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IN BRIEF



'Transparency' debate continues in Congress

NEW DELHI A day after senior Congress leader Manish Tewari demanded transparency in the party's presidential election, his Lok Sabha colleague Manick Tagore on Thursday posted on Twitter the names of people who elected him as delegate.

NEWS ▶ PAGE 15

Delhi Assembly passes confidence motion

NEW DELHI The Delhi Assembly on Thursday passed a confidence motion tabled by CM Arvind Kejriwal. The AAP chief said it proved that his party's leaders "cannot be bought" and that the BJP's 'Operation Lotus' had failed. No vote was cast against the motion as no BJP MLA was present during the proceedings.

CITY ▶ PAGE 2

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GST revenues cross the ₹1.4 lakh cr. mark again

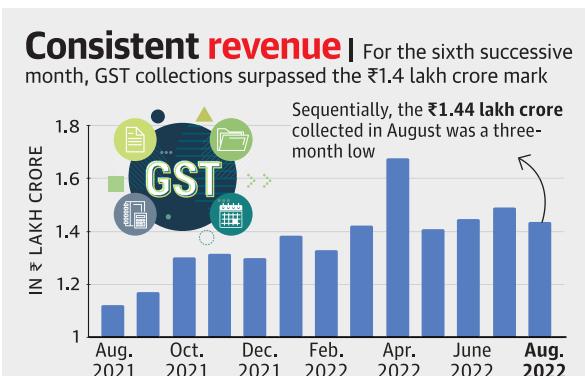
However, August collection is 3.6% lower than July's

VIKAS DHOOT
NEW DELHI

India's gross revenues from the Goods and Services Tax (GST) were ₹1,43,612 crore in August, 28% higher than a year ago. Revenues from import of goods soared 57% during the month while domestic transactions and import of services yielded 19% higher taxes than in August 2021.

This is the sixth successive month when GST revenues have been over the ₹1.4 lakh crore mark, the Finance Ministry said, stressing that GST collections have risen 33% till August this year, compared to the corresponding period of 2021-22, and are "continuing to display very high buoyancy".

On a sequential basis, however, August's GST kitty, based on transactions carried out in July, was 3.6% lower than July's collection of ₹1,48,995 crore and marks a three-month low. As per the Ministry, 7.6 crore e-way



Manufacturers upbeat'

Indian manufacturers reported the fastest increase in production and new orders in nine months in August, thanks to strengthening demand conditions and a spike in export orders, as per the survey-based S&P Global

India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI). The seasonally adjusted PMI moderated slightly to 56.2 in August from 56.4 in July, showing improvement in operating conditions for producers. ▶ PAGE 18

bills were generated in July, "marginally higher" than 7.4 crore in June and 19% higher than the 6.4 crore in July 2021.

The Ministry said the sustained uptick in GST collections is "a clear impact of various measures taken by the

(GST) Council in the past to ensure better compliance". Better reporting coupled with economic recovery has been having positive impact on the GST revenues on a consistent basis, it added.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 14

Teesta custody: SC questions Gujarat

Under Cr.PC, a woman is entitled to favourable treatment, CJI tells the State govt.

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

Activist Teesta Setalvad has been in custody for over two months and, as a woman, is entitled to "favourable treatment" under the Code of Criminal Procedure (Cr.PC), the Supreme Court *prima facie* told Gujarat on Thursday.

"Suppose we give her interim bail and let the matter be taken up [by the Gujarat High Court] on September 19?" the top court queried.

The court is hearing a plea for bail filed by Ms. Setalvad,



Teesta Setalvad

who is accused of forgery and fabrication of evidence in connection with the 2002 Gujarat riots cases.

"There is no offence here

against her which comes with a rider, nothing like PO TA or UAPA in which bail should not be granted..

These are normal IPC [Indian Penal Code] offences. Under Section 437 of the Cr.PC, a lady is entitled to favourable treatment," Chief Justice of India U.U. Lalit, heading a three-judge Special Bench, asked Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for Gujarat.

She was arrested in Mumbai on June 25 by the Gujarat Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS), a

day after the Supreme Court, in a judgment, dismissed allegations of "larger conspiracy" levelled by Zakia Jafri, widow of Congress leader Ehsan Jafri who was killed in the 2002 Gujarat riots, against former Chief Minister Narendra Modi and over 60 senior State officials. In its judgment in the Jafri case, the top court had snubbed Ms. Setalvad, who had fought the case on behalf of Ms. Jafri for decades.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 14

Jharkhand leaders meet Governor

UPA delegation seeks clarification on CM's 'disqualification'

AMARNATH TEWARY
PATNA

A 10-member delegation of the ruling United Progressive Alliance (UPA) in Jharkhand on Thursday met Governor Ramesh Bais seeking clarification over reports of "disqualification" of Chief Minister Hemant Soren as an MLA.

The team comprising leaders from the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, the Rashtriya Janata Dal and the Congress,



The UPA delegation calls on the Jharkhand Governor in Ranchi on Thursday. ▶ PTI

met Mr. Bais amid the political uncertainty prevailing in the State over Mr. Soren's

continuation at the helm.

The BJP has been demanding that Mr. Soren quit on "moral grounds" and a mid-term election be held in view of the allegation that he violated electoral laws by extending a stone mining lease to himself while holding the Mines portfolio.

The delegation also submitted a memorandum to the Governor.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 14

IMF to extend \$2.9 billion to Sri Lanka

MEERA SRINIVASAN
COLOMBO

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has reached a staff-level agreement with crisis-hit Sri Lanka, in a first step before extending a \$2.9-billion loan package that the Fund has made contingent on assurances from the island nation's creditors.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 14

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Court denies bail to former Bihar Minister

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PATNA

A local court in Patna on Thursday rejected the bail application of former Bihar Minister Kartikeya Singh in a kidnapping case.

Mr. Singh had resigned from Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's Cabinet late on Wednesday, a day after his portfolio was changed from Law to Sugarcane.

Mr. Singh, an upper caste Bhumihar leader, is said to be a close aide of politician and MLA from Mokama Anant Singh, who is currently lodged in jail after his conviction in a case related to recovery of sophisticated weapons and ammunition from his ancestral house. He ceased to be an MLA after his conviction in the case.

The court had issued an arrest warrant against Mr. Singh in a case filed on July 14, under Sections 363, 364 and 365 of the Indian Penal Code, at the Bihta police station in connection with the kidnapping of a builder, Rajiv Kumar.

The Opposition BJP had kicked up a row over Mr. Singh taking oath as Law Minister even after the court had issued an arrest warrant against him.

Now, Maharashtra CM visits Raj Thackeray ahead of BMC polls

Ruling alliance looking to snare Uddhav faction's core Marathi vote bank with MNS support

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE
PTI

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Thursday called on Raj Thackeray amid speculation that the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) president might form an alliance with the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-Shiv Sena (Shinde faction) coalition ahead of the crucial Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) elections. Last month, the MNS chief had held a string of meetings with top BJP leaders.

With the BMC polls expected to be held in October, the newly formed government is going all out to wrest control of the cash-rich Mumbai civic body from Uddhav Thackeray's Sena faction.

The BJP and the Shinde faction are looking to snare a large portion of the core Marathi vote bank of the Thackeray-led Sena faction in Mumbai by securing an alliance with the MNS.

'Courtesy call'

However, Mr. Shinde downplayed the visit and said he had merely gone to attend the Ganpati *darshan* at Mr. Thackeray's residence, Shivtirth, in Mumbai's Dadar area as part of the ongoing Ganesh Chaturthi festivities. He



Festive mood: Eknath Shinde with Raj Thackeray (left) at the MNS chief's residence for Ganesh Chaturthi celebrations in Mumbai on Thursday. ■ PTI

added that it was purely "a courtesy call" that also served as an occasion to enquire about the health of the MNS chief, who had recently undergone a hip replacement surgery.

On the possibility of 'a new political equation' taking root in the State, Mr. Shinde said, "As there was no political discussion, the question of a new political equation coming into being doesn't arise... an atmosphere of bonhomie and enthusiasm pervades the State during Ganesh festivities. We keep going to each other's houses for *darshan*, so I visited

Mr. Thackeray's residence too."

It was a meeting between two of the most prominent Sena 'rebels': Mr. Shinde and Mr. Raj Thackeray, the estranged cousin of the Sena president, who had caused a major rupture within the party founded by Bal Thackeray by exiting it in 2006 to float his own political outfit, the MNS.

Mr. Shinde's recent intra-party revolt, which brought down Uddhav Thackeray's three-party Maha Vikas Aghadi government, was the most serious rebellion within the Sena following that by Mr. Raj Thackeray. "We talked of old

times... After all, we have all worked in the shadow of Bal Thackeray and received his guidance for many years," said Mr. Shinde after the meeting.

Flurry of meetings

Since last week, the MNS chief has been meeting one top BJP leader in the State after another, sparking widespread speculation of a possible alliance between the BJP and the MNS ahead of the high-stakes BMC polls.

On Tuesday, Maharashtra BJP president Chandrashekhar Bawankule met with the MNS chief at Shivtirth. Earlier on Saturday, Mr. Raj Thackeray had met with Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis at the BJP leader's bungalow, Sagar, in Mumbai. This was his second meeting with Mr. Fadnavis in less than a month. In every case, the BJP leaders downplayed their meetings with Mr. Raj Thackeray as a mere "courtesy call" and denied any political angle to it.

Prior to Mr. Shinde's revolt which vertically split the Shiv Sena, the party has controlled the BMC (as well as its powerful standing committee) for more than two decades, with Sena Mayors at the helm of affairs.

Stop bulldozing madrasas: Assam MP to CM Himanta

'Even the U.P. CM has stopped such action now'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

Assam MP Maulana Badruddin Ajmal has slammed the Bharatiya Janata Party-led Assam government for demolishing the Markazul Marif Quariyana Madrasa in western Assam's Bongaigaon district on August 31 and asked Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma to stop bulldozing madrasas. Such actions are an attack on the education of children in the State's minority-dominated areas, Mr. Ajmal said.

"Madrasas are public properties that cannot be bulldozed without any legal notice. Even the Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh has stopped using bulldozers now," Mr. Ajmal, who is the chief of the minority-based All India United Democratic Front, said.

"I urge the Chief Minister to stop this policy. If any individual is caught for links with jihadi organisations or anti-national activities, the government should arrest him immediately and punish him according to the law," he said.

Mr. Ajmal said madrasas never teach hatred or communalism and demolishing them is unfair. "The madrasas targeted by the government were doing well academically. Bulldozing them is denying education to Muslim children."

The madrasa in Bongaigaon was the third demolished by the government after the arrest of 37 pe-



Maulana Badruddin Ajmal

ople over a month for allegedly being operatives of the al-Qaeda and the Ansarul Bangla Team, a Bangladesh-based terror group.

Citing a District Disaster Management Authority feedback that the madrasa was unsafe and being run without proper documents, the Bongaigaon administration gave less than 24 hours' notice to vacate the madrasa. The action followed the arrest of Mufti Hafizur Rahman, a teacher at the madrasa since 2018 who was allegedly working for a "jihadi" organisation.

A couple of days ago, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) filed a charge sheet against eight of the 37 arrested for alleged links with fundamentalist organisations. Seven of them are from western Assam's Barpeta district and one is from Tripura. The Assam government had handed over the cases of "jihadi" terror modules" to the NIA after a preliminary investigation.

Shivpal Yadav launches caste front in U.P.

ANUJ KUMAR
GHAZIABAD

In a move that will further stir the caste pot of Uttar Pradesh politics, Shivpal Yadav, founder of the Pragatisheel Samajwadi Party (Lohia), on Thursday announced the formation of the Yadukul Punarjantran Mission (Yadav Renaissance Mission).

While the Jaspur nagar MLA will be the patron of the organisation, former MP D.P. Yadav will serve as its chief.

Mr. Yadav said the the mission would fight for social justice.

"It will neither support nor oppose any political party," he said at a press conference in Lucknow.

Mr. Yadav said it would work towards creating consensus for the caste census and formation of an Ahir (Yadav) regiment in the Army.

Police team from Goa visits Phogat's house

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
HISAR (HARYANA)

A Goa Police team visited Sonali Phogat's Sant Nagar home here on Thursday and later met revenue officials as part of their investigation into the alleged murder of the BJP leader.

The team had arrived here on Wednesday and family members of Phogat were present when they went to her house.

Later in the day, the police team met revenue officials.

Sources said the Goa Police is also assessing the property, including land, which is in her name and trying to find out if there is any property angle involved in the case. Some relatives had earlier alleged that Phogat's associate Sudhir Sangwan was eyeing her property.

Forest Dept. reunites elephant calf with herd

End of 3-day-long search in the Nilgiris

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
UDHAGAMANDALAM

After a three-day-long search, forest department officials in the Nilgiris said they tracked down the mother of a two-month-old elephant calf that got separated from its herd last week. The calf has been seen and photographed with the elephant, believed to be its mother, and another male elephant after it was reunited with the herd on Wednesday evening.

P. Arunkumar, Deputy Director of Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (Buffer Zone), said the animal had been fed by forest department staff and a mahout, Bomman, who is renowned for working with young elephants and calves at the Theppakadu Elephant Camp for around three days. Glucose and coconut water was given to the elephant calf over the three days while forest department staff searched using drone cameras for the mother of the animal.

The remote e-voting period begins on Wednesday, 21.9.2022 (9.00 a.m.) and ends on Friday, 23.9.2022 (5.00 p.m.). The e-voting module shall be disabled for voting after 5.00 PM on 23.9.2022. During this period, Members whose name appear in the Register of Members as on 03.09.2022 and those who are eligible as per Article 48 shall be entitled to exercise their vote through e-voting process.

Members who have cast their vote by remote e-voting may attend the Meeting but shall not be allowed to vote again in the meeting.

The members attending the meeting who have not already cast their vote by remote e-voting can exercise their right to vote at the meeting. The facility for voting by manual ballot will be made available at the meeting venue.

The notice of the meeting is displayed in the club's website www.cosmopolitanclubchennai.com and the e-voting website of CDSL: www.evotingindia.com. In case of grievances connected with the facility for voting by electronic means may be addressed to Mr. Rakesh Dalvi, Manager, (CDSL) Central Depository Services (India) Limited, "A" Wing 25th Floor, Marathon Futurex, Mafatlal Mill Compound, N M Joshi Marg, Lower Parel (East), Mumbai 400013 or send an email to helpdesk.evoting@cslindia.com or call on 022-23058738 / 022-23058542/43

/ By order of the Executive Committee / Place: Chennai K Sundareswaran Date: 02.09.2022 President



Mission accomplished:
Officials are confident that they found the herd to which the calf belonged.

■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

calf was slowly guided towards the female elephant. Another male elephant which was part of the herd rushed towards the calf and guided the calf back to the herd. As light was fading, forest department staff left the area on Wednesday, confident that they had found the mother and the herd to which the calf belonged to.

Drone footage

On Thursday, using drone cameras, the forest department began surveying the area to find the young calf. Mr. Venkatesh released images of the calf being part of the elephant herd.

Supriya Sahu, Additional Chief Secretary, Environment, Climate Change and Forests, tweeted a video of the calf being reunited with its mother.

On Wednesday evening, forest department officials were taking the elephant to Congress Mattam to check whether the herd of elephants spotted there would accept the calf. On the way, they spotted a lactating mother by the side of the road. They immediately stopped the vehicle and released the calf.

With Bomman, the mahout leading the way, the

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Kerala looking at BJP with new hopes: PM

Projects worth ₹50,000 cr. in progress

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

KOCHI

Kerala too would have a "double-engine-driven development" if it supports the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the State, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said.

Addressing party workers at a public meeting organised outside the Cochin International Airport Limited on Thursday evening, Mr. Modi said BJP-ruled States were experiencing double-engine development with copious support from the BJP-led Central government.

The people of the State were now looking at the BJP with new hopes. They had realised that the BJP was one political party that could bring in development and fulfil their aspirations, he said.

Mr. Modi said the Centre had been generously supporting the State in various spheres of development. Various roads and National Highway development projects worth ₹50,000 crore



PM Narendra Modi at the Adi Sankara Janmabhoomi Kshetram in Kalady. •PTI

were in progress in the State. Over 3,000 km of roads were developed in the rural areas of the State under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana. Various infrastructure projects, including the metro rail project, would be launched in the State on Friday, he said.

Mr. Modi also flagged off the first train in Kochi metro's 1.8-km Pettah-SN Junction corridor. Later, he offered prayers at the Adi Sankara Janmabhoomi Kshetram, birthplace of Adi Sankaracharya, in Kalady.

Karnataka police arrest Muruga Math seer

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

HUBBALLI

Six days after the case of alleged sexual harassment of two minor girls was filed under POCSO Act against him, the seer of Brihan Math in Chitradurga, Shivamurthy Muruga Sharana, was arrested on Thursday night.

Superintendent of Police, Chitradurga, K. Parashuram confirmed the development, saying the seer had been arrested in connection with the cases.

Pressure had been

mounting on the police as activists and several organisations had started questioning the delay in arresting the seer, who heads a prominent Lingayat math in Karnataka and wields considerable influence in the community.

The arrest came hours after the hearing on anticipatory bail plea of Muruga Sharana was adjourned till Friday, allowing a day's time for the prosecution and victims' counsels to submit their objections.

Activist Mary Roy passes away

Her plea led to SC verdict that Christian women have equal share in family property

STAFF REPORTER
KOTTAYAM

Mary Roy, educator and women's rights activist on whose petition the Supreme court delivered the landmark judgment against the Travancore Christian Succession Act of 1916 to ensure Christian women an equal share in family property, died after a brief illness here on Thursday. She was 89.

She is survived by two children, son Lalit Roy and daughter Arundhati Roy, writer and activist who won the 1997 Man Booker prize.



1933 - 2022

In a statement, the family members said the funeral would be held on Friday.

Born in a Syrian Christian family in 1933, Ms. Roy was the daughter of P.V. Isaac, an entomologist who had trained in England, and Susie Isaac. Starting from Delhi, she had a cosmopolitan education and graduated from the Queen Mary's College in Chennai.

Following the breakdown of her marriage with Rajib Roy, Ms. Roy took to teaching to support the family and returned to Kottayam to start her own school, Corpus Christi High School, in 1967. After having presided over

the school, which later changed its name to Pallikoodam, for over five decades, she stopped playing an active part in the school administration due to ill health.

After the death of her father in December 1960, Ms. Roy sued her brother George Isaac to gain equal access to the property of her deceased father. The battle, which lasted over four decades and was finally settled in favour of Ms. Roy in 2009, stands as one of the pillars of gender justice in the country.

More Cong. MLAs from Himachal will join us, says BJP

'The Congress is a sinking ship'

VIKAS VASUDEVA
CHANDIGARH

Days after two sitting MLAs of the Congress joined the Bharatiya Janata Party, the ruling party in Himachal Pradesh has not ruled out more legislators joining it.

Even as a section of BJP workers expressed displeasure over the developments in a few Assembly constituencies, especially where Congress MLAs were recently admitted into the party's fold, the party leadership asserted that this feeling of "insecurity" is natural, but is overcome in due course of time.

Senior BJP leader and spokesperson Randhir Sharma on Thursday said the party has a strong base in Himachal Pradesh. "Now, if someone from outside joins the party, then it's natural that there would be a feeling of insecurity, and many times we see resistance as well, but because our cadre has a commitment towards the party's ideology, in due course of time, the opposition or the resistance gets over," he said.

With elections to the 68 Assembly seats in the hill State due later this year, Pawan Kajal and Lakhwinder Rana MLAs from the Congress joined the BJP. Following this, a section of BJP members resisted Mr. Kajal's entry into the party. Similarly, former Nalagarh BJP MLA K.L. Thakur publicly opposed Mr. Rana's entry into the party, but later said he would support the party's chosen candidate. "Initially, Mr. Thakur expressed his displeasure, but later he has categorically stated that he

would support any candidate that the party would nominate in the constituency," he said.

BJP's State in-charge Avinash Rai Khanna said the party is seeking votes on its performance during its tenure and would form the next government.



Congress MLAs Lakhwinder Singh Rana and Pawan Kumar Kajal with BJP national president J.P. Nadda. •FILE PHOTO

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Dated: 31.08.2022

PR No-268173 Dated, 11.04.2022

The undersigned on behalf of Government of Jharkhand invites item rate bids through e-procurement from the eligible bidders registered* in appropriate class with any State/Central Government/State /Central Government Organization for construction of Bridge and maintenance for five years of the works (List of schemes shall be displayed in the website pmgsytendersjhr.gov.in) of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna (RCPLWEA -Batch-II, 2021-22).

The bid should be submitted online in the website pmgsytendersjhr.gov.in. The bidders should have valid Digital Signature Certificate for online submission of bid.

Sl. No.	District / Block	Repackage	Name of Bridge	Length (in Km)	Total Package Cost (in Lakh)	Earnest Money (in Lakh)	Completion of Time
1	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.	Gumla / Bishnupur	JH-BR-LWE-II-GUM-01 /21-22 (3rd Call)	Ghaghra - Kaththokwa-Judwan	77.44	364.35	3.65	30th March 2023

Sl. No.	District / Block	Repackage	Name of Bridge	Length (in Km)	Total Package Cost (in Lakh)	Earnest Money (in Lakh)	Completion of Time
2.	Pashchimi Singhbhumi / Tonto	JH-BR-LWE-II-WSM-01 /21-22 (2nd Call)	Arahara Kunikuta Boroi - Sangatai CHHOTANAGRA TO THOLKOBAD TO USARIA	51.37	390.60	3.91	30th March 2023

Details of bid submission is as under:

Procurement Officer	Place of Opening	Availability of tender (on-line) for bidding	Date & time of opening (on-line) of tender
		From	To
Chief Engineer, JSRRDA, Ranchi	Chief Engineer, JSRRDA, Ranchi	02.09.2022 at 10.30 AM	09.09.2022 upto 5.00 PM

* Non-registered bidders may also submit bid, however the successful bidders must get registered in appropriate class with appropriate authority before signing the contract.

- Note:-
- Amount of Bid Security should be taken as mentioned in the Bid Data Sheet of the Bidding Document.
 - Cost of Bid Document (Rs. 10000) and Bid Security (as mentioned in the Bid Data Sheet) shall be deposited online in form as mentioned in Bid Data Sheet failing which the bid will be treated non responsive and action shall be taken as per Sec. 2 of ITB clause 12.2 (d). Online payment through RTGS/NEFT should not be made through SBI.
 - In case, it is found, even after the award of work that the bidder has submitted/ uploaded any false/errorneous/fraudulent statement/document, he/she is liable for blacklisting and forfeiture of Bid Security.
 - Bidders must submit GST registration certificate without which bid is liable to be rejected.
 - Bidders whose names appear in the Debar/blacklist of RWD, any department of GoJ/GoI (including JSRRDA) shall not be allowed to participate in the above bids.
 - Bids submitted by bidders, who have long pending ATR(s)/ made inordinate delay in execution of earlier allotted construction/maintenance works of PMGSY, may be rejected summarily.
 - In case of any discrepancy/dispute about units/ amount in BOQ, units/amount as mentioned in Current SOR on which BOQ has been prepared shall prevail. Discrepancy in amount shown in Form of Bid Part-II in words and figures shall make bids non responsive.
 - Participating bidders are free to submit grievances, if any, against the decision of technical evaluation within five working days from the date of uploading of decision of technical evaluation only through email at jh-ce@pmgsy.nic.in. Grievance submitted after stipulated period shall not be considered.
 - Bidders must have valid registration with Employee Provident Fund organization under EPF and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1952 failing which the bid shall be rejected.
 - Bidders must not quote rate for routine maintenance. The amount for routine maintenance as indicated in the Bill of Quantities must be acceptable to bidders.
 - For unbalanced bids, extra performance security will be required to be deposited by the bidder by the time of Agreement.

All other details can be seen in the bidding document which is available in website pmgsytendersjhr.gov.in as per schedule mentioned above.

Chief Engineer
JSRRDA, Ranchi

PR 276822 (Rural Work Department)22-23*D

NORTHERN RAILWAY
OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE

The Sr. Divisional Engineer-III, Northern Railway, Delhi Division invites E-Tender for the following work.

1 Name of work	Annual operation and maintenance of sand filter, disinfection system and valve operation at DLI water complex in the section of SSE/WL/DLI under DEN/Works (for Two years) in the jurisdiction of Sr.DEN-III.
2 Approx. cost of work	Rs. 50,000.00/- (Rupees Fifty Lakh and six only)
3 Earnest Money to be deposited	Rs. 1,00,000/- (Rupees One Lakh Only)
4 Cost of tender document	Rs. 0/-
5 Date & Time of submission of tender bid and opening of tender	27.09.2022 @15:00 Hrs.
6 Website particulars where complete details of tender documents can be seen	www.reps.gov.in

- The tenderer/s must be registered on the Indian Railway E-Procurement system (IREPS) site i.e. www.reps.gov.in for participating in the e-tender system.
- For all terms and conditions please refer tender document.
- No manual offers are acceptable.
- Cost of tender document and Earnest money will be acceptable through net banking or payment gateway only.

No.: 128/W/280/e Tender Notice/NIT/51/2022-23/W-3 Date: 30.08.2022 2234/22

Serving Customers with a Smile

NORTHERN RAILWAY
OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE

The Sr. Divisional Engineer-IV, Northern Railway, Delhi Division for and on behalf of President of India invites E-Tender on prescribed form for the following work.

Invitation of tender through E-Tendering (E-Procurement Systems)

1 Name of work with its location	(1) CTR 2.62 KM FROM DN 119.316-120.60 126.15-126.51 and UP km km 145.12-146.10 and TTR P 5.87 km from DN KM 131.56-131.82 160.14-161.45 182.44-183.79 186.12-187.32 191.52-191.64 198.32-199.04 and UP km 134.32-134.512 135.342-135.501 161.118-161.708 175.026-175.59 and 190.43-190.552 for existing 52 kg 90 UTS Rails and PSC Sleepers M+15 with 60 kg 90 UTS Rails and PSC-wider sleepers on DLI-BTI section. (NIT 30-W-IV-22-23)
2 Approx. cost of work	(1) Rs. 1,08,01,500.96 (2) 2,18,86,990.55
3 Earnest money	(1) Rs. 2,04,000.00 (2) 2,59,400.00
4 Date and Time of submission of tender and opening of tender:	Bidding Start date for work no. Up to 15:00 hrs. on 09.09.2022 opening of e-tender at 15:00 hrs. on 23.09.2022
5 Website particulars, published e-tender, notice location etc. complete details of tender can be seen and website where the tender form can be downloaded:	Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. www.reps.gov.in

No.: 128/W-260/Tender Notice/30&31-W-IV/22-23 Date: 31.08.2022 2233/2022

Serving Customers with a Smile

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified person whose name, residence and family is unknown, about 30-35 years of age was found dead near PNB Bank, Pulbangash Metro Station, Subzi Mandi, Delhi on 31.08.2022 at 11:30 PM. In this regard DD No. 104A, dated 31.08.2022, has been registered at P.S. Subzi Mandi, Delhi.

The description of the UIDB is as under:

Sex: Male, **Age:** About 30-35 years, **Height:** 5'5", **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Wearing:** Pink, yellow and grey colour t-shirt and black pant.

If anyone has any information about this UIDB, kindly inform the SHO/Subzi Mandi, Delhi.

SHO
P.S. Subzi Mandi, Delhi
Ph. No.: 8750870126, 9129132201
DP/567/N/2022



PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

(See Section 82 Cr.PC)

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Bhagwan Singh, S/o Harichand R/o H.No.69, Veena Enclave, Nangloi, Delhi has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case FIR No. 203/13, dated 05.07.2013 u/s 392/397/411/34 IPC, P.S. Nangloi, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused Bhagwan Singh cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Bhagwan Singh has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Bhagwan Singh of FIR No. 203/13, dated 05.07.2013 u/s 392/397/411/34 IPC, P.S. Nangloi, Delhi is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 17.11.2022.

By Order,
Ms. Shagun
Metropolitan Magistrate-04 (West)
Room No.268, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi

DP/502/OD/2022

NORTHERN RAILWAY

CORRIGENDUM

Ref: Tender Notice No. 30/2022-2023 dated 22.07.2022

(I). Tender No. 08195281E due on 30.08.2022 (S.No.07)

In reference to above tenders, the due date has been extended from 30.08.2022 to 30.09.2022. More details are available on website. The corrigendum has been published on website www.reps.gov.in.

2239/22

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

INDIAN RAILWAYS

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS

(RAILWAY BOARD)

E-TENDER No. 2022RS1742TC

1.0 Executive Director, Railways, Store(S), Ministry of Railways, Railway Board, Government of India invites e-tender for procurement of **1,83,824** Friction wedges with specified range of coefficient of friction for broad gauge freight bogies.

2.0 The interested tenderers are advised to visit the website <http://reps.gov.in> for details of the tender and submission of their e-bids.

3.0 No manual offers will be accepted against e-tender.

4.0 Tender will be closed at 15:00 hours on 17.10.2022.

Director, Railway Stores (W)
Ministry of Railways, Railway Board, New Delhi,
for and on behalf of the President of India.

2254/22

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

NORTHERN RAILWAY

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

30-Elect-23-T-2022-23-E3

Comprehensive annual maintenance contract (CAMC) of:
A) JOHNSON make lifts installed at NDLS (05 Nos.), DEE (02 Nos.), GZB (02 Nos.) MTC (02 Nos.), HNZM (05 Nos.), PNP (02 Nos.) stations over Delhi division total 18 Nos., for three years.

B) JOHNSON make lifts (08 Nos.) installed at ANVT Railway Station for three years.

C) JOHNSON make installed lifts (04 Nos.) installed at CNPK for three years.

Approx. cost of the work in Rs. 101.21 Lacs

Address of the office Sr. Divl Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi.

Bid Security Rs. 200600.00

Date & time of submission of tender 21.09.2022, 12:00 Hrs.

Opening of tender 21.09.2022, 12:00 Hrs.

Website & notice board www.reps.gov.in & Sr. Divl. Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi

2224/22

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SGPC seeks time from PM over prisoners' release

'Govts. adopting discriminatory policy'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

The issue of the release of Sikh prisoners who have completed their sentences is yet again at the centre stage with Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) – the body responsible for the management of gurdwaras – seeking time from Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the issue.

SGPC president Harjinder Singh Dhami on Thursday wrote to the PM that several Sikh prisoners were still lodged in different jails in the country even after completing their life sentences, and they should be released. To deliberate the issue, time should be given to the SGPC delegation for a meeting, he wrote.

Mr. Singh said upon getting time from the PM, a five-member delegation of SGPC will go for the meeting. He said that as part of their efforts, the SGPC is holding regular discussions and a meeting of all SGPC members has been called on September 2 to discuss the issue of the release of Sikh prisoners.

Referring to remission of convicts in the Bilkis Bano case, Mr. Dhami said that governments were adopting a discriminatory policy. "On one hand, by adopting a sympathetic ground, the government is releasing convicts of a heinous crime like rape, while on the other, Sikh prisoners are kept lodged in jails for three decades," he said.

Arumughaswamy report to be made public, says Stalin

It will be tabled in the Assembly

STAFF REPORTER
COIMBATORE

The report submitted by Justice (Retd.) A. Arumughaswamy Commission of Inquiry, probing the circumstances that led to former Chief Minister J. Jayalalithaa's hospitalisation and death, will be tabled in the Assembly soon, said Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, here on Thursday.

He said the report was widely discussed during the cabinet meeting held recently, and it was decided to make the report public by tabling it in the Assembly



Tamil Nadu CM M.K. Stalin along with the report of Justice Aruna Jagadeesan Commission of Inquiry on the 2018 Thoothukudi police firing incident.

Speaking at the wedding of former Minister Pongalur N. Palanisamy's granddaughter with the son of Bar-

**RAHUL KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI**

The Meghalaya government has "finalised" the site for relocating Mazhab Sikhs and other Dalit residents of Shillong's Harijan Colony, also called Punjabi Lane. The Harijan Colony residents have been under pressure since May 2018 when a quarrel between a Sikh woman and a Khasi tribal bus driver over the alleged awkward parking of the vehicle in the colony snowballed into a communal clash.

It eventually led to a move to evict the residents. They will now be shifted to the Shillong Municipal Board quarters.

Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel continue to guard the entry and exit points of the 12,444.13 square metres colony – rows of hovels flanking a lane – adjoining few

duh or Barabazar, the commercial core of Meghalaya.

"We have finalised the decision to relocate 342 families from Harijan Colony to the quarters of the Shillong Municipal Board (SMB) after the Urban Affairs Department identified the location as suitable," Meghalaya's Deputy Chief Minister, Preston Tynsong told journalists in Shillong.

Members of some of the families in Harijan Colony are employees of the SMB.

The 342 families would be shifted after the residential quarters, in a dilapidated shape now, are reconstructed. The Urban Affairs Department has been asked to provide designs and estimates for constructing the quarters, Mr. Tynsong said.

He said the government would meet leaders of the Harijan Panchayat Committee (HPC) after a detailed

plan is submitted.

The site of the SMB quarters, officials said, occupies some 2.5 acres and is at a distance of more than one kilometre from the Harijan Colony.

On June 4, 2018, the Meghalaya government formed a high-level committee headed by Mr. Tyn-

song for examining all relevant records and documents relating to the relocation of the colony. Members of this committee held parleys with the Harijan Colony residents and recommended their relocation.

The HPC challenged the move in the High Court of

Meghalaya, which ordered both the HPC and the committee to maintain the status quo of the colony.

But on March 31, 2021, the State government executed a tripartite lease deed with the Syiem (king-like chieftain) of Mylliem and the SMB for taking over the Harijan Colony land. The government took possession of the land in October 2021.

The HPC said the Syiem's ancestor had granted the land for people from Punjab, brought by British rulers to work as manual scavengers, to settle down in the 1850s.

"The settlers of the colony should not think we are against them. We are not throwing them out but want them to be relocated at a proper place," Mr. Tynsong said after the takeover, claiming the residents had thrice thwarted the com-

mittee's bid to prepare an inventory of the families and their possessions.

He said the Harijan Colony was worse than a slum and not fit for human habitation while outlining the government's plan to beautify the area.

The HPC had resisted the relocation plan that it claimed was being fuelled by builders eyeing the prime land of Harijan Colony to construct a shopping mall. It also questioned the government's takeover when the case was pending in the court.

But the HPC relented after a meeting with State government representatives in April this year.

"We realised that we cannot fight the system forever. We have never been against relocation and we are ready to move if the government fulfils our demands," HPC chairman Gurjit Singh said.

Relocation of residents of Shillong's Harijan Colony 'finalised'

Mazhab Sikhs and other Dalit residents of the colony have been under pressure since a communal flare-up in 2018



Raising their voice: Women from Punjabi Lane in Shillong staging a silent protest over the land survey directed by the High Level Committee of Meghalaya government in this June 20, 2018, photo. ■ FILE PHOTO

AAP focuses on Saurashtra, Kejriwal visit from today

Delhi CM to address rally in Dwarka

MAHESH LANGA
AHMEDABAD

Delhi Chief Minister and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener Arvind Kejriwal has set his eyes on the politically-important Saurashtra region in Gujarat where the BJP had suffered heavily in the last Assembly polls in 2017.

Mr. Kejriwal will be arriving on a two-day visit to the region on Friday during which he will address a rally in Dwarka and hold a town hall event in Surendranagar.

This would be his fifth visit to the State. In less than a month he has already held town halls in Rajkot and Jamnagar apart from addressing

a rally in Veraval. He has also visited the Somnath temple in the region.

Besides Saurashtra, he has held rallies or town hall interactions in Ahmedabad, Palanpur, Surat, Mehsana, Chhota Udepur and Bharuch so far since March this year.

With 52 seats out of 182 in the State Assembly, Saurashtra is the most politically-important region where the AAP senses an opportunity to take on the BJP as its main challenger.

In the last Assembly polls in 2017, the ruling BJP had suffered heavily in Surendranagar, Junagadh, Amreli and Gir Somnath and Morbi districts of the region.

Kerala passes University Laws (Amendment) Bill

'Changes must for keeping Sangh Parivar forces at bay'

STAFF REPORTER
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Kerala Assembly on Thursday passed the University Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2022 which alters the composition of the search-cum-selection committee to appoint Vice Chancellors and effectively provide the State government greater leverage in the process.

While the Opposition staged a walkout accusing the government of attempting to relegate universities to the status of party offices, the treasury benches said the Bill was driven by the compulsions of keeping

Sangh Parivar forces at bay in the administration of universities.

While the Bill awaits the Governor's assent, its passage will enhance the appointment age of Vice Chancellors to 65 years and increase the strength of the selection committee to five (from the existing three). The government had initially proposed the inclusion of the vice chairman of the Kerala State Higher Education Council (KSHEC) as convenor of the committee. But, Higher Education Minister R. Bindu moved an official amendment to bring an aca-

demic expert who is nominated by the council vice chairman as replacement to the particular position.

The committee

The move comes amidst claims that the inclusion of the KSHEC vice chairman, who could be perceived as linked to universities by way of his/her position, could be in violation of the University Grants Commission (UGC) regulations.

Other members of the committee will include a nominee each of the State government, UGC, Chancellor and the university Senate.

SEARCH FOR MISSING



General Public is hereby informed that one female Namely: Babli, D/o: Balkishan, R/o: H.No. C-486, JJ Camp, Tigri Khanpur, Delhi, has been missing from Safdarjung Hospital from the area of P.S. Safdarjung Enclave since 25.08.2022 at 10:00 am. In this regard a case DD No. 96A dated 25.08.2022 has been lodged at P.S. Safdarjung Enclave, Delhi. The description of the missing female is as under: Age: 24 years, Height: 5'3", Face: Round, Complexion: Shallow, Built: Fatty, ID Mark: Mehendi colour T-shirt, black colour lower and black colour slipper in her feet. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the female but no clue has come to light so far. Any person having any information or clue about this female kindly inform to the following.

Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>
E-Mail ID - cic@cbi.gov.in
Fax No.: 011-24368639
Ph. Nos.: 011-24368638, 24368641
DP/513/SW/2022

SHO
P.S. Safdarjung Enclave, Delhi
7065036231

INDIAN RAILWAYS

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(RAILWAY BOARD)

E-TENDER NO. 2022RSI1741TC

Director, Railways Stores (W), Ministry of Railways, Railway Board, Government of India invites e-tender for procurement of 91,912 Nos. Constant Contact Side Bearers (CCSB) for BG bogie wagons to RDSO Specification No. WD-62-Misc-17 with latest revision CCSB (80440 Nos.) variant B to drawing No. WD-12008-S/I for BOBX type wagons and WD-62-Misc-17 with latest revision CCSB (11472 Nos.) variant C to drawing No. WD-12007-S/I for BOBRN type wagons.

2.0 The interested tenderers are advised to visit the website <http://ireps.gov.in> for details of the tender and submission of their e-bids.

3.0 No manual offers will be accepted against e-tender.

4.0 Tender will be closed at 15.00 hours on 11.10.2022.

Director, Railway Stores (W)
Ministry of Railways, Railway Board, New Delhi.
for and on behalf of the President of India.

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED

(See Section 82 Cr.P.C.)

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Brijesh Kumar Garg S/o Late Satpal Garg R/o Chakbir Sarkar Road, Near Indu Model School, Muktsar, Punjab has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case FIR No. 75/17 U/s 21/29 NDPS Act & 14 Foreigners Act PS: Crime Branch Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused Brijesh Kumar Garg can not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Brijesh Kumar Garg has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Brijesh Kumar Garg of FIR No. 75/17 U/s 21/29 NDPS Act & 14 Foreigners Act PS: Crime Branch Delhi is required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before 07.10.2022

By Order
Devendra Kumar Sharma
ASJ/Special Judge (NDPS)(West) Room No. 132,
Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi.

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

(See Section 82 Cr. P.C.)

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person namely Ravinder Kumar S/o Sh. Prem Chand Sharma R/o K-21/26, Gali No. 14, Gangotri Vihar Ghonda, Delhi has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case F.I.R. No. 827/15 U/s 392/411/34 IPC registered at P.S. Timarpur, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon that the said Ravinder Kumar could not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the accused Ravinder Kumar has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Ravinder Kumar is required to appear before the court to answer the said complaint on or before 15.10.2022.

By Order
Sh. Apoorv Gupta
Metropolitan Magistrate-02
Room No. 26, Tis Hazari Court, Delhi

DP/488/N/2022
(Court Notice)

NORTHERN RAILWAY

OPEN-E-TENDER NOTICE

The Sr. Divisional Engineer-III, Northern Railway, Delhi Division invites E-Tender for the following work:

1 Name of work	Repair to damaged flooring with V.D.C & repair to coping & PF's walls of goods shed & PF 1 to 16 at Delhi Main and Repair to Leakage of Valley gutter & drainage pipes at PF 1 to 16 in the section of SSE/WDLI under ADEN/DLI.
2 Approx cost of work	Rs. 89,81,252.99/- (Rupees Eighty Nine Lacs Eighty One Thousand Two Hundred Fifty Two And Ninety Nine Paise Only)
3 Earnest Money to be deposited	Rs. 17,900/- (Rupees One Lakh seventy Nine Thousand Six Hundred Only)
4 Cost of tender document	Rs. 0.00/-
5 Date & Time of submission of tender bid and opening of tender.	27.09.2022 @15:00 hrs.
6 Website particulars where complete details of tender documents can be seen.	www.ireps.gov.in

* The tenderer/s must be registered on the Indian Railway E-Procurement system (IREPS) site i.e. [www.ireps.gov.in](http://ireps.gov.in) for participating in the e-tender system. • For all terms and conditions please refer tender document. • No manual offers are acceptable. • Cost of tender document and Earnest Money will be acceptable through net banking or payment gateway only. • No. No. 128-W/280/e Tender Notice/NIT-54-2022-3W-D3-Dated:- 01.09.2022

2251/2022

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that one dead male head was found at Pole KM No. 11/01-3, Up line Rly Track Shakur Basti Railway Station on 28.08.2022 at 16.36 hrs. In this regard DD No. 35-A Dated 28.08.2022 has been lodged at P.S. Sarai Rohilla Railway Station, Delhi. Name: Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown, Age: About 50-55 years, Height: Unknown Complexion: Unknown, Wearing: Unknown Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the information about the dead male but no clue has come to light so far. If any one is having any information about this dead male please inform the undersigned.

S.H.O
P.S. Sarai Rohilla Railway Station, Delhi
DP/570/RLY/2022
Ph. 011-28711697, 8750871308, 9811235224

Appeal for Identification



Calling time on caretakers of J&K's Sufi shrines

The Waqf Board, in a bid to promote transparency and set its finances in order, has banned donations to caretakers of shrines and ousted them. The move threatens to consign ancient rituals to obscurity and push into penury families that have looked after the upkeep of the spiritual centres for centuries, reports **Peerzada Ashiq**

As the sun sets on a Friday in Srinagar's old city, 82-year-old Yaseen Zahra is awaiting the azan (call to prayer) at the entrance to the 600-year-old shrine of Shah Hamdan, which is dedicated to Persian saint Mir Sayyid Ali Hamdani, who propagated Islam in Kashmir in the 14th century.

Mr. Zahra is among the hundreds of 'mujavirs' (traditional caretakers of shrines) who were ousted after the Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board, in an unprecedented move, issued a directive on August 18 banning "forcible donations across the shrines of J&K UT (Union Territory) with immediate effect". The move brought to an end the centuries-old practice of 'Nazr-o-Niyaz' – offerings from devotees to 'mujavirs', which is similar to the 'chadhava' given to priests who perform rituals in Hindu temples. The authority said the ban was imposed after several complaints from devotees about purported corruption.

Within 48 hours, scores of donation boxes were seized and over 100 'mujavirs' and their belongings removed from prominent shrines in the Valley – including 36 caretakers from the Ashmuqam shrine in Anantnag, 20 from the Charar-e-Shareef shrine in Budgam and eight from the Khawaja Naqshband Sahib shrine in Srinagar. Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and J&K Waqf Board chairperson Dr. Darakhshan Andrabi, 48, described the ban as "a cleanliness drive". "The era of transparency has begun in the Waqf Board," she said.

All 133 mosques and shrines in the Union Territory come under the direct control of the J&K Waqf Board in accordance with the J&K Reorganisation Act, 2019, which was introduced following the withdrawal of Article 370, granting special status to J&K, on August 5, 2019. The board receives no government funding and runs solely on donations.

The caretakers say the ban violates the Central Waqf Act, which allows them to accept donations and mandates that they hand over 7% of the collection at shrines to the board. Compared with the centralised revenue collection system of the now-abolished J&K Muslim Waqf Board, the new board had granted them powers to receive endowments in the form of cash and jewellery, recruit workers and manage their own affairs.

Though the dislodging of 'mujavirs' and removal of donation boxes might lead to a rise in the Waqf Board's monthly collection by 15%-20%, it threatens to consign ancient rituals performed by them to obscurity and push into penury families that have looked after the upkeep of the shrines for centuries.

"It seems our 'pir' (saint Hamdani) is upset with our misdeeds. We have never heard of such government orders in the past. We pray every day for sanity to prevail and restoration of the old order, which has been in place for centuries," says Mr. Zahra, who is no longer allowed to collect 'niyaz' dropped by devotees into 'saisen' (donation) boxes placed at fixed points on the premises of shrines. In return, 'mujavirs' offered 'Tabarruk' (small, crunchy sugar balls and dates), just like 'prasad' in temples.

Mr. Zahra's 'saisen' box was seized on August 19 by Waqf Board officials who raided the shrine along with policemen wielding automatic guns. "We wanted to protest against the move. But the policemen pointed guns at us. What can one do when guns are aimed at you? One policeman even warned that an FIR would be lodged against us if we protested, keeping us in jail for months. We allowed them to take the donation boxes without putting up any resistance. Now, we await the 'pir' to deliver his justice," says the caretaker whose movements are being monitored by the board officials posted at the shrine.

Apart from being a 'mujavir', affiliated with the Hamdania school of thought, Mr. Zahra is a 'khateeb', who recites 'Awrad-e-Fathiyyah' and 'naats' (verses in praise of Allah and His Prophet), at the shrine. 'Awrad-e-Fathiyyah', introduced by saint Hamdani in the 14th century, is a litany extolling monotheism, a practice unique to Kashmir, which is recited at dawn in mosques and shrines. The practice, however, is not followed by several other orthodox sects of Islam. In Kashmir, 'Awrad' has become central to a section of devotees from the Hanafi school of thought.

Traditionally, every shrine in Kashmir has two types of donation boxes: one to collect 'Nazr-o-Niyaz' and the other to receive 'Tameer-o-Taraqi' (money for the Waqf Board to undertake maintenance of shrines). Though the board's boxes are placed at prominent spots at the shrines, devotees can place money in the boxes of their choice.

Caught in the cross hairs

In the ban order, Ishfaq Mohiuddin, an executive magistrate at the Waqf Board, had directed officials "to paste notices with helpline numbers at conspicuous places within 'ziyarat' (shrines) requesting the public to inform them about such elements ('mujavirs')". He also warned of disciplinary action in case of "dereliction or laxity by



On the way out: Employees of the Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board remove a donation box belonging to 'mujavirs' that was installed on the premises of a prominent shrine in Srinagar. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

any Waqf employees", who are largely drawn from non-Peers and non-Syeds.

Peers and Syeds are two classes that monopolised the study of the religious scriptures and their propagation in Kashmir. Most members of these families, either by virtue of lineage or affiliation, have been caretakers of Sufi shrines for centuries. Non-Peers and non-Syeds do not have much say in the ritualistic matters of shrines.

"Despite coming from a reasonably sound economic background, such people ('mujavirs') are permanently occupying particular spots within shrines for their activities. There were instances where such spots were outsourced or given on contract against the receipt of large sums of money, violating the sanctity of the shrines," Mr. Mohiuddin says.

However, the Waqf Board has not yet filed a police complaint against any caretaker for malpractice or auctioning of spots at shrines. In fact, shrines in Kashmir are now facing a fresh challenge – the new generation is moving away from Sufi practices to more scriptural interpretations by scholars of other orthodox sects in Islam. Over time, the footfall at shrines has dipped considerably in the Valley. The changing discourse in society has made it easy to whip up a frenzy against the 'mujavirs'.

Mr. Mohiuddin terms donations to 'mujavirs', who are mainly Peers, "pillagers" that severely limit the board's ability to extend charity and carry out activities for the uplift of the poor and disadvantaged groups in society. "It also restricts the board from providing facilities to the 'zaireen' (devotees) and carrying out infrastructural improvements at shrines," he says.

To drum up support for the move, the Waqf officials took to social media. Their highly political posts received a positive response from netizens, who sought an end to the culture of visiting shrines of Sufi Islam in Kashmir. Several locals also raked up the debate over whether visiting these shrines amounted to 'shirk', an un-Islamic practice.

"Dear 'Peer Sahab'! If you have your 'Mureed' (devotee) who is offering you gifts and money, why use the platform of 'Ziyarat' (shrines)? They may visit your home plz! How can you blackmail a 'Zaayir' (devotee) at a sacred place through 'walsa rath sa toubrukh' and then *di sat!* (accepting donations)," Mr. Mohiuddin wrote in a Facebook post.

To put the 'mujavirs' in a spot of bother, he also drew parallels between Peers and beggars. "If you are a government employee or a pensioner or a businessman, why are you still begging there? *Aur agar aapko wahan baithnay mein sharm aati hai* (if you feel ashamed of sitting there), then you contract out the spot literally through an auction?" the Facebook post said.

The narrative created by the Waqf Board officials pushed the debate beyond the "reformist" move and sparked discussions.

sions on a class war that has been brewing in Kashmir for decades. Hundreds of netizens ended up backing the move to oust "money-taking" 'mujavirs' from shrines. "Trust me, this is just the beginning! There are a lot of reforms to come! The new Waqf is targeting to achieve in months what could not be achieved in decades, in Sha Allah!! (sic)," it said.

No consultation on ban'

Cleric Shabir Ahmad Makhdoomi, who traces his lineage to Sheikh Hamza Makhdoom, a 16th-century Sufi mystic popularly known as Mehboob-ul-Alam or Sultan-ul-Aarifeen, describes the raids as "shameful and a matter of great regret". "The raids were aimed at denting the image of the Peers. They looked deliberate and well-designed. If there was a complaint of forcible donations, the culprits could have been identified and barred from entering shrines."

Mr. Makhdoomi, who claims he does not charge any money for leading prayers five times a day at the Makhdoom Sahib shrine, says the board did not make any effort to get in touch with the 'mujavirs' before ordering the ban. "There was no consultation. The issues could have been highlighted and addressed in a more mature way," he says.

Mr. Makhdoomi says his father was a government employee who performed rituals for devotees and organised 'khatam', a recitation of Quranic verses and 'naats', from an allotted space in the shrine. On the charges of accepting donations and the Peers also having government jobs, he says, "Our family has been safeguarding and propagating the teachings of the saint. We would accept 'haadi' (money for performing rituals) like the saint himself did when he was alive. It is an Islamic practice followed in shrines across Kashmir. The money also goes towards organising 'langars' and setting up educational institutions. The Peers accept 'haadi' only from devotees who make wishes. Forcing people to shell out money is un-Islamic."

He adds that the allegations levelled by the board against 'mujavirs' reek of bias. "Don't farmers who have large tracts of land or an orchard have the right to apply for government jobs? Will the government snatch their hereditary source of income too if they take up government jobs?"

Legal recourse

Khalid Geelani, a Sajada Nisheen, a caretaker by lineage of the Abdul Qadir Geelani shrine dedi-

Show the door: The belongings of 'mujavirs' being removed from the shrine of Sheikh Hamza Makhdoom during a recent raid by the J&K Waqf Board in Srinagar. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

cated to an Iranian saint who founded the Qadiriyya school of Sufism, has decided to knock on the doors of the court against the board's move. "The board's actions are not to promote Sufism but to dilute the faith. They intend to turn shrines into business units, which is unfortunate. These are spiritual places whose primary objective is to safeguard religious teachings and propagate traditional ways of 'ibadah' (worship) and devotion. The banning of 'Nazr-o-Niyaz' and the humiliation of 'mujavirs' will deter people from affiliating with shrines and devoting time to recite 'naats' and 'khataams,'" says Mr. Geelani, who worked at a company in Dubai after securing an MBA degree.

He says taking on the mantle of the Sajada Nisheen after his father passed away in 2008 was not an easy decision. "I had no option but to quit my job to

carry forward the legacy of Sufism. I am the only son in the family. It was a life-changing decision," he says.

The Geelanis have been the caretakers of the Abdul Qadir Geelani shrine since 1684, when Hazrat Syed Mohammed Fazil Qadri, popularly known as Sakhî Shah, and his brother, Syed Abu Hassan Qadri, came to Kashmir. "It was due to the permanent stay of Sakhî Shah in Kashmir that thousands of people, including contemporary religious scholars, nobles, landlords, and leaders, joined the Sufi order of 'Silsilatul Qadri'. Hazrat Sakhî Shah Sahab belongs to the 18th generation of Hazrat Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jeelani. I am a direct descendant of the 21st generation. We are the caretakers of all the relics at the shrine," says Mr. Geelani, who keeps the relics for public viewing on the occasion of the annual week-long Urs when lakhs of devotees throng the shrine.

The Geelanis claim that the saint is buried in the family graveyard and the land where the shrine sits was donated by them. "We have donated more than 18 kanals (2.25 acres) of land. We have also set up resting rooms, a place for women worshippers and a school for girls. When we ran the affairs decades before the Waqf Board came into being, the shrine increased in size and the followers multiplied. The results since the board's takeover are there for all to see."

Struggle for survival

Mr. Geelani says 'mujavirs' are finding it difficult to support their families after the ban. "The Peers are central to the Sufi faith. If they are dislodged and their families left in penury, what will happen to the Sufi tradition? Is a shrine just a business unit?" he says.

There are 19 donation boxes of the Waqf Board and just three of the 'mujavirs' at the shrine, he says. The total collection helps 21 families associated with the shrine perform rituals and recite verses. At the Shah Hamdan shrine, the board has six donation boxes and the 'mujavirs' three, which were run by 16 families by taking turns every week.

The 'Nazr-o-Niyaz' played a crucial role in providing funds to caretakers for organising 'langars' and buying eatables for the Urs and other special occasions. The Waqf Board should tell the people if it did anything for the shrine when it was gutted in 2012," he says.

Huge salary outgo

According to Waqf Board chairperson Ms. Andrabi, a significant portion of the donations goes into the pockets of the 'mujavirs', leaving the board with reduced funds to open new hospitals and education-

al institutions. However, a closer look at its finances in 2019-20 shows that a whopping ₹15 crore of its annual revenue of ₹20 crore to ₹26 crore went towards paying the salaries of its staff.

The board is now in the process of working on creating a digital record of all its assets and properties. "The process of digitisation is in full swing. It will remain in the public domain and end possibilities of encroachments in the future," Ms. Andrabi says.

Political observers see the BJP leader's latest move as an attempt to tighten the grip of the party on the shrines in the Valley. Securing control of spiritual centres with capacity for mass outreach will help the BJP expand its voter base in J&K after the withdrawal of Article 370.

For decades now, different political parties have affiliated with the shrines to amplify their ideology. The Valley's two main shrines – Shah Hamdan and Dargah Hazratbal – are seen to be closely linked with the National Conference.

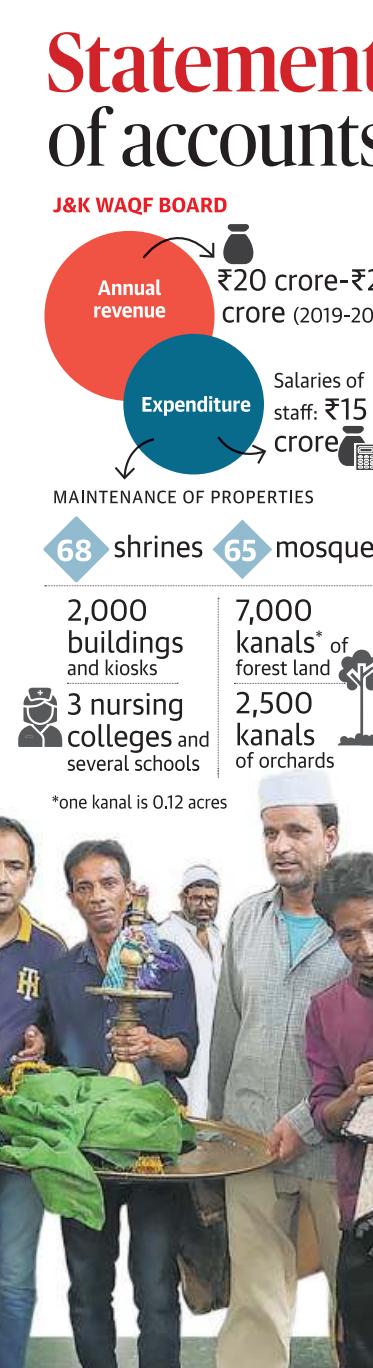
More reforms in the offing

Tougher decisions are on the anvil for aligning the clergy to a new political reality. The Waqf Board is mulling legal proceedings in cases where land has been given on lease over "political considerations". It aims to declare such land granted for residential purposes "null and void" under the Central Waqf Act. "Waqf land leased over political considerations to influential people will be cancelled shortly," Ms. Andrabi says.

It is also planning to restructure the rent charged for using its properties to convert the board into "a productive enterprise". "We have decided to take tough steps to manage the great Sufi shrines, and the board's assets and properties as per the Central Waqf Act. We don't have a problem with people doing business on our properties. We only have an issue with rent not being paid for several decades. These businessmen got away with not paying rent because they transferred large sums of money to the party fund. Such practices will come to an end now," Ms. Andrabi says, without naming any regional party.

Fight to reclaim rights

Meanwhile, at the Shah Hamdan shrine, the 'mujavirs' are galvanising public support for their reinstatement even as the friction between them and the Waqf Board officials grows with each passing day. "We will educate people on Fridays on what is being done here. A bad practice of forcing devotees to offer donations could have been easily stopped by installing CCTV cameras. There is more to this move than meets the eye. We have not yet staged vociferous protests because we are still in talks with top officials. We will reclaim what we have owned for centuries, even if it means resorting to confrontation," says Mr. Zahra as he enters the shrine for prayers under the glare of the Waqf Board officials.



NISSAR AHMAD

As part of the Delhi Contemporary Art Week, a host of galleries are all set to galvanise the contemporary art scene in the Capital

:: AMARJOT KAUR

In its fifth edition now, the ongoing Delhi Contemporary Art Week (DCAW) is packing a punch with its seven-gallery collaboration and the concomitant exhibitions, walk-throughs, discussions and workshops. Galleries Blueprint 12, Exhibit 320, Gallery Espace, Latitude 28, Nature Morte, Shrine Empire and Vadehra Art Gallery have mounted the works of over 60 artists from India and abroad at the Bikaner House, New Delhi, to galvanise the contemporary art scene in the Capital.

At the Old Building of the house, writer and curator Meera Menezes has assembled a group exhibition, called Legal Alien, which borrows its title from the famous 'Englishman in New York' song by British musician Sting. The singer apparently said that he felt so homesick when he first moved to New York that he went from one English pub to another just to feel at home. The exhibition explores the notion of alienation through the prism of technology, existentialism and pandemic. While some artists explore the theme of migration, whether it be across countries or spaces (rural and urban), others ponder on what it means to be a citizen of a country and still feel like an alien.

Housing galleries

Each participating gallery has curated a diverse art show, bringing together multi-disciplinary artists with different perspectives under one roof. Ridhi Bhalla and Mandira Lamba of Blueprint 12 are engaging with DCAW to voice experimental, artistic views of marginalised communities and their identity. "We focus on introducing new voices that are constantly pushing the boundary. This year the curation is on material exploration through photography, book pages, textile, graph paper etc., they say. The fresh artists on their list are Kaimura and Mansha Chhatwal, with Ta-



Seven galleries, seven days, one roof

beena Nissar Wani, Aditi Anuj, Madhu Das, and Koyal Raheja.

The theme ranges from human experiences, prohibited or censored books, to gestures and spaces. Exhibit 320 has eight artists on

board: Kumaresan Selvaraj, Sumakshi Singh, Gopi Gajwani, Sonali Sonam, Yasmin Jahan Nupur, Harish Ojha, Rahul Kumar and Gurjan Kumar.

Renu Modi, director, Gallery Es-

POINTS OF DISCUSSION

Day 1: In Search of the Vernacular: Dismantling the National-Regional Binary (11 a.m. to 12 noon)
New Ways of Writing Critically on Literature, Cinema, Theatre and Dance (12.30 p.m. to 1.30 p.m.)

Roundtable: Practitioners and Criticism (2.30 p.m. to 4 p.m.), followed by walk-through at Centre of Contemporary Art with artists and gallerists of DCAW (4.15 p.m. to 5 p.m.)

Day 2: Writing for/in a Changing Country (11 a.m. to 12 noon)
Has Art Writing/Criticism Become Boring? New Strategies of Making Art Writing/Criticism Readable (12.30 p.m. to 1.30 p.m.)
Roundtable: Art History and Storytelling (2.30 p.m. to 4 p.m.), followed by Walk-through at Centre of Contemporary Art with artists and gallerists of DCAW (4.15 p.m. to 5 p.m.)

pace, says, "We have seen the number of visitors go up every year. For us, DCAW presents an opportunity to reach out and create new audience for art."

This year, the gallery has showcased the works of 11 artists, including the senior artist Amit Ambalal and Rashmi Mala, who has recently signed up with Espace. The works of Dilip Chobisa, GR Iranna, Ishita Chakraborty, Mekhla Bahl, Nandini Bagla Chirimar, Paula Sengupta, Shambhavi, Tamang Samanta and Valay Gada are on display too.

This year, Latitude 28 brings together South Asian artists using distinct form and technique to infuse traditional styles with new

artworks are on sale (starting price: ₹20,000) and display till September 7 at Old Building and newly refurbished Center for Contemporary Arts; Bikaner House, New Delhi.

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The mystery of Champaran mutton

Bihari food is making its mark in the city with more restaurants offering the State's cuisine



had taken in

the flavours of all the spices in the gravy. Since then, I have been a card-holding member of the underground Bihar-food-lovers' club.

So, when my notice was drawn to a cloud kitchen called The

Chhaunk last week, I was intrigued. One, I liked the name; two, it served the food of Bihar. I checked the menu and found that Champaran meat was a part of it. So, I asked for a plate (₹440), with sattu puri with aloo sabzi (₹320), dal puri with kheer (₹310)

and khichri masala (₹295). The food hamper came with thekua (₹230) and aloo chokha (₹40).

The food, indeed, was authentic Bihar cuisine. I learnt that the cloud kitchen was being run by a keen cook, Manjari Singh, and her daughter-in-law, Hiranyamayi Shivani. There are four outlets in Gurugram, but the food can be ordered online (thechhaunk.in).

I was, on the whole, immensely satisfied with my dinner.

The khichri was sublime – the rice and dal had melded well in the lightly spiced and ghee-tempered dish. The dal puri – with a lentil paste – was excellent, too, and came with soft potato fries while the kheer was flavoured with cardamom and peppered with nuts and raisins.

The sattu kachori, a thick puri with a paste of roasted gram, came with a light curry of potatoes and

peas. The aloo chokha was superb: a mash of potatoes tempered with mustard oil and green chillies.

The Champaran mutton, however, was disappointing. I thought the spices were a bit too strong in the dish, and the garlic flavour, much too mild. I ended the meal with the sweet and crunchy, fried thekua (which is prepared often in our house, but our version has coconut pieces and raisins), and rang the curtain down on a great meal.

It is good to know that Bihar's food is making its presence felt in the city. Over the years, many little stalls or carts offering litti-chokha and sattu sherbet have sprung up in the city. And while I hope they flourish, I am happy to see that some of the finer dishes of the region are finding their place in the sun, too.

The larger idols, typically eight to 11 feet in height, are usually brought to the Capital from Kolkata and Maharashtra and installed in pandals.

One of the biggest Ganesh mahotsav in Delhi happens in Laxmi Nagar. Into its 21st year, the idol here is referred to as *Delhi ka Mahara*.

The Shri Ganesh Sewa Mandal, which organises the community puja every year, is known for using environment-friendly products.

From tableware to idols, every item used during the celebration is recyclable. For the bhandara prasad, biodegradable crockery made with leaves is used.

The mandal has tied up with a tech start-up to convert any plastic item such as water bottles into polyester yarn.

"We believe that serving

Swachh Bharat Abhiyan brand ambassador Asit Kumar Modi recently recognised the mandal for creating a clean and green India.

Each year, the *pandal* has different themes such as *Jal hi Jeevan hai* and *Ban Plastic*. This year it is *Azadi ka Amrit Mohotsav* in keeping with the celebrations of 75 years of India's Independence.

Ever since the pandemic, the celebrations have been reduced to five days with precautionary measures and safety protocols in place. Anticipating big crowds this year, the organisers have scheduled different time slots for visitors. On the day of immersion, free saplings will be distributed among devotees, says Ladda.

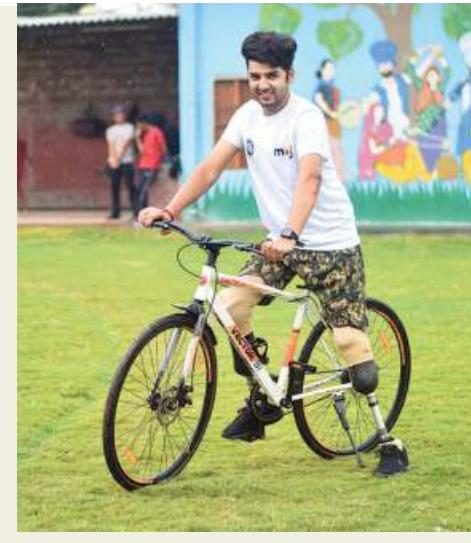
Shruti Sanwariya

:: SOMA BASU

On August 15 when Ablu Rajesh Kumar cycled for a kilometre in his hometown of Amritsar, holding the Tricolour aloft, he was a picture of courage and determination, attracting a team from the International Book of Records and hordes of people who lined up at a school playground to cheer him. It was not without a reason. The 24-year-old on prosthetic legs created a world record taking six laps in three minutes holding the Indian National Flag in one hand.

"Deep in my heart," he says over the phone, "I was driving the wheel of faith." In fact, he always has, ever since he lost both legs in an accident 10 years ago. Never has this come in the way of his dream of dancing, cycling, running or doing yoga. "I was 14 then and could not let one accident ruin my entire life. God gave me a second chance and I have many things on my bucket list, which people say is impossible to achieve, given my condition."

Ablu is not one to give up. He trains at the gym to keep himself



The ground beneath his feet

Youth influencer Ablu Rajesh Kumar uses his prosthetic legs to re-interpret every act in life and on Independence Day, he set a world record

fit and meditates to keep himself calm. "I want to do different things and inspire people to believe in themselves," says Ablu, who has defied all odds and stunned medical practitioners with his will power and determination to live life fully.

His childhood passion was to become a dancer. In a cruel twist of fate, he came under the wheels of a train. He shares his gut-wrenching story with a smile.

"My left eye was blown out, left hand broken, left leg and right ankle were cut. My dismembered body parts were collected in a sack and I was declared dead upon reaching the

hospital." He says, one of the doctors was God-sent. He wheeled Ablu inside the operation theatre for an 18-hour surgery to "repair and resuscitate him".

His right leg was amputated and the doctor suggested he try the Jaipur foot.

Ablu, however, did not want to be dependent on crutches and opted for prosthetic legs.

After a month in hospital and being bedridden for 18 months,

the young boy began his arduous journey to recovery.

"My legs would turn blue when I began walking with my prosthetic legs. Not a day passes even now when I am not in pain. I was adamant about learning dance and joined a dance school without telling the teacher about my condition. She was shocked to discover it after a week and offered to teach me for free."

The journey between 2011 and now was fraught with challenges,

but his stubborn mind and heart helped him achieve his goals.

"I want to be known for my dancing skills," he says and talks of drawing inspiration from Bharatanatyam dancer and actor, Sudha Chandran.

Having performed in multiple stage shows and events, Ablu



One stop art shop A sampling of the exhibits on display

■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Delhi gears up to welcome Lord Ganesha

The Capital has set safety protocols and precautionary measures in place even as devotees prepare to celebrate Ganesh Chaturthi



Green scene The Shri Ganesh Sewa Mandal is known for using environment-friendly products ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

After a gap of two years due to the pandemic, the enthusiasm for Ganesh Chaturthi celebrations has revived. Potters from Mayur Vihar in East Delhi to Hauz Rani and Badarpur in South Delhi are doing brisk sales of idols this season.

"Pottery is our ancestral work and our means of sustenance. COVID-19 threw life out of gear and many of us were forced to take up jobs as security guards and cleaners for our livelihood," says Dinesh in Badarpur. "Several idol makers and artisans are back this year," he adds.

Giving final touches to eco-friendly Ganesh idols, usually measuring one to four feet, Raju in Hauz Rani says he is happy with the bulk orders that have come his way from shops in Chhatarpur and Lado Sarai.

The larger idols, typically eight to 11 feet in height, are usually brought to the Capital from Kolkata and Maharashtra and installed in pandals.

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The mandal has tied up with a tech start-up to convert any plastic item such as water bottles into polyester yarn.

"We believe that serving

runs a dance academy in Amritsar where he teaches dance to children from disadvantaged backgrounds free of cost.

Stardom reached him when he turned into a content creator for a short-video app. As his popularity and followership increased, Ablu gained visibility as a judge, model and motivation speaker.

"I was the most handsome boy in school and dreamt of becoming an actor." He was offered a role in *Pavitra Rishta* (as Sushant Singh Rajput's son). His parents, who knew nothing about the film industry, declined to send him to Mumbai.

"I now travel so often to Delhi and Mumbai for events and performances, that I feel through my accident, the universe is telling me to never turn down an opportunity and keep moving ahead."

Ablu now dreams of scaling Mt. Everest. He has begun to up his stamina with a strict daily schedule of yoga, walking and dancing. "By this time next year, I should have climbed up the mountain that protects us all. My mission is my tapasya."

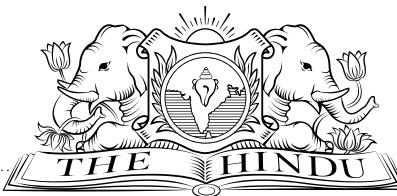


A picture of grit and resolve Ablu Rajesh Kumar with his family after creating the world record ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

es, but his stubborn mind and heart helped him achieve his goals.

"I want to be known for my dancing skills," he says and talks of drawing inspiration from Bharatanatyam dancer and actor, Sudha Chandran.

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Slow improvement

Fiscal authorities should spur consumption and investment to aid faster recovery

The latest official GDP estimates would in normal circumstances be a cause for cheer, pointing as they ostensibly do to a double-digit expansion in economic output in the first quarter. The NSO's projection of 13.5% growth in gross domestic product from the year-earlier April-June period, however, is disconcertingly slower than the 16.2% pace that the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had projected just last month and points to an economy that is still in search of a firmer footing. Faced with headwinds – signs of a global recession and the Ukraine war – the first-quarter's underwhelming momentum may pitch the economy into a far shallower growth trajectory even as faster-than-acceptable inflation erodes consumer confidence. Output in the eight broad sectors that combine to provide the Gross Value Added (GVA) shows that while year-on-year all sectors expanded, with public administration, defence and other services growing 26.3%, six of these sectors posted sequential contractions. Only two services sectors – electricity, gas, water and other utility services, and financial and professional services – logged expansions from the January-March quarter, growing by 12.6% and 23.7%, respectively. The major employment-providing sectors of agriculture, manufacturing, construction and the contact-intensive trade, hotels and transport services sector suffered quarter-on-quarter contractions of 13.3%, 10.5%, 22.3% and 24.6%, respectively.

The demand side has flattered to deceive. Private final consumption expenditure, the essential bulwark of the economy, appeared to have revived with a year-on-year expansion of 25.9% lifting its share in the GDP to just shy of 60%. However, when viewed sequentially, the estimated ₹22.08 lakh crore of private consumption spending in April-June 2022 was a not insignificant ₹54,000 crore, or 2.4%, less than what was spent in the preceding quarter. And both government spending and gross fixed capital formation, which is viewed as a proxy for private investment, shrank quarter-on-quarter by 10.4% and 6.8%, respectively, undermining overall output. That GDP, in fact, contracted 9.6% sequentially should be a cause for concern among policymakers. Given that this year's monsoon has distributed rains in an erratic scattershot pattern that has caused disruptive flooding in some parts while leaving key paddy and pulses growing areas in northern and eastern India moisture deficient, both farm output and consumer spending in the rural hinterland are likely to take a hit. And with global trade also becalmed amid the sharp slowdown in advanced economies, India's merchandise exports are sure to weaken in momentum, any benefits from the rupee's depreciation against the dollar notwithstanding. With the RBI needing to stay laser focused on taming inflation, the onus is on fiscal authorities to spur consumption and investment.

A revert to the mean

Increase in violent crimes, suicides in 2021 points to indirect consequences of pandemic

In a worrying trend, the registration in violent crimes such as rape, kidnapping, atrocities against children, robberies and murders increased in 2021 to levels set before the pandemic, in comparison to the drop in 2020, according to the annual report, "Crime in India" released by the NCRB earlier this week. The drop, in 2020, seemed to, therefore, be an anomaly, either due to lowered registration or a partial decrease in occurrence as there were extensive lockdowns and office shutdowns. While there was an increase in violent crimes in 2021, the overall crime rate (per one lakh people) decreased from 487.8 in 2020 to 445.9 in 2021, largely due to a decrease in cases registered under disobedience to a public servant's order, relating to the lockdowns. If 2020 was the year when India faced the first COVID-19 wave, 2021 was equally a fraught year because of the effect of the Delta variant of the novel coronavirus; the frequency and intensity of the lockdowns were relatively lower in comparison to 2020. "Cruelty by husband or his relatives" constituted 31.8% of crimes against women, up from 30.2% in 2020 and 30.9% in 2019, indicating that domestic violence continued to be a major issue. While violent crimes increased, the conviction rate fell from 75.8% in 2020 to 72.3% in 2021, as did the conviction rate (57% from 59.2% in 2020). So, law enforcement was less responsive in a year with more violent crimes. Again these trends have to be read State-wise – Assam (76.6 violent crimes per one lakh people), Delhi (57) and West Bengal (48.7) had the highest numbers while Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu registered the lowest numbers.

The report also revealed that the suicide rate in the population in 2021 – 12 per one lakh people was the highest in the last five years. Domestic problems (33.2%) and illnesses (18.6%) were reported as the main reasons, with most victims being daily wage earners (25.6%) and housewives (14.1%), revealing the severity of the pandemic and its indirect consequences on people. With India registering the highest excess deaths during the pandemic, in particular during the Delta wave according to the World Health Organization, these figures are not surprising. The 5.9% jump in cases registered as cyber crimes over 2020, also indicates the increasing use of digital devices and the related challenges. This increase was more so in rural areas as cyber crime in metropolitan cities (with population more than two million people) registered a decline of 8.3% compared to 2020. With more people in rural areas utilising digital devices, including for financial purposes, the increase in cybercrimes should warrant an effort by the Government to educate people about risks in cyber activities and to ensure better law enforcement.

Academia, research and the glass ceiling in India

True gender parity is when institutions consider women as assets rather than it being just a diversity rectification issue



SUPRAKASH CHANDRA ROY

Gender issues, particularly gender inequality and discrimination in academia relating to higher education, perhaps came under the spotlight for the first time in India in 1933 when Kamala Sohoni approached Sir C.V. Raman to pursue research in physics under his guidance. The Nobel Laureate and illustrious director of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, turned the request down on the ground that she was a woman.

Sohoni ignored the refusal which was based on gender discrimination and went on a satyagraha in front of the director's office. She was then admitted for one year on condition that her work for the year would not be recognised till the director was satisfied with the quality of her research and that her presence did not distract her male colleagues pursuing research. Similarly, in 1937, Professor D.M. Bose, then Palit Professor of physics at Calcutta University, was reluctant to include Bibha Chowdhuri in his research group on the ground that he did not have suitable research projects to assign to women. Chowdhuri was unfazed and had her way. She joined D.M. Bose's research group. Her work on cosmic rays in determining the mass of mesons is legendary.

These are only two well-known examples of gender discrimination in academics and there are many more such examples. In 2018, Prof. Alessandro Strumia of Pisa University, a theoretical physicist who regularly works at CERN, the European Organization for Nuclear Research in Switzerland, claimed at a workshop organised by CERN that "physics was invented and built by men, it's not by invitation" and that 'male scientists were being discriminated against

because of ideology rather than merit' implying that women are less capable than men in physics research. CERN called the presentation "highly offensive" and suspended him pending an investigation. Ironically, a day later, Donna Strickland was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics, for her work on lasers, and became the third woman to win a physics Nobel, after Marie Curie in 1903 and Maria Goeppert Mayer in 1963.

The general bias against women which arose out of suspected capability of their intelligence and their mettle in undertaking the arduous task of research was quite common in the 20th century. Things have changed and the glass ceiling has been broken. But how far have we progressed in the last 100 years in shedding this bias and ensuring that women are on a par with men in academic institutions?

Government's incentives
Despite the remarkable improvement in the participation of women in higher education and participation in the workforce over the past decades, progress has still been quite uneven. The Government of India has been ramping up efforts to remove gender inequality by providing incentives for women's higher education. Some of these initiatives such as the Gender Advancement for Transforming Institutions (GATI), i.e., a pilot project under the Department of Science and Technology to promote gender equity in science and technology, and Knowledge Involvement in Research Advancement through Nurturing (KIRAN), i.e., a plan under the Department of Science and Technology again to encourage women scientists in science and technology and also preventing women scientists from giving up research due to family reasons, are noteworthy. Some institutions are setting up creches so that the scientist mothers can carry on with their research work uninterrupted. Universities too are trying their best to be equal opportunity employers.



However, despite all these endeavours, there is still a gender bias that persists and which has not been removed fully. Women are still an under-represented population globally in hardcore science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

Women and STEM
In this respect, India's position in academia is disappointing. According to available UNESCO data on some selected countries, India is at the lowest position, having only 14% female researchers working in STEM areas. But India is not very far behind many advanced countries in this aspect. For example, Japan has only 16% female researchers, the Netherlands 26%, the United States 27% and the United Kingdom 39%. Countries with a fairly good ratio in terms of an equal number of female and male researchers are South Africa and Egypt, with 45% female researchers each, and Cuba, at 49%. The highest number of female researchers are in Tunisia, Africa (55%) followed by Argentina (53%) and New Zealand (52%).

In India, about 43% of women constitute the graduate population in STEM, which is one of the highest in the world, but there is a downside to this; only 14% of women join academic institutions and universities. Although male and female participation in graduate studies is comparable, the participation of women in research has dropped significantly (27% female as compared to 73% male). Thus, the visibility of female faculty in universities and research institutes is significantly lower. But what is bothersome is

that the percentage of women in faculty positions begins to shrink with each step up the ladder. The number decreases when it comes to a position involving decision-making. Even recognition of merit when it comes to women is sluggish when it comes to the total number of women fellows in the three science academies of India – 7% for the Indian Academy of Sciences (IAS), which was founded in 1934; 5% for the Indian National Science Academy (INSA), which was established in 1935, and 8% for the National Academy of Sciences India (NASI), which was founded in 1930.

According to a report published recently, at most STEM institutes, women occupy 20% of all professorial positions. The more prestigious the institute, the lower the number of women employees. For example, in IIT Madras only 31 out of 314 professors (10.2%) and in IIT Bombay only 25 out of 143 professors (17.5%) are women. Analysis of a few leading private universities does not reflect any significant difference. The number of female participants in decision-making bodies such as the board of governors or council of institutes of higher education of repute is abysmally low.

According to a survey by the University Grants Commission (UGC), seven (13%) of the 54 central universities; 52 (-11%) of the 456 State universities; 10 (8%) of the 126 deemed universities; and 23 (-6%) of the 419 private universities have female vice-chancellors. Out of the six Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) established in the 20th century, only IIT Kharagpur and IIT Delhi have women members on their governing body. As Anita Bhogle in her recent book, *Equal, Yet Different - Career Catalysts for the Professional Woman* has reasoned, a lot of this is because women are wired differently, and their challenges are different.

In the corporate world
On the contrary, participation of women in leadership and decision-making positions in private

enterprises (the corporate sector) is startling when compared to the reality in academics. The number of women in senior management positions in the corporate sector in India is 39%, which is higher than the global average. Number of women CEOs in Fortune 500 companies is 15% while female board members in the management of private enterprises has been growing from 15% (2016), 16.9% (2018) to 19.7% in 2022. If this trend continues, near parity will be reached by 2045, according to a forecast made by Deloitte.

It is worth reflecting on the reasons for this discrepancy in female participation in higher positions in these two sectors. The mechanism of selection and promoting personnel in the private sector is mostly based on competence or merit because it is more result (market) oriented with a definite matrix than what it is in the academic institutes. A professor at Cambridge once remarked that the marketplace does not worship false idols and, therefore, makes empirically correct judgements.

Second, encouraging the participation of women in the workforce in the private sector with the adoption of various schemes for women began long ago when compared to the initiatives taken by the Government of India in recent years. Various schemes such as flexi-hour worktime, rejoining the workforce after an interim break, sections operated only by women, etc. were introduced in private enterprises as early as the 1990s with the benefits being reaped now.

It is hoped the programmes that have been initiated by the Government to empower women in the workforce will usher in gender parity by 2047, which would mark the centenary of India's Independence. Most importantly, gender equality or parity will happen only when there is a change in mindset and institutions consider women as assets rather than simply a diversity rectification issue.

Suprakash Chandra Roy, a writer, was the Editor-in-Chief of the journal, Science and Culture

The big-picture takeaways from China's Taiwan drills

The PLA has still to cover some gaps before it gains the confidence and warfare proficiency in any planned invasion



HARSH V. PANT &
KARTIK BOOMAKANTI

the PLA exist following the conclusion of these exercises. Although China's Eastern Theater Command (ETC) is responsible for planning and executing any potential invasion of Taiwan, the Southern Theater Command (STC) was also in an advanced state of alert for these drills.



REUTERS
reached gear for an air assault mission against Taiwan. These brigades have demonstrated capacity to remain airborne for a long period, but this is insufficient as any potential invasion would require them to fly in close formations while simultaneously maintaining effective air-ground and air-sea communication. The latest drills do not definitively confirm these capabilities. The aviation brigades of the PLAA are growing strength, but will only reach optimum strength, both operationally and technologically, over the next decade.

Using air power
First, the Chinese have made substantial progress in the development and operation of rotary and fixed wing aircraft for dedicated assault missions against Taiwan. The People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) latest helicopters are almost as advanced as their American variants. The comprehensive reorganisation of the PLA into group armies has enabled the Chinese to significantly operationalise their rotary wing aircraft. Indeed, the latter could play a key role in any initial assault to capture Taiwan. An aviation brigade is part of each of the PLAAF's 13 group armies and also integral to the group armies deployed in Xinjiang and Tibet.

Alternatively, the rotary component of aviation brigades, which represents frontline combat capabilities of the PLAAF, could be kept in reserve and pressed into action for a prospective invasion of Taiwan following an initial assault with less advanced rotary aircraft in the PLAAF inventory. There are two specialised air assault brigades as part of the PLAAF's 75th and 83rd group armies that are di-

ments and repairs, evacuation and medical assistance to dispersed air and amphibious assault units in unforgiving and demanding battlefield conditions will be crucial for a sustained and effective military mission across the Taiwan Strait. However, the PLA is deficient in amphibious vessels, and has an inadequate number of personnel trained for complex logistics missions and military transport aircraft.

The military drills conducted by the PRC earlier this month were only a partial demonstration of the PLA's military prowess. Irrespective of the progress made by the Chinese, the PLA has still some distance to traverse before it gains the confidence and the requisite proficiency for combined arms warfare that is crucial to the invasion of Taiwan. Significantly complicating the latter is an American intervention on behalf of Taiwan, neutralising China's aim of a low-cost swift and decisive capture of the island, rendering any cross-strait military action by the PRC into a protracted war. The PRC may need to complete several drills, which could lead to more crises, before it can actually execute an invasion.

Harsh V. Pant is Professor of International Relations at King's College London, and Vice President, Studies and Foreign Policy at the Observer Research Foundation (ORF), New Delhi. Kartik Bommakanti is a Senior Fellow at the Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi

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.

New pledges

The article, "Pledges from Red Fort, pledges by every Indian" (Editorial page, August 31), is a true analysis of the grim Indian scenario. The writer's exhortations are well timed, which, if acted upon, can be translated into reality. The article must serve as a 'common minimum programme' for the political Opposition. A mass movement is the need of the hour in view of the many dangers behind our democracy.

P.K. SHARMA,
Barnala, Punjab

■ There is an ever-widening gap in terms of income inequality, with a more than willing pro-corporate Government. A few individuals who could take new pledges might not be able to make a difference as there could be fiery rhetoric keeping 2024 in mind which could mesmerise many.

G.B. SIVANANDAM,
Coimbatore

■ The advice of the Mahatma was what came to my mind after reading the article. It is unfortunate that even after 75 years of Independence, Gandhian values are not

followed in letter and spirit. Though the pledges are valid for not only Indians but also all other citizens across the world, the point is whether they would be followed in the present global environment, which is difficult.

R. BASKAR,
Kannankurichi, Salem, Tamil Nadu

■ The state of India is a revelation. The common man stares at difficult times especially with rising prices of many essential commodities. He has got only empty promises in return. Even so, I join hands

with Sam Pitroda in taking the pledges and I do hope that others do so.

SAJAN SEBASTIAN,
Nedumparampil, Kavalam, Kerala

Floods and foes

India and Pakistan should not miss the opportunity to help each other in times of crisis. India should take the lead in extending help to Pakistan, especially as we have not hesitated to help even Afghanistan that was in the grip of terror and also run by a regime with terrorist associations. Even our help to Sri Lanka has been without expecting

anything in return. Pakistan too should not show any aversion to accepting our help. Crisis should be a prelude to a detente between the two brother-nations.

DHARMARAJAN A.K.,
Thalassery, Kerala

■ Pakistan may have its selfish reasons to seek a relaxation of trade restrictions with India. Still, India ought to engage with Pakistan which would perhaps lead to a thaw in the frosty relationship. Both countries should take lessons from the amity and bonhomie shown by their



To read more letters online, scan the QR code

cricket teams in Dubai.

AANYA SINGHAL,
Noida, Uttar Pradesh

Road accidents

It is disheartening that Chennai leads other cities in the country in deaths due to road accidents. It is imperative that provisions are made in the law for deterrent penalties for rash and negligent driving. Speeding two-wheelers are also a cause. There is a need for close surveillance.

N. RAMA RAO,
Chennai

Can civil servants express their views on law, governance?

PARLEY

The Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules could distinguish between government policy and action

On India's 76th Independence Day, the Gujarat government released 11 men convicted on charges of gang-raping Bilkis Bano, who was 21 years old and five months pregnant at that time, and murdering seven members of her family, including her three-year-old daughter during the 2002 riots. The convicts, once released, were felicitated with garlands and sweets. Two days later, Ms. Bano issued a statement saying, "the trauma of the past 20 years washed over me again." Soon thereafter, a senior IAS officer, Smita Sabharwal from Telangana, tweeted from her personal account in support of Ms. Bano and questioned the Gujarat government's decision, sparking off a row over whether she was in breach of the Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules of 1964 and reviving the debate on the freedom of civil servants to express their personal views on matters of law and governance. In an interview moderated by Sonam Saigal, Justice B.N. Srikrishna and K. Sujatha Rao discuss the issue. Edited excerpts:

On August 17, Ms. Sabharwal quoted Ms. Bano's statement and tweeted, "As a woman and a civil servant I sit in disbelief, on reading the news on the #BilkisBanoCase. We cannot snuff out her Right to breathe free without fear, again and call ourselves a free nation. #JusticeForBilkisBano". As a bureaucrat, was she wrong in tweeting this?

B.N. Srikrishna: The citizens of this country have the fundamental right of free speech guaranteed to them under the Constitution, which is subject to reasonable restrictions in the interest of securing the state's sovereignty, international relations, health, morality, etc. She has the right to tweet. But when you undertake a government service, you subject yourself to certain disciplinary rules. That prevents a government servant from becoming a member of a political organisation, or any organisation of such a nature, or expressing herself freely with regard to anything that has to do with the governance of the country.

Sujatha Rao: There are two views in this case. Most colleagues, particularly those who are serving in the government, would take exception and not be very supportive – because the general belief is that as

This rule is of the British era. There is no doubt that the British were very, very strict and didn't want their officers to be talking about how bad the governance was. But in a democracy, the right to criticise the government is a fundamental right and nobody can muzzle that. Unfortunately, I didn't have an opportunity to express myself by sitting on the bench either in Bombay or in Kerala or in the Supreme Court, but I would have said this very loudly and without hesitation.

There is a recent judgment of then Tripura High Court Chief Justice Akil Kureshi, one of the best judges I have come across, who did not get enough due because of obvious reasons. He said something very interesting in a (2020) judgment (*Lipika Paul v. The State Of Tripura*), "As a Government servant the petitioner is not devoid of her right of free speech, a fundamental right which can be curtailed only by a valid law." She (the petitioner) was entitled to hold her own beliefs and express them in the manner she desired, subject to not crossing the borders laid down in the Conduct Rules which were applicable in Tripura. A fundamental right cannot be curtailed except by a valid law made by a legislature. In 2018, the Kerala High Court had said, "One cannot be prevented from expressing his views merely because he is an employee. In a democratic society, every institution is governed by democratic norms. Healthy criticism is a better way to govern a public institution." I think the trend is that judges are taking the view that IAS officers have a right to express themselves in a legitimate and decent manner.

Today, things are very bad. I must confess, if I were to stand in a public square and say I don't like the face of the Prime Minister, somebody might raid me, arrest me, throw me in jail without giving me any reason. Now that is something that all of us should oppose as citizens.

Sujatha Rao: There are two views in this case. Most colleagues, particularly those who are serving in the government, would take exception and not be very supportive – because the general belief is that as



IAS officers, we should not talk against government actions or government policies in public fora. And if at all we feel very strongly about something that is being done or acted upon, we can at best, if it is such a serious situation, approach the associations.

The Bilkis case was a travesty of justice. It crossed all borders of fairness and humanism. The gang rape and the murder of the child were horrific. Despite that, you find the convicts are not even in jail for life. A committee was constituted so casually and a 1992 [remission] policy was invoked even though there are new laws. And the committee had five members of the ruling party. They just released them and there was a celebration about it – it's a mockery [of justice].

In such a situation, Smita tweeted as a woman. There was anger. Why she added the words 'civil servant' is because the dharma of the civil servant is to uphold constitutional principles in letter and in spirit, and the rule of law. In this case, both the spirit of the Constitution and the rule of law were being subverted. This could be a very dangerous precedent, as we saw recently [when] the Andhra Pradesh government released eight murder convicts (on remission, despite them not completing the mandatory 14 years in jail). If murderers are going to be released by executive action, what is the point of having courts? Wind up the courts and let just the collector, the ruling party, decide who should be in jail and who should not be in jail. For some actions if civil servants, whether retired or in service, speak

We need to make a differentiation between what is something that's going to hurt society, hurt the Constitution, and the rule of law.

K. SUJATHA RAO

up, that would have some kind of a deterrent [effect] on the arbitrary abuse of bureaucratic power.

Rule 9 of the Rules of the Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules states, "No Government servant shall... make any statement of fact or opinion... which has the effect of an adverse criticism of any current or recent policy or action of the Central Government or a State Government." Isn't this in violation of Article 19 (freedom of speech and expression) of the Constitution?

BNS: The courts are now veering towards the view that this rule is too stringent and cannot be applied in this manner. I agree that once you take up government service, you surrender and allow some restrictions on your fundamental rights. You are to operate within bounds. The rule says you cannot criticise a policy judgment. This is a very vague expression and needs to be carefully scrutinised. Releasing criminals who had committed heinous crimes prematurely, without application of mind... is that a policy? I hope that someday the Supreme Court will sit down and thrash out these issues carefully.

SR: No, I don't think the rules violate Article 19. It is a rule, it's not the law. It's not in the Constitution. Freedom of speech is given in the Constitution, but these are Conduct Rules and they are imposed because there has to be some discipline in an organisation for that organisation to function. There is a process of decision-making. Right from below, the matter is examined, the pros and cons are taken up, the bureaucracy is given an opportunity to examine all the aspects, write their notes of objection or support, and finally it reaches the political executive. When a policy is decided, it has to be obeyed and complied with by the bureaucracy.

So, do you think that there was a problem with the medium through which the officer shared her opinion? Would it have been better if she had simply done it behind closed doors?

BNS: Whether she had written an op-ed in *The Hindu* or tweeted or posted about it on Facebook, the bounds are the same; the bounds don't change the game, the rules of the game remain the same. Ultimately, it's your fundamental right which has to be reasonably restricted. The reasonableness of the restriction is not in the medium, it is in the manner in which you're restricted, the purpose for which your right is restricted and the method by which it is restricted, namely, by legislation made in accordance with the Supreme Court in the *Puttaswamy* case (which holds that the right to privacy is protected as a fundamental right under the Constitution) in connection with data protection law. I think it is time that this country encourages its democratic principles.

SR: No, she (Ms. Sabharwal) has no authority to express her opinion behind closed doors. What authority does she have? This is happening in Gujarat. She is not a stakeholder in the decision-making process. These rules were made way back during the British time. The scene has changed today. We have social media and there are no laws that say that because I am serving the government, I cannot use Twitter. If I can tweet about my holidays, I can also share my views with my follow-

ers saying, 'I'm very pained by what's happened today.' She has not given a speech about it; it is just a private communication on Twitter. She chose to express her anguish.

Nowadays, many government officers and ministers are encouraged to communicate government policies to the general public through social media. So, isn't it time to 'un-gag' civil servants when it comes to commenting on such decisions?

BNS: Unfortunately, government officers are given only one way of encouragement: say good things in the media. Do they have the liberty as of today to say what is bad? The only problem I see is, if you are going to implement a policy, let's understand one thing: in democracy, everybody has a right to express his or her opinion, a right to object, a right to dissent. The same thing could be said for an IAS officer; he or she may have a right to dissent. Once a resolution has been adopted, it's your job to implement it. If you don't implement it, you are not being true to yourself. That is the problem that arises. That is a very, very thin line, and also a question of how to balance the two interests.

SR: Creating more transparency about policies through social media is the duty of a government officer. This has to be taken on a case-by-case basis. I have supported Smita only because it was the Bilkis case. We need to make a differentiation between what is something that's going to hurt society, hurt the Constitution, and the rule of law. This is not a government policy (decision to release convicts on remission). This is an action, which is ordained by the Supreme Court, executed by the government of Gujarat, and the (question is over the) manner in which it has been done. This was an exception.

Do you then think that we need to challenge these rules?

BNS: Yes, somebody could challenge it as offending constitutional fundamental rights; then the Supreme Court would be forced to come down and say either it is good, or it is bad, and give good reasons for that.



B.N. Srikrishna
is a retired justice
of the
Supreme Court



K. Sujatha Rao
is a retired IAS
officer

NOTEBOOK

Fishing for stories and more

The Agartala Press Club, among the best-equipped in the Northeast, was also famous for fishing

RAHUL KARMARKAR

Agartala is not yet the 'smart city' it seeks to be under the Smart Cities Mission. But it has arguably been the smartest and cleanest urban centre in the Northeast since 1936-37, when the king of the State prepared a master plan, which is said to be one of the first modern concepts of urban planning. The master plan gave Agartala, situated on the banks of the Howrah river, a profusion of lakes, perhaps to match the perfume-yielding Agarwood tree that once grew abundantly enough to give the city its name. Urban expansion claimed the trees, but several lakes, a few shrunken over the years, have remained.

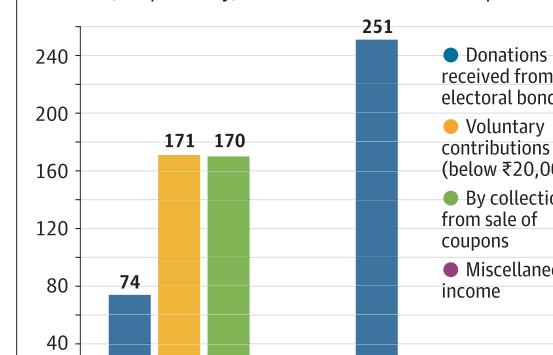
One of the reasons the lakes, most of which are now managed by the Agartala Municipal Corporation, have survived is the passion with which many residents pursue angling, patiently sitting with their fishing rods for a catch often till 10 p.m. daily. Among them are a few journalists who ensure a visit to Agartala is never "wasted" beyond the hours you need to work". The scribes blame the location of the Agartala Press Club for being bitten by the fishing bug. The Press Club building is on the edge of Durgabariighi, one of the two lakes flanking Ujjayanta Palace, a museum from where Tripura's kings once ruled. The other lake is Laxminarayanbariighi. The royalty had named these lakes Gangasagar and Krishnasagar, which are hardly in circulation today.

For the correspondents of mainstream media houses stationed in Guwahati to cover seven or eight north-eastern States, visiting press clubs in other State capitals or towns across the region is a ritual. These are where you get local information, vital leads and contacts, besides refreshing memories of "hunting" in pairs or in a pack. The three-storey Agartala Press Club is among the best-equipped in the region, perhaps a shade less than the larger, four-storey Imphal Press Club. The other press clubs, mostly Assam-type cottages, are paler in contrast. The modest Press Club near Indira Gandhi Park in Arunachal Pradesh's Itanagar is pre-

DATA POINT



1 Undisclosed sources | The graph shows the amount of funding (in ₹ crore) received in FY21 through unknown sources. The national parties and regional parties received ₹427 crore and ₹264 crore worth of funds, respectively, from unknown sources. A split:



3 National parties

In FY21, the Congress secured ₹178.8 crore as income from unknown sources, the highest among all national parties, followed by the BJP at around ₹100 crore. The BSP did not declare income from any source

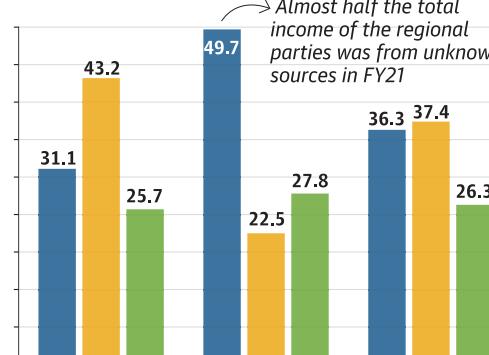
4 Regional parties

Among those regional parties which had declared their income with the Election Commission of India, the YSR-Congress received ₹96.3 crore from unknown sources, the highest, followed by the DMK at the second position

Unknown sources of political funding in FY21

The Association of Democratic Reforms' analysis of the income-tax returns and donation statements of select national and regional political parties in FY21, shows that 36% of the sources remained anonymous. Currently, parties are not required to reveal the names of individuals or organisations making donations that are less than ₹20,000 or those who make donations through electoral bonds. According to the ADR, even though the parties were brought under the RTI Act in June 2013, they have still not complied with the decision, thereby making it difficult to find out the sources

2 Share of revenue | The graph shows the donations from unknown sources (blue), donations from known sources (orange) and income from other known sources such as sale of assets, membership fees (green) as a share of total revenue in FY21



in ₹ crore

Political parties

Political parties	Donations received from electoral bonds	Voluntary contributions (below ₹20,000)	By collection from sale of coupons	Miscellaneous income	Total
INC	10.1	10.8	156.9	1.0	178.8
BJP	22.4	78.0	0	0.1	100.5
CPM	0	82.4	4.4	10.5	97.3
AITC	42.0	0	0	0	42.0
NCP	0	0	8.2	0	8.2
BSP	0	0	0	0	0
YSR-Congress	96.3	0	0	0	96.3
DMK	80.0	0	0	0	80.0
BJD	67.0	0	0	0	67.0
MNS	0	5.8	0	0	5.8
AAP	6.0	0	0	0	6.0
SAD	0	0	4.7	0	4.7

The ADR said that at least 27 regional political parties did not list their audit and contribution reports on the Election Commission of India's website, and so were not included in the analysis

The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO SEPTEMBER 2, 1972

Bill soon to check black money

New Delhi, Sept. 1: Government will bring in as early as possible comprehensive legislation based on the recommendations of the Wanchoo Committee to check the menace of black money which had been "playing havoc" with the social and economic life of the country, the Minister for Revenue and Expenditure Mr. K.R. Ganesh told the Rajya Sabha to-day. Intervening in a two-hour debate on the report raised by Mr. Bhupesh Gupta (CPI) the Minister said the recommendations were now being processed. The Committee had made 396 recommendations of which 213 required legislative action for implementation. Strongly denying the charge that the ruling party had a "vested interest" in perpetuating the institution of black money, Mr. Ganesh said this problem was the product of World War II which gave birth to a new class of contractors. During the era of planned economy after the Independence, anti-social elements resorted to the same practice and exploited every incident of human misery. Mr. Ganesh said the problem and magnitude of black money has vast ramifications. He said it should be a problem of national concern. "It cannot be solved by rule of thumb." Mr. Ganesh said the institution of black money was the progeny of the system of status quo which the present government wanted to change. He said before legislative measures were taken, the government would endeavour to plug the loopholes to avoid tax evasion.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO SEPT. 2, 1922

Indian Air Force

London, Sept. 1: The "Times" gives prominence to the correspondence demanding improvement in equipment of Air Force in India. The newspaper in the course of a long leading article comes to the conclusion that the Force has never been given a fair chance. The Air Ministry has failed to supply it with suitable equipment while the Indian Military authorities have prevented it from making full use of such material and other facilities it possessed. The "Times" says it is a case for searching impartial enquiry; admits that there is no question that charges brought forward by the dead and living against those in authority must be met without delay. The Royal Air Force in India must be equipped with proper machines and everything else it needs for service in the field. Economy that costs the lives of the country's defenders is an economy gone mad.

Text & Context

NEWS IN NUMBERS



Cases against state

5,164

The number of cases of offences lodged against the state in India, including those under sedition, Official Secrets Act, and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, in 2021, according to National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data. The cases showed a decline in 2021 when compared to 2020 and 2019, which saw 5,613 and 7,656 filed, the 'Crime in India - 2021' report showed. Moreover, 8,600 such pending cases investigation were carried forward from last year. PTI

Meta takes action

2.7

In crore, the number of social media posts in India, against which technology conglomerate Meta took action in July, the company said in its monthly transparency report. The company took action against 2.5 crore posts on Facebook and 20 lakh posts on Instagram to comply with Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021. On Facebook, action was taken against 1.73 crore of spam content, followed by 27 lakh posts related to "adult nudity and sexual activity". PTI

Lockdown in China

21

In million, the number of people who have been ordered to stay home in the City of Chengdu by Chinese authorities following a spike in COVID-19 cases. About 70% of the flights have been suspended to and from the southwestern Chinese city. The strict action was taken after Chengdu reported around 1,000 cases in the latest outbreak. Though no deaths were reported, the extreme measures reflect China's rigid adherence to its "zero-COVID" policy that has adversely affected the economy, with lockdowns. AP

Over 50,000 cases

50,496

The number of monkeypox cases recorded in the global outbreak, the latest WHO figures showed, though the transmission is slowing in the virus hotspots of Europe and the United States. The UN agency, which declared the outbreak a global public health emergency on July 24, said 16 deaths were reported this year. WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the declines in new infections proved the outbreak could be halted. AFP

IMF loans to Sri Lanka

2.9

In billion, the amount of the International Monetary Fund agreed to provide Sri Lanka as a loan over four years under a preliminary agreement to help the crisis-hit country, the global lender announced. The IMF and the Sri Lankan authorities have reached a staff-level agreement to support Sri Lanka's economic policies with a 48-month arrangement under the Extended Fund Facility, with the objective to restore macroeconomic stability and debt sustainability while safeguarding financial stability. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

EXPLAINER

Effecting the ban on single-use plastics

What are single-use plastics and how do they impact the environment? What are the amended rules and are alternatives available?

THE GIST

G.S. BAJPAI
SANDEEPA TAAK

■ The purpose of single-use plastics is to use them once or for a short period of time before disposing of them. There is a greater likelihood of single-use plastic products ending up in the sea than reusable ones.

■ The Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2021, prohibited the manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale, and use of plastic carry bags whose thickness is less than 75 microns.

■ To ensure the effective enforcement of the ban, national and State-level control rooms will be established, as well as special enforcement teams for the purpose of checking the illegal manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of single-use plastics.

The story so far: The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, notified the Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2021 on August 12, 2021. In keeping with the spirit of the 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav', the country is taking steps to curb littered and unmanaged plastic waste pollution. Since July 1, 2022, India has banned the manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale, and use of single-use plastic (SUP) items with low utility and high littering potential. India is a party to the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA). In all, 124 nations are party to the UNEA, and India has signed a resolution to draw up an agreement in the future that will make it legally binding for signatories to address the full life cycle of plastics, from production to disposal.

Why are single-use plastics harmful? The purpose of single-use plastics is to use them once or for a short period of time before disposing of them. Plastic waste has drastic impacts on the environment and human health. There is a greater likelihood of single-use plastic products ending up in the sea than reusable ones.

India has taken resolute steps to mitigate pollution caused by littered single-use plastics. A number of items are banned, including earbuds with plastic sticks, balloon sticks, plastic flags, candy sticks, ice cream sticks, polystyrene (thermocol) for decorations, plates, cups, glasses, cutlery such as forks, spoons, knives, straws, trays, wrapping or packing films around sweet boxes, invitation cards, cigarette packets, plastic or PVC banners less than 100 micron, stirrers, etc.

What is the impact on the environment?

Littered single-use plastic items have an adverse effect on both terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. All countries face a major environmental challenge due to pollution caused by single-use plastic items. India piloted a resolution on single-use plastics pollution at the 4th United Nations Environment Assembly in 2019, recognising

the urgent need for the global community to address this issue. This resolution was adopted at the UN Environment Assembly as an important step forward. In the recently concluded 5th session of the United Nations Environment Assembly in March 2022, India engaged constructively with all member states to develop a consensus on a resolution to drive global action against plastic pollution.

However, India is not the first country to ban single-use plastics. Bangladesh became the first country to ban thin plastic bags in 2002; New Zealand banned plastic bags in July 2019. China had issued a ban on plastic bags in 2020 with a phased implementation.

As of July 2019, 68 countries have plastic bag bans with varying degrees of enforcement.

What are the plastic waste management rules in India?

With effect from September 30, 2021, the Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2021, prohibited the manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale, and use of plastic carry bags whose thickness is less than 75 microns. From December 31, 2022, plastic carry bags whose thickness is less than 120 microns will be banned.

It means that the ban does not cover all plastic bags; however, it requires the manufacturers to produce plastic bags thicker than 75 microns which was earlier 50 microns. As per the notification, the standard shall be increased to 120 microns in December this year.

The notification clearly mentioned that plastic or PVC banners/hoardings should have more than 100 microns in thickness, and non-woven plastic (polypropylene) must be more than 60 GSM (grams per square metre). Non-woven plastic bags have a cloth-like texture but are counted among plastics. Still, plastic or PET bottles, counted among the most recyclable types of plastic, have been left out of the scope of the ban.

In addition, the Indian government has taken steps to promote innovation and create an ecosystem for accelerated adoption and availability of alternatives across the country. To ensure the effective enforcement of the ban, national and State-level control rooms will be established,

as well as special enforcement teams for the purpose of checking the illegal sale and use of single-use plastics. To prevent the movement of banned single-use plastic items between States and Union Territories, border checkpoints have been established.

In an effort to empower citizens to help curb the plastic menace, the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has launched a grievance redressal application.

The Government has been taking measures for awareness generation towards the elimination of single-use plastics. The awareness campaign has brought together entrepreneurs and start-ups, industry, Central, State and local Governments, regulatory bodies, experts, citizen organisations, R&D and academic institutions.

What is the role of the manufacturer?

In addition, the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change notified the Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2022 on February 16, 2022. Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is the responsibility of a producer for the environmentally sound management of the product until the end of its life. The guidelines provide a framework to strengthen the circular economy of plastic packaging waste, promote the development of new alternatives to plastic packaging and provide the next steps for moving towards sustainable plastic packaging by businesses.

What are the challenges?

The ban will succeed only if all stakeholders participate enthusiastically and engage in effective engagement and concerted actions.

However, if we look back at our past, almost 25 Indian States previously banned plastic at the state level. However, these bans had a very limited impact in reality because of the widespread use of these items.

Now the challenge is to see how the local level authorities will enforce the ban in accordance with the guidelines. Banned items such as earbuds with plastic sticks, plastic sticks for balloons, etc., are non-branded items and it is difficult to find out who the manufacturer is and who is accountable for selling because these items will be available in the market even after the



issuing of guidelines.

What's happening on the research and development front?

The consumer needs to be informed about the ban through advertisements, newspaper or TV commercials, or on social media. In order to find sustainable alternatives, companies need to invest in research and development. The solution to the plastic pollution problem is not the responsibility of the government alone, but of industries, brands, manufacturers and most importantly consumers. Finding alternatives to plastic seems a little difficult, however, greener alternatives to plastic may be considered a sustainable option. For example, compostable and bio-degradable plastic, etc., may be considered as an option.

While the total ban on the use of plastic sounds a great idea, its feasibility seems difficult at this hour, especially in the absence of workable alternatives.

G.S. Bajpai is Vice-Chancellor, Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law, Punjab. Sangeeta Taak is an Assistant Professor.

EXPLAINER

Why has the Supreme Court relaxed the ban on iron ore mining in Karnataka?

Why did the Court go back on its own order? What does this mean for mining operations in the State?

NALME NACHIYAR

The story so far: On August 26, 2022, the Supreme Court raised the ceiling limit of iron ore mining for Ballari (from 28 MMT to 35 MMT), Chitradurga and Tumakuru districts (from 7 MMT to 15 MMT collectively) in Karnataka, saying that the conservation of ecology and environment must go hand in hand with the spirit of economic development. Earlier, on May 20, 2022, the apex court had relaxed the ban on sale outside the State and export of already excavated iron ore from mines in these three districts. Ten years after it clamped down on production and sale of iron ore in Karnataka, the Court has relaxed its own orders.

How did the illegal mining start? Karnataka's mining story is closely linked to the notorious Reddy brothers of Ballari. In 2002, Gali Janardhan Reddy incorporated the Obulapuram Mining Company (OMC) in Andhra Pradesh's Anantapur district. Eight years later, in 2010, it was shut down by the Court, after a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe was initiated against Mr. Reddy in 2009 for illegal mining. The



unprecedented illegal mining left in its wake a plunder of public wealth, massive losses to the exchequer, encroached forest land, a ravaged environment and large-scale health issues among the local population.

The two Lokayukta Reports of 2008 and 2011 exposed over 700 government officials in the mining scandal, including three Chief Ministers, laying bare the nexus between the political class and the mining and steel industries. After the Court-appointed Central Empowered Committee (CEC) report brought to light

accounts of rampant violations, the apex court passed an order on September 23, 2011 to stop mining operations in Ballari.

Furthermore, in 2012, the SC banned export of iron ore pellets from Karnataka with an aim to prevent environmental degradation. It fixed maximum permissible annual production limit at 35 MMT for A and B category mines.

What were the Court's directions? Following the ban, the Court directed the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE) to draw up a reclamation and rehabilitation plan to reverse the environmental damage caused by illegal mining.

A year later, in September 2012, the SC allowed 18 "category A" mines to resume operations. Subsequently, the ore was sold through e-auctions. In December 2017, the Court permitted increasing the cumulative ceiling cap to 35 MMT based on a CEC report.

Why has the issue resurfaced? In May this year, The Federation of Indian Mineral Industries, Southern Chapter – which includes Vedanta Limited – had asked the SC to scrap e-auction norms in the export or sale of iron ore for mining

lessees in the state.

The mining firms claimed that they were facing closure as steel plants and other related industries were not willing to purchase stocks in the e-auction or above the prevailing market price. This application by mining firms was supported by the Union ministries of Steel and Mines.

The CEC also gave in, adding that the demand and supply and price of iron ore are best left to be determined by market forces.

As opposed to 2017, when Karnataka was in support of a gradual increase in the ceiling limit, the Basavaraj Bommai-led government has changed its stance and is now in favour of a complete removal of the ceiling limit. However, it has opposed lifting of the decade-old ban on iron ore export from the State.

What did the Supreme Court rule? Through its two orders this year, the top Court ruled that it was necessary to create a level playing field for the mines situated in the three districts with those in the rest of the country.

Taking cognisance of the course correction by the government, it relaxed its 2011 order since the situation had now "changed for the better".

"changed for the better". However, the Court has reserved its judgment on the complete removal of ceiling limits on iron ore mining.

The original petitioner, NGO Samaj Parivartha Samudaya led by activist S.R. Hiremath, has opposed any exports on the grounds that minerals are national assets that need to be preserved and only finished steel should be exported.

What are the implications?

India's efforts to clean up illegal mining and export of iron ore, left steel producers in the lurch after 2011. With closure of mines, steel mills faced raw material shortages forcing them to import, thereby opening up the country to business for iron ore giants from outside India.

India exports its low-grade ore mainly to China. Hence, resuming exports in Karnataka would lower supplies to the local market and benefit Chinese steelmakers, the Indian Steel Association has argued.

The restrictions on production and sale had also affected lakhs of mining dependants in Karnataka making their livelihood uncertain. The Court order may offer them some respite.

THE GIST

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FROM PAGE ONE

GST revenues cross ₹1.4 lakh crore mark again

The gross GST revenue collected in August includes ₹24,710 crore of Central GST, ₹30,951 crore collected as State GST, and Integrated GST of ₹77,782 crore, which comprises ₹42,067 crore collected on import of goods. GST Compensation Cess collections were ₹10,168 crore.

"While absolute GST collections displayed a mild sequential dip in August, the impressive 28% year-on-year growth reflects the revival in consumption, improved compliance as well as elevated inflation," said Investment Information and Credit Rating Agency of India chief economist Aditi Nayar.

Mizoram and Goa reported the highest growth in revenues at 78% and 32%, respectively.

Teesta custody: SC questions Gujarat

The Supreme Court on Wednesday said it was "actually struck" by the fact that Ms. Setalvad was detained by the Gujarat Police on June 24 and kept in custody for over two months on the basis of a complaint which merely "recites" the adverse remarks made by the court against her.

"What actually struck us is that your complaint does not recite anything more than what the Supreme Court said... The judgment is out on June 24. The complaint is filed on June 25, within just a day... Obviously the author of this complaint was not privy to anything more than what the Supreme Court said..." CJ Lalit observed orally.

Chief Justice Lalit, speaking for the Bench of Justices S. Ravindra Bhat and Sudhanshu Dhulia, challenged the State to produce on record at least one case in which the bail application filed by a woman was listed, after issuing notice to the State, for hearing again after six whole weeks.

The Gujarat High Court, which issued notice to the State on Ms. Setalvad's bail plea on August 3, chose to list the case on September

19. Bail jurisdiction normally requires the court to hear and decide pleas as quickly as possible as the personal liberty of a person is at stake.

Chief Justice Lalit asked Mr. Mehta whether this was the "standard practice in the Gujarat High Court".

The court asked the State whether it had collected any additional material during the custodial interrogation of the activist in the past two months. "As things stand today, the FIR is nothing but what has happened in the Supreme Court... in the last two months, have you filed chargesheet or is the investigation still on?" Chief Justice Lalit asked.

The court reminded the State about Section 167 of the Code which provides a 60- to 90-day deadline for completion of investigation after which the accused was entitled to bail.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal and advocate Aparna Bhat, for Ms. Setalvad, said the FIR did not reveal what document she had supposedly forged. There was no *prima facie* case against her in the FIR, they said.

The court scheduled the case for September 2.

UPA delegation meets Jharkhand Governor

The Opposition BJP had lodged a complaint with the Governor in February against Mr. Soren and the Governor had sought opinion from the Election Commission (EC) on the issue. On August 25, the EC reportedly sent its opinion to the Governor in a sealed envelope. The BJP leaders, later, triggered a row by saying that the EC had recommended disqualification of Mr. Soren as MLA.

The UPA delegation submitted the memorandum to the Governor complaining

that "leaks" from his [the Governor] office, regarding an envelope from the EC over disqualification of Mr. Soren, "has been causing commotion". They urged the Governor to clear the air on the issue.

After meeting the Governor, working State president of Congress Bandhu Turkey told mediapersons: "The Chief Minister is not resigning. The Governor is seeking legal opinion and has assured us that the situation will be made clear within two days."

IMF to extend \$2.9 billion to Sri Lanka

"IMF staff and the Sri Lankan authorities have reached a staff-level agreement to support Sri Lanka's economic policies with a 48-month arrangement under the Extended Fund Facility [EFF] of about \$2.9 billion," a visiting IMF team said on Thursday.

The announcement comes even as Sri Lanka endures an agonising economic downturn that has left scores of families starving.

President Ranil Wickremesinghe termed the agreement "an important step in the history of Sri Lanka".

The objectives of the new programme – Sri Lanka's 17th with the Fund – are "to restore macroeconomic stability and debt sustainability, while safeguarding financial stability, protecting the vulnerable, and stepping up

structural reforms to address corruption vulnerabilities and unlock Sri Lanka's growth potential," the IMF said. However, the international financial institution has laid out expectations that Sri Lanka must meet, before the IMF management and Executive Board can approve the programme.

"Prior actions" on Sri Lanka's part include raising fiscal revenue through a "more progressive" income tax regime, rebuilding foreign reserves, and increasing social spending. Significantly, Sri Lanka, which opted for a pre-emptive sovereign default on its \$51 billion foreign debt in April, must work to obtain debt relief from its creditors and additional financing from multilateral partners," the Fund said in its statement.

The Crime Multi Agency Centre (Cri-MAC) was launched in 2020 by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to share information on crime and criminals 24x7 with various law enforcement agencies on serious criminal incidents, including human trafficking, data show.

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programme – Sri Lanka's 17th with the Fund – are "to

restore macroeconomic stability and debt sustainability, while safeguarding financial stability, protecting the vulnerable, and stepping up

Modi, Xi weigh meeting as chill remains in ties

MEA backs German envoy's comments on Beijing's 'outrageous' claims on Arunachal Pradesh, in its latest message to China

SUHASINI HAIDAR
ANANTH KRISHNAN
NEW DELHI/BEIJING

India and China are weighing a first meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping in almost three years, even as a chill remains in relations with an as-yet-unresolved border crisis and increasingly sharp recent exchanges.

While this meeting could come as early as mid-September, with both leaders currently expected at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Uzbekistan, the G20 meet in mid-November in Indonesia, where both have confirmed their attendance, offers another possibility.

A meeting does, however, come with risks for New Delhi, which has viewed warily China's recent attempts to portray ties as "normal" despite the situation at the Line

of Actual Control (LAC), a perception that a high-level meet may reinforce. New Delhi reluctantly hosted Foreign Minister Wang Yi in March as he visited the region, but conveyed a strong message that India would not accept China's demand to keep the border "in an appropriate place" and restore relations.

India has since kept up that messaging in public. On Thursday, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) backed the German Ambassador to India's comments calling China's claims on Arunachal Pradesh "outrageous" and its transgressions at the LAC a "violation of international law". Responding to German envoy Phillip Ackerman's comments, which had generated anger in Beijing, MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said the international community has a "proper



Narendra Modi with Xi Jinping during the BRICS Summit in Brazil in 2019.

appreciation" of India's stand on boundary issues.

On August 29, Mr. Jaishankar, in a speech in New Delhi on August 29, repeated for the third time in recent weeks India's stand that normalcy in ties was predicated on normalcy on the border. China's military, for its part, last week cited those same agreements which India has accused China of violating, to oppose upcoming India-U.S. high-altitude military exercises, calling them "med-

dling". Past meetings between Mr. Modi and Mr. Xi have been seen by both sides as helping calm border tensions – a brief conversation in July 2017 on the sidelines of a summit was seen as breaking the deadlock that led to the resolution of the stand-off in Doklam the following month. In recent months, however, the Chinese military has continued with a hardline stance on slow-moving LAC talks and refused to restore the status quo, a stand which, given Mr. Xi's apparently tight control over the People's Liberation Army (PLA), appears to be following his direction.

This will give New Delhi some pause for thought, even if both leaders appear likely to cross paths in Samarkand. According to an Uzbekistan Foreign Ministry official overseeing logistics, all preparations have been

made for the summit and "heads of all eight member countries" are expected.

The MEA said earlier that Mr. Modi's visit to Samarkand for the SCO summit would be announced at the "appropriate time", although a formal statement on Mr. Jaishankar's visit to Tashkent in July for the SCO Foreign Ministers' meeting said they had "discussed the preparations for the forthcoming SCO Summit of Heads of State scheduled to be held in Samarkand on 15-16 September". A factor in India's possible attendance is India taking over as the Chair of the SCO.

The Wall Street Journal reported on August 19 that Mr. Xi's office "has also begun preparing bilateral meetings on the sidelines of the summit with the leaders of Pakistan, India and Turkey". However, the Chinese Defence

Minister being the lone absentee at the recent SCO Defence Ministers' meet has raised doubts on whether Mr. Xi will travel, with Beijing on Wednesday announcing the party congress on October 16.

The last meeting between Mr. Modi and Mr. Xi, in Brazil in November 2019, reflected a period in the relationship that most in New Delhi now believe there is no returning to. Taking place a month after Mr. Xi's visit to Chennai for the second "informal" summit, Mr. Xi told Mr. Modi his "successful meeting" with him "went very well" and he was "willing to maintain close communication" to "jointly steer the direction of China-India relations" and "increase political mutual trust". Mr. Modi said their meetings in Wuhan and Chennai "strengthened trust and friendship".

IN BRIEF



Commercial LPG price cut by ₹91 per refill

NEW DELHI

The price of commercial LPG used in hotels and restaurants on Thursday was slashed by ₹91 per cylinder on softening international prices. The price of a 19-kg commercial LPG cylinder was cut to ₹1,885 per cylinder in the national capital.

2 JeM militants killed in north Kashmir operation

SRINAGAR

Two Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) militants, planning to carry out attacks in north Kashmir, were killed in an anti-militancy operation of the security forces in Baramulla's Sopore on Thursday, the Jammu & Kashmir police said. They have been identified as Mohammad Rafi Lone and Kaiser Ashraf Dar.

SC seeks info on attacks on Christians

Bench clarifies it has not formed any opinion on the veracity of the allegations

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday directed the Union Home Ministry to obtain from eight States information about the registration of FIRs, status of investigation, arrests and chargesheets filed in incidents petitioners allege to be attacks targeting the Christian community and institutions.

The States are Bihar, Haryana, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

These States have to verify the action taken by their law enforcement agencies on the incidents of "criminal wrongdoings" which happened in 2021, as alleged in the petitions filed by Rev. Dr. Peter Machado of National Solidarity Forum, Rev. Vijayesh Lal of Evangelical Fellowship of India and others.

The States have to submit their verification reports to the Ministry, which would in turn file an affidavit in the Supreme Court.

A Bench led by Justice D.Y. Chandrachud said the verification exercise was necessary for the court to determine whether the directions issued by the apex court in a host of judgments, notably in the Tehseen Poonawalla case, were being followed by the States. These judgments



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had made the State machinery accountable for preventing or taking immediate criminal action against perpetrators of communal violence, including lynchings.

Preliminary affidavit

A preliminary affidavit filed in the court by the Centre had earlier dismissed the allegations in the petitions, saying they were based on "falsehood" and "selective self-serving documents".

Even family feuds and private land disputes are being shown as communal targeting, the Ministry had countered.

"Majority of the incidents alleged as Christian persecution in these reports were either false or wrongfully projected. In some cases, incidents of purely criminal nature and arising out of personal issues, have been cate-

gorised as violence targeting Christians," the government affidavit had maintained.

The MHA had said several incidents were "not necessarily related to incidents on violence targeting Christians".

The affidavit contended that "preliminary factual check and inputs received" reveal that even action taken by local administrations against illegal constructions were projected as instances of religious targeting of places.

The MHA had objected to reports that the police were negligent or biased or complicit with vigilante groups, leading to an atmosphere of intolerance.

Mr. Gonsalves, for the petitioners, had submitted that there were around 505 attacks on the religious community in the past several months alone.

Bangladesh Prime Minister to visit India next week: MEA

She will hold talks with Modi, offer prayers at Ajmer Sharif

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina of Bangladesh will pay an official visit to India next week, the Ministry of External Affairs announced on Thursday.

During her stay, Ms. Hasina will offer prayers at Ajmer Sharif and award Mujib Scholarships, an initiative of the Government of Bangladesh for the descendants of 200 Indian armed forces personnel who were martyred or suffered critical injuries during the Liberation War of 1971, Dhaka has announced. "In recent years, both sides have sustained high level of engagement including at the highest level between our two countries.



Sheikh Hasina

The forthcoming visit of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will further strengthen the multifaceted relationship between our two countries based on strong historical and cultural ties, mutual trust and understanding," said Arindam Bagchi, Spokesperson, Ministry of External Affairs.

Ms. Hasina will be accompanied by a number of Ministers, advisers, and secretaries, as well as a delegation of business houses of Bangladesh, announced a press release from Dhaka.

Ahead of the visit, both sides held the Ministers-level meeting of the Joint River Commission here on August 25, which highlighted the urgency to resolve bilateral riparian issues and the upcoming renewal of the Ganga Waters Treaty.

Ms. Hasina will be hosted by President Droupadi Murmu and Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar, and will hold a round of delegation-level talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Hyderabad House.

Vostok-2022 begins in Russia with India, China participating

U.S. criticises India's attendance in the joint military exercise

DINAKAR PERI
SUHASINI HAIDER
NEW DELHI

An Indian Army contingent comprising troops from 7/8 Gorkha Rifles is participating in the multilateral strategic and command exercise 'Vostok-2022' which commenced on Friday at the training grounds of the eastern military district in Russia. The exercise also includes participation by the Chinese People's Liberation Army.

"The exercise is aimed at interaction and coordination amongst other participating military contingents and observers," the Army said in a statement. The exercise is scheduled to be held from Sept. 01 to 07.

The Indian Army contingent, over the next seven days, will undertake joint manoeuvres to include field training exercises, combat discussions, and firepower exercises, it said.

Russia has stated that Vostok-2022 will be conducted in two phases. Participating contingents include observers from the Collective Security Treaty Organisation, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and other partner states including Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, China, Laos, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Syria and Tajikistan, said Russian Deputy Defence Minister Colonel General Alexander for foreign military at-

taches in a briefing in Moscow.

India also defended its participation in the exercises in response to U.S. criticism. "India has been regularly participating in multilateral exercises in Russia, along with a number of other countries," said MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi, stressing that the Vostok exercises were routine, and added that they would only include Army contingents.

MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi was responding to comments by the U.S. White House Press Secretary who said that "the U.S. has concerns about any country exercising with Russia while Russia wages an unprovoked brutal war against Ukraine."

Seven States cold to Centre's crime portal

Cri-MAC was launched to share info on significant crimes across the country

VIJAYA SINGH
NEW DELHI

At least seven States and one Union Territory have given the cold shoulder to the Centre's online platform meant to share information and coordinate action among law enforcement agencies on serious criminal incidents, including human trafficking, data show.

The Crime Multi Agency Centre (Cri-MAC) was launched in 2020 by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to share information on crime and criminals 24x7 with various law enforcement agencies and ensure a seamless flow of information among them. The application run by the National

Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) aims to help in early detection and prevention of crime incidents across the country.

West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland and Sikkim and Union Territory of Dadra, Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu have not uploaded a single alert on Cri-MAC since the portal was launched in March 2020.

Delhi, Assam and Haryana uploaded the maximum number of alerts on the portal, which included information on the release of a hardened criminal from jail or an incident of terror, murder, dacoity among others.

As on July 1, the number of alerts uploaded on the portal stood at 35,145 though there are 16,361 police stations in the country

'Transparency' debate continues in Congress

After Manish Tewari, Karti Chidambaram raises queries on electoral rolls; Manickam Tagore posts booth members' list online

SANDEEP PHUKAN
NEW DELHI

A day after senior Congress leader Manish Tewari demanded transparency in the party's presidential election, his Lok Sabha colleague Manickam Tagore on Thursday posted the names of people who elected him as delegate on Twitter.

The debate had started on Wednesday after *The Hindu* quoted the Central Election Authority (CEA) chief Madhusudan Mistry saying that no one should doubt the fairness of the election and if anyone wants to check the list of 9,000 delegates who will elect the next Congress president, "they should do so by visiting the Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) office".

"In my booth no 64 we have @INCIndia membership of 29 members through the digital membership. Among the 29 members, two were elected in consensus:

booth president Thiru. Karurudurai, booth delegate myself," Mr. Tagore tweeted.

In another tweet, he put out the list of his colleagues who were elected as delegates from different blocks and booths. "Let's celebrate our strength @INCIndia," he added.

Though the Congress had made it clear that it will not make the list of delegates public, Mr. Tagore's move to post the list of Madurai South District Congress Committee was seen as a response to his Lok Sabha colleagues, Mr. Tewari and Karti P. Chidambaram, who had said the electoral roll should be transparent and publicly available on the party's website.

"With great respect @MD_Mistry ji How can there be a fair & free election without a publicly available electoral roll? ...names & addresses of electors must be published on @INCIndia website

 With great respect @MD_Mistry ji How can there be a fair & free election without a publicly available electoral roll? ...names & addresses of electors must be published on @INCIndia website

MANISH TEWARI, LOK SABHA MEMBER



website in a transparent manner," Mr. Tewari had written on Wednesday, tagging *The Hindu* report.

Mr. Tewari, who is a member of the ginger group called G-23 that has been pushing for internal reforms in the Congress for the past two years, questioned why should anyone visit the PCC offices to find out "who the electors are", and said that such things did not happen even in a club election".

"In interests of fairness & transparency I urge your gods self to publish entire list of electors on @INCIndia website.

How can someone consider running if he/she does not know who electors are. If someone has to file his/her nomination & gets it proposed by 10 Congresspersons as is requirement, CEA can reject it saying they are not valid electors," he added.

Lok Sabha member Karti P. Chidambaram tweeted, "Every election needs a well defined & clear electoral college. The process of forming the electoral college must also be clear, well defined & transparent. An ad hoc elec-

toral college is no electoral college."

Backing his colleagues, Lok Sabha member Shashi Tharoor, one of the possible contenders in the presidential race, said, "Certainly, I think it's important that everybody should have transparency on the electoral rolls. If we only asked for that's what Manish has asked for, then I'm sure that it's a principle that everybody would agree."

The issue of electoral rolls not being made public was raised by another G-23 leader, Anand Sharma, at the Congress Working Committee last Sunday when the final schedule was approved with a show of hands.

Meeting with Azad

On Tuesday, key G-23 leaders like Mr. Sharma, Bhupinder Singh Hooda and Prithviraj Chavan had met in Delhi to strategise about the upcoming presidential election and later called on former Con-

gress stalwart, Ghulam Nabi Azad, who quit the party last Friday.

"The Congress president has agreed to our demand of holding elections. Despite that Azad sahib decided to quit the party, but he had never discussed his resignation with us. We only asked him as to what happened that he had to take such a decision even after the demands were accepted," Mr. Hooda clarified on Thursday.

Mr. Hooda was interacting with mediapersons during his visit to New Delhi in connection with the Congress' September 4 "Halla Bol" rally over rising inflation.

To a query on the meeting, Mr. Hooda said Mr. Azad had been with him in the Congress for decades and he wanted to ascertain the reasons for him quitting the party without prior consultation.

(With inputs from Ashok Kumar in Gurugram)

Don't take back money from farmers: Congress

'Govt. should stop issuing notices'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Centre should stop issuing notices to farmers, deemed ineligible under the PM-KISAN scheme, to demand the recovery of the money disbursed to them under the flagship scheme, the Congress said on Thursday.

The party said that while the government was "waiving lakhs of crores" worth of loans of its industrialist friends, it is taking back the money given to the poor 'annadaatas' of the country..." Mr. Singh said.

He alleged that before the 2019 polls, the Modi government started the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) and "hastily" took bank account numbers of farmers so that money reached them before the polls. "Now the government is saying that those who are not eligible for this and have received the amount under PM-KISAN should return the money. The government is also sending notices to farmers for taking back the money. The process of recovery by declaring about two crore farmers ineligible across the country should be immediately stopped," Mr. Singh said.

National-level quiz for school students gets good response

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

The fifth edition of the Discovery School Super League, a national-level quiz, powered by BYJU's, has attracted participation from over four lakh students from 1,200 schools, according to a press release issued here on Thursday.

The aptitude-based contest is being held in three rounds and students will get a chance to represent their respective States and compete for the final three posi-

tions. School-level and district-level rounds are being held following which a final round will take place.

The final round in Mumbai will be telecast on the Discovery Network channels. The release said the quiz garnered a huge response in Tamil Nadu.

NASA trip

According to the release, the top three teams will get a chance to go on an all-expenses paid trip to NASA with their school principals.

The toppers from each school will also be invited to exclusively experience the nearest Byju's Tuition Centres, where they will be provided with a free workshop based on advanced concepts of maths and science. Sr. Regina Mary, headmistress, Our Lady's Higher Secondary School, Thiruvottiyur, was quoted in the release as saying the students were enthusiastic and prepared for all aspects of the quiz beyond the confines of textbooks.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah will visit Bihar, more specifically the Muslim-majority Seemanchal area of the State, his first such visit after the Janata Dal(U) parted ways with the BJP to ally with the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) to form a government.

Senior sources in the BJP have confirmed that Mr. Shah will visit Bihar on September 23 and 24 and address two rallies, one in Purnea and another in Kishanganj, both in the Seemanchal area.

"Amit Shahji will be in Patna first for a meeting of the core group of the BJP. There

First visit to State after JD(U) parted ways with the BJP

NISTULA HEBBAR
NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah will visit Bihar, more specifically the Muslim-majority Seemanchal area of the State, his first such visit after the Janata Dal(U) parted ways with the BJP to ally with the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) to form a government.

Senior sources in the BJP have confirmed that Mr. Shah will visit Bihar on Sep-

tember 23 and 24 and address two rallies, one in Purnea and another in Kishanganj, both in the Seemanchal area.

These are areas where the Muslim population ranges between 35% and 70%. The BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) did well there in the 2019 election, largely on the back of communal polarisation. The NDA had won three out of the four seats in the area. Even the seat won by the JD(U) was by

Shah to visit Seemanchal in Bihar



will be a review of the programme of senior leaders of the party who are to visit 200 Assembly segments in the State. After that, there will be two public rallies, one in Purnea and another in Kishanganj," the source said.

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a BJP member who fought on JD(U) ticket as the two parties were in an alliance.

"To go to Seemanchal is also *saankaitik* (symbolic)," added the source alluding to the fact that in the *Mahagatbandhan*, the banding together of the JD(U), the RJD and others presented a formidable caste arithmetic which had to be countered by Hindutva consolidation across caste lines.

This plan comes as Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has signalled that he is ready to stake claim to national leadership of the Opposition parties.

Haridwar hate speech accused to surrender in court today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DEHRADUN

Haridwar hate speech accused Sitendra Narayan Tyagi has said he will surrender before a Haridwar court on Friday.

He had earlier claimed in a video that his life was in danger and he might be killed in a suicide attack.

The Supreme Court on May 17 had granted Mr. Tyagi interim bail for three months on medical grounds in the Dharma Sansad case.

RAJASTHAN MEDICAL SERVICES CORPORATION LIMITED, JAIPUR
Gandhi Block, Swasthya Bhawan, Tilak Marg, C-Scheme, Jaipur-302005
Ph.: 0141-222887, Fax : 0141-222805, Email : edepmmsc@nic.in
Website : <http://rmsc.health.rajasthan.gov.in>, <http://spcc.rajk.nic.in>
No.: F-8(I) RMSC/EPM/M-3/2022-23/NB/1133 Dated : 25.08.2022

NOTICE INVITING BID

Bids for Item (1) 3 Channel ECG Machine (2) High Flow Nasal Cannula System are invited from interested bidders up to 27.09.2022, 06:00 PM. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal <http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in>, <http://spcc.rajk.nic.in> or the state and <http://rmsc.health.rajasthan.gov.in>.
UBN No.: (1) 3 Channel ECG Machine - MSC223GLRC00055
(2) High Flow Nasal Cannula System - MSC223GLRC00053
Executive Director (EPM)
RMSCL, Jaipur

CENTRAL POWER RESEARCH INSTITUTE
(A Govt. of India Society, Ministry of Power)
Post Box No.8066, Prof. Sir. C.V.Raman Road
Sadasivanagar Post Office, Bangalore - 560 080.
ADVERTISEMENT NO. CPRI/09/2022

CPRI invites applications for one position of Research Associate on purely temporary basis, for a period of one year. Interested candidates may refer website <https://cpri.res.in> for details regarding eligibility criteria, educational qualification etc. and submit their application as per the prescribed format posted in website with all relevant copies of documents by post latest by 16.09.2022. Applications received after the due date will not be considered.

Chief Administrative Officer (I/C)

OFFICE OF THE ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER PHED REGION I JODHPUR
Tel-0291-2651750 E-Mail : rj_acgeo@nic.in
No.ACE/Region I/Ju.Ar. Distt./2022-23/ 6293-6311 Dated 25/8/2022
Notice Inviting Bid

Bids for work of "Work of Construction of Source, PLJ of rising main pipelines, internal village distribution pipeline, Reservoir and FHTC including one year Defect Liability period Village Hansa Desh Panchayat Samiti Lohawat under JJM in the jurisdiction of PHED District Division Phalodi AND Work of Construction of Source, PLJ of rising main pipelines, internal village distribution pipeline, Reservoir and FHTC including one year Defect Liability period Village Moolrai Panchayat Samiti Lohawat under JJM in the jurisdiction of PHED District Division Phalodi are invited from interested bidders upto 6.00 pm (time) 22.09.2022 (date). Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (<http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in>, <http://spcc.rajk.nic.in>) of the state; and PHED department website.

UBN No.- PHE 2223 WS0B 06006
UBN No.- PHE 2223 WS0B 06007
(Vinod Bharti)
Addl. Chief Engineer
PHED REGION (I) JODHPUR
DIPR/C/11230

CENTRAL POWER RESEARCH INSTITUTE
(A Govt. of India Society, Ministry of Power)
Post Box No.8066, Prof. Sir. C.V.Raman Road
Sadasivanagar Post Office, Bangalore - 560 080.
ADVERTISEMENT NO. CPRI/10/2022

CPRI invites applications for one position of Research Associate on purely temporary basis, for a period of two years. Interested candidates may refer website <https://cpri.res.in> for details regarding eligibility criteria, educational qualification etc. and submit their application as per the prescribed format posted in website with all relevant copies of documents by post latest by 16.09.2022. Applications received after the due date will not be considered.

Chief Administrative Officer (I/C)

OFFICE OF ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER, WATER RESOURCES ZONE, UDAIPUR
Near Akashvani, Chetak Circle, Udaipur (Rajasthan) 313001
Phone no. : 0294-2528265 Email- aceudaipur2019@gmail.com
No.- ACE/Actt/Mahif./2022 / 3303 Dated 30/08/2022
CORRIGENDUM- 1ST - NIT No. 06/2022-23

The dates for uploading bids for following works in NIT no. 06/2022-23 is hereby extended till 13.09.2022, upto 06:00 PM due to unavoidable circumstances.

S. No.	Name of Work
1	Rehabilitation and Renovation of Arthuna Distributary RD 20 Km to tail and its distribution system (CMBA-22/Package-XI)
2	Rehabilitation and Renovation of Parsoliya Distributary and its distribution system (CMBA-22/Package-XII)

Updated particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal <http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in>, www.dpr.rajasthan.gov.in, <http://spcc.rajk.nic.in> & departmental website www.warajasthan.gov.in/wrd, UBN No. 1 WRD 2223 WLOB1053 UBN No. 2 WRD 2223 WLOB1054 Additional Chief Engineer Water Resources Zone, Udaipur DIPR/C/11387

GOVERNMENT OF PUDUCHERRY GOVERNMENT PHARMACY
INDIRA NAGAR, GORMEDU, PUDUCHERRY - 605 006.
MAIL ID: cgp-health.pon@nic.in Phone: 0413-2272170
GST NO: 34CHEG02561G1DW
No.1402/CGP/A4/2022-23/ Date: 02/09/2022
NOTICE INVITING TENDER

to have a Rate Contract in supply of Medicines, Surgical Items, Lab Items, Ortho Implants and Radiological items for the Year 2022-23

On behalf of the President of India, 'e-tenders' are invited by the Chairman, CPC Tender Committee - cum - Director of Health and Family Welfare Services, Puducherry, for having a Rate Contract with Health Department for supply of Medicines, Surgical Items, Lab Items, Ortho Implants and Radiological Items for use in the Health Institutions in the Union Territory of Puducherry for period of one year from the date of Award of Contract.

Bidders should submit their tender online only through CPPP Portal <https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app>.

The tender details, specifications, terms and conditions and time schedule may also be downloaded from the website <https://health.puducherry.gov.in>, for reference only.

The last date for submission of tender by online is 23.09.2022 up to 17.00 hrs.

(Dr. G. SRIRAMULU)
Chairman - cum - Director (Health)

No.245/DIP/AD(PRESS)/2022-23

Detailed advertisement, qualification, experience and application form is available at www.natboard.edu.in

Duly filled & forwarded application forms in the prescribed format along with copies of testimonials should reach on or before 10th October, 2022.

30th August 2022
New Delhi

Joint Director (Admin.)

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA Irrigation & CAD Department Irrigation Circle, Hill Colony, Nalgonda District

Tender is invited by Irrigation Circle, Hill Colony Nalgonda District vide Notice No: 20SE/IC/CHC/2022-23 dated: 27.08.2022 for work 'Design Fabrication, supply, erection, commissioning of vertical lift service gate of size 9.7x7.0 m x 4.120 m, 2 N's and dismantling. Re-erection of existing rope drum hoist for chlorine service gates of Nagarjun Sagar Dam, Nalgonda District for an ECV Rs.12,22,79,946/- is available from 01.09.2022 to 08.09.2022 at 3.00 PM and last date for receipt of bid is 08.09.2022 at 5.00 PM for further details see in e-procurement website.

Sd/- K. Dharma, 30-08-2022
DPR R.O.N.6258/PCL/ADVT/1/2022-23 DL 01.09.2022 Superintending Engineer, Irrigation Circle, Hill Colony.

महात्मा जीविता फूले मुख्य मंडी प्रांगण कृषि उपज मंडी समिति
(फल एवं जड़ी वस्तु) दर्मिल मार्केट, बुजर्ग, ईमेल ID : kums.jaipuri@rajasthan.gov.in
फ़िल्मक - 30/08/2022
क्रमांक :- 1903 ई-प्रोक्यूर्सन फॉर्म से निर्धारित प्रत्येक में ई-प्रोक्यूर्सन निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। निविदा से सम्बन्धित विस्तृत विवरण <a href="https://www

IN BRIEF



Moosewala case: SC seeks details on Bishnoi

NEW DELHI The Supreme Court on Thursday sought the details of the FIRs registered against gangster Lawrence Bishnoi, arrested in connection with the murder of popular Punjabi singer and Congress leader Sidhu Moosewala. A Bench directed the Punjab Police to submit a chart giving details of the number of FIRs lodged against Bishnoi. The court was hearing a plea filed by Bishnoi's father against the transit remand ordered by a Delhi court for the production of his son in the murder case. It posted the matter for further hearing on September 13. PTI

Amit Shah launches CAPF e-Awas portal

NEW DELHI Union Home Minister Amit Shah launched a portal on Thursday for allotment of residential quarters to Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) personnel. Mr. Shah said the portal 'CAPF e-Awas' will end the 'caste system' prevalent in allotment of residential quarters to the jawans as it will bring transparency and accountability. He said it is the responsibility of the government to care for the families of jawans who protect the nation's borders.

Senior advocate Rajani Iyer passes away

MUMBAI Senior advocate Rajani Iyer, one of the six designated women senior advocates of the Bombay High Court, passed away on Thursday after a brief illness. She was 69. Senior advocate Navroj Seervai said Iyer was a friend to those in need. Retired Justice V.M. Kanade of the Bombay High Court called her a firebrand and said, "I have known her since I was a junior. She was a frank and outspoken judge. She fought for civil rights even during the Emergency and upheld constitutional rights for almost 50 years".

UGC proposes clustering of colleges

It finalises norms for transforming universities into multidisciplinary bodies, a key NEP suggestion

JAGRITI CHANDRA
NEW DELHI

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has finalised guidelines for transforming colleges and universities into multidisciplinary institutions and has prescribed three different approaches which include "clustering" of establishments located in proximity to each other. The UGC will make public its "Guidelines for transforming higher educational institutions into multidisciplinary institutions" on Friday. These aim to help State governments and universities frame appropriate rules and policies. Promoting multidisciplinary institutions was a key recommendation of the National Education Policy, 2020.

The UGC has suggested academic collaboration between institutions through "clusters" of higher educa-

tion institutions (HEIs) in order to promote multidisciplinary education and research in online and offline modes.

The cluster system will help single-stream institutions with poor enrolment due to lack of employment-oriented, innovative multidisciplinary courses and lack of financial resources and help such centres improve their grades in National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) accreditation, say the guidelines. They will have to design their timetable in consultation with partner institutions so that students can register for courses offered by them without facing scheduling clashes.

The member colleges in a cluster will continue to function as affiliated colleges under the university in the initial phase during which they



They aim to help State governments and universities frame rules and policies.

will share their resources to offer programmes and guide student research projects. After the initial years, the affiliating university may affiliate the cluster of colleges as a single unit during which they will pass through graduating autonomy before developing into an autonomous degree-granting cluster of

college. These can then later evolve into research or teaching universities.

The UGC has also prescribed two other approaches for existing colleges and universities to become multidisciplinary. These include merger of single-stream institutions with other multidisciplinary institutions under the same management or different managements, as well as expanding the number of departments in a college or university by adding new subjects such as languages, literature, music, Indology, sports, etc.

Students opting for courses offered as a result of collaborations and mergers can also avail credit mobility between partnering institutions as the National e-Governance Division of the Ministry of Electronic and Information Technology has developed the ABC platform

which allows students to open an academic account and add HEIs of interest and store credits earned from them for receiving degrees and diplomas.

The guidelines also identify student orientation programmes as an important element to familiarise them with the new options available to them.

The UGC also suggests capacity-building for faculty so that they can teach, train and research in multidisciplinary academic programmes such as through initiatives like Annual Refresher Programme in Teaching as well as investment in learning assessment tools. It has also harped on setting up Education Departments in universities and colleges that will teach curriculum design, pedagogy, communication and writing to future teachers.

Expert panel gives green clearance for PMO project

It lays down conditions for the nod

DAMINI NATH
NEW DELHI

The government's Executive Enclave project, which includes construction of a new Prime Minister's Office (PMO), on Thursday received environmental clearance from the State Environment Impact Assessment Authority, Delhi (SEIAA-Delhi).

The SEAC, in its meeting on Monday, approved the proposal for the second time, after approving it on April 9. The SEAC had sent the proposal to the State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA), which referred it back to the SEAC on April 19 for a relook vis-a-vis the implementation of the Delhi government's Tree Transplantation Policy, 2020.

The project would include removal of 487 of 807 trees on the site near South Block. The new PMO would be spread over 13,822 sqm.

pensatory plantation of 10 times as many trees as would be cut.

In its recommendation on Monday, the SEAC had observed that the tree survey was not incorporated into the design and planning phase of the project.

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SpiceJet flight returns due to 'autopilot' snag

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

A SpiceJet plane, carrying 89 passengers, that took off for Nashik from Delhi on Thursday returned midway due to an "autopilot" snag. The Boeing 737 plane landed safely and later the passengers were flown to Nashik in another aircraft.

In a statement, SpiceJet said its Delhi-Nashik flight returned to Delhi after the flight crew experienced a malfunction with the autopilot system.

The aviation regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) will probe the incident. This is the latest in a series of incidents involving planes of SpiceJet, which was ordered by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on July 27 to operate only 50% of its flights for eight weeks.

Indian-made HPV vaccine this year

One shot will be priced at ₹200-400

JACOB KOSHY
NEW DELHI

India's first indigenously developed vaccine to prevent cervical cancer, CERVAVAC, will likely cost ₹200-400 a shot and be commercially available later this year, Adar Poonawalla, CEO, Serum Institute of India (SII), said on the sidelines of a launch event here on Thursday.

CERVAVAC, developed by SII, was approved by the Drug Controller General of India in July. The event also underlined the role of the Indian government, particularly the Department of Biotechnology, in facilitating trials and investments in the vaccine candidate.

CERVAVAC is a quadrivalent vaccine, meaning it is effective against at least four

variants of cancer-causing Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), and resulted from a partnership of DBT's Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC), and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation that supported Serum's development efforts.

Annually, about 1.25 lakh women are diagnosed with cervical cancer, and over 75,000 die from the disease in India. Close to 83% of invasive cervical cancers in India and 70% of cases worldwide are attributed to HPV-types 16 or 18. HPV transmission is influenced by sexual activity and age. Almost 75% of all sexually active adults are likely to be infected with at least one HPV type. A vast majority of the infections resolve itself.

Remove State laws regulating temples: plea

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday, hearing a plea to strike down State laws regulating and administering temples and gurdwaras, wondered whether such freedom, considering the wealth generated, will turn them into "centres of power" operating outside checks and balances.

A Bench was hearing a petition by advocate Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay for a declaration that Hindus, Buddhists, Jains and Sikhs have rights to "establish, manage and maintain their religious places like Muslims, Parsis and Christians". It said States had no right to "abridge" this right. It said such State laws violated the rights to equality, religious freedom, etc.

BJP says the organisation does not need her certificate



Mamata Banerjee at a rally to thank UNESCO for according the Intangible Cultural Heritage tag to Durga Puja. ■PTI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KOLKATA

Trinamool Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee's assertions on Wednesday that all in the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) were "not bad" and that there are many who "do not support BJP" kicked up a political storm.

While the AIMIM, the Congress and the CPI(M) on Thursday attacked her for what they saw as opportunism on Ms. Banerjee's part, the BJP said it did not need certificates from her.

The West Bengal Chief Minister had in a passing remark at State secretariat function said, "The RSS was not that bad. There are still people in the RSS who do not support the politics BJP

does". AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi, on Thursday said that "in 2003 too, she had called the RSS 'patriots', (and) in turn the RSS had called her Durga".

The RSS, instead of commenting on her left-handed praise, pointed to West Bengal's record of political violence and asked for corrective measures.

Parties slam West Bengal CM over her 'praise' for RSS

Twitter starts testing 'edit tweet' feature

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Twitter users may soon see some tweets with 'last edited' label as the company began testing the 'edit tweet' feature – the most requested feature till now, internally. Twitter will also soon expand the test base for the feature to the subscribers of its paid monthly subscription Twitter Blue.

"It's true: edit tweet is being tested by our team internally," the company said in a blog post.

The edit feature will allow users to make changes

to their tweet after it has been published. "Think of it as a short period of time to do things like fix typos, add missed tags, and more," Twitter explained.

For the testing, users will be able to edit tweets a few times within 30 minutes following their publication.

The edited tweets will appear with an icon, time stamp, and label so it is clear to readers that the original tweet has been modified. Tapping the label will take viewers to the tweet's edit history, which includes past versions of the tweet.

State liable to pay aid for liquor deaths: HC

Court was hearing plea by kin of men who died after drinking spurious liquor

ISHITA MISHRA
NEW DELHI

The State has complete control over liquor sale and is hence liable to pay compensation to the kin of those who lost their lives or vision after alcohol poisoning, the Allahabad High Court has said.

The court was on Wednesday hearing a petition filed by the families of those who died after consuming spurious liquor in Azamgarh in 2021.

Jai Prakash Mishra, counsel for the petitioners, told the court that all the con-

sumers had bought liquor from licensed retail vend country liquor shops, which sold it as branded liquor. The police chargesheet said the licensed vendors and certain other persons were involved in the manufacture and sale of spurious liquor.

"Thus *prima facie*, the State government, having complete control and regulation to manufacture and sale of liquor under the U.P. Excise Act, 1910 and Rules framed thereunder; is also liable to pay specified amount to the sufferer or successors of the deceased,"

it said. The court asked the State to pay the compensation under provisions of the Mukhya Mantri Kisan Evam Sarvhit Bima Yojna, which provides for compensation on account of death or permanent disability due to poison, etc.

11 petitioners

Among the 11 petitioners in the case, nine are the widows of the men who died after drinking the brew and one is the son of a victim. The last petitioner lost his vision after consuming alcohol.

The court observed that from the records of the writ petition, it appeared that most of the petitioners were unlettered and belonged to the weaker sections of society.

Rani Sonkar, wife of deceased Pappu Soknak, told *The Hindu* that she was struggling to earn after the death of her husband. She has three children, all under five years of age.

"Though my husband had brought the liquor from a government licensed shop, I was denied of any compensation for my loss," she said.

Tech innovations for accessibility awarded

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Puri on Thursday gave away awards to the winners of the Smart Solutions Challenge and Inclusive Cities Awards, 2022.

The Belagavi Smart City's system for those with disabilities to access education and healthcare was awarded the top prize in the category of implemented solutions.

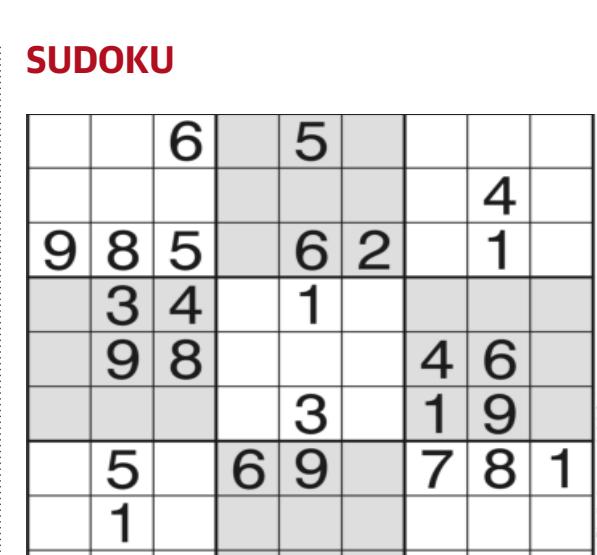
The awards were an initiative of the National Institute of Urban Affairs and the United Nations in India for

addressing the city-level challenges of accessibility and the inclusion for persons with disabilities, women, girls and senior citizens, a statement said.

"I am thoroughly impressed at the creative capacity of the innovative solutions as well as their potential to change lives of persons with disabilities, women and older persons," Mr. Puri said.

The challenge, which was launched in April, received over 100 entries, of which the top 10 were identified as winners, the statement said.

SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★★

Solution to puzzle 13649

P	R	E	S	T	I	D	G	O	T	R	U	U	A	R	W	O	H	H	U
U	S	A	T	I	E	N	O	S	E	L	F	U	S	A	T	I	E	N	O
H	I	D	E	F	O	P	T	R	E	G	O	F	H	I	D	E	F	O	P
T	I	N	G	E	B	L	A	T	R	E	G	O	H	T	I	N	G	E	B
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9	8	5	6	2	1	4	3	7	5	9	6	7	2	8	1	5	3	9	4
3	4	1	6	7	8	9	2	5	3	1	9	8	4	6	5	7	6	8	0
9	8	4	3	2	1	6	5	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0

UN accuses China of Uighur rights abuses

China denounces the HRC report as a 'patchwork of false information cooked up' by Western nations

ASSOCIATED PRESS

GENEVA

The UN accused China of serious human rights violations that may amount to "crimes against humanity" in a report examining a crackdown on Uighurs and other ethnic groups. Beijing on Thursday denounced the assessment as a fabrication cooked up by Western nations.

Human rights groups have accused China of sweeping a million or more people from the minority groups into detention camps, where many have said they were tortured, sexually assaulted, and forced to abandon their language and religion. The camps were just one part of what the rights organisations have called a ruthless campaign against extremism in the far western province of



Call for probe: The entrance of the Urumqi No. 3 detention centre in Dabancheng in Xinjiang, in this file picture. ■ AP

Xinjiang that also included draconian birth control policies and restrictions on people's movement.

The assessment from the Geneva-based UN Human Rights Council (HRC) largely corroborated earlier reporting by researchers, advocacy

groups and the news media, and it added the weight of the world body to the conclusions.

Still, among Uighurs who have fled overseas, there was a palpable sense of relief that the report had finally seen the light of day.

"The report is pretty damning, and a strong indictment on China's crimes against humanity," said Rayhan Asat, a Uighur lawyer, whose brother is imprisoned in Xinjiang. "For years, the Chinese government has said the Uighurs are terrorists. Now, we can point to them and say, you're the terrorists."

Report welcomed

Human rights groups, Japan and Germany quickly welcomed the report.

The assessment concluded that China has committed serious human rights violations under its anti-terrorism and anti-extremism policies and calls for "urgent attention" from the UN, the world community and China itself to address them.

Human rights groups re-

newed calls for the UN rights body, which meets next month, to set up an independent body to investigate the allegations. But China showed no sign of backing off its denials.

"The assessment is a patchwork of false information that serves as political tools for the U.S. and other Western countries to strategically use Xinjiang to contain China," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said. "It again shows that the UN Human Rights Office has been reduced to an enforcer and accomplice of the U.S. and other Western nations."

In a sign of China's fury, it issued a 122-page rebuttal, entitled "Fight against Terrorism and Extremism in Xinjiang: Truth and Facts," that was posted by the UN along with the report.

Rishi Sunak, Liz Truss make final pitches to Tory voters

Conservative Party members can vote until 5 p.m. today

SIRIRAM LAKSHMAN

LONDON

As the window closes for Conservative Party members to vote for their new leader and the country's Prime Minister, the candidates, former Chancellor Rishi Sunak and Foreign Secretary Liz Truss, made their final pitches to voting members at a packed Wembley Arena in London on Wednesday.



Rishi Sunak and Liz Truss at the leadership hustings in London. ■ GETTY IMAGES

power, fracking in areas that support it, more oil and gas from the North Sea.

Quizzed on foreign policy on Wednesday, including about the U.K.-U.S. relationship, Ms. Truss declined to say whether former U.S. President Donald Trump was a "friend or foe". Last week, she had said that the "jury's out" on whether Emmanuel Macron, President of France, one of the U.K.'s closest partners, was a friend or foe.

"That's not commenting, as far as I can say," she said on Wednesday, defending her remark about Mr. Macron.

Mr. Sunak's flagship policy is to immediately tackle inflation, and on Friday he claimed inflation, which is over 10% now, would decrease faster under his plan than under any of the alternatives.

He has opposed more borrowing to cut taxes, saying the idea is not "conservative", and investors should not lose confidence in the U.K.

Ms. Truss promised she would not introduce new taxes, would simplify the tax code and reverse the Johnson administration's national insurance hike and place a moratorium on 'green levies' on energy bills.

Ms. Truss also said she would focus on the supply side of energy (including suggesting the use of more nuclear

was she could work with them.

Ms. Truss had been sceptical about the 'special relationship' with the U.S. according to a report published on August 29 in *The Financial Times*.

Speaking to reporters during a virtual briefing on Wednesday, the White House National Security Council strategic communications coordinator, John Kirby, said the bilateral relationship with the U.K. would remain special and that the U.S. looks forward to working with whoever the next Prime Minister is.

On Chinese President Xi Jinping, Ms. Truss said she would not use the word "foe" but said that she is "concerned about China's assertiveness" and was working with allies in the G7 (group of seven advanced economies) to avoid becoming strategically dependent on China. In the context of a question on Israel's safety, Ms. Truss said the top priority was to stop Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon.

Mr. Sunak's segment did not involve an extensive discussion on foreign policy. In the context of migration, he referred to his plan to make trade, visas, and financial assistance to countries contingent on them taking back asylum seekers to the U.K., whose claims had failed. He also said he would get the agreement with Rwanda, to take asylum seekers, on track. In June, the European Court of Human Rights intervened to stop the first deportation flight to Rwanda from leaving the U.K.

No state funeral for Mikhail Gorbachev

Putin pays tribute to former Soviet leader, but will stay away from his interment

REUTERS

MOSCOW

Russian President Vladimir Putin is to miss the funeral of the last Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, denying the man who failed to prevent the collapse of the Soviet empire the full state honours granted to Boris Yeltsin.

Gorbachev, idolised in the West for allowing eastern Europe to escape Soviet communist control but unloved at home for the chaos that his "perestroika" reforms unleashed, will be buried on Saturday after a public ceremony in Moscow's Hall of Columns.



Mikhail Gorbachev

The grand hall, within sight of the Kremlin, hosted the funerals of Vladimir Lenin, Josef Stalin and Leonid Brezhnev. Gorbachev will be given a military guard of honour – but his funeral will

not be a state one.

State television on Thursday showed Mr. Putin paying tributes by placing red roses beside Gorbachev's coffin – left open as is the tradition – in Moscow's Central Clinical Hospital, where he died on Tuesday aged 91.

Mr. Putin made a sign of the cross in Russian Orthodox fashion before briefly touching the edge of the coffin. "Unfortunately, the president's work schedule will not allow him to do this on Sept. 3, so he decided to do it today," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

He said Gorbachev's cere-

mony would have "elements" of a state funeral, and that the state was helping to organise it.

Nevertheless, it will be a marked contrast to the funeral of Yeltsin, who was instrumental in sidelining Gorbachev as the Soviet Union fell apart and hand-picked Putin, a career KGB intelligence officer, as the man most suited to succeed him.

When Yeltsin died in 2007, Mr. Putin declared a national day of mourning and, alongside world leaders, attended a grand state funeral in Moscow's Cathedral of Christ the Saviour.

Poland seeks German war reparations

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

WARSAW

Poland estimated its Second World War losses caused by Germany at \$1.32 trillion, the leader of the country's ruling nationalists said on Thursday. Jaroslaw Kaczynski said Warsaw would officially demand reparations.

Poland's biggest trade partner and a fellow member of the EU, Germany has previously said all financial claims linked to the war have been settled. Poland's new estimate tops the \$850 billion estimate by a ruling party lawmaker from 2019.

Taiwan shoots down drone over outpost

ASSOCIATED PRESS

TAIPEI

Taiwan's military said it shot down a drone hovering over one of its island outposts just off the Chinese coast on Thursday amid a spike in tensions with Beijing.

The Kinmen Defence Command said the drone entered restricted airspace over Shyu island.

Flares and warning shots were fired but the drone maintained its position and was shot down, it said in a statement.

It described the drone as being for "civilian use", but did not specify if it had been recovered or what weapon was used to bring it down. On Wednesday, Taiwan said it warned off drones hovering over three of the islands it occupies off the coast of the Chinese port city of Xiamen.

Tensions between both sides have been high since China fired missiles into the Taiwan Strait and mobilised ships and warplanes following U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's Taiwan visit last month.

UN inspectors arrive at Ukraine nuclear plant amid shelling

ASSOCIATED PRESS

KYIV

A UN inspection team arrived at Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant on Thursday on a mission to safeguard it from catastrophe, reaching the site amid heavy shelling that prompted the shutdown of one reactor and underscored the urgency and danger of the task.

The 14-member team from the International Atomic Energy Agency reached Europe's biggest nuclear plant in a convoy of SUVs and vans, after months of negotiations to get in-

side the complex and take steps to prevent a disaster on the continent. The inspectors were led by IAEA director Rafael Grossi.

Energoatom, Ukraine's state nuclear power company, said Russian mortar shelling had led to the shutdown of one of its reactors by its emergency protection system and had damaged a backup power supply line used for in-house needs.

"There has been increased military activity, including this morning until very recently," Mr. Grossi said during the journey.

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH BIHAR
SH-7, Gaya-Panchnpur Road, Gaya-824236, Bihar

Ph.D. ADMISSION NOTIFICATION 2022-23

CUSB invites online application for admission in 26 Ph.D. Programmes. Commencement of Online Application/fee payment : 01.09.2022 Closing of Online Application/fee payment : 21.09.2022 For other details, visit University website Controller of Examinations

HIGH COURT OF JHARKHAND, RANCHI NOTICE

Quotations are invited from recruitment agencies for conducting the entire process of recruitment for the post of Personal Assistant of this Court. Details of work to be performed by the Agency, is available on the Official website of the High Court of Jharkhand, Ranchi i.e. www.jharkhandhighcourt.nic.in, under the heading - "Tender". Closing Date: 15.09.2022 Dated: 31.08.2022 Sd/- Registrar General

GOVERNMENT OF HIMACHAL PRADESH

HIMACHAL PRADESH STATE ROADS TRANSFORMATION PROJECT (HPSRTP)

Request for Expression of Interest Proposal

Name of Project: Himachal Pradesh State Roads Transformation Project (HPSRTP)

Loan No./Credit No. : 9066-1N

Grant No. :

Date : August 31, 2022

The Director (Projects)-cum-CE, H.P. State Roads Transformation Project, HPRIDCL, Nigam Vihar, Shimla-171002, Himachal Pradesh India invites the Request for Expression of Interest(EoI)-cum-Request for proposal from national consultants for the consultancy services as detailed in the table below:-

Sr. No.	Description of the Consultancy Services	Date of availability of Expression of Interest(EoI) on HPRIDCL web site	Last date/Time for submission of Proposals
1.	'Selection of Senior Bioengineering Expert for World Bank Funded Himachal Pradesh State Roads Transformation Project (HPSRTP);	September 05, 2022	September 30, 2022

EoI & ToR will be available on the official web site of HPRIDCL under link <http://himachalservices.nic.in/hpridcl/HPSRTP.html>.

Note: - Any further addendum/Corrigendum to this Request for Expression of Interest (REoI)-cum-Request for proposal documents shall be available to all interesting firms on the same web site link. Proposal must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by post) by September 30, 2022 at 15:00 hours (IST)

Director (Projects)-cum-CE, HPSRTP, HPRIDCL, Nigam Vihar, Shimla-171002

HP / 0428/2022-2023

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Sr. No.	Description of the Consultancy Services	Date of availability of Expression of Interest (EoI) on HPRIDCL web site	Last date/Time for submission of Proposals
1.	Consultancy Services for Procurement of Bioengineering Solutions Manual for the State of Himachal Pradesh under Himachal Pradesh State Roads Transformation Project (HPSRTP)	September 02, 2022	September 27, 2022

EoI & ToR will be available on the official web site of HPRIDCL under link <http://himachalservices.nic.in/hpridcl/HPSRTP.html>.

Note: - Any further addendum/Corrigendum to this Request for Expression of Interest (REoI)-cum-Request for proposal documents shall be available to all interesting firms on the same web site link. Proposal must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by post) by September 27, 2022 at 15:00 hours (IST)

Director (Projects)-cum-CE, HPSRTP, HPRIDCL, Nigam Vihar, Shimla-171002

HP / 0427/2022-2023

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Loan No./Credit No. : 9066-1N

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HP / 0427/2022-2023

GOVERNMENT OF HIMACHAL PRADESH

HIMACHAL PRADESH STATE ROADS TRANSFORMATION PROJECT (HPSRTP)

Request for Expression of Interest Proposal

Name of Project: Himach

MARKET WATCH

	PRICE	CHANGE
Sensex	58,767	-1.29
US Dollar	79.56	-0.05
Gold	50,723	-1.44
Brent oil	91.62	-

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Ports	837.80	-4.35
Apollo Hosp	4277.15	-45.75
Asian Paints	3446.55	54.95
Axis Bank	744.15	-7.35
Bajaj Auto	4076.30	-8.55
Bajaj Finance	17406.40	444.25
Bharti Airtel	7181.30	-124.95
BPCL	331.35	2.70
Britannia Ind	3718.15	-29.60
Cipla	1023.00	-15.45
Coal India	230.30	-4.50
Divis Labs	3599.20	-27.65
Dr Reddys Lab	4202.10	-42.95
Eicher Motors	3411.60	52.85
Grasim Ind	1685.00	6.35
HCL Tech	926.05	-12.90
HDFC	2404.20	-42.20
HDFC Bank	1472.15	-13.95
HDFC Life	575.60	0.40
Hero MotoCorp	2876.65	38.95
Hindalco	421.95	-17.05
Hind Unilever	2606.00	-53.85
ICICI Bank	874.35	-12.95
IndusInd Bank	1111.40	3.95
Infosys	1464.20	-28.75
ITC	317.60	-2.90
JSW Steel	661.60	-5.30
Kotak Bank	1902.85	-12.60
L&T	1912.95	-9.55
M&M	1312.05	3.35
Maruti Suzuki	9024.50	-57.75
Nestle India Ltd.	19732.95	-192.90
NTPC	160.70	-3.30
ONGC	134.70	-3.90
PowerGrid Corp	226.10	-3.50
Reliance Ind	2560.40	-77.55
SBI Life	1296.55	-32.55
State Bank	533.30	2.05
Shree Cement	21586.15	-486.95
Sun Pharma	871.85	-21.20
Tata Consumer Products Ltd.	838.40	28.75
Tata Motors	466.90	-4.20
Tata Steel	106.40	-1.90
TCS	3131.70	-79.45
Tech Mahindra	1052.90	-23.20
Titan	2622.00	17.35
UltraTech Cement	6632.50	-45.35
UPL	756.45	-12.80
Wipro	410.45	-3.10

EXCHANGE RATES

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	79.36	79.68
Euro	79.48	79.80
British Pound	91.80	92.17
Japanese Yen (100)	56.96	57.19
Chinese Yuan	11.50	11.55
Swiss Franc	81.09	81.43
Singapore Dollar	56.70	56.94
Australian Dollar	60.25	60.49
Malaysian Ringgit	17.70	17.79
Australian Dollar	54.10	54.32

Source: Indian Bank

IN BRIEF



Amazon Pay Smart Stores eyes expansion
COIMBATORE
Amazon Pay Smart Stores plans to include more product categories and expand geographically. "We started with electronics and appliances and have got into apparel and fashion now," said Girish Krishnan, Director, Rewards and Merchant Services, Amazon Pay India. "We are also experimenting with grocery," he added.

TVS Motor, Indian Bank, ALL scale 52-week high
CHENNAI
TVS Motor, Ashok Leyland (ALL), Rane Holdings and Indian Bank scaled 52-week highs on the bourses on Thursday. TVS Motor closed the day at ₹1,015.05, a gain of ₹29.35, or 2.98%. ALL shares touched the ₹163.45 mark, ending at ₹162.80, a gain of ₹8.8, or 5.71%. Rane Holdings' scrips touched ₹898.15, closing at ₹873.15, a gain of ₹22.10, or 2.6%. Indian Bank shares touched ₹197.70, settling at ₹193.60.

Greentech to operate Enel Green wind turbines
CHENNAI
Coimbatore-based Greentech said it had entered into a contract with Enel Green Power for operation and maintenance of wind turbines installed and commissioned by the latter in Gujarat. The contract is for a period of three years. The 150-MW capacity wind farm comprises 100 Suzlon 582-1,500 KW wind turbines. Greentech, founded in 2007, began operations with a fleet of less than one megawatt.

Sony-Zee merger can hurt competition: CCI
NEW DELHI
A merger between the Indian unit of Japan's Sony and Zee Entertainment to create a \$10 billion TV enterprise will potentially hurt competition by having "unparalleled bargaining power", the Competition Commission of India found in an initial review, according to a notice seen by Reuters. The CCI's Aug. 3 notice to the two firms stated the watchdog was of the view that further probe was merited. REUTERS

August auto wholesales witness growth ahead of festival season

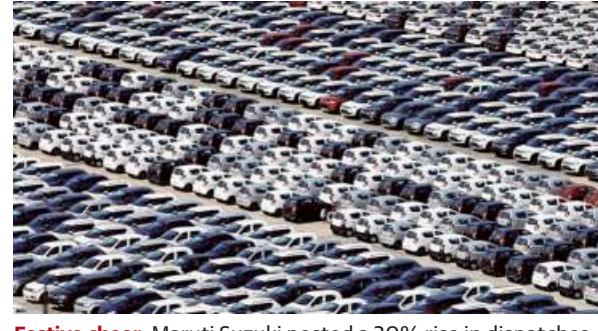
Maruti Suzuki's sales rise 30%, Tata Motors' climb 68% as chip crunch eases

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Automobile makers such as Maruti Suzuki, Tata Motors, Mahindra & Mahindra and Kia saw strong growth in vehicle dispatches to dealers in August, ahead of the festival season, as better semiconductor availability helped boost production.

Maruti Suzuki posted a 30% rise in wholesales in August to 1,34,166 units. "The shortage of electronic components had a minor impact on the production of vehicles, mainly in domestic models," said Shashank Srivastava, senior ED, (Marketing & Sales). In the three months to August, "the cumulative



Festive cheer: Maruti Suzuki posted a 30% rise in dispatches to dealers in August to 1,34,166 units. ■ REUTERS

sales figure is 9,92,000 which is the highest-ever, three-month cumulative figure for the industry. So, the demand continues to be strong" and supply also improved, he added. MSIL cur-

rently has an order backlog of 3.7 lakh units, he said.

Hyundai Motor India said wholesales grew 6% to 49,510 units. Tata Motors' domestic passenger vehicle (PV) sales

climbed 68% to 47,166 units last month, while Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) reported an 87% jump in domestic PV sales to 29,852 units.

Veejay Nakra, president, Automotive Division, M&M, said, "[In] August... we registered the highest-ever SUV volume." M&M sold 26,285 commercial vehicles compared with 11,432 units a year earlier.

TVS Motor Co. saw 33% growth in domestic two-wheeler sales to 2,39,325 units in August. "With positive market sentiment and the upcoming festive season, the company is optimistic about the demand," the company said in a statement.

SBI cuts FY23 growth forecast to 6.8% as Q1 data disappoints

Goldman, Moody's also reduce estimates for fiscal year

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA/REUTERS

MUMBAI/NEW DELHI

State Bank of India (SBI), Moody's Investors Service and Goldman Sachs have revised downward their annual growth forecasts.

While SBI revised its GDP growth estimate to 6.8% from 7.5%, citing the way below GDP numbers for the first quarter, Moody's forecast 7.7% growth, against 8.8%. It cited rising interest rates, uneven monsoon and slowing global growth.

The National Statistical Office on Wednesday released the Q1 GDP numbers which showed growth of 13.5%, pulled down by a poor show of the manufac-

Morgan Stanley sees 40 bps downside risk to growth estimate

turing sector, which logged a 4.8% expansion in the first three months of FY23.

Goldman Sachs lowered the current fiscal year estimates by 20 basis points from 7.2%.

"We are now revising our annual GDP growth for FY23 to 6.8%, mostly due to a statistical adjustments, but growth is likely to show an increasing momentum in the second half," SBI group chief economic adviser Soumya Kanti Ghosh said.

"Our expectation that real GDP growth will slow from

8.3% in 2021 to 7.7% in 2022 and decelerate further to 5.2% in 2023 assumes rising rates, uneven distribution of monsoon, and slowing global growth will dampen economic momentum sequentially," Moody's said.

"Despite the main drivers of domestic demand coming in line with our expectations, a large drawdown in inventories and statistical discrepancies came as a surprise," said Santanu Sengupta, India economist at Goldman Sachs.

Separately, Morgan Stanley's India economist Upasana Chachra said there was a 40 basis points downside risk to its FY23 growth estimate of 7.2%.

Stake sale to Adani needs I-T nod: NDTV

REUTERS

MUMBAI

New Delhi Television Ltd. said a major stake sale by its founders to Adani group would require clearance from India's tax authorities, adding another hurdle to the conglomerate's bid to take control of the popular news network.

The Income Tax Department in 2017 provisionally barred the founders - Pranoy and Radhika Roy - from selling a part of their stake as part of a reassessment of their taxes, NDTV said in an exchange filing late on Wednesday.

NDTV and Adani have locked horns in public after the conglomerate, run by Gautam Adani, last week unveiled plans to control a majority stake in the news network seen as bastion of independent media.

MM Forgings to invest ₹225 crore for EV foray

Firm acquires EV power train start-up

N. ANAND

CHENNAI

MM Forgings Ltd. will invest ₹225 crore over the next few years for foraying into electric vehicles (EVs), said Vidyashankar Krishnan, Vice-Chairman and MD.

"We are making a foray into EVs as part of our transformation strategy to become a leading player in this segment, which offers a huge opportunity," he said in an interview.

As part of the plan, MMF announced the acquisition of 88% stake in the city-based EV power train start-up Abhinav Rizel Pvt. Ltd. for an undisclosed sum and also the setting up of Suvarchas Vidyal Pvt. Ltd., a subsidiary with an authorised share capital of ₹5 crore.

Stating that the market size of EV power trains in In-

dia would touch ₹1 lakh crore over the medium-term, he said that Abhinav Rizel already had eight patents with 10 more under filing for EV motor and powertrain technologies covering two-three and four wheelers and commercial vehicles.

"We will invest ₹200 crore in the new plant that will come up in Oragadam to make traction motors for EVs and auxiliary motors for heavy vehicles," he said.

U.S.'s AI chip export ban may hit China tech units

Supply chain may be disrupted: Beijing

REUTERS

SHANGHAI

A U.S. order to ban exports of some advanced chips to China is likely to hit almost any major tech company running public clouds or advanced artificial intelligence (AI) training modules in the country, experts said.

Chip designer Nvidia Corp. said that U.S. officials told it to stop exporting two top computing chips for AI work to China.

Advanced Micro Devices also said it had received new licence requirements that will stop its advanced AI chip called MI250 from being exported to China.

Shu Jueting, a Chinese Commerce Ministry spokesperson, said that Beijing opposes the measures, saying they undermine the rights

of Chinese companies and threaten to disrupt global supply chains.

"We're going from blocking certain U.S. companies from supplying to a certain company, as was the case with Huawei, to banning certain U.S. products from selling to China period," said Jay Goldberg, CEO of D2D Advisory. Market

watchers say the ban may hit a swathe of Chinese tech firms such as Alibaba Group Holding Ltd. and Huawei Technologies Co. Ltd.

Cooking gas LPG sales were 5% higher year-on-year at 2.44 million tonnes in August, according to industry data.

PMI flags fastest manufacturing output growth since November

Easing inflation fears lift sentiment to 6-year high: S&P Global

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Manufacturers reported the fastest rise in output and new orders in August since November, aided by strengthening demand and a spike in export orders, as per the survey-based S&P Global India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI).

The seasonally adjusted index eased to 56.2 in August, from July's 56.4, signalling the second-strongest improvement in operating conditions for producers a year earlier.

TVS Motor Co. saw 33% growth in domestic two-wheeler sales to 2,39,325 units in August. "With positive market sentiment and the upcoming festive season, the company is optimistic about the demand," the company said in a statement.

Hyundai Motor India said wholesales grew 6% to 49,510 units.

aluminium and steel cooled, but firms continued to pass on

Suryakumar dazzles as dominant India makes it to Super 4

Circumspect Kohli comes good with an unbeaten half-century in Men in Blue's 40-run win over Hong Kong; Jadeja and Chahal deliver miserly spells

ASIA CUP

ASHWIN ACHAL

DUBAI

India finished its Asia Cup Group 'A' campaign with an easy 40-run win over Hong Kong at Dubai International Cricket Stadium here on Wednesday. With two wins in as many matches, India qualified for the Super 4.

India set Hong Kong a massive target of 193, which proved to be too high a mountain to climb. Hong Kong managed to bat out the full 20 overs, but failed to mount a serious challenge.

With the game in the bag, the crowd got a buzz when part-timer Virat Kohli came on to bowl in the 17th over. Speedsters Avesh Khan and Arshdeep Singh had horror outings, conceding 53 and 44 runs respectively in their four overs.

After being put in to bat, India overcame a slow start to post a good score. Surya-

kumar Yadav (68 n.o., 26b, 6x4, 6x6) turned on the jets when the run-rate needed a boost. Suryakumar went berserk in the last over, bowled by Haroon Arshad, smacking the pacer for four sixes.

Suryakumar's pyrotechnics helped India rack up 54 runs in the last three overs, which effectively put the total beyond Hong Kong's reach.

Cautious to a fault

K.L. Rahul (36, 39b, 2x6) and Kohli (59 n.o., 44b, 1x4, 3x6) were cautious to a fault. Rahal looked terribly out of sorts, failing to find get the ball off the square.

Kohli fared a little better, but he was by no means electric. Most surprisingly, Rahul and Kohli showed no attacking intent, preferring instead to poke around for singles. India ambled along to 44 for one at the end of the PowerPlay, and 70 for one when

SCOREBOARD

INDIA

K.L. Rahul c McKechnie b Ghazanfar 36 (39b, 2x6), Rohit Sharma c Aliaz b Ayush 21 (13b, 2x4, 1x6), Virat Kohli (not out) 59 (44b, 1x4, 3x6), Suryakumar Yadav (not out) 68 (26b, 6x4, 6x6); Extras (b-1, w-5, nb-2): 8; Total (for two wkts. in 20 overs): 192.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-38 (Rohit, 4.5 overs), 2-94 (Rahul, 12.6).

HONG KONG BOWLING

Arshad 3-0-53-0, Ayush 4-0-29-1, Ehsan 4-0-26-0, Aliaz 3-0-37-0, Yasim 4-0-27-0, Ghazanfar 2-0-19-1.

HONG KONG

Nizakat Khan run out 10 (12b, 1x4), Yasim Murtaza c Avesh b Arshdeep 9 (9b, 2x4), Babar Hayat c Avesh b Jadeja 41 (35b, 3x4, 2x6), Kinchit Shah c sub (Bishnoi) b Bhuvneshwar 30 (28b, 2x4, 1x6), Aizaz Khan b

drinks was called after 10 overs.

Rohit Sharma (21, 13b, 2x4, 1x6) was deceived by

Avesh 14 (13b, 2x4), Zeeshan Ali (not out) 26 (17b, 2x4, 1x6), Scott McKechnie (not out) 16 (8b, 2x4, 1x6); Extras (lb-1, w-3, nb-2): 6; Total (for five wkts. in 20 overs): 152.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-12 (Yasim, 1.6), 2-51 (Nizakat, 5.6), 3-74 (Hayat, 11.1), 4-105 (Aliaz, 14.5), 5-116 (Kinchip, 17.1).

INDIA BOWLING

Bhuvneshwar 3-0-15-1, Arshdeep 4-0-44-1, Jadeja 4-0-15-1, Avesh 4-0-53-1, Chahal 4-0-18-0, Kohli 1-0-6-0.

Toss:

Hong Kong.

MoM:

Suryakumar. India won by 40 runs.

TODAY'S MATCH GROUP A

Hong Kong vs. Pakistan
Sharjah, 7:30 p.m. IST



Scattering it around: Suryakumar's pyrotechnics powered India to a formidable total. ■AP

Suryakumar and Rahul: picture in contrast

Former reaps the reward for a bold approach while the latter cuts a sorry figure

ASHWIN ACHAL

DUBAI

It was just another day at the office for Suryakumar Yadav. His unbeaten 26-ball 68 against Hong Kong in the Asia Cup here on Wednesday reflected the attacking nature of Suryakumar's batting. This trait, crucially, comes naturally to him.

"I've been batting the same way for the last three or four years. I bat the same way in all situations," Suryakumar said in the post-match press conference.

Second nature
If going all guns blazing is second nature for Suryakumar, the same cannot be said of K.L. Rahul. The Karnataka batter cut a sorry figure in his 36, which came at less than run-a-ball. Rahul hesitated to even attempt the big hits, chancing his arm on just three occasions. The rest of his 39-ball knock contained a disconcerting number of dot balls and jabs.

Rahul certainly did not follow the team management's mantra of playing attacking cricket. Having been dismissed for a duck in the previous match against Pakistan, Rahul was perhaps being cautious in a bid to regain form. This does not serve the team's cause.

It did not help that Rahul was batting alongside Virat Kohli, who was similarly circumspect. The duo sucked



Overcautious: Rahul's passive play resulted in a lacklustre opening period for India. ■AP

the momentum out of the Indian innings, putting on 56 runs in 49 balls for the second wicket. In T20 cricket, there is no place for two sheet anchors, much less in the top order.

Things looked up for India when Rahul's tortured stint came to an end in the 13th over. The arrival of Suryakumar injected life into proceedings. He made his intentions clear early, sweeping

spinner Yasim Murtaza for fours off the first two deliveries he faced.

Heartwarming gesture

Suryakumar stated that he enjoyed batting with Kohli. "It was a heartwarming gesture [Kohli waiting for Suryakumar to lead him off the field]. I've never seen this before. I was wondering why Virat was not going forward. I told him that we will exit together. It was very enjoyable batting with him. Our plan was very clear. We knew exactly what to do," Suryakumar said.

The 31-year-old said that he was flexible to bat at any position. Asked if he was willing to open the batting with Rohit Sharma, Suryakumar said, "So you're saying that KL [Rahul] should not play (laughs).... I am flexible to bat at any number. I've told the coach and captain to send me at any number, as long as you keep me in the eleven."

After being put in to bat, Bangladesh rode on handy knocks from Mehidy Hasan (38, 26b, 2x4, 2x6), Afif Hossain (39, 22b, 4x4, 2x6) and Mosaddek Hossain (24 n.o., 9b, 4x4) to post 183 for seven.

Sri Lanka pips Bangladesh, enters playoffs

Kusal and Shanaka star in successful chase after spinner Theekshana's good spell

ASHWIN ACHAL

DUBAI

Sri Lanka sneaked past Bangladesh by two wickets in their Group B match of the Asia Cup to seal a Super 4 spot at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium here on Thursday. The loss sent Bangladesh out of the tournament.

Chasing 184, Sri Lanka required 34 runs off the last three overs. Bangladesh pacer Ebadot Hossain, making his T20I debut, conceded 17 runs in the 19th over to let the advantage slip. Kusal Mendis (60, 37b, 4x6, 3x6) and Dasun Shanaka (45, 33b, 3x4, 2x6) kept the Lankan chase on track.

Handy knocks

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In his element: Kusal's aggressive knock set the tone for Sri Lanka's reply. ■AP

Mosaddek came alive in the final over, bowled by Asitha Fernando, hitting the pacer for a six and two fours. The Bangladesh batters used

any pace on offer to play the paddle scoop. The Sri Lankans erred by keeping fine-leg inside the circle and spraying it down the leg.

Spinner Theekshana, brought into the attack in the second over, was the pick of the bowlers. Theekshana's spin and pace variations presented a puzzle, one which the Bangladesh batters struggled to solve. He cleaned up captain Shakib Al Hasan, who made room for an inside-out hit but missed the ball completely.

Fellow-spinner Wanindu Hasaranga picked up two wickets, but proved to be expensive. Fast bowler Fernando, making his T20I debut, went for 51 runs in his four overs.

Bangladesh was boosted by the presence of a sizeable contingent of its fans in the stadium.

The scores: Bangladesh 183/7 in 20 overs (Mehidy Hasan 31, Afif Hossain 39, Mahmudullah 27) lost to Sri Lanka 184/8 in 19.2 overs (Kusal Mendis 60, Dasun Shanaka 45, Ebadot Hossain 3/51); **Toss:** Sri Lanka; **MoM:** Kusal Mendis.

Carter, Mukesh shine on truncated first day



Incisive: Mukesh Kumar sent back three New Zealand-A batters. ■K. MURALI KUMAR

NZ-A IN INDIA

SPORTS BUREAU

Joe Carter and inclement weather frustrated the India-A bowlers on the opening day of the first cricket 'Test' at Bengaluru's M. Chinnaswamy Stadium on Thursday.

When the weather intervened and forced the players off the field shortly after tea, New Zealand-A, which chose to bat, was on 156 for five. Carter was batting on 73 (17ob, 10x4). There was no further action, as 29 overs were lost in the day.

The scores:

New Zealand-A: Chad Bowes c Ruturaj b Mukesh 5, Rachin Ravindra c Patidar b Nagawalla 12, Joe Carter (batting) 73, Mark Chapman c Abhimanyu b Dayal 15, Robert O'Donnell lbw b Mukesh 24, Cam Fletcher lbw b Mukesh 13, Sean Solia (batting) 1; Extras (b-1, lb-1, nb-10, w-1): 13; Total (for five wkts. in 61 overs): 156.

Fall of wickets: 1-10, 2-28, 3-51, 4-100, 5-149.

India-A bowling: Mukesh 13-4-34-3, Dayal 13-2-35-1, Nagawalla 13-2-34-1, Kuldeep 19-3-44-0, Tilak 3-0-7-0.

the visitors were reduced to 51 for three, but Carter and skipper Robert O'Donnell ensured there was no further hiccup till their team reached the 100-mark.

Mukesh, however, trapped O'Donnell to end the fourth-wicket stand, which was worth 49. Wicket-keeper Cam Fletcher also gave solid support to Carter.

The fifth-wicket partnership had also added 49 when Fletcher too fell lbw to Mukesh, whose fine effort yielded the impressive figures of three for 34 from 13 overs.

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LIVE TELECAST

BWF: Japan Open, Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Voot Select, 6.30 a.m.
Durand Cup: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Voot Select, 3 & 6 p.m.

Asia Cup: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 7.30 p.m.
Ultimate Kho Kho: Sony Ten 1, 3 (SD & HD) & LIV, 7.30 & 8.45 p.m.

US Open: Sony Ten 2, Six (SD & HD) & LIV, 8.30 p.m. onwards

Bundesliga: Sony Ten 1 (SD & HD) & LIV, 12 a.m. (Saturday)

La Liga: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Voot Select, 12.30 a.m. (Saturday)

JAPAN OPEN



Prannoy enters quarters

OSKA
H.S. Prannoy breezed into the quarterfinals with a stunning straight-game win over former World champion Loh Kean Yew of Singapore but it was curtains for K.

Srikanth at the Japan Open Super 750 badminton tournament here on Thursday.

The results (second round): H.S. Prannoy bt Loh Kean Yew (Sgp) 22-20, 21-19; Kanta Tsuneyama (Jpn) bt K. Srikanth 21-10, 21-16.

Australia seals ODI series

TOWNSVILLE
Mitchell Starc took three early wickets to help Australia restrict Zimbabwe to 96 and Steve Smith posted an unbeaten 47 as Australia won the second ODI by eight wickets on Wednesday to clinch the three-match series.

The scores: Zimbabwe 96 in 27.5 overs (Sean Williams 29, Mitchell Starc 3/24, Adam Zampa 3/21) lost to Australia 100/2 in 14.4 over (Steve Smith 47 n.o., Alex Carey 26 n.o.).

CSK franchise named Joburg Super Kings

CHENNAI
The Johannesburg-based franchise of Chennai Super Kings Cricket Limited (CSKCL) in the South Africa T20 (SA20) league has been named Joburg Super Kings. Faf du Plessis will lead the side, while Stephen Fleming will be the coach, it was announced on Thursday. PTI

David in Australia T20 WC squad

REUTERS
MELBOURNE
Singapore-born all-rounder Tim David has been named in Australia's Twenty20 World Cup squad. Cricket Australia said on Thursday.

The squad: Aaron Finch (Capt.), David Warner, Mitchell Marsh, Steven Smith, Glenn Maxwell, Marcus Stoinis, Matthew Wade, Tim David, Josh Inglis, Ashton Agar, Mitchell Starc, Pat Cummins, Adam Zampa, Josh Hazlewood, and Kane Richardson.

Delhi Half Marathon on Oct. 16

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI
The \$268,000 Vedanta Delhi Half Marathon will be run here on October 16.

After the pandemic forced the cancellation of the event in 2021, the 17th edition of the annual event will commence at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium.

Registrations for the race and the virtual races will start on Friday from 7 a.m. and end at midnight on October 11 at vedantadelhihalfmarathon.procain.in

The virtual race categories are half marathon, Open 10K and the Great Delhi Run (5 kms).

Athletes Anjali Bobby George, Avinash Sable, boxers Nikhat Zareen, Vijendra Singh, hockey player Sandeep Singh, cricketer Suresh Raina, triple-jumper Eldhose Paul, paralympian Sharad Kumar were present at the launch of the event on Thursday evening.

Chennaiyin routs TRAU for its first win

Kerala Blasters makes it to the quarterfinals; Jamshedpur signs off on a high

DURAND CUP

SPORTS BUREAU

Petar Sliskovic struck a brace as Chennaiyin FC (CFC) outplayed a 10-man TRAU 4-1 in a Group C match to earn its first win in the Durand Cup football tournament at the Khuman Lampak Stadium in Imphal on Thursday.

The towering Croatian forward Sliskovic scored in the first minute, one of the fastest goals in the tournament, to give Chennaiyin an early advantage. Chennaiyin's frontline kept pushing and earned a penalty in the 19th minute. Kwame Karikari unleashed a low powerful shot to make it 2-0.

TRAU put up a spirited effort before it was reduced to 10 men following a red card to forward Salami Johnson Singh in the 36th minute.

Still, it won a penalty in the dying minutes of the first half and skipper TRAU captain Komron Tursunov slotted home a beauty to make it 2-1.

Chennaiyin virtually took

the match away from the host as Vafa Hakhamaneshi headed in the third goal (51st minute) and Sliskovic scored through a superb header from a long pass into the box from the left within four minutes.

Easily done

Meanwhile on Wednesday, Kerala Blasters recorded a fine 2-0 win over Army Green in a Group D encounter to make it to the quarterfinals.

For Blasters, Muhammad Aimen opened the account in the 25th minute and Aritra Das doubled the lead in the injury time of the first half.

Special Correspondent reports from Kolkata

Jamshedpur FC concluded its campaign on a high as it got the better of Indian Air Force (IAF) 2-1 in an inconsequential Group A league match at the Kishore Bharati Stadium on Thursday.

The win saw Jamshedpur FC finishing third in the league table with six points while IAF finished last losing all its matches. Mohamedan Sporting (nine points

from three matches) and Bengaluru FC (seven from three) have already booked quarterfinal berths from the group.

ATK MB wins

Meanwhile, ATK Mohun Bagan rode on the early strikes from Lenny Rodrigues and Kiyan Nassiri to prevail over Indian Navy 2-0 in a Group B league match on Wednesday.

The 16-time champion, which completed its group league with seven points from four matches, has to wait for the result of the last group league match between Rajasthan United FC and Indian Navy on September 5, which will decide the final group standings.

The results: At Imphal: **Group C:** Chennaiyin FC 4 (Sliskovic 1, 55, Karikari 20+pen, Vafa 51) bt Trau 1 (Tursunov 45+pen).

Group D: Kerala Blasters 2 (Aimen 25, Aritra 45+3) bt Army Green 0.

At Kolkata: **Group A:** Jamshedpur 2 (Piyyush 26, Ruatmawia 84) bt IAF 1 (Somananda Singh 39).

Group B: ATK Mohun Bagan 2 (Lenny 18, Kiyan 28) bt Indian Navy 2.



Opening strike: Aimen, right, firing in Blasters' first goal against Army Green on Wednesday. ■ RITU RAJ KONWAR

ISL to kick-off in Kochi on October 7

It will have a new playoff format and be open to spectators

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

After being played entirely in Goa the last two years, the Hero Indian Super League will travel all over the country again in its ninth edition which opens in Kochi on October 7.

Kerala Blasters, last edition's runners-up, will take on SC East Bengal in the opener at the Nehru Stadium here. Defending champion Hyderabad FC will start its campaign at home against Mumbai City FC on October 9.

The ISL, in its original home and away format, will be open to spectators this time and most of the matches will be held between Thursdays and Sundays which will bring the event in line with the top global leagues.



New season beckons: Defending champion Hyderabad FC will start against Mumbai City FC on Oct. 9. ■ FOCUS SPORTS/ ISL

The Football Sports Development Limited (FSDL), the ISL's organiser, has also introduced a new playoff format for the league.

The top two teams at the end of the league stage will automatically make the semi-

finals. And teams finishing between the third and sixth spots will play a single-leg playoff to determine the other two semifinalists.

The 11-team ISL's league phase will run for five months, till the end of Febru-

ary 2023, and the playoffs, semifinals and final will be in March. After the ISL, the Super Cup will be played in April.

New playoff format:

Eliminator 1: 3rd placed team vs. 6th placed team; **Eliminator 2:** 4th placed team vs. 5th placed team.

Semifinal-1 First leg: 1st placed team vs. (winner of eliminator 2); **Semifinal-2 First leg:** 2nd placed team vs. (winner of eliminator 1).

Semifinal-1 Second leg: (winner of eliminator 2) vs. 1st placed team.

Semifinal-2 Second leg: (winner of eliminator 1) vs. 2nd placed team.

Final: Winner of Semifinal-1 vs. winner of Semifinal-2.

ISL key dates: Opener: October 7; Last league stage match week: February 23-26, 2023. Playoffs, semifinals and final: March 2023.

DELHI ROUND-UP

No sweat for LRAC

Priyanshu Sheryaar picked up three wickets while Arjun Singh and Ankur Kumar made half-centuries as Lala Ramcharan Aggrwal Club (LRAC) defeated Mishra Sports by 130 runs in the sixth Skillz Youth under-19 tournament.

The scores: LRAC 250 in 40 overs (Ankur Kumar 53, Arjun Singh 51, Priyanshu Sheryaar 41, Vishal Kumar 4/24, Anuj Shukla 3/23) bt Mishra Sports 120 in 32 overs (Priyanshu Sheryaar 3/21).

Five-wkt. win for Players Academy

Four wickets by Ansh Mendwal and three by Mayank Malhotra helped Players Academy beat Push Academy by five wickets in the Blasters Trophy tournament.

The scores: Push Academy 216 in 43 overs (Mayank 60, Abhishek Aggarwal 45, Ansh Mendwal 4/30, Mayank Malhotra 3/49) lost to Players Academy 217/5 in 27 overs

defeated Playfitz Sports Management by 46 runs to enter the final of the second AS Open tournament.

In another semifinal, Gyanti Academy beat York Club by eight wickets.

The scores: RCA 212/8 in 40 overs (Keshav Dabas 56, Gaurav Sabharwal 52) bt PSM 166 in 36 overs (Ayush Doseja 45, Vineet Dubey 38, Aditya Yadav 4/28, Kamal Singh Bhairwa 3/21).

York Club 158 in 39 overs (Akshay Singh 54, Vinod Kumar 35) lost to Gyanti Academy 159/2 in 29 overs (Samarth 60, Saksham Sharma 40, Eshan Arora 43).

Easy for Arabin Academy

Anurag made an unbeaten 59 as Arabin Academy scored a five-wicket win over Blue Star in the USC tournament.

The scores: Blue Star 143/7 in 40 overs lost to Arabin Academy 146/5 in 26 overs (Anurag 59 n.o., Siddharth 38).

RCA and Gyanti Academy to clash for title

Aditya Yadav picked up four wickets and Kamal Singh Bhairwa took three as Ravindra Cricket Academy

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Dhanya, Rihan shine

Dhanya Nakra's 65 runs and Rihan Khan's four wickets saw RKB Academy beat Ryan Academy by 60 runs in the Bhagwaan Parshuram under-17 tournament.

The scores: RKB 201/9 in 40 overs (Dhanya Nakra 65, Daksh Drall 3/19) bt Ryan 141 in 26.2 overs (Kirit Kaushik 72, Rihan Khan 4/35, Jatin Mukkadi 3/23).

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