the climate zone, the degree of outsourcing of services, and patient privacy. The survey spanning over two years has been conducted by the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) under the Union Health Ministry with

technical support from Centre for Chronic Disease Control

(CCDC) and Alliance for an Energy Efficiency Economy The survey pointed to several differences in end-use uptake and utilisation pathways between the public and private healthcare facilities. "For instance, while heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC) use and type depended on the size and level of healthcare in the public health

system, (sub-centres and health

and wellness centres mostly

shown absence of HVAC) there

is still immense scope to promote informed decisions in procurement of energy-efficient heating and cooling systems," it said.

The study also suggested that the purchase of star-rated medical-use refrigeration even in rural health facilities where storage of vaccines and drugs is required can address both the cost factor and help mitigate the hospital's energy footprint. Similarly, the transition to energy-efficient lighting, medical equipment, and waterheaters (including solar-powered heaters) can be mandated within the NPCCHH.

Other major suggestions included mandating Energy Conservation Building Code (ECBC) norms for new construction and major renovation. The ECBC has been notified in 18 states. Ensure effective operations and maintenance of renewable energy systems and enhancing awareness and building capacities were also part of the suggestions.

To increase renewable energy deployment in public healthcare, the survey has recommended leverage funding through global, national, and state-level funding mechanisms available through financial mechanisms such as the Green Climate Fund, and local and regional funding mechanisms including examples like Arogya Raksha Samiti (ARS).

for construction of ship for ICG



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI**

Ministry of Defence on Tuesday signed a contract here for the construction of one training ship for the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) with Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd (MDL), Mumbai at a cost of ₹310 crore under the Buy (Indian- IDDM) category. This is the first dedicated train-

ing platform with integral heli-

copter capabilities that will provide basic sea training to 70 Coast Guard and other international under-trainee officers to prepare these budding mariners on the multi-dimensional maritime aspects of Coast Guard life, officials said. This training ship with advanced and modern hightech surveillance and monitoring systems will provide profound insight and expertise to the ICG cadets on the challenges at sea while ensuring the security of coastline and off-

The majority of equipment and systems will be sourced from indigenous manufactur-ers, including MSMEs.

shore assets.

The project envisages to generate significant employment over a period of three years. While meeting the objectives of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat', the contract would also boost the indigenous shipbuilding capability and help in bolstering maritime economic capabili-

Nationwide survey suggests carbon | Defence Ministry | NHAI upgrades traffic system | for advanced road safety

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI**

Central road making agency National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has upgraded the Advanced Traffic Management System (ATMS) for enhanced road safety and digital enforcement on national highways and expressways. The enhancements include replacing previous VIDS cameras with the newly introduced Video Incident Detection and Enforcement System (VIDES) to emphasise the digital enforcement of traffic rules. VIDES has the capability to identify 14 distinct incidents, including triple riding, helmet and seatbelt violations, wrong lane or direction driving, presence of animals on the highway, and pedestrian crossings, the

statement said. According to a NHAI statement, depending on the detected incident, VIDES will alert route patrol vehicles or ambulances, generate e-challans, relay alerts to nearby Variable Messaging Boards, or send notifications through the 'Rajmargyatra' mobile app to nearby travellers.

For comprehensive coverage, the statement said, these cameras are slated for installation every 10 km along national highways, with state-of-theart command and control centres at every 100 km integrating various camera feeds.

Apart from this, Vehicle Speed Detection System (VSDS) is now integrated into VIDES, optimising the use of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras, it added. The Traffic Monitoring Camera System (TMCS) will also be upgraded, the statement said, adding that positioned every 1 km on the national highway, these cam-

eras have been endowed with



advanced capabilities like automated detection of accidents and stalled vehicles

Strengthening collaboration with local traffic agencies, the statement said NHAI will allocate dedicated workstations in the command and control centre for traffic police represen-

Moreover, provisions have been made to share camera feeds over the network to enhance real-time coordination and response. ATMS deployment may also play an active role in disaster management by providing inputs for effective planning and implementation.

It will also provide online sharing of highway status and other important information that will help both the agencies and the highway users. The statement said the policy also provisions implementation of Digital Highways by developing integrated utility corridors along the national highways to develop optic fibre cables (OFC) infrastructure. While the ATMS equipment

will use OFC to communicate with the command and control centre, there are provisions in the policy for 5G-based communication in the future as the coverage increases, it said. Meanwhile Union Road Transport Highways Minister

Nitin Gadkari said the NHAI

is facing difficulties in the

preparation of detailed project

reports, as companies con-cerned are not ready to accept

new technology. Addressing the 'CRISIL India Infrastructure Conclave 2023', Gadkari said big players in the steel and cement industry are indulging in cartelisation to jack-up prices. According to Gadkari, rating of companies that make DPRs is a big challenge. "The preparation of DPRs is a big problem for NHAI... There is no perfect DPR anywhere in any project," Gadkari, who is known for his

frank views, said. "While making DPR, they (companies engaged in DPR making) are not ready to accept new technology, new innovation, new research and even the standard of DPRs are so low that everywhere (there is) additional scope of work," he said. The minister recalled that once upon a time, there were 50 big contractors who used to get contracts for road construction. "I felt that was not correct. (So) I liberalised the technical and financial norms, by which, today we have 600 big (road) contractors," he said.

According to Gadkari, the problem is that some of them quote prices below 30-40 per cent for highway construction projects. "We need to maintain the equilibrium between the quality and the cost. And that is also a big challenge," he

Centre told to upgrade private security to 'Para Police' NEW DELHI

Keeping in mind the recent developments in Israel, the Central Association of Private Security Industry (CAPSI) has urged the Centre to upgrade the role of private security personnel to "Para Police" by imparting security skills and knowledge of international standards national standards.

There are over one crore private security professionals employed in India to protect human and corporate assets. We are the largest security workforce in the World. It is the time to upgrade the role of private security to "Para Police" by imparting security skills and knowledge of inter-

national standards. The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) had already developed international standards for private security.

These highly trained security professionals can be given new role in the internal security to ensure safe and secure environment," said Kunwar Vikram Singh, Chairman, CAPSI, the apex body of the private security industry. In a statement Singh said the Ministry of Home Affairs

should consider grading private security guards and supervisors to the status of "Para Police" by upskilling them to effectively perform para police duties which para police duties which would significantly increase overall security personnel available for maintaining law and order in the country. This could lead to a stronger and more visible security presence, instilling a sense of safety and deterrence, he added.

Shivaji made first attempt to stop | Fire claims lives of woman, two kids attack on Hindutva: RSS leader

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

Sah Vyavastha Pramukh (coorganisation head) of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) Anil Oak said that Shivaji made the first attempt to stop the ideological, literary, cultural and physical attacks on Hindutva. He was addressing a dialogue programme organised before the staging of the historical Mahanatya (grand drama) Janata Raja (visionary king), based on the life of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, at Centre of Vedic Science in Banaras Hindu University (BHU) here on Monday which was also attended by Union Minister Dr Mahendra Nath Pandey. The drama will be organised from 5.30 pm to 8.30 pm at Amphitheater grounds in BHU here from November 21

Oak said that this great drama is being staged in Kashi to commemorate the completion of 350 years of 'Hindavi Swaraj' established by Shivaji. Elaborating Shivaji's war strategy, he said that as survival is necessary for the establishment of Swaraj so one must fight to win the war. "The war between Shivaji and Afzal Khan has been described as one of the seven major wars of the world by the London Military School," he said, presenting the description of this

war in the form of a poem. Regarding Shivaji's good governance policy, Óak said that in reality Shivaji fought only for seven years and worked for 'Suraj' (good governance) for 28 years. "The first pension scheme, compassion-



RSS leader Anil Oak addressing a programme at BHU in Varanasi on Monday.

respect. He also sentenced his

maternal uncle Mohite to life

imprisonment for misbehaving

with a poor woman. Taking

quick decisions was the special-

of Shivaji, with only 60 sol-

diers he defeated one lakh sol-

diers in a guerrilla war in the

palace of Shaista Khan." He

said, adding that construction

of new forts, establishment of

navy, appointment of pant

pradhans for good governance

showed the vision of Ramrajya

by Shivaji. According to him,

Baba Saheb Purandare com-

posed 'Mahanatya' by penning

down these ideals of Shivaji. He

said that the money received

from the tickets would be

utilised for making residential

arrangements for the attendants in front of the Cancer

While presiding over the programme, Union Minister Dr Mahendra Nath Pandey

said that the learned people of

Kashi also had a contribution

in the life of Shivaji Maharaj. "It

was here that Pandit Gaga

Bhatt performed the corona-

tion of Shivaji. In fact, the pre-

sent period is also passing

Hospital.

ate appointment, food grain scheme for every family, navy and merchant navy were started during the reign of Shivaji. Aurangzeb has also praised Shivaji's character in a part of the play," he said, adding that establish the Hindavi Empire, Shiva ji made such friends whose ideals are relevant even in the present situa-

Giving the example of Shivaji's Nai (barber), he said that despite not being expert in war, he did not worry about his life for Swaraj and went straight to the enemy's side. "To save the life of Shivaji, Baji Prabhudesh Pandey, along with only 300 people fought with 4,000 Pathan horsemen and attained martyrdom," he said, adding that presently, that place in Maharashtra is famous by the name of Pavan Khind.

He further said that Shivaji was deeply imbued with the feeling of patriotism. "Shivaji had no desire to become a king but to establish the Hindavi Empire as he assumed the title of Chhatrapati. Shivaji also treated women with special

through such circumstances as were there during the time of Shivaji. In such a situation, staging Janata Raja Mahanatya will provide us a solution to those situations. Shivaji's guru Samarth Guru Ramdas had called him Janata Raja which means far-sighted king." Dr Pandev said. Renowned storyteller

Shantanu Ji Maharaj said that by conspiring with Indian history, the characters of many great men were made to disappear from the pages of history He said that the Seva Bharti (Kashi Prant) will work to teach, show and narrate one such character. "Just as all the Indians had made their own sacrifices for the construction of the grand Ram Temple in Ayodhya, similarly everyone's sacrifice should be made for this great drama also," he said. At the beginning, the

guests garlanded the statue of Mahamana and lit the lamp and it was followed by a presentation of BHU's Kulgeet by the students of the Faculty of Music and Stage Arts. Kashi Prant Pracharak Ramesh Chandra and Seva Bharti Kashi Prant chief Rahul Singh were also present on the stage. Dr Harendra Rai, co-secretary of Mahanatya Organizing Mahanatya Committee, Prof Satya Prakash Pal, Prof DC Rai, Kashi Vibhag Pracharak Nitin and others were also present. The vote of thanks was given by Prof Upendra Nath Tripathi, Coordinator of Centre of Vedic Science and Prof Gyan Prakash Mishra of Journalism department conducted the

tutions across the country on

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE PRAYAGRAJ

woman and her two minor after a fire broke out in their house due to leakage in LPG cylinder in Khatauli village in Fatehpur on Monday evening, the police said. The incident took place when the woman was preparing meal and the gas pipe of the cylinder caught

The deceased were identified as Alka Devi (28), Gaurav (5) and Pari (2). The police said both the kids were sitting next to their mother when she was preparing the meal. After hearing their cries, neighbours and other villagers rushed to the spot and tried to douse the

Upon being alerted, a team of police also reached the spot and took the trio to the district

hospital from where the doctors referred them to the LLR Hospital in Kanpur. However, the family members took them to a private hospital in Kanpur where they succumbed to their injuries, they said adding that the bodies have been sent for postmortem. SUGGESTIONS INVIT-

ED: Under a nation wide campaign the Allahabad University Unit of Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) has invited suggestions from the students regarding education and other important sub-The ABVP is to pass reso-

its national conference scheduled in Delhi. The ABVP has invited sug-

lutions on the basis of sugges-

tions received from students in

gestions from students studying in various educational insti-

various issues pertaining to education, national subjects, environment and other contemporary issues. Students can send their views/suggestions on the aforementioned subjects through the Google Forms available on ABVP's Facebook handle, X (formerly known as Twitter), Instagram and other social media handles. They can also send their views/suggestions on the e-mail ID of ABVP national general secretary Yagyvalkya Shukla which

abvpyagywalkya@gmail.com . The $ABVP\ Allahabad$ University unit has also asked students to submit their suggestions through Google Form and e-mail.

The ABVP will prepare proposals based on suggestions received from students

thorough discussion with the students present in the conference, the ABVP will pass the aforesaid proposals in its national conference scheduled to be held from November 30 to December 3 in Delhi.

The ABVP in its national conferences and national executive committee meetings, passes resolutions on various topics, including education, environment etc. Based on these passed proposals, ABVP units across the country, along with students and youth, works relentlessly to achieve the set goals and brings an optimistic change in the society. After having a thorough discussion on the suggestions received from the students across the country in its Amrit Mahotsav conference, ABVP will finalise its future plans.

Students staging dharna go on rampage

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

A large number of students who were sitting on a dharna went on a rampage on the Allahabad University (AU) campus on Tuesday. The chief proctor allegedly got students protesting at the library gate lathicharged. After this the students closed the library gate and started creating a ruckus. Seeing the increasing commotion, forces from many police stations were called. This was followed by heated clashes between angry students, security guards and policemen.

The police then dispersed the students using mild force. After this the police arrested

five protesting students. **2 MEMBERS OF ATIO**

VARANASI (PNS): The five-

day Regional Science Congress-

2023 kick started at Mahamana

Hall of Institute of Science in

Banaras Hindu University

(BHU) here on Tuesday. The

event jointly organised by

Navodáya Vidyalaya, Varanasi

and Institute of Science, BHU,

GANG HELD: The Khuldabad police arrested two members of slain Atiq Ahmed gang from Chaufatka area and seized seven crude bombs from their possession.

Those arrested were Anees Akhtar alias Anees Kabari (46) and his son Mohd Rehman (21), residents of Chakia Kasari Masari. The police said the duo was associated with Atiq and his family members for a long time. They have been booked under Section 4/5 of the Explosives Act. The police have been compiling their criminal

During interrogation, the duo revealed that they had been carrying these bombs since the killing of lawyer Umesh Pal in February this

Five-day Regional Science

Congress inaugurated

told the police that they used to carry these bombs for their own security. The police said the duo was planning to hide these bombs under the dilapidated office structure of slain Atiq Ahmed.
POSTAL DEPARTMENT

year. They have been evading

police since then. They also

LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN: The Postal department has launched a campaign 'Samriddhi Sukanya Samriddhi Samaj' to take the benefits of 'Sukanya Samridhhi Yojana' launched by PM Modi under 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' scheme.

General Postmaster Krishna Kumar Yadav said that under Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana, account of girls up to

in post office. It offers 8.0 per cent interest, which is higher than small savings scheme. This account, can be opened with only Rs 250. There is provision of exemption of up to 1.5 lakh in income tax under section 80C of Income Tax. Postmaster general said three lakh Sukanya Samriddhi accounts have been opened so far in post offices of Prayagraj region. Senior superintendent of post office, Prayagraj division, Abhishek Srivastava said for opening Sukanya Samriddhi account, people may contact nearest post office with a copy of birth certificate of girl child, a copy of Aadhaar card of her mother or father along

with two photographs.

Dastak Abhiyan launched

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

In order to its efforts to prevent the transmission of communicable and vectorborne diseases, the Health department has launched Dastak Abhiyan under Special Communicable Disease Control Drive. Under the Dastak Abhiyan

launched by the Health department on Monday, the Asha-Anganwadi workers and health workers will identify the patients of communicable and vector-borne diseases by visiting from home to home and conduct the test of their health. They will also make the people Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr Sandeep Chaudhary informed and directed the health employees to work continuously with the coordination of Panchayati Raj and Rural Development department to avoid water logging and culmination of contaminated water besides ensuring the cleanliness of drainage and cutting of ambushes. To ensure the availability of



The health employees making the people aware about communicable diseases under Dastak Abhiyan.

pure drinking water for the families, he directed the health employees and advised that the family members should use toilets. The choked drainages of the rural areas should be

fogging should be endured cent per cent and the source of communicable diseases should be destroyed, he directed, adding that the drive should be monitored and its reporting cleaned, anti-larva spray and should be made on e-portal on

Stickers, posters, etc should be affixed to aware the people of mosquito-borne diseases, he directed and added that the maximum people should be aware about this taking the help of Gram Pradhan in the rural areas and corporators in the urban areas. The Nodal Officer of Communicable Diseases and ACMO Dr SS Kannoujia informed that the Health department has been made the Nodal department of the drive which is working relating to vector-borne diseases making coordination with 10 other departments. The District Malaria

informed that the screening of the persons with symptoms of fever, influenza like illness (cough, nausea, etc will be made during the visit from home to home by Asha-Anganwadi workers and they should also make the list of the persons with the symptoms of tuberculosis, leprosy, filaria, etc and ensure their test and treatment in case they are test-

will offer a plethora of activities, sessions, lectures and visits to ignite young minds towards pursuing science. A total of 83 meritorious students from different Jawahar Navodava Vidvalavas of Uttar Pradesh and Úttarakhand are attending the event. At the inaugural ceremony of the programme Prof Anil K Tripathi, Director, Institute of Science, of scientific discoveries and innovations. He shared with students insights on various revolutionary scientific innovations and how they impacted

human civilization. He also

talked about the difference

between invention and innova-

tion. Prof SM Singh, Dean,

Faculty of Science, during his

interaction with students

attempted to cultivate the seed

of curiosity among the attendees. His simple delivery of words engaged students in the journey he was intended to take them through. He acquainted students with the significance of Gurukul system and its effect on Indian society by taking instances from the story of Raja Raghu, who once with his great dedication towards a disciple guru, filled his chariot with gold to greet his guru with Dakshina. Dr Amiya Kumar Samal, chairman, organising committee, briefed the participants about the activities planned for the programme. Nagesh Kumar Mishra, Principal, Jawahar Novadaya Vidyalaya, Varanasi, Following the inaugural session, groups of students were taken on a visit to different departments of the institute where they got to see various scientific instruments and also witnessed their use in scientific research. A quiz round was also organised by two members of the organising committee, Atal Singh and Shubham

Pandal to take visitors on a journey to Nagaland termed as an eco-friendly pan-

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

This puja season, when all barwaris (Durga puja samitis) of the city are using different themes to make their puja pandal stand out, the one being installed by the Bai-Ka-Bagh Durga Puja Committee is very interesting. This pandal will take visitors on a journey to the hilly state of Nagaland.

Inside the pandal, the artists have made several houses similar to those seen in villages of Nagaland. All structures of this pandal are made of bamboo, which is found in abundance in Nagaland. The small conical shaped houses, solar power connection to harness solar energy etc have all been set up to make it look like an authentic Nagaland village.

Interestingly, every decorative item around the inner walls of the pandal is made exclusively by bamboo, i.e. without using any form of plastic or thermocol unlike other pandals of the city. "In this way, our pandal can also be

dal of the city" says Shailendra Dwivedi, general secretary of this barwari. In the same way, the Durga puja pandal of Tagore Town barwari, which is being installed at the ground of Colonelganj Inter College gives a look of Kedarnath temple of Uttarakhand. "I had been to the shrine a couple of years ago and from there, I got an idea to make our pandal resemble the holy shine," says the general secretary of the barwari. The pandal will have a huge figure of Nandi in the second sitting posture, as is seen at the entrance of the Kedarnath shrine. The main stage of the shivling in Kedarnath and behind the Shivling, will be the statues of all the deities, including Goddess Durga, which will be worshipped for four days of the festival. The highlight of this pandal would be a selfie point, which is being made at

Alumnus donates \$ 1.6 m to IIT (BHU)

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

The IIT (BHU) Foundation, a US-based all volunteer, non-profit association of IIT (BHÛ) alumni, announced that Dr Raj Yavatkar, IIT(BHU) graduate and CTO of Mountain View, California based Juniper Networks, has donated 1.6 million US dollars which will be used to build the Student Academic Centre at the institute here, providing a transformational growth ecosystem for the students on

"IIT (BHU) not only got me started on an excellent engineering path but the experience was truly transformative for someone who arrived on the campus at a young age. The institute helped me grow in many areas such as leadership, communication, and risk-taking." said Dr Raj Yavatkar. He further continued that he was excited to support building the Student Academic Centre which will help students pur-sue innovative R&D projects while also offering opportunities to showcase their cultural talents and build a strong community focused on collabora-

Dr Raj Yavatkar graduated with BTech in Electronics Engineering from IIT-BHU, followed by a MTech in Computer Science at IIT Bombay, and a PhD in Computer Science from



Alumnus Dr Raj Yavatkar donates \$ 1.6 million for a Student Academic Centre in IIT (BHU)

Purdue University. He is a IEEE fellow and is recognised as a leading expert in the networking industry and holds more than 50 patents.

Raj has co-authored five Internet standards. Dr Yavatkar has also published more than 40 papers in academic journals and conferences and has coauthored the book, Inside the Internet's Resource Reservation Protocol (RSVP) published by John Wiley

Currently, Raj is the Chief Technology Officer at Juniper Networks, a leading vendor for networking systems and ser-

Juniper, Raj leads the corporate strategy and technology innovation to put the company on a growth path with expansion in enterprise, data center, and mobile network segments. Raj also serves as an advisor to and is an early

investor in many startups.
Sagar Bhimavarapu (ECE '88), CEO of the IIT (BHU) Foundation, noted that Dr Yavatkar is a proud example of what IIT (BHU) alums have accomplished. "We are grateful to Raj for supporting our efforts to help the IIT (BHU) community, and we look forward to working with other alums to help grow the Foundation's mission" Sagar

He further expressed his gratitude for this generous donation that supports creating a robust environment for global donations and endowment for the truly remarkable IIT

Director of IIT (BHU), Prof Pramod Kumar Jain and the Board of Governors also expressed their gratitude for this generous donation. Prof Jain said, "This makes possible a state-of-the-art Student Academic Centre providing our students with the best amenities and will go a long way in molding technology leaders of tomorrow.

DEVOTEES OFFER PRAYERS CHANDRAGHANTA **TEMPLE:** Long line of devotees was seen at Chandraghanta Devi Temple located at

Chandraghanta Gali near

Thatheri Bazar in Chowk area on the third day of Shardiya Navratra here on Tuesday Right from the morning hours, there was a long line of devotees in the nearby narrow lanes. As the weather conditions turned pleasant after a good unseasonal rain during the night hours, the devotees did not feel inconveniences to wait for a long time to reach the temple and offer prayers. The city received over 14.4 mm rains during the night and as the hailstorm also hit the region, the same damaged the kharif crops badly at some Heavy rush of devotees

was also seen throughout the day at the famous Durga Mandir (Durga Kund) as usual. Rush was also seen at some other temples of goddesses. This holy city is a rare place where there are separate temples of all the nine Gauris and Devis where the devotees reach to offer prayers on different days during Basantik (Chaitya) and Shardiya Navratra respec-

Besides, hundreds of devotees rushed to Vindhyachal in Mirzapur district by Roadway buses or other vehicles to offer prayer on this auspicious occa-

Rush was also seen at Old Durga Mandir at Ramnagar, Sheetla Mata Mandir at Adalpura (near Chunar, Mirzapur) and others.

DM reviews progress in works

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

District Magistrate Priyanka Niranjan reviewed the progress in works costing more than Rs 50 lakh at the Collectorate on Monday. During the review of works

neering college to complete the building in such a period that the next academic session could run in it. She directed the working agencies to carry out works with quality and complete it within stipulated time.

leadership of Chairman NPP Shyam Sundar Keshari who was successful in completing the work before Navratri Mela The chairman said with a budget of Rs 2 crore under Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Adarsh

Nagar Panchayat Yojana more The meeting was also attend-

DM Priyanka Niranjan reviewing the progress in works at the Collectorate on Monday

related to National Health Mission she was informed that out of 67 Arogya centres, 64 have been completed out of which a letter has been sent to the department concerned for taking over building of 22 centres. The work of one centre was under progress while the budget of two centres was to be sent back due to non-availability of the land. The DM issued strict instruction to the working agency related to engi-

ed by Chief Development Officer (CDO) Srilaxmi VS and joint magistrate Alok Prasad.

FUNCTION: Union Minister State for Commerce and Industry Anupriya Patel while addressing the inaugural function of a project carried out by the Nagar Palika Parishad Mirzapur on Monday said the government is performing very well for every section of life. She appreciated the

than 300 poles were erected in the outskirts of the city from Baraundha to Ojhala bridge which is one of the routes to Vindhachal. He said the poles were equipped with LED bulbs which will illuminate the entire road. The programme started with prayers by the minister amidst the chanting of Vedic shlokas. MLA Ratnakar Mishra, corporators and others were present.

WORKSHOP: MLC and

general secretary of BJP Anoop Gupta in a workshop organised under 'Voter Chetna under Mahabhiyan' on Monday said vote is one of the strongest way

the tank installed in one side of

the school. This tank was

donated to the inter college by

the Indian Army.

to fulfil our aspiration.

He said the party has decided to extend full cooperation to the upcoming electoral revision drive by the Election Commission. The workshop was attended by all people's representatives, party workers and

ANOTHER FEATHER IN SCHOOL'S CAP: It is a matter of pride for the district that the leading school of the city Daffodils Public School secured the top position in the country in maintaining high class academic performance as well as social activities.

Giving details director Amardeep Singh said an organisation 'Education World' conducted the survey throughout the country and after the marking done by experts the school was declared first in a programme held in Delhi. He said that the assiduous effort of the dedicated staff of the school was acknowledged by a reputed organisation working in the field of the education for long and it has fixed marks as per the quality of social activities. He congratulated other director of the school Aparajita Singh who led the team of teachers who worked hard and succeeded in securing the top

position in India.

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PAPER WITH PASSION-

Murder without killer

Nithari killing prime suspects win relief, justice for kin families goes abegging

his has become an intermittent habit with our justice delivery system, our judicial system and us as society. From Jessica to Arushi to now at least 19 underprivileged kids in the Nithari are of the NCR, there have been murders most foul discovered, but our learned courts at last tell us that the investigation does not prove that the suspects/accused did it. So they are let off with a rap on the knuckles. The investigators ---- transferred, promoted, retired or dead ---- face no accountability either. That seems to be the bane that has come to revisit us in the form of Allahabad HC's shocking decision on the Nithari murder accused, domestic help Surinder Koli and his master Moninder Singh Pandher. The incident, reported from Noida in 2005-06, took years for the horrifying details to come out. The Nithari murders were especially gruesome as they involved killing innocent children in cold blood; several dead bodies were recovered from a nearby drain. Many bodies had internal organs removed, hinting also at an



organised organ racket. But a botched-up investigation along with loopholes in the judicial system made sure that the perpetrators could go scot-free. Though Koli and Pandher were found guilty in 2009, the High Court has recently overturned the guilty verdict ostensibly because of lack of evidence and the testimony of alleged witnesses.

In the annals of Indian criminal history, the Nithari serial killings stand as a chilling testament to the depths of human depravity. The case shocked the nation as young women and children fell victim to unimaginable brutality. The Nithari killings were a series of abductions, sexual assaults and murders. The victims dis-

appeared without a trace, leaving their families in anguish and despair. As investigations progressed, the police unearthed gruesome evidence at the residence of Pandher and Koli. The house was a charnel house, revealing the ghastly remains of several missing persons. The CBI recovered many bodies and body parts from the nearby drain and it was thought that the case was foolproof against the prime suspects. But turns out that the scales of the blindfolded lady do not tilt equally for the influential and the underprivileged. Most victims were migrants from UP and Bihar, living on day's earnings and thus hardly had any say in the system or resources to pursue the case. The Nithari case is emblematic of the slow, convoluted and frustrating Indian justice system. The Nithari case is not just a local tragedy but a national shame. It epitomises the systemic issues that afflict India's criminal justice system, including lack of accountability, shortage of forensic resources and the inordinate delay in adjudication. It calls for immediate and comprehensive reforms within the Indian criminal justice system. Only then we can hope to prevent the travesty of justice from being repeated. This decision to acquit the prime suspects should stir society's collective conscience. If it does not, we are all as good



Artisans prepare effigies of demon King Ravana ahead of the Dussehra festival, in Rampur

Hamas's resolve may survive IDF onslaught



Hamas pulled off Pearl Harbour and 9/11 combined, on October 7, which shows its mettle and motivation. Annihilating it will not be easy for Israeli Defence Forces

n this page last week, a colleague expressed misgivings about the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) resilience and wondered if the steel was blunted. No one has ever doubted the will, fighting prowess and potential of Israelis given their history of conflict, survival and incredible prosperity. Israel has almost similar experience in its conflicted history as our own: war on creation in 1948, a second bigger round in 1956 and full-fledged regional wars in 1967 and 1973.

IDF, like now, was caught with its pants down when Egyptians executed a cross-Suez offensive that hesitated allowing the counter-Canal riposte led by Ariel Sharon's Centurion Tank division and Squadron and Troop leaders like Chaim Erez and Benny Taran. In the 1973 war on the Syrian front, the hero was Avigdor Kahalani who later became Mayor of Tel Aviv and Minister of National Security. His book Heights of Courage is a prescribed reading for the Israeli military. He was worshipped by Armoured Corps officers who used to take a second oath near Mount Hermon on Golan Heights where a UN Indian Mechanised force is currently located.

And who will not remember Moshe Dayan, the toast of the 1948 Arab-Israeli war and Commander of Jerusalem Front? He became a legend: his eyepatch was replaced with the Jaffa orange in an ad proclaiming The Best. I was privileged to know Kahalani, Erez and Taran, all Armoured Corps, the sword in desert terrain. With the last two, we spent year-long training and friendship at Fort Leavenworth, US and Belgravia, UK. I visited Israel before India formally recognized it in January 1992. That travel is etched as the journey that commenced in Cairo where the Yom Kippur War was conceived. The taxi was driven by a retired Artillery Lieutenant Colonel from the Egyptian Army. We crossed the Suez and drove through Sinai still littered with debris from the 1967 and 1973 wars. The drive was punctuated with a vanquished Veteran's narration of victory turned into defeat. In 1991, rocketry against Israel.



ISRAEL HAS SIGNED PEACE TREATIES WITH **JORDAN AND** EGYPT AND THE OSLO ACCORD IN 1993. THE MOST RECENT IS THE ABRAMS ACCORD WHICH HOPES TO **IMPROVE ISRAEL'S RELATIONS WITH ARAB STATES**

The West Bank, which was infiltrated by Islamic State last year, has opened a third front for the IDF where more than 300 Palestinians and 50 Israelis have been killed this year. But Hezbollah appears to be only shadowboxing. Iran is external enemy no 1. Both Iran and Israel have vowed to destroy each other and do not recognize the other's right to exist. Iran backs Syria, Lebanon and Gaza. Hamas has a stockpile of 130,000 rockets and missiles. It was only in 2012 that their accuracy improved and Israel devised the Iron Dome whose launch I witnessed. It is an expensive antidote to missiles but can distinguish which missile will hit populated areas. Its discrimination capacity makes it valuable.

against Hamas will be the fifth large-scale operation with the first launched in 2008 after Hamas took control of Gaza. Similarly, Israel has invaded Lebanon thrice - in 1978, 1982 and 2006.IDF has failed to deter Hamas and diminish Hezbollah. Its punitive strikes only degrade capability till their next rocket attack. This time IDF is tasked to permanently destroy Hamas and rescue the 199 hostages hidden in an under ground web of tunnels. This cordon and search operation can take months and become an abattoir. Taran says the

The current ground offensive

operation is not the reoccupation of Gaza. Israel is known to have exchanged 1,200 Palestinian prisoners for one soldier. Iran says Hamas will release hostages if air attacks cease. Ultimately the safety of hostages will constrain operations with IDF fighting on enemy terrain.

Hamas's daring incursion into Israel is a brilliant strategy but the barbarity and brutality of tactics shaming Chengis Khan. Hamas achieved total surprise and horrendous gains. This time they did 9/11 and Pearl Harbour combined, inflicting on Israel their highest losses since the Yom Kippur war.

It has already become the world's largest man-made humanitarian catastrophe that you and I watch on TV. But no one can stop the mauled Israelis from retaliation and the IDF from wreaking retribution by reducing Gaza to the stone age. Fingers crossed the Gaza Front does not spark Lebanon and the West Bank. IDF may destroy Hamas's capability to fight; but not its will to fight anoth-

(The writer, a retired Major General, was Commander. IPKF South, Sri Lanka, and jounaer member of the Defence Planning Staff, currently the Integrated Defence Staff. The views expressed are

Development census serves our goals better



DHARMAPALAN

A census on the educational and professional profiles of citizens would help the government devise policies to plug in gaps that impede our development

ven though scientifically we are one species of Homo sapiens, human beings continue to show discrimination based on religion, race and caste. It's a shame for our country in particular and humanity as a whole when people kill each other in the name of caste, religion and race in different parts of the country. Most of the so-called developed countries have reached the level that we see today as they were able to do away with this social mischief. Unfortunately, in our country caste is a dominating player in our social set-up. To preserve the dignity of one's caste even parents are killing their children who try to move away from the clutches of caste rules. People make relationships, friendships and even helping hands based on caste factors.

The caste system that we see today was initiated during the post-Vedic period when more rigid 'Jathis' emerged from the varnas. Around the 6th century BCE, religious movements led by figures like Buddha and Mahavira challenged the hierarchical nature of the caste system.

However, the colonial British rule, as part of their policy of divide and rule, reinstated the social divisions. They introduced census operations that classified people into various castes and communities. This had the effect of reinforcing existing social divisions.

The great spiritual philosopher from Kerala Sree Narayana Guru advised people to follow the " one caste, one religion, one god" philosophy for the betterment of humanity. Unfortunately, even in his home state, no one is following this in true spirit. The Christian missionaries who converted native people on the belief that Christianity does not follow a caste system and gives respect to everyone are also bereft of a culture of oneness. Few Christian sects in Kerala are more fanatic the country. It seems that caste is a deeply ingrained aspect of Indian society, its reflection can be seen in every religious group in the

country. Even after 75 years of independence despite efforts to dismantle the formal caste system through legal means, caste-based discrimination and social stratification continue to be significant challenges in contemporary India. It is at this juncture, that the demand by the opposition parties in "INDIA" pushing for a nationwide caste census comes as a retrogressive step. What do our political parties expect from this? Do they want to reinstate the caste sentiments in the mindset of our youngsters? Are they promoting the historical wrongs our predecessors have done and want our youngsters to fight against one another along caste lines? Are they not interested in seeing our country as a developed nation? Politicians should not play petty electoral politics by fooling people. What is the

ultimate objective of pushing

for a caste census? If it is for

the upliftment of a commu-

than any other community in nity/ caste by providing reser-

vations, previous experience shows that it has failed miserably as the community that receives reservations remains backwards even today. What is the use of giving reservations to the children of government servants based on caste lines? Government support can be provided for one generation for their upliftment. There is no meaning in providing reservations to the next generation, as these people have been lifted from the marginalized category. Many communities that had been the dominant earlier are becoming marginalized now.

Irrespective of caste, governments should support every citizen who is marginalized based on their financial status. Instead of a castebased census, our political parties should take steps to conduct a census on the educational profile and professional profiles of citizens. This can help devise policy measures to identify gaps that impede our develop-

(The writer is an adjunct faculty at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore, views are personal)

SWINE FEVER OUTBREAK IN MANIPUR

Sir-The Manipur's Veterinary and Animal Husbandry Department has confirmed an outbreak of African Swine Fever (ASF) in the state, with the Pig Farm of the Central Agriculture University (CAU) in Imphal West District declared as the 'epicenter' of this contagious disease. Measures have been taken to prevent, control, and eradicate the infectious disease, including prohibiting the movement of pigs from the affected areas.

Since then, I have been in

Israel more than a dozen times

including attending uninter-

rupted since 2010, the annu-

al International Institute of

Counter Terrorism confer-

ence in Herzilya till COVID

paused it. So, Í think I know

the IDF pretty well. For any-

one doubting its combat

Israel has signed peace treaties

with Jordan and Egypt and the

Oslo Accord in 1993. The most recent is the Abrams

Accord which hopes to

improve Israel's relations with

Arab states. Except with Iran,

Syria and Lebanon, there is

peace including efforts to

mend ties with Saudi Arabia.

Since 1973, no Arab country

has challenged de facto nuclear Israel. Tel Aviv is fighting

internal wars against non-

state actors Hezbollah in

Lebanon, Islamic Jinad and

Hamas which has been mis-

governed since 2007 Gaza is the periodic source of Hamas

strength is a strategic error.

Reports indicate that ASF might have been introduced through pigs or pork from neighboring countries like Myanmar and Bangladesh. The outbreak has already caused significant damage to the region's pork industry, affecting thousands of families and causing financial losses. The northeastern region's annual pork business is substantial, and this outbreak poses a severe threat to the livelihoods of many.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

Sir-MakeMyTrip's recent advertisement, aimed at Pakistan cricket fans during the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023, has faced backlash for its lack of sensitivity. The ad begins with an "Open Invitation to Pakistani Fans," encouraging them to put aside rivalries when visiting India.

It goes on to offer discounts based on Pakistan's performance: a 50% discount if they lose by 10 wickets or 200 runs, with the code "BoysPlayedWell"; a 30% discount for a 6-wicket or 100run loss, using the code

"EkShaheenHaar"; and a 10% discount for a 3-wicket or 50-run loss with the code "NoMaukaMauka." India has a historical record of victories over Pakistan in World Cup matches, having won in 1992, 1996, 1999, 2003, 2011, 2015, and 2019. Nevertheless, the ad has faced criticism for its tone and the way it ridicules

the Pakistani team.

Two distinct eras

THE EDITOR



the four decades before and after 1990 mark two distinct eras in India, accompanied by differing social and economic philosophies. The 1950s represented a shift from agricultural deficiencies, with the Green Revolution transforming India from a nation living hand-to-mouth to a selfsufficient one. The Nehruite philosophy emphasized technology, economic growth, and progress, leading to the

establishment of the first IIT before the nation's first general elections. The present day reflects a thriving middle-class that emerged from this transformation and ushered in the era of aspirational India. While the 1990s witnessed economic liberalisation, the current leadership is focused on leveraging India's

political and economic standing. This progress has, however, led to social strain and disproportionate wealth distribution, exacerbated by jobless growth from disruptive technologies. The next generation of leaders faces the challenge of optimising multiple factors, using technology to promote inclusiveness and bridge socio-political divides. This requires statesmen with vision and foresight, and it's essential to trust in India's ability to produce such leadership

CHECK ELECTION SOPS

Sir—Election dates have been announcedfor five states. The Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Rajiv Kumar has pointed out that freebies offered by political parties have a "tadka" of populism, and voters have every right to ask the parties how they intend to fulfill these promises if elected to power. He is correct, and the promises made by these parties are often extravagant, unrealistic, and outright absurd.

However, these promises are still made because there are certain sections of society that are susceptible to such grandiose assurances. As long as there are segments of the population ready to be exploited, there will be political parties willing to offer free rations, direct money transfers to women's accounts, monthly cash incentives for women, free electricity up to a certain unit consump-Manzur Hasan | Howrah tion, specific annual allocations of free

So, who else can put an end to this unsavory practice? The courts, of course. Politicians find courts easy to approach and convenient to evade the issue, which would otherwise be their own responsibility. The Supreme Court had, on a previous occasion, criticized the "freebie culture," noting that offering freebies disrupts the level playing field in an election, with the party making such promises standing to gain. The Supreme Court suggested the formation

of a committee of experts to address this

issue. Indeed the country must decide

a policy on freebies that are offered by

the political parties so that there is no

confusion on the issue. Ganapathi Bhat | Akola

> Send your feedback to: letterstopioneér@gmail.com

through the electoral process. R Narayanan | Mumbai gas cylinders, and the list goes on.

It appears that the Election Commission (EC) can do little to curb this practice.

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FIRST COLUMN SPIRITUAL LITERACY IS A MUST

Our real enemies are not our rivals but suspicion, fear, hatred and violence



RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR **NIKUNJ**

t's a proven fact today that disharmony in human relations gives rise to not only wars but to almost all other problems directly or indirectly related to us. The phenomenon of split in families, the rising number of cases of divorces, and even most of the psycho-somatic diseases which are caused by stress or mental tension are due to disharmony in human relations only and nothing else. In the past few days, we all have witnessed how extreme conflict between 2 countries over a border issue resulted in a mass exodus of people from their homeland as well as deaths of innocent people in massive bombings during night time. Hence one cannot deny the fact that the forces that are leading to the disintegration of nations, communities and political parties crop up primarily from disharmony. Most problems of law & order and even the commotions and disturbances in major Legislatures also are due to disharmony in relations between political parties or various linguistic groups, religious communities, etc. It is, thus, very much essential to find a solution to eliminate this problem lest it will eliminate us. But what is the way out? How does one move ahead? Well!! It is quite clear from some of the examples that have been given of the world-events that these problems are mainly the creations of our minds, our attitudes and our negative thinking. Hence, to create harmony, we need to first of all disarm our minds to dismantle the forces of disharmony. It is estimated that world over approximately two trillion dollars are spent every year by various countries on what is called 'Defence' or 'Security' and yet it's quite surprising that insecurity is increasing rather than decreasing. What's more saddening is that all the diversion of resources to war purposes deprives the poorer sections of society of the help that they need or deserve. In this respect, it is essential to redefine security and to break the link between security and military force. We need to understand that our security lies not in an armed state of readiness for war but in friendliness, love and peace with oth-



Our real enemies are not men and women but suspicion, fear, hatred, violence and feeling of revenge and these enemies cannot be eliminated by military means. It has, therefore, rightly been said in the Gita: 'Arjuna, the soul is its own best friend and it is its own worst enemy'. A deep study of the history of human civilization would reveal that presently, there are prevalent certain wrong beliefs that have led us to this kind of a negative culture, negative lifestyle and negative attitudes, one of these wrong beliefs is that there has always been disharmony in the world and there was no time in the history of mankind when there was total harmony. If that were so, then why today do we have a greater number of wars that are more devastating and which result in mass killings? Why are we today inventing more and more deadly weapons? It shows that there was a time in the distant past when there were less and less wars and there was also the earliest era which was free from all kinds of disharmony.

Thus, there must have been a time when the world population was small, the environment was clean and there were no wars and people lived in amity and peace. Such an era was known as the Golden Age. That was the time when there was Universal Harmony. It is that new world which we wish to usher in again. And, we want those attitudes and that thinking which can restore harmony in human relations. So, how can we bring about that change? It's very simple, for that we need to realize that most of our problems arise from our spiritual illiteracy which has to be eradicated. If, therefore, we can get rid of this kind of illiteracy and have a new lease of consciousness beyond war and enmity, then we can open to a new paradise, otherwise, we will end in eternal darkness.

(The writer is a spiritual educator and popular columnist;

views are personal)

State doles can put discoms at risk



UTTAM GUPTA

Discoms will be profitable only when they are unshackled from state controls and electricity distribution is deregulated



ven as the Central government is making all-out efforts to remove the financial distress of power distribution companies or discoms (situated at the core of the power supply chain, they procure electricity from power generating companies or gencos and distribute it to the consumers) and restore them to robust health, actions of the state governments undermine these efforts. The financial distress of discoms arises fun-

damentally due to their inability to generate enough revenue to pay for the electricity they buy. For over two decades, they have been incurring losses year after year. They have funded these losses by borrowings from banks and other FIs apart from keeping bills pending. At the end of FY 2021-22, their total debt was Rs 620,000 crore. Discoms' inability to generate required revenue has to do primarily with two factors viz. aggregate technical and commercial (AT&C) losses - a jargon for power theft and shortfall in the average revenue realisation from the sale of electricity vis-a-vis the average cost of supply (cost of purchase, neeling and distribution), or the ACS ARR gap. During 2020-21, AT&C losses were 22.32 percent while the ACS-ARR gap was Rs 0.54 per kWh.

Both maladies arise due to constant meddling in the running of discoms by their owners namely the state governments. Power theft on such a massive scale is unthinkable without the complicity of the political establishment. People living in slum settlements/jhuggi clusters being a big vote bank, the party in power encourages unauthorized connections to enable their

access to free power. As for the second malady, the political brass orders discoms to sell a major slice of electricity to households (HHs) and farmers, either at a fraction of the cost of supply or even free (the state electricity regulatory commissions or SERCs which are mandated to fix tariff merely act as rubber stamps). Even as the state government promises to reimburse the differential amount to discoms, most states don't reimburse or do it partially and after con-



REPORTEDLY, MORE THAN 100,000 METERS HAVE BEEN BIFURCATED OR TRIFURCATED **ENABLING EVEN** HIGH-END **CONSUMERS TO AVAIL OF THE** FREE BONANZA

(The writer is a policy analyst, views are per-

Given nearly a quarter of the revenue lost due to power theft and a substantial amount in subsidies remaining unpaid, the financial stress of discoms is inevitable. The politics of freebies now deeply entrenched in the system has exacerbated the already grim situation. Let us look at the developments in Punjab. Last year, amongst a host of freebies promised by AAP the most prominent was free electricity to households (HHs) for consumption up to 300 units per month.

Going by sheer common sense, the State should give help only to those HHs who can't afford to pay costbased tariffs. The way to go is to identify households whose income is below a threshold. AAP hasn't gone by this. Could it be presumed that only low-income HHs have consumption of fewer than 300 units? So, in essence, the assistance reaches only to those who can't afford it. A closer scrutiny would reveal that the approach adopted by the AAP government is mischievous. Its real intent was to give the dole to 'all and sundry'.

If a household consumes less than 300 units a month, it doesn't necessarily follow that it is a family with low income. For instance, there would be umpteen number of welloff/high-income old-age couples living alone who consume less than 300 units a month. Even for others, who consume more than this threshold, we see a dastardly trend of consumers applying for multiple connections within the same HH. For instance, a household consuming 900 units a month, gets three meters installed to keep consumption of each under 300 units thereby ensuring zero bill.

Reportedly, more than 100,000 meters have been bifurcated or trifurcated enabling even high-end consumers to avail of the free bonanza. As a consequence, cur-

rently almost over 95 per cent of power consumers in Punjab avail of subsidies. The swelling number of connections has increased the subsidy by Rs 125 crore per month on average. As a result, the total domestic subsidy for the current FY is now expected to be Rs 8,813 crore - Rs 1,500 crore higher than the initial estimate of Rs 7,313 crore. In Delhi, where there is no charge

for HHs consuming up to 200 units (HHs consuming between 200 and 400 units get a deduction of Rs 800 from their bill), the possibility of the majority of households availing of access to electricity - free of any charge - is not ruled out. The situation in other states won't be different. Given almost the entire population of the State - including the rich, millionaires, billionaires and so on, getting to enjoy the free bonanza, the burden of power subsidy is bound to gallop. Faced with budget constraints, the states will take increasing recourse to underpay ment and delayed reimbursement of subsidy dues to discoms.

Meanwhile, the Centre is dealing with discoms under a two-pronged strategy (i) forcing them to make timely payments and (ii) helping them cut AT&C losses and reduce the ACS-ARR gap. Under (i), it implemented late payment surcharge (LPS) and related matters Rules, in 2022. The LPS rules made it mandatory for discoms to clear their legacy dues as existing on June 3, 2022, in a time-bound manner in 12 equal monthly instalments (EMI) with the benefit of nonapplicability of the LPS after its implementation date. The same rules are also provided for timebound clearance of current dues failing, which will attract a power supply cut.

The pressure tactics have worked. The legacy dues of all stakeholders in the electricity supply chain viz.

power generating companies (gencos) and transmission companies (transcos) from discoms decreased from Rs 1,39,747 crore in June 2022 to Rs 69,957 crore in July 2023. Faced with the threat of LPS, the latter could have used loans taken from PFC and REC (out of Rs 130,000 crore sanctioned under 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan') to

make payments to the former. As for (ii), under the 'Reforms-Linked, Result-Based Scheme for Distribution' (RLRBSD) launched in July 2021, the Centre has undertaken a massive investment of Rs 300,000 crore to improve the reliability and quality of the power sup-ply and enhance the efficiency of discoms. It has compulsory pre-paid and smart metering components to be implemented across the power supply chain, including in about 250 million households. The Scheme has yielded results.

The AT&C losses of discoms have one down from 22.32 per cent dur ing 2020-21 to 13.5 per cent during 2022-23. The ACS-ARR gap has also reduced from Rs 0.54 per kWh during 2020-21 to Rs 0.15 per kWh in 2022-23. A 9 per cent cut in AT&C losses is a stupendous achievement. It seems that pre-paid and smart meters have been installed, and power theft is almost eliminated. The Centre is keen that the ACS-ARR gap should be reduced to 'zero' by March 2025. This will require making power theft 'nil' and timely recovery of all subsidy dues from the States. But, this won't be possible if states continue with business as usual; it could even lead to erosion of the gains made in 2022-23. Modi's efforts would deliver only when (a) discoms are unshackled from state controls; (b) States give subsidies directly to the beneficiaries and (c) electricity distribution is deregulat-

The Israel-Hamas war: Where does India stand?

India's diplomatic stance, which supports a two-state solution, may necessitate a revision in light of the evolving dynamics of the conflict

hen the global economy is reeling under the crisis, the current geopolitical crisis in the Middle East has doubly heightened the level of inflation. This crisis emerged following the unexpected offensive launched by the Hamas against Israel, which subsequently led to Israel declaring war. Since Israel is a significant trading partner for India, the effects could be escalating.

With sheer surprise, the weekend's unexpected strike by Hamas on Israel has triggered a huge armed war in the Middle East. More than 2300 people have been killed in the fighting so far, and hundreds more have been held prisoners. Israeli Prime Minister has warned of a harsh response, so the situation is unlikely to



(Chakraborty is HoD-Digital Marketing and associate professor at the School of Management, Presidency University Bangalore; views are personal)

improve very soon. In this context, India, one of Israel's oldest and greatest allies, has expressed its support for the Jewish state and has pledged to assist in the time of crisis. India's Prime Minister has timely expressed shock and condemnation of the terror incident. Inflation throughout the world is possible if the terror attack and retaliation between Israel and Palestine escalate into a full-scale war. This might be economically comparable to the beginning of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

Consequences on India's Trading

At present, Israel is India's third-largest Asian trading partner and India's 10thlargest trade partner globally. Military trade between India

and Israel is valued at approximately Rs 74,000 crore, making it the second largest supplier of military equipment to India after Russia. India's goods exports to Israel constitute 1.8% of India's overall exports, mostly driven by the sale of petroleum products. Israel imports between \$5.5 to 6 billion worth of refined petroleum products from India. During the fiscal year 2023, the aggregate value of India's exports to Israel amounted to \$8.4 billion. Hence, there exists a significant likelihood of rupee devaluation, necessitating intervention by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). In such a scenario, the currency range is expected to increase to the ?83-84 bracket. In contrast, India engages in the importation of equip-

other valuable gemstones, including both precious and semi-precious varieties, from

Israel's primary exports to India are the essential materials and machinery used in India's major industries and factories, such as precious stones and metals, electronic equipment, fertilisers, machines, engines, pumps, medical and technical equipment, organic and inorganic chemicals, salt, sulphur, stone, cement, and plastics. Currently, Israel exports items and equipment to India valued at more than \$3 billion. If bilateral commerce between the two

nations is halted due to the ter-

ror strikes and the conflict.

India might miss out on com-

modities worth Rs 25,000

ment, pearls, diamonds, and crore, resulting in a surge in the prices of several common

household items. The ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas has caused a sense of unease in financial markets worldwide, leading investors to redirect their investments towards safehaven assets. Investors maintain a cautious stance and exhibit vigilance in response to global developments, as a riskaverse mentality pervades the market. Investors may tend to exercise caution when considering high-risk ventures. Indian stock market

Last week, the Indian stock market had a notable decline, along with the performance of other global stock indexes. This decline was influenced by the unexpected multifaceted assault carried out by the ter-

rorist group Hamas, involving land, air, and sea operations, resulting in the loss of more than 1,000 lives in Israel. The aforementioned trend has resulted in an escalation of geopolitical tensions, accompanied by an increase in crude oil prices and heightened volatility in global stock mar-

Only predictions

There are only predictions with conclusions. The rightwing politics in Israel and Palestine exhibit a disinclination towards embracing compromise. This hinders the process of negotiation. India's diplomatic stance, which supports a two-state solution, may necessitate a revision in light of the evolving dynamics of the conflict. Indian citizens stuck in Israel may need to be

evacuated as quickly as possible to avert loss of lives. The Indian diaspora residing in these nations may also experience repercussions in their

In the context of the broader Israel-Palestine conflict, India has always advocated for a peaceful resolution that upholds the rights of all involved parties. The persistent war has resulted in heightened geopolitical tensions. The attainment of a peaceful resolution of the issue necessitates the collaborative endeavours of the global community. A balanced approach is of utmost importance, as it not only facilitates the cultivation of positive ties with Arab nations but also ensures a productive and meaningful interaction with them.

Belgian cops shoot suspect accused of killing two Swedes

 $\begin{array}{ccc} P_{a} & \text{suspected} & \text{Tunisian} \\ \text{extremist accused of gunning} \end{array}$ down two Swedish soccer fans in a brazen assault on a Brussels street that sent shockwaves through Belgium and Sweden.

Hours after the suspect disappeared into the night and a manhunt was launched in the Belgian capital, Interior Minister Annelies Verlinden posted on X, formerly Twitter, that "the perpetrator of the terrorist attack in Brussels has been identified and has died."

She thanked Belgium's intelligence and security services, as well as prosecutors, "for their swift and decisive action."

The man was shot in the Schaerbeek neighbourhood near where the rampage took place. The weapon used in the assault was recovered.

Amateur videos posted on social media of Monday's attack showed a man wearing an orange fluorescent vest pull up on a scooter, take out a large weapon and open fire on people getting out of a taxi.

He chased them into a building to gun them down. He was also filmed calmly loading his weapon as cars drove slow

ly by.

Questions remain unanswered over how a man who was on police files, thought to be radicalised and being sought for deportation was able to obtain a military weapon and launch such an attack.

"Last night, three people left for what was supposed to be a wonderful soccer party. Two of them lost their lives in a brutal terrorist attack," Prime Minister Alexander De Croo said at a news conference just before "Their lives were cut short in full flight, cut down by extreme brutality.

"The attack that was launched yesterday was committed with total cowardice," he said. Security was beefed up in

Brussels, particularly around places linked to the Swedish community, and at Belgium's southern border with France.

Not far from the scene of the shooting, the Belgium-Sweden soccer match in the national stadium was suspended at halftime and over 35,000 fans were kept inside as a pre-caution while the attacker was

Caroline Lochs, a fan from Antwerp, said the alarm left her "frustrated, confused, scared. I think everyone was quite scared.

At a news conference in Stockholm, Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson said that "everything indicates this is a terrorist attack against Sweden and Swedish citizens, just because they are Swedish."

He said the suspect had occasionally stayed in Sweden but was not on police files

"It's not an unusual pattern to move around," Kristersson added. "We have an openness in Europe, which is one of the important reasons why we need to keep an eye on the EU's external border because otherwise people can easily move between European countries."

Kristersson has been invited to Brussels to mourn the victims and pay tribute to the work of police at a commemoration ceremony on Wednesday, De Croo announced on X, saying: "We wish the people of Sweden strength and courage to get through these difficult times."

Sweden's foreign ministry said the two fatalities were men aged in their sixties and seventies. A third man, also in his seventies, was wounded and remains in hospital.

De Croo said the assailant was a Tunisian man living illegally in Belgium who used a military weapon in the attack. Federal prosecutors said later that the suspect was found after a witness spotted him in a

EU leaders seek harmony at virtual summit

ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR

AP ■ BRUSSELS

The European Union leaders are trying to overcome the cacophony of different opinions and voices over the Israel-Hamas war into one single political hymn in an attempt to have a bigger diplomatic impact on the global stage.

Even if their summit on Tuesday is by virtual video con-

ferencing only, the attack in Brussels that left two Swedes dead last night further underscored the need to show a unified stance in the face of common threats.

Ever since the attack of Hamas on Israel on October 7, the EU has shown it is a group of 27 different nations and even their common institutions have sent out different messages, sowing confusion about the bloc's intentions and reaping international criticism.

Many member states feel that EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen overstepped her authority by visiting Israel on Friday without a pre-agreed political message and then toed what many saw as an excessively pro-Israeli

"Foreign and security policy remains a responsibility of the member states," EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said Tuesday ahead of the the virtual summit. Von der Leyen's executive Commission maintains she is free to travel as she wants and express solidarity with a nation in need as she pleases, and will do so again if need be. Still, the unease was compounded because, for some, an EU insistence that Israel respect international law in its fight against Hamas was not expressed explicitly enough by von der Leyen.

"The position is clear: Israel has the right to defense, but this defense has to be developed in compliance with international laws and in particular humanitarian laws because war also has its laws,"

He insisted that it would be the main common message coming out of the summit.

On Tuesday, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz travelled to Israel for an impromptu visit. French President Emmanuel Macron said that he will travel to the region "as soon as I consider that we have a useful agenda and very concrete actions to drive forward."

Few other international crises divide the bloc like the Israel-Palestinian conflict.

Just last week in the wake of the Hamas attack, a commissioner at the bloc's executive branch announced that development aid meant to help the Palestinian Authority reduce poverty would be immediatey suspended. Hours later, the European Commission's position changed. It announced an urgent review of the assistance to ensure that no money is being misused. Since it is listed by the EU as a terror group, Hamas does not receive any such funds anyway.

Then on Saturday, the commission said it was tripling humanitarian aid to Gaza money meant to be used in times of crises or disasters.

Macron, a key player in Tuesday's summit, said that beyond supporting Israel's right to defend itself, he also has been able "to pass on warning messages calling for respect for humanitarian law, international law and civilian populations in Gaza and the West Bank, and for non-escalation of the conflict in Lebanon."

"We remain extremely vigilant and committed," he added. EU Council President Charles Michel said in announcing the summit that "the conflict could have major security consequences for our societies." He said that the leaders would look at ways to help civilians in Israel and Gaza caught up in the war and to work with other countries in the Middle East and Persian Gulf regions to try to prevent the conflict from spreading.



In this photo released by an official website of the office of the Iranian supreme leader. Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei speaks in a meeting in Tehran, Iran, Tuesday, Khamenei warned that Israel's continuing offensive in Gaza would cause a violent reaction across the region.

MOTHER OF ISRAELI WOMAN HELD BY HAMAS APPEALS FOR HER RELEASE

Jerusalem (AP): The mother of a young Israeli woman held by Hamas appealed for her release on Tuesday, calling the seizure of some 200 hostages by the Palestinian militant group "a crime against humani-ty." A day earlier, Hamas military wing released a video showing a dazed Mia Schem, 21, having her arm wrapped with Schem, 21, having her arm wrapped with bandages. It was the first sign of life from any of the hostages since Gaza-based gun-men smashed through border fortifica-tions on October 7, killing more than 1,400 people in Israel." I didn't know if she's dead or alive until yesterday," her mother, Keren Schem, said at a news conference. "All I knew is that she might be kidnapped. I'm begging the world to bring my baby back home. She only went to a party, to a festival party to have some fun. Now she's in Gaza." Mia Schem was seized at a desert rave just over the border from Gaza that became the site of what is believed to be the worst civilian massacre in Israeli his-

Medics in Gaza struggle to save lives

 $F^{
m or\ hours\ and\ hours,\ Moen}_{
m Abu\ Aish\ digs\ through\ the}$ rubble of demolished homes to find survivors of Israeli airstrikes, toiling in a vast and desperate search complicated by the shortage of critical sup-plies and the sheer scope of destruction across the Gaza

Even as rescue worker Abu Aish, 58, and his colleagues struggle to pry lifeless bodies from the concrete and twisted metal where residential towers once stood, the death toll keeps rising. Gaza's Health Ministry has

reported that Israel's bombardment - launched after Hamas mounted a bloody, unprecedented attack on Israel on Oct 7 - has killed more than 2,700 Palestinians, many of them women and children.

But far more Palestinians have been killed than have been officially reported, with 1,200 people, among them around 500 minors, believed to be trapped under the rubble awaiting rescue, or recovery,



health authorities said. They based their estimates on distress calls they received.

"So many times medics say they hear victims scream, but they cannot do anything about it," said Mohammed Abu Selmia, general director of Shifa Hospital, Gaza's biggest medical centre. The untold scores of victims buried beneath destroyed buildings shed light on the struggles of rescue teams in Gaza trying to save lives, while cut off from the internet and mobile networks, running out of fuel and exposed to unceasing

Israel imposed a siege on Gaza after the Hamas attack, severing the crowded strip's access to water, power and fuel. Health authorities have warned that without humanitarian aid, hospitals and emergency services will soon break down. Hospitals running on backup generators say they have enough fuel for another day or

"The destruction is so intense, there are hundreds of dead under the rubble as we speak," said Mahmoud Basal, the spokesperson for the which provides emergency service, his voice cracking as he fought back tears.

Where are the Arab countries? Where is the rest of the world? We are begging you, please, save us from this mad-

At dawn Monday, Israeli warplanes struck the head-quarters of the Civil Defense in Gaza City, killing seven para-medics as they prepared for a rescue mission, the Interior Ministry said. In widely shared videos of the aftermath, medics, shellshocked and exhausted, crouched on the back of their blood-smeared ambulance with their heads in their hands. "They targeted a centre for ambulances," one of them cried out, his voice fran-

"There are no weapons. There are no militants. There is nothing, nothing but civilians." The Israeli military didn't immediately comment on the airstrike, but has alleged in the past that Hamas militants use hospitals and rescue services as protective cover.

'Alleged attacker in French school stabbing declared allegiance to IS'



Paris: France's anti-terror prosecutor said Tuesday a suspected Islamic extremist declared allegiance to the Islamic State group before fatally stabbing a teacher in school attack last

The prosecutor, Jean-Francois Ricard, said, in a press conference, an audio recording was found by police investigators in the suspect's phone. In it, the alleged attacker declared allegiance to the Islamic State and expressed "his hatred of France."

Ricard took no questions. A teacher was fatally stabbed in the neck and three other people injured in the school attack Friday in the northern town of Arras.

New York (PTI): In a suspect-

ed hate crime, a 19-year-old

Sikh was assaulted and injured

in New York for wearing a turban while travelling in a shut-

on Sunday when the Sikh teen

was riding a shuttle bus in

Queens, a borough of New

York City, CBS News channel

According to the police, the suspect approached the vic-

tim, asking him to remove his

turban and said, "We don't

wear that in this country and

take that mask off!"The attack-

er then repeatedly punched the

teen in his face, back, and the

back of his head, causing minor

cuts. He also tried to remove the

victim's turban from his head

before getting off the bus and

leaving the scene on foot, the

report said. Police described the

suspect as "a male, 25-35 years

of age, dark complexion, slim

The attack took place early

tle bus, the police said.

reported.

Sikh teen assaulted in

NY for wearing turban

Legal challenge to dethrone Zulu king heads to court

Africa's ethnic Zulu nation has reached the courts as a faction tificate was rushed. of the royal family seeks to than a year. The North Gauteng High Court in the capital ments this week in the royal succession battle between King Misuzulu kaZwelithini and his half-brother, Prince Simakade Zulu, who believes he is entitled to be king. The Zulu nation is the largest ethnic group in South Africa with an estimated 12 million Zuluspeaking people, predominantly in the KwaZulu-Natal region.

They are acknowledged for resisting British colonialism in the early 1800s and the Zulu king is arguably the most influential traditional leader in South Africa. Prince Simakade wants the court to overturn President Cyril Ramaphosa's recognition of King Misuzulu as the rightful heir. He is disputing the traditional and legal processes followed to appoint Misuzulu, and his lawyers have told the

build, approximately 5'9" tall,

with brown eyes and black

hair," and sought the public's

Department hate crime unit is

investigating the incident, and

the police department is calling

it a hate crime assault, NBC

New York TV channel report-

ed. No arrests have been made

in the case yet, The Messenger

news portal reported. The vic-

tim, who was not named

refused further medical treat-

ment at the scene, police said in

the statement sent to The

Messenger. "Right now, the vic-

tim is very traumatised," com-

munity activist Japneet Singh

was quoted as saying by ABC7 television station. "The family is

very scared for him," Singh

added. Though he refused treat-

ment at the scene, Singh says the

victim was injured badly

enough that he won't be able to

work for the next few days.

The New York Police

help to find him.

Johannesburg (AP): The battle for the throne of South sion to recognise Misuzulu and grant him the relevant cer-

Previous attempts to stop dethrone the king after less the coronation of the king were unsuccessful last year. Misuzulu ascended to the death of his father, King Goodwill Zwelithini, who ruled for over 50 years, making him the longest reigning Zulu

He is the oldest son of King Zwelithini and Queen Mantfombi of the royal house of eSwatini. The late king had six wives and several sons. After the king died last year, Misuzulu's mother served as the regent for just a month before she died, but in her will she named her son to be the next king. Addressing the court on Tuesday, Ramaphosa's lawyer, Marumo Moerane, argued that the president's issuance of the certificate recognising Misuzulu as the heir to the throne followed consultations with the Zulu royal family, which confirmed him as

Polish election winner urges prez to move quickly to form new govt

AP WARSAW

The opposition leader who ■ won Poland's parliamentary election, Donald Tusk, appealed to the nation's presiand fast decisions" so that a new government could be formed quickly.

Three opposition parties that vowed to restore democratic standards in Poland together won over 54 per cent of the votes in the nation's weekend parliamentary election, putting them in a position to take power, according to a complete ballot count reported Tuesday. Poland's constitution now requires President Andrzej Duda to assess the new political alignment of forces and to appoint a new prime minister who is tasked with forming a government that will need parliament's approval, all within a set timeframe.

In a video statement, Tusk appealed to Duda, saying, "I would like to ask for energetic and quick decisions" and stress-



ing that "the winning democratic parties are ready to take over responsibility for governing the country any moment."

'People are waiting for the first decisions that will be the result of the elections" that took place Sunday, Tusk said.

Duda is an ally of the conservative Law and Justice party, which has been in power since 2015. His term runs until 2025.

governed the country for eight

Law and Justice, which

over 35 per cent of the votes, making it the single party with the most votes. But the party and its leader Jaroslaw Kaczynski lost their majority in parliament and appeared to have no way to hold onto

turbulent years, won slightly

Turnout was nearly 75 per cent, the highest since Poland's return to democracy, surpassing even the level of 63 per cent in 1989, a vote that triggered

Soviet-backed communist sys-

Law and Justice had been leading the country down an illiberal path, taking control of ed the country's constitution. The party politicised state institutions, including taxpayerfunded public media which it used as a propaganda tool to praise itself and vilify oppo-

The election result was a huge victory for Tusk, the head of the largest opposition group, Civic Coalition. He appeared likely to return to his past role as Polish prime minister, a job he held from 2007-14. He also served as European Council president, a top job in the EU, from 2014-19.

Tusk's success is all the more remarkable given that state media went into overdrive to portray him as a stooge of Germany and Russia. That portrayal, which appeared baseless, also won him much sympathy.

among detained climate activists

Greta Thunberg

London (AP): Greta Thunberg was detained by British police on Tuesday alongside other climate activists who gathered outside a central London hotel to disrupt a meeting of oil and gas compaamong dozens of protesters who chanted "oily money out" and attempted to block access to the InterContinental Hotel on Park Lane, which is hosting the Energy Intelligence Forum.

The conference is hosting speakers, including the chief executives of Saudi Arabia's Aramco and Norway's Equinor, as well as the UK's energy security minister.

An Associated Press photographer saw Thunberg being led away by officers and taken into a police vehicle, along with about 10 other activists.

Earlier Tuesday, London's Metropolitan Police said five people were arrested on suspicion of obstructing a highway during the protest.

Protesters attempted to block access to the conference venue by sitting on the sidewalk by the entrance. They held aloft banners and chanted "oily money out" and "cancel the conference," while some lit yellow and pink smoke flares.

Greenpeace activists abseiled down from the roof of the hotel to unfurl a banner reading "make

The protesters accuse fossil fuel companies of deliberately

slowing the global energy transition to renewables in order to make more profit. "The world is drowning in

fossil fuels. Our hopes and dreams and lives are being washed away by a flood of greenwashing and lies," Thunberg told reporters before she was detained. "It has been clear for decades that the fossil fuel industries were well aware of the consequences of their business models, and yet they have done nothing." "We cannot let this continue. The elite of the oil and money conference, they have no intention of transition, she added.

"We have no other option but to put our bodies outside this conference and to physically disrupt. And we have to do that every time, we have to continue showing them that they are not going to get away with this."

battle fake reviews **Amazon to**

cate it. Much of the problem

AP ■ NEW YORK

Come of the most used plat-Sforms for travel and online shopping said Tuesday they're going to team up to battle fake reviews. Amazon, reviews site Glassdoor and Trustpilot as well as travel companies Expedia Group, Booking.com and Tripadvisor said in an announcement they're launching a coalition that aims to protect access to "trustworthy consumer reviews" world-

The companies said the members of the group, which will be called Coalition for Trusted Reviews, will look for best practices for hosting online reviews and share methods on how to detect fake

That will include developing standards for what constitutes a fake review and sharing information about

how bad actors operate. Phony reviews have long plagued online marketplaces despite their efforts to eradi-

is fueled by brokers who solicit fake customer reviews through social media platforms, encrypted messaging apps and other channels in exchange for money, free items or other benefits. Brokers can solicit positive reviews to boost sales for businesses or sellers. They can also also post negative reviews for competitors in order to tank their sales.

Last month, Amazon said two review brokers in China were sentenced to two-and-ahalf years in prison and three vears of probation after using messaging apps to advertise and sell fake reviews to Amazon selling accounts.

The company has filed a flurry of other lawsuits in the past year against operators that it says were doing similar things. Last year, it also sued the administrators of more than 10,000 Facebook groups that it alleged were coordinating bogus reviews in exchange for money or free products.

Facebook groups trading reviews for Google and Trustpilot, which allows users to leave feedback for businesses, were also discovered earlier this year by the British consumer watchdog group Federal regulators have

also been aiming to crack down on bogus reviews aiming to deceive consumers. In June, the Federal Trade Commission proposed a new rule that, among other things, would prohibit businesses from selling or obtaining fake reviews, suppressing honest reviews and selling fake social engagement. Businesses would also be pro-

hibited from creating or controlling a website that claims to provide independent opinions about its products and employing other practices like 'review hijacking," which makes reviews for one product appear like they were written for different ones. If the proposal is adopted, violators can be face penalties.

US updates policies to stop China from getting advanced computer chips

Washington (AP): The US Commerce Department on Tuesday updated and broadened its export controls to stop China from acquiring advanced computer chips and the equipment to manufacture them.

The revisions come rough ly a year after the export controls were first launched to counter the use of the chips for military applications that include the development of hypersonic missiles and artificial intelligence.

These export controls are intended to protect technologies that have clear national security or human rights implications," Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo said on a call with reporters. "The vast majority of semiconductors will remain unrestricted. But

rity or human rights threats, we will act decisively and in concert with our allies." The updates stemmed from consulting with industry and conducting technological analyses. There will now be a gray

when we identify national secu-

zone that will be monitored for chips that could still be used for military aims even if they might not meet the thresholds for trade limitations. Chip exports can also be restricted to companies headquartered in Macao or anywhere under a US arms embargo, preventing countries of concern from circumventing the controls and providing chips to China.

The updates also introduce new requirements that make it more difficult for China to manufacture advanced chips

 $R^{ussian\ President\ Vladimir}_{Putin\ arrived\ in\ Beijing\ on}$ Tuesday for a visit that underscores China's support for Moscow during its war in Ukraine as well as Russian backing for China's bid to expand its economic and diplomatic influence abroad.

The two countries have forged an informal alliance against the United States and other democratic nations that is now complicated by the Israel-Hamas war. China has sought to balance its ties with Israel against its relations with Iran and Syria, two countries that are strongly backed by Russia and with which China has forged ties for economic reasons as well as to challenge Washington's influence in the Middle East.

Putin's plane was met by an honour guard as the Russian leader began his visit that is also a show of support for Chinese leader Xi Jinping's signature 'Belt and Road' initiative to build infrastructure and expand China's overseas praised the massive but loosey linked BRI projects.

"Yes, we see that some people consider it an attempt by the People's Republic of China to put someone under its thumb, but we see otherwise, we just see desire for cooperation," he told state broadcaster CCTV, according to a transcript released by the Kremlin on Monday. Putin will be among the highest profile guests at a gathering marking the 10th anniversary of Xi's announcement of the BRI project, which has laden countries such as Zambia and Sri Lanka with heavy debt from contracts with Chinese companies to build roads, airports and other public works they could not otherwise afford. U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has praised the Chinese policy as bringing development to neglected

Asked by reporters Friday about his visit, Putin said it would encompass talks on Belt and Road-related projects, which he said Moscow wants to link with efforts by an

Soviet Union nations mostly located in Central Asia to "achieve common development goals."

He also downplayed the impact of China's economic influence in a region that Russia has long considered its backyard and where it has worked to maintain political and military clout. "We don't have any contradictions here, on the contrary, there is a certain synergy," Putin said.

Putin said he and Xi

would also discuss growing economic ties between Moscow and Beijing in energy, high-tech and financial industries. China has also grown in importance as an export destination for Russia. Alexander Gabuev, direc-

tor of the Carnegie Russia Eurasia Centre, said that from China's view, "Russia is a safe neighbour that is friendly, that is a source of cheap raw materials, that's a support for Chinese initiatives on the global stage and that's also a source of military technologies, some of those that China

Putin begins China visit 'Russia sending more forces to eastern Ukraine city after assault slows'

 $R^{ussia\ is\ throwing\ more}_{units\ into\ its\ effort\ to\ take}$ a key eastern Ukraine city, Western analysts say, after apparent setbacks that have slowed its dayslong onslaught.

The attempt to storm Avdiivka, a heavily defended city that stands in the way of Moscow's ambition of securing control of the entire Donetsk region, is Moscow's most significant offensive operation in Ukraine since the start of the year, the UK defence ministry said Tuesday.

The Kremlin's push to claim Avdiivka comes after months of fending off Ukraine's counteroffensive, which Kyiv launched some 16 months after Russia's full-scale invasion. Both sides are looking for battlefield advantages ahead of winter. They are also looking to secure future weapons supplies for what is shaping up as a protracted war of attrition.

The Kremlin's forces deployed to Avdiivka are like-



18, 2023. Russia is throwing more units into its effort to take this key eastern Ukraine city, Western analysts say, after apparent setbacks that have slowed its dayslong

ly making slow progress and sustaining high casualties in what is proving a costly effort, the UK defence ministry said on X, the social media platform formerly known as Twitter.

The pace of Russia's attack on the heavily fortified target has reportedly slowed in recent days since its launch last week, a Washington-based think tank said. Citing the Ukrainian General Staff, the Institute for the Study of War said Ukrainian forces pushed back down from 30 reported assaults the previous day. Kyiv officials said Russia mounted up to 60 attacks per day in the middle of last week

The Ukrainian defence ministry said Tuesday that Russia is nevertheless still attempting to encircle the city, with 10 attacks over the previous 24 hours. The UK defence ministry said Russia's effort to overrun Avdiivka "looks increasingly unlikely in the short term".

More widely, Russian forces launched six Shahed drones and one Kh-59 cruise missile over southern regions of Ukraine late Monday, Kyiv authorities said.

The Ukraine Air Force of Ukraine claimed to have intercepted all the targets, with no casualties or destruction reported. Ukraine struck two helicopter airfields near the Russia-controlled Luhansk and Berdyansk regions, the Air Force claimed. It was not immediately possible to verify the two sides' battlefield claims.

Ukraine uses **ATACMS** missiles against Russian forces for the first time

Washington (AP): A US official says the longer-range ballistic missiles long sought by Ukraine have been delivered quietly by the US and are being used on the battlefield against Russia nearly a month after President Los Bilden promised them to his Joe Biden promised them to his Ukrainian counterpart.

The official was not authorised to publicly discuss the matter before an official announcement and spoke Tuesday on the condition of anonymity. Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and other Ukrainian leaders have been urgently pressing the US to provide the Army Tactical Missile System, known as ATACMS. Their delivery to the war front was shrouded in secrecy, with the expectation that the first public acknowledgement would come when the missiles were used on the

Pakistan court adjourns Imran khan, Qureshi's indictment till October 23

A special court in Pakistan on Tuesday adjourned till October 23 the indictment of former prime minister Imran Khan and his close aide Shah Mahmood Qureshi in the cipher case for allegedly violating the secret laws of the country. The case pertains to a secret diplomatic document that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Khan used to criticise his opponents for allegedly orchestrating his ouster from power in April last

The document reportedly went missing from his possession. Khan's party alleges that the document contained a threat from the US to oust Khan from office.

The special court set up by the government held the incamera hearing at Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail after the Islamabad High Court on Monday reject-

CIPHER CASE

ed a plea by Khan against holding his trial in jail. Judge Abual Hasanat

Zulqernain adjourned hearing till October 23 with the remarks that Khan and former foreign minister Qureshi would be indicted on that day.
Barrister Salman Safdar

and Khalid Yousuf Chaudhry were present as 71-year-old Khan's counsels, the Dawn newspaper reported. Qureshi's wife and daughter also reached the court. However, it was not confirmed whether they were allowed to attend the hearing, it said. Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) special prosecutor Shah Khawar, Khan, Qureshi and their legal teams were all present during the

Khawar told journalists that the indictment proceedings will take place next



Monday (October 23), Geo News reported. "On October 23, the

charges will be framed and the indictment will be filed. After the indictment, the regular trial of the cipher case will

As per the court's orders of October 9, both PTI leaders were expected to be indicted in

the case on Tuesday.

However, the indictment could not take place on Tuesday with the court only distributing the copies of the challan (charge sheet) among

Speaking to the media after the hearing, lawyer Sher Afzal Marwat said that Khan and Qureshi will now be indicted during the next hearing. Khan was ousted through

vote of no-confidence in April 2022. He was incarcerated on August 5 this year, after an Islamabad court sentenced him to three years in prison in the Toshakhana case. The PTI chief was lodged in the Attock District Jail to serve his prison

Later, his sentence was suspended by the Islamabad High Court, but then he was arrested in the cipher case.

Pak Army backs govt's decision to deport illegal foreigners

Islamabad (PTI): Pakistan's powerful army on Tuesday extended its full support to the government's decision to repatriate and deport all illegal foreigners, including Afghan refugees, from November 1 onwards. The caretaker government has set October 31 as the deadline for thousands of undocumented immigrants, including around 1.7 million Afghan refugees, to leave the country or risk imprisonment, deportation and forcible expulsion from November 1 as it intensified its crackdown against those involved in militancy and smuggling. Pakistan's decision has drawn widespread criticism, with organisations such as the UNHC for Refugees and Amnesty International calling on the government to rethink its plans. The Taliban-led govern-ment in Afghanistan has also expressed its reservations over the move. At the 260th Corps Commanders' Conference held at General Headquarters in Rawalpindi, top brass of the Pakistan Army resolved to fully support the federal governments decision to repatriate and deport

'40 places of worship of Ahmadis destroyed in 2023 in Pakistan'

At least 40 places of worship of the Ahmadi minority community have either been attacked by radical Islamists or partially demolished by police in different parts of Pakistan during the first 10 months of this year, a body representing the persecuted group said on Tuesday. Ahmadis in Pakistan are usually referred to as Qadianis, which is considered a derogatory term for them. Pakistan's Parliament in 1974 declared the Ahmadi community as non-Muslims. A decade later, they were banned from calling themselves Muslims. They are banned from preaching and from travelling to Saudi Arabia for pilgrimage. "At least 40 incidents of desecration of our worship places have taken place this year between January and October in various parts of Pakistan. Of them, 11 occurred

in Sindh and the remaining in Punjab province," Amir Mahmood, an official of the Punjab chapter of Jamaat-e-Ahmadiyya Pakistan, told PTI. In Sindh, some Ahmadi worship places came under attack by religious extremists who committed the offence with impunity as police remained silent spectators, he



said. While in most cases, radical Islamist party Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) attacked the Ahmadi worship places, in some incidents, police demolished minarets, arches and removed sacred writings from the prayer halls under the pressure of religious extremists, Mahmood said.

The TLP argues that Ahmadi worship places are similar to that of Muslim mosques because they have minarets. Mahmood said not a single case against the religious extremists has been registered so far for attacking and damaging the Ahmadi worship places. He also blamed Punjab's caretaker government for its complete failure to stop desecration of Ahmadi worship places in the province.

During its tenure, around 30 such incidents took place in the province, he said.

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The Jamaat-e-Ahmadiyya

Pakistan said the situation is becoming worse day-by-day for the already marginalised

community.

"Ahmadis are facing persecution at the hands of the evil elements. The acts of desecration of the places of worship in various areas of Pakistan continues unabated. It is a new norm and the authorities are

doing nothing," it said. Earlier, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) said the destruction of part of Ahmadiyya sites of worship is a brazen violation of the recent Lahore High Court judgment regarding the protection of Ahmadiyya sites of

"It demonstrates yet again that the community is being hemmed in systematically and deliberately by law enforcement and the religious far right alike. According to the 2014 Supreme Court judgment, the police are supposed to protect the community's right to practice its faith. The government must hold the perpetrators accountable, repair the damage and ensure that this does not recur again," the HRCP had said.

Although the number of Ahmadis in Pakistan is around a million, unofficial figures put their population much

Child killed, 9 injured in hand grenade explosion Karachi (PTI): A child was

killed and eight others injured on Tuesday when a hand grenade exploded in Pakistan's restive Balochistan province.

According to police, a group of children belonging to a religious seminary were playing with the hand grenade when it exploded in the Zarchain area of Wadh city. The injured were immedi-

ately transported to a local hospital. Police and lawenforcement agencies cordoned off the area and launched detailed investigation. "This is not the first time

such an incident has taken place. Militants and separatists leave behind or drop such dangerous explosives and when children find them they end up being killed or injured," Wadh DSP Abdul Manaf said.

He said hand grenades were left behind by the militants and separatists operating in the province and in some cases even rocket launchers had gone off when found and children tried to play with

Indian former chief priest fails in appeal to cut jail term

PTI ■ SINGAPORE

former Indian chief priest A tormer inclination enter place at one of Singapore's oldest Hindu temples has failed in his bid for a lighter jail term for pawning the temple's gold jewellery for more than SGD 2.3 Kandasamy Senapathi, 39,

was sentenced to six years in jail by a district judge in May after he pleaded guilty to two charges of criminal breach of trust (CBT) and two charges of removing the benefits of his criminal activities from jurisdiction. Six similar charges were taken into consideration during his sentencing.

The Indian national was employed by the Hindu Endowments Board as a priest at the Sri Mariamman Temple in the central business district here from December 2013 until he resigned on March 30, 2020.

He would pawn a piece of jewellery that adorned statues of deities at the temple for cash and then return on another day to redeem the first piece of jewellery using a second piece of jewellery, according to The Straits Times newspaper.

On Tuesday, his lawyer,



Divanan Narkunan, argued before the High Court that the sentence imposed was manifestly excessive, the report said.

Divanan argued that the district judge had erred by focusing on the misappropriated sum stated in the charges without considering that the money obtained by Senapathi was merely a fraction of the total pawn proceeds.

The lawyer argued that although Senapathi received a total of SGD 2.3 million (USD 1.6 million), he had obtained only SGD 141,054.90 as benefits, as most of the pawn proceeds were used to redeem the jewellery and pay off the interest owed to the pawnshops.

Disagreeing with the lawyer, Justice Vincent Hoong pointed out that when Senapathi pawned the jewellery pieces, he received the proceeds, as reflected in the charges. The amount represented the value of the items misappropriated.

'Ĥow the appellant chose to use the pawn proceeds subsequently is irrelevant to determining the sum misappropri-ated in each of the CBT charges," the report quoted the

judge as saying.

Noting that sums owed to the pawn shops resulted from Senapathi's unlawful acts, the judge said, "This is simply a disingenuous argument."

Between 2016 and 2020, Senapathi pawned 66 distinct pieces of jewellery at various pawn shops on 172 occasions. He was caught when the COVID-19 pandemic struck in 2020, throwing the regular audit timing off and revealing the missing jewellery.

All the pieces of jewellery he pawned have since been returned to the temple. However, the sum of SGD 141,054.90, which was remitted, still needs to be recovered.

Afghan mob attacks Pak Customs, police and paramilitary rangers

Karachi (PTI): A mob of Afghans residing in Pakistan's biggest city attacked a team of Customs accompanied by police and paramilitary rangers after they carried out a raid to seize smuggled goods from a market in a main commercial area of the city.

all illegal foreigners from

November 1 onwards, the mili-

tary said in a statement.

A video, which has gone viral, shows dozens of Afghans armed with sticks running after the Customs officials and vehicles of the Police and Rangers on Tariq Road as they tried to carry out a raid during nighttime on Monday.

Tariq Road is one of the busiest commercial centres of Karachi and has numerous fabric and clothing shops in shopping malls and markets which are generally owned by Afghans, who have now settled down in the city after fleeing from their country. A source in the Customs vigi-

lance confirmed the incident and said the team had gone with police and rangers back up after confirmed intelligence reports that smuggled cloth and fabrics worth millions of rupees were being sold by Afghan shop owners on Tariq Road.

Many of the Afghan refugees in Pakistan have established successful businesses in Karachi and other parts of the country and mostly focus on clothes, fabrics, carpets, curtains, and rug businesses. They own or rent shops in nearly all the major commercial centres and malls of Karachi. A police official said the raid had nothing to do with the government announcement that Afghans living illegally in Pakistan had to return home by November 1 or would be sent back to Afghanistan forcibly after the It is to inform to the public at large that Mr. Prakash S/o Late Mr. Jugendra Singh Recorded owner of the Residential House of a Prakash S/o Late Mr. Jugendra Singh is Recorded owner of the Residential House of area measuring (Undivided 3/4 Share), i.e., 55.1775 Sq. Mfrs., out of total area 88 Sq. 74ss., i.e., 73.57 Sq. Mfrs., out of Khasra No. 139/3, situated al Ward No. 3, in the area of Village Dundahred Pargana Loni, Tehsli and District, Chaziabad vide Sale Deed dated 19.07.2023-Vide Doc. No. 7467. SRO-IV Ghaziabad, And same to be finance & mortgage by Ummeed Housing Finance Pvt. Ltd., That the Surviving Member Certificate (SNO-Ltd., That the Surviving Member Certificate (SNO-Ltd., That it is Surviving Member Certificate (SNO-Ltd.) is surviving Member Certificate (SNO-Ltd.) in the Surviving Member Certificate (SNO-Ltd.) is surviving Member Certificate (SNO-Ltd.) in the Surviving Member Certificate (SNO-Ltd.) is surviving Member Certificate (SNO-Ltd.) in the Survivin

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Owner of DDA LIG FLAT NO.57-C, FIRST FLOOR, POCKET-K, SHEIKH SARAI PH-IL) DELHI110017, have applied for certified copies & conversion from leasehold to freehold in DDA. The original documents i.e. Demand-cumallotment Letter, possession Letter, Noc For Water And Electricity Connection, & Other Documents of the above said flat has been lost, An F.I.R./NCR/IR NO.1026313/2023 dated 16/10/2023 to this effect has been lodged in PS. Crime Branch, Delhi. Any person (s) claiming any right, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents, may write/contact with above named person at above Address/Phone No. 9818023230 within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice-the person daiming any right, interest, objection with respect to this property.can personally inform or write to Deputy Director (LAB-Housing)-LIG, Delhi Development Authority, Vikas Sadan, New Delhi-110023.

ncumbrances, lien etc. Lucem Legal LLF -93B, Second Floor, Opp. SBI Bank, Sector 2 Noida, UP-201301, Contact # 0120-426937 Qty For Verka Head Office, Sector- 34 A, Chandigarh Freezer On Wheel Annual 100-110 Ltr. 200 Ltr. 15 Units 85 Units

For complete details regarding above tender (NIT), please www.verka.coop & e Tendering portal i.e. eproc.punjab.gov.in. 2. Corrigendum, if any, will be uploaded on website only

KAMA Holding

Incharge (Purchase

Baidu unveils Ernie 4.0 Al model, claims that it rivals GPT-4

AP ■ HONG KONG

hinese search engine and artificial Cintelligence firm Baidu on Tuesday unveiled a new version of its artificial intelligence model, Ernie 4.0, claiming that it rivals models such as GPT-4 in the U.S. Baidu's CEO Robin Li demonstrated Ernie 4.0 at the company's annual Baidu World conference in Beijing. He said the model has achieved comprehension, reasoning, memory and generation, which uses algorithms to produce and create new content.

Li said that Ernie 4.0 was able to understand complex questions and instructions and apply reasoning and logic to generate answers to questions. "It is not inferior in any aspect to GPT-4," Li said, stating that the latest model was "significantly improved" compared to its original Ernie

In a live demonstration, Li prompted Ernie 4.0 to generate advertising materials including advertising posters and a marketing video. He also asked Ernie 4.0 to come up with a martial arts novel complete with characters with various personalities. Baidu is a frontrunner among a slew of Chinese companies racing to come up with artificial intelligence models, after OpenAI's ChatGPT took the world by storm last year. Beijing sees artificial intelligence as a key industry to rival the United States and aims to become a global leader Beijing-based Baidu started off as a

search engine firm and over the past decade has invested heavily in artificial intelligence technology such as autonomous driving and more recently, generative AI to stay competitive.

The company's Hong Kong-listed



shares fell 1.7 per cent Tuesday following the announcement. Baidu introduced its Ernie Bot in March. In August, it made the model available to the public. Ernie 4.0 is not yet available to the general public but

some people have been invited to try it. Li said Baidu plans to incorporate artificial intelligence technology into its search engine, maps and cloud drive services, and its business intelligence offerings for enter-prise customers. He did not give a timetable for that.

The technology can transform how certain products work. Baidu's search engine might generate a customized answer to a query instead of just providing a list of results and links.

China has recently sought to regulate the generative AI industry, requiring companies to carry out security reviews and obtain approvals before publicly launching their products. Companies that provide such AI services must also comply with government requests for technology and data. The US does not have such

KAMA HOLDINGS LIMITED

Place : Gurugram

CIN: L92199DL2000PLC104779 Registered Office: The Galleria, DLF Mayur Vihar, Unit No. 236 & 237. 2nd Floor, Mayur Place, Noida Link Road, Mayur Vihar Phase I Extn Delhi – 110091; Corporate Office: Block C, Sector 45, Gurgaon-122003 Tel. No : (+91-11) 49482870 • Fax : (+91-11) 49482900

Email: info@kamaholdings.com; Web.: www.kamaholdings.com

Notice is hereby given that Share Certificates pertaining to shares of the Company detailed below have been reported lost and request(s) for issue of duplicate Certificates in lieu thereof have been received by the Company.

SI. No.	Folio No.	Name of the Share Holder / Legal Heir (Claimant)	Cert-No.	Dist-No.	Lost Shares
1	SPP0003916	NANDESH SETHI RAVI PARKASH SETHI	4389	298879-915	37
2	SPP0001699	RAVI SETHI	1749	65274-310	37
3	SPP0005091	ATUL JAYANT SHAH	6318	446431-61	31
any person having any claim /objection in respect of the above requests should lodge such					

claim /objection with the company at its Corporate Office within 15 days of the publication of this notice, failing which the company will consider to give effect to the above requests Public is hereby cautioned against dealing with the aforesaid share certificates

for KAMA HOLDINGS LIMITED

EKTA MAHESHWARI WHOLE TIME DIRECTOR,CFO & COMPANY SECRETARY

Markets rebound after 3 days of fall

Equity benchmark indices bounced back on Tuesday after three days of fall amid recovery in global markets and buying in HDFC Bank post its quarterly earnings. The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed

261.16 points or 0.39 per cent to settle at 66,428.09. During the day, it jumped 392.89 points or 0.59 per cent to 66,559.82

The Nifty gained 79.75 points or 0.40 per cent to 19,811.50.

Among the Sensex firms, Power Grid, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Tech Mahindra, Bajaj Finserv, ITC, Bharti Airtel, Nestle, NTPC, Bajaj Finance, Reliance Industries, Infosys and HDFC Bank

were the major gainers. HDFC Bank ended nearly 1 per cent up after the company reported a consoli-dated net profit of Rs 16,811 crore for the September quarter, its maiden quarterly earnings announcement after merging parent HDFC with itself. Tata Motors, Larsen & Toubro, IndusInd

Bank, Tata Consultancy Services, JSW

Steel and Mahindra & Mahindra were among the laggards. "The market's gap-up opening today, offsetting the losses of the past three days, indicates an optimism over the ongoing Q2 earnings despite concerns about the Middle

East and subdued start by the IT sector. The

GAINERS Change (+261.16 MIPS NIPS TOP LOSERS Tata Motors TOP GAINERS NSE Nifty TOP LOSERS

upward trend was broad-based with particular upside in banking, oil & gas and FMCG

"However, some profit-taking was evident as the day concluded. FIIs continue to withdraw funds due to rise in the US bond yields. An insight about the future direction of

interest rates is expected from the Fed chair's upcoming speech on October 19th. While the market will also closely monitor the developments in the Israel-Hamas conflict, with a consensus emerging that the geopolitical risk will not elevate," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services. In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge jumped 0.70 per cent and midcap index climbed 0.39 per cent. Among the indices, utilities rallied 1.21 per cent, power jumped 0.98 per cent, energy (0.94 per cent), oil & gas

Capital Goods and realty were the lag-

(0.80 per cent), financial services (0.66

per cent) and telecommunication (0.64

gards.
In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong ended in the

positive territory. European markets were trading in the green. The US markets had ended with gains on Monday.

Ğlobal oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.48 per cent to USD 90.08 a

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 593.66 crore on Monday, according to exchange data. The BSE benchmark had declined 115.81

points or 0.17 per cent to settle at 66,166.93 on Monday. The Nifty slipped 19.30 points or 0.10 per cent to 19,731.75.

Rupee rises 3 paise to close at 83.24 against \$

Rupee consolidated in a narrow range and settled for the day higher by 3 paise at 83.24 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday amid a positive trend in domestic equities.

Forex traders said the rupee is trading with a slight positive bias on positive domestic markets. However, a strong US dollar and concerns over the ongoing conflict in the Middle East capped

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.24 against the US dollar and moved in a range of 83.22 to 83.26 in the day trade.

The rupee finally settled 3 paise higher at 83.24 (provisional) against the previous close.

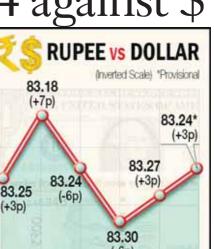
On Monday, the rupee settled at 83.27 against the US dollar. "We expect the rupee to trade with a slight pos-

itive bias on the rise in risk appetite in global markets and decline in crude oil prices. Diplomatic efforts to contain the Middle East conflict may also support the risk assets," said Anuj Choudhary Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas.

However, elevated US dollar and any further escalation on geopolitical tensions between Hamas and Israel may cap sharp gains. "Selling pressure from FIIs and RBI's maturing

of dollar/rupee swap transactions may pressurise the rupee at higher levels. Traders may take cues from retail sales and industrial production data from the US. USD-INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of Rs 82.90 to Rs 83.70," Choudhary added

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the



greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, rose 0.09 per cent to 106.33. Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark,

advanced 0.41 per cent to USD 90.02 per bar-

On the domestic equity market front, the BSE Sensex closed 261.16 points or 0.39 per cent higher at 66,428.09. The broader NSE Nifty advanced 79.75 points or 0.4 per cent to Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were net

sellers in the capital markets on Monday as they sold shares worth Rs 593.66 crore, according to exchange data.

RBI imposes penalty on ICICI Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank for violation of norms

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank on Tuesday said it has imposed a penalty or Rs 12.19 crore on ICICI Bank and Rs 3.95 crore on Kotak Mahindra Bank for noncompliance of certain regulato-The penalty on private sector lender ICICI Bank has been

imposed for contravention of norms related to 'Loans and Advances-Statutory and Other restrictions' and 'Frauds classification and reporting by commercial banks and select Fls'. In another statement, the RBI said the penalty on Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited has been imposed for contravention of directions related to "Managing Risks and Code of Conduct in Outsourcing of Financial Services by banks", "Recovery Agents engaged by Banks", "Customer Service in Banks", and "Loans and Advances - Statutory and Other

Restrictions". In both cases, the RBI said the penalties are based on the deficiencies in regulatory compliance and is not intended to pronounce upon the validity of any transaction or agreement entered into by the banks with their customers.



Vedanta explores tieup with Japanese tech firms as it plans to set up chip plant

Indian conglomerate Vedanta Group on Tuesday said it is exploring collaborations with Japanese technology companies as it continues with its plan to set up a semiconductor fab in

Vedanta's semiconductor and display business Global Managing Director Akarsh K Hebbar during Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit roadshow in Japan had said that it is a USD 80-billion opportunity for cominvest in the electronics manu-

facturing hub in Gujarat. "He (Hebbar) outlined Vedanta's ambitious plans to establish semiconductor and display fabs in Dholera SIR, Gujarat, and invited Japanese companies to partner with Vedanta in helping build the country's first electronics manufacturing hub in the

state," the statement said. Hebbar also pointed out that the hub has the potential to attract hundreds of SMEs and create more than one lakh jobs.

"There is a USD 80-billion opportunity for companies willing to come and invest in this electronics manufacturing hub, and Vedanta will be the anchor

at Rs 74,000 per kg

GOLD REMAINS FLAT; SILVER DIVES ₹300

New Delhi: Gold remained flat at Rs 60,150 per 10 grams in the national

capital on Tuesday, according to HDFC Securities. However, silver declined

Rs 300 to Rs 73,700 per kilogram. In the previous trade, silver had settled

New Delhi: The government will sell up to 7 per cent stake in Housing &

Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) at a floor price of Rs 79 per

share. The Offer For Sale (OFS) for over 14.01 crore shares or 7 per cent

New Delhi: Malabar Gold and Diamonds, the world's leading gold jewellery retailer, has taken the global showroom count to 333 with the simultaneous

launch of four showrooms located at Rajouri Garden in Delhi, Ambala in

Harvana, Bhavnagar in Guiarat and Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh, Our

design versatility which perfectly meets the evolving customer sensibilities

and commitment to offer quality, transparency and top-class customer

services make us the favourite jeweller among jewellery buyers in India and

GOVT TO SELL UP TO 7 PER CENT STAKE IN HUDCO

stake will open for institutional investors on Wednesday

MALABAR SHOWROOM COUNT REACHES 333

beyond, said MP Ahammed, Chairman, Malabar Group.

for Japanese companies interested in investing in India," Hebbar

Vedanta group firm AvanStrate Inc is headquartered in Japan. Late last year, the company signed agreements with 30 Japanese technology companies to foster the development of India's semiconductor and glass display manufacturing ecosys-

Japan is also the second Quad partner after the United States to sign an agreement with India for the joint development of the maintain the resilience of its

global supply chain. With around 100 semiconductor manufacturing plants, Japan is among the top five countries to have a semiconductor ecosys-

Earlier, Vedanta had formed a joint venture with Taiwanese electronics manufacturing giant Foxconn which announced plans to invest USD 19.5 billion in setting up a semiconductor wafer fabrication plant.

Both the firms have announced that they will invest in setting up electronic chip plants in India separately, but they are yet to announce the name of their technology partner.

GPT Healthcare refiles IPO papers with Sebi replacements, interventional cardiology,

GPT Healthcare, which operates and manages mid-sized multispecialty hospitals under the ILS Hospitals brand, has refiled draft papers with capital market reg-ulator Sebi to raise funds through an Initial

The IPO comprises a fresh issue of equity shares aggregating to Rs 40 crore, and an offer for sale of up to 2.6 crore equity shares by BanyanTree Growth Capital II, LLC, a Mauritius-based structured private equity, according to the draft red herring prospec-

Public Offering (IPO).

tus filed on Monday.
Proceeds from the fresh issue will be used for payment of debt and general corporate

Kolkata-based GPT Healthcare had in January 2021 filed preliminary papers with Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) to raise Rs 450-500 crore through the



The company had received the capital markets regulator's nod to float the issue but it didn't go ahead with the launch.

GPT Healthcare, which started with an eight-bed hospital in Kolkata in 2000, operates four full service multispecialty hospitals, with a total capacity of 561 beds, and attends to over 35 specialties and super specialties such as internal medicine, diabetology, gastroenterology, orthopaedics and joint

neurology, neurology, neurosurgery and paediatrics, as per the DRHP.

The company competes with listed industry peers, including Global Health Ltd, Krishna Institute of Medical Sciences Ltd, Jupiter Life Line Hospitals Ltd, Yatharth Hospital & Trauma Care Services Ltd, Kovai Medical Center & Hospital Limited and Shalby Ltd. Its total income increased 7.11 per cent to

Rs 366.73 crore in FY23 from Rs 342.40 crore in FY22. The company's net profit declined to Rs 39.01 crore for FY23 from Rs 41.66 crore a year ago.

The company had reported a net profit of Rs 9.98 crore in the June quarter while the total income was at Rs 97.63 crore.

JM Financial is the sole book-running lead manager to the issue. The equity shares are proposed to be listed on the BSE and the NSE.

India to spend nearly ₹143 lakh crore on infrastructure between FY24 and FY30: Crisil

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $I^{
m ndia}$ will spend nearly Rs 143 lakh crore on infrastructure between fiscals 2024 and 2030, more than twice the Rs 67 lakh crore spent in the past seven financial years starting 2017, rating agency Crisil said on Tuesday

Of the total, Rs 36.6 lakh crore will be green investments, marking a five times rise compared fiscals 2017-2023, it added.

"India's infrastructure spending will double to Rs 143 lakh crore between fiscals 2024 and 2030, compared with 2017-2023, Crisil said in its Infrastructure Yearbook 2023.

Crisil Ltd managing director and CEO Amish Mehta said the agency expects India's gross domestic product to grow at an average 6.7 per cent through fiscal 2031 to be the fastestexpanding large economy.

"Per capita income is seen rising from USD 2,500 now to USD 4,500 by fiscal 2031, creating a middle-income country," he said, adding that this growth will be underpinned by massive all-round infrastructure development, with sharp focus on integrating sustainability."

While releasing 'CRISIL Infrastructure Yearbook 2023', which includes a unique national index CRISIL InfraInvex, Mehta said policy interventions and a conducive investment climate have aided the uptrend in the CRISIL InfraInvex scores across sectors. "Four of these - roads and

renewable energy and ports have an overall score of 7-plus (out of 10), which underscores the pace of reforms and developments of the past few years," he added. The rating agency noted that the

highways, power transmission,

next phase of infrastructure development will be marked by growth in the average ticket size of projects and a significant number of mega-scale projects. icy and regulatory interventions and focus on timely execution build an attractive case for various stakeholders to accelerate investments across infrastructure sectors, Crisil

The rating agency predicted that prominent sectors such as roads and power are expected to remain major contributors, while relatively nascent ones such as EVs, solar, wind, and

hydrogen will pick up pace. The share of EVs in India's overall automobile sales is likely to reach 30 per cent by 2030. Two-wheeler EV sales are expected to outpace other segments up to 2028, while demand for EV buses will be driven by state transport under-

takings," it said. According to Crisil, favourable total cost of ownership and total cost of acquisition, as well as model availability for twoand three-wheelers will support EV offtake in coming years. It said the share of renewable

energy in total capacity is estimated to grow 4x between fiscals 2023 and 2030.

CCI approves merger of IDFC Ltd with IDFC FIRST Bank

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $F_{\text{Commission of India (CCI) on}}^{\text{air trade regulator Competition}}$ Tuesday approved the merger of IDFC Ltd with IDFC FIRST Bank

IDFC FIRST Bank is in the business of providing banking services, while its parent IDFC Ltd (IDFCL) is an RBI-registered non-banking financial company. The deal is subject to conditions, including the merger of IDFC Financial Holding into IDFC Ltd in the first step and subsequently, the amalgamation of IDFCL with IDFC FIRST Bank.

Further, CCI also approved the cancellation of the existing shares held by IDFC Financial Holding in IDFC FIRST Bank and then the issue of new shares of the bank to IDFCI's shareholders

IDFC Financial Holding is a non-operative financial holding company registered with the Reserve Bank of India The Competition Commission said it has approved the deal under the green channel route.

"There are no horizontal overlaps or vertical/complementary linkages between the business activities of the parties in the

"Given the absence of any horizontal overlaps or vertical or complementary linkages between the parties, the transaction is being notified under the green channel route," CCI said. Under the green channel route, a trans-

action which does not raise any risk of an appreciable adverse effect on competition is deemed to be approved on being intimated to the CCI.

In July, IDFC FIRST Bank announced the merger of its parent IDFC Ltd with itself in an all-stock transaction. Also, boards of IDFC FIRST Bank and

IDFC have approved the reverse merger and said the composite scheme of amalgamation includes the merger of IDFC and IDFC Financial Holding Company with IDFC First Bank.

Bajaj Finance Q2 profit up 28 per cent at ₹3,551 crore

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Dajai Finance Ltd (BFL) on Tuesday reporte \mathbf{D} a 28 per cent rise in its consolidated net profit to Rs 3,551 crore for the second quarter ended September 30.

The non-banking finance company had posted a net profit of Rs 2,781 crore in the July-September quarter a year ago. Its total consolidated income increased to Rs 13,382 crore during the July-September period

against Rs 9,974 crore a year earlier, BFL said in a regulatory filing. The Pune-headquartered company's total expenditure rose to Rs 8,624 crore compared to Rs 6,222 crore in the year-ago period. Its consolidated assets under management (AUM) as of September 30,

Rs 2,18,366 crore a year ago. Capital adequacy ratio (including Tier-II capital) as of September 30, 2023, was 23.19 per cent. The Tier-I capital was 21.88 per cent, it said. The board at its meeting held on October 5 has

2022, grew by 33 per cent to Rs 2,90,264 crore from

approved raising of capital through a qualified institutions placement (QIP) for an aggregate amount not exceeding Rs 8,800 crore by issue of equity shares of face value of Rs 2 each.

Besides, the board has also approved preferential issue (Pl) of up to 15,50,000 warrants convertible into equivalent number of equity shares to Bajaj Finsery Limited, the promoter and holding Company, for an aggregate amount not exceeding Rs 1,200 crore in accordance with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Issue of Capital and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2018, it said.

JV segment to see intense competition among players: Tata Motors TATA MOTORS The top three-four players will highest ever score for adult and have just a few thousand (units) child occupant safety in the crash tests done by Global here and there. At some point Tata Motors on Tuesday said

■ it plans to keep updating its SUV range as it expects the robustly growing segment to remain highly competitive with presence of all leading players. Sports utility vehicles are driving the overall growth of the domestic passenger vehicle segment. As per the latest SIAM data, SUV sales account for 60 per cent of the overall passenger vehicle sales in the country. In an interaction with PTI, Tata

Chandra said the company has

a leadership position in some of

the SUV sub-segments and is

looking to consolidate in others.

'The SUV segment is going to

be an intensely fought segment.

consideration for buyers are market leaders in their respective segments while Harrier Safari combo was number two in its vertical. Motors Passenger Vehicles Managing Director Shailesh

someone will be number one

sometimes somebody else will

become number two," he said. He noted that in such scenarios it is more important to focus on the individual products and whether they are in the top two Chandra said Punch and Nexon

Tata Motors on Tuesday rolled out new versions of Harrier and Safari with price starting at Rs 15.49 lakh and Rs 16.19 lakh

quite some time. There have respectively. "Going beyond this, we are been few new launches by other coming with two more models players. The ranking will keep - Curvv and Sierra — in 2024 changing... There is no clear

and 2025, respectively," he stat-

So the company's SUV portfolio is going to further strengthen from where it is now, Chandra noted "We have been number one for

number one here. Important thing is that we are doing excellent in all these four

SUVs that we have. More importantly, we are adding to this portfolio, so our strength in SÚV is going to always remain very strong going forward," he added. The updated versions of both Harrier and Safari have received top safety ratings from the vehi-

cle safety group Global NCAP. "With their 5-star GNCAP rating and highest scores by any Indian vehicle to date, our SUVs are the safest spaces on Indian roads," Chandra said.

In a separate statement, Global NCAP said it has given five-star safety ratings to the new versions of Tata Safari and Harrier SUVs. Both models have achieved the

NCAP on Indian cars so far, it stated. Global NCAP rates vehicles from zero to five based on their safety features and automobiles with a higher rating are considered safer for occupants. "This is a very strong result... The top adult and child safety score in our testing to date confirms the manufacturer's strong commitment to developing safer vehicles, which we warmly welcome and applaud," Global NCAP Secretary General

Global NCAP's crash test protocols assess frontal and side impact protection for all models, as well as electronic stability control.

Alejandro Furas said in a state-

Delhi Metro's first Managing Director E Sreedharan, popularly known as Metroman, visited Metro Bhawan on Tuesday. He was received by the present

Managing Director Dr Vikas Kumar and Principal Executive Director, Corporate Communications Anuj Dayal. Sreedharan interacted with the senior officials and wished the Phase 4 of the project all success

SABITZER'S PENALTY, SENDS AUSTRIA TO EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP



AP BRUSSELS

ubstitute Marcel Sabitzer Scored from the penalty spot shortly after entering the game to secure a 1-0 win for Austria at Azerbaijan and send his country to next year's European Championship in a day overshadowed by a deadly shooting in Brussels which saw Belgium's game against Sweden halted at halftime

"Due to the incidents in Brussels earlier tonight, play is suspended. Our thoughts are with all those affected," a post from the

Belgian national team read on X, formerly known as Twitter. European soccer governing body UEFA confirmed the Group F match had been called off following consultation with

both teams and local police. The score was 1-1 at the time. Viktor Gyokeres gave Sweden a 15th-minute lead, but Romelu Lukaku had Belgium level just after the half-hour.

Belgium had already qualified for Euro 2024 while Sweden's chances of a top-two place had been ended by Austria's victo-

AUSTRIA ADVANCES

After losing 3-2 to Belgium in Vienna last week in the fight for Group F supremacy - Austria's only defeat in seven qualifying games so far - Sabitzer and his teammates knew a win in Baku would secure a spot at the tournament hosted by Germany. With several key players sidelined because of injuries, Austria struggled to create real chances

in the first half. It was awarded

a penalty just minutes into the

second half after a hand ball.

Sabitzer was clinical in convert-

ing with a strike into the corner

in the 48th

Sabitzer, who plays for Borussia Dortmund, recently returned to competition after recovering from an adductor injury he picked up last month in a Champions League match against PSG.

Austria finished with 10 men after striker Guido Burgstaller was sent off in stoppage time for a second yellow card.

Austria became the seventh team to qualify after Belgium, France, Portugal, Scotland, Spain and Turkey, along with host Germany

RONALDO SCORES 2

Cristiano Ronaldo scored twice for Portugal in a 5-0 demolition of host Bosnia in Group J. Bruno Fernandes, Joao Ĉancelo

and Joao Felix also scored with all goals coming in the first half. Iceland routed Liechtenstein 4-0 and Slovakia won 1-0 at Luxembourg in the same

Netherlands came away from Greece with a 1-0 win in Group B to revive its hopes. Virgil Van Dijk's penalty in second-half stoppage time sent the Netherlands above their opponents and into second in their group. Both have 12 points. Wout Weghorst earlier failed to convert his penalty.

We do not have a specialist for penalties, corners and free kicks," said Netherlands coach Ronald Koeman. "When Virgil was behind the ball for the second one, I suddenly thought Surely it won't be one of those evenings when this one goes wrong too.' But Virgil took it well and decided the

Ireland thrashed Gibraltar 4-0 in the group's other game.

returning to clubs

Sweden players take

Sweden once they were allowed to leave King Baudouin Sta-

dium, which was locked down for 21/2 hours for security rea-

sons before officials began an

It was around 4 am local time

when the last of the Swedish

650, according to the Swedish

Football Association — left

the stadium under police sur-

veillance, along with some staff

All hotels where Swedish sup-

porters were staying were also guarded by police, the federa-

The Swedish FA confirmed to

The Associated Press that the

national-team players were

now making their way back to

from the federation.

tion said

overnight flight home,

The suspect in the shooting was shot dead by police on Tuesday, Sweden players were return-ing to their clubs on Tuesday Belgian Interior Minister Ann-Oing to their clubs on Tuesday after taking an overnight flight home from Brussels following the suspension of their European Championship qualifier against Belgium at halftime because a gunman killed two Swedish nationals before kick-off elies Verlinden said, and the weapon believed to have been used by the man has been recovered. Authorities had been searching

for a 45-year-old suspected Tunisian extremist who was known to police and was living in Belgium illegally. Swedish FA officials said infor-

The squad went directly to the airport and flew back to mation about the shooting incident, which also led to another Swedish national getting seriously injured and taken to hospital, reached them just before the match began and that Belgian authorities and evacuation process around midnight local time. police considered the game should be played because the supporters — totaling about stadium was viewed as the safest place for the Swedish

> A decision was made to halt the match at halftime. Martin Fredman, the federation's head of security, said about 400 Swedish fans "received help during the evening and night. The cooperation between supporters, federations and authorities has worked very well in an extremely stressful situation, Fredman said



India men's hockey plays compactly at Asian Games: Somaya

PTI ■ BHUBANESWAR

Olympic gold medallist M M Somaya feels the Indian men's hockey team produced one of the most "compact" performances to win its fourth vellow metal at the recently-concluded Hangzhou Asian Games. Somaya, who was the Indian contingent's deputy chef de mission at Hangzhou, said it was mostly an unblemished performance from the Harmanpreet Singh-led side, who directly qualified for Paris Olympics by

winning the gold.
"I think they (India) played outstanding in all the matches, barring a few lapses of concentration against Japan and Korea, but otherwise, overall, I think one of the most compact and sound performances we have seen," said Somaya, a member of India's 1980 World Cup-winning team in Moscow.

With next year's Paris ticket secured, the Indian team can focus on its preparations now. "Now that the burden of qualifying is gone, they can concentrate on making a strong program up to Paris. So just because

they're not playing in the tournament for qualification doesn't mean that they will be complacent. They can now engage in preparatory camps and tours with Paris in mind," Somaya

The 64-year-old also lauded the women's team, who bagged the bronze at the Asian Games but missed out on a direct ticket to Paris.

The women also played very well, barring that game against China in the first half where they were a little overwhelmed. And then in the second half they opened up, but it was too late. Overall, it was an excellent performances from both the

Somaya also had words of appreciation for the Odisha government for its overwhelming support to Indian hockey. "Odisha have stood out because of their support for hockey, I don't remember any other sport where a state has supported the national team. It's always been a corporate, but in this case the state itself has supported the national team, which is a big

AITA actions against Sasi for not wearing official jersey

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The AITA is contemplating action against Sasi Mukund for not wearing the official jersey during the Davis Cup tie against Morocco and has also introduced a players' code of conduct to ensure 'discipline' in

In the opening singles of the World Group II play-off tie against Yassine Dlimi on September 16, Mukund wore the jersey provided by his permade available by official Indian team sponsor 'OOK' after taking "permission" from skipper Rohit Rajpal.

To make matter worse, the jersey that Mukund wore had 'INDIA' spelt wrongly and the matter was brought to AITA's notice by the team sponsor. The team name printed on the back had an extra 'I'.

It may be mentioned that the official sponsor only provided the kit and no sponsorship money was given to either All Indian Tennis Association (AITA) or the players who were part of the tie that India won 4-1 in Lucknow last month.

AITA issued a showcause notice to Mukund on September 28, asking him to explain within seven days why action should not be taken against him for not wearing the official jersey and playing with a jersey that had India written wrongly.

On October 3, Mukund sent his reply to the national federation, saying that "shorts received from OOK were not comfort-

Mukund also wrote that he had taken prior permission from both captain Rajpal and and coach Zesshan Ali to wear the jersey that had his sponsor's



picked the only one that had

He also lamented that neither the captain nor his teammates noticed when he stepped on to the court.

printing mistake.

"I have immense respect for my country and I would never do something intentionally to tarnish its image," he wrote and also apologised for the inadvertent mistake

On October 13, the AITA communicated to Mukund that his explanation was not acceptable since the captain has denied giving him any permission and further asked him to clarify his

When contacted by PTI,

Mukund said captain Rajpal had indeed allowed him.

"There was no money involved. The players were not given any sponsorship fee for this tie. Only the kit was provided by the official sponsor. Captain Rajpal had understood this and allowed me," Mukund, who had lost his match to Dlimi, said.

"Usually the players are asked to sign a contract with the AITA for that one week if they are being paid for wearing that official kit. In this case, we did not sign any contract. My personal sponsor 'Indian Tree' pays me, so what's wrong in it. The pockets of the shorts were such that the ball were coming out. These are the reasons that the players lose interest in playing for the national team," he said. AITA Secretary General Anil Dhupar said they have introduced a players' code of conduct for clarity and all players will be bound by it.

The players code of conduct is before the Executive Committee members. It will come into effect immediately. It is for all players, be it men's, women's, boys or girls," he said.

Asked if they will indeed take action against Mukund, Dhupar said,"Mukund has apologised but we are still discussing the matter'

Asked for his viewpoint, Davis Cup coach Zeeshan Ali said,"All players should be wearing only the official kit. During the Asian Games all the players and support staff wore the official kit only. Procedure has to be followed by all".

It is not the first time that an Indian player has preferred

playing with the kit that has his personal sponsor's name written. They do get paid for wearing the sponsor's name. If the match is telecast live, the amount increases

"The AITA had also introduced the system of paying the players for official sponsor's name. The initiative was taken by captain Rohit Rajpal. If you have to stop players from wearing the name of their personal sponsor during the Davis Cup, then you have to compensate, said a team source.

"In this case (Morocco tie), no sponsor was willing to pay any sponsorship money to the players and the AITA. Just the kits had arrived through OOK, it is difficult to even arrange for kits for Indian Davis Cup team," the source said, summing up the state of Indian tennis



Contrasting results for Indian sub-junior hockey teams

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

sub-junior (U-16) hockey teams endured contrasting results on the final day of their maiden tour to the Netherlands.

While the boys beat the Netherlands' U-16 side 4-0, the Indian girls lost 1-4 against the Dutch.

Rohit Irengbam Singh, Ketan Kushwaha, Rahul Rajbhar and captain Manmeet Singh Rai scored for the Indian boys

"This is a great way to finish off such a historic tour. The boys showed immense character and grit and the efforts that have been put in are unmatched. It's a matter of pride to have produced such a fine show espe-

cially in overseas conditions, Indian sub-junior boys' team coach Sardar Singh said. In the girls' game, Kajal Jr scored the lone goal for Índia. Former India captain and subjunior girls' team coach Rani Rampal, said, "The girls played their hearts out and that is

exactly what is expected of them every time they step out on the field. There are a few areas for us to work on and this tour has

given us exactly what we need-

ed to identify our strengths and

Kusale now aiming for gold at Asian Championships

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $R^{ifle\; marksman\; Swapnil\; Kusale's}_{dream\;\; of\;\; winning\;\; an\;\; Asian}$ Games medal in Hangzhou might have gone sour, courtesy one poor shot, but that has not stopped him from aspiring for gold at the Asian Championships, scheduled to commence in Changwon, South Korea on October 22.

One of the best 50m rifle 3-positions shooter in the country, the 28vear-old Kolhapur marksman was leading by a huge margin in his event at the Asian Games recently before a rank bad 7.6 on the thirdlast shot in the finals saw him take a mighty tumble from No.1 to 5.

That effectively ended his hopes of winning even a bronze medal in the quadrennial continental showpiece as he finished fourth.

However, as the shooting team leaves for the Asian Championships, Kusale has put the disappointment on the back-burner and wants to concentrate on the next assign-

That shot... How did it go that way, I have absolutely no idea. It's a game basically. I still had two shots remaining and I focused on them. I just forgot that had I shot a poor score," said Kusale, one of the early birds to secure a Paris Olympic

quota place. "Initially, I was a bit shocked how it could happen to me. But without bothering about it much, how and why it happened, I prepared myself for the next two shots," said Kusale, who had bagged the 2024 Olympic quota by finishing fourth at the World Championships in Cairo last

Yes, it did strike me that I had missed the gold medal because of that one shot, but then I thought it can happen in this sport and I will concentrate on the next champi-

A similar last shot in the finals at the 2022 World Championships in Cairo had robbed him of a medal, but that disappointment was masked by the Olympic quota place



"It had happened to me at the World Championships in Cairo last year as well, but yes, I bagged an Olympic quota there and finished fourth, so that was the saving grace," said Kusale on the sidelines of a function organised by the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) to felicitate the Asian Games medal

India returned home with 22 medals in shooting, their best ever performance at the Games.

"I was very deeply concentrating on the moment, too much focused and because of that, maybe, my entire process (went for a toss). It's something which I never anticipated I could do. I tried my level best to come back, but I still missed an individual medal.

Kusale, though, won the team gold along with Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar and Akhil Sheoran.

Kusale, a junior TC with the Railways, says that world champion rifle shooter Tejaswini Sawant has helped him handle tricky situation while competing. Sawant, who also hails from

Kolhapur but now resides in Pune, had become world champion in 2010 in women's 50m rifle prone. 'Teju di (Tejaswini) has taught me how to handle different situations, etc. I have learnt from her and she has inspired me a lot over the years," said Kusale.

shortcomings.

Kusale is also not surprised that his best pal" Akhil Sheoran too has bagged the second Olympic quota for the country at the World Championships in Baku, Azerbaijan just before the Asian Games.

The two have been competing together since 2012, when they were juniors, and Kusale said he cannot remember a national camp when they have not been room

'Akhil has been my roommate and best pal since 2012 since the time we were competing as juniors. We are like brother and both have won (Olympic) quota, albeit one year

sport 12

NZ AIMS TO KEEP THEIR **UNBEATEN RUN INTACT**

A fghanistan's upset win over defending champions England has given the side a new stature and New Zealand would underestimate Hashmatullah Shahidi's side at their own peril when the two sides clash in their World Cup match here on Wednesday. While the Kiwis would look to

keep their unbeaten run going in the tournament, Afghanistan, who shocked England by 69 runs, would be keen to create another big upset and put their campaign firmly on track in the showpiece event.

New Zealand are going great guns in the tournament, hav-ing won all three matches so far and are currently placed second on the points table, trailing India on net run rate.

On the other hand, Afghanistan had an inauspicious start to their campaign losing to Bangladesh and India before leaving Jos Buttler's England in a tizzy with a victory to be cherished for long in New Delhi on Sunday.

New Zealand will again be led by wicketkeeper-batter Tom Latham after their charismatic skipper Kane Williamson suffered a fracture on his left thumb during the match against Bangladesh and was ruled out for a few games.

Williamson, who had missed the opening two matches against England and the Netherlands — due to an ACL



injury suffered during IPL 2023, was looking good to strike a century after being out of action for more than five months. But the skipper's innings was cut short at 78 when he was struck on the thumb by a throw from the

Despite the huge setback, the Kiwis would be banking on their success so far to win their fourth game on the trot against an unpredictable Afghanistan, who played their

pacer Tim Southee finally gets a chance against Afghanistan, having recovered from a thumb injury, though his match fitness has remained an issue.

The Kiwis will rely heavily on their top order comprising Will Young, Devon Conway and Daryl Mitchell, while allrounder Rachin Ravindra, with his impactful performances across departments, will also be the player to watch.

The Kiwi batters would certainly have watched the video guts out against England. footage of Afghanistan spinners It would be interesting to see if Rashid Khan and Mohammed Nabi many times over to counter the slow-bowling threat, given that the duo accounted for five England

With the meeting happening at the Chepauk, where the pitch has traditionally assisted spinners, New Zealand will have their hands full when they take on the trio of Rashid, Mujeeb Ur Rehman and Nabi. As for the Afghanistan batting, opener Rahmanullah Gurbaz is the man in form, having scored 50-plus in two matches so far, while the likes of skipper Shahidi, Azmatullah Omarzai and Ikram Alikhil could come in handy as well.

While Trent Boult and Matt Henry's searing pace will be feared by the Afghan batters, their main challenge could unexpectedly come from the spin duo of Ravindra and Mitchell Santner, with the latter being the most successful slow bowler in the competition so far.

The two teams have clashed in this format only twice with New Zealand winning on both



Rohit best man to lead India to third WC title

A ustralian legend Ricky Ponting believes a "laid-back" Rohit Sharma is the ideal captain to lead India to their third ODI World Cup title the second on home soil title, the second on home soil after the 2011 triumph.

With three convincing wins under their belt, India have made a perfect start to their World Cup campaign.

India defeated Australia by six wickets in their tournament opener, before registering emphatic eight and sevenwicket wins over Afghanistan and Pakistan to sit on top of the points table.

"He's very laid back, Rohit. Very laid back with everything he does. You can even see that by the way that he plays. He's a pretty laconic sort of batsman as well, and that's the way he is both on and off the field," Ponting told the ICC on Tuesday. Rohit took the captaincy reins from Virat Kohli in both the white-ball formats in December 2021.

And Ponting believes Rohit's character fits perfectly for the India job, allowing Kohli to focus on his batting.

Someone like Virat, who is a bit more heart-on-the-sleeve, and probably listens to the fans and plays up with the fans a little bit more, someone with his personality would probably find it a bit harder," the twotime World Cup winning Australia skipper said.

"But I think Rohit will be fine with it. He's a terrific bloke and has been a great player for a long time, and he's done a great job as leader of India."

The Men In Blue last won the World Cup when the tournament was jointly hosted by India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh in 2011.

So, the extra pressure of performing in front of home fans in Pune on Thursday.

would definitely be there, but Ponting feels Rohit is the best man to deal with that.

'We can't sit back and say that the pressure won't get to them (India) at some stage, or it won't affect them, because it will, just with the enormity of

the tournament.

"But he'll (Rohit) take it and cope with it as well as probably anyone," he said.

Ponting said that with all bases covered, India are the team to beat in the ongoing showpiece. "I said from the start that I think they're going to be the team to beat. They've got a very talented team," he said.
"They've got all bases covered

with their fast bowling, their spin and their top-order, middle-order batting. They're going to be extremely hard to beat. But we'll see how they hold up under extreme pressure as well," Ponting concluded. India will next play Bangladesh

We regret squandering promising: Nissanka

Adisappointed Pathum Nissanka said anything close to 300 would have been a challenging total but Sri Lanka failed to sustain a promising start against Australia in a World Cup match here. Nissanka (61) and fellow open-

er Kushal Perera (78) gave Sri Lanka an ideal start on Monday, but the Island nation suffered an unexpected batting collapse, losing all 10 wickets for just 84 runs to put up a below-par 209 on the board

The Australians grabbed the opportunity with Josh Inglis (58) and Mitchell Marsh (52) scoring half-centuries each to take their side to a fivewicket win in 35.2 overs, their first victory in three match-

"Despite our promising start, we deeply regret not being able to sustain it, resulting in us being limited to a score of 210 runs, Nissanka said at the post-match



press conference

On a wicket like this, I believe we should aim for a total closer to 300 runs, and this was a contributing factor for our defeat. Nissanka's 61 off 67 balls was his second successive half-century in the tournament.

"I believe I've given my best for the team. I'm hopeful that I can contribute significantly by scoring substantial number of runs and playing substantial innings in the upcoming matches," he

Sri Lanka have lost three games they have played so far and need to win all their remaining six matches for a shot at the semifinals.

They next face the Netherlands here on Saturday

'Our focus now is to learn from our mistakes and strive for strong performances in the upcoming matches. Our mental level is good. We hope to play well in these matches and win the remaining matches, Nissanka said.

Shami's role is clear still no place in 'Perfect IX'

At times, the greatest of actors don't fit the character of a particular film and in director Rohit Sharma's 70 mm World Cup panorama, Mohammed Shami is that protagonist who is missing out on a meaty role.

Unlike the 2019 World Cup campaign, the Indian team management seems to have absolute clarity on the role of each squad member, leaving a world class operator like Shami three games of the ODI show-

With the team ticking all the boxes so far, Shami, who is among the best in the business and ended with a five wicket haul against Australia ahead of the World Cup, might just have to keep warming the bench in the coming fixtures. Mohammed Siraj is Jasprit Bumrah's new ball partner at the moment while all-rounder

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Hardik Pandya is performing the role of a third pacer effec-

Shardul Thakur, who has bowled a total of 8 overs in two games, is the fourth fast bowling option on a flat deck and if it is a spin friendly track like the

Date-13.10.2023

Collector-cum-CEO,

Zilla Parishad, Bhadrak

one in Chennai, R Ashwin comes in to the eleven in place of Thakur to complement Kuldeep Yadav and Ravindra Jadeja.

There seems to be crystal clarity even on the batting front. Unlike the 2019 edition, the

ber four position become a game of musical chairs, Shreyas Iyer, if he is fit, is the clear choice in that position. Even though he oozes X factor, Suryakumar Yadav has to wait for his return. Rohit Sharma has led from the

lead up of which saw the num-

front thus far and India look the team to beat in the World Cup. However, there are a few questions that need to be answered. Can the team rely on Hardik as the third seamer? Should Shami not play in place of Thakur as the yet been required with the bat at number 8? Speaking to PTI, former chief

selector MSK Prasad lauded the team's horses for courses approach.

They are using horses for courses and it is working fantastically well for the team. If you see they used Ashwin in Chennai and Shardul for the other two games (in Delhi and Ahmedabad). Last game,

others did the job (he bowled only two overs)," said the former India wicketkeeper. "Shami will come into picture

Shardul was not required as the

if they want to rotate Siraj. Replacements are very clear right now, Sky will replace Shreyas if there is a need, Ishan will replace Gill at the top and Shardul will play if it is a flat deck. Aswhin will come in his place if it is a turning track

Hardik lends a critical balance to the playing eleven but conpast, can he be expected to bowl 10 overs game after game as the third seamer if the need arises?

"With Hardik, you can't expect him to bowl 10 overs in every game. The job that he is doing. Of bowling 5-6 overs per game, that is good enough. Team management seems to have absolute clarity on the role of every individual," added

Gurbaz reprimanded for breaching ICC's Code of Conduct



PTI NEW DELHI

fghanistan batter Rahma-Anullah Gurbaz has been handed an official reprimand for breaching level 1 of the ICC Code of Conduct during their epic World Cup match against England.

Gurbaz was found to have breached Article 2.2 of the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel, which relates to "abuse of cricket equipment or clothing, ground equipment or fixtures and fittings dur-

ing an International Match." In addition to this, one demerit point has been added to Gurbaz's disciplinary record, for whom it was the first offence in a 24-month period.

The incident occurred in the 19th over of Afghanistan's innings, when after his dismissal, Gurbaz slammed his bat on the boundary rope and a chair. Gurbaz admitted the offence and accepted the sanction proposed by Jeff Crowe of the Emirates ICC Elite Panel of Match Referees, so there was no need for a formal hearing. On-field umpires Rod Tucker and Sharfuddoula Ibne Shahid third umpire Paul Reiffel and fourth umpire Paul Wilson levelled the charge. Level 1 breaches carry a minimum penalty of an official reprimand, a maximum penalty of 50 per cent of a player's match fee, and one or two demerit points. Afghanistan had defeated England by 69 runs to create one of the biggest upsets in World cup history.

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Type of products to be supplied Books No. of Books 4050 Nos Bid Cost. ₹ 1,000/-5. Publication of Short Tender Dt.18.10.2023 Last Date of receipt Dt.02.11.2023 (Up to 05.00 PM) Date of Opening of Bid Dt.03.11.2023 at 11:30 AM. 8 The details of book list, terms & conditions are available in the https://nabarangpur.nic.in/ from 10.00 AM of 18.10.2023 to 01.11.2023 up to 5.30 PM and

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At 11.30 AM of 30.10.2023 Date & Time of opening of Name and Address of the Officer

Last date / time of receipt of bids

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Brooks' Hill, Near Stadium

5.00 PM of 28.10.2023.

General Manager, WATCO Division, Sambalpur