



Security forces kill four militants in Shopian encounter

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Tensions over death in custody; Priyanka briefly detained in Agra

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Union Govt. issues fresh guidelines for travellers to India

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Rohit leads from the front in India's facile win over Australia

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IN BRIEF



Delhi gov. announces compensation for farmers

NEW DELHI
 Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday announced ₹50,000 per hectare as compensation for farmers whose crops have been damaged in the unseasonal rain. Mr. Kejriwal claimed that this amount was the highest in the country and that efforts were on to ensure that farmers receive it within two months.

BJP open to an alliance with Amarinder Singh

NEW DELHI
 The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Wednesday appeared open to an alliance with the yet to be formed political party of former Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh (retd.), a day after the latter made an overture. BJP general secretary and party's Punjab in charge Dushyant Gautam said Capt. Singh was a "patriot" and the BJP was open to tie-ups with "nationalist forces".

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U.P. 'dragging its feet' in Lakhimpur case: SC

Court finds that only four of 44 witnesses gave statements

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
 NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday found it hard to dispel the impression that the Uttar Pradesh Government is "dragging its feet" in the Lakhimpur Kheri case, in which a Union Minister's son is accused of mowing down protesting farmers with an SUV.

A three-judge Bench, led by Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana, discovered from a status report filed by the Government just minutes before the hearing that only four of the 44 witnesses to the brutal incident had given their statements to the judicial magistrate so far.

The incident, which allegedly involves the convoy of Union Minister of State for Home Ajay Mishra Teni, occurred on October 3.

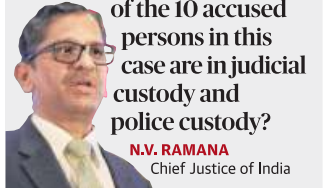
A statement recorded by a magistrate under Section 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) is valuable later during trial as corroborative evidence. It can be used to bolster the prosecution case against the accused. Any delay in recording statements under Section 164 of the CrPC creates room for influencing the witnesses.

Senior advocate Harish Salve, for Uttar Pradesh, said he was instructed that the

Court's concern

A three-judge Bench of the Supreme Court perused a status report filed by the State Government on the investigation into the Lakhimpur Kheri violence

The reconstruction of the crime is different from recording the Section 164 CrPC statements of witnesses... How many of the 10 accused persons in this case are in judicial custody and police custody?



N.V. RAMANA
 Chief Justice of India

Why have the statements of only four witnesses been recorded out of 44? Your Special Investigation Team is the best person to know who can be browbeaten



JUSTICE SURYA KANT

delay occurred due to the Dasara holidays. The courts were closed for the festival.

"What is the connection between Dasara vacation and criminal courts?" Chief Justice Ramana shot back.

Justice Surya Kant said, "Why have the statements of only four witnesses been recorded out of 44? Your Special Investigation Team is the best person to know who can be browbeaten."

The State's Additional Advocate-General, Garima Parshad, said the police had not wasted time and, in the meanwhile, "reconstructed the crime scene".

Chief Justice Ramana addressed Ms. Parshad, "The reconstruction of the crime is different from recording

the Section 164 CrPC statements of witnesses. Our question is why were they not taken all this while?"

Justice Hima Kohli, on the Bench, told the State, "We think you are dragging your feet... Please dispel the impression."

Chief Justice Ramana told Mr. Salve, "Please tell them to start on the Section 164 statements..."

The senior lawyer urged the court to adjourn the case to next week. He promised that things would be cleared up by then. He said that in the last hearing on October 8, the court voiced doubts whether the State was "going soft" on the accused.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Indian team meets Taliban Dy. PM

In Moscow, 10-nation statement recognises the 'new reality' in Afghanistan

SUHASINI HAIDAR
 NEW DELHI

India joined a 10-nation statement recognising the "new reality" of the Taliban in power in Afghanistan at the Moscow format meeting on Wednesday, as Indian officials reportedly met Taliban Deputy Prime Minister Abdul Salam Hanafi and offered humanitarian aid to the regime in Kabul.

News of the meeting between the Taliban delegation and J.P. Singh, Joint Secretary for Pakistan-Afghanistan-Iran, Ministry of External Affairs, was reported over the Twitter handle of the Taliban Deputy Information and Broadcasting Minis-



New equations: Members of the Taliban Government delegation in Moscow on Wednesday. • AP

ter and spokesperson, Zabihullah Mujahid.

The MEA made no immediate comment, but Government sources confirmed to *The Hindu* that the meeting

necessary to take into account each other's concerns and improve diplomatic and economic relations. The Indian side finally expressed readiness to provide a wide range of humanitarian assistance to the Afghans," Mr. Mujahid said in a series of tweets announcing the meeting between "the Special Representative of India for Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan" and Mr. Hanafi in Moscow.

This would be the first time India has officially announced aid for Afghanistan after the August 15 takeover of Kabul by the Taliban.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Maharashtra firm sold 'GM-contaminated' rice

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ
 NEW DELHI

The Centre has identified a Maharashtra-based exporter as the source of the broken rice flagged in Europe as contaminated with genetic modifications (GM) earlier this year, the Commerce Ministry said on Wednesday.

It added that the 500-tonne consignment was given a non-GMO certification by an independent agency.

While reiterating that GM rice is not grown commercially in India, the Ministry

asked genetic and rice experts, including the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), to investigate.

IARI Director A.K. Singh told *The Hindu* that the European Commission must share details of specific genetic markers found in the consignment, so that it could be tracked to ascertain if there were any linkages to any of the approved field trials of GM rice in India.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Denied bail, Aryan Khan moves Bombay HC

Case pertains to NCB drug bust on cruise

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
 MUMBAI

Actor Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan on Wednesday moved the Bombay High Court after a special court rejected his bail in the case of the busting of a drug racket on a cruise ship on October 2.

The appeal of Aryan Khan, 23, is expected to be heard in the High Court on Thursday.

Aryan Khan, who is

lodged at the Arthur Road Jail, was arrested on October 3 by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) after the cruise raid.

Judge V.V. Patil of the special court under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act also rejected the bail pleas of Arbaaz Merchant, 26, and Munmun Dhamecha, 39, arrested with him.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Kushinagar now hub of Buddhist tourist circuit

PM opens airport, says focus is on developing places associated with Lord Buddha

JAGRITI CHANDRA
 KUSHINAGAR

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday inaugurated the Kushinagar International Airport in Uttar Pradesh, which will help connect key Buddhist pilgrimage sites.

Kushinagar is an important Buddhist pilgrim destination, and is believed to be the final resting place of Gautam Buddha.

An inaugural flight of Sri Lankan Airlines landed at the airport earlier in the day, bringing a large contingent

of Buddhist monks and Sri Lankan Ministers, including Sports Minister Namal Rajapaksa, nephew of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and son of Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa. They met Mr. Modi at an event at the Mahaparinirvana Temple here.

Diplomats from 12 countries where Buddhism is practised, including Mongolia, Myanmar, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Bhutan, Republic of Korea, Nepal and Japan, were also present.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

SC decision on physical hearings sparks debate

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
 NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court's decision to shift gears from virtual to physical hearings twice a week became a point of debate on the very first day of the court's reopening after Dasara holidays on Wednesday.

Several senior lawyers, including senior advocate Kapil Sibal and Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta, urged the Chief Justice of India not to make physical hearings mandatory.

Mr. Sibal said some cases had records which ran into 50 to 60 volumes, and allowing just one briefing lawyer inside the courtroom would affect proper legal representation of the matter. Senior advocate Vikas Singh, who is the president of the Supreme Court Bar Association, said he objected to Mr. Sibal's plea.

The CJJ said the court was forced to modify its standard operating procedure to make physical court mandatory on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

The first full physical hearing in the Supreme Court would start on October 21, a Thursday.

The CJJ said certain sections had been clamouring that the court was "shirking" from physical hearings. The CJJ agreed to place the issue before other judges later in the day.

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Hotel employee held with 90 kg firecrackers

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi police have arrested a 26-year-old man, an employee of a five-star hotel, for allegedly possessing 90 kg firecrackers, which he had planned to sell, in central Delhi's Jama Masjid area.

Constable Dharmender and assistant sub-inspector P.R. Patnayak arrested the accused, identified as Mohd. Azim, along with a plastic bag containing 90 kg firecrackers on Tuesday.

The accused is a resident of Dharampura in Jama Masjid area, the police said, adding that he has been booked under Section 286 (acting rashly or negligently with an explosive substance to endanger human life) of the Indian Penal Code and Sections of the Indian Explosive Act.

Significantly, the DPCC had banned the sale and possession of firecrackers in the NCR.

Open fair price shop in Baprola so that poor are served well: HC

Court takes note of the fact that women have to walk through forest to fetch rations

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has asked the AAP government to open a fair price shop (FPS) at Rajiv Ratan Awasth Yojana, Phase-2, Baprola, for the convenience of more than 800 families mostly belonging to the economically weaker section.

Justice Nazmi Waziri took note that the nearest FPS is approximately 2.5 km away, and women have to walk through deserted stretches and forest areas to fetch rations and feed their families.

"It is in the interest of the State to ensure that citizens do not have to chart their ways through difficult areas simply to get foodgrains at subsidised prices," Justice Waziri said.

"In the special facts and



circumstances, it is appropriate that the Delhi government open an FPS in the aforesaid place or in the immediate vicinity...so that the poorest of the poor are served well by the State," the court ordered.

The court's direction came while hearing a plea for an FPS by residents of Rajiv Ratan Awasth Yojana.

The government said that there are only 320 ration cardholders in the

area; therefore it may not be feasible to operate an FPS with a small amount of margin money. The margin money is ₹2 per kg of food-grain supplied by an FPS. Generally, each FPS caters to about 1,000 ration cardholders, it said.

Exception to rule

The High Court, however, highlighted that there is an exception to the rule where an FPS can be opened for lesser numbers.

As per the guidelines for allotment of FPS outlets, as notified by the Delhi government in August 1997, an FPS can be established in an area where there are about 1,000 food cardholders and about 1,400 cards in case of kerosene oil depot.

The guidelines also provided that in case of JJ

(jhuggi jhopri) clusters and other areas inhabited by poorer sections of society, and in special cases, relaxation of norms for opening of a new PDS outlet can also be considered.

The High Court ordered the Delhi government to submit a compliance affidavit by November 30, and posted the case for further hearing on December 8.

During the hearing, the counsel, representing the petitioner, said that there exists a community centre in the residential area and a portion of it has already been earmarked for opening of an FPS.

The counsel contended that due to the long distance of 2.5 km from the nearest FPS, the morsel of food comes at a palpable cost to the safety and security of the residents.

House help kidnaps 7-year-old boy, demands ₹1.10 cr. ransom

Accused nabbed near Gokulpuri metro station; boy rescued

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A 22-year-old house help has been arrested for allegedly kidnapping a seven-year-old boy from Shahdara's Gandhi Nagar for a ransom of ₹1.10 crore, the police said on Wednesday.

Joint Commissioner of Police (Eastern Range) Sagar Preet Hooda said that the accused has been identified as Monu from Uttar Pradesh. He was arrested with the help of technical surveillance, the police said.

DCP (Shahdara) R. Sathiyasundaram said that they received a PCR call at 4 p.m. on Tuesday from the boy's father, who said that the minor had been kidnapped by their help who they had hired about a week ago to look after the child. The father said that Monu had gained the boy's trust and on Tuesday evening, he took the child on the pretext

The family negotiated that they could not pay more than ₹10 lakh but he refused to reduce the ransom amount

R. SATHIYASUNDARAM
DCP (Shahdara)

of buying him some edibles and didn't return for an hour.

"Our other house help said that Monu had taken his phone and when we called, the number was switched off. When we tried again, it was on and he picked up and said that he was bringing him in half an hour. But when we called again after half an hour, he said that he would only return the child after we gave him ₹1.10 crore," the father, who runs a mineral water plant, said.

The police registered a case and began investigation.

"The phone was put on technical surveillance while the family negotiated that they could not pay more than ₹10 lakh but he refused to reduce the ransom amount and switched off the phone," Mr. Sathiyasundaram said.

The family, along with police officials, then roamed the area where the phone location was traced and finally, the boy and the accused were spotted near Gokulpuri metro station. The boy was rescued and the accused was arrested.

On interrogation, the police said, Monu disclosed that he was planning to buy a flat in Mumbai using the ransom money.

The boy's family said that Monu had gained the child's trust in a week so much so that when the police were arresting him, he asked them not to do so, as Monu was his uncle.

Turning off engines at signal can help reduce pollution by 15%: Rai

Minister urges public to be part of 'Red Light On, Gaadi Off' drive

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Air pollution caused by vehicles can be reduced by 15%-20% if everyone takes part in the 'Red Light On, Gaadi Off' campaign, Environment Minister Gopal Rai said on Wednesday.

"This campaign is a great initiative to reduce vehicular pollution in Delhi. The aim of the 'Red Light On, Gaadi Off' campaign is to stop the burning of fuel in vehicles parked at intersections. If the two crore people of Delhi do their part with full res-



A volunteer during 'Red light On, Gaadi Off' campaign in the city. ■ FILE PHOTO

entire campaign is on your shoulders. This campaign will run till November 18. We are confident that the way we are running the anti-dust campaign in Delhi, we will also see success similarly with this campaign," he said.

The Delhi government started the campaign earlier this week and appealed to citizens to turn off their vehicles when the traffic signal is red. "To give further impetus to the initiative, all the MLAs of Delhi will campaign at Chandgi Ram Akhara on Thursday," Mr. Rai said.

possibility, then we can reduce the vehicular pollution by 15%-20%," Mr. Rai said.

The campaign is voluntary. "I call upon the two crore people of Delhi. This

City's air quality falls to 'poor' category, expected to worsen

₹3.07 crore levied as environmental compensation charge for violating dust control measures: CAQM

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The air quality in the city deteriorated from "satisfactory" category on Tuesday to "poor" on Wednesday. It is expected to worsen further, as per official data.

"In the presence of local dry weather and north-westerly wind, local dust emission will lead to high PM10. Additional dust transport from desert areas is very likely. Fire emission from upwind region will increase PM2.5 concentration as winds are from north-west region at transport level. The overall AQI is likely to degrade to higher end of



A worker spraying bio-decomposer solution in a field at Fatehpur Jat village of Narela. ■ FILE PHOTO: SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

moderate or poor category for the next three days," said monitoring agency SAFAR (System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research).

Also, the share of stubble burning in neighbouring States in causing air pollution is likely to increase in the next two days if there is no rain.

The AQI of Delhi was 221 on Wednesday, up from 69 on Tuesday, as per the Central Pollution Control Board's 4 p.m. bulletin, which is an average of the past 24 hours and considered the day's AQI.

Surprise checks

Meanwhile, ₹3.07 crore has been levied as environmental compensation charge on construction and demolition sites in Delhi and NCR for violating dust control measures, as per the Commission for Air Quality Management.

Following the directions of the commission, dedicat-

ed teams were deployed in the States to inspect construction and demolition (C&D) sites.

"They have so far carried out surprise checks and inspections at more than 6,596 sites, of which 963 sites were found to be non-compliant with various C&D waste management rules and dust mitigation measures. Further, an amount of approximately ₹3.07 crore has been levied as environmental compensation charge against the defaulting agencies, besides orders for stoppage of work at 52 locations," an official statement said.

3 held in make-up artist murder case

Police suspect it to be a case of sudden provocation

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Three youths were arrested for their alleged involvement in the murder of a 24-year-old aspiring make-up artist in Dwarka's Bindapuri in the early hours of Tuesday, the police said, adding that it appears to be a case of sudden provocation.

DCP (Dwarka) Shankar Chaudhary said that the three have been identified as Ankit Gaba, who can be seen in the CCTV footage attacking the victim, identified as Dolly Babbar alias Kishu, and Himanshu and Manish Sharma, who were with Ankit at the time of the incident. But the role of the duo is being examined.

Mr. Chaudhary said that the incident occurred near the victim's house after a party at an under-construction building where the four of them - Dolly and the



The accused in police custody. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

three accused - got together and drank. "During the party, a heated argument broke out between Ankit and Dolly over personal issues, which turned into a fight. He then stabbed her in the presence of Himanshu and Manish," the DCP said.

The police said that the accused already had a knife in his two-wheeler. "While it appears to be a case of sudden provocation, the

presence of a weapon in his vehicle puts a question mark over whether the murder was planned," Mr. Chaudhary said.

Escape plan

During investigation, it was revealed that after committing the crime, they escaped to Patiala. "After they found that the police were chasing them and they couldn't find a permanent hideout, they decided to return to Delhi and dispersed after reaching here. Himanshu and Manish were arrested in Dwarka Mor and Ankit was arrested at an under-construction building in Dwarka Sector-23," he said.

Ankit, while trying to evade arrest, fell from the second floor of the building and injured his legs, Mr. Chaudhary said, adding that he has been admitted to a hospital.

IIT announces scholarships, seed funding


SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

IIT-Delhi on Wednesday announced an Endowment Merit Scholars Programme that will provide 120 merit scholarships every year to batches of 15 women and 15 men pursuing BTech/dual degree. It also announced an Endowment Nurture Fund that aims to offer graduating students an opportunity to be awarded seed funding for their proposed ventures, encouraging them to embark on developing and nurturing their entrepreneurial ideas and aspirations rather than seeking job placement, the institute said.

The institute had last year established the IIT-D Endowment Fund and had announced the two initiatives to encourage diversity in scholastic excellence and entrepreneurship.

Ramgopal Rao, Director of IIT-Delhi and chairman of the Endowment Fund Board, said that the institute has taken a historic step with the establishment of the Endowment Fund, and it is encouraging to receive the collective support of the alumni towards the realisation of the institute's vision.

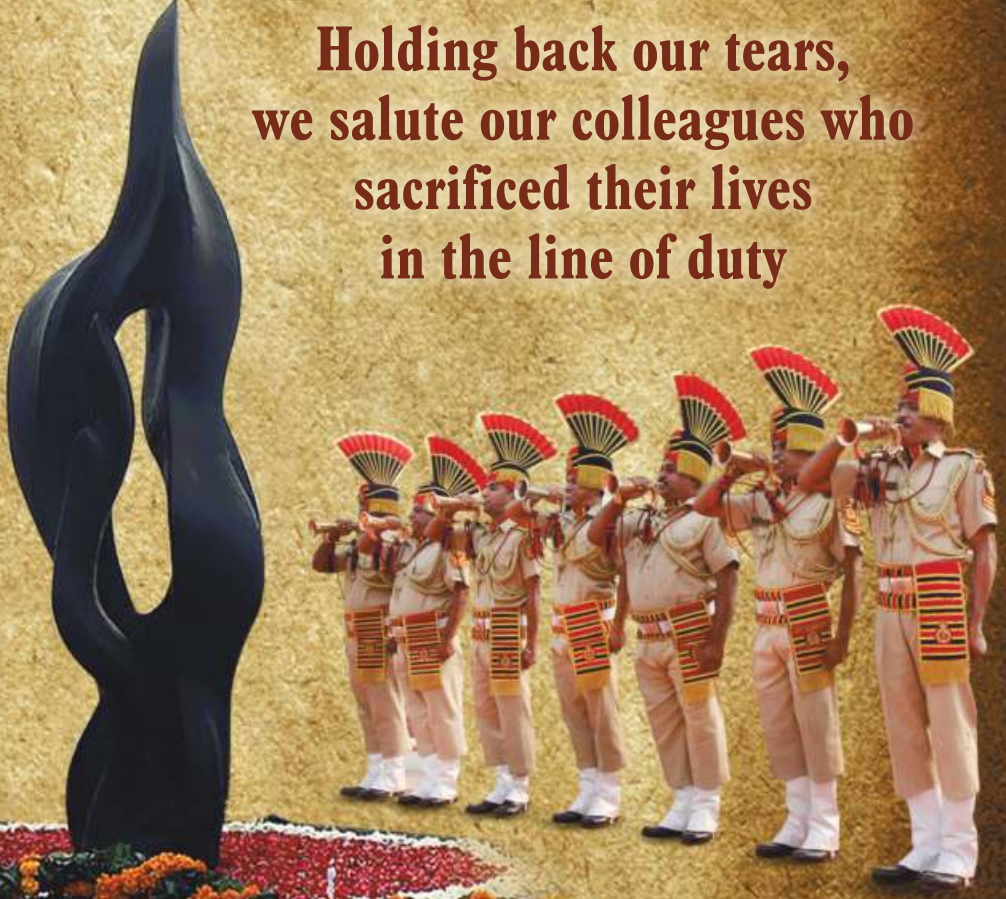
"The endowment initiative has helped the institute connect with the alumni at a deeper level and engage them on a variety of activities," Mr. Rao said.



DELHI POLICE
SHANTI SEWA NYAYA

Police Commemoration Day
21st October, 2021

**Holding back our tears,
we salute our colleagues who
sacrificed their lives
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RISE 06:27 SET 17:44
RISE 19:29 SET 08:39

Delhi Weather

	max	min
Delhi City	31	20
Safdarjang	31	20
Palam	32	21

Delhi Palam Today
32°C The mist and haze will occur during slight cool morning. Day will be little warm. Night remains slight cool.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
33°C A dry weather to continue. Morning will be hazy. Day will be warm. Night remains pleasant.

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IN BRIEF



City adds 25 COVID-19 cases, no deaths

NEW DELHI
The city reported no COVID-19 deaths in 24 hours and the total number of fatalities stood at 25,090, as per a bulletin released by the Delhi government on Wednesday. Twenty-five new cases were reported, taking the total cases to 14,39,466. A total of 56,293 tests were conducted in a day and the test positivity rate was 0.04%. There are 310 active cases.

THE HINDU
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Delhi govt. announces ₹50,000 per hectare compensation for farmers

BJP says the amount should be increased to ₹50,000 per acre, threatens agitation

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday announced ₹50,000 per hectare as compensation for farmers whose crops have been damaged in the unseasonal rain.

Mr. Kejriwal claimed that this amount was the highest in the country and that efforts were on to ensure that farmers receive it within two months.

The officials concerned, the CM said, had been directed to complete surveying the damaged crops in a fortnight following which the compensation would reach the affected farmers' accounts.

"A few days ago, I met a delegation of farmers who appraised me of how the unseasonal rain had ruined their crops. I want to tell all the farmers of Delhi that they need not worry about the situation," Mr. Kejriwal said at a digital briefing.

"I stand with you. Ever



A spell of rain catches motorists unawares in Delhi. ■ FILE PHOTO

since we came to power 6-7 years ago, we have been giving a compensation of ₹50,000 per hectare whenever crops have been damaged in Delhi," he said.

Mr. Kejriwal said this compensation amount was the highest provided by a government in the country with most States disbursing around ₹8,000 to ₹10,000 per hectare. "I want to as-

sure all the farmers that we will help and support them; their compensation will reach their accounts as soon as possible," he added.

Leader of Opposition in the Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri termed the announcement a victory for, and a result of pressure from, the BJP.

He, however, said that the amount of compensation

A few days ago, I met a delegation of farmers who appraised me of how the unseasonal rain had ruined their crops

ARVIND KEJRIWAL
Chief Minister

was less and it must be increased along with the fulfilment of other outstanding demands of the Capital's farmers.

"The compensation amount is very less and should be increased to ₹50,000 per acre. The farmers should also get subsidy for the purchase of diesel, electricity and agricultural machinery like in other States," Mr. Bidhuri demanded.

"If these demands are not met, the BJP will launch an agitation in the interests of Delhi's farmers after Diwali," he added.

SDMC schools to get 586 primary teachers

"The move won't make any difference"

MUNEEF KHAN
NEW DELHI

Addressing the shortage of teaching staff at primary schools falling under the South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC), Samagra Shiksha-Delhi has announced the engagement of 586 schoolteachers, on a contractual basis, under the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA).

The move comes after Mayor Mukesh Surjan wrote a letter to Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, stating that there was a "shortfall of 600 teachers", which were to be "urgently filled with contractual teachers as a temporary measure".

Mr. Surjan said that these teachers had been serving at SDMC schools "since 2001" and "could not be engaged during the pandemic period".

"These teachers are now under the SSA and they will have a regular renewal of their contracts, unlike previous instances where

they had to wait and do multiple follow-ups," he said in the letter.

Currently, there are close to three lakh students studying in SDMC schools.

Reacting to the decision, some heads of SDMC schools said that they faced "bigger issues" and that the move "would make no difference" to their situation.

A school official, who did not wish to be named, said he faced a "massive" shortage of teachers for the "evening shift". "We have only 14 teachers handling the evening shift; there are 21 vacancies that need to be filled. I do not think we will get any teachers from the 586 that have been approved. These 586 teachers were serving on a contractual basis even before, except the lockdown period," he said.

He added that close to "400 students" had enrolled in the current academic year for the evening shift and the teaching staff were inadequate.

Valmiki Jayanti to be celebrated on grand scale, says Kejriwal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government will celebrate Valmiki Jayanti on a grand scale at Thyagaraj Stadium on Saturday, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said on Wednesday.

The Chief Minister made the announcement following his visit to the Valmiki Temple at Mandir Marg, which is located in his Assembly Constituency of New Delhi.

"This is the first time that the occasion will be marked on such a grand scale and each citizen of Delhi is invited to be part of the celebrations," Mr. Kejriwal was quoted as saying.

The CM said that the Ramayana is a legendary epic that tells society about the Dharma of each and every person in this world.

"If we adopt the path shown by Lord Valmiki even fractionally in our lives, then we will be able to lead much better lives," he added.

North Delhi civic body launches online portal for funeral services

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The North Delhi Municipal Corporation on Tuesday announced the launch of its online cremation and burial grounds application that will give users real-time updates on availability of slots and will also generate digital cremation slips.

Mayor Raja Iqbal Singh said users can utilise the portal section on the civic body's website. "The North civic body is making an all-out effort

to provide services to the citizens at their doorsteps," he added.

Currently, there are 12 crematoria under the North Delhi corporation's jurisdiction. They are Nigam Bodh Ghat, Inder Puri, Panchkuian Road, Satnagar, Beri Wala Bagh, Wazirpur, Paschim Vihar cremation ground, Haidpur cremation ground, Rohini Sector-26 cremation ground, Mangol Puri cremation ground, Mangol Puri cemetery and Mangol Puri burial ground.

225-foot-long national flag to be displayed at Red Fort

This is to mark 100 crore vaccinations

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The 225-foot-long monumental national flag made by the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), which was unveiled earlier in Leh, will be displayed at Red Fort to celebrate 100 crore COVID-19 vaccinations on Thursday.

The tricolour made of Khadi, which weighs 1,400 kg, is 150 feet wide and was conceptualised to celebrate

"Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav".

It was displayed at Leh in the Union Territory of Ladakh on October 2. As many as 180 Army jawans tugged the flag to a hilltop, 13,000 feet above sea level.

The Army is the custodian of the flag as the flag code has to be adhered while displaying it. A KVIC official said the flag will be used on a rotational basis for all events of national importance in the coming days.

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Punjab police foil major cross-border smuggling bid

Twenty-two pistols, 44 magazines and 100 live rounds besides a packet of heroin recovered

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT CHANDIGARH

In an intelligence-led operation, the Punjab police on Wednesday said they have recovered arms and ammunition besides heroin during a search operation from near the fencing on the border in Tarn Taran district.

The operation was jointly conducted by the Border Security Force (BSF) and the Counter Intelligence Amritsar in Mianwali Hithaar in the Khemkarn sector.

Officiating DGP Iqbal Preet Singh Sahota said on receipt of information that Pakistani operatives have concealed a huge con-



Huge haul: Arms and ammunition that were recovered in Tarn Taran district on Wednesday. ■PTI

signment of arms and heroin, the Counter Intelligence Amritsar was sent to the spot and a search operation was planned with the BSF authorities.

He said that during the combing operation, the teams have recovered 22 pistols (most of them .30 bore Star mark) along with 44 magazines and 100 live rounds

besides a packet of heroin (weighing 934 grams) packed in a black-coloured kit bag concealed in a paddy field.

Mr. Sahota said during preliminary investigation, it has come to light that the consignment was placed by Pakistani smugglers in the Indian territory as part of their 'conceal and clear' modus operandi.

A case under Sections 511 of the IPC, Sections 21, 28, 29 of the NDPS Act, Section 25 of the Arms Act and Section 14-Finance Act has been registered at the police station SSOA Amritsar on October 19.

Amarinder draws flak from Cong., Akali and AAP leaders

Former CM termed an 'opportunist' and accused of colluding with the BJP

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT CHANDIGARH

A day after former Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh announced that he would launch his own party, he came in for strong criticism from key political parties in the State on Wednesday.

Hitting out at Capt. Amarinder Singh (retd.), Punjab's Deputy Chief Minister Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa termed him an opportunist.

Mr. Randhawa also blamed Capt. Singh for enhancement of powers of the Border Security Force (BSF) in Punjab.

Shiromani Akali Dal leader and former Union Minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal said "It is now clear that Capt. Amarinder Singh was aligned with the BJP all along and backstabbed his party as well as Punjabis."

"The cosy relationship that Capt. Singh shared with the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi is also clear from the fact that despite being an opposition Chief



Former Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh. ■FILE PHOTO

Minister, the BJP never went after him like they did in the case of Mamata Banerjee and others. The most the PM said about him was that he was a 'swatantar fauji' (independent soldier). Capt. Singh's announcement that he would form his own party and align with the BJP is proof that the independent 'fauji' was always working in collusion with the BJP," she said.

The Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) Punjab affairs co-in-charge Ragh-

av Chadha in a statement said, "Prime Minister Narendra Modi is making every effort to prevent the Aam Aadmi Party from forming a government in Punjab. While the Bharatiya Janata Party, Akali Dal and the Congress are failing to stop the Aam Aadmi Party from forming a government in Punjab, the Prime Minister has fielded his beloved Capt. Amarinder Singh through a fourth party, to prevent the formation of the AAP government [next year]."

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HC asks NIA to file reply on Teltumbde's bail plea in Elgaar Parishad case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Wednesday directed the National Investigation Agency (NIA) to file a reply on a bail plea of Professor Anand Teltumbde, an accused in the Elgaar Parishad-Maoist links case.

Prof. Teltumbde (71), who is in jail for the last one-and-a-half years, had approached the HC last month, challenging the order of a special court denying him bail in July.

A Bench of Justices Nitin Jamdar and S.V. Kotwal directed the NIA to file its reply within two weeks.

In his plea filed through senior counsel Mihir Desai, Prof. Teltumbde has denied all charges levelled against him and urged the court to grant him bail.

On July 12 this year, the special NIA court had rejected Prof. Teltumbde's bail plea, observing in its order that there existed a prima facie case against him under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act. The academician, however, challenged the order and said the NIA had picked and chosen electronic evidence to suit its case.

CBSE prints Minister's photo as 'gram sevak'

He seeks its immediate removal

ALOK DESHPANDE MUMBAI

Maharashtra Minister of State for Home and Congress leader Satej Patil has found himself in a new position, that of being a 'gram sevak', thanks to the Central Board of Secondary Education.

Mr. Patil's photograph from a public function has been printed with a caption calling him a 'gram sevak' in a CBSE book.

The picture has been printed on page number 70 in a chapter on the duties and importance of Gram Panchayat. The lesson is in the Social Science book of Class III. Mr. Patil's office on Wednesday sent an email to CBSE chairman Manoj Ahu-

ja demanding immediate removal of the photograph.

Second-term Minister
"It is surprising that the reputed Central board has printed the photograph without any verification. Satej Patil is a senior Congress leader and reputed politician from Maharashtra. He has been serving his second term as the Minister and has been a member of the Legislative Council. No wrong should be taught to the children of this country. We hope the error is rectified by the board immediately," the mail said.

When contacted, Mr. Patil said, "Our office has already communicated this issue to the CBSE Chairman and I hope they will resolve this issue at the earliest."

Telangana poll panel conducts mock e-voting

It was part of the dry run of the country's first smartphone-based e-voting solution

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT KHAMMAM

Around 55.6% of the total 3,830 persons, who registered their names through the distributed ledger technology based e-voting application, participated in the dummy election (mock e-voting) conducted by the Telangana State Election Commission (TSEC) as part of the dry run of the country's first smartphone-based e-voting solution, on a pilot basis in Khammam on Wednesday.

According to sources, as many as 2128 registered voters in Khammam Municipal Corporation (KMC) limits participated in the mock voting through the "TSEC eVote" Android app from 7 am to 5 pm on Wednesday.

The TSEC's digital initiative is a

collaborative effort involving the Emerging Technologies Wing of the State IT Department and the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) to create an e-voting facility for certain sections of the electors including differently abled voters to make elections more inclusive and accessible.

3,830 people participated
Sources said that 14,804 persons tried to register their names for the mock voting through the mobile app during the stipulated period. However, only 3,830 persons succeeded in enrolling their names through the DLT-based e-Voting application.

Many applicants reportedly faced technical glitches during the registration process due to reasons like failure to link their Aadhaar cards with mobile phone numbers, among other factors, sources added.

In a statement, Khammam Municipal Commissioner Adarsh Surabhi said the mock voting (dry run for e-voting) was conducted successfully.

Mueen Ali appears before ED

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT KOCHI

Sayed Mueen Ali Shihab Thangal, son of Indian Union Muslim League (IUM) Kerala chief Panakkad Sayed Hyderali Shihab Thangal, appeared before the Enforcement Directorate officials in Kochi on Wednesday in connection with the agency probe into allegations of money laundering using *Chandrika* daily, the mouthpiece of the IUM.

The ED launched a probe after complaints that ₹10 crore, which was suspected to be part of the kickbacks related to the Palarivattom flyover corruption, was laundered by using the accounts of the daily. Mr. Mueen had earlier held IUM leader P.K. Kunhalikutty responsible for the financial crisis the newspaper was facing.

Actor questioned by ED in 'conman' case

Jacqueline Fernandez had skipped three summons earlier

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

Actor Jacqueline Fernandez appeared before the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday for questioning in connection with an over ₹200 crore money laundering case filed against alleged conman Sukesh Chandrashekar, officials said.

The actor deposed before the federal agency at 3.30 p.m. after skipping its summons at least three earlier.

Ms. Fernandez, 36, has once appeared before the agency in August and had recorded her statement under



Actor Jacqueline Fernandez

the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act in this case. It is understood that the agency wants to confront her with the main accused in the case - Mr. Chandrashekar and his

actor wife Leena Maria Paul - and also record her statement again.

The agency, they said, wants to understand some trail of funds and transactions that are allegedly linked to Ms. Fernandez in this case.

Actor and dancer Nora Fatehi, 29, recorded her statement with the ED last week in this case.

Ms. Fatehi's representative had said that she has been the victim in the case and being a witness, she is cooperating and helping the officers in the investigation.

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED
General public is hereby informed that one male Namely **Amit Raj S/o Sh. Amar Nath Gupta** R/o Gobarsahi Pokhar, PS Sadar, PO Khabra, Muzaffarpur, Bihar has been missing/kidnapped from Chawri Bazaar in the jurisdiction of PS Hauz Qazi, Delhi since 26.06.2021. In this regard, a case **DD No. 60A dated 05.10.2021 has been registered at P.S. Hauz Qazi, Delhi.** The description of the missing male is as under.
Age: 29 years, **Height:** 5'6", **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Face:** Long, **Build:** Thin, **Wearing:** White colour shirt, blue colour jeans pant and black sports shoes in feet. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out him but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone have any information about this kidnapped/missing male then please inform to the following Tel No./e-mail: **cic@cbi.gov.in** and Website: **http://cbi.nic.in**
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IN BRIEF



Student dies as school bus falls into pond in A.P.

SRIRAKULAM
One student was killed when a school bus fell into a pond near Koyyam village of Andhra Pradesh's Srikakulam district on Wednesday. According to the police, the victim was identified as Mylapilli Raju, 6. Five other students who were in the bus were saved.

Nearly 2 lakh yet to get second dose in Mysuru

MYSURU
Even as Mysuru district has over two lakh doses of vaccines in stock, there are about two lakh people who are yet to get their second dose even after completing the 84-day gap from their first dose. To reduce the gap in the fully vaccinated population, the Department of Health is holding a major drive on Friday to vaccinate at least one lakh people.

TDP bandh against attacks in A.P. partial

Jagan, Naidu trade charges against each other

STAFF REPORTER
VIJAYAWADA

The bandh called by the Opposition Telugu Desam Party to protest against the attacks on its party offices in Andhra Pradesh on Wednesday was partial.

Alleging that TDP official spokesman K. Pattabhiram had made objectionable comments and used unparliamentary language against Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy over the drugs seizure issue, unidentified miscreants attacked TDP offices and the houses of some party leaders.

Criticising the attacks, TDP president N. Chandrababu Naidu gave a bandh call on Wednesday. Many TDP leaders and activists were taken into preventive custody, and a few were kept under house detention.



Loud and clear: TDP activists participating in the bandh called by the party chief in Guntur on Wednesday. *T. VIJAYA KUMAR

Additional forces were deployed at bus and railway stations and at all government offices across the State as a precautionary measure.

Activists of YSRCP staged dharnas at many districts condemning the language used by the TDP official spokesman.

Blaming the TDP for Tuesday's disturbances, Mr. Reddy alleged that the Opposi-

tion party would not hesitate to incite communal violence as part of its conspiracy to derail the government's welfare agenda.

In his speech that followed the disbursement of financial assistance under the Jagananna Thodu scheme, Mr. Reddy said the TDP was unable to accept the growing popularity of the government, and was hence trying

Naidu to sit on 36-hour protest

STAFF REPORTER
VIJAYAWADA

TDP national president and former A.P. Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu will be staging a 36-hour demonstration at the TDP headquarters from 8 a.m. on October 21 till 8 p.m. the following day, in protest against Tuesday's attacks on his party offices and leaders' houses.

to vitiate the peaceful atmosphere.

Terming the attacks as "State-sponsored terrorism," Mr. Naidu, in a press release on Wednesday, said the ransacking of the State party office, the residence of spokesman K. Pattabhiram and the offices / houses of various leaders allegedly by the YSRCP cadres was a major conspiracy that should be ex-

Police arrest Pattabhiram

STAFF REPORTER
VIJAYAWADA

The Governorpet police on Wednesday evening arrested Telugu Desam Party official spokesman K. Pattabhiram from his residence here. He was booked under criminal conspiracy, promoting disharmony, enmity or hatred between different groups and other charges.

posed by the police.

Mr. Naidu alleged that the government and the police had colluded to intimidate the TDP leaders by resorting to physical attacks.

He said the attack on the TDP State office was unprecedented.

Never in the past had the headquarters of the main Opposition party been vandalised, Mr. Naidu said.

CBI files chargesheet in judge murder case

He was mowed down on July 28

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Wednesday filed a chargesheet against two accused in the alleged murder of Dhanbad Judge Uttam Anand, who was mowed down by an auto-rickshaw on July 28, officials said.

The CBI filed it before a special court against auto-rickshaw driver Lakhman Verma and his accomplice Rahul Verma under the Indian Penal Code sections related to murder (302) and destruction of evidence (201) besides common intention (34), they said.

The central agency has kept the probe open in the case, the officials said.

Lakhman Verma and Rahul Verma are both in judicial custody, they said, adding that their narco-analysis has been conducted by the CBI.



A forensic team inspecting the auto-rickshaw involved in the accident. *FILE PHOTO

The 49-year-old judge was allegedly mowed down by a heavy auto-rickshaw while he was jogging on July 28 morning in Dhanbad.

CCTV camera footage showed that the judge was jogging on one side of a fairly wide road at Randhir Verma Chowk in Dhanbad when the auto-rickshaw veered towards him, hit him from behind and fled the scene, killing him.

'Toll in rain-related incidents rises to 42'

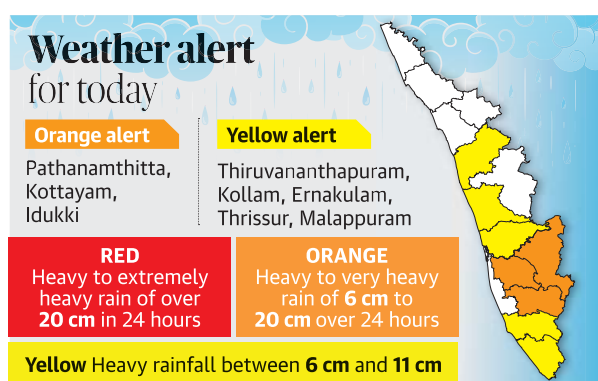
Bodies of 19 killed in landslips recovered; six persons are missing, says Pinarayi

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has said that 42 people had died in the State in natural calamities triggered by heavy rain between October 12 and 20.

The bodies of 19 people who died in landslips in the districts of Kottayam (12 people in Plapally and Kavali in Koottickal panchayat) and Idukki (seven from Kakkayar and Peruvanthanam) were recovered. Six people are still missing, the Chief Minister told a press briefing here on Wednesday.

As many as 3,851 families were currently accommodated in 304 relief camps across the State. Several families



circulation formed near the south Tamil Nadu coast was expected to bring widespread rainfall to Kerala till October 24, he said.

With the northeast monsoon likely to commence next week, the State would continue to remain alert, he said.

Government departments have been directed to disburse the financial assistance to the kin of the deceased at the earliest.

Meanwhile, the IMD has issued orange alert in Pathanamthitta, Kottayam and Idukki, and yellow alert for Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Ernakulam, Thrissur and Malappuram for Thursday.

were shifted to the homes of relatives. Earlier in the day, the Chief Minister informed the Assembly that 217 houses were destroyed and 1,393 damaged in rain-related calamities.

The Chief Minister under-

scored the need to remain vigilant, especially in high ranges and other vulnerable locations, given the heavy rainfall alert for Thursday issued by the India Meteorological Department (IMD). Additionally, the cyclonic

PM invites oil majors to partner with India

Modi discussed reforms undertaken in the oil and gas sector in the last 7 years

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday interacted with chief executives of global and Indian oil majors and invited them to partner with India in exploration and development of the oil & gas sector in the country.

The sixth such annual interaction, which comes amid soaring prices of petrol and diesel in the country, was attended by Saudi Aramco President & CEO Amin Nasser, British Petroleum CEO Bernard Looney, Rosneft Chairman & CEO Dr. Igor Sechin, Schlumberger Limited CEO Olivier Le Peuch, Honeywell UOP President & CEO Bryan Glover, Reliance Industries

CMD Mukesh Ambani and Vedanta Limited Chairman Anil Agarwal, among others.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Puri, Niti Aayog Vice Chairman Rajiv Kumar and Niti Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant were also part of the virtual meeting.

As per the official release, during the meeting, talking about the oil sector, Mr. Modi said that the focus has shifted from 'revenue' to 'production' maximization.

Further, he touched upon the need to enhance storage facilities for crude oil and talked about the rapidly growing natural gas demand in the country.

"He talked about the current and potential gas infrastructure development including pipelines, city gas distribution and LNG regasification terminals," the statement said, adding that the Prime Minister discussed in detail the reforms undertaken in the oil and gas sector in the last seven years, including the ones in exploration and licensing policy, gas marketing, policies on coal bed methane, coal gasification, and the recent reform in Indian Gas Exchange.

Such reforms will continue with the goal to make India 'Aatmanirbhar' in the oil & gas sector," he said.

"He said that India is a land of openness, optimism

and opportunities and is brimming with new ideas, perspectives and innovation. He invited the CEOs and experts to partner with India in exploration and development of the oil and gas sector in India," it added.

CEOs' take

The CEOs on their part said that India is adapting fast to newer forms of clean energy technology, and can play a significant role in shaping global energy supply chains. They talked about ensuring sustainable and equitable energy transition, and also gave their inputs and suggestions about further promotion of clean growth and sustainability.

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Get vaccinated for protection against COVID-19.

Follow Covid appropriate behaviour even after vaccination.



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Use mask correctly



Maintain 6 feet (2 gaj) physical distance



People with severe physical disabilities incapable of visiting the nearest COVID-19 Vaccination Centre, may contact on the numbers given below for vaccination.

District	North	North-West	North-East	New Delhi	East	West	South	South-East	South-West	Shadhara	Central
Phone No.	23645701	25951182 8130854050	22120014	1800 111 323	22029103	25100093 /94/96/97 7982661695	8287898412	8595748455	25 0 7 3 5 0 2 / 05 / 07 / 08	22120020	23270151

Directorate of Health and Family Welfare, Government of NCT of Delhi

DIP/Shabdarth/D/0109/21-22



Plugging the leak

India must assuage importers that its produce is compliant with trade demands on GM foods

Since June, the export of about 500 tonnes of rice from India has triggered an uproar in several European countries on the grounds that it was genetically modified (GM) rice. This emerged during a check by the European Commission's Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed that was testing rice flour by the French company Westhove. In June, France had issued a notification for unauthorised GM rice flour, identifying India as the point of origin, and alerting Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, the U.K. and the U.S. as the possible destination of products made with the flour. So in August, the American food products company Mars, fearing GM contamination, announced that it was recalling four of its product lines of 'Crispy M&M'. GM-free rice that is tagged as 'organic rice' is among India's high-value exports worth ₹63,000 crore annually. India does not permit the commercial cultivation of GM rice, but research groups are testing varieties of such rice in trial plots. So the suspicion is that rice from some of these test-plots may have "leaked" into the exported product. The Indian government has denied this possibility with a Commerce Ministry spokesperson alleging that the contamination may have happened in Europe "to cut costs". However, India has indicated that it will commission an investigation involving its scientific bodies.

India's history of crop modification using GM is one of test-plants finding their way to commercial cultivars before they were formally cleared. Thus, Bt-cotton was widely prevalent in farmer fields before being cleared. Though they have not been cleared, Bt-brinjal and herbicide-tolerant cotton varieties too have been detected in farmer fields. Though the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee is the apex regulator of GM crops, it is mandated that trials of GM crops obtain permission from States. Because of the close connections between farmers and State agriculture universities, which are continuously testing new varieties of crops employing all kinds of scientific experiments ranging from introducing transgenes to other non-transgenic modification methods, and the challenges of ensuring that trial plots are strictly segregated from farms, there is a possibility that seeds may transfer within plots. Because many Indian farmers are dependent on European imports, the Centre must rush to assuage importers that India's produce is compliant with trade demands. The fractious history of GM crops in India means that passions often rule over reason on questions of the safety of GM crops, and so India must also move to ensure that research into all approaches – GM or non GM – should not become a casualty in this matter of export-quality compliance.

For change

Changes in law on same-sex relations must be along with an attitudinal change in society

A recent advisory from the National Medical Commission (NMC) emphasising the need to avoid derogatory references to the LGBTQIA+ community in medical textbooks or teaching methods has underscored the value of institutional awareness on issues concerning queer and trans people. The advisory came after the Madras High Court voiced concern over "unscientific and derogatory information" in some textbooks. The NMC cautioned medical universities, colleges and other institutions to avoid such references while teaching subjects relating to gender. The institutions were also asked not to approve books with such references, while textbook authors were instructed to amend what has been written on issues such as virginity and homosexuality. The circular represents the fruition of efforts by Justice N. Anand Venkatesh, who framed guidelines in an order in June, to protect the community's rights. He had expanded the scope of a writ petition filed by a lesbian couple for protection against harassment into one that went into the status of those who did not conform to gender identity assigned at birth or to hetero-normative sexual orientation. The court's attention was then drawn to psychiatry, forensic medicine and toxicology textbooks. Justice Venkatesh had suggested that the NMC and the Indian Psychiatric Society bring in necessary changes in the curriculum.

The judge had directed the police not to harass sexual minorities, but later noted with consternation that such harassment was not only continuing, but sometimes extended to NGOs and other allies of the LGBTQIA+ community. He mooted changes to the police conduct rules to provide for punishing erring police personnel in this regard. He also noted disparaging references in the media. He found that a psychiatrist had referred a gay man for cognitive behavioural therapy, while prescribing anti-depressants and drugs meant to treat erectile dysfunction under the wrong impression that sexual orientation required some sort of therapy. In the course of the hearing, the judge had subjected himself to counselling so that he could overcome his own mindset, limitations in understanding and lack of exposure to issues of gender non-conformity and to go beyond the binary understanding of sex and sexuality. Judicial intervention generally has a salutary effect on the behaviour of the state, its institutions and structures. However, barring specific directions, the spirit of judicial orders, especially with regard to social issues, rarely percolates to every limb of the administration. The queer and gender non-conforming people have found an ally in the court, but they would need greater effort on the part of the authorities at various levels, if their rights are to be protected. In any case, any change in law in terms of recognising same-sex relations or understanding self-identification of gender must be complemented by an attitudinal change in society at large.

The carbon markets conundrum at COP26

Success in Glasgow hinges to a great extent on the conclusion of one of the most technical and highly contentious issues



RAVI S. PRASAD

If climate negotiations are compared to a game of diplomatic chess, Article 6 of the Paris Agreement would be the king to be checkmated and captured for concluding the Paris Agreement Work Programme (PAWP) at the 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Article 6 of the Paris Agreement introduces provisions for using international carbon markets to facilitate fulfilment of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) by countries. The success of COP26 at Glasgow hinges, to a great extent, on the conclusion of carbon markets discussions. Despite several rounds of high-level meetings, it remains one of the most technical and highly contentious unresolved issues of the PAWP.

A sensitive issue

Developing countries, particularly India, China and Brazil, gained significantly from the carbon market under the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) of the Kyoto Protocol. India registered 1,703 projects under the CDM which is the second highest in the world. Total carbon credits known as Certified Emission Reductions (CERs) issued for these projects are around 255 million which corresponds to

an overall anticipated inflow of approximately U.S.\$2.55 billion in the country at a conservative price of U.S.\$10 per CER. Therefore, logically, India has a lot to gain from a thriving carbon market. However, with the ratification of the Paris Agreement, the rules of the game have changed.

Unlike the Kyoto Protocol, now even developing countries are required to have mitigation targets. Developing countries are faced with a dilemma of either selling their carbon credits in return for lucrative foreign investment flows or use these credits to achieve their own mitigation targets. This has made Article 6 a highly sensitive issue that requires careful balancing of interests and expectations.

What should be debated

For developing countries, the new market mechanism is much more than a tool for achieving mitigation targets under the NDCs. Much like its predecessor, it should help promote sustainable development and assist climate change adaptation in the developing countries. It should encourage private sector participation and attract foreign investments to support low carbon development. While over 50% of the countries have communicated their intention of using market mechanisms to achieve NDC targets, India is not one of them as it aims to rely on domestic mitigation efforts to meet its NDC goals. It is the developed countries that would rely more on market mechanisms for achieving their climate targets as they would be comparatively low-cost options.



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The three critical issues that would be hotly debated in Article 6 negotiating rooms are CDM Transition, Accounting rules and Share of Proceeds to the Adaptation Fund. Let us examine them one by one.

CDM transition: The CDM projects have gone through due diligence and credits have been issued under UNFCCC oversight. Therefore, the Article 6 mechanism should honour the previous decisions and allow for a smooth transition of these projects and credits to ensure not only the viability of these projects but also inspire trust among the private investors in the UNFCCC decision-making process.

However, some countries have cast doubts on the environmental integrity of these credits and while there is greater acceptance for transition of projects/activities, the same is not the case for transition of credits. If the decision regarding transition of CDM is not favourable, it could lead to a loss of billions of dollars worth of potential revenue to India alone. A possible landing zone can be that the new supervisory body to be formed under the Paris Agreement can re-examine the validity and rigour of such credits.

Accounting rules: Article 6.4

mechanism is meant to incentivise the private sector and public entities to undertake mitigation activities for sustainable development. Under this mechanism, a country can purchase emission reductions from public and private entities of the host country and use it to meet its NDC targets. However, this does not automatically imply that emission reductions transferred from a host country be adjusted against its NDC targets. It must be appreciated that these reductions represent additional efforts of the private sector or public entities to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, and in fact raise global climate ambition. This is also in line with the provision of Article 6.5 of the Paris Agreement wherein the host country is not required to undertake corresponding adjustment for the projects outside its NDC.

The path ahead

Being a developing country, India does not need to undertake economy-wide emission reduction targets at this stage of its development. This means, not all mitigation actions fall within the purview of its NDC. Therefore, it can significantly gain from the market mechanism under Article 6.4 by selling emission reductions that lie outside its NDC. The counter view of developed countries, that this will deter raising ambition levels, is flawed as such efforts will in fact be additional to what have been committed in the NDC. Robust accounting will ensure that there will be no double-counting of emission reductions.

Share of Proceeds (SOP) to the

Adaptation Fund: For developing countries, adaptation is a necessity. However, it remains severely underfunded compared to financing for mitigation activities. While developing countries emphasise that the SOP must be uniformly applied to Articles 6.2 and 6.4 to fund adaptation, developed countries want to restrict its application to Article 6.4. This would disincentivise the Article 6.4 mechanism and limit voluntary cooperation to the cooperative approaches under Article 6.2 favoured by developed countries.

In a way, carbon markets allow developed countries to keep emitting greenhouse gases while developing countries benefit from the revenue generated from the sale of their carbon credits. Central to the discussions on Article 6 is equitable sharing of carbon and developmental space. Climate justice demands that developing countries get access to their fair share of global carbon space. As developing countries are nudged to take greater mitigation responsibilities, a facilitative carbon market mechanism that respects the principles enshrined in UNFCCC would greatly help accelerate their transition to low carbon development and would be a win-win solution for all countries.

Ravi S. Prasad was Additional Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change and Chief Negotiator, Climate Change - India (till February 2021). He is now Additional Chief Secretary and Agriculture Production Commissioner (Agriculture, Veterinary and Fisheries), Government of Assam. The views expressed are personal

The outlines of a national security policy

Once cybertechnology becomes a key variable in the defence policies of a nation, land size or GDP size are irrelevant



SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY

National security concepts have, in the two decades of the 21st century, undergone fundamental changes. These fundamental changes reveal that a large country, in terms of size of geography, population and GDP, will not deter any country. Cyber warfare has vastly reduced the deterrent value of these sizes since cyber weaponry will be available even to small island countries, and the capacity to cause devastation to a large nation by cyber warfare is within the reach of even small and poorer nations.

An equaliser

Innovations in weapons moved from stones in the pre-historic era, to bows and arrows, and later to cannons and guns in the 19th century. These were followed by aeroplanes, nuclear bombs, and intercontinental missiles in the 20th century. In the 21st century, the world is moving to cyber weapons-based warfare which will also immobilise current tangible advanced weapon systems in a war.

Therefore, in the 21st century, after cybertechnology enters as an important variable in nations' defence policies, the size of a country will cease to matter. Sri Lanka, or North Korea, empowered by cybertechnology, will be equal to the United States, Russia, India or Chi-

na, in their capability to cause unacceptable damage. Weapons in the 21st century will merely mean a cyber button on the desk of the nation's military and the leader of the government. Geographical land size or GDP size will be irrelevant in war-making capacity or deterrence.

More innovations

These fundamental changes are entirely due to the earlier 20th century innovations in cybertechnology and software developments. Drones, robots, satellites and advanced computers as weapons are already in use. More innovations are around the corner. Some examples of further innovations are artificial intelligence and nanotechnology.

Warfare, therefore, will be no more just mobilisation of weapons or be dependent on the size of the armed forces of men. It will be cyber warfare. From remote controlled drones to artificial intelligence driven weapons systems, etc., will matter in the 21st century.

Hence, national security in the 21st century covers not merely the overt and covert operations but, more crucially, electronic operations from a remote centre beyond the front lines of ground forces or air power to track enemy assets by these newly weaponised cyber instruments of technology. Tracking those cyber warfare centres of the adversary will need a new national security policy.

By credible accounts, China, recently, publicly cautioned Indians to sit up and take notice by using cybertechnology to shut down Mumbai's electric supply in popu-



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lated areas of the city, for a few hours. This was to overawe Indians as we were clueless for hours as to what went wrong till reports emerged about a possible cyberattack. Thus, each nation will have to prepare more for bilateral conflicts in the 21st century that are based on cyber warfare rather than in multilateral acts of conventional war or rely on military blocs for mobilisation.

The four dimensions to this

National security at its root in the 21st century will depend on mind-boggling skills in four dimensions:

Objectives: the objective of the National Security Policy in the 21st century is to define what assets are required to be defended, the identity of opponents who seek to overawe the people of a target nation, by unfamiliar moves to cause disorientation of people. Although the novel coronavirus is perhaps accidental, it has completely destabilised peoples globally and their governments in all nations of the world over, and also derailed the global economy because nations were most unprepared for such a pandemic, even conceptually. So far, nearly two years of the pandemic have left several millions [or more] dead with most

economies having been driven to the edge of disaster. Normal life has been disrupted. Never before has there been such a virus attack of this dimension. This is a preview of the kinds of threats that await us in the coming decades which a national security policy will have to address by choosing a nation's priorities.

Priorities: In such scenarios of uncertainties about the future in the 21st century, national security priorities will require new departments for supporting several frontiers of innovation and technologies such as hydrogen fuel cells, desalination of seawater, thorium for nuclear technology, anti-computer viruses, and new immunity-creating medicines. This focus on a new priority will require compulsory science and mathematics education, especially in applications for analytical subjects. Every citizen will have to be alerted to new remote controlled military technology and be ready for it.

Strategy: The strategy required for this new national security policy will be to anticipate our enemies in many dimensions and by demonstrative but limited pre-emptive strikes by developing a strategy of deterrence of the enemy.

For India, it will be the China cyber capability factor which is the new threat for which it has to devise a new strategy.

The agenda for the new strategy will be critical and emerging technologies, connectivity and infrastructure, cyber security and maritime security. But, alas, India by trying to befriend nations on both sides of the divide ended up with

no serious ally internationally. The position of India is much like that of the bat species in the *Panchatantra*.

Methods to use

Resource mobilisation: The macroeconomics of resource mobilisation depends on whether a nation has 'demand' as an economic deficit or not. That means, for example, if demand for a commodity or service is in deficit or insufficient to clear the market of the available supply of the same, then liberal printing of currency and placing it in the hands of consumers is recommended for the economy to recover the demand supply parity. This then is one way of facilitating resource mobilisation in a demand supply balanced market. A way to increase demand is by lowering the interest rate on bank loans or raising the rates in fixed deposits which will enable banks to obtain liquidity and lend liberally for enhancing investment for production.

If it is 'supply' that is short or in deficit compared to demand, then special measures are required to incentivise to encourage an increase in supply. The bottomline is that except for endowments of nature, a true economist adept in macroeconomics and inter-sectoral impact, will not despair for a lack of resources. Macroeconomics has many ways to generate resources without taxation. Printing of notes of currency is one way when there is a demand shortage.

Dr. Subramanian Swamy is a BJP Member of Parliament and former Union Minister for Law and Justice

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

Nature's fury

First, it was Kerala, battered and bruised by heavy rains, claiming precious lives and infrastructure. Now we have Uttarakhand where the situation seems far worse (Page 1, October 20). Natural calamities are beyond human perception; therefore, there need to be foolproof measures in place to ensure minimal losses. The NDRF teams do a great job, without an iota of doubt, but perhaps they need to be deployed immediately after alerts by the India Meteorological Department. Hilly terrain, as the reports show, would require better monitoring systems in place.

BALASUBRAMANIAM PAVANI, Secunderabad

EU food recall

The Genetically Modified (GM) contamination of rice flour allegedly originating

from India, according to notifications on the European Commission's rapid alert system, naturally rekindles the debate on the desirability of growing GM crops (Page 1, October 20). The problem is that even field trials of GM crops are not without dangerous consequences. Pollen from GM plants can be accidentally transferred to other normal plants with unpredictable outcomes. Growing GM and non-GM crops is considered so dangerous that European Union law stipulates a minimum distance between these crops, depending on the particular variety of crop grown. It is not yet proven conclusively by scientists that foods from GM crops are completely safe for human consumption. The fears of adverse effects on human health such as

transfer of antibiotic resistance to humans and toxicity are not yet satisfactorily addressed. Until proven conclusively to be completely safe by scientists, GM crops should not be allowed even for field trials, let alone for growing on a commercial scale.

KOSARAJU CHANDRAMOULI, Hyderabad

Gandhi and Savarkar

It is true Savarkar kindled the national spirit against the British but with a different ideology. Gandhiji was for a pluralistic India taking within its fold the minorities without whom India would not be complete. The notorious Cellular jail in the Andamans was where inmates belonging to different faiths suffered and perished because of the atrocities perpetrated by

the colonial rulers. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's statement on Savarkar is perhaps a precursor to the BJP rewriting history. Could it be a move to 'installing its own heroes' in the new Parliament building which is being built at breakneck speed?

N.G.R. PRASAD, Chennai

Captain's party

Captain Amarinder Singh's plan to float his own party is sure to send shivers down the spine of the Congress leadership. It is a development which the Grand Old Party eventually asked for by mismanaging its affairs in Punjab right from the time it inducted Navjot Singh Sidhu into its fold. Mr. Sidhu has a propensity to tread his own path. The Congress spent much time in placating Mr. Sidhu, revealing strategic

flaws in its approach. Captain Amarinder's party is sure to eat into a sizeable share of Congress votes.

V. SUBRAMANIAN, Chennai

Vaccine second dose

There are a lot of people – like me and my daughter for instance – who have received both doses of the COVID-19 vaccine but are unable to get completion certificates. In our case, the second dose, on July 13, 2021, is shown as the first dose in the certificate. In my case, I have tried my level best by sending emails to all the high-profile authorities as this type of an error cannot be corrected online. Unless such serious errors are corrected how is the Government to have the right data on vaccination?

K.K. NAIR, Thiruvananthapuram

■ The concern is that around 40% of those who got their first jab are still to receive the second dose.

The lackadaisical attitude of people who believe that the pandemic has waned, vaccine hesitancy, low vaccine coverage in rural and isolated areas, and an overall slackening in the pace of vaccination are all causes. The increase in the gap between the two doses of Covishield, which accounts for more than 85% of all vaccinations, has also resulted in people waiting for a longer period to get their second dose. If there is no shortage of doses, then the gap between the two jabs can be shortened. Ramping up the production of the two other approved vaccines will also help in full vaccination.

Dr. Biju C. MATHEW, Thiruvananthapuram

No place for women in Karnataka

A backlash is seen against the language of autonomy through an invocation of traditionalist ideals



JANAKI NAIR

Karnataka's Ministers and other Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders are currently outdoing each other in unchecked hate speech against women. A second-time Minister of Health, K. Sudhakar, speaking at a World Mental Health Day event at the prestigious National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) in Bengaluru, decided to expound on the "healing properties" of the "great Indian family", and regretted that Indian women were either choosing to remain unmarried or not have children, or worse, have children using surrogacy. These bizarre and unrelated "facts" were not drawn from any of the (still fortunately reliable) National Family Health Surveys (NFHS), or even local regional data sets. When he did ground his remarks in the YouGov-Mint-CPR Millennial Survey, which clearly states there is no gender difference in these trends, he managed to change the foot in his mouth, asserting that the "traditional family" and its value system would be a solace to mentally troubled youth.

His assertions succeeded in giving his mates a chance to provide further "justifications" that were even more delusional. C.T. Ravi, the National General Secretary of the BJP, who has single-handedly coarsened the political discourse in Karnataka, chimed in to "qualify" this statement. Not all women were like that, he said, adding that only the "modern" ones, or those working in the Information Technology/Biotechnology (IT/BT) sector, lived in micro families and aped women in the U.K. and the U.S. In fact, the "mindset of modern women has broadened too much", he helpfully added.

Delusional statements

All these delusional statements would have been laughable had they not come from people in power, who decide not only the priorities of Government policies but put in place the State's laws. Or, even scarier, they are coming from people in pow-



K. MURALI MOHAR

er who are willing to share space with those who resort to violence to confine that alarmingly "broadened" mind of the Karnataka woman. An increasing number of cases are being reported of hyperactive Bajrang Dal, Sri Ram Sene, Hindu Jagarana Vedike and other right-wing men's groups intervening in inter-faith relationships using violent methods.

Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, who had recorded with pride the alacrity with which his State's police had acted in checking the "moral policing" of a woman in a burqa seen with a man (presumably of another faith), chose to justify such assertions of moral values when virtues of the same feather were involved. Such "actions and reactions" of Hindu male vigilantes, he said, speaking at Mangaluru in Dakshina Kannada, a region that has been severely polarised, were not just inevitable but necessary in order to check those "hurting sentiments in society".

The latest round of misogyny, which has gone alarmingly uncontested by those very IT/BT women who are often the face of the State's, and especially Bengaluru's, flourishing economic growth, is part of a deepening public discourse on women. The new Home Minister, Araga Jnanendra, in his first reaction to the Mysuru gang rape incident in August 2021, did not hesitate to shame and blame the victim – an MBA student at that – chastising the couple for having visited those "dangerous" places. The University of Mysore obediently followed that "suggestion" of securing women's safety by confining them to hostels after 6 p.m. (The order was quickly withdrawn).

In Karnataka, as now in most of In-

dia, love is a four-letter word. Feminist historians, among others, have shown that the tired chant of a "culture in danger" or the "family in danger" has been repeatedly invoked over the last 150 years, particularly at times when women assert and claim their rights to education, jobs, safe public spaces, etc. "Family/tradition in danger" seems to be an inexhaustible capital for those who are alarmed by what Indian women have achieved, particularly hard won legal rights since the late 1970s. What we are witnessing is a backlash against the language of autonomy and rights through an invocation of nationalist and kinship ideals.

Such statements must not be isolated from other actions of the Karnataka Government. Karnataka recently decided to shut down close to 187 *santwana* kendras (mediation and counselling centres), set up in 2001 and easily among the most sought after services by women facing domestic abuse and violence in rural areas and small towns. Ostensibly, this shutdown was proposed on the grounds that the State could not spare ₹6 crore from its Budget, and did not want to replicate Central programmes.

NCRB data

Remember that the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data for 2020 found that 30% of crimes against women were by family members – sons, husbands, fathers and uncles. According to the fifth round of the NFHS, Karnataka witnessed the largest increase in spousal violence, from 20.6% in NFHS-4 to 44.4% in NFHS-5. By raising the volume on "culture" and "society" in danger, the State simultaneously

shuts the door, and, therefore, the public eye, on what High Court judges across the country have proclaimed as one of the most dangerous places for women – the home. *Santwana* kendras were crisis centres providing legal education, psychological counselling and recuperative strength to victims of domestic violence. Reports from as recently as 2015 had confirmed how crucial they had become for women's mental wellness in all parts of Karnataka, their services largely being availed of by Other Backward Classes (OBCs), Scheduled Castes (SCs), Muslims and Scheduled Tribes (STs), in short, among the less privileged in the caste/class hierarchy.

Overt power has now been conceded to (male) vigilante groups to forcefully intervene in what they believe are assaults on vaguely defined Indian, or more properly, Hindu culture. Brutal and macabre acts of violence in ending interfaith relationships are now becoming commonplace, as in the "beheading" of Arbaz Aftab Mullah in Belagavi by men who had threatened the victim and have been identified as belonging to the Sri Ram Sene. To date, no arrests have been made in this murder case. It is these acts of violence that the Chief Minister has publicly condoned.

At the same time, Karnataka's eagerness to match if not outdo the Uttar Pradesh model of governance is also taking the form of weaponising the law to show women their place. Raucous demands have been made to pass an "anti-love jihad" law. This twin strategy, of combining law with violence, successfully replaces a language of rights with a discourse on nation and kinship. It replaces women's recourse to legal strategies and empathetic counselling with the moral authority of nation and kin, largely exercised by men. Perhaps it is not accidental that in a Cabinet that has only one woman member, the Minister in charge of Women and Child Development in Karnataka is Achar Halappa Basappa, a man whom Myneta reports as having one criminal case against him. Only they can be trusted to govern Karnataka's daughters.

Janaki Nair taught Modern Indian History at the Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi

Is the coal crisis over?

The supply of coal in India is well below the demand



ANIL SWARUP

Initially, there was a huge debate on whether there was a coal crisis at all. We aren't discussing coal any more. Hence, wasn't there a crisis? Or, if there was one, is it all over?

"Crisis" is a subjective term. There are no objective criteria of determining whether there is a crisis or not. However, "shortage" can be determined objectively. No one can deny the fact that the supply of coal in India is well below the demand. Whereas the demand is nearly a billion million tonnes (MT), the supply is well below 800 MT within the country. When this shortage becomes acute, in terms of the availability of coal at power plants, it is sometimes called a crisis. The acute shortage can be on the account of production, an increased demand or a failure of supply chain management when the stocks are sufficient at the pit head but requisite supply is not made to the power plants.

Coal crises keep recurring in the country primarily due to the shortage in coal production. Ironically, India sits on 300 billion MT of coal and, as mentioned earlier, our annual requirement is around a billion MT per annum. A similar crisis had occurred in 2014. Back then, it was on account of a Comptroller and Auditor General who played to the gallery after making his calculations just like an accountant. It led to devastating consequences and coal production suffered. The crisis was managed through meticulous planning and execution.

The immediate coal crisis is attributed to an increase in the demand for power on account of the post-pandemic economic recovery, an increase in international prices of coal, unseasonal rainfall and a mismanagement of the supply chain within the country. Apparently, some of it has been managed and we are no longer discussing the crisis. No one seems to be talking about the stagnation in the production of coal by Coal India Limited (CIL). The production has stood at 600 MT for the past three years. Had the production grown at the rate at which it was increasing (8-9%) during 2014-16, the current production of CIL itself would have been more than 750 MT. Also not being discussed is the stagnant coal production from the non-CIL domain. A number of mines were allocated to entities other than CIL. Why haven't these mines augmented coal production? Non-CIL coal production fell from 128 MT in 2019-20 to 120 MT in 2020-21. The de-

pendence on imported coal increased and, hence, when the international prices shot up, as they did recently, there is a crisis.

The crisis will recur in case the coal production is not augmented. How then can the production of coal be increased? Some of the answers lies in what happened during 2014-16.

Supported, not monitored

CIL has a fabulous team. It needs to be supported and not "monitored". The Union Government has an important role to play. CIL should focus on mining. Government officers should interact with the States, but before that, this ongoing "war" between the Union Government and the States will have to stop. Ironically, all the coal resides in States that are ruled by non-National Democratic Alliance (NDA) parties. Officers from the Union Government will have to go down to the States, convey a value proposition and sit with State-level officers to resolve issues related to land acquisition and forest clearances. During 2014-16 not a single meeting with the States was held in Delhi. All meetings were held at the State headquarters. The Union Government will also have to take up clearance-related issues with the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

CIL, which had reserves of around ₹35,000 crore in 2015, now appears to be strapped for funds, especially cash flows as power generating companies (GENCOs) owe more than ₹20,000 crore to CIL. Funds will have to be arranged for the expansion of existing mines as well as the opening of new ones. First, the Union Government should stop squeezing more funds out of CIL as it has done during the past few years by way of dividends to balance its own Budget, when this money should have been used for opening new mines and expanding existing ones. Second, it should consider providing cash to CIL against the dues owed by GENCOs. Non-CIL production will have to be augmented. There was an inter-ministerial Coal Project Monitoring Group (CPMG), which was set up in 2015 to fast-track clearances, that became dormant. This will need to be revived.

The coal crisis may be temporarily over, but if the fundamentals of the crisis are not taken care of, it is likely to recur. What also needs to be looked at is the financial crisis that is brewing in the power sector. GENCOs have a receivable of more ₹2,00,000 crore from distribution companies. They, in turn, owe more than ₹20,000 crore to CIL. There is, hence, a serious cash crunch though most of these entities show profit in their balance sheets.

Anil Swarup is a retired civil servant and a former Secretary in the Government of India

The global tax revolution

New regime may bring in 'Golden Era' of direct taxes

T.C.A. RAMANUJAM
T.C.A. SANGEETHA

International tax jurisprudence received a shot in the arm when 130 countries agreed to introduce a new global tax regime for taxing multinational corporations (MNCs) operating the globe over. For over a century now, the corporate tax system was based on the application of the twin principles of the source rule and the residence rule. All that a MNC had to do to avoid high tax in a country where they did business was to get registered in a tax haven. Globalisation allowed MNCs to replace fears of double taxation with the joys of double non-taxation by exploiting mismatches between the tax laws of various countries and by cutting taxable profits. A digitalised world made their task easier.

Tax havens came in handy for the MNCs. It became easier with the rise of intangible assets, which could easily be shifted from one country to another. But shifting of profits to low tax havens deprived poor countries of revenue by as much as 5% as compared to an alternative system where profits are taxed based on the current location of companies, revenues, their employees and their wage codes. Small countries wanted investments on a grand scale. That could be achieved with low direct taxes. Countries like Belgium, Britain, India and Indonesia brought in Digital Services Taxes on the local sales of foreign firms with online platforms. The U.S. objected and threatened retaliatory tariffs.

Hence, realisation dawned on all the countries that the time had come for a radical change in the tax system. U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen announced that it was time to end the "race to the bottom" on corporate tax. Egged on by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 130 countries achieved a historic agreement in June on a more stable and fairer international tax architecture. As per the agreement, MNCs would no longer pay taxes in the country where they register their headquarters for tax purposes, but would pay in the country where they generate their sales. A minimum global tax of 15% on profits would be introduced in all countries.

How did this happen? The Global Financial Crisis of 2008 forced all countries to change the international tax rules to prevent base erosion and profit shifting. Anti-abuse provisions, new transfer pricing documentation provisions, countering harmful tax practices more effectively taking into account transparency and economic substance and the introduction of an effective dispute resolution mechanism were the objectives that were agreed upon.

The OECD estimates that the proposal to levy 15% minimum tax on global corporations that do business in each country would fetch additional \$150 billion per year and move taxing rights of over \$100 billion in profits to different countries. Taxing rights would be reallocated so that a slice of the profits could be levied according to the location of a company's sales. A minimum rate of 15% would be levied on such a slice of profits. As per the agreement, countries where MNCs operate would get the right to tax at least 20% of the profits exceeding a 10% margin.

India, China, Russia, Germany and other countries have signed the agreement, which has to be implemented from 2023. But there are hurdles to cross. India would have to reconsider the equalisation levy. Revenue from the equalisation levy should be compared with the 15% global minimum tax. The Ministry of Finance said significant issues, including the share of profit allocation and the scope of subject-to-tax rules, would have to be addressed and a consensus agreement had been reached on October 8. The draft rules would reset the system for international taxation and subject MNCs to new nexus and profit allocation rules.

Simultaneous implementation of the law by all the signatories to the agreement would be a stupendous job. If achieved, it may herald the dawn of the "Golden Era" of direct taxes. Revamping India's Direct Tax Code to sail with the concept of global minimum tax requires effort, which is easier said than done.

T.C.A. Ramanujam is Chief Commissioner of Income Tax (retd.) and an advocate of the Madras High Court. T.C.A. Sangeetha is an advocate of the Madras High Court

DATA POINT



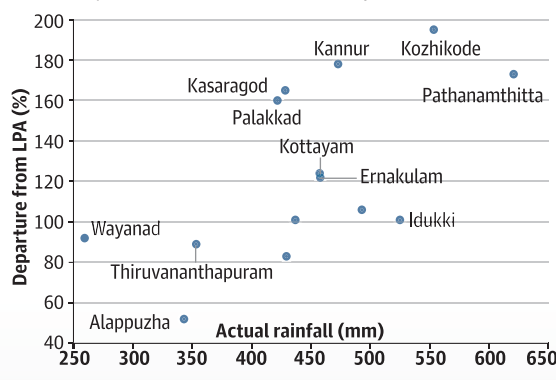
In deep water: People affected by the floods clean garbage at Kuttanad in Alappuzha on Sunday. ■ SURESH ALPUPZHA

A wet October in Kerala

In the first 20 days of October 2021, every district in Kerala received more than 250mm of rainfall. In 10 of the 14 districts, rainfall received in October was twice the Long Period Average (LPA). As rainfall increased, water inflow to reservoirs also increased in October, swelling their storage to very high levels. Heavy to very heavy rainfall (64.5mm to 204.4mm) is predicted for Pathanamthitta, Kottayam and Idukki districts on Thursday. Therefore, inflows into major reservoirs in these districts and the resulting spills (excess water deliberately released from reservoirs) have to be closely monitored. By Vignesh Radhakrishnan,

Jasmin Nihalani and Sumant Sen

1. Pouring down | The graph shows the actual rainfall received in the first 20 days of October 2021 and the % departure from the LPA in every district of Kerala

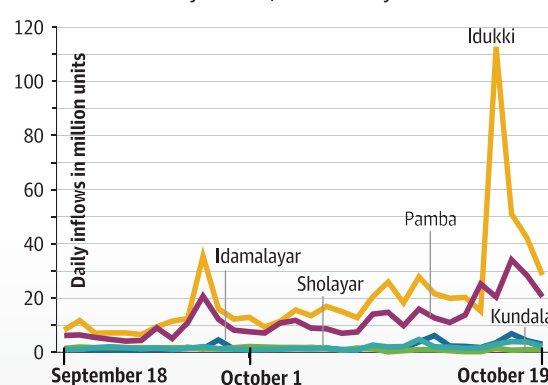


2. Five year highs | The table compares rainfall received between October 1 and 20, 2021 with the five previous Octobers. For instance, in Ernakulam, 457.9 mm of rainfall was received between October 1 and 20, 2021, which is 196% of the rainfall received in October 2020 and 77% of October 2019. October 2019 was the wettest October between 2016 and 2020 in 13 districts

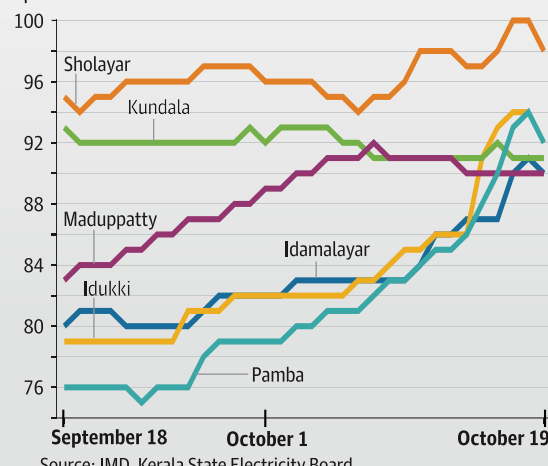
District	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Alappuzha	277%	152%	105%	73%	141%
Kannur	1049%	277%	185%	113%	183%
Ernakulam	285%	156%	114%	77%	196%
Idukki	448%	184%	161%	140%	176%
Kasaragod	1800%	339%	294%	83%	138%
Kollam	261%	153%	155%	107%	199%
Kottayam	297%	159%	117%	77%	182%
Kozhikode	1302%	256%	207%	97%	234%
Malappuram	502%	207%	158%	79%	334%
Palakkad	478%	410%	185%	112%	260%
P.Thitta	277%	145%	101%	113%	268%
T.puram	814%	146%	170%	102%	174%
Thrissur	437%	228%	157%	83%	197%
Wayanad	443%	219%	107%	76%	208%

*T.puram: Thiruvananthapuram; P.Thitta: Pathanamthitta

3. Rising inflows | The graph shows the daily inflow of water into major reservoirs. The inflow has increased gradually in October, especially in the Idukki and Pamba reservoirs. The districts in which they are located are expected to receive heavy to very heavy rainfall on Thursday. Hence, inflows may increase further



4. Dam watch | The storage levels (%) of all major reservoirs have surged in October. As of October 19, all of them crossed the 90% mark. Planned spills have already been initiated in the Pamba and Idukki reservoirs. Unlike discharges, spills are not meant for specific utilisation



Source: IMD, Kerala State Electricity Board

The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO OCTOBER 21, 1971

French firm offers help

The Government of India has received an offer of assistance from the French manufacturers of "Mirage" jets for its programme to develop new types of aircraft for its military and probably civilian requirements also. The Government is considering the offer and the French party is awaiting the Government's reply. Further details of the kind of assistance offered by the manufacturers of "Mirage" are not known. It is believed that the offer relates to the design and development of the engine for the new types of aircraft that the Union Government wants to develop within the country. Mr. M.H. Bizot, Honorary Chairman of Banque Nationale de Paris and Chairman of the French economic mission, which is now on a visit to India for discussion with the Government and industrialists on the promotion of Indo-French co-operation, declined to answer questions on the French offer relating to the Mirage jets. He said France was now offering technical assistance to India for the building of a satellite launching site at Sriharikota, near Madras. Mr. Bizot said that the mission was very much impressed with the opportunities available in India for investment.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO OCTOBER 21, 1921

A congratulatory meeting

Under the joint auspices of the South Indian Liberal Federation, Dravidian Association, the Twenty Club, and the Non-Brahmin Vakil's Association, a public meeting was held yesterday evening in Egmore to thank H.E. Lord Willingdon for recommending two Non-Brahmins for the High Court Bench, and to congratulate Messrs M.D. Devadoss, and M. Venkatasubbarao on the elevation as High Court Judges. There was a good gathering. Mr. O. Thanikachalam Chetti who presided said that the present appointments were striking instances of the recognition of merit among the Non-Brahmin community and that they were made in spite of the adverse influences at work. Mr. S. Muthiah Mudaliar in moving the resolution "That this meeting of the Non-Brahmins of Madras begs to convey its heartfelt thanks to H.E. Lord Willingdon for the appointment of two Non-Brahmins as Judges of the High Court of Judicature at Madras," said that the tremendous difficulties and obstacles in the way of the appointments both here and in England had been overcome by the indefatigable exertions of His Excellency Lord Willingdon.

FROM PAGE ONE

'U.P. dragging its feet on Lakhimpur Kheri case'

"How many of the accused have been arrested?" the CJI asked.

Mr. Salve said 10 have been arrested in the case of the farmers' deaths. He highlighted that there were two crimes involved. One was regarding the running over of farmers and the other concerning the lynching of three people in the ensuing violence. He submitted that the second incident was "more difficult to investi-

gate" as it was a mob that was involved.

The court observed that the case needed to be bifurcated. The Bench, which had taken *suo motu* cognisance of the Lakhimpur Kheri events, said it would first focus on the farmers' deaths. The court finally adjourned the hearing to October 26, giving time for U.P. to provide more information about their investigation.

Indian team meets Taliban Deputy PM

India was also a signatory to the joint statement issued by representatives of China, Iran, Russia, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan which called on the Taliban to keep their commitment on forming an "inclusive" government and ensuring that their territory is not used by terror groups to threaten the security of other countries, curb transnational drug routes and pursue "friendly relations" with neighbouring countries. "It was stated that further practical engagement with Afghanistan needed to take into account the new reality, that is the Taliban coming to power in the country, irrespective of the official recognition of the new Afghan government by the international community," the statement said, marking a decided shift in India's previously tough stand on engaging the Taliban.

In the past few months,

the Indian Ambassador in Doha has met with Taliban representatives and an Indian delegation took part in another multi-country meeting in Doha that included Taliban representatives as well. However, this is the first such official participation by India where the delegation, which also includes MEA Joint secretary for Eurasia Adarsh Swaika met directly with Taliban officials who are part of the new regime in Kabul that remains unrecognised by any country.

The Moscow format meeting, part of a series of meetings on Afghanistan since 2017, concluded with a proposal to launch a collective initiative for an international donor conference convened by the United Nations to collect funds for Afghanistan's economic and financial reconstruction.

The U.S. did not send any representative to the meeting.

Maharashtra firm sold 'GM-contaminated' rice

The European Commission's contamination alert prompted the recall of tonnes of confectionery items and baked goods throughout Europe this summer, and provoked concerns that India's ₹65,000 crore worth of annual rice exports could be hurt by the allegations, as *The Hindu* reported on Wednesday.

"The GMO contamination is suspected to have been found in rice flour which was processed in the EU, and they themselves are not sure of the exact source of the contaminant. The broken white rice exported from India, which is allegedly one of the possibilities, has passed through many hands before reaching the

actual processors in the EU," said a Commerce Ministry statement.

Ministry spokesperson D.J. Narain told *The Hindu* that the exporter had been identified as wholesale trader Omprakash Shivprakash of Akola in Maharashtra, who said the exported rice was non-GM.

The Ministry suggested that cross contamination could have taken place while the broken rice was being processed into final products in Europe. "The experts in India, both from the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) and agricultural experts from the IARI and other rice experts are, however, investigating the matter," it added.

Denied bail, Aryan Khan moves High Court

Mr. Khan had sought bail through senior advocate Amit Desai on the grounds that there has been no recovery of possession of contraband found from him. Additional Solicitor General Anil Singh, for the NCB, opposed Mr. Khan's bail, saying: "Mr.

Khan has a role in procurement and consumption of contraband. It is revealed that he used to procure contraband from Mr. Merchant and the sources connected to him from whose conscious possession six grams of charas was recovered."

Kushinagar now hub of Buddhist tourist circuit

"There is a special focus on the development of places associated with Lord Buddha through better connectivity, and creation of facilities for devotees. Lumbini, the birth place of Lord Buddha, is not far from here. Sarnath, where Lord Buddha gave the first sermon, is also within a radius of 100-250 km. Both Gaya, where Buddha attained enlightenment, is also a few hours away. With the launch of this airport, I, as a representative of Poorvanchal, have also fulfilled one of my commitments to this region," Mr. Modi said.

Apart from Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia, Minister of State for External Affairs Meenakshi Lekhi, Tourism Minister G. Kishan Reddy, Law Minister

Kiren Rijiju and Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Arjun Ram Meghwal were present.

In his first comments on Air India since privatisation, Mr. Modi said, "the decision on Air India will give new energy to the aviation sector in the country."

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said, "The State will get 11 more airports in the years to come, including two international ones."

On the sidelines of the Kushinagar airport inauguration, Mr. Namal Rajapaksa presented to Mr. Modi a Sinhala-Tamil-English translation of the Bhagavad Gita. (With inputs from Suhasini Haidar in New Delhi and Meera Srinivasan in Colombo)

Security forces kill four terrorists in J&K

Police say two were involved in killing migrant labourers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
SRINAGAR

Security forces on Wednesday eliminated four militants, including two commanders of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) who were involved in the killing of migrant labourers in Jammu and Kashmir, police have said.

While two ultras were killed in the encounter at Dragad in Shopian, two others were eliminated in a gun-battle in Kulgam district, said a police official.

One soldier lost his life while two others suffered injuries in the Shopian operation.

According to a defence spokesman, a joint operation was launched on Wednesday evening after information was received about the movement of two terrorists along the Ashmuji-Dev-sar road in Kulgam district.

He said the ultras opened fire, forcing the security forces to retaliate. "In the ensuing firefight, two ter-



Close watch: CRPF personnel conducting checks in Srinagar, which has been put on high alert, on Tuesday. *NISSAR AHMAD

rists have been neutralised."

Earlier in the day, security forces launched a cordon and search operation in Dragad area of Shopian district following information about the presence of militants there, the officials said.

They said the search operation turned into an encounter after militants opened fire on the security forces. Two ultras of The Resistance

Front (TRF), a shadow outfit of Lashkar-e-Toiba, were killed. Three security force personnel also suffered injuries. One of them later succumbed to his injuries, the officials said.

Meanwhile, security forces foiled a terror plot with the arrest of a man armed with a live hand grenade in Kishtwar district on Wednesday, officials said.

Now, there is will to confront graft: PM

Modi addresses CBI and CVC officers

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said there was political will to attack corruption today, while previous governments lacked both political and administrative will.

Mr. Modi addressed CBI and Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) officers via a video message during a joint conference at Kevadia, Gujarat.

He urged the officers to rededicate themselves to abolishing corruption.

He said the Government had instilled confidence in people that graft could be contained.

Digital footprints

"Earlier, the way the governments and systems were run, they lacked both political and administrative will. Today, there is the political will to attack corruption and continuous improvement is also being carried out at the administrative level."

He said his Government



Narendra Modi

had simplified procedures, thereby reducing interference in the lives of the common people. He said digital footprints had made investigations easier than before.

"The Prime Minister exhorted the officers not to flinch from taking action against the corrupt and ensure that there is no safe haven for anyone who deceives the country and countrymen," a statement from the Prime Minister's Office said.

He asked the officers to strengthen "New India's policy of zero tolerance for corruption".

Can't outgoing CBI chief continue, asks court

Plea says Government cannot appoint interim directors

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday asked the Union Government to respond whether it can, in "exceptional circumstances", continue with the outgoing Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Director rather than appointing an "Acting" chief.

A Bench led by Justice L. Nageswara Rao asked the Government, represented by Attorney-General K.K. Venugopal, that instead of an interim or an "Acting" Director, the premier investigating agency could continue with the incumbent until the high-powered selection committee comprising the Prime Minister, the Chief Justice of India and the Leader of the Opposition zeroed in on the next regular appointment.

NGO's plea

The suggestion came while hearing a petition filed by NGO Common Cause, represented by advocate Prashant Bhushan, about how the law does not permit the Government to issue executive orders on its own, appointing interim CBI Directors.

Mr. Bhushan said the government had done it thrice



In exceptional circumstances, can the CBI Director continue till a new Director is appointed? JUSTICE L. NAGESWARA RAO Supreme Court judge

since 2017. Such manoeuvres would hamper the functional autonomy of the elite probe agency that investigated several sensitive cases in the country.

"In exceptional circumstances, can the CBI Director continue till a new Director is appointed?" Justice Rao asked the top law officer on Wednesday.

Mr. Venugopal sought time to reply. The court posted the case after the Diwali holidays.

In March 2021, the court first issued notice in the

Army strengthens firepower along LAC in eastern sector

'Integrated defended localities' set up at several locations

DINAKAR PERI
BUMLA

The Army has significantly augmented its firepower along the 1,300-km Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the eastern sector, while also beefing up overall defences in the region, especially in the Tawang sector, by integrating various services in real time through automation.

This includes upgraded L-70 air defence guns, M777 Ultra Light Howitzers, and automated and electronic fusion of Bofors and other artillery guns deployed along the LAC.

Integration of arms

The Army has set up "integrated defended localities" at several locations along the LAC. These integrate various arms of the Army such as infantry, engineers, artillery, air defence, aviation and also the fighter aircraft of the Air Force, to respond to any threat in real time and bring in maximum firepower, ex-

Pandemic fuelled rise in child sexual abuse online: report

COVID-19 created a 'perfect storm' of conditions, it says

RAMYA KANNAN
CHENNAI

The Global Threat Assessment report 2021, by WeProtect Global Alliance, launched on Tuesday, said COVID-19 had contributed to a significant spike in child sexual exploitation and abuse online.

WeProtect Global Alliance is a global movement of more than 200 governments, private sector companies and civil society organisations working together to transform the global response to child sexual exploitation and abuse online.

The report was a meta study that distils findings from multiple international studies on the issue. The findings show that in the past two years, the reporting of child sexual exploitation and online abuse has reached its highest level. "COVID-19 created a 'perfect storm' of conditions that fuelled a rise in child sexual exploitation and abuse across the globe," it stated.

"This sustained growth is outstripping our global capacity to respond. Child sexual abuse remains a chronically underfunded issue," said Iain Drennan, executive director, and Ernie Allen, chair, WeProtect Global Alliance, in their foreword.

The rise in child 'self-generated' sexual material is another trend that challenges the existing response, with the Internet Watch Foundation observing a 77% increase in child 'self-generated' sexual material from 2019 to 2020.

As part of the report, a global study of childhood experiences of more than 5,000 young adults (aged 18 to 20) across 54 countries was done by Economist Impact. About 54% of the respondents had experienced at least one online sexual harm incident during childhood. More than a third of respondents (34%) had been asked to do something sexually explicit online they were uncomfortable with

during their childhood. Respondents who identified as transgender/non-binary, LGBTQ+ and/or disabled were more likely to experience online sexual harms during childhood, it said. The report also featured a survey of technology companies that showed most were using tools to detect child sexual abuse material, but only 37% currently use tools to detect online grooming.

During the pandemic, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) indicated 106% increase in reports of suspected child sexual exploitation to its global CyberTipline. During the lockdown, there was a 95% rise in searches for child sexual abuse material, the NCMEC reported.

The report calls for prioritising prevention activities against abuse, creating safe online environments for children, besides calling on all with a role to protect children to work together to improve the response.

IN BRIEF



Param Bir not traceable, Maharashtra tells HC

MUMBAI The Maharashtra Government told the Bombay High Court that former Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh is not traceable, and it will not continue with its statement that no coercive action will be taken against him. However, senior advocate Mahesh Jethmalani, appearing for Mr. Singh, told the court that he had not been declared an absconder yet. A Division Bench of justices Nitin Jamdar and S.V. Kotwal was hearing a petition filed by Mr. Singh seeking to quash an FIR against him. The plea says the FIR was registered belatedly after having failed to persuade him to withdraw his complaint against Anil Deshmukh.

Class VII student beaten to death by teacher

JAIPUR A Class VII student of a private school was allegedly beaten to death by a teacher in Rajasthan's Churu district on Wednesday, police said. The accused has been apprehended. Education Minister Govind Singh Dotsara expressed grief over the incident and issued directions to suspend the recognition of the school. A police official said 13-year-old Ganesh was severely thrashed for not completing homework. He was rushed to a hospital in an unconscious state where doctors declared him brought dead. PTI

Cong. questions Shah's silence on J&K killings

NEW DELHI The Congress on Wednesday questioned Home Minister Amit Shah's 'silence' over the targeted killings in J&K and said the Centre had failed to tackle the situation. Party spokesperson Gaurab Vallabh demanded that the Centre should restore J&K's statehood, hold elections and offer financial support to migrant workers who have had to flee J&K. "Right now, Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh are in direct control of the Home Minister. Have we seen any statement by the Home Minister?" asked Mr. Vallabh.

After leaving Cong., BPF cosies up to BJP in Assam

GUWAHATI The Bodoland People's Front (BPF) that left the Opposition alliance led by the Congress has cosied up to the BJP again in Assam. Ahead of by-elections to five Assembly seats, BPF chief Hagrama Mohilary said the friendship between his party and the BJP was "certain". Supporters of his party would vote for the BJP candidate in the Bhabanipur constituency, he stated. "It is now up to the BJP to formally announce the tie-up," he told party workers.

House panel to study 'border management'

BSF's extended jurisdiction on agenda

SOBHANA K. NAIR
NEW DELHI

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs headed by senior Congress leader Anand Sharma has decided to study "border management", which will also entail deliberations on the contentious extension of jurisdiction of the Border Security force (BSF) up to 50 km inside the international borders in Punjab, West Bengal and Assam.

The Home Ministry, through a notification published on October 11, amended the BSF Act of 1968. The BSF's powers which include arrest, search and seizure were till now only up to 15 km in these States. Punjab and West Bengal have objected to the change.

The parliamentary panel met to discuss the agenda. Other than the pending issues, it has added "border management" to the list, which will include deliberations of all borders protected by the Central Armed Police Forces. Informed sources said this was added on demand from the Trinamool Congress.

No policing powers

The BSF does not have policing powers and after apprehending a suspect, it can

only conduct "preliminary questioning" and the seized consignment or a suspect have to be handed over to the local police within 24 hours.

West Bengal has 2,216 km long border with Bangladesh and the Trinamool contends that the extension of jurisdiction will effectively bring nearly one-third of the State's territory under the BSF's control. Out of 23 districts in the State nearly 10 districts will be affected. This will have an impact on 21 of the 42 Lok Sabha constituencies which could have larger political implications.

The Opposition is expected to register its protest on the new amendment in the winter session of Parliament. The BSF Act, Section 139(3) requires the Government to lay the notification before Parliament and the members, within 30 days, can raise a motion for discussion on annulment of such an order. "It is clearly a violation of the federal values laid down in the Constitution. We will press for annulment of the order," a Trinamool leader said.

There was no objection or opinion from any other member from the committee on the issue when it was raised.

BJP open to an alliance with Amarinder Singh

He has stated he will soon announce his political party

NISTULA HEBBAR
NEW DELHI

The BJP on Wednesday appeared open to an alliance with the yet to be formed political party of former Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh (retd.), a day after the latter made an overture. BJP general secretary and party's Punjab in charge Dushyant Gautam said Capt. Singh was a "patriot" and the BJP was open to tie-ups with "nationalist forces."

On Tuesday, Capt. Singh stated that he would soon announce his own political party and was hopeful of a seat arrangement with the BJP if the farmers' issue was resolved in their interest.

On his condition of resolving farmers' issues, Mr. Gautam noted that Capt. Singh had not spoken about ending the farmers' agitation. "He talked about farmers' issues. We are committed to it and are working for the wel-



Dushyant Gautam

fare of farmers. If the time comes, both will sit together and discuss farmers' issues," he observed.

"Our main agenda is nationalism and keeping the nation first. All those parties who want to form alliances with us on this agenda are welcome." Capt. Singh was once a soldier and his stand on the issues of national security should be praised. "He was a soldier. He knows about the threats to the country and how to secure it. He is patriotic. And whe-

never it is a matter of national security and security at the borders, we have appreciated his stand," Mr. Gautam remarked.

Solution soon?

Senior sources in the party disclosed that one could anticipate a move towards resolving the long-running agitation of farmers against the three controversial farm laws. "Several options are being mullied in terms of a way out, including a new expanded committee of stakeholders to hold talks with farmers go into the nitty gritty of the demands by farmers," a source explained.

Interestingly, Capt. Singh had met Union Home Minister Amit Shah and National Security Advisor Ajit Doval after he quit as Chief Minister. At that time, it was said he had spoken of the security challenges in the border State post the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan.

Rawat wants Punjab duty revoked

He asks Cong. leadership to allow him to focus on his home State Uttarakhand

SANDEEP PHUKAN
NEW DELHI

Amid the ongoing political turmoil in Punjab, All India Congress Committee (AICC) general secretary Harish Rawat on Wednesday took to Twitter, asking the party leadership to relieve him from his duties as in charge of the State and allow him to focus on his home State Uttarakhand, where elections are scheduled along with Punjab.

Earlier in the day, Mr. Rawat called on former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi, reportedly to discuss Uttarakhand elections and brief him on the devastation caused by heavy rain in the State. However, Punjab is learnt to have been discussed.

Following this meeting, in a series of tweets, he expressed his desire to move out as AICC's Punjab in charge.

Mr. Rawat's move not only comes a day after former Chief Minister Capt. Amarinder Singh (retd.) announced his intention to float his own party but also days after



New role: Harish Rawat, right, made the request a day after Navjot Singh Sidhu sought an audience with Sonia Gandhi.

State Congress Chief Navjot Singh Sidhu wrote a fresh letter to Congress president Sonia Gandhi, seeking an audience with her to explain his 'Punjab Model'.

'Torn between States'

"Today, I have been able to overcome a big indecision. One the one hand, I have a duty towards my 'janmabhoomi' (birthplace) and the other hand, I have to offer my services to my 'karmabhoomi' (land where one works). Things are getting complicated as elections are drawing closer as a person

has to give full-time to both the places," Mr. Rawat tweeted in Hindi.

He wanted to be in Uttarakhand to "wipe off" the tears of the people affected by the deluge but couldn't because of the "call of duty". "So that I can devote myself to Uttarakhand completely, I should be relieved of my present duties," he tweeted and signed off, saying the party leadership would decide but it was his "request", he stated.

Earlier in the day, Mr. Rawat slammed Capt. Amarinder for announcing his own

outfit and stating he was hopeful of a tie-up with the BJP. "The BJP was looking for a face and the Captain has offered his services. Only he can explain why he would sacrifice his years of standing as a leader by tying up with the BJP," he told *The Hindu*.

Asked if the Congress would initiate disciplinary action against Capt. Amarinder, who has not yet formally resigned from the party despite publically stating that he would quit, he observed, "We have taken note of the announcement and are monitoring further developments".

Mr. Rawat questioned Capt. Amarinder's 'silence' over the Lakhimpur Kheri incident in which the son of Union Minister of State Ajay Mishra is an accused. "Why is he silent over it? Have you ever protested against the atrocities against farmers, especially the way the Centre has kept them at Delhi borders for 10 months and nearly 600 of them have died?" he added.

Uttarakhand death toll touches 52

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DEHRADUN/NEW DELHI

Landslips blocked roads, many villages went without electricity, and the toll climbed to 52 as authorities on Wednesday faced the aftermath of the rain that had battered Uttarakhand for over two days.

Six more bodies were pulled out from the rubble of the collapsed houses. Five persons are missing and 17 injured, according to official data.

The weather cleared on Wednesday morning after the incessant rain since Sunday night triggered floods, which washed away bridges, and landslips, which blocked access to towns like Nainital for hours.

Most of the deaths were due to house collapses and an official statement said 46 of them suffered damage. Nainital district alone saw 28 deaths.

The official count of people missing in rain-related incidents does not include a trekking team of 11.

Om Prakash Rajbhar meets Akhilesh

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
LUCKNOW

Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party president and former BJP ally Om Prakash Rajbhar called on Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav on Wednesday, in the first open indication that the two parties could be inching towards a possible alliance in the 2022 Uttar Pradesh Assembly election.

While there was no formal announcement of any electoral tie-up, both sides sent out enough signals that they were willing to work and contest together.

The SP already has the support of three OBC-based parties in the State — the Rashtriya Lok Dal, Janvadi Party (Socialist) and the Mahan Dal. An alliance with the SBSB, which had contested the 2017 Assembly polls in alliance with the BJP, would boost its prospects in Purvanchal, especially among the Rajbhar OBC community.

Mr. Yadav, sharing a picture of the meeting, which lasted almost an hour, also called it a courtesy call.

Punjab polls set to see new shifts

Amarinder's proposed party, possible alliance with BJP pose challenges to Cong.

VIKAS VASUDEVA
CHANDIGARH

With former Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh announcing that he is set to float his own party and declaring that he is open to an alliance with the Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP), the 2022 Assembly election in the State is likely to see new political dynamics.

The ruling Congress, which is still grappling to put its house in order under its new State chief Navjot Singh Sidhu, could face a tough challenge, even as it seems to be a win-win situation for Capt. Amarinder Singh (retd.) and the BJP.

The key to success for Capt. Singh's proposed new party and the possible alliance would be an early resolution of the ongoing farmers' agitation against the Centre's farm laws.

The BJP's "nationalist" narrative, surrounding which the party has been of late playing its politics, blends well with the personality of Capt. Singh, who has been vocal on the threats posed by neighbouring Pakistan.



Unlikely alliance: Experts say Amarinder Singh's alliance with the BJP could prove to be win-win for both parties. ■ FILE PHOTO

Also, he has been hitting out at Mr. Sidhu, accusing him of connections with Pakistan and dubbing him "anti-national".

Boost for BJP

For the BJP, which has over the years remained a 'junior partner' in alliance with the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) in Punjab, the new alliance could give a much-needed boost.

Although some analysts say that Capt. Singh's popularity has taken a beating in his recent stint as the Chief Minister owing to his "inaccessibility" to people and even his own leaders, the 79-

year-old is seen as an active leader capable of putting up a strong electoral fight.

Capt. Singh has been viewed as a secular and moderate leader and, in

NEWS ANALYSIS

Punjab, Hindu voters have been traditionally been inclined towards the Congress. But if he joins hands with the BJP, voters could shift, eventually harming the Congress' prospects.

Some political observers believe that Capt. Singh still has his loyalists in the Congress and that there are sev-

eral disgruntled leaders in the party who could join hands with him.

Win-win situation

"Capt. Amarinder's announcement of a new party and possible alliance is a win-win for both him and the BJP. Capt. Amarinder had to forge an alliance with the BJP as the campaign needs finance and vote mobilisers. On the other hand, the BJP would get a leader who has a statewide support base and also a secular image. He can bring together the alienated elements within the Congress and also the Akali Dal," said Ashutosh Kumar, professor with the political science department of Panjab University. "He can raise the issue of national security, Pakistan factor, which gels with the BJP agenda," he added.

"Definitely Capt. Amarinder can harm the Congress. The question is would the new Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi be able to swing the Dalit vote en masse, which at least for now looks a difficult task," Mr. Kumar said.

Man suspected of theft dies allegedly in police custody

Five policemen, including an inspector and SI, suspended

OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW

A sweeper, who was suspected of stealing ₹25 lakh from a police station warehouse in Agra, allegedly died in police custody during the recovery of the amount on Wednesday.

An FIR on charges of murder was lodged against unidentified persons after Arun Valmiki's family alleged that he was assaulted after being picked up for questioning and raised doubts on the police version.

Five police personnel, including an inspector and a sub-inspector who had gone for the recovery, were suspended and an inquiry committee was constituted, SSP Agra Muniraj G. said. The autopsy report revealed that he died of heart attack, Mr. Muniraj added.

On October 17, the money went missing from the storeroom of the Jagdishpura police station following which five policemen were suspended for negligence, and



Consoling kin: Priyanka Gandhi Vadra meeting the family of the victim in Agra on Wednesday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

a probe was initiated. The sweeper was among those detained and questioned as a suspect, the police said.

Mr. Muniraj said the sweeper had allegedly confessed to the crime and a police team took him to his house where he said he had hidden the cash.

While recovering the amount, his "health suddenly went bad," Mr. Muniraj said. The police and his family rushed him to a hospital where a doctor declared him brought dead, said the SSP. The police managed to recover ₹15 lakh from him, he said.

The family of the sweeper alleged that he was murdered by the police and accused the police personnel of first carrying out the theft and then trying to falsely implicate Arun.

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra demanded a high-level probe. She also demanded compensation for the victim's family. Ms. Vadra was stopped in Lucknow by the Uttar Pradesh police from going to Agra to meet the family members of the victim, but was later allowed to proceed.

(with PTI inputs)

SC denies furlough to Asaram's son

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday upheld the Gujarat Director General of Police's (DGP) order to deny a two-week furlough to self-styled godman Asaram's son, Na-

rayan Sai, who is serving life imprisonment for rape.

A Bench led by Justice D.Y. Chandrachud agreed with the State police chief that the crimes committed by the convict were too grave to grant him furlough.

The DGP, while declining furlough to Sai, had taken into consideration his criminal misconduct during the trial, including attempts to bribe officials, assaulting and murdering witnesses, and threatening police officials.

Spirit of Valmiki's philosophy is under attack, says Rahul

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Constitution embodies the spirit of Maharishi Valmiki's philosophy but it is under attack now as lakhs of Dalits, poor and marginalised people face violence under the current regime, former Congress president Rahul Gandhi said on Wednesday.

He made the remarks while flagging off Shobha Yatra, an annual parade on the occasion of Valmiki Jayanti, from the party headquarters.

"Greetings on the occasion of Valmiki Jayanti! Maharishi Valmiki showed the path of love and brotherhood to our nation, gave us a way of living. Our Constitution is based on the ideas of Maharishi Valmiki. However, these days we can observe that his ideology is being attacked," Mr. Gandhi told party workers and supporters.

"Today, the Constitution, Valmiki's philosophy, especially our Dalit brothers and sisters, are being attacked. The country is witnessing that the poor, the weak and the marginalised are being attacked and the benefits are being given to 10-15 people. And crores of poor people, farmers, Dalits are being attacked.

"I would like to give a message to the Dalit brothers and sisters that the Congress party will stop these attacks. The more they divide the country, the more we will join."

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ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT
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(Food Analyst Recruitment for JNTUK Kakinada)
Advt.No:JNTUK/SFT/Technical staff/2021, dated 20.10.2021
Applications are invited in the prescribed format for 2 Technical posts (Food Analyst) in the cadre of Assistant Professor at School of Food Technology, JNTUK Kakinada.
Refer JNTUK Website www.jntuk.edu.in for Application format, vacancy position, instructions and guidelines etc., to the applicants. The filled in application in all respects should reach the Registrar, JNTU Kakinada, Kakinada-533003 on or before 10.11.2021. Sd/- REGISTRAR

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Last Date 30/10/2021 up to 05:00 pm. For details, visit www.ktdfc.kerala.gov.in

Bureau of Investment Promotion
BIP/CGM (F&A)/2209 Date: 12.10.2021
Notice Inviting Bid
Bids for Procurement of hiring services of a placement agency for providing services on job basis for One Stop Shop facility in Bureau of Investment Promotion, Jaipur are invited from interested bidders upto 4.00 PM of 09.11.2021. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (<http://eproc.rajabasthan.gov.in>, <http://sppp.raj.nic.in>) of the state.
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Raj.Samwadi/C21/7364 Commissioner (Inv. & NRIs)

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T.N. No. 01/2021-22/HDO, Dated 18.10.2021.
For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamil Nadu, Percentage tender through online only will be received upto 22.11.2021 15.00 hours by the Superintending Engineer (H), C&M, Tirupur Circle for CRIDP 2021-2022 Works, pertaining Tirupur (H) C&M Division.
Details of works, approximate value of works, EMD, availability of tender documents and all other details are available from 25/10/2021 onwards in the Government website <https://tntenders.gov.in>. If any Changes/Corrections in the tender, it will be published in the above Government website only.
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Directorate of Animal Husbandry & Veterinary Services, Odisha, Mangalabag, Cuttack - 753001
Phone no. - 0671-2414629, Email - dahvsorissa@gmail.com, Website-<http://odishaahvs.nic.in>

EOI No. 14149 date: 18.10.2021

The Director of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services, Odisha, Cuttack invites Expression of Interest (EOI) from the intending firms/ organizations / Agencies for supply of 4.5 lakh doses approximately goat semen for genetic improvement of goat for the State of Odisha in phased manner during the year 2021-22. The details of the Expression of Interest (Non-transferable) as well as terms and conditions and information docket are available on the DAH & VS, Odisha website <https://odishaahvs.nic.in>. Interested parties are requested to download the required documents and submit their response to the undersigned at the above-mentioned address along with the cost of the EOI document of Rs.11800/- in shape of Bank Draft drawn in favour of the Director, AH&VS payable at Cuttack.
The cost of EOI documents is compulsory and the bank draft should be enclosed in original along with the EOI documents. The cost paid for EOI documents is non-refundable.
The EOI documents must be deposited within date 16.11.2021 at 5 PM.

Time Line	
Date & Time of release of EOI	18.10.2021 at 5 PM
Submission of queries on EOI & discussion	30.10.2021 (on virtual mode) at 11.30 AM
Date & time of submission of EOI documents	21.10.2021 to 16.11.2021 from 10 AM to 5 PM
Last date of submission of EOI	16.11.2021 till 5 PM
Date and time of opening of EOI	17.11.2021 at 11:30 AM
Finalization of RFP	29.11.2021
Date of Opening of Price Bid	To be informed to the qualified Bidders

Director
Directorate of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services
Odisha, Mangalabag, Cuttack
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WHO chief holds talks with Health Minister
UNITED NATIONS/GENEVA
WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus tweeted on Tuesday that he had discussed the issue of the Emergency Use Listing (EUL) of Bharat Biotech's COVID-19 vaccine Covaxin and resumption of supplies of the Serum Institute of India-manufactured AstraZeneca vaccine to the COVAX facility among other topics during a call with Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya. PTI

Gita Gopinath to leave IMF, return to Harvard
WASHINGTON
The International Monetary Fund's chief economist Gita Gopinath will leave her job in January next year and return to the Harvard University's Economics Department, the global financial institution said. The 49-year-old economist joined the IMF as chief economist in January 2019. PTI

Suspect confesses to killing teacher in Odisha
BHUBANESWAR
The main suspect in the disappearance of a teacher in Kalahandi district of Odisha has confessed to having killed her, the Odisha police said on Wednesday. He is alleged to have committed the murder to stop her from disclosing his extra-marital affairs. Opposition parties have demanded the ouster of Minister Dibya Shankar Mishra, who is said to have close links with the suspect, to ensure a fair probe.

Fresh SOP released for travellers to India

Negative RT-PCR report is mandatory

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI
The Union Government has revised guidelines for those flying into India, stating that the revision has been brought "in view of increasing vaccination coverage across the globe and the changing nature of the pandemic".
The revised SOP (standard operating procedure), which will be valid from October 25, requires mandatory COVID-19 RT-PCR negative report for those boarding a flight to India.
All travellers should submit a self-declaration form on the Air Suvidha portal before their scheduled trip and upload the negative RT-PCR report.
This test should have been conducted within 72 hours before undertaking the journey, according to the guidelines.
If a traveller is coming from a country with which

SC rejects plea for report on NEET 'malpractices'

Any interference would be detrimental to students: Bench

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI
The Supreme Court on Wednesday declined to entertain a petition to call for a report on investigations in the FIRs registered in different States over the alleged malpractices in the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET-UG) held on September 12.
A Bench headed by Justice L. Nageswara Rao said any interference now would be detrimental to a large number of students.
"We cannot interfere. We understand what you say but it will create a lot of confusion. Any interference at our hands will be detrimental to a large number of students," Justice Rao, accompanied by Justice B.R. Gavai on the Bench, said.
Senior advocate Salman



Crucial test: NEET-UG was conducted across the country on September 12. *K. MURALI KUMAR

Khurshid, appearing for the petitioners, said FIRs had been filed at various places and sought the top court's direction to call for a fact-finding report on the issue.
The top court refused to budge, saying anything said or done by it at this stage would be taken out of context and confuse students.

The court was hearing a plea filed by Vishwanath Kumar and others contending that on the day of the examination, the CBI had registered an FIR against four accused persons and unknown others, stating that the process of examination was manipulated by using proxy candidates.

CBSE to allow change in venue for first-term Board exams

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI
The Central Board of Secondary Education has said that Class 10 and 12 students who were not in the same city where they had taken admission would be allowed to request a change of examination centre for the first-term Board exams beginning next month.
"It has come to the notice

of the Board that some students are still not in the city of their school where they had taken admission and are residing somewhere else. In view of the above, at an appropriate time, the CBSE will inform students to make a request to their respective schools to change the city of examination centre. Schools will follow instructions given by the CBSE to forward the

request to the Board in an online system," said CBSE Examination Controller Sanyam Bhardwaj.
"Accordingly, all students and schools are requested to remain in touch with the CBSE's website. As soon as the students are informed in this regard, they can make the request to their school within the schedule," he added.

INTERVIEW | BALRAM BHARGAVA

'Covaxin instilled self-confidence'

Indigenous COVID jab proved India is a vaccine superpower: ICMR chief

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN NEW DELHI
The development of Covaxin has instilled the confidence that India is now much more than the pharmacy of the world and that it is a vaccine superpower, says **Balram Bhargava, Director-General, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).**
Excerpts:

The ICMR co-developed India's first indigenous COVID-19 vaccine with Bharat Biotech. What have been the crucial learnings from this public-private partnership (PPP)?
■ In the development of this vaccine and this partnership, I think the most important aspects have been complete trust and the level of mutual appreciation for each other's calibre between the public and the private partner. It worked both ways – the ICMR's trust in Bharat Biotech and Bharat Biotech's faith in the ICMR.

Right at the outset, we had clearly decided that the steps we follow must have a clear scientific basis and whatever we do should be documented in scientific journals.
Now as we know, the international academia has appreciated the scientific evidence on Covaxin published in over 15 papers. These publications in highly acclaimed, peer-reviewed global scientific literature cover the entire spectrum of vaccine development, whether it be preclinical develop-

ment, small animal studies, hamster studies, large animal studies and all phases of clinical trials, including the phase-III trial, which is one of the largest in the world.
These studies also include the vaccine's efficacy against the emerging virus variants, Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta.

How has this experience of co-developing Covaxin enriched science and public health in the country?
■ First, this experience has instilled self-confidence in us that India is now much more than the pharmacy of the world. It is also a vaccine superpower.

This confidence in being able to develop new vaccines from scratch now pervades the industry and the academia, and it is the right time to use our learnings from these experiences to develop new vaccines for other diseases and scale them up.
Second, for decades, we were largely known as a powerhouse for generic drug-making. This experience in COVID-19 has acted as a catalyst for us to move up the value chain and take a leap into drug discovery or vaccine discovery space, to be specific. If this has to take off, the industry and the academia will have to collaborate in a big way.

Do you think this experience of developing a vaccine in PPP mode can be replicated for other diseases?
■ Yes, I think this exemplary model, where the public and



This experience has acted as a catalyst for us to move up the value chain and take a leap into drug discovery

private partners worked with scientific rigour on a fast-track mode to deliver a product on time can serve as a template for developing vaccines for other diseases. When we worked together, we were always working on a timeline even when we were racing against time. All along there was mutual respect, clear communication, and the setting of concrete goals in the project. This generated a momentum that I feel should not be lost and should be utilised for other projects.

India has developed a safe and efficacious vaccine that is beneficial not only for the global south but even for the global north.

Are you confident of India reaching its target of vaccinating all adults by the year-end?

■ I think our system is currently working like a turbo-charged, well-oiled machine

ery vaccinating at a very fast rate, and we are advancing rapidly to reach that target. I think the world is watching us and will be witness to the fact that our vaccination drive has not only been very agile but also very responsive and responsible.

What are the steps that are helping India reach its 100-crore vaccination goal?

■ The dedication and efforts of our frontline workers and healthcare professionals involved in the vaccination drive. Second, the rich experience of carrying out one of the world's largest universal immunisation programmes and third, an aligned holistic approach of different arms of the Government with a singular focus to make vaccination drive a success contributed to this journey.

Also what is working is the ability of the whole of the Government to work together as well as strike successful public-private partnerships, where needed, that has resulted in a series of victories in these times of extreme uncertainties.

Whether it be the development of CoWIN, or the pragmatic way we prioritised vaccination for different groups, getting right many of those small steps nestled within the large vaccination drive resulted in the country achieving this milestone.

Beyond all, the country showed a clear commitment to public health, and that paid off.

Colleges reopen in Maharashtra

Physical classes resume after 18 months; only 50% students allowed for now

SHOUMJOIT BANERJEE PUNE
Colleges and universities reopened across Maharashtra on Wednesday after being closed for over 18 months due to the pandemic.
State Higher and Technical Education Minister Uday Samant had earlier said that students must be fully vaccinated to attend classes.

'Full vaccination' rule
Most colleges are continuing with online lectures or for students unable to attend physical classes because they have not fulfilled the 'full vaccination' criterion. The State Government has allowed all non-agricultural colleges and State-run, deemed and self-financed universities and colleges affiliated to them to resume physical classes.

Mr. Samant had last week mandated the varsities to issue the standard operating procedures (SOPs) to colleges affiliated to it. As per the



Students attending a class at K.B.P. College in Navi Mumbai on Wednesday. *PTI

SOPs, classrooms should have only 50% students of the total capacity, while colleges should give students the option to attend online or offline sessions.

The institutes should keep a record of vaccination certificates of every student and staff attending the physical sessions.

State Health Minister Rajesh Tope has urged colleges

and universities to think of setting up vaccination camps after discussions with the local administration to increase the pace of vaccination.

"Students must get inoculated. Special drives can be set up by varsity authorities in collaboration with the local administration. Care will also have to be taken in the post-vaccination stage, in

the event students experience any discomfort," Mr. Tope had said.

The Government's decision to resume physical classes follows its phased re-opening of educational institutions. On October 4, physical sessions for students of Classes V to XII in rural areas and VIII to XII in urban pockets resumed after more than a year and a half.

Three held for assaulting Hindu man, Muslim woman

Incident took place on October 8

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT BELAGAVI
The Belagavi police arrested three persons on the charge of assaulting a Muslim woman and a Hindu man who were travelling together in an autorickshaw.
Auto driver Dawood Khateeb and his friends Mohammad Ayub and Yusuf Pathan were arrested.
The incident happened on October 8.
The arrests were made on Tuesday.

The woman and the man were assaulted, and threatened with death.
The married woman, who had come to Belagavi to borrow money from the man, was asked not to move with non-Muslims.

The two persons from different villages had hired the autorickshaw of Khateeb, after alighting at the Belagavi bus stand.
They wanted to go to a

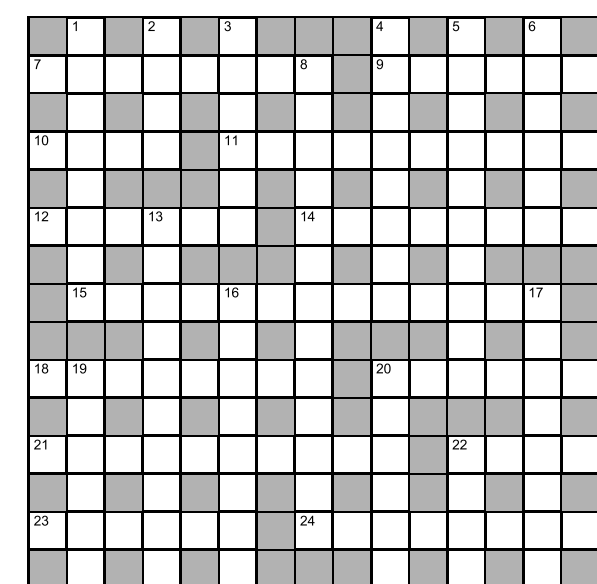
park to sit and discuss, and told the auto driver to take them to a park. But the driver diverted his vehicle to Aman Nagar and called his friends.

All the accused thrashed the man and the woman. The accused threatened to kill them, by tying their hands and legs, cutting their heads and throwing them on the railway track, "just as in the case of Arbaz Mulla of Khanapur".

Robbed them
Khateeb, the autorickshaw driver, noticed the burqa of the woman and the vermilion on the man's forehead and decided to teach them a lesson, a police officer said.

The police said the accused had robbed the two of their ATM cards, a mobile phone and ₹50,000 cash. These have been recovered from the accused, the police added.

THE CROSSWORD + 13382 Display keystrokes of genius. Type your answers in our online grids: @ <https://qr.go.page.link/jjpTn> SCAN TO PLAY



- ACROSS**
- 7 Trouble from Bond's boss, say? (8)
 - 9 Distrustful of doctor / nurse getting united (6)
 - 10 Tip off white queen on board (4)
 - 11 Dogs in Spooner's dried grass fields (10)
 - 12 Top dog Djokovic tormented somewhat (6)
 - 14 Change broom used after killing black rodent (8)

- 15 An Arab may sway with that dance (13)
 - 18 On the counter, left key in man's cups (8)
 - 20 Hindus, even in difficulty need this God (6)
 - 21 A violent criminal smuggling gold back for assessment (10)
 - 22 Contains alcohol securely kept, basically (4)
 - 23 Advertisement covering new player's pitch (6)
 - 24 Poured last drop of champagne and wine after performance (8)
- DOWN**
- 1 By controlling temperature, doctor includes hot diet supplement (7,1)
 - 2 Hero starting to climb into top position from below (4)
 - 3 Say, Sanjay Subrahmanyan reigns in performance (6)
 - 4 Touring University, desperately hope carriage returns for transport (8)
 - 5 Send PMs with you switching handles (10)
 - 6 Exchanges outbursts after sacking one (6)
 - 8 Revealing comments of followers interrupted by terribly rude author's mouthpieces (8,5)
 - 13 Assemble more pliant fixture for kids to bounce on (10)
 - 16 Excited by notice outside soldier's gallery (8)
 - 17 Guy recruiting hot secretary (8)
 - 19 Abuse troops capturing base (6)
 - 20 Sarod never returned to store dealer (6)
 - 22 Bite food converting oxygen to energy (4)

SUDOKU

9			1		3	6		
		4			3			
3					5			9
			8			1		2
7							8	
8	1			4				
1			9					6
			1			5		
6	3		2					8

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to puzzle 13381

A	R	T	F	U	L	J	E	T	P	L	A	N	E
U	E	N	C	S	R	S	S						
D	I	A	S	T	O	L	I	C	O	A	S	I	S
A	B	I	I	O	T	A	A						
C	A	R	O	L	C	U	R	I	O	S	I	T	Y
I	E	H	T	Z	L	S							
T	R	A	N	C	H	E	S	H	O	P			
Y	K	H											
Q	F	I	A	O	D	I	C	K	E	N	O		
U	N	I	N	S	U	R	E	D	T	R	A	C	T
A	L	T	I	G	W	T	H						
I	D	I	O	M	S	T	E	R	I	L	L	I	S
L	A	A	T	R	S	V	I	R					
S	A	L	E	S	T	A	X	S	T	R	E	A	M

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

1	7	8	4	5	2	9	6	3
2	6	4	3	9	1	7	5	8
5	9	3	8	7	6	1	4	2
3	4	9	1	6	5	8	2	7
6	8	2	7	3	4	5	9	1
7	5	1	2	8	9	4	3	6
4	1	7	9	2	3	6	8	5
9	2	6	5	1	8	3	7	4
8	3	5	6	4	7	2	1	9

FAITH

Krishna's infancy

None could have enjoyed the beauty of the Krishna avatara more than the Azhvans, said M.A. Venkatakrisnan in a discourse. Periyazhvar imagines himself to be Yasoda, and his verses celebrate Krishna's infancy and childhood. There are verses dedicated to combing the baby's hair, to feeding Him etc. There is a genre of poetry in Tamil, known as Pillai Tamizh, wherein the hero of the poem is imagined to be a child. Each stage in the child's life is then described.

Periyazhvar's verses about Krishna may be considered to be the forerunner of this kind of poetry. Peiriyazhvar imagined himself to be Yasoda, and so, there were many possibilities for him to compose verses about baby Krishna. After all it was Yasoda to whom this blessing of witnessing His growing years was given. But Kulasekara Azhvar put himself in the place of Devaki and wrote about Krishna, the child. Devaki had never enjoyed Krishna's childhood, for she did not bring Him up. Kulasekara Azhvar's verses are called "Devaki's lament," for they express Devaki's grief at being separated from her child Krishna. One verse has Devaki crying over her husband's misfortune.

The baby Krishna is the darling of everyone in Gokula, and people claim kinship with Him, so that they can pick up the baby. One of them asks the baby where His father is. Krishna is only some months old, and has not yet begun to speak. But He is at that age where He can understand a simple question that is put to Him. So, when asked where His father is, His eyes wander, until He locates Nandagopa. Then, with His hands, He points to Nandagopa, much to the delight of all those gathered. Should this joy not have been Vasudeva's by right, for after all, he was Krishna's father, cries Devaki in anguish.

Alignment of U.S., India interests makes a great difference: Burns

China not an Olympian power, says Biden's envoy nominee to Beijing

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Joe Biden's nominee for the post of Ambassador to Beijing, Nicholas Burns, said the alignment of U.S. and Indian interests in the Indo-Pacific "makes a great difference" in terms of the challenges posed by China.

Mr. Burns was answering a question on the U.S.'s opportunities and constraints in collaborating with different countries while dealing with Beijing.

"The comparative advantage that we have versus China is that we have treaty allies. We have partners who deeply believe in us and the Chinese really do not," Mr. Burns said, highlighting U.S. President Joe Biden's emphasis on treaty partnerships in the Indo-Pacific, such as with Japan, Australia, South Korea, Thailand and Indonesia. He also mentioned India which is not a treaty partner but a 'Major Defence Partner' and a country that regularly holds bilateral and multilateral security exercises with the U.S.

"As you know — and I think every administration since President (Bill) Clinton has been working on this — we have a newfound security partner in India, that makes a great difference to have Indian and American interests aligned as they clearly are, strategically, in the Indo-Pacific," Mr. Burns said.

As a foreign services officer, Mr. Burns had played a key negotiating role in the U.S.-India Civil Nuclear Agreement. He held senior positions in both Democrat and Republican administrations — a point that came up during his hearing. Currently Mr. Burns is a professor at



Making a point: Nicholas Burns, left, at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on Wednesday. •REUTERS

the Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government. Giving credit to former President Donald Trump and his Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, for reinvigorating the Quad grouping of countries, Mr. Burns said President Biden had organised two leader-level meetings of the Quad already. He also said the U.S.'s newly launched security partnership with the U.K. and Australia (AUKUS) was "transformational".

Overall, Mr. Burns said he would support the Biden administration's policy of "vigorously" competing with China in some areas (economy, infrastructure, technology) and cooperating in other areas (such as climate action), while also holding China accountable for its actions in the Indo-Pacific. Mr. Burns also supported the U.S. speaking out against human rights abuses in China, and said that genocide was occurring in Xinjiang.

Substantial weaknesses "...The People's Republic of China is not an Olympian power. It's a country of extraordinary strength, but it also has substantial weaknesses and challenges, demographically, economical-

ly, politically, we should have confidence in our strengths," he said.

Beijing's recent actions towards Taiwan (China has sent a record number of jets into Taiwan's Air Defence Identification Zone this month) were "especially objectionable", Mr. Burns said. However, he added that the U.S. is right to continue its 'One China' policy — a policy that recognises that there is only one legal government of China but is compatible with the U.S. providing military assistance to Taiwan (as outlined in the U.S.'s Taiwan Relations Act of 1979).

"Given what China has done ... I think the Congress and the executive branch have every right to continue to deepen our security cooperation, to expand our arms provisions to Taiwan. That's the most important thing we can do," he said, adding that the Act also called for providing the strongest possible deterrent in the 'Western Pacific' (Indian Ocean).

"As a third measure, we ought to be asking and we are asking our allies, to show a real commitment to Taiwan and we're seeing that from Japan and other allies," he said, adding that the U.S. had to be very clear in criti-

cising China on its actions against Taiwan.

At various points in his testimony, Mr. Burns said it was important for the U.S. to work with both Indo-Pacific partners as well as European allies with regard to the challenges from Beijing. In response to a question on whether allies were "retreating", i.e., shying away from confronting challenges with China, he said he was not observing that.

"I don't see retreat. Certainly I think we're seeing a stiffening of the resolve of Japan, which is so important for us. Australia, rock solid on these issues. India...not a treaty ally but a strategic military partner in the Bay of Bengal...[is] very important for us," he said.

On Europe, he said countries had different views and that the German position would be clear once the new government was formed — the views of the Social Democrats and Greens being key.

"I would note that the Greens were very critical of China during the recent campaign," he said, adding that in France, President Emmanuel Macron had spoke out about China too. The U.S. and France have recently been mending fences over a rift in their relationship over AUKUS.

The confirmation hearings of Rahm Emanuel, former Mayor of Chicago, who is the administration's nominee to Tokyo, and entrepreneur Jonathan Kaplan, the nominee to Singapore, were also conducted on Wednesday. A confirmation date has not been announced for Mr. Biden's pick for New Delhi, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti.

As deaths soar, Putin orders virus curbs

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MOSCOW

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday ordered a nationwide week-long paid holiday to curb COVID-19 infections in Europe's worst affected country and urged Russians to show "responsibility" and get vaccinated.

Mr. Putin approved a government plan to declare a non-working week across the country from October 30 as Russia registered a record 1,028 coronavirus deaths in a single day.

"The main aim is to protect the lives and health of our citizens," he said during a televised meeting.

He said the severity of the outbreak in Russia was linked to the vaccination rates that are "unfortunately" low. Mr. Putin said he was surprised by how many Russians were refusing the vaccine.

Jailed Russian Opposition leader wins top EU prize

European Parliament praises Navalny's 'immense bravery'

ASSOCIATED PRESS
BRUSSELS

Imprisoned Russian Opposition leader Alexei Navalny was awarded the European Union's top human rights prize on Wednesday in a clear slap to President Vladimir Putin.

In awarding the Sakharov Prize to Mr. Navalny, the European Parliament praised his "immense personal bravery". The 45-year-old activist was poisoned with a nerve agent last year and promptly arrested upon his return to Moscow from treatment in Germany and later imprisoned.

"He has campaigned consistently against the corruption of Vladimir Putin's regime, and through his social media accounts and political campaigns, Navalny has helped expose abuses and



Alexei Navalny

mobilise the support of millions of people across Russia. For this, he was poisoned and thrown in jail," Parliament President David Sassoli said in a statement.

He called for Mr. Navalny's immediate release.

The recognition of Mr. Navalny will further sour relations between the 27-nation bloc and Russia. These ties

have been on the decline for years, especially following Moscow's 2014 annexation of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula and its support for a separatist insurgency in eastern Ukraine.

The impact reverberated beyond the EU as well.

Days after Russia suspended its mission at NATO and ordered the closure of the alliance's office in Moscow in retaliation for NATO's expulsion of Russian diplomats, the organisation's chief said he embraced the news. "I welcome the fact that a strong voice... in Russia has been awarded this prize," NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg told reporters. He said the prize was a call for "his unconditional release from prison" and to have an "international investigation" into it.

Facebook plans name change: report

REUTERS

Social media giant Facebook Inc is planning to re-brand the company with a new name next week, the *Verge* reported on Tuesday.

Facebook chief executive officer Mark Zuckerberg plans to talk about the name change at the company's annual Connect conference on October 28, but it could be unveiled sooner, the report said.

The re-brand would likely position Facebook's social media app as one of many products under a parent company, which will also oversee groups like Instagram, WhatsApp and Oculus.

U.S. riot panel votes to hold Trump ally Bannon in criminal contempt

The former White House adviser had refused to testify

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

Lawmakers investigating the deadly assault on the U.S. Capitol voted unanimously on Tuesday to pursue criminal contempt charges for a key ally of former President Donald Trump for refusing to testify.

Former White House adviser Steve Bannon failed to comply with a subpoena to appear before the cross-party January 6 congressional select committee on Thursday last week.

The right-wing political adviser had told the panel he would be withholding testimony and documents until

Mr. Trump's claim of "executive privilege", which allows Presidents to keep certain conversations with aides secret, had been resolved.

But the nine-member committee said Mr. Bannon's position was not a lawful basis to ignore the order and voted unanimously to adopt a report setting out the case against him. "Mr. Bannon has no legal right to ignore the committee's lawful subpoena," Representative Liz Cheney, vice-chair of the committee and one of only two Republican members, said on Tuesday.

Experts believe Mr.

Trump's claims that he is entitled to block Mr. Bannon giving evidence to investigators are likely baseless, since the presidential "executive privilege" carve-out is not generally understood to apply to former occupants of the White House. Furthermore, Mr. Bannon wasn't even serving in government at the time covered by the subpoena.

The move paves the way for the Democratic-controlled House of Representatives to vote to refer the 67-year-old former strategist to the Justice Department to consider charges.

27 killed in Syria capital, rebel territory

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
DAMASCUS

A rare bombing of an Army bus in Damascus and shelling shortly after of a town in rebel-held northwest Syria killed at least 27 people on Wednesday, in the deadliest flare-up in months.

Two bombs planted on an Army bus in central Damascus were detonated early in the morning, killing 14 people, in the worst such attack in the capital in four years, state news agency SANA reported.

There was no immediate claim for the bombing, but government shelling shortly after killed 13 people in Idlib province, parts of which are controlled by groups that have claimed such attacks in the past.

"A terrorist bombing using two explosive devices targeted a passing bus" at a bridge in Damascus, the state news agency said, reporting that at least three people were wounded. Images released by SANA showed first responders searching the charred bus and what it said was a bomb squad defusing a third device in the same area.

Pentagon chief urges more Black Sea security ties

To counter Russian aggression: Austin

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BUCHAREST

U.S. Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin urged more defence cooperation among Black Sea allies on Wednesday ahead of a NATO Ministers summit.

Following talks in Bucharest with Romanian Defence Minister Nicolae Ciuca, Mr. Austin said action was needed by littoral states of the Black Sea amid Russia "militarisation" of the region.

"The security and stability of the Black Sea are in the U.S.'s national interest and critical for the security of NATO's eastern flank," he said.

"The region is vulnerable to Russian aggression and we've seen evidence of that by ongoing actions in eastern Ukraine (and) the occupations of parts of Georgia," he told reporters.

Mr. Austin was in Bucharest on the third stop of a tour of the region to build confidence among allies, including Georgia and Ukraine, both of which are hoping to join NATO, and to promote greater cooperation among military forces.



Lloyd Austin

He will then take part in an in-person Defence Ministers summit at NATO headquarters in Brussels on Thursday and Friday.

The U.S. has nearly 1,000 troops in Romania, a full member of NATO, which Mr. Austin says is good deterrence against potential Russian aggression.

Most are stationed at the southeastern Mihail Kogalniceanu airbase but a number are also there to support an Aegis missile defence system, the first installed on NATO's eastern flank.

Talks with Mr. Ciuca focused in part on how to advance current basic defence cooperation by the countries on the Black Sea rim.

U.S. plans to give jobs to children

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON

Children aged 5 to 11 will soon be able to get a COVID-19 shot at their paediatrician's office, local pharmacy and potentially even their school, the White House said on Wednesday.

Federal regulators will meet over the next two weeks to weigh the benefits of giving shots to children, after lengthy studies meant to ensure the safety of the vaccines.

Within hours of formal approval, expected after the Food and Drug Administration signs off and a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advisory panel meeting scheduled for November 2-3, doses will begin shipping to providers across the country, along with smaller needles necessary for injecting young children, and within days will be ready to go into the arms of children on a wide scale.

About 15 million doses will be shipped to providers across the country in the first week after approval, the White House has said.

ELSEWHERE



Taliban agree to new polio vaccination drive

UN agencies are gearing up to vaccinate all of Afghanistan's children under five against polio for the first time since 2018, after the Taliban agreed to the campaign. For the past three years, the Taliban barred UN vaccination teams from doing door-to-door campaigns in parts of Afghanistan under their control. AP

New air strikes hit Tigray

Ethiopian Govt. has also blocked UN aid efforts in region

ASSOCIATED PRESS
NAIROBI

New air strikes hit the capital of Ethiopia's Tigray region, residents said on Wednesday, as video showed injured people with bloodied faces being rushed to vehicles and thick black smoke rising in the sky. The Ethiopian Government said it targeted facilities to make and repair weapons, which a spokesman for the rival Tigray forces denied. Meanwhile, the United Nations said it is slashing by more than half its Tigray presence

as an Ethiopian Government blockade halts humanitarian aid efforts and people die from lack of food.

The war in Africa's second-most populous country has ground on for nearly a year between Ethiopian and allied forces and the Tigray ones who long dominated the national government before a falling-out with Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize winner.

There was no immediate word of deaths from the new air strikes in Mekele, report-

ed by Kindeya Gebrehiwot of the Tigray external affairs office and confirmed by a resident and a humanitarian worker. One resident said five people were injured, speaking on condition of anonymity for fear of retaliation.

"Indeed there have been air strikes in Mekele today," Ethiopian Government spokesperson Legesse Tulu said, adding they targeted facilities at the Mesfin Industrial Engineering site that Tigray forces use to make and repair heavy weapons.

ENTERPRISE CONNECT A Business Initiative

ONGC has Organized Student Study Tour under Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav
In line with the observance of "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav", ONGC organized a study trip for students of Godavari Institute of Engineering & Technology (GIET) of Rajahmundry to its Mini Refinery at Talipaka and Gas Collecting Station at Kesanaipalli. The trips were organized from 5 to 9 October 2021, in five groups of around 25 students each. The trips are aimed at providing the students with an insight of various oil-field operations of ONGC, to inculcate a passion among the budding engineers for nation building efforts. Earlier in September, celebrating the 75 years of Independence, ONGC had organized field visits for five student groups from Kendriya Vidyalaya and engineering colleges. The study visits from 1 to 15 September were organized at five oil-field locations of the Maharashtra — Ahmedabad, Mehsana, Ankleshwar, Cambay and Cauvery.

under the aegis of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG), ONGC is organizing study visits of 25 groups, comprising of around 100 students in each group, from September 2021 to January 2022, under 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' (AKAM). Under this AKAM, ONGC is also collaborating with other oil PSUs, to launch various projects to boost the country's indigenous handicraft sector. Center public enterprises under the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas will be launching 75 different handicraft projects across the country till 15 August 2022.

Punjab National Bank has Reduced Gold Loan Rates
Punjab National Bank (PNB) has come up with a range of deals and offers. As part of the new scheme, the bank has slashed the interest rate on loans against gold jewellery and Sovereign Gold Bond by 145 basis points to bring more joy to its customers. PNB now offers loans against Sovereign Gold Bond (SGB) at 7.20% and loans against gold jewellery at 7.30%. Additionally, PNB has slashed the home loan rate which now starts from 6.80%, while customers can avail car loans starting from 7.15% and personal loans from 8.95%, one of the lowest in the industry. During the festive season, PNB is also offering a full waiver of service charges/processing fee on the loans against gold jewellery and SGB.

The bank has also slashed the margin on home loans. Hence, home loan seekers can now avail of loans up to 80% of the property's value without any upper ceiling on the loan amount. With the reduction in interest rate and zero processing fee, funds are available at a very competitive rate on a range of retail loan products offered by PNB during this season.

BHEL has won Clarivate South and South East Asia Innovation Award 2021 for Most Innovative Company in Heavy Industries Segment
Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) has been adjudged as winner of the Clarivate South and South East Asia Innovation Award 2021 under Corporations in India - Heavy Industries segment, recognising BHEL's efforts as a leader in Innovation and placing the company among top innovators in India. The award has been won by BHEL earlier in the years 2018 and 2020 also.

The Clarivate awards were announced at the Clarivate South & South East Asia Innovation Forum, held virtually earlier. The award was

received by Mrs. Renuka Gera, Director (IS&P, addl. charge E, R&D) on behalf of BHEL, from Mr. Rajat Sikka, Director — Intellectual Property Group, South Asia & South East Asia of Clarivate Analytics.

Punjab Cabinet has Slashed Water User Charges for Rural and Urban Residents
Punjab Cabinet on 18 Oct'21 decided to provide free power to all Rural Water Supply (RWS) schemes w.e.f. October 1, 2021. This decision was taken during a Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi. According to a spokesperson of the Chief Minister's Office, this decision would entail an annual expenditure of Rs.440 crore on the state exchequer. Likewise, the Cabinet also gave nod to reduce the service charges on all RWS schemes by 70% from Rs.166 to Rs. 50 per household per month in the villages.

It was also decided in the meeting to provide funds through budgetary support/grant to settle outstanding arrears of Rs. 1168 crore of power bills of RWS schemes. Extending relief to the people residing in urban areas, the Cabinet also decided to reduce water usage charges to Rs.50 per month for domestic connections of all categories having plot size above 125 Sq. yards in Municipal Councils/Nagar Panchayats and Municipal Corporations. Notably, plots upto 125 Sq. yards in urban areas have already been exempted from paying water and sewerage user charges. Both these concessions would benefit nearly 25 lac families living in urban areas. Further, the Cabinet also decided to waive off all the outstanding arrears of water supply and sewerage charges for domestic connections. This decision is likely to cost the state exchequer to the tune of nearly Rs.700 crore.

Asian Development Bank has Signed Loan Agreement with Urban Development Department of Uttarakhand
On dated 18th October 2021, Department of Urban Development, Government of Uttarakhand had a virtual meeting for the loan negotiation and signing of agreement for Project entitled, "Uttarakhand Integrated and Resilient Urban Development Project (UIRUDP)".

In the meeting detailed discussions were held with Asian Development Bank team, Manila, Philippines about the loan agreement to be signed by the Department of External Affairs, Government of India and Project agreement jointly signed by Mr. Shailesh Bagoli, IAS, Secretary Urban Development Department, GOU and Task Team Leader Ms. Na Won Kim of Asian Development Bank. It was decided that ADB will provide an amount of 125 Million US\$ as 1st Phase of the UIRUDP to Government of Uttarakhand, for development of climate resilient water supply, sewerage and Storm water drainage facility development for two major cities of both the developmental divisions of the state, i.e., Dehradun in Garhwal division and Nainital in Kumaon. The project implementation period is of total 07 years.

NBCC has Signed MoU with Delhi University
On September 28, 2021, NBCC and the University of Delhi (DU) inked a MoU for Construction and Infrastructure Development works at the university campus. The agreement was signed by Shri Pradeep Sharma, CGM

(BD) on behalf of NBCC while Dr. Vikas Gupta, Registrar signed on behalf of DU in the presence of officials from both the organisations. The company being a major implementing agency of the Govt. of India has successfully implemented various iconic projects including academic buildings of Central/ State Universities, IITs and IIMs across the nation.

Banaras Locomotive Works has organized function for distribution of self-employment toolkits and certificates for successful trainees
Function on 03 Oct'21 marks the culmination of the 100-hour training program organized by BLW for training of the first batch, in Technical Trades viz. Electrician, Fitter, Machinist, and Welder, under Rail Kaushal Vikas Yojana (RKVY). RKVY program was launched on 17.09.2021, Vishwakarma Puja Day, by Shri Ashwini Vaishnav, Hon'ble Minister of Railways, Communications, Electronics & Information Technology. RKVY program empowers local youth by way of providing entry level training in Industry relevant skills through Railway Training Institutes. This program seeks to take forward the vision of the PM to give confidence to the youth of this country, as a part of 75 years of Azadi Ka Mahotsav. The RKVY program is under aegis of Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) — a scheme of the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) to achieve vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat. Total 50000 Youths will be trained over period of three years in 75 Railway Training Institutes, spread all across India.

BLW has been entrusted as nodal agency for implementation of RKVY program. Course content and Assessment procedure for Training has been developed by Banaras Locomotive Works. Trainees for the RKVY program are selected through open advertisement and transparent shortlisting mechanism. Trainees have undergone 100 hours of practical and theoretical training. Subsequent to training, all trainees have undergone a standardized assessment and successful trainees are awarded certificate.

ALLEN Career Institute's Mridul Agarwal achieved All India Rank 1 in IIT-JEE Advanced 2021
Sh. Brajesh Maheshwari (Director, ALLEN Career Institute) said that Mridul Agarwal, A student of ALLEN Career Institute has achieved All India Rank-1 in the IIT Entrance Examination scoring the highest ever percent in the history of JEE-Advanced. Mridul Agarwal has scored 348 out of 360 marks, 96.66 percent. He is the first student who has topped JEE-Advanced, JEE-Main, and KVPY simultaneously.

7 ALLEN students are in the top 15 AIR. Arnav Aditya Singh secured AIR 9, Manpreet Singh got AIR 12, Anant Kidambi got AIR 13, Amay P Deshmukh got AIR 14, and Tanay Vineet Tayal got AIR 15. All of them are classroom students of ALLEN Career Institute. Kartik Sreekumar, associated with Allen distance learning program secured AIR 7.

27 ALLEN students are in the Top 50 AIR according to the results compiled so far. In this, 24 students are from ALLEN Classroom, and 3 are from ALLEN Distance Learning Program. With this, 49 students have made it to the Top 100 AIR, out of which 39 are from the classroom and 10 from Distance Learning Program.

MARKET WATCH

	20-10-2021	% CHANGE
Sensex	61,260	-0.74
US Dollar	74.88	-0.62
Brent oil	85.19	0.31

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	794.90	2.65
Asian Paints	3169.60	-14.15
Axis Bank	804.80	3.15
Bajaj Auto	3848.65	-62.90
Bajaj Finserv	18603.20	-473.35
Bajaj Finance	7761.35	22.05
Bharti Airtel	708.45	27.35
BPL	441.10	-11.95
Britannia Ind	3762.00	-33.90
Cipla	905.90	-0.30
Coal India	180.50	-4.00
Divis Lab	5116.40	-75.70
Dr Reddys Lab	4753.90	-47.90
Eicher Motors	2651.20	-52.50
Grasim Ind	1692.50	-25.40
HCL Tech	1232.90	0.80
HDFC	2795.10	-27.80
HDFC Bank	1673.85	-14.85
HDFC Life	703.40	0.60
Hero MotoCorp	2816.00	-60.05
Hindalco	512.95	-20.80
Hind Unilever	2478.65	-68.15
ICICI Bank	745.85	-1.60
IndusInd Bank	1201.70	7.70
Infosys	1802.35	-19.80
Indian Oil Corp	130.55	-3.25
ITC	246.60	0.65
JSW Steel	685.15	-6.40
Kotak Bank	2015.45	-19.90
L&T	1806.70	-39.35
M&M	899.35	-18.15
Maruti Suzuki	7590.75	-64.90
Nestle India Ltd.	19277.65	-90.80
NTPC	146.25	-3.40
ONGC	154.90	-3.70
PowerGrid Corp	194.35	-4.30
Reliance Ind	2700.40	-31.45
SBI Life	1168.75	-24.70
State Bank	499.90	11.70
Shree Cement	27457.40	-239.40
Sun Pharma	814.90	-12.45
Tata Consumer Products Ltd.	826.95	-16.35
Tata Motors	486.90	5.00
Tata Steel	1343.30	-23.60
TCS	3608.85	-25.30
Tech Mahindra	1539.30	0.20
Titan	2411.40	-73.50
UltraTech Cement	7129.60	-40.50
WIPAC	715.90	-17.80
Wipro	701.95	-9.60

EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	74.67	74.99
Euro	86.86	87.24
British Pound	102.75	103.20
Japanese Yen (100)	65.28	65.56
Chinese Yuan	11.68	11.73
Swiss Franc	80.88	81.27
Singapore Dollar	55.54	55.78
Canadian Dollar	60.46	60.72
Malaysian Ringgit	17.93	18.03

SUN Mobility raises \$50 mn from Vitol

BENGALURU
SUN Mobility, a service provider for EVs, has raised \$50 million from Vitol, an investor in zero-emission and renewable energy assets.

'High oil prices will sap global recovery'

Puri urges Saudi Arabia, other OPEC nations to work towards affordable and reliable supplies

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

India, the world's third-largest energy consumer, on Wednesday warned that high oil prices will undermine global economic recovery, and nudged Saudi Arabia and other OPEC nations to work towards affordable and reliable supplies.

Petrol and diesel prices have hit record highs across the country after relentless price increases since May.

"If energy prices remain high, global economic recovery will be undermined," Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said at the India Energy Forum by CERAWeek.

Global oil prices crashed to \$19 per barrel in April 2020 as demand evaporated with most nations clamping



Dearer by the day: India's oil import bill rose to \$24 billion, from \$8.8 billion in June 2020, says Puri. ■ VIJAY SONEJI

lockdowns to control the spread of the novel coronavirus.

Demand recovered this year as vaccination against the infection revived economies worldwide.

International benchmark Brent crude has since rallied to \$84 per barrel.

This, he said, had made fuel expensive and was stoking fears of inflation.

Mr. Puri said India's oil im-

port bill had climbed from \$8.8 billion in June 2020 quarter to \$24 billion this year because of a spike in global oil prices.

'Energy access crucial'

"India believes energy access has to be reliable, affordable and sustainable," he said adding economic recovery after a devastating pandemic had been fragile and it was further being threatened by the high prices.

India, which imports almost two-thirds of its oil needs from West Asia, has told oil producers, including the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), that high crude prices will hasten the transition to alternate fuels and such rates will be counter-productive for the producers.

Mr. Puri has in recent weeks flagged the issue of high oil prices to Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Kuwait, Qatar, the U.S., Russia and Bahrain. He conveyed India's strong preference for responsible and reasonable pricing, which was mutually beneficial for consumers and producers.

Mr. Puri said volatility in international prices was not just hurting India but also industrialised nations.

While the world had begun the transition towards cleaner fuels such as electric-powered vehicles and hydrogen, most nations were still dependent on oil to fuel their economies. And high oil prices would hurt the recovery in demand.

India is 85% dependent on imports to meet its oil needs.

'Future has to attend Amazon row arbitration'

REUTERS
NEW DELHI

Future Retail must take part in arbitration over a commercial dispute with Amazon, a Singapore arbitration panel ruled on Wednesday, rejecting the Indian retailer's bid to avoid the process.

Amazon is trying to block Future's \$3.4 billion sale of its retail assets to Reliance Industries, accusing it of breaking contracts. Future denies any wrongdoing.

After the arbitrator put the deal on hold last year in an interim decision, Future argued it should be excluded from arbitration because Amazon had initiated it incorrectly under a contract it signed with another Future group firm.

Gold imports to climb in coming months: GJEPC

'Festival season to spur demand'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

India's gold imports are expected to grow further in the coming months on account of peak demand due to the festive and wedding seasons, the Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) projected on Wednesday.

Gold imports, which have a bearing on the current account deficit, zoomed to about \$24 billion in the April-September period.

'Sharp pickup'

Imports picked up in August, which recorded the second-highest gold imports of 118.08 tonnes. Chairman Colin Shah said the increase in imports during July, August, and September was



due to the lifting of lockdowns, revival of domestic and export demand, and the start of the festive season that had resulted in a sharp rise in demand.

"We expect that imports of gold will further rise in the forthcoming months as peak festive/wedding season will further boost the demand for jewellery both at home and key international markets," he added.

Footwear firm Metro plans to raise ₹250 cr.

LALATENDU MISHRA
MUMBAI

Footwear retailer Metro Brands Ltd. plans to tap the capital market to raise up to ₹250 crore, a large part of which will be utilised for opening 219 new stores under Metro, Mochi, Walkway and Crocs brands.

"We are bullish about footwear retailing in India," said chairman Rafique A. Malik. "We have got the format right and have been profit making. Our online sales are also growing rapidly," he noted.

"Overall, the demand for footwear has reached pre-COVID level. All the new 219 stores will come up in two-and-a-half to 3 years and most of the capital will be utilised for that."

Vodafone Idea presses pause on spectrum dues

Moratorium to end in September 2025

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Vodafone Idea on Wednesday said its board has approved availing the four-year spectrum payment moratorium being offered by the government as part of the relief package for the telecom sector.

The other options offered in the Telecom Department's notification will be considered by the board of directors within the stipulated timeframe, it said in a regulatory filing.

"We wish to inform you that the board of directors of the company has approved the exercise of the option of deferment of the company's spectrum auction instalments for a period of 4 years (October 2021 to

UAE Minister assures energy supplies to India

Demand outpacing supply: Al Jaber

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) on Wednesday vowed to meet India's growing energy demand, saying it will remain the nation's trusted partner of choice.

Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber said the UAE is investing across its energy supply chain to remain a reliable energy provider to India and the world.

Stating that the energy demand is outpacing supply, he said the present global scenario calls for continued investment across the entire energy sector to avoid a deeper supply crunch.

Speaking virtually at an event, he said India's economy is returning to "robust,



Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber

almost double-digit growth" as the world recovers from the pandemic.

He acknowledged the challenges facing the sector and explained how the UAE is responding to remain a reliable energy provider to India and the world. "The current demand dynamic is a wake-up call to continue to invest across the energy sector to avoid a deeper supply crunch," he added.

'India may see salaries rise by 9.3% in 2022'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

Higher salaries in India are making a comeback with 9.3% hike being expected in 2022, from 8% in 2021, and with firms planning to give employees larger raises as they face mounting challenges of attracting and retaining employees, according to a report by Willis Towers Watson.

Salaries are projected to see a median salary increase of 9.3% next year compared with the actual median salary increase of 8% in 2021, according to the 'Salary Budget Planning Report' by the global advisory, broking and solutions company. India's projected salary increase is the highest in Asia-Pacific for the next year, it added.

SPORT

Unseeded Swastika Ghosh in last four

Top four women seeds knocked out; no problems for men

TABLE TENNIS

RAKESH RAO
CHANDIGARH

Unseeded Swastika Ghosh gatecrashed into her maiden women semifinals with three impressive victories in the National ranking table tennis championship on Wednesday.

On a day of major upsets when the top four women seeds – Sreeja Akula, Olympian Sutirtha Mukherjee, Ayhika Mukherjee and Reeth Rishya – fell before the quarterfinals, the men's top-four seeds Sharath Kamal, Manav Thakkar, Soumyajit Ghosh and Sanil Shetty entered the last four.

The day's biggest newsmakers at Panchkula's Devi Lal Stadium were the Airports Authority of India's duo of Swastika and Surabhi Patwari.

Swastika, 18, avenged the loss suffered to former National champion Madhurika Patkar four days ago in the Maharashtra State championship with a 11-3, 11-6, 8-11, 9-11, 6-11, 11-7, 11-6 victory in the round of 32. She then proceeded to end the dream run of the talented Karnata-



Dream run: Swastika Ghosh notched up some fine wins en route to the semifinals. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ka-girl Kushi Viswanath – the conqueror of second seed Sutirtha – in six sets.

Surabhi, who knocked out top seed Sreeja Akula 4-1, lost to eighth-seeded Prapti Sen in the quarterfinals. Earlier, Kushi stunned a jittery Sutirtha 11-8, 11-6, 5-11, 8-11, 11-8, 11-4 before Varuni Jaiswal packed off third seed Ayhika 6-11, 11-8, 11-9, 13-11, 9-11, 12-10.

Diya Chithale, among the

rising stars, downed fourth seed Reeth in six sets.

The results:
Men: Quarterfinals: Sharath Kamal bt Sudhanshu Grover 11-5, 12-14, 11-4, 11-6, 11-9; Harmeet Desai bt Sanil Shetty 14-12, 6-11, 12-10 11-6, 11-7; Soumyajit Ghosh bt Deepit Patil 11-5, 9-11, 11-7, 11-6, 11-7; Manav Thakkar bt Sarthak Seth 11-7, 11-9, 11-5, 11-7.

Pre-quarterfinals: Sarath bt Jeet Chandra 3-11, 9-11, 11-7, 11-3, 11-2, 11-7; Grover bt Wes-

ley Do Rosario 11-7, 9-11, 11-3, 10-12, 17-15, 12-14, 11-7; Harmeet bt Abhishek Yadav 11-7, 11-5, 7-11, 11-5, 11-4; Sanil bt Payas Jain 11-8, 14-12, 11-7, 11-3, 11-4, 3-11; Soumyajit bt Manush Shah 7-11, 15-17, 11-8, 11-8, 11-9, 6-11, 11-6; Deepit bt Arjun Ghosh 11-7, 5-11, 4-11, 13-11, 14-12, 5-11, 11-5; Sarthak bt Ronit Bhanja 11-8, 10-12, 11-8, 12-10, 8-11, 12-10; Manav bt Shubh Goel 11-7, 11-8, 11-5, 11-7.

Women: Quarterfinals: Prapti Sen bt Surbhi Patwari 8-11, 11-9, 10-12, 11-8, 11-8, 11-9; Takeme Sarkar bt Diya Chithale 8-11, 11-9, 12-10, 11-6, 4-11, 11-13, 11-9; Anusha Kutumbale bt Shruti Amrute 11-7, 11-5, 16-14, 10-12, 11-5; Swastika Ghosh bt Kritika Sinha Roy 11-6, 11-6, 11-7, 11-3.

Pre-quarterfinals: Surbhi bt Sreeja Akula 12-10, 9-11, 11-9, 11-9, 11-9; Prapti bt Sagarika Mukherjee 13-11, 11-7, 11-4, 9-11, 11-8; Takeme bt Yashaswini Ghorpade 11-9, 11-9, 11-7, 12-10; Diya bt Reeth Rishya 11-9, 3-11, 11-5, 11-6, 5-11, 11-6; Shruti bt Varuni Jaiswal 12-10, 9-11, 11-4, 7-11, 11-8, 11-5; Anusha bt Risha Mirchandani 11-6, 9-11, 11-8, 9-11, 11-5, 11-8; Kritika bt S. Selena-deepthi 11-3, 11-8, 9-11, 11-9, 11-3; Swastika bt Kushi Viswanath 6-11, 14-12, 11-3, 11-6, 8-11, 12-10.

AQUATICS

SPORTS REPORTER
BENGALURU

Ridhima Veerendra Kumar's record-breaking swim in girls' Group II 100m backstroke was the highlight as Karnataka dominated day two of the sub-junior and junior National Aquatic Championships at the Basavanagudi Aquatic Centre on Wednesday.

Ridhima's time of 1:04.87s – 0.43 seconds faster than Maana Patel's mark set in 2014 – was one of four new National records set by the home swimmers on the day, with the others being Aneesh S. Gowda (boys' Group I 400m freestyle) and the boys' and girls' Group I 4x100m medley relay teams.

Elsewhere, Assam's Astha Choudhury came up with two of her fastest swims in the Group I 100m butterfly race, rewriting the National record first in the heats, and then again in the final with a time of 1:03.58s. Karnataka's Jas Singh won his fourth individual gold, in the 100m freestyle for Group V boys, to add to the wins in 100m breaststroke, 200m IM and 50m backstroke on day one.



Ridhima Veerendra Kumar. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The results: Boys: Group I: 400m freestyle: Aneesh S. Gowda (Kar), 4:00.11 (NMR; OR: 4:00.91, Aryan Nehra (Guj), 2019); **200m backstroke:** Utkarsh Gor (Mah), 1:02.95; **100m butterfly:** R. Sambhav (Kar), 55.87; **4x100m medley:** Karnataka, 3:56.35 (NMR; OR: 4:00.76, Karnataka, 2018); **Group II: 50m breaststroke:** Abhishek Kannaujia (SSCB), 32.98; **200m butterfly:** N. Deva Ganesh (AP), 2:17.90; **Group III: 400m freestyle:** M. Yagna Sai (AP), 4:59.32; **100m butterfly:** Akshaj Thakuria (Kar), 1:06.55; **Group IV: 100m freestyle:** Sharan Sridhara (Kar), 1:06.85; **200m IM:** T. Kabilan (TN), 2:46.94; **Group V: 100m freestyle:** Jas Singh (Kar), 1:09.47.

Girls: Group I: 400m freestyle: Aanya Wala (Mah), 4:34.54; **200m backstroke:**

Sanjana Prabhugaonkar (Goa), 2:28.71; **100m butterfly:** Astha Choudhury (Assm), 1:02.71 (NMR; OR: 1:03.58, Astha, 2021); **4x100m medley:** Karnataka, 4:32.69 (NMR; OR: 4:37.34, Karnataka, 2018); **Group II: 100m backstroke:** Ridhima Veerendra Kumar (Kar), 1:04.87 (NMR; OR: 1:05.30, Maana Patel (Guj), 2014); **50m breaststroke:** Vihitha Nayana (Kar), 36.10; **200m butterfly:** Hashika Ramachandra (Kar), 2:26.56; **Group III: 100m butterfly:** Tanishi Gupta (Kar), 1:10.12; **Group IV: 100m freestyle:** Alyssa Sreedal Rego (Kar), 1:08.72; **200m IM:** Anvesha Khanikar (Assm), 3:00.85; **Group V: 100m freestyle:** K. Lasya Sri (AP), 1:12.46

On Tuesday: Boys: Group I: 4x200m freestyle: Karnataka, 7:50.06 (NMR; OR: 7:57.07, Karnataka, 2017); **Group II: 100m breaststroke:** Surya Jhoyappa (Kar), 1:11.61; **Group III: 50m backstroke:** Akshaj Thakuria (Kar), 33.60; **Group IV: 50m backstroke:** Ishan Ghosh (Ben), 35.37; **Group V: 50m backstroke:** Jas Singh (Kar), 37.58.

Girls: Group II: 100m breaststroke: A.K. Lineysa (Kar), 1:16.66; **Group III: 50m backstroke:** Pramiti Gnanasekaran (TN), 34.59; **Group IV: 50m backstroke:** Annika Deborah Pappoornam Ananth (Tel), 37.77; **Group V: 50m backstroke:** Shreya Binil (Ker), 39.88.

Lakshya cruises ahead; Saina, Prannoy and Kashyap bow out

BADMINTON

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
ODENSE (DENMARK)

Lakshya Sen thumped compatriot Sourabh Verma in straight games to enter the second round but it was curtains for H.S. Prannoy, P. Kashyap and Saina Nehwal at the Denmark Open Super 1000 tournament here on Wednesday.

Lakshya dished out a superb performance to outclass Sourabh 21-9, 21-7 in 26

minutes. In another men's singles match, sixth-seeded Jonatan Christie of Indonesia overcame Prannoy 21-18, 21-19 in 46 minutes. P. Kashyap retired while trailing 0-3 against the fourth seed Tien Chen Chou of Chinese Taipei.

Saina, who had retired midway through her first match at Uber Cup Final due to a groin injury, couldn't match Japan's World No. 20 Aya Ohori and lost 16-21, 14-21

in the opening round.

The Indian doubles players had a dismal outing as apart from Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Ashwini Ponnappa, none of the others could put up a fight in their respective matches.

While Satwik and Ashwini's gallant battle ended with a 17-21, 21-14, 11-21 loss to China's Feng Yan Zhe and Du Yue in mixed doubles, J. Meghana and Poorvisha S. Ram lost 8-21, 7-21 to Indonesian combination of Nita Vio-

lina Marwah and Putri Syaikah in women's doubles.

Ashwini and N. Sikki Reddy also went down 17-21, 13-21 to the second-seeded Korean pair of Lee Sohee and Shin Seungchan.

On Wednesday, the World No. 25 was up against Sourabh, an opponent against whom he had lost twice in the past but it made no difference as Lakshya dished out a dominating show to blow the latter away.

The results: First round:

Men: Lakshya Sen bt Sourabh Verma 21-9, 21-7; Jonatan Christie (Ina) bt H.S. Prannoy 21-18, 21-19; Tien Chen Chou (Tpe) bt P. Kashyap 3-0 ret'd.

Women: Aya Ohori (Jpn) bt Saina Nehwal 21-16, 21-14; **Doubles:** Nita Violina Marwah & Putri Syaikah (Ina) bt J. Meghana & Poorvisha S. Ram 21-8, 21-7; Lee Sohee & Shin Seungchan (Kor) bt Ashwini Ponnappa & N. Sikki Reddy 21-17, 21-13.

Mixed doubles: Feng Yan Zhe & Du Yue (Chn) bt Satwiksairaj Rankireddy & Ashwini Ponnappa 21-17, 14-21, 21-11.



Easily done: Lakshya Sen had the measure of Sourabh

TV PICKS

Badminton: Denmark Open, Star Sports 3, 12.30 p.m.
Men's T20 World Cup: (first round): Star Sports 1 & 2 (SD & HD), 3.30 p.m. & 7.30 p.m.
Europa League: Sony Ten 2 (SD & HD), 10.15 p.m.; Sony Ten 2 & Sony Six (SD & HD), 12.30 a.m. (Friday)

IN BRIEF



Akeal Hosein to replace injured Fabian Allen

West Indies drafted in left-arm spinner Akeal Hosein as a replacement for injured Fabian Allen on Wednesday for the T20 World Cup. The ICC's technical committee approved the replacement after Allen withdrew because of an ankle injury. **AP**

Rohit in sublime touch as India wins with ease

Rahul and Suryakumar also comes good; Kohli tries his hand at bowling; early strikes peg Australia back

T20 WC WARM-UPS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DUBAI

India fine-tuned its World Cup preparations with a convincing nine-wicket win over Australia in its final warm-up game on Wednesday.

Captaining the side, Rohit Sharma (60, 41b, 5x4, 3x6) showed sublime touch along side opening partner K.L. Rahul (39, 31b, 2x4, 3x6) as India overhauled Australia's total of 152 for five in 17.5 overs.

Suryakumar Yadav, who came in at No. 3, hit a quick-fire unbeaten 38 (27b, 27b, 5x4, 1x6) to guide the team home in the company of Hardik Pandya (14 n.o., 8b, 1x6).

An option

Virat Kohli, who decided to turn his arm over after quite a while, kept things tight with two overs of medium pace.

Earlier, after losing the

toss, India reduced Australia 11 for three in the less than four overs. David Warner's barren run continued as a failed reverse sweep off R. Ashwin had him trapped in front. With his very next ball, the off-spinner got rid of birthday boy Mitchell Marsh, who edged to the first slip.

When Ravindra Jadeja trapped skipper Aaron Finch leg-before with his very first ball, Australia was left with a lot of work to do.

Steve Smith (57, 48b, 7x4) and the in-form Glenn Maxwell (37, 28, 5x4) arrested the slide with a 61-run partnership before Marcus Stoinis (41 n.o., 25b, 4x4, 1x6) provided a final flourish.

The scores: Australia 152/5 in 20 overs (Steve Smith 57, Marcus Stoinis 41 n.o., Ashwin 2/8) lost to India 153/2 in 17.5 overs (Rohit Sharma 60, K.L. Rahul 39, Suryakumar Yadav 38 n.o.). **Toss:** Australia.

India won by eight wks. with 13 balls to spare.



Common and rare: Rohit Sharma, donning the skipper's role, essayed some of his trademark shots, while Virat Kohli sent down two overs of medium pace. **INSTAGRAM/INDIANCRICKETTEAM & AP**



Hardik expected to bowl

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DUBAI

India vice-captain Rohit Sharma on Wednesday said that all-rounder Hardik Pandya is expected to be "ready" to bowl when the team starts its T20 World Cup campaign here on Sunday.

Rohit said the team needs a sixth bowler during the showpiece.

"Hardik is coming along pretty well, but it'll be a while before he will start to bowl. He hasn't started bowling, but he should be ready by the start of the tournament," said Rohit.

"We have quality in the main bowlers, but you need an option for a sixth bowler," he added.

India plays Pakistan in its opening match here on Sunday.

Hardik's fitness has been a concern heading into the tournament as he did not bowl at all in the IPL.

David Wiese powers Namibia home

Netherlands suffers second straight loss

T20 WORLD CUP

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
ABU DHABI

David Wiese bludgeoned an unbeaten 66 in 40 balls as Namibia stayed alive in the T20 World Cup with a six-wicket triumph over the Netherlands here on Wednesday.

The former South Africa international, who played in the 2016 edition, hit five sixes and four boundaries as Namibia chased down the target of 165 with six balls to spare for its first ever win in the World Cup.

In the opening game on Monday, it had crashed to 96 all out and lost by seven wickets to Sri Lanka. The Dutch, who lost their opener to Ireland, also by seven wickets, would find it difficult to advance.

Wiese was well-supported

by captain Gerhard Erasmus who contributed 32 off 22 balls with the pair putting on 93 for the fourth wicket.

O'Dowd comes good

Earlier, opener Max O'Dowd made a second successive half century to lead Netherlands to 164 for four after being put into bat. The New Zealand-born O'Dowd batted for virtually the entire innings, making 70 off 56 balls with one six and six boundaries.

Colin Ackermann also played a solid role hitting 35 off 32 balls, while Scott Edwards added a quickfire, unbeaten 21 to give the Dutch innings added extra impetus.

The scores: Netherlands 164/4 in 20 overs (Max O'Dowd 70, Colin Ackermann 35, Jan Frylinck 2/36) lost to Namibia 166/4 in 19 overs (David Wiese 66 n.o., Gerhard Erasmus 32). **Toss:** Namibia.



Hitting away: David Wiese played a blistering knock to help Namibia overcome Netherlands. **AFF**

Sri Lanka makes the Super 12 with a clinical victory

Hasaranga, Nissanka hit half-centuries before the bowlers bundle out Ireland

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
ABU DHABI

Wanindu Hasaranga and Pathum Nissanka hit half-centuries as Sri Lanka thrashed Ireland by 70 runs on Wednesday to reach the Super 12 stage of the T20 World Cup.

Hasaranga, who smashed 71, and Nissanka, who made 61, put on a key stand of 123 to guide Sri Lanka to 171 for seven after being in trouble early on in the first round match.

Then its bowling attack, led by spinner Maheesh Theekshana who returned figures of three for 17, dismissed Ireland for 101 in 18.3 overs despite a valiant 41 from skipper Andy Balbirnie.

Hasaranga stood out with his maiden T20I half-century and economical figures of one of 12 as Sri Lanka remained top of Group A with four points after a second



Mission accomplished: Sri Lankan players celebrate after the big win over Ireland on Wednesday. **AFF**

successful win.

Put in, Sri Lanka stumbled to eight for three in the second over before Hasaranga and Nissanka started the recovery.

Paul Stirling claimed the wicket of Kusal Perera for nought with the second ball of the innings and Josh Little

took two in two the following over to remove Dinesh Chandimal and Avishka Fernando.

Hasaranga, an all-rounder who bowls leg-spin, took the attack to the opposition with four straight boundaries off spinner Simi Singh to lay the foundation for Sri Lanka's

challenging total.

He reached his fifty in 38 balls and kept up the charge to punish the Ireland bowlers, blasting a towering six before falling to Mark Adair.

Nissanka also recorded his first fifty in the shortest international format as he hit six fours and a six in his 47-ball knock.

Little returned impressive figures of four for 23 and Adair claimed his 50th T20I wicket before the Lankan skipper Dasun Shanaka finished the innings with a six and a four in his unbeaten 21 off 11 balls.

The scores: Sri Lanka 171/7 in 20 overs (Wanindu Hasaranga 71, Pathum Nissanka 61, Joshua Little 4/23) bt Ireland 101 in 18.3 overs (Andy Balbirnie 41, Maheesh Theekshana 3/17, Lahiru Kumara 2/22, Chamika Karunaratne 2/27). **Toss:** Ireland.

Sri Lanka won by 70 runs to qualify for the Super 12.

Abhay to apply for fielding coach's job

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Abhay Sharma, who has worked with India-A, India under-19 and the national women's side, has emerged as one of the candidates for the senior men's team fielding coach's position in place of the outgoing R. Sridhar.

The 52-year-old is set to apply for the role with the Indian team.

"He will be applying for the role soon," a BCCI source confirmed. The application deadline is November 3.

Pattinson quits international cricket



James Pattinson. **AP**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MELBOURNE

Australian fast bowler James Pattinson on Wednesday retired from international cricket after realising that he won't be in the reckoning for the Ashes series due to fitness issues.

The 31-year-old, who has played 21 Tests and 15 ODIs, though will continue to play domestic cricket.

Pattinson had recently suffered a knee injury during an intra-squad Victorian trial game.

Bangladesh starts as the favourite

PNG, already out of the tournament, eyes an elusive win

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
AL AMERAT (OMAN)

Bangladesh, its campaign back on track, will start as the overwhelming favourite when it faces Papua New Guinea in a must-win Group-B league game of the T20 World Cup here on Thursday.

Bangladesh suffered a shock six-run defeat against Scotland. But the Mahmudullah-led side bounced back to defeat Oman by 26 runs on Tuesday.

Bangladesh will need a win to keep its chances of making it to the Super12 alive, as it only has two points from two games and is placed third with a net run-rate of +0.500.



Vital cog: All-rounder Shakib Al Hasan's role will be crucial for Bangladesh. **AP**

A win against Papua New Guinea will give it two crucial points and then it would also hope that Oman loses its final game against Scotland, which has already qualified from the group, to ensure its

passage into the next stage.

The role of star all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan would be crucial for the Asian side. Shakib has been among the runs and wickets and he could pose a serious chal-

Today's matches

- Bangladesh vs Papua New Guinea, 3.30 p.m.
- Scotland vs Oman, 7.30 p.m.

enge to the PNG batters on a track that assists the spinners. Mahmudullah had conceded that the team would have to improve in a lot of areas despite the win against Oman.

Meanwhile, the Assad Vala-led PNG has lost both its games and is already out of contention.

But it would surely like to sign off the tournament on a positive note.

Match starts at 3.30 p.m. IST.

Scotland looks to keep slate clean

Oman has players who can help the side pull off a victory

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
AL AMERAT (OMAN)

Scotland will fancy its chances of maintaining its unbeaten run and enter the Super 12 on a winning note when it meets Oman in the Group-B league game of the T20 World Cup here on Thursday.

Scotland shocked fancied Bangladesh in the tournament opener and then got the better of Papua New Guinea in the second group match on Tuesday, taking another huge step in their cricketing journey by qualifying for the Super 12 stage.

There is power and touch at the top and middle-order including Richie Berrington and Calum MacLeod. Pos-



Sweeping success: Calum MacLeod is one of Scotland's best players of spin. **AFF**

sessing a wide array of strokes, MacLeod remains one of Scotland's best players of spin.

Hosts Oman got off to an excellent start with a convincing win against PNG but

lost to Bangladesh.

Playing at home, Zeeshan Maqsood's side has the players who can help the team get the better of an in-form rival.

Match starts at 7.30 p.m. IST.

India men in Pool B for junior World Cup

Women placed in Pool C

HOCKEY

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

Defending champion India has been placed along with Canada, France and Poland in Pool B for the men's Junior World Cup hockey tournament to be played at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar from November 24.

According to the schedule released by the International Hockey Federation (FIH) on Wednesday, the host will begin its campaign against France at 7.30 p.m. on the opening day before meeting Canada (November 25) and Poland (November 27) in its subsequent pool engagements.

India won the title when

it hosted the last edition of the event in Lucknow in 2016. The quarterfinals will be played on December 1 and the semifinals on December 3.

Final on December 5

The final will take place on December 5.

India has been slotted in Pool C for the women's Junior World Cup to be held in Potchefstroom, South Africa, from December 5 to 16.

India will face Russia (December 6), Argentina (December 7) and Japan (December 9) in the pool stage.

The quarterfinals will be held on December 12 followed by the semifinals on December 14 and the final on December 16.

Pique helps Barca to its first CL win of the season

Goal glut as Liverpool and PSG post fighting wins; Ajax overwhelms Dortmund

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

ASSOCIATED PRESS
PARIS

Gerard Pique scored the vital goal to earn Barcelona a nervy 1-0 win over Dynamo Kyiv in Champions League Group E on Wednesday and keep alive the Spanish side's hopes of reaching the knockout rounds.

Pique volleyed home Jordi Alba's cross in the 36th minute to register Barca's first goal of this season's competition and secure its first victory after 3-0 defeats by Bayern Munich and Benfica.

There was a goal rush on Tuesday and it was hardly a surprise to see Lionel Messi and Mohamed Salah among the scorers. By converting coolly taken penalties late in their games, Messi and Salah sealed 3-2 wins for Paris

Saint-Germain and Liverpool, respectively, on a chaotic night when 35 goals were scored across eight group matches.

Ajax produced perhaps

the best performance of the lot in overwhelming Borussia Dortmund 4-0, with Sebastian Haller netting his sixth goal of the group stage in just three rounds of games.

Messi rescued the French club in its 3-2 win over Leipzig, equalising in the 67th and then producing a cheeky "Panenka" penalty down the middle to complete PSG's co-

meback. Salah became the first player in Liverpool's 129-year history to score in nine straight games in all competitions, clinching a 3-2 victory at Atletico Madrid.

The results: Group A: PSG 3 (Mbappe 9, Messi 67, 74-pen) bt RB Leipzig 2 (Andre Silva 28, Mukiele 57).

Group B: Atletico Madrid 2 (Griezmann 20, 34) lost to Liverpool 3 (Salah 8, 78-pen, Keita 13); Porto 1 (Diaz 65) bt AC Milan 0.

Group C: Ajax 4 (Reus 11-og, Blind 25, Antony 57, Haller 72) bt Borussia Dortmund 0;

Group D: Shakhtar Donetsk 0 lost to Real Madrid 5 (Kryvtsov 37-og, Vinicius Jr 51, 56, Rodrygo 64, Benzema 90+1); Inter Milan 3 (Dzeko 34, Vidal 58, de Vrij 67) bt Sheriff 1 (Thill 52).

Group E: Barcelona 1 (Pique 36) bt Dynamo Kiev 0.

Group G: Salzburg 3 (Adeyemi 3, Okafor 65, 77) bt Wolfsburg 1 (Nmecha 15).



Delightful finish: Despite attention from RB Leipzig's defenders, Lionel Messi scores PSG's second. **AP**

IN BRIEF

**Benzema absent for blackmail trial**

VERSAILLES
Real Madrid forward Karim Benzema wasn't present on Wednesday for the opening of his three-day trial for involvement in an alleged attempt to blackmail former France teammate Mathieu Valbuena over a sex tape. The 33-year-old Benzema's legal team told the court that professional obligations made it "impossible" for him to attend. Valbuena's lawyer deplored the absence. **AP**

Bruce leaves Newcastle by 'mutual consent'

LONDON
Steve Bruce has left his position as Newcastle manager by "mutual consent", 13 days after a Saudi-led takeover at St James' Park, the Premier League club announced on Wednesday. Bruce took charge of his 1,000th match as a manager in Sunday's 3-2 defeat by Tottenham — his only game under the new owners. His assistant, Graeme Jones, will be in charge for Saturday's trip to Crystal Palace. **AFP**

**Nathan Lyon suffers mild concussion**

MELBOURNE
Australia Test spinner Nathan Lyon suffered a "mild concussion" during New South Wales' intra-squad trial game but is expected to be available for next week's Sheffield Shield opening match. Lyon was withdrawn from the rest of the three-day game on Tuesday as a precautionary measure. **PTI**

India U-23 team departs for Asian Cup Qualifiers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI
The India U-23 football team departed for Dubai on Wednesday to compete in the forthcoming Qualifiers for the AFC U-23 Asian Cup.

India, which has been clubbed in Group E along with Oman, UAE and the Kyrgyz Republic, begins its campaign against Oman on October 24.

"Every country has talented youngsters, and U-23 players who are already playing at the senior level for their respective countries, and so do we. But we need to find the balance in this team," head coach Igor Stimac said.

Top seed Vijay knocked out

SPORTS BUREAU CHANDIGARH
S. Venkataraman knocked out top seed Vijay Kumar 6-7(6), 6-4, 6-3 in the men's over-45 quarterfinals of the ITF seniors tennis tournament at the Roots Academy, Zirakpur, on Wednesday.

The results (quarterfinals):
Over-35: Dilip Mohanty bt Anindito Guha 7-5, 6-1; Harmeet Singh bt Mohit Pandey 6-1, 6-1; Raj Kumar bt Kiran Kumar 6-0, 6-0; Varun Makkar bt Prasang Raheja 6-0, 6-2.
Over-45: S. Venkataraman bt Vijay Kumar 6-7(6), 6-4, 6-3; Yogesh Kohli bt Avnish Chandra Rastogi 6-4, 6-1; Shyam Jagat bt Gopal Soni 6-3, 3-6, 6-1; Monty Roy bt Sunil Lulla 7-5, 6-1.
Over-55: Nirmal Kumar Ranjan bt Anil Nigam 6-1, 6-0; Sanjay Kumar bt Omprakash Choudhary 6-2, 6-0; Kuldeep Singh bt Rakesh Kohli 7-5, 6-3; Ajeet Bhardwaj bt Naresh Vij 6-1, 6-2.
Over-65: Narender Janweja bt Mahender Kakkad 6-2, 6-0; Mridulal Barkoti bt Darshan Lal Maria 6-1, 6-0; Vinayak Gujrathi bt Sudhir Kumar 6-2, 6-0; Suresh Murthi bt Pala Ram Sehgal 6-0, 6-1.

Antetokounmpo delivers for the Bucks

Steph Curry's triple-double powers Golden State Warriors past LA Lakers

NBA

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE MILWAUKEE

Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 32 points as the Milwaukee Bucks launched the defence of its NBA crown on Tuesday with a 127-104 victory over the Brooklyn Nets, while LeBron James and the Los Angeles Lakers were out-gunned by the Golden State Warriors 121-114.

Antetokounmpo picked up where he left off in guiding the Bucks to victory in the NBA Finals last season, leading an emphatic all-round offensive display that included 14 rebounds and seven assists.

The two-time NBA Most Valuable Player was one of five Bucks who cracked double figures on a night when Milwaukee's fans celebrated as the team raised its first championship banner in 50 years at the Fiserv Forum.

Khris Middleton had 20 points while Pat Connaughton also made 20 off the bench. Jordan Nwora added 15 points while Jrue Holiday, who left the game with an in-



Charging ahead: Giannis Antetokounmpo put on an emphatic all-round offensive display as Milwaukee Bucks made a winning start to its defence of its title. **AP**

jury early on, had 12.

Missing Irving
It was a chastening loss for Brooklyn, who have started the season without the services of Kyrie Irving.

The Nets have left Irving out of the line-up for the foreseeable future because of his refusal to take the COVID-19 vaccine, which makes him ineligible for home games in New York due to ci-

ty laws.
In Irving's absence, Kevin Durant led the Brooklyn scorers with 32 points while James Harden had 20. New signing Patty Mills added 21 — making seven-from-seven

from three-point range — while Nic Claxton had 12 points.

In Tuesday's other season-opener, the new-look Los Angeles Lakers was humbled by the Warriors at the Staples Center.

James led the Lakers scorers with 34 points while Anthony Davis chimed in with 33. But they were the only two Los Angeles players to make double figures, while blockbuster new signing Russell Westbrook was restricted to eight points, five rebounds and four assists.

Instead it was the Warriors who looked the more cohesive unit, with Stephen Curry leading the way with 21 points, 10 rebounds and 10 assists — Curry's first triple-double since 2016.

Six Warriors players made double figures, with Jordan Poole just behind Curry with 20 points. The Lakers led 59-53 at half-time but were blown away by the Warriors after the break.

The results: Milwaukee Bucks 127 bt Brooklyn Nets 104; Golden State Warriors 121 bt LA Lakers 114.

India pugilists leave for World championships

It will be Nievea's last assignment

BOXING

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

The Indian men's boxing team, comprising the likes of Asian medal-winners Deepak Kumar (51kg), Shiva Thapa (63.5kg) and Sanjeet (92kg), left for Belgrade on Wednesday to compete in the World championships starting on October 24, hopeful of coming over the disappointment of an underwhelming Olympics campaign.

The three form the experienced core of the 13-member squad, which is made up of this year's National champions. Of these, Thapa is the only one with prior experience of competing in the World event, having claimed a bronze in 2015.

Support staff

The boxers are accompanied by the support staff, led by High Performance Director Santiago Nievea and newly-appointed head coach Narender Rana, with

former Commonwealth Games silver-medallist L. Devendra Singh as one of the assistant coaches.

This will be Nievea's last assignment with the Indian team after the Boxing Federation of India decided against giving him a long-term extension at the end of the Tokyo Olympics.

The preparation for the Worlds has been far from ideal as the boxers got just about 10 days to practice in a camp after the Nationals.

The five men who competed in Tokyo, including last World championships silver-medallist Amit Panghal (51kg), could not make the squad after skipping the Nationals owing to nigglers and "lack of preparation time".

The squad: Govind Sahani (48kg), Deepak Kumar (51kg), Akash (54kg), Rohit Mor (57kg), Varinder Singh (60kg), Shiva Thapa (63.5kg), Akash (67kg), Nishant Dev (71kg), Sumit (75kg), Sachin Kumar (80kg), Lakshya (86kg), Sanjeet (92kg), Narender (+92kg).

'Biennial World Cups needed to attract youth'

FIFA chief Infantino makes a pitch to European football leaders

FOOTBALL

ASSOCIATED PRESS WASHINGTON

FIFA president Gianni Infantino told European football leaders that introducing biennial World Cups would help keep youngsters interested in the sport at a time when they are increasingly "running after" other activities.

The Associated Press obtained a recording of Infantino speaking on Tuesday during a meeting that was closed to the media, where UEFA member associations also voiced a stream of opposition to his plans to double the frequency of World Cups.

Infantino was challenged by presidents of national federations on the damage that would be caused to not only club competitions but also national teams if FIFA radi-



Pushing his agenda: FIFA president Gianni Infantino feels other activities that young boys and young girls are running after is football's enemy. **AFP**

cally overhauls the international game despite European opposition.

But Infantino pitched the reshaping of world football as being necessary to safeguard the future of the sport.

"I believe as well that the enemy of football is not the World Cup or is not FIFA but it is other activities that young boys and young girls

are running after today," Infantino said in closing remarks to the meeting that lasted more than an hour.

"And we need to see how jointly and together we can bring them back to be interested in football. And we want to, as far as I'm concerned, do this all together as we have always been doing in the last few years."

Infantino did not specify what those "other activities" were. He did not respond to a phone call from the AP seeking comment and FIFA had no immediate comment expanding on the remarks.

Leaders from the Finnish, Italian, Germany, Portuguese, Romanian, Scottish, Spanish and Swiss federations told Infantino they want to continue having the World Cup every four years.

Player welfare

They cited the impact on player welfare of having more frequent tournaments, the pitfalls of having only one block of qualifiers across October and November, and the potential damage caused to the growing profile of the women's game by having more men's competitions.

No country spoke in favor of the plans during the call with Infantino.

UEFA estimates €3b shortfall

Expected fall-out of FIFA's controversial plans

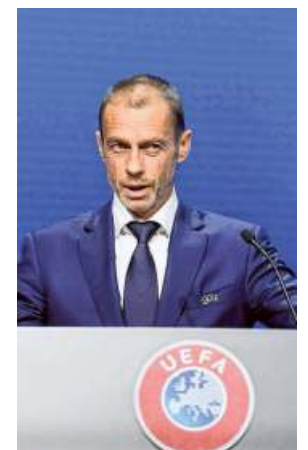
AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE PARIS

A report commissioned by UEFA estimates a shortfall of between €2.5 and 3 billion over four years for European federations if FIFA adopts its controversial plan to switch to a biennial World Cup, AFP has learned.

European football's governing body presented the findings of the study to the leaders of its 55 member federations on Tuesday.

The report does not take into account the possible additional shortfall for each of the national championships, say French newspapers *Le Monde* and *L'Equipe*, who revealed the contents of the document.

UEFA has already opposed FIFA's proposed change to the international calendar which is looking to hold the World Cup every two years from 2028, in-



UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin. **AP**

stead of the usual quadrennial rhythm.

UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin said last month that the change would "lead to more randomisation, less legitimacy, and it will unfortunately dilute the World Cup itself".

His sentiments have been echoed by leagues, federations and supporters around the world.

FIFA president Gianni Infantino, however, insists the change would benefit federations and is determined to plough ahead with the idea, saying this week that a final decision will be made "before December".

Single window

In addition to the biennial World Cup, the project plans to bring together qualifying matches into a single window in October, or even two in March and October, instead of the current spread of windows throughout the year.

According to *Le Monde*, the recently-created Nations League, would disappear with the European Championships also moving to a biennial programme.

100 days to go for Asian Cup

Bala Devi urges fans to support India

ANI NEW DELHI

The impending football fever in India is fast approaching as Wednesday marked the three-month countdown for Asia's flagship tournament for women's football — AFC Women's Asian Cup India 2022, set to commence on January 20 next year.

The best 12 teams from the continent will battle it out for the top honours in the competition which will be played across Navi Mumbai, Mumbai and Pune till February 6, 2022. The Asian Football Confederation (AFC), which unveiled "Our Goal for All" as the official tagline of the presti-

gious tournament on the 100 days to go milestone date, has confirmed 10 teams for the competition and two more teams will be finalized this week.

Bala Devi, who bagged her third AIFW Women's Footballer of the Year Award earlier this year, urged the football fans of India to show support for their nation at the AFC Women's Asian Cup India 2022 and the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup India 2022.

"I was overcome with joy when I learnt that in 2022 India will host both, the AFC Women's Asian Cup India 2022 as well as the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup India

2022," said Bala in an official release.

"I was very happy because these tournaments will be a fantastic stepping stone for our young girls to progress. When you look at the support for our team that participated in the FIFA U-17 World Cup India 2017, it is really unbelievable.

"I would humbly request everyone to show similar support to the women who will be participating in the AFC Women's Asian Cup India 2022 in January next year, as well as to those who will play in the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup India 2022 in October next year," she added.



Bala Devi. **FILE PHOTO**

WINTER GAMES

ASSOCIATED PRESS BEIJING

The Olympic flame arrived here on Wednesday amid calls from overseas critics for a boycott of the February 4-20 Winter Games.

Communist Party secretary Cai Qi, the top official in the Chinese capital, received the flame at a closely-guarded airport ceremony.

Beijing is the first city to be awarded hosting rights to both the Summer and Winter Games, largely as a result of the reluctance of European and North American cities to bid for the 2022 edition.

At Wednesday's flame handover ceremony, Beijing



Cai Qi, Communist Party Secretary, lights the cauldron during the Olympic flame welcoming ceremony. **AFP**

Deputy Mayor Zhang Jiandong said the City was committed to holding a "simple, safe and an excellent Games".

The flame will be placed on display over the next few months, with a three-day re-

lay scheduled to start on Feb. 2 involving around 1,200 torchbearers in Beijing, suburban Yanqing and Zhangjiakou in neighboring Hebei province where ski jumping and other outdoor events will be held.

If we don't get results, we start searching for scapegoats: Misbah**CRICKET**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA KARACHI

Former captain Misbah-ul-Haq said that there will be no improvement in Pakistan cricket unless it changes its culture and stops hunting for scapegoats.

Speaking for the first time since his sudden resignation as head coach last month, Misbah said "cosmetic surgery" will not change anything.

"The problem is that in our cricket we only look at results and we don't give time or have patience for planning ahead and improving the system.



Misbah-ul-Haq. **AFP**

"We don't focus on the fact that we have to develop our players at domestic level and then in the national team. We want results and if we don't get the desired results we start searching for scapegoats," he said.

Stars urged to get jobs or miss the Australian Open

Our rules are very clear, they apply to everyone: health minister Greg Hunt

TENNIS

ASSOCIATED PRESS MELBOURNE

Elite tennis players should get vaccinated against COVID-19 or risk missing the Australian Open in January, Australian officials said on Wednesday.

Some players, including men's No. 1 Novak Djokovic, have advocated that the decision to get the vaccine should be a personal choice.

But Australia's health minister Greg Hunt said the rules were straightforward: everyone arriving in the country needed to be double-vaccinated.

"Our rules are very clear, they apply to everyone without fear or favour," he said.



Reluctant? Novak Djokovic hasn't confirmed whether he has been vaccinated for COVID-19. **AFP**

"It doesn't matter whether you are number one (tennis player) in the world or anything else, our rules are

about protecting Australians and they apply to everybody." Djokovic, who has won

the Australian Open title a record nine times and shares the men's Grand Slam record of 20 titles with Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal, hasn't confirmed whether he has been vaccinated for COVID-19.

High stakes

If he doesn't get vaccinated, he risks missing the tournament which he has won for the last three years.

Asked if he had a message for Djokovic, Australian immigration minister Alex Hawke said: "I don't have a message to Novak, I have a message to everybody that wishes to visit Australia: you'll need to be double vaccinated."

Suryanshi in semifinals

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT JHAJAR

Qualifier Suryanshi Tanwar beat Shruti Gupta 6-7 (5), 7-5, 6-1 in the quarterfinals of the ₹100,000 AITA women's ranking tennis tournament at the Joygaon Academy on Wednesday.

In the semifinals, Suryanshi will challenge the top seed Renne Singla.

The other semifinal will be between second seed Reshma Maruri and Sandeepa Singh Rao.

The results:
Singles (quarterfinals): Renne Singla bt Priyam Kumari 6-1, 6-3; Suryanshi Tanwar bt Shruti Gupta 6-7(5), 7-5, 6-1; Sandeepa Singh Rao bt Paavani Pathak 6-2, 6-2; Reshma Maruri bt Mirdhula Palanivel 7-6(2), 6-2.