



Two dead as Assam eviction turns violent; CM orders probe, police claim self-defence

Photographer hired by dist admn held; 9 policemen injured, one critical, says DGP

TORA AGARWALA
GUWAHATI, SEPTEMBER 23



A video grab shows the photographer jumping on protester

CLASHES BROKE out in Sipajhar in Assam's Darrang district Thursday as thousands protested against the government's ongoing eviction drive against "illegal encroachers", leaving at least two people dead and several injured on both sides. In one video that surfaced on social media, a protester armed with a lathi was shot at

from close quarters, and was later beaten up and jumped upon as he lay motionless on the ground.

Special DGP G P Singh confirmed the civilian deaths, adding that nine policemen were in-

jured. "One policeman is critical," he said. Darrang Superintendent of Police Susanta Biswa Sarma told *The Indian Express* that police "did what they had to do" in "self-defence".

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Police watching, hired cameraman stomps on protester they shot at

TORA AGARWALA
GUWAHATI, SEPTEMBER 23

A MAN dressed in a vest runs out towards a police party holding aloft a lathi. The policemen in riot gear almost immediately open fire, and as the protester falls to the ground, keep raining lathis on him. As a stain from a wound to his chest appears on his white vest, a man with a camera slung around his neck and a scarf half covering his face approaches him. Later identified



Bijoy Bania,
who was
arrested on
Thursday.
UNI

as Bijoy Bania, a photographer hired by the district administration to document the government eviction drive, he proceeds to jump on the protester, stomp on him, punch him — and return back to repeat the same — as

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Govt to SC: No caste census, conscious policy decision

Not feasible... many operational difficulties: Social Justice Ministry

ANANTHAKRISHNAN G
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 23

EFFECTIVELY RULING out a caste census in 2021, the Centre has told the Supreme Court that such an exercise "would not be feasible" and that "exclusion of information regarding any other caste", apart from SCs and STs, "from the purview of census is a conscious policy decision".

This was the key submission of the Ministry of Social Justice in an affidavit filed in the top court in response to a plea by the Maharashtra government seeking a direction to the Census Department to collect information on Backward Class of Citizens (BCC) in the 2021 enumeration.

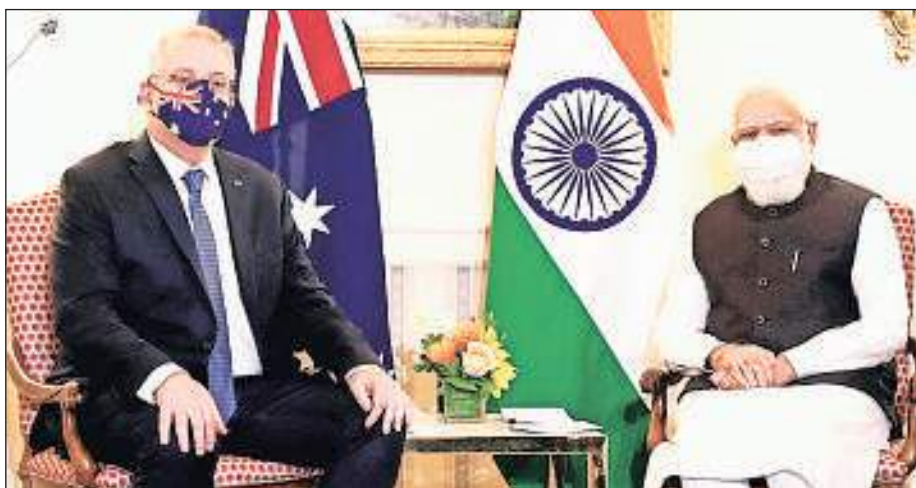
The Centre told the court that "a caste-wise enumeration in the Census has been given up as a matter of policy from 1951 onwards and thus castes other than

SCs and STs have not been enumerated in any of the Census since 1951 till today".

Its affidavit said that "while the preparation for the 1951 Census, the first after independence, was underway, the Government of India had decided on the policy of official discouragement of caste. It was decided that in general, no race/ caste/ tribe enquiries should be made and such enquiries should be restricted to the Scheduled Castes and Tribes notified by the President of India in pursuance of Articles 341 and 342 of the Constitution".

The Centre's submission in the apex court comes at a time when it is facing demands for a caste census from opposition parties, and even allies such as JD(U). On July 20, in a written reply to a question in Lok Sabha, Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai had

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison in Washington DC on Thursday. PTI

PM Modi kicks off US visit, discusses investment roadmap with top CEOs

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 23

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi started his US visit with a series of meetings with top executives of Qualcomm, Adobe, First Solar, General Atomics and Blackstone on Thursday.

He discussed investment opportunities in India's electronics

and telecommunications sectors with Cristiano Amon, CEO of Qualcomm. This included the recently launched Production Linked Incentive Scheme (PLI) for Electronics System Design and Manufacturing (ESDM), as well as developments in the semiconductor supply chain in India.

"Strategies for building the local innovation ecosystem in India were also discussed," an

MEA statement said.

Sources said Amon expressed enthusiasm about working with India on ambitious digital transformation programmes including in 5G and PM-WANI, among others.

Sources said Amon spoke about the "incredible opportunities" in India, and the size of the Indian market. "We also see

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ORDER BY NEXT WEEK: COURT

SC says will set up own expert panel to look into Pegasus charges

Petitioners had objected to Centre offer to form committee

ANANTHAKRISHNAN G
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 23

THE SUPREME Court Thursday said it is constituting a committee of technical experts to look into allegations of unauthorised surveillance using the Pegasus software developed by Israeli firm NSO Group, and that an order in this regard might be out by next week.

The observation by Chief Justice N V Ramana is significant given that the Centre had earlier submitted that it would set up an expert panel on its own to look into the allegations that phones of several people had been hacked into using the spyware, and had urged the court to allow this.

A three-judge Bench headed by the CJI had on September 13 reserved its order on a batch of petitions seeking a probe in the matter. On Thursday, Justice Ramana said the order was tak-

EXPLAINED
Panel tussle

THE SUPREME Court order is significant given that the government had urged it to let it form a committee of domain experts and, citing national security, said it would submit an affidavit on the matter to it. Neither has it clarified so far if Pegasus software was bought or used by it.

THE EDITORIAL PAGE

COURT IS WATCHING

SC move to set up a panel to probe Pegasus is a vital and welcome step. At stake are basic liberties

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ing time as some of the experts who the court had in mind to be part of the committee had declined to take the role citing personal difficulties.

"We will be able to finalise the members of the technical expert committee by next week and pronounce orders," the CJI told Senior Advocate C U Singh, one of the lawyers representing the petitioners.

The Centre has "unequivocally" denied all allegations regarding illegal surveillance. In a brief affidavit on August 15, it had told the Supreme Court that, nevertheless, "with a view to dispel any wrong narrative spread by certain vested interests and with an object of examining the issues raised", it would set up "a Committee of Experts in the field which will go into all aspects of the issue".

The petitioners however had pointed out that the Centre's affidavit did not disclose whether

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Suicide within 30 days of infection will count as Covid death: Centre to SC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 23

THE CENTRE on Thursday informed the Supreme Court that it has decided to include death by suicides happening within 30 days of a person testing Covid-19 positive too as Covid-19 death, thereby entitling their next of kin to get Rs 50,000 as ex-gratia.

In guidelines submitted earlier to court on what would constitute a Covid death, the government had said deaths occurring due to poisoning, suicide, homicide, accidents etc will not be treated as Covid-19 deaths, even

if the virus infection is an accompanying condition. The court had asked the government to reconsider this condition.

On Thursday, the top court conveyed its happiness to the government for fixing ex-gratia payments to the next of kin of those who succumbed to the pandemic.

"Today we are very happy. There will be some solace to the persons who have suffered. Everything the government is performing... We're happy that something is being done to wipe out the tears of those who suffered... We have to take judicial notice of the fact that what India has done, no other country could

do," remarked Justice M R Shah, sharing a bench with Justice A S Bopanna.

The remarks came as Solicitor General Tushar Mehta apprised the court that the NDMA had recommended payment of Rs 50,000 ex-gratia to the next of kin of those who died due to Covid-19. He also took the court through the guidelines brought out by the Authority to enable the payment. "To ensure uniformity, we have decided that states will give the amount to the kin of the deceased who died due to CoVID, from the State Disaster Relief Fund (SDRF)," he submitted.

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JHARKHAND SCHOLARSHIP FOR TRIBAL STUDENTS TO STUDY IN UK 'I worked as a coolie to study... never dreamt my daughter would go abroad'

ABHISHEK ANGAD
RANCHI, SEPTEMBER 23

■ Dinesh Bhagat, 31, worked for seven years at his father's stationery shop in Ranchi, using his spare time to apply for scholarships in universities abroad.

■ Hercules Singh Munda, son of an Assistant Conservator of Forest, grew up listening to stories of how his father sold goats to be able to get an education. Inspired by his father, after his B.Tech, he worked as a researcher at IIT Hyderabad.

■ Anjana Pratima Dungdung, 21, a political science graduate, counts her father, a Block Welfare Officer who worked as a construction labourer in his



The six tribal students will head to universities in England and Ireland for their higher studies. Express

early years, as her inspiration.

WHAT BINDS them -- together with Ajitesh Murmu, Akansha Mery and Priya Murmu -- are

their stories of struggle, along with a fierce determination to make the most of an opportunity that has opened up for them in

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Assam to Rajasthan: Over a year later, trafficked minor girl rescued

DEEP MUKHERJEE
JAIPUR, SEPTEMBER 23

IN JANUARY last year, the family of a minor girl, then 14, got an FIR filed in Assam's Dhubri district after she went missing.

More than a year later, in September, the girl was rescued from Rajasthan's Barmer district, near the westernmost tip of the country. Sold into an abusive marriage, she began the 2,500-km journey home Wednesday along with her father and Assam Police officers — and her one-year-old child.

A phone call to her brother, whose number she had memorised, helped her family discover

her location, reveals her statement to the Barmer Child Welfare Committee (CWC).

The girl's case is one of the thousands of instances of trafficking of women and children from North Eastern states such as Assam and Tripura to Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Delhi and Haryana, where they are also often used as bonded labourers, said Nirmal Gorana, convener of the National Campaign Committee for Eradication of Bonded Labour (NCCBBL).

It was Gorana who sent an email on September 13 to the Barmer SP, the Assam police, and authorities in the two states about the whereabouts of the

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EXPLAINED



FED STANCE & INDIA
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33 people, including two minors, rape 15-year-old in Thane for 8 months

VALLABH OZARKAR
MUMBAI, SEPTEMBER 23

A 15-YEAR-OLD schoolgirl has complained to police in Thane district that she was raped by 33 people including two minors at different places in Thane over the past eight months.

Police have arrested 24 youths and detained the two minor boys.

"We have arrested a total of 26 people including two minors. Twenty-four of them were produced in a local court. Twenty-two of them were remanded in police custody until September 29, and the two minors were sent to a juvenile home," Sachin Gunjal, deputy commissioner of

police (Zone 3), said.

Police are looking for the rest of the accused, Gunjal said. A special investigation team (SIT) headed by a woman officer of the rank of assistant commissioner of police has been constituted to probe the case.

According to police, the victim became friends with one of the accused minors on social media. He allegedly assaulted her sexually in January, and recorded the act on his mobile phone.

This video was used to blackmail the girl, who was then forced to meet with the other accused, who raped her on multiple occasions at various locations, police said.

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EXPRESS INVESTIGATION - PART 3

In Bihar's showpiece drinking water scheme, a tale of two wards



SANTOSH SINGH
SAMASTIPUR, MADHUBANI, SEPTEMBER 23

UNTIL TWO years ago, Kanchan Kumari used to stand in a queue outside her neighbour's borewell every morning, waiting to fill her quota of two buckets. It meant getting late often for college. Today, the Economics student has tap water at home,

and is able to spend most of her time on her BA final-year exams.

About 90 km away, Ramesh Mishra and his neighbour Kanhai Chandra Mishra point to the rust-tipped taps outside their homes and share a dry laugh. Four days after the taps were installed in April, the water supply stopped. And they are still waiting.

On one hand, the Bihar government's Har Ghar Nal Kal Jal scheme to provide drinking water to 1.08 lakh panchayat wards is a success, 95% complete in five years and changing lives for the better.

On the other hand, as The Indian Express investigation found, the scheme has been blighted by political patronage in awarding several contracts — from the family of BJP leader and

Deputy Chief Minister Tarkishore Prasad to those of senior JD(U) leaders such as ex-state secretary Anil Singh — and shoddy work in some villages.

At ward No.15 in Samastipur's Jhakhra, where Kanchan Kumari hails from, the scheme has brought relief to a village that was desperately dependent on a depleting ground water table, marred by frequent fights over water, and where women and children spent most of their time in water queues. "Our lives have changed with a twist of the tap," says Gayatri Devi, a local resident, with a bright smile.

But at ward No.5 in Madhubani's Simri, the taps are dry, and there is a glaring gap in implementation with no official



Har Ghar Nal Kal Jal in Jhakhra, Samastipur; a dry tap in Simri, Madhubani. Santosh Singh



DEPUTY CM
MEETS CM,
STATE BJP
SENDS REPORT,
PAGE 8

supervision. The tanks have been built, the pipes have been laid from the borewell, and the taps fixed — and yet there is no water. Because? The contractor has not yet provided an electric connection for the motor to

pump water from the borewell to the tanks. "The contractor is getting money for nothing," says Vishwajit Mishra, a farmer.

In this ward, *The Indian Express* investigation found, work under Har Ghar Nal Kal Jal is among a clutch of contracts awarded by the Public Health Engineering Department to Sunil Kumar Jha, the nephew of former PHED Minister and BJP MLA Vinod Narayan Jha. PHED implements a bulk of the work under the scheme, and awards multi-ward contracts of Rs Rs 30-57 lakh through a bidding process.

In Jhakhra's ward No.15, meanwhile, the work is being implemented by a local panchayat committee under the Panchayati Raj Department. Work under this department is

for single wards, and the project cost (for unfiltered water) is around Rs 15 lakh.

"Before we got Har Ghar Nal ka Jal, our ward in Jhakhra was badly affected with the water level receding to 125-150 feet — from 80-100 feet in case of good rains or floods in a year. The seasonal Jamuari and Balan rivers were also running dry until this monsoon," says Mahendra Mahto, an elderly resident.

"Most of us are small time farmers and daily wage earners, and only a few can afford submersible pumps...one set costs around Rs 1.2 lakh. Our entire panchayat used to depend on the affluent few with submersible pumps, drawing water from 300-400 feet," he says.

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West Bengal

‘Have to bring daughter back’: Kin of electrocuted girl refuse relief

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, SEPTEMBER 23

THE FAMILY of one of the two girls from South DumDum in the North 24 Parganas district, who died from electrocution on Wednesday night, refused the state's compensation offer on Thursday.

The victims, identified as 13-year-old Anushka Nandi from Bandhab Nagar Colony and 12-year-old Sneha Banik from the Motijheel area, were electrocuted after coming in contact with an electric pole, a portion of which was submerged in a waterlogged area.

The minors, both students of Class VI, were rushed to the state-run RG Kar Medical Hospital but were declared dead on arrival.

While Anushka inadvertently touched an electric pole while crossing a waterlogged street, Sneha, too, got electrocuted while trying to save her friend.

According to local sources, there has been extensive waterlogging in the area because of the overflowing Bagiola canal following persistent and heavy rainfall in the state over the last few days.

Senior Trinamool Congress MP Saugata Roy visited the bereaved families on Thursday and announced financial assistance

Anushka's mother refused to accept the Rs 2-lakh compensation amount, saying they were willing to pay Rs 4 lakh to the government instead, if it would bring her daughter back

of Rs 2 lakh each. However, Anushka's mother refused to accept the compensation amount, saying they were willing to pay Rs 4 lakh to the government instead, if it would bring her daughter back.

"We are ready to pay them Rs 4 lakh but they have to bring my daughter back. They were here to offer us money," a member of Anushka's family said.

From the morning, local Trinamool leaders kept visiting their house and ran into protests by neighbourhood residents.

"We will always stand in support of the victims' families. It is a huge loss for them in what is a very unfortunate incident," Roy said.

Kolkata mayor and state transport minister Firhad Hakim, said, "There has been unusually heavy rainfall. Kolkata and many adjoining areas are still sub-

merged. There are plans to clear the canals so that the rainwater can flow out quickly. This rainfall has broken the records of last several years. The government will support families of those who were electrocuted."

As a result of unrelenting rainfall, vast swathes of Kolkata and suburban areas have been inundated. At least 13 people have died across the state over last three days due to electrocution. Three people were electrocuted to death on Wednesday night and Thursday morning. While one of the victims was from Malda, the other two were from Belgharia and Agarpara in the North 24 Parganas.

Deepak Chowdhury (65) was electrocuted in Tarapur area of Agarpara on Wednesday night. In another incident, a worker at the Texmaco factory in Belgharia died from electrocution on Thursday morning. The deceased was identified as Sona Roy, 40.

The victim in Malda's Mothabari was identified as 60-year-old Siddique Sheikh. A huge police force had to be deployed in the area to defuse tension arising out of the incident. It was alleged that the elderly accidentally stepped on a live wire while wading through a waterlogged area.

Hostage case: Mahato named main accused

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, SEPTEMBER 30

THE NATIONAL Investigation Agency (NIA) has named TMC leader and former Maoist Chhatradhar Mahato as the main accused in its chargesheet in the Rajdhani Express hostage case. The chargesheet was filed before an NIA special court.

According to sources in the agency, the NIA has named 13 people in the chargesheet. Apart from Chhatradhar, the names of his brother Shashadhar Mahato and former Maoist commander Kishaji also feature in the chargesheet.

Sources in the NIA further said to free himself from jail, Chhatradhar planned to take the Rajdhani passengers hostage. The People's Committee Against Police Atrocities (PCAPA), a Maoist front that he founded, executed the plan with the help of



Besides Chhatradhar, his brother is also named in chargesheet

the Leftist ultras and some villagers, they added. Such allegations have been made in the chargesheet.

Of the 13 accused in the case, three have died already and four more former Maoists were absorbed into the West Bengal police as home guards after they surrendered their arms.

The state government had released Chhatradhar a few months before the Assembly polls. However, on March 26, the day after polling in Jangalmahal, the NIA raided his house in the wee hours and arrested him again. The chargesheet has been filed within 180 days of his arrest. A total of 50 pages of this

chargesheet was submitted on Thursday. The accused, including Chhatradhar, have been charged under multiple non-bailable sections of the Indian Penal Code and the UAP(A).

The Mahato family had termed his arrest on March 26 as political. The PCAPA had moved court seeking his house arrest in the case. However, the court dismissed the plea. Earlier, he was arrested by the NIA on September 22, 2009. Apart from being accused of taking Rajdhani passengers hostage, Chhatradhar was also alleged to be behind the killing of CPM activist Prabir Mahato.

Chhatradhar, who was on the frontline of the Lalgarh movement, was arrested in September 2009 by West Bengal Police. On his release from prison in February 2021, Chhatradhar was appointed as an office bearer of the ruling Trinamool Congress.

At 132, Kolkata logs day's highest Covid cases; PIL seeks curbs on Puja crowd

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, AUGUST 27

OF 746 new Covid cases reported in the state in the last 24 hours, Kolkata logged the highest at 132, followed by North 24 Parganas's 125. The fresh cases have taken the total caseload to 15,64,139.

At least 12 deaths Covid patients succumbed to the virus in the last 24 hours. Nadia recorded four deaths, Kolkata and North 24 Parganas two each, and Jalpaiguri, Bankura, Purba Medinipur and Hooghly one death. So far, 18,703 have died of

Covid.

Meanwhile, a PIL filed in the Calcutta High Court has requested it that this year too, Covid-19 restrictions to prevent crowding during Durga Puja should be enforced. The HC had last year imposed curbs against visitors to Durga Puja pandals.

"I have appealed that last year's rule should be valid this year too. The third wave is expected in October," said petitioner and lawyer Sabyasachi Chattopadhyay.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had earlier said the decision on visits to pandals at night would be taken later.

Advertisement No. 63/2021

Government of India
Public Enterprises Selection Board
invites applications for the post of
Director (Finance)



HIL (India) Limited

Last Date of receipt of applications in PESB is
by 15.00 hours on 15th November, 2021.

For details login to website
http://www.pesb.gov.in

IIIT Bhubaneswar
Imagine, Innovate, Inspire
(A University established by the Government of Odisha)

No.: IIIT-Bh/16021/232

Date : 24.09.2021

RECRUITMENT FOR THE POST OF DIRECTOR

International Institute of Information Technology Bhubaneswar, a University under Electronics and IT Department, Government of Odisha offering several Undergraduate, Postgraduate and Doctoral programmes in Science & Technology is in search of a suitable Indian national for appointment to the post of DIRECTOR.

Application form and other details can be downloaded from the Institute website <https://www.iiit-bh.ac.in>. Hard copy of the filled-in application form along with all supporting documents and application fee must be sent to as to reach the office of the undersigned by **12.10.2021 (05:00 PM)**.

Incomplete application and the application received after due date will not be entertained and will be summarily rejected. For further details please visit the Institute website : <https://www.iiit-bh.ac.in>

The authority reserves the right to reject any or all the applications without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd/- DIRECTOR (I/C)

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NATIONAL BANK FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
C-24, 'G' Block, Bandra-Kurla Complex, Bandra (E), Mumbai - 400051

Request for Proposal (RFP)

National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) invites proposals in sealed cover from reputed Vendors for implementing DMABI (Data Management, Analytics and Business Intelligence) Solution comprising of Data Warehouse, Extraction, Transformation & Loading and Business/Artificial Intelligence tools. Interested vendors may visit our website www.nabard.org for details and apply as stated therein. The last date of receipt of proposal is **21 October 2021 upto 3.00 PM**

गोद बढे >> तो देश बढे www.nabard.org Taking Rural India >>> Forward

Judge intentionally hit by auto: CBI

Ranchi: The CBI, which is probing the death of Dhanbad judge Uttam Anand, told the Jharkhand High Court on Thursday that the autrickshaw driver, who has been apprehended in this connection, intentionally hit him with his three-wheeler.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), during the hearing of the case on a virtual platform, said a probe is underway to find out who all are involved in the conspiracy.

The 49-year-old district judge was allegedly mowed down by a heavy autrickshaw while he was out jogging near Randhir Verma Chowk in Dhanbad.

IN THE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL SILIGURI

2nd Floor, PCM Tower, 2nd Mile
Sevoke Road, Siliguri - 734001
West Bengal

Summons under Sub-Section (4) of section 18 of Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 read with Sub-Rule (2A) of Rule 5 of the Debt Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993.

T. O. A. 1032/2017
(Arising out of O. A. No. 304/2015)

State Bank of India
...Applicant

Vs.
Sri Narayan Chandra Biswas & Ors.
...Defendants

To
(1) Sri Narayan Chandra Biswas, S/o. Late Aji Kumar Biswas, 154, Dayanagar Road, P. O. Cosmibazar, District - Murshidabad, Pin - 742102.

(2) Sri Nirmal Kumar Biswas, S/o. Late Aji Kumar Biswas, 154, Dayanagar Road, P. O. Cosmibazar, District - Murshidabad, Pin - 742102.

(3) Sri Karick Chandra Biswas, S/o. Late Aji Kumar Biswas, 154, Dayanagar Road, P. O. Cosmibazar, District - Murshidabad, Pin - 742102.

(4) Sri Lakshman Biswas, S/o. Late Aji Kumar Biswas, 154, Dayanagar Road, P. O. Cosmibazar, District - Murshidabad, Pin - 742102.

(5) Smt. Sunil Mondal Biswas, W/o. Sri Krishna Gopal Mandal, 19, Nilmoni Ganguli Lane, P. O. Khagra, District - Murshidabad, Pin - 742103.

(6) Smt. Shikha Chowdhury Biswas, W/o. Sri Ashim Kumar Chowdhury, Saidabid Thakurpara, P. O. Khagra, District - Murshidabad, Pin - 742103.

WHEREAS the instant application bearing O. A. No. 304 of 2015 between the parties above named was registered under Debts Recovery Tribunal - II at Kolkata under Section 19 of the Recovery of Debts due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 (now known as Recovery of Debts and Bankruptcy Act, 1993, as amended.)

AND WHEREAS the said O. A. No. 304 of 2015 has been transferred and numbered in this Tribunal as T.O. A. No. 1032 of 2017 due to change in jurisdiction from DRT - II, Kolkata to DRT, Siliguri.

You are hereby directed to appear in person or through duly empowered legal practitioner or through duly authorised officer for further proceedings / hearing of the case on **05/10/2021** at 10 o'clock or immediately, before the Tribunal / Registrar.

TAKE NOTICE that in default of your appearance on that date aforementioned, the application will be heard and decided in your absence.

Given under my hand and the seal of the Tribunal. The 15th day of September, 2021.

By Order of the Tribunal
Registrar / Assistant Registrar
Debts Recovery Tribunal Siliguri

NAME CHANGE

By an affidavit before the Executive Magistrate, Angul, I, Shakuntala Pattanayak, 68, W/o Suresh Chandra Pattanayak, Rio Villi P.O. Kumanda, Near Bhandupuri, U.P. School, P.S/Dist-Angul, Odisha declare that prior to my marriage my name was Shakuntala Sahu which is mentioned in my Adhaar Card and PAN Card. After marriage my name has been changed to Shakuntala Pattanayak. Shakuntala Pattanayak and Shakuntala Sahu W/o Suresh Chandra Pattanayak is one and same person and except myself, there is no other person who bears two names in the above address. Henceforth, I will be known as Shakuntala Sahu instead of Shakuntala Pattanayak for all purposes.

CORRIGENDUM

In the UCO Bank, Possession Notice advertisement for 3 & 4, DD Block, 1st Floor, Salt Lake, Sector-1, Kolkata-700 064 published on 19.09.2021 in this newspaper. In SI No.2 Ramiz Frooti & Gazi Pepsi Cold Drinks description of the mortgaged immovable Property should read R.S & L.R Khatian No. 588, 96, 613, 21, 99 & 579, R.S & L.R Dag No. 41, 46, 39, 40 instead of R.S & L.R Khatian No. 21, 99 & 579, R.S & L.R Dag No. 39, 40. The other details of property will remain the same. Error is regretted.

Sd/- Authorised Officer,
UCO Bank

Date: 24.09.2021

KOLKATA BATA NAGAR BRANCH
Rajshree Apartment, Opp. Maheshwala, P.S. Daulatpur,
Post: B B T Road, Kolkata - 700 141 / E-mail: ivjng@bankofbaroda.com

Appendix IV, Rule 8(1) POSSESSION NOTICE (for Immovable Properties)

Whereas the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the Bank of Baroda, under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(2) read with Rule 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice under Section 13(2) of the Act dated 21.04.2021 calling upon the Borrower Late Mr. Sunil Sharma and Mrs. Bandana Sharma to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs.14,29,429.85 (Rupees Fourteen Lakh Twenty Nine Thousand Four Hundred Twenty Nine and Eighty Five Paisa only) including unpaid interest w.e.f.31.03.2021 in term loan account plus accrued interest thereon and incidental expenses and costs within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower/guarantor and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the said Act, read with Rule 9 of the said rules on this 21st day of September of the year 2021.

The borrower/guarantor in particular and public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Bank of Baroda, Bata Nagar Branch for an amount of Rs.14,29,429.85 (Rupees Fourteen Lakh Twenty Nine Thousand Four Hundred Twenty Nine and Eighty Five Paisa only) including an applied interest w.e.f.31.03.2021 in term loan account plus accrued interest thereon and incidental expenses and costs, etc.

The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Description of Immovable Properties

Residential flat measuring 810 Sq. Ft. more or less super built up area flat no. 3C consisting of two bedrooms, one dining/kitchen, one toilet, one W.C. and one balcony at the south east side one the third floor of said ground plus three stored Residential building together with undivided impartible proportionate share of land measuring 5 cottahs lying and situated at Mouza- Banshroni, J.L. No. 45 in E.P. No. 32 & 33, comprising C. S. Plot No. 313/2895(P) within the limit of Kolkata Municipal corporation Ward no. 113 being Premises No. 27 Benoy Pally and its Assesse No. 31130800274, P.S. Regent Park, Kolkata-700070 in the District of South 24 Parganas, in the name of Late Mr. Sunil Sharma. Butted and bounded by on the North: 12ft. wide K.M.C. Road, on the South: 12ft. wide K.M.C. Road, on the East: 14-8' wide K.M.C. Road and on the West: E.P. Nos. 30 & 31.

Date: 21.09.2021, Place: Kolkata

Authorised Officer, Bank of Baroda

PUBLIC NOTICE

ICICI Bank
ICICI Bank Limited

Registered office: Landmark, Race Course Circle, Vadodra 390 007.
Corporate office: ICICI Bank Towers, Bandra-Kurla Complex, Mumbai 400 051.

GOLD AUCTION COM INVITATION NOTICE

The below mentioned borrowers have been issued notice to pay off their outstanding amount towards the facility against gold ornaments ("Facility") availed from them by ICICI Bank Limited ("ICICI Bank"). We are constrained to conduct an auction of pledged gold ornaments on **28.09.2021** as they have failed to repay the dues. ICICI Bank has the authority to remove auction/change the auction date without any prior notice. Auction will be held online - <https://ewel-auction.procuretiger.com> between 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm. For detailed Terms and conditions, please log into given website. In case of deceased borrower, all conditions will be applicable to legal heirs.

Loan A/C No.	Customer Name	Branch Name	Loan A/C No.	Customer Name	Branch Name
254605001552	Bhalschand Jha	Branch Name: Aarati	243705000827	Avinash Kumar Mishra	Branch Name: Patna - Dighe, Bihar
Branch Name: Bhabua		046305004474	Sanjay Kumar	Branch Name: Gaya	
255805001795	Anil Kumar Singh	Branch Name: Gaya-Tekari Road	248505000977	Anil Singh	Branch Name: Patna-Anisabad
Branch Name: Bhagalpur		248605001022	Nikhil Narayan	Branch Name: Patna-Boringroad	
Branch Name: Titikamajhi		248605001035	Nikhil Narayan	Branch Name: Patna-Boringroad	
180805001047	Krishna Kumar Kundan	Branch Name: Mokshini	133305002206	Prasanna Gharti	Branch Name: Patna-Boringroad
Branch Name: Bhagalpur-Patalroad		133405001919	Rinku Sharma	Branch Name: Patna-Boringroad	
043105003877	Rahul Kumar Sah	Branch Name: Ajiun Kumar	040405009853	Shahrozy Sarwar	Branch Name: Patna-Boringroad
Branch Name: Bodh Gaya		133405004923	Rinku Sharma	Branch Name: Patna-Boringroad	
256005000505	Nikhil Narayan	Branch Name: Mouza-Fargpur	040405009575	Shahrozy Sarwar	Branch Name: Patna-Boringroad
Branch Name: Chapra		030605011075	Ankit Kumar	Branch Name: Patna-Boringroad	
092505003625	Rajiv Kumar	Branch Name: Narkataganj (Nagar)	040405009328	Shahrozy Sarwar	Branch Name: Patna-Boringroad
Branch Name: Darbhanga - Loharibazar		752105000060	Ganga Yadav	Branch Name: Patna - Ashiana Nagar	
243705000816	Avinash Kumar Mishra	Branch Name: Patna - Ashiana Nagar	194305000802	Sadhana Sinha	Branch Name: Patna - Ashiana Nagar

Date : 24.09.2021
Place: Aarati, Bhagalpur, Darbhanga, Gaya, Kaimur, Muzaffarpur, Paschim Champaran, Patna, Purbi Champaran, Rohtas, Saran

IDBI BANK

Bank Aisa Dost Jaisa

Regd. Office: IDBI Tower, WTC Complex, Cuffe Parade, Mumbai - 400 005.

Kind Attention: Holders of IDBI Flexi Bonds - Redemption Payment

IDBI Bank Limited (IDBI Bank) issued Flexi Bonds (Bonds) of different series under the Industrial Development Bank of India (Issue and Management of Bonds) Regulation, 1972. IDBI Bank exercised its right of call option under the respective Offer Documents (OD) and redeemed Bonds. The exercise of call option was duly intimated to all Bond holders by individual letters sent to their addresses recorded with the Bank. IDBI Bank also widely published the said call option through newspapers in different jurisdictions and also attempted to reach out to the Bond holders at their registered addresses. Some of the Bond holders are yet to approach the Bank. Hence, unclaimed Bond holders are hereby once again requested to approach nearby IDBI Bank Branch or approach R&T Agent for claiming redemption proceeds. For further information, the bondholders are advised to visit our website www.idbibank.in

Date: September 24, 2021

Place: Mumbai

SD/-

(Authorised Signatory)

बैंक ऑफ बड़ौदा
Bank of Baroda

ZOSARB, Kolkata

21A, Sadananda Road, 2nd Floor, Kolkata - 700 026
Email: armcal@bankofbaroda.com

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE

ANNEXURE-E
SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES ; "APPENDIX- IV-A [See proviso to Rule 6 (2) & 8 (6)]

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 6 (2) & (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Bank of Baroda, Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" for recovery of below mentioned account/s. The details of Borrower/s/Guarantor/s/Secured Assets/Dues/Reserve Price/e-Auction date & Time, EMD and Bid Increase Amount are mentioned below:-

Sr/ Lot No.	Name & address of Borrower/s/Guarantor/ s/ Mortgagor (s)	Detailed description of the immovable property with known encumbrances, if any	Total Dues.	Date & Time of E-auction	Reserve Price EMD amount Bid Increase Amount	Status of Possession (Symbolic/Physical)	Property Inspection date & Time
1	M/s Josnika Food and Beverages Private Limited at Registered Office Address at 5, Gorky Terrace (3rd Floor), Kolkata- 700017; H-37, Outer Circle Cannanught Place, New Delhi- 110001 (unit); K-101, Hauz Khas, New Delhi- 110016 represented by Director(s): Mrs. Sumana Ghosh and Mr. Sunil Chander Nair; Corporate Guarantor(s): M/s Josnika Developers Private Limited and M/s Arcava Real Estate Private Limited and Guarantor(s): Mrs. Sumana Ghosh, Mr. Sunil Chander Nair and Late Partha Ghosh	Property No. 1 : Equitable mortgage of Apartment No. 4A2, admeasuring 1264 square feet super built area on the 4th floor of the RIDGE residential tower constructed at Hiland Park, together with one car parking space bearing No. 4, located at the Deck Level Open of Ridge Tower at Hiland Park. Mortgagor of Flat is the Corporate Guarantor(s): M/s Arcava Real Estate Private Limited vide Deed No. 1-1901-01865/2018 on 17/03/2018 Property NO. 2 : All that piece and parcel of land admeasuring 0.375 acres thereabout situated at Andal, District : Burdwan, 0.018 Acres in Dag No. 1158, 0.019 Acres in Dag No. 1159, 0.090 Acres in Dag No. 1160, 0.161 Acres in Dag No. 1161 & 0.087 Acres in Dag No. 1164 comprised in J.L. No. 36, L.R. Khatian No. 4009, Mouza- Andol under P.S. Andal within the limits of Andal Gram Panchayat in the industrial zone of Aerotropolis. Property No. 3 : All that piece and parcel of land admeasuring 0.8661 acres thereabout or 37,727 sq. ft. or thereabouts comprised of 0.0920 acres in R.S. Dag No. 1154, 0.2800 Acres in R.S. Dag No. 1155, 0.0400 Acres in R.S. Dag No. 1157, 0.2761 Acres in R.S. Dag No. 1158, 0.0189 Acres in R.S. Dag No. 1159, 0.0225 Acres in R.S. Dag No. 1161, 0.0970 Acres in R.S. Dag No. 1162, 0.0396 Acres in R.S. Dag No. 1157/1160, L.R. Khatian No. 4009, Mouza - Andol under P.S. Andal within the limits of Andal Gram Panchayat in the Mixed use zone of Aerotropolis. Mortgagor of Property 2 & 3 is the Corporate Guarantor(s): M/s Josnika Developers Private Limited vide Deed No. 1-1903-03056/2018 on 12/12/2018 Property(ies) 2 & 3 is situated at Sujalam Sky City, Andal, NH-2, West Bardhaman	Rs.5,07,25,439.35 (Five Crore Seven Lakhs Twenty Five Thousand Four Hundred And Thirty Nine Rupees And Thirty Five Paisa only) as on 31.10.2019 and further interest thereon at contractual rate plus costs, charges and expenses	22.10.2021 from 2 p.m to 6 p.m (With unlimited extension of 10 minutes)	Property No. 1 Rs.78,00,000/- Rs.7,80,000/- Rs. 10,00,000/- Property No. 2 Rs.81,00,000/- Rs.8,10,000/- Rs. 10,00,000/- Property No. 3 Rs.2,34,00,000/- Rs.23,40,000/- Rs. 20,00,000/-	Symbolic 	

4 West Bengal



RAIN RIDE

Commuters cover themselves from rain in Kolkata Thursday. Rain may continue to lash Bengal this week. Partha Paul

Stir with leader's body stopped near CM's house: BJP

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, SEPTEMBER 23

Police on Thursday prevented the BJP from staging a demonstration before Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's Kalighat residence with the body of party leader Dhurjati Saha.

Saha, who was fielded by the BJP from the Magrahat Paschim constituency in the Assembly polls earlier this year, died at a private hospital on Wednesday, three months after he was allegedly attacked by Trinamool Congress men during the polls. The BJP demanded a CBI probe into his death.

Without any prior intimation, the BJP turned up in numbers with the body near the CM's Kalighat residence on Thursday evening and soon a scuffle broke out with the police. Led by BJP state president Sukanta Majumdar and also featuring MPs Arjun Singh, Jyotirmoy Mahato and the party's Bhabanipur bypoll candidate Priyanka Tibrewal, party workers erupted in protest against the police and tried to block a road nearby.

However, the police eventually managed to remove the protesters from the area and impose Section 144 of CrPc.

The state BJP president was also seen squatting on the road along with fellow party leaders and members but was removed by the police.

"We wanted to go to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's residence to seek justice for our party leader. We wanted to show that there is no democracy in the state. But the police did not allow us to stay there. They forcefully removed us from the place. Male police personnel manhan-



BJP's Dhurjati Saha died on Wednesday after he was attacked allegedly by TMC workers on May 2.

died our candidate Priyanka Tibrewal. It is a shame that there were no women police personnel near the chief minister's residence. The chief minister is scared to face us and hence got her police to stop us from holding this protest," Majumdar said.

Earlier, on Thursday, the body was taken to state BJP headquarters for leaders and workers to pay their last tributes. Later it was taken to Kalighat without any prior notice.

On the scuffle between BJP leaders and policemen, Trinamool MLA Tapas Roy said, "BJP is an unruly party. They want to stay in the limelight. They are behaving as if Mamata Banerjee is scared of them. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah could not defeat her in the Assembly polls. The BJP very well knows the margin by which their candidate will lose the bypoll. They are simply looking to find an excuse for their defeat."

Singh said, "There is no law and order in the state. The Trinamool is using the police to stop us. We strongly condemn this act. We want justice for the family of the victim."

Unlike us, Cong failed to defeat BJP: Abhishek

Several BJP MPs, MLAs willing to join TMC: Diamond Harbour MP

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, SEPTEMBER 23

AMID THE talk of an Opposition unity against the BJP before the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, TMC all-India general secretary and MP Abhishek Banerjee on Thursday pitched for his party's central role and hit out at the Congress for its failure to defeat the saffron party in the last seven years.

He alleged that the Murshidabad Congress and BJP were working together to defeat the TMC in the September 30 Samsarganj and Jangipur Assembly polls.

"A block president of the Murshidabad Congress told me that he wanted to fight against the BJP. He knows that Adhir (Chowdhury, state Congress president) is hand in glove with the BJP. There is a tacit understanding between the BJP and Congress here. Can you see the Congress on the ground? Can their MPs be seen? The Congress cannot defeat the BJP. In the last seven years, the Congress could not defeat the BJP. It is the TMC which is only defeating the BJP. There is a difference. The Congress is getting defeated by the BJP but we are defeating it," Banerjee said while addressing a rally at Samsarganj for the party candidate.

In Jangipur, former five-time Congress MLA from Farakka Moinal Haque joined the TMC in Banerjee's presence. The former All-India Congress Committee member had quit the party a few days ago. Banerjee claimed that a large number of BJP MPs and MLAs wanted to switch to the TMC. "We have kept our doors shut respecting the sentiment of the people. The day we open our gates, the BJP will cease to exist within three months," he said.



'Murshidabad Congress and BJP are hand in glove'

"It is my goal to throw the BJP out of India in the next three years. I will go to every state ruled by the BJP and contest against it. We will dethrone the BJP from every state where they are in power," said the Diamond Harbour MP.

Unfazed by recent attacks on TMC workers in the BJP-ruled Tripura, Banerjee said his party would defeat the Biplab Kumar Deb government in the next Assembly polls.

"Khela (game) has started in Assam and Tripura. Now (Tripura Chief Minister) Biplab Deb is scared to see the TMC gain foothold in his state. He has imposed Section 144 of CrPc so that I cannot go to Tripura. Why are you afraid to see me? How long will you keep Section 144 in Tripura? The TMC will win Tripura," said Banerjee.

Reacting to Banerjee's allegations, state Congress president and MP Adhir Chowdhury asked the TMC to do some "soul-searching".

"The nephew did not say who was responsible for bringing the BJP into West Bengal. The nephew did not talk about TMC's association with the BJP when they had supported the Atal Bihari Vajpayee's government at the Centre. Instead of targeting the Congress, they should look into the mirror and do some soul-searching," he said.

'TMC govt opposed bringing fuel under GST'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, SEPTEMBER 23

UNION MINISTER for Petroleum and Natural Gas, Hardeep Singh Puri on Thursday targeted Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, claiming her government had objected to the proposal of bringing petrol and diesel prices within the ambit of Goods and Services Taxes.

The Union minister, who is visiting the state to campaign for Priyanka Tibrewal, the BJP candidate for the September 30 Bhabanipur by-election, said the proposal was mooted at the last GST meeting.

The Trinamool has been vocal against the rising prices of petro-



Proposal was mooted at the last GST meeting: Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri

leum and diesel in the recent weeks.

"Mamata Banerjee is asking about fuel prices. She must know that at the GST Council meeting, some states, including West Bengal, resolved to keep petrol and diesel away from the

BENGAL ASSEMBLY BYPOLLS

Will prove vote rigging in Nandigram poll: Mamata

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, SEPTEMBER 23

RAKING UP her defeat from Nandigram in the Assembly elections earlier this year, Trinamool Congress chief Mamata Banerjee claimed on Thursday that the vote was rigged.

Banerjee, who is her party's candidate for the Bhabanipur Assembly bypoll, has to win to stay on as chief minister.

Addressing her third public meeting ahead of the September 30 bypoll at Chakraberia in Bhabanipur, she said, "I will prove it in court that the Nandigram vote was rigged. From day one, they (BJP) conspired against me. They injured my leg as a result of which I had to campaign all through the Assembly election in a wheelchair. But I wasn't ready to accept defeat."

She claimed that the BJP wouldn't even have got 30 seats if the polls were held free and fair.

In the run-up to the polls, which were held between March and April, Banerjee took everyone by surprise with her announcement that she would contest the Nandigram constituency against East Midnapore against onetime lieutenant-turned-BJP candidate Suwendu Adhikari.

The outcome of the polling on April 1 literally came down to the last round of counting and was eventually decided in favour of Adhikari by a margin of 1,956 votes. He was subsequently made the Leader of Opposition in the state Assembly.

She yet again exhorted all vot-



Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee seeks blessings of priests at a Jain temple during her campaign for the Bhabanipur Assembly bypoll on Thursday. CMO

Mamata Banerjee yet again exhorted all voters to step out and exercise their franchise, come rain or shine. Rain has been forecast for September 30

ers to step out and exercise their franchise, come rain or shine. Rain is forecast for September 30. "I request everyone to go out and vote even if it rains."

Flashing the victory sign at voters in Chakraberia, the Trinamool supremo said it was destiny that brought her back to Bhabanipur for a bypoll that will decide if she remains chief minister. "B" stands for Bhabanipur and also for Bharat. Remember that," the CM said.

"Vote even if it rains. I will stand to suffer if I don't get every

she lost in Nandigram against Suwendu Adhikari. Now ahead of the bypoll, she appears to be nervous," Puri, who is currently in the city to campaign for the BJP in Bhabanipur, said.

At her first public meeting for the September 30 bypoll, Banerjee urged people not to take her electoral victory for granted and vote for her to ensure that she remains chief minister.

"Don't think that Didi's victory is secured and there is no point going out to vote for her. Please don't do that. I will be in trouble if I don't get each of your votes. You will not have me back as the chief minister if I don't get each of your votes. So, every single vote is very important for me," Banerjee had said.

single one of your votes. Don't be complacent in assuming that my victory is guaranteed. Please don't do that. If you want to see me as chief minister, you must vote for me. Every vote is crucial. If I do not win, someone else will become the chief minister as we are in majority," Banerjee said. She had voiced a similar sentiment in her campaign speech on Wednesday.

While campaigning for the Assembly polls, the BJP had claimed that Durga Puja couldn't be organised peacefully under the Trinamool regime. To that, the CM retorted on Thursday, "Those who talk about Durga Puja have imposed Section 144 (of CrPc) in (BJP-ruled) Tripura. So how will they organise Durga Puja?"

Tripura Police did not permit to Trinamool national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee, citing imposition of Section 144.

Man held for 'sharing communal messages'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, SEPTEMBER 22

AHEAD OF the Assembly bypolls, the Cyber Cell of Kolkata police on Thursday arrested a man from Birbhum district for allegedly sending communal messages on WhatsApp groups.

The man has identified as Param Roy Chowdhury of Charkal Gram under Nanoor police station. Police had earlier received similar complaints.

The arrest came after a complaint was lodged by one Suraj Mondal, a resident of Kalighat, the area close to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's house.

'Big leader from BJP will soon join TMC'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KOLKATA, SEPTEMBER 23

SENIOR TRINAMOOL Congress leader Firhad Hakim Thursday said a "big leader from the BJP" is set to join Trinamool Congress in a few days and claimed that the saffron party will disintegrate in the state.

Hakim, who is on the campaign trail for party supremo and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for the September 30 Bhabanipur bypoll, said the party is not inducing BJP leaders indiscriminately into its fold.

Trinamool is checking the antecedents, track record and image of each BJP leader who has made overtures to Trinamool leaders and is deciding on his/her appeal after due deliberation, Hakim, who is also a senior minister in Banerjee's cabinet, said.

The state has been a witness to several switchovers to Trinamool from BJP since the April-May state poll in which it stormed back to power under Banerjee.

"The process of returning has only started," was Hakim's cryptic reply when asked by reporters whether there would be more crossovers to the Trinamool after the most recent switchover by former Union minister Babul Supriyo and BJP national vice-president Mukul Roy earlier.

"Wait for a few more days. A big-time BJP leader is all set to join our party. BJP will disintegrate in West Bengal," he said.

"In the wake of the Assembly byelection, a number of groups were created where the group admin (Chowdhury) and others were posting communal messages. They also posted some obscene material," said Joint CP (crime) Murlidhar Sharma.

The accused has been booked under various section of the Information and Technology Act, and IPC sections 120 B (criminal conspiracy), 153 A (promoting enmity among different groups), 259 A (deliberate and malicious acts, intended to outrage religious feelings) and 505 (2) (creating or promoting enmity).

Three from Bangladesh held for 'illegal entry'

Guwahati: Three Bangladeshis, who were trying to sneak into India, were apprehended by the BSF and later handed over to the border guards of the neighbouring country in a goodwill gesture, an official here said on Thursday.

Acting on a tip-off, Border Security Force (BSF) personnel nabbed the three Bangladeshi nationals at Dighalati outpost in West Bengal's Cooch Behar district on Wednesday, the official of the paramilitary force said.

During interrogation, the trio said that they were labourers and were planning to go to New Delhi in search of jobs. **PTI**

"IMPORTANT"

Whilst care is taken prior to acceptance of advertising copy, it is not possible to verify its contents. The Indian Express (P) Limited cannot be held responsible for such contents, nor for any loss or damage incurred as a result of transactions with companies, associations or individuals advertising in its newspapers or Publications. We therefore recommend that readers make necessary inquiries before sending any monies or entering into any agreements with advertisers or otherwise acting on an advertisement in any manner whatsoever.

PSPCL Punjab State Power Corporation Limited
Regd Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall, (Patiala)
CIN: U40109PB2010SGC033813, Website: www.pspcl.in
(Contact Number: 96461-18754)
Tender Enquiry No. 274/HPS/ED-JS-413 Dated: 21.09.2021
SE/Hydel Projects, PSPCL, Shed A-3, Shakti Vihar, PSPCL, Patiala invites E-Tender for Design, Manufacture, Supply, Erection, Testing and Commissioning of 4 sets of Microprocessor based Static Excitation Equipment along with accessories (including dismantling of existing Panels, Equipment, Cables etc.) for 4x15 MW Machine of Shanan Power House, PSPCL, Joginder Nagar, Distt. Mandi (HP).
For detailed NIT & Tender specification please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> from 24.09.2021 onward.
NOTE: Corrigendum & addendum, if any will be published online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>.
C-346-21 8166/Pb

BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE
Office of the Executive Engineer, Gandhinagar Division, Bashyam Park, South Central Street, Bengaluru- 560 020
No.EE(GNR)/E-Proc/005/2020-21 Date: 22.09.2021
INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (KW-4)
(Through GOK e-Procurement Portal only)
The Executive Engineer, Gandhinagar Division, invites tenders from eligible Tenderers for the construction works detailed in the table below:

Sl. No.	Name of Work	EMD (Rs. in lakh)
1	Providing CC Road and Footpath Culverts Drains works at Old Tharagupet Main Road, and cross roads in Ward No. 109	3.50

1) Tender documents may be downloaded from the e-procurement portal from : **08.10.2021 onwards.**
2) Pre-Bid Meeting : **13.10.2021 at 16.00 Hrs.** 3) Tenders must be submitted online through e-procurement portal on or before **16.00 Hrs. on : 18.10.2021.** 4) Technical bids will be opened on **21.10.2021 at 12:30 Hrs.** Further details can be accessed from GOK e-procurement website: <https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in> or contact e-procurement helpdesk at : 080-22441076.
Sd/- Executive Engineer, Gandhinagar Division.
PAY DEVELOPMENT CHARGES, HELP TO DEVELOP BENGALURU
STAY PROTECTED FROM COVID-19, NO CARELESSNESS UNTIL THERE IS A CURE.
 Wear Mask 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing Maintain Hand Hygiene

Asansol Municipal Corporation Asansol
NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER
E-Tender Notice No. 35/WS/Eng/2021 dated 23-09-2021
Memo No. 296/WS/Eng/2021 dated 23.09.2021
Please visit to website www.asansolmunicipalcorporation.com or www.wbtenders.govt.in.
For details, intending contractors may also contact Eng. Dept. of this office and office notice Board.
Sd/-
Superintending Engineer
Asansol Municipal Corporation

MAHAGENCO
Maharashtra State Power Generation Co. Ltd.
Notice Inviting Tender
a) Tenders are invited for - "Open Tender in SRM for Installation of Dry Sorbent Injection based Flue Gas Desulphurization (FGD) System package for 2 Units of 210MW capacity units at Nashik TPS (Unit-3&4) of MAHAGENCO." (Tender Code (RFx) No. 3000021813). The tender is available for online sale from 02.09.2021 to 18.10.2021.
The tender fee - Rs. 35,400/- (inclusive of GST)
b) The detailed NIT and prequalification requirements can be viewed on Mahagenco website www.mahagenco.in under Tenders - Head office Tenders and <http://eprocurement.mahagenco.in>.
c) The bidders are required to visit www.mahagenco.in and or <http://eprocurement.mahagenco.in> for corrigendum/amendments, if any at a future date.
d) For further clarification, following engineers of Project & Planning can be contacted ;
1) Supdt. Engineer, Project & Planning 022-26474211 (Extn:2304) / Mob.No. 8879770703
2) Executive Engineer, Project & Planning 022-26474211 (Extn:2445) / Mob.No. 9920099652 / 8879770725
Email :- cgmpp@mahagenco.in / segpp1@mahagenco.in / eegpp14@mahagenco.in.
Sd/-
Chief Engineer(P&P),

TRANSMISSION COPORATION OF ANDHRA PRADESH LTD.
e-Procurement TENDER NOTICE
The APTRANSCO invites bids online for the works with Spec No. APT-e-64/21-22 for "Supply, Erection, Testing and Commissioning of 220 KV Parawada DC line (1.9KM) by making LULO of 220 KV Kakinda-VSS along with 2 No 220 KV Bays at 220V132/33 KV Parawada SS in Visakhapatnam district" on turnkey basis. Available on e-procurement site from 24.09.2021 at 5.00PM. Note: office inviting bids CE/Zone/Visakhapatnam. Further details can be seen at <http://apptprocurement.gov.in>.
Sd/- Chief Engineer, APTRANSCO, Visakhapatnam Zone
DIPR No.388PP/CL/ADVI/1/1/2021-22, Dt:23/09/2021

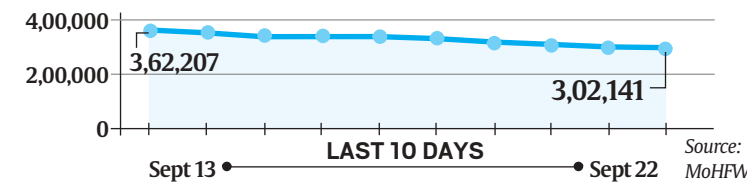
The Brihanmumbai Electric Supply & Transport Undertaking
(Of The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation)
TENDER NOTICE
E-tender are re-invited for the supply of following items.
(1) 71584, (2) 71614, (3) 71657, (4) 71664
Note: For more details, log on to website <https://mahatenders.gov.in>
PRO/AAM(M)/65/2021 GENERAL MANAGER

OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL S.M.S. MEDICAL COLLEGE & CONTROLLER OF THE ATTACHED HOSPITALS, JAIPUR
No.8311-16/FMC/Store/2021-22 Dated: 18.09.2021
Notice Inviting Bid
Bid for Supply & installation below mentioned items are invited from interested bidder's upto 11-10-2021 at 04.00 PM. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (<http://eproc.rajesthnan.gov.in>, <http://sppp.raj.nic.in>) of the state and SMS Medical College, Jaipur. Department website.
UBN:- SMS2122GLOB00275 To SMS2122GLRC00283
Sd/-
PRINCIPAL & CONTROLLER
DIPR/C/9647/2021

SBI
Digital & Transaction Banking- Products & Operations Department
Corporate Centre, 1st floor, 'C' Wing, Mittal Tower, Nariman Point, Mumbai - 400021. E-mail: dgmp/projects.dtb@sbi.co.in
Website: <https://bank.sbi/>, <https://www.sbi.co.in>
CORRIGENDUM-I
RFP No.: D&TB/PS/RFP/METRO/2021-22/001 Dated: 04.09.2021
Please refer the Corrigendum available for RFP No.: D&TB/PS/RFP/METRO/2021-22/001 Dated: 04.09.2021 available under "Procurement News" at Banks website: <https://bank.sbi/>, <https://www.sbi.co.in>, <https://etender.sbi/>
Place: Mumbai Sd/-
Date: 24.09.2021 Digital & Transaction Banking- P&O Department

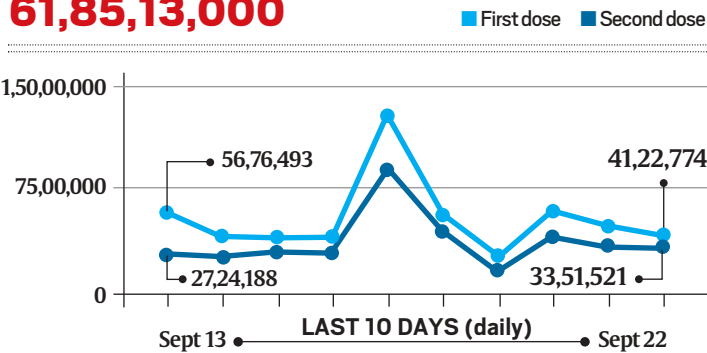
PARADIP PORT TRUST
Corrigendum-IV
To e-Tender Call Notice No. EMWS-29/2021 for the work: "Grant of license for Installation, Operation & Maintenance of 04 nos. of 100Ton capacity HMC for a period of 05 years extendable to another 01 year".
The last date of Bid Submission and opening of the bid for the above e-Tender Call Notice are hereby extended as follows:
1. Last date and time of Bid Submission: 11.10.2021 up to 18:00 Hrs. 2. Opening of Technical Bid: 12.10.2021 at 11:00 Hrs. All other terms and conditions of the original tender, Addendum-I and Addendum-II will remain unchanged.
Executive Engineer(M), Workshop Division-1
Dated: 23.09.2021
PPT/PR/113/21-22

BASIRHAT MUNICIPALITY BASIRHAT, NORTH 24 PGNS
WBMD/BASIR/E-01 OF 2021-22 (3rd Call)
Online Tenders are invited from resourceful agencies for Construction of New Furnace of Electric Crematorium and augmentation of power supply including Repairing & Renovation of Burning Ghāt under Basirhat Municipality. Tender Closing Date: 18.10.2021 upto 02:00 p.m. For details, visit: <https://wbtenders.gov.in> www.basirhatmunicipality.in
Sd/- Chairperson Basirhat Municipality



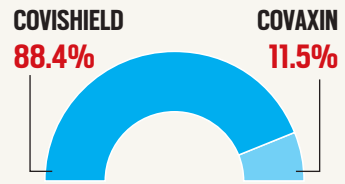
CORONAVIRUS DASHBOARD

TOTAL VACCINATED IN INDIA (at least one dose)
61,85,13,000



TOTAL DOSES
83,39,90,049

(Sputnik V's 9,04,319 doses not represented in pie)



DOSES ON SEPT 22 74,74,295
SEPT 21: 80,01,927 (48,22,066 1st doses; 31,79,861 2nd)

Note: The Sept 22 figures in these graphs are based on the government updates on Sept 23
Source: Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, updated at 11 pm on September 23

Winged microchip is 'smallest human-made flying structure'



The microflier does not have a motor on engine, but catches flight on the wind.

Northwestern University

NORTHWESTERN University engineers have created an electronic microchip with the capability of flight. About the size of a grain of sand, the new flying microchip (or "microflier") does not have a motor or engine. Instead, it catches flight on the wind — much like a maple tree's propeller seed — and spins like a helicopter through the air toward the ground.

A release by Northwestern University described these microfliers as the "smallest-ever human-made flying structures". The research has been published in *Nature* and is featured on the cover of the journal.

By studying maple trees and other types of wind-dispersed seeds, the engineers optimised the microflier's aerodynamics to ensure that it — when dropped at a high elevation — falls at a slow velocity in a controlled manner. This behaviour stabilizes its flight, ensures dispersal over a broad area and increases the amount of time it interacts with the air, making it ideal for monitoring air pollution and airborne disease. These microfliers also

can be packed with ultra-miniaturised technology, including sensors, power sources, antennas for wireless communication and embedded memory to store data, the release said.

"Our goal was to add winged flight to small-scale electronic systems, with the idea that these capabilities would allow us to distribute highly functional, miniaturised electronic devices to sense the environment for contamination monitoring, population surveillance or disease tracking," the release quoted John A Rogers, who led the device's development, as saying.

The team designed and built many different types of microfliers, including one with three wings, optimised to similar shapes and angles as the wings on a tristellateia seed. To pinpoint the most ideal structure, they led full-scale computational modeling of how the air flows around the device to mimic the tristellateia seed's slow, controlled rotation. Based on this modelling, the team then built and tested structures in the lab.

Source: Northwestern University



PAPER CLIP

NEW RESEARCH

EXPLAINED YOUR MONEY

Fed stance and India

US central bank's statement reiterating that it would maintain an 'accommodative stance' until inflation and employment targets had been met, boosted markets in India on Thursday.



SANDEEP SINGH & GEORGE MATHEW

STOCK EXCHANGES that were nervous ahead of the Federal Reserve's meeting on Wednesday cheered the US central bank's statement reiterating that it would maintain an 'accommodative stance' until inflation and employment targets had been met.

Indications that rates may be raised towards the end of 2022, and that the tapering of the Fed's bond purchase programme would be gradual and spread into the middle of next year, have brought comfort to market participants.

The Sensex at the Bombay Stock Exchange on Thursday jumped 958 points (1.6 per cent), closing at a new high of 59,885. The broader Nifty at the National Stock Exchange rose by 1.57 per cent, to close at 17,882. The markets have also reflected the waning of concerns over possible default on debt repayment by the Chinese real estate giant Evergrande.

What did the Federal Reserve say?

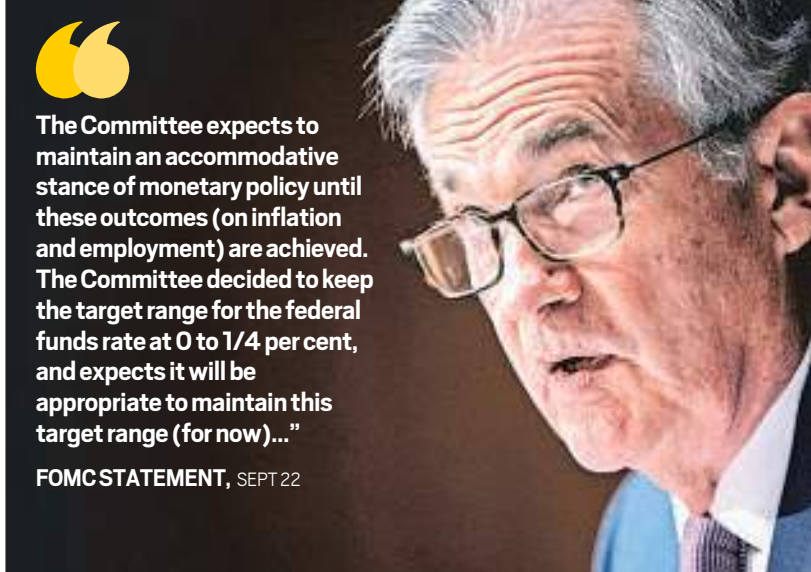
Even as it outlined the risks to economic outlook in line with the course of the coronavirus, the Federal Reserve, in its statement issued on Wednesday, said it would continue to "maintain an accommodative stance of monetary policy" until it achieves an inflation moderately above 2 per cent.

The Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC), which sets US monetary policy, has decided to keep the target range for the federal funds rate at 0 to 1/4 per cent. It "expects it will be appropriate to maintain this target range until labour market conditions have reached levels consistent with the Committee's assessments of maximum employment and inflation has risen to 2 per cent, and is on track to moderately exceed 2 per cent for some time".

What did the Fed say on the infusion of liquidity?

The Fed had said earlier that it would moderate the pace of asset purchases; it said on Wednesday that if progress in the economy continues, moderation in the pace of asset purchase "may soon be warranted".

Markets expect the Fed to start the tapering process from November, which may lead to a slowing of the flow of liquidity. Markets



Jerome Powell, Chair of the US Federal Reserve. NYT Archive

have risen significantly on account of excess liquidity worldwide, which has been channelled into equity markets; a slowing of the bond-buying programme will reduce its availability, and diversion into the markets.

The Fed currently purchases treasury securities of at least \$80 billion, and mortgage-backed securities of at least \$40 billion per month.

What does the Fed's decision mean?

Asset purchases could decline by \$15 billion per month, and an end to asset purchases by mid-2022 will strengthen the case for raising rates in 2023. The updated Summary of Economic Projections now implies three rate hikes by 25 basis points in 2023, and the Fed is split over delivering the first increase in 2022.

Inflation of over 2% is firmly signalled for the entire forecast horizon that had been extended until 2024. "We expect the Federal Reserve to act on the dovish side of the median of the new projection, as Chairman Powell most likely favours hiking rates in 2023. The more hawkish outcome of the FOMC meeting is seen as a sign of strength

that the US economic recovery and reflation of the economy is on the right path. The indicated more aggressive interest-rate path is supportive for the US dollar in the short term," David Kohl, chief economist at Julius Baer, said.

Analysts say the tapering is likely to be calibrated, and non-disruptive for financial markets — which means foreign investors are unlikely to suddenly exit India. The RBI's monetary policy and unwinding measures will likely be in line with the US tapering decision.

Why did the markets rise on Thursday?

That had more to do with the Fed's statement on raising interest rates — the markets derived comfort from the continuation of the accommodative monetary policy stance for now.

Market participants believe that interest rate hikes are still some time away — which is good for Indian equities. Low interest rates in the US will ensure continued fund flows from foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) into Indian equities, while existing investments will likely stay put for now. FPI flows into Indian equities amounted to Rs 2,083 crore in August; it has risen sharply in September,

FPI NET INVESTMENT INTO INDIAN EQUITIES IN 2021

January	19,473
February	25,787
March	10,482
April	-9,659
May	-2,954
June	17,215
July	-11,308
August	2,083
September	12,921
Total	64,040

All figures in ₹ crore

What new WHO pollution norms mean for India

AMITABH SINHA
PUNE, SEPTEMBER 23

NEW AIR quality norms released by the World Health Organization on Wednesday are likely to ignite a fresh round of discussion on air pollution in India. These norms would make India appear worse than it already looked under the existing norms. Considering the current situation, even the older WHO norms were beyond India's reach in the foreseeable future. The new standards are unlikely to be achieved for several years.

Beyond that, the revised standards are an acknowledgment of the mounting scientific evidence that points to a much higher risk to human health from air pollution than was earlier known. The appropriate response, therefore, would be a more focused effort to mitigate these risks and prevent the loss of lives.

No quick fixes

There is unlikely to be any dramatic im-

provement in India's air quality, even if a concerted effort was initiated immediately. The quality of air is dependent on a variety of activities and needs to be tackled at source. For example, one cannot expect clean air, when the surroundings are filthy, or the quality of roads are not good.

Also, the effort to improve air quality comes in direct conflict with some other objectives, such as the need to ensure that our industry remains competitive in the short term. That is the reason why we have seen repeated relaxations, or extensions of deadlines, in implementing more stringent emission norms for certain industries.

But there are also several areas where clean air comes out as collateral benefit. Several flagship government programmes — Swachh Bharat, Namami Gange and other river and lake cleaning projects, Smart City Mission, building of highways and expressways, the push for electric vehicles — would all lead to a significant improvement in air quality, not just in big metros which remain the focus of all debates on air pollution, but

across the country.

The Ujjwala scheme would probably have already started making a difference in the households where traditional cooking fuel has been permanently replaced by LPG in the last few years. The health impacts of indoor air pollution are not very well appreciated even now, but study after study has shown that it is as big a killer as outdoor air pollution.

The faster India moves ahead on these projects, the quicker it is likely to see improvements in air quality. The fallout of these projects on air quality is expected to be far greater than any fancy ideas like artificial rain or an odd-even scheme for private transport.

Low hanging fruit

The improvement is likely to be slow even if sustained push is maintained on all these projects. This realisation is reflected in India's National Clean Air Programme as well. The targets set for the selected cities are quite modest and would take several years to be

achieved.

But there are a number of rather low-hanging fruits that can deliver appreciable benefits within a short span of time. Unfortunately, not enough attention is paid to these, even though these are easy and cost-effective to implement. Plenty of construction is happening all across the country — houses, roads, commercial centres, airports — and this is likely to continue for a couple of decades.

India still does this construction in a very unclear manner. The construction site is not covered or segregated, construction material or debris are kept in the open, and transported in open trucks. Almost all construction sites are dust bowls.

India's roads don't conform to basic construction sites. The corners of the roads are not properly paved, leading to the release of lots of very harmful particles. The sidewalks and road dividers are major sources of dust.

It is easy to fix these if the local municipal bodies want to. And there are significant gains to be achieved in terms of air quality.

Maharashtra civic polls: how multi-member ward system works

VISHWAS WAGHMODE
MUMBAI, SEPTEMBER 23

THE MAHA Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government in Maharashtra on Wednesday took a decision to reintroduce the multi-member ward system for all municipal councils and corporations barring the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), instead of the existing single-member ward system. The decision comes ahead of municipal council and corporation elections to be held later this year and early next year.

What is the multi-member ward system?

There will be a three-member ward system in municipal corporations and a two-member ward system in municipal councils.

In other words, municipal seats will be demarcated together to create a three- and two-member ward system in corporations and councils respectively. There will be no change in the number of wards or corporations; the wards will be bunched together only for the purpose of the election.

Those contesting from the same party or alliance across the designated multi-member ward will campaign across the two or three wards, although they will file their nomination from individual wards. If elected, each will represent the individual ward only. Voters, however, will be able to select candidates in their own ward as well as in the other wards clubbed together in the multi-member ward.

Although candidates from the same party/alliance in a multi-member ward will be called a "panel", a voter does not really se-

lect a panel, but individual candidates, who can be from the same party or from different parties. A voter is also entitled to select just one candidate. But for this, the voter has to make a written submission to the presiding officer of the booth. This is to ensure documentary proof in case a party or candidate goes to court questioning how a candidate got fewer votes than others.

When has the system been tried before?

A three-member ward system in municipal corporations was introduced in 2001 by then Chief Minister Vilasrao Deshmukh. It was scrapped in 2006. In 2011, Chief Minister Prithviraj Chavan introduced a two-member ward system for municipal corporations and a four-member system for councils. In 2016, Chief Minister M Devendra Fadnavis changed it to a four-

member system for corporations and a three-member system for councils.

In December 2019, the MVA government decided to scrap it and revert to the single-member ward system. But with several upcoming municipal corporation and council polls, the NCP and Congress preference for the multi-member ward system has prevailed.

What is the rationale?

The reason for the non-partisan support to this scheme is that it appears to help a party or alliance maximise its seats. A party can offset weak candidates with strong ones in a multi-member ward. The hope is that the strongest of the candidates will carry the day for the others in the "panel", even though this is not guaranteed.

The state Urban Development

Department notifies rules for the manner of allotment and rotation of reservation of seats of corporators in wards. Subsequently, the State Election Commission undertakes an exercise for the allotment for seats for the reserved category and rotating them, said sources.

This decision will help field one woman as well as OBC and open category candidates in the panel and there would be no injustice to anybody. Nobody will be impacted due to reservation in any particular ward. All sections will get justice in forming a three-member panel," said Nawab Malik, NCP minister, adding that it would also help the three allies to jointly field candidates wherever possible.

Will it cause a delay in holding the polls?

There was speculation that the MVA has

done this to delay polls in order to win time to bring back the OBC quota, scrapped by the Supreme Court in March, in local bodies. But State Election Commission sources said the multi-member ward system will come into effect the day the government amends the law either through an ordinance or a Bill but it will not lead to deferring the polls.

"We have already started the process of drafting ward boundaries of municipal corporations. We can make changes, as it is not a huge exercise. So, it will not lead to deferring of local bodies polls," said a senior SEC official.

An ordinance has to be promulgated, and sent to the Governor for approval.

Why has the BMC been left out?

Sources said the single-member ward system is maintained in BMC due to the population and huge size of wards in BMC.

6



THE INDIAN EXPRESS, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2021

THE EDITORIAL PAGE

WORDLY WISE
OUR SOCIETY IS NOT ONE OF SPECTACLE
BUT OF SURVEILLANCE.
— MICHEL FOUCAULT

The Indian **EXPRESS**

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

COURT IS WATCHING

SC move to set up a panel to probe Pegasus is a vital and welcome step. At stake are basic liberties

THE SUPREME COURT said Thursday that it would set up a committee of experts to study the allegations of illegal surveillance using Pegasus spyware and issue orders next week. Expert panels appointed by the court always test the separation of powers but in this case, the move is vital and welcome. When the executive cites national security, a probe under an SC-appointed committee has more credibility than one by a government panel. At stake are vital issues involving civil liberties, including the right to privacy of citizens, the integrity of institutions and due process. The public is entitled to know, as the court said, “whether this spyware has been used by the government by any other method other than permissible under the law”.

Since the Pegasus Project, a collaborative journalism enterprise, reported by *The Wire* in India, revealed that a spyware developed by Israeli firm NSO Group is being surreptitiously used to snoop on politicians, journalists, civil liberties activists — three journalists of *The Indian Express* were on the list, two current, one former — the government has been cagey about clearing the air. Though the Minister of State for Defence told Parliament that his ministry “had not carried out any transaction with NSO Group Technologies” — the NSO has clarified that it trades only with sovereign governments — Solicitor General Tushar Mehta told the Supreme Court that the government cannot be made to answer whether or not it uses Pegasus spyware. Mehta reasoned that a clarification on this matter by the government would alert terrorists and compromise national security. While the government filed a short affidavit in the Supreme Court, when proceedings began on a clutch of petitions filed by journalists and the Editors Guild of India, it backtracked from filing a detailed affidavit that it had promised the court, earlier this month. However, the government offered to set up a panel of experts to look into the allegations and submit a report to the court. At every step, the government has cited national security to avoid a discussion on Pegasus — its refusal to allow a debate on the matter in Parliament resulted in the Opposition disrupting the Monsoon Session. The government’s defence of its intransigence — that terrorists would be alerted if it speaks — is weak since no one has asked for the names of terrorists under surveillance. What is being asked is whether state agencies used the spyware to snoop on journalists, Opposition politicians, human rights activists, bureaucrats etc., and if so under whose authorisation. If it has not, it is as much a task of the government to probe if any outside agency has used the spyware on Indian citizens since the petitioners have claimed that forensic analysis revealed tampering of their gadgets.

The Supreme Court has been the custodian of personal freedoms and has been an alert watchdog whenever the executive and legislature have transgressed the red lines that separate the state’s authority from the domain of individual rights, including the right to privacy. India’s stance on Pegasus has been in sharp contrast to other governments, which have taken serious note of the revelations and set up probes. The court has rightly recognised that the likes of Pegasus pose a threat to core values of democracy as well as the autonomy and credibility of institutions and processes. Its panel and its work are keenly awaited.

CLEAN THE AIR

WHO’s new air quality standards underline the health-pollution link. It’s time policies take a holistic approach

THE WHO’S NEW air quality benchmarks should be a wake-up call for policymakers in most parts of the world, including India. The new limits, announced on Wednesday, are not mandatory but policymakers would be well-advised to not ignore the global health body’s advisory that peoples’ health is at risk from much lower levels of pollution than previously thought of. The stringent yardsticks mean that almost all of India is a polluted zone for most of the year.

India’s air quality standards were way short of WHO norms even before. The new thresholds will sharpen these differences. India’s annual average PM 2.5 standard, for instance, is now eight times below the WHO’s benchmark. Much of the gap has to do with geographical and meteorological factors that contribute to a high base pollution load in several parts of the country. Vehicular and industrial emissions compound the problem. But India’s quest for clean air has also suffered because pollution management in the country rarely goes beyond ad-hoc measures such as bans, fines and shutting down of power stations. Despite the well-documented links between pollution and health – reiterated by the WHO on Wednesday – the ministries of environment and health rarely collaborate. Clean-air plans have rarely been products of the combined expertise of environment scientists, public health professionals, urban planners and transport sector specialists. The National Clean Air Programme does talk of inter-sectoral linkages, especially health and environment, and sets time-bound targets — most importantly, a 20-30 per cent reduction in particulate matter concentration in 2024 compared to 2017. But the programme’s litmus test will lie in the manner in which it brings together the inputs of different departments into its final action plan – in the absence of such concerted action, the NCAP could end up becoming another data-gathering exercise.

India’s ambient air quality standards were last updated in 2009. The Central Pollution Control Board is reportedly working on framing revised guidelines. Even though complete compliance with them might be difficult, the CPCB cannot afford to ignore the WHO’s new benchmarks. The heightened health risks of pollution, underlined by the new guidelines, should be the key takeaway for India’s premier pollution monitoring agency – and all other agencies responsible for clean air in the country.

BATTER TAKES GUARD

Replacing batsman with a gender-neutral term is a sign that cricket has changed. That’s good news

IT WAS A long innings. But the “batsman” is finally out, making space for the “batter”. The change in terminology, according to the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC), the authority on the game’s laws, helps “reinforce cricket’s status as an inclusive game for all”. And this is just as it should be. When women’s cricket, once dismissed as the also-ran version of the “real game”, has proved its ability to draw crowds, bust records and produce cricketing heroes, the shift in language is a sign that the sporting establishment is catching up. There are those, like British journalist Piers Morgan, known to see the collapse of civilisation at even the slightest stumble towards change, who have been triggered into outrage. Others find the new word awkward on the tongue, so strong is the hold of habit. Fact: In a playground of “fielders”, “bowlers”, “wicket-keepers” and “umpires”, it was “batsman” that was as odd as a powerplay in Test cricket.

Cricket in the 21st century is nothing like it once was — a “gentleman’s” sport tied up with class and feudal notions of gentility in Britain and with the “civilising” force of the empire in the colonies. Well, the former colonies have gone on to own the game, turning it into a desi spectacle, a money-spinning one, that cannot be played with a stiff upper lip. Even the Aussies blush when they read Virat Kohli’s lips. Women too were not welcome, with the MCC reluctantly opening its doors to female members as late as 1998.

But the future of any sport in 2021 rests on how many doors it can open to a diversity of talent. Cricket must be glad that it has fresh blood, male and female, running through its veins. If that means finding a better word for “third man” and “nightwatchman”, what’s to lose?



SUKANTA CHAUDHURI

THE SUICIDE OF three NEET aspirants in Tamil Nadu has sparked yet another debate on India’s stressful entrance exams. The reaction of the Tamil Nadu government is necessarily administrative and inevitably political. It is unlikely to solve the problem, and might worsen it in unsuspected ways.

The root problem is neither administrative nor educational but social. Our children are conditioned from infancy to think, as Ashis Nandy once put it, that they have three career choices — doctor, engineer or failure. The shine has faded somewhat from engineering courses since the economic downturn. Besides, engineering institutes being less rigorous to set up, their number can match or (as today) even exceed the demand. NEET has thus replaced JEE as the career-driven adolescent’s greatest torment, but both have spawned serious social maladies.

The greatest stress is usually generated by parents and the family, even playing off siblings against one another. Peer pressure comes close as a second factor. Schools are induced to measure their success by the number of students clearing NEET and JEE. Middle-class enclaves snidely compare the respective success of neighbourhood children.

A new addition to this dismal scene should, in itself, be deeply heartening — growing aspiration among children of disadvantaged backgrounds. When such a child beats the odds to excel at school, she might face even more pressure than her privileged peers from family and community. This is aggravated by a sense of inadequate support. These children cannot attend coaching centres or even courses in distance mode, let alone the residential coaching hubs epitomised by Kota. If they do, deficiencies in schooling and background make it hard for them to cope. A family might mortgage home and hearth in the cause, which exacerbates the pressure. This is the group registering most student suicides, not only with NEET and JEE but in higher education generally.

The deficiencies in schooling may not always be absolute, but simply in terms of the peculiar demands of entrance tests. Their structure is often at a strategic remove from

NEET, JEE obsession in students, without means to realise their dreams, can have grave consequences

The present Union policy has brought to crisis point a scenario evolving over the last three decades. Previous to that, tertiary education provided the one arena where young people from all classes and communities could meet on something like equal footing, at least as regards institutional facilities. Many institutions were substandard; others notably productive, as evinced (all else apart) by the success of their alumni among the Indian diaspora. Instead of consolidating that success while addressing the very real deficiencies, the system has been overturned.



RAJA MENON

THE ANNOUNCEMENT FROM Washington that the US, UK and Australia are to form an alliance against China comes as a resounding slap to the Indian foreign policy establishment trying to ride two horses simultaneously. The information that Australia is to be provided nuclear submarine technology further humiliated the external affairs ministry and rubs salt into the wounds of the Indian Navy. Stunted by the neglect of being allotted just 14 per cent of the defence budget, the Navy has been hit hard by the news that US nuclear submarine technology — the finest in the world — will only be made available to Australia. Canberra has reaped the rewards of steadfast friendship with the US and accepting the punishing tariffs imposed by Beijing on Australian agricultural exports to China. These tariffs were imposed by a vengeful Xi Jinping for Australia’s refusal to abandon its American ally.

Mired in a continental outlook, Delhi has failed to appreciate that the 12,50,000-man Indian army, despite its gallant service, has no offensive capability against the smaller PLA, numbering 9,75,000. Geography is against us in the Himalayas, where China has lateral connectivity of four- to six-lane highways to move acclimatised troops. The Navy remains the only service capable of any punitive action against China. With nuclear submarine technology, Australia has now been catapulted into a frontline state against Chinese aggression, something that India with a population of 1.3 billion and a GDP approaching \$5 trillion can only dream of. Australian nuclear submarines

THE WAGES OF DITHERING

Delhi’s uncertainty in projecting naval power has pushed it to Indo-Pacific sidelines

can rapidly penetrate the South China Sea through the Indonesian Straits and threaten China at its doorstep.

Despite a lack of support from the PMO and MEA, many naval veterans have, on their visits to Washington, approached key figures in the US establishment about nuclear submarine technology for the Indian Navy. The answer has always been the same — the US Navy is against transferring the technology to a non-aligned state. India’s efforts have been crippled by a lack of funding and the inability to access highly-enriched uranium cores for the propulsion reactor. With the introduction of the Quad, we had an opportunity to operationalise the coalition, and set up a Quad secretariat in India. Suggestions and pleading with the MEA and PMO have fallen on deaf ears, preoccupied as they are with reinforcing failure in the Himalayas and ignoring the Navy. Now a country with 27 million people and a GDP of \$ 1.4 trillion has become a power that can influence the choices being made in Beijing.

Naval strategists and well-wishers have often been mystified trying to answer the questions of who makes foreign policy in Delhi. While the charter exists with the MEA, insiders are adamant that the PMO has the last word. So, the thinking public is unlikely to be enlightened as to why we have to remain non-aligned when our neighbour is competing with the US to be the global hegemon — a rogue hegemon. Beijing has armed the Pakistan Navy and Air Force to the teeth, has bases in Gwadar and Djibouti, supports the

Taliban in Afghanistan, is a strategic ally of the Myanmar junta – yet, we are reluctant to take the Quad beyond a diplomatic talk shop.

Does this dithering come from timidity or a misplaced sense of Chanakyan cunning to successfully befriend the US without antagonising China? It is time that Delhi realised that regional power will not come from stringing a million men across the Himalayas, but from a navy, supreme in the Indian Ocean and commanding the access choke points to international trade. At the least, an operationalised Quad would have given us info-dominance over critical areas, if the navy’s anxieties are addressed. But by using the Quad for diplomatic and political grandstanding, without naval representation, we have lost the little leverage that we could have had.

The great American thinker Andrew Marshall used to say that strategy should not be written without first defining the scenario to which it applies. Accordingly, the US Office Net Assessment defines the evolving scenario every four years in a docket entitled “Global Futures” as a guide to government. We have no such document, but our scenario is fairly predictable, dominated as it is by the rise of a rogue Chinese hegemon. So, why is our foreign policy still hoping to “appease” Beijing by denying India a blue water navy — the only instrument that gives us punitive capability against Beijing?

Menon, a former rear admiral, has authored four books on maritime and nuclear strategy



SEPTEMBER 24, 1981, FORTY YEARS AGO

RAHMAN KILLERS

TWELVE BANGLADESHI ARMY officers, including 10 who distinguished themselves in the liberation struggle and had gallantry decorations, were hanged on charges of mutiny and assassination of President Ziaur Rahman. Within hours, violence erupted in the capital with a mob protesting against the hangings setting fire to government buses and cars. Police resorted to lathicharge at least twice and also fired teargas shells to contain the angry crowds. A meeting convened by the freedom fighters’ organisation condemned the execution of the army officers and called upon the people “to resist the de-

signs of anti-freedom forces”.

SEPTEMBER RAINS

INCESSANT RAINS AND landslides claimed 17 lives in Bombay. Many others were injured in the deluge. Transport services were disrupted for most of the day. A family of three was wiped out in Bhandup and a woman and her two sons were injured when a huge boulder landed on the chawl. Three others were killed in a mishap in northwest Bombay. Such intense showers at the tail end of the monsoon season took Bombay by surprise. The Santa Cruz observatory recorded 30.6 cm of rain in 24 hours – a new record for September.

DELHI POWER CRISIS

DELHI CITIZENS WERE subjected to load-shedding for as long as five hours on September 23. Even essential services like airport, water supply and hospitals were affected. In Connaught Place, shopkeepers keep shutters down fearing pilferage.

ARMS RACE

PAKISTAN PRESIDENT GENERAL Zia-ul-Haq said his government would simply ignore the protests of India at the acquisition of arms by Pakistan. He said Pakistan had never raised any issue about India’s piling of arms.



Kolkata



THE IDEAS PAGE

The unicorn stampede

India is gaining at China's expense, but investors need to ask questions about long-term sustainability



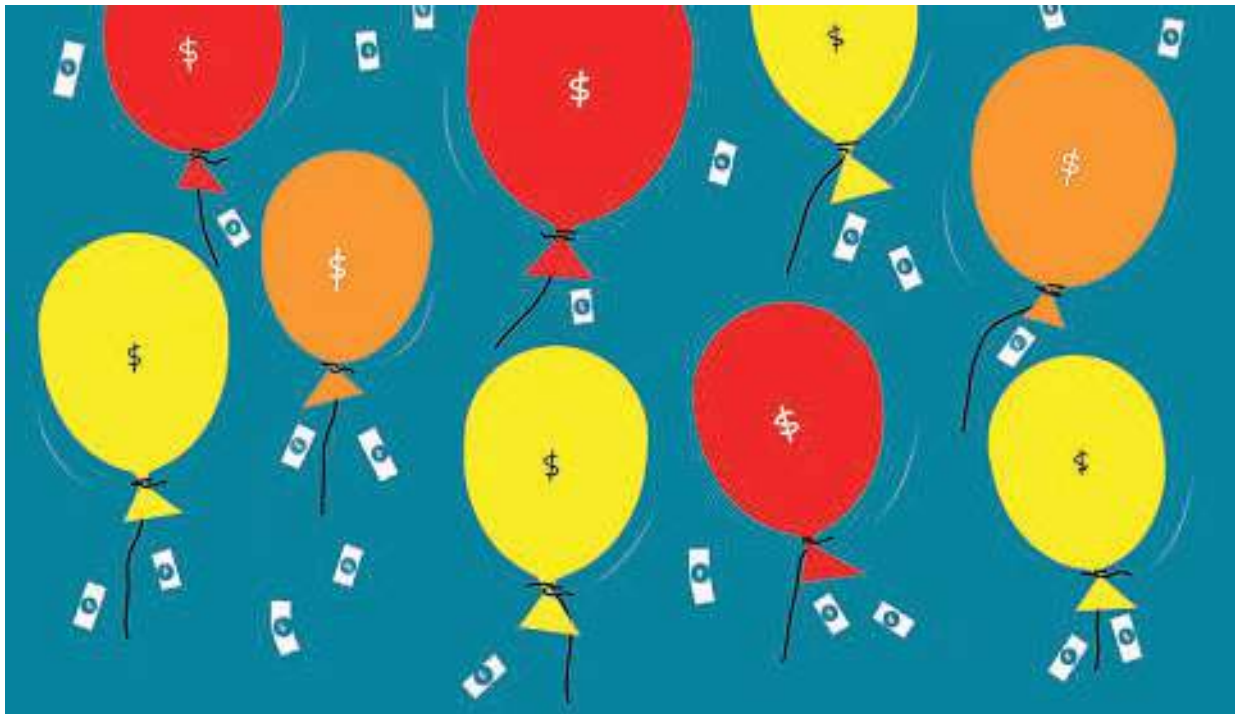
BHASKAR CHAKRAVORTI

TIGER GLOBAL MANAGEMENT, a New York-based investment firm, has a reputation for tracking and hunting unicorns — startups with billion dollar-plus valuations. This year, if we were to track the Tiger's shifting gaze, we would catch sight of an interesting migratory phenomenon: Fewer unicorn sightings in China — ordinarily the biggest unicorn habitat outside the US — and the beginnings of a unicorn stampede in India. While the shifting of the Tiger's gaze cannot be good for China, I worry it may not be good for India either.

But, first, let me step back up and fill in the story. For this, we begin in China, where President Xi Jinping seems hellbent on knee-capping its most dynamic sector. I speak of China's tech industry that contributed over 38 per cent to the country's GDP last year, and was key to managing both Covid and the economy. Nevertheless, Beijing has decided to crack down on the industry, wiping out \$1.5 trillion in market value. The crackdown began with the abrupt suspension of the much-anticipated initial public offering (IPO) of Ant Group last November, while founder, Jack Ma, the very face of Chinese tech worldwide, mysteriously went underground. To add to the intrigue, pressures on Ant only continued to mount. It wasn't just the Ant Group in the government's crosshairs. China's regulators stopped the ride-hailing company, Didi Chuxing, from accepting new users, as soon as it went public on the New York Stock Exchange. Founders of companies, such as JD.com, TikTok and Pinduoduo seem to have been sufficiently spooked to seek early retirement.

Then there have been sweeping industry-wide changes, from anti-monopoly legislation to new rules governing data collection and use. The state's shadow extends well beyond restricting capital markets access and tightening regulations. Weekends and holiday tutoring by private tutors are off-limits. Video games, on the other hand, can only be played on Fridays and weekends. Financial bloggers, whose data does not agree with official statistics, are being scrubbed out of existence. Male digital idols considered too effeminate are out of favour, as are certain digital celebrities and influencers.

Needless to say, all of this has investors spooked as well. Of all the major hedge funds, Tiger Global Management topped the list in terms of greatest exposure to the risks created by China's tech crackdown. As you might expect, Tiger needed to turn elsewhere, which brings us to its gaze turning towards India. While not new to the Indian market, Tiger's interest in India has spiked, and, of course, this has not escaped the attention of other investors. China may have four times the number of unicorns as India, but this year India has far outstripped China in newly minted unicorns; thanks to Tiger and those following its lead, for the first time since 2013, the value of venture deals in India surpassed that of China. Tiger's investment in Innovecer, for example, has given India its first health-tech unicorn.



C R Sasikumar

If this keeps up, India will experience a veritable blessing of unicorns — yes, "blessing" is the actual term for a herd of these mythical creatures — thanks not only to the fact that the money fleeing China needs refuge, but to many converging forces within India itself. India is the world's second largest digital market. The use of the United Payment Interface has made digital payments easier in a society that was — and still is — so tied to cash. The pandemic lockdowns have driven an unusually large proportion of that digital population to spend an unusually large amount of time and spend money online. This means that in a very short time, the need to serve this digital population has exploded. The Chinese crackdown could not have come at a more opportune time. Many startups are in a hurry to capitalise on the boom with many investors looking to capitalise them: Meesho will help you sell stuff on messaging apps; Razorpay can help with online payments; Chargebee can manage online subscriptions; ShareChat can get you into Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities over a vernacular social media platform.

While the emergence of a dynamic digital ecosystem is indeed exciting, there is reason to worry about the speed of this emergence. When investors rush in to seek refuge because they are fleeing risk elsewhere, even if the refuge looks promising, they can contribute to a self-reinforcing cycle that ends up destroying the refuge. The early investors draw in others who fear they are missing out, and more investors rush in, perpetuating the cycle. The cascading tranches of money over-capitalise startups by giving more money than what's needed to get to necessary milestones. Eager to get a piece of the action, each investor may over-value a company, far exceeding what is justifiable based on market fundamentals. The stampede builds and soon you have the makings of a tech bubble.

Instead of reflexively chasing the next shiny startup in India, investors ought to ask a few questions: Do the startups and the markets they serve have the capacity to scale up and do they justify sticking with them for a long period? Can these startups, eager to win customers with rock-bottom pricing, ever discover a path to profits, especially with Indian

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consumers used to bargains? What are the most plausible exit pathways for investors? Has the Indian initial public offerings market really proven itself? Does the experience of just one Zomato post-IPO tell us enough about the future of India's IPO potential? Are there enough large corporations that might buy these startups? Could the high initial valuations deter follow-up funding by future investors and acquirers? Have the risks of numerous regulatory uncertainties of India been adequately addressed? Will the still-rickety infrastructure, the poor track record of managing either Covid or the economy become obstacles for the startups, no matter how essential their services seem today? Can the under-investment in essentials, such as education, health and job market readiness, clog the talent pipeline? What happens to Indian digital habits in a post-Covid world, whenever that comes about? In a country that thrives on human contact, would people eventually take their eyes away from their screens and go back to the crowded shops, streets and buildings that are the very essence of India? Can the Indian government be trusted not to borrow a page from the government it would like to emulate — the Chinese state — and attempt a crackdown of its own?

Don't get me wrong: It is exciting to see this huge interest in India's tech startups — even if it is at the expense of another country. But it would be wise for investors to take a deep breath and ask a few questions. India desperately needs patient capital, skilled talent and appropriate technology to solve the country's numerous fundamental problems laid bare by the pandemic. The last thing India can afford is a bubble that bursts and for all three to take flight and seek refuge in yet another country because no one — not even Tiger — wants to pick up the pieces of a popped bubble. Let's make sure that the blessing of unicorns does not end up saddling India with a curse.

The writer is dean of Global Business at The Fletcher School at Tufts University, the founding executive director of Fletcher's Institute for Business in the Global Context and a non-resident senior fellow at the Centre for Social and Economic Progress

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"After unsuccessful military adventures in the Middle East and Central Asia, the Western bloc is looking to test the waters in East Asia and the Pacific Rim. Instead of flexing its military muscle, it needs to engage China — for once sparked, an arms race will be difficult to contain."

—DAWN

In Punjab, high command returns

Captain Amarinder Singh's gamble on a weak central leadership did not pay off. But the crisis within the party still simmers



ASHUTOSH KUMAR

THE RECENT EVENTS in the Punjab unit of the Congress recall the party high command's tradition of handling internal wrangling. As a dominant party in the "Nehruvian era", the Congress, as Rajni Kothari argued, played the dual role of the "ruling party" as well as the "party of opposition". The party then had powerful regional satraps from dominant land-holding communities, who enjoyed significant autonomy. The central leadership confined itself to a mediating role when a tussle among factional leaders would get out of control. This would change under Indira Gandhi, whose leadership style and norms were in stark contrast to Nehru. Her ascendance resulted in the Congress transitioning into a "centralist" party with the pre-eminence of "high command politics", the latter becoming a euphemism first for the leader and then the family.

The party chief ministers, nominated more on the basis of their loyalty than leadership skill or support base, would often have to go to Delhi to seek approval for even trivial issues related to the party or the government. The high command would tolerate or openly encourage factional leaders in the state units.

Captain Amarinder Singh is closer to a quintessential regional satrap of the Nehruvian era even though his political career commenced in the Indira-Rajiv era. Old ties with the family brought him to the party in 1980 and also allowed him to return in 1997. However, unlike other loyalists, Singh, a dominant Jat Sikh and a Patiala royal, succeeded in projecting himself as a leader who supported the cause of Sikhs and Punjabi Suba. His resignations first as a Congress MP in 1984 and then as an Akali Dal minister in 1986 over Operation Blue Star and Operation Black Thunder respectively strengthened this image. It was reinforced when he became the chief minister who helped pass the Punjab Termination of Agreements Bill in 2004, resulting in the annulment of the state's 1981 pact on the sharing of the Ravi and Beas river waters with Haryana and Rajasthan.

The Congress's wins against the Akali Dal-BJP combine in the 2002, 2017 and 2019 elections came under his leadership. Singh also showed considerable political skill to checkmate rival faction leaders, including former state presidents like Partap Singh Bajwa. Most importantly, in a state where religion, region, caste, kinship, language all play a role in influencing electoral choices, Singh, with his moderate secular nationalist image, was able to gain a state-wide support base, unlike his rivals.

It was this seemingly invincible leadership position that brought in him a fatal sense of complacency, especially after the win over Arun Jaitley in the 2014 elections in Amritsar. Defying the established rules of game, Singh threatened to break the party if not made the chief ministerial candidate in the 2017 elections. He was replaced by Bajwa as the state unit president after the 2012 electoral debacle, and had questioned the leadership ability of Rahul Gandhi.

In the last two years, he hardly visited Delhi, and defied the high command directive to bring back Navjot Sidhu, a protégé of the Gandhi siblings. Despite being called twice to Delhi and made to defend his poor record before the high command-appointed committee, which also passed on instructions to listen to dissident legislators' grievances, Singh failed to take visible corrective measures.

He also failed to fulfil the party's tall promises like generating employment, waiving farmers' debts, carrying out reforms in the power sector, bringing back industries, and ending the transport, sand, mining and land mafia raj. The refusal to change his laid-back leadership style, depending heavily only on a few trusted bureaucrats and trusted courtiers finally proved to be his undoing. His inexplicable reluctance to catch and punish the bigwigs responsible for the drug menace, the failure to take swift action against those responsible for sacrilege and the subsequent firing over protesting Sikhs gave rise to the popular perception that he had a tacit understanding with the tainted Akali leadership. The predicament of the rival Akali Dal and the BJP over the three contentious farm laws, which have become the rallying point for the landholding Jat Sikh farmers, hardly assured the legislators facing anti-incumbency.

Amid all this turmoil, Singh apparently stuck to his belief that a much-weakened high command would not dare take punitive action against him, given that it had not acted when faced with dissidence in the state party units like in Rajasthan. His long-term loyalty to the family was another factor. It was evident in the high command's attempt to foist a reluctant Ambika Soni as a stop-gap chief minister. That quarrelling faction leaders accepted the high command's decision uncritically reminded one of the Indira-Rajiv era.

With the appointment of Charanjit Singh Channi as the first Dalit chief minister, the party high command has tried to keep the factional fighting under check and also reap an electoral dividend, given the state's demography. It is, however, obvious that the leadership crisis is far from over, given the rebellious stance of the slighted Singh and leaders waiting in the wings to fight another day. The visible hand of the "high command" in the whole saga, reminiscent of the Indira era, places greater electoral responsibility on it in the forthcoming elections, a tall order by all means.

The writer is professor, department of political science, Panjab University



ANANYA AWASTHI

Gardens of plenty

Poshan Vatikas could bridge nutrition gap, help in livelihood generation

IN THE BACKDROP of the month-long celebrations for Poshan Maah in September 2021, the Ministry of Women and Child Development has been promoting the establishment of "Poshan Vatikas" across the country. Literally translating to nutri-gardens, the ministry plans to set up Poshan Vatikas across all anganwadi centres with the aim to provide a fresh supply of fruits, vegetables and even medicinal plants, especially in aspirational districts. With Prime Minister Narendra Modi's clarion call for "Atmanirbhar Bharat", the conceptual foundation of this programme builds on self-reliance and the adoption of sustainable food systems to address nutrition security amongst women and children. Nutri-gardens by themselves represent an exemplary global best practice which has the potential to address the multiple goals of diet diversity, nutrition security, agri-food cultivation, local livelihood generation and environmental sustainability.

The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) final guidelines, released in January 2021, give a sneak peek into the government's thinking behind the setting up of the Poshan Vatikas, with the launch of the Poshan 2.0 strategy shortly awaited. The guidelines state that the main objective of introducing Poshan Vatikas is to encourage community members to grow local food crops in their backyards and secure them with an inexpensive, regular and handy supply of fresh fruits and vegetables. This is directed towards addressing the micro-nutrient deficiencies through access to diverse and nutritious diets, coupled with the generation of economic activity for local cultivators

and village industries. The guidelines identify potential land spaces that can be utilised to set up the Vatikas, including anganwadi centres, panchayat areas, government schools, vacant lands or any other patch of community/government land available in the locality. Additionally, the guidelines also mandate retrofitting these gardens with backyard poultry and fishing as per the prevalent food culture, which can be particularly useful in addressing the protein requirements.

It is also hoped that the nutri-gardens may act as a demonstration site to educate children about the need for the consumption of fresh food produce and promote messaging for healthy dietary behaviours amongst women. Pointing towards the importance of multi-ministerial convergence, the guidelines emphasise the need for collective action by the Ministry of AYUSH, Ministry of Environmental Affairs, the MGNREGA scheme, Poshan Panchayats and mother groups. As an example, the government has been incentivising a drive for the plantation of moringa at all anganwadi centres. Moringa, also known as sehjan or drumstick, is a native Indian plant, rich in beta carotene, iron, vitamins A, B2, B6 and C5 and exhibits multiple health benefits, including antioxidant, antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, anti-cholesterol, anti-diabetic and even anti-cancer properties.

Turning to scientific research, a review of global evidence demonstrates that setting up of nutri-gardens can significantly improve awareness about dietary diversity and a preference for the consumption of fresh food pro-

duce, especially in children. Experiences with school-yard gardens in the US have demonstrated an increased dietary intake of vegetables and fruits amongst children. Similarly, research from South Africa shows that the setting up of nutri-gardens can increase the likelihood of fresh food consumption. In Nepal, some trials were complemented with sensitisation modules on nutrition education and sustainable agriculture, though lack of parent involvement and access to fresh food produce were cited as key gaps that prevented the uptake of fresh food produce in children's diets.

In India, the MS Swaminathan Research Foundation has been at the forefront of demonstrating the impact of nutri-gardens on increased consumption of fruits and vegetables. Interventions included distribution of seed kits for growing green leafy vegetables, roots and saplings of fruit trees (for example lemon, papaya, guava and mango) and moringa. This was supplemented with awareness generation workshops and cooking demonstrations.

Interestingly, a systematic review of evidence from India and other South Asian countries highlights that while nutri-gardens have been able to scientifically demonstrate an increase in intermediate outcomes like dietary diversity which is critical for nutritional outcomes, evidence is lacking or inconclusive around the impact of nutri-gardens on the long-term nutritional parameters of women and children. In this context, a nation-wide launch of Poshan Vatikas presents the government and academia with an excellent oppor-

tunity to generate local evidence around the efficacy of nutri-gardens on the health and nutrition outcomes of women and children. Moreover, results from such implementation research can be extremely useful in informing the operational guidelines for setting up of Poshan Vatikas by anganwadi workers, especially given the unique context of India's food diversity, geography and culture.

Finally, the proof is in the pudding. Success of the national strategy depends on how the Poshan Vatika programme is implemented. Expected barriers for implementation may include access to cultivable land, availability of a water source, protection against grazing, bandwidth and skill sets of anganwadi workers, supply of seeds and inputs, and coordination between diverse stakeholders for the translation of technical know-how on setting up of nutri-gardens. At the same time, the ministry also has an opportunity to promote Poshan Vatikas as a platform to increase convergence between its agriculture and nutrition policy, build capacity of anganwadi workers, including raising compensation for their expected labour, bridge the gap between production and consumption of fresh fruits, vegetables and animal produce, disseminate messages on the importance of diet diversity and, ultimately, scale up a best practice that can contribute towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

The writer is assistant director, Harvard School of Public Health — India Research Center. Views expressed are personal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

WELL EXPRESSED

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Not too hot' (IE, September 23). The theme — "too much comfort reduces the drive to survive" is beautifully expressed. This is one of the reasons why the paper remains "top of the pops".

Fali S Nariman, Delhi

DISTURBING ATTACK

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Draw the line' (IE, September 23). It's shameful to see a few goons aligned with a particular religious organisation attacking the house of Muslim MP from Hyderabad and AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi in Lutyen's Delhi, which is otherwise supposed to be a highly secured area where most VIPs reside. The Delhi Police, which reports directly to the Union Home Ministry, must act efficiently and quickly in nabbing the culprits. Otherwise, this incident will also be tagged as being sponsored by the central government or BJP. No individual or a group should dare to attack someone's house in broad daylight without fear of lawful agencies. The incident is certainly a matter of worry for the general public. If an MP is not safe in the most secure area of the national capital, then how can a common citizen expect to have safe and secure surroundings? To ensure the safety of its citizens, the concerned state police is entirely responsible and so, by bringing such anti-social elements to justice, the police can gain the confidence of the public. This will also prove that the police force can never afford to be biased against any religion or a political party.

Vandana, Chandigarh

BEYOND NEET

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'The case against NEET' (IE, September 22). There are a plethora of students sitting for the NEET and the number of seats is limited. The demand for doctors is evermore, especially in rural India. The reluctance of doctors from urban metropolises to work in rural areas makes the situation a perfect storm. Therefore, the government must set up more medical colleges catering to the demand for doctors in poverty-stricken areas. Also, an exam other than NEET must be conducted (just as there are multiple entrance exams to enter management institutes) so that the future of an individual does not hang on the performance of a single day.

Melvin Thomas, Bhopal

INDEPENDENT POLICY

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'AF-Pak ambush' (IE, September 23). Pakistan's insistence to include the Taliban in the SAARC summit and India unequivocally turning this down is a reality check for Pakistan and its new protégé. Western countries may dither over granting legitimacy to the Taliban but India ought to take an independent view, especially in terms of the US. The way things are unfolding, be it the UK's vaccine controversy or the non-inclusion of India in the newly-formed alliance AUKUS, thus making the QUAD feckless for all practical purposes, is a signal that the China-fear syndrome has clouded their thinking.

Deepak Singhla, Noida

8 EXPRESS NETWORK

DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



STATE MATTERS

THE JAL Shakti Ministry headed by Gajendra Singh Shekhawat has constituted a 34-member Hindi Salahkar Samiti, an advisory panel to promote the use of the language in the ministry's working. The panel, which has a three-year term and is headed by the minister, has four non-official nominated members. Incidentally, all four non-official members nominated by the ministry are from Shekhawat's home state Rajasthan. While two of them are from the minister's hometown Jodhpur, two others are from Jaipur. It is learnt that this is perhaps the first time in recent years that all four non-official members have been nominated from one state. In 2015, the committee constituted under the then Water Resources Minister Uma Bharati had four non-official members from three states – Delhi, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

ONLINE GAINS

AN ONLINE mechanism it set up during the pandemic to be in touch with party leaders and workers appears to be helping the Bihar BJP. With the BJP launching a three-week celebrations of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birthday, its Bihar unit leaders have good results to send to the central leadership. State unit president Sanjay Jaiswal, who had set up the online meetings with every district leadership on a daily basis, now gets the daily report on party activities before evening each day. Jaiswal takes at least 45 meetings online every month – apart from the physical meetings he has resumed – with every district team while his general secretaries take at least 100 meetings a month. The pandemic time has made every party worker comfortable with online meetings and now it is being used for the outreach programmes.

CRACKING THE WHIP

WITH THE National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) gaining popularity, the Education Ministry has a new headache – misleading advertisements by private higher education institutes. It has come to the ministry's notice that certain institutes are trying to lure students by misrepresenting their NIRF rankings. The reported violations include institutions highlighting state-wide and even district-wise ranks, which are not issued in the first place. Some institutions simply highlight their rank without mentioning the year. Institutions indulging in such misleading advertising campaigns will not be included in the annual NIRF exercise in the future, the ministry has now warned in a circular to all institutes.

UP ex-MLA, Brahmin face in party, Tripathi quits Congress

MAULSHREE SETH
LUCKNOW, SEPTEMBER 23



Laliteshpati Tripathi

ANOTHER BRAHMIN face of the Congress, former MLA Laliteshpati Tripathi, quit the party on Thursday, saying that those who sacrificed for the party from the days of Indira Gandhi were not given due respect and he felt helpless as he was not able to fight for them. Laliteshpati Tripathi, who held the post of vice-president of UP unit of the Congress, is the great-grandson of former CM Kamalapati Tripathi. Four generations of his family have been associated with the Congress.

"I no longer felt any logic to remain in the Congress... many party workers who have been associated with freedom struggle and stood by the party in

the time of crises, stood with Indira Gandhi. I was not able to fight for them. That is why, I resigned from the party's primary membership," Laliteshpati said at a press conference in Varanasi.

He said he had no bad feelings for the party leadership, including Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and Rahul Gandhi.

Asked if he will join another party, Tripathi said he would first discuss it with his supporters.

Earlier, former Union minister Jitin Prasada had quit the party to join the BJP.

In show of strength, Gurgaon BJP MP says no plan to retire soon

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
GURGAON, SEPTEMBER 23

SENDING A clear message to his detractors who, he claimed, were writing obituaries of his political career, BJP MP from Gurgaon, Rao Inderjit Singh, on Thursday said he does not plan to retire soon and will continue to contest elections.

Speaking at a 'Shaheed Diwas Samaroh' in Patauda village at Jhajjar, the 70-year-old said, "Some people have been opining that I should retire. I have given it a thought and decided that I have no plans to retire. Why should I? I am physically fit, mentally alert... I have no blood pressure issues, I don't suffer any seizures. I can run as

fast as a 50-year-old."

The rally was held to mark the "martyrdom" of Ahirwal king Rao Tula Ram and was billed as a show of strength for Singh. It came a month after Union Cabinet Minister Bhopendra Yadav held a 'Jan Ashirwad Yatra' in the Ahirwal region, sparking speculation of a change of guard within the party's state unit in South Haryana.

"If a farmer's son was not standing guard at the border to safeguard our country... if we do not respect their sacrifices, then Pakistan, China and Taliban will defeat us. We will raise voice for a separate Ahir regiment and we will also speak to farmers. There is a need to talk to them," he said.

5 held for fine on Dalit whose child strayed into temple

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU, SEPTEMBER 23

THE POLICE in Karnataka's Koppal district have arrested five people who were involved in the imposition of a penalty of Rs 25,000 on a Dalit family whose three-year-old boy had wandered into a temple in Kusthagi taluk.

The incident took place on September 4 in Miyapur village where the entry of Dalits into the local temple is forbidden. Police sources said the five people they arrested are linked to the temple and the local panchayat.

These sources said the family had gone near the temple on the occasion of the boy's birthday, when he entered the temple. The priest and other village elders held a meeting on September 11 and imposed a fine of Rs 25,000 on the Dalit family.

"The fine was imposed by saying the temple had to be cleansed and rituals conducted after the Dalit boy entered," a police officer said. The family belonged to the Channadasar community among Dalits while the five arrested people are from the OBC Ganiga caste.

The child's father was reluctant to file a complaint as he feared his family would face a backlash from the village.

Covid-19 jabs at home for the disabled: Govt

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 23

ALMOST EIGHT months after it rolled out the Covid-19 vaccination drive across the country, the Centre on Thursday announced the introduction of home vaccination for the those with restricted mobility, disability and special needs.

Also, in its first official statement over the UK's new travel guidance not recognising Covid-19 vaccination certificates issued by India, the Union Health Ministry said that "both sides are in dialogue" and a "quick resolution" to the issue will be found.

Announcing the home vaccination provision, head of India's Covid-19 task force Dr V K Paul said, "I am pleased to inform you that we have made new provisions. For those persons, whose mobility is such that they cannot be moved out of the house for vaccination, or those who have a disability, or if someone has special needs that they cannot go to a vaccination centre, we have made new provisions."

"For them, under supervision at home and by following SoPs, we will make provisions for vaccination at home. The orders and advisory have been issued," Dr

Paul said.

He said district-level immunisation officers will continue to follow the same SoPs for vaccination at home, including the critical aspect of monitoring adverse events following immunisation.

"We have confidence that our vaccines are safe. The arrangements we will make for home vaccination would be effective, safe, supportive, and nurturing. And it will follow all the SoPs. It is an important development. We will encourage teams at local level to participate and connect with this new system," Dr Paul said.

The decision to roll out vaccination at home in special cases comes at a time when India has completed administering first dose of the Covid-19 vaccine to 66 per cent of the estimated adult population and both doses to 23 per cent of the eligible population.

Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan emphasised that there has been "equitable access" to Covid-19 vaccination.

"A substantial proportion of vaccines has been administered at rural vaccination centres. In rural centres, 45.75 crore doses have been administered, while 25.42 crore doses have been administered in the urban centres," he said, adding that between May 1

and September 22, only 6 per cent of the total doses have been administered in private hospitals concentrated in urban centres.

On the issue of the UK travel guidance qualifying Covishield as an approved vaccine but not the Covid-19 vaccination certificates issued in India, Bhushan said, "On United Kingdom, let me reiterate what Ministry of External Affairs has already underlined."

"First, we believe that the dispensation that is proposed to be implemented from October is a discriminatory practice. Two, both the sides are in dialogue. We believe that a quick resolution will be found. Third, we do reserve the right to reciprocate in a similar manner."

On Thursday, after meeting National Health Authority CEO Dr R S Sharma, British High Commissioner to India Alex Ellis posted on Twitter that neither India nor UK raised technical concerns with the vaccination certification process.

"Excellent technical discussions with @rssharma3 @AyushmanNHA. Neither side raised technical concerns with each other's certification process. An important step forward in our joint aim to facilitate travel and fully protect public health of UK and India," Ellis tweeted.

'Push for shorter Covishield gap'

Bengaluru: The technical advisory committee advising the Karnataka government on the Covid-19 pandemic has asked the state to ask the Centre to reduce the gap between the two doses of the Covishield vaccine.

The committee has sought the shortening of the span of dosages from the current 84 days to around one month to broaden the spread of vaccination. "We told the government to write to the Centre to reduce the gap between the first and second dose of Covishield. It is primarily because the vaccine supplies are good now and we have to keep in mind a possible third wave if a new variant emerges," said committee chairman Dr M K Sudarshan,

ENS

Deputy CM meets CM, state BJP sends report



SANTOSH SINGH
PATNA, SEPTEMBER 23

A DAY after *The Indian Express* reported that contracts worth over Rs 53 crore were awarded under Bihar's Har Ghar Nal Ka Jal scheme to family members and aides of Deputy Chief Minister Tarkishore Prasad, the BJP leader met Chief Minister Nitish Kumar in what, he said, was "a review meeting of the Mines Department". But sources said the Chief Minister also raised the findings of *The Indian Express* investigation and asked Prasad to "explain his side of the story in the public domain".

Prasad also issued a statement targeting the Opposition RJD for "playing up" the issue. "The Opposition should engage in constructive criticism but has been trying to divert attention from serious charges of corruption they have faced... I have been trying to meet the goals and high standards set by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and former Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi," he said.

Meanwhile, the Bihar BJP unit has sent a "report" to the party's central leadership on *The Indian Express* investigation into the award of contracts to family members of Prasad. Sources said the report was sent after an "emergency meeting" on Wednesday evening when BJP state chief Sanjay Jaiswal and general secretary (organisation) Bhikubhai Dalsaniya met Prasad.

BJP sources said the "emergency meeting" was held on the instructions of the central leadership. "We have sent a report and are waiting for further directions," they said.

Sources said that while engaging in business activities is

"not bad or wrong" in itself, the report has noted that "it would be better if elected functionaries are more careful since they are public representatives and always under scrutiny".

The ongoing investigation by *The Indian Express* found that in 2019-20, Bihar's PHED allotted 36 projects under the scheme in Katihar, from where Prasad is a four-time MLA, to his daughter-in-law Puja Kumari – and two firms linked to his brother-in-law Pradeep Kumar Bhagat; and aides Prashant Chandra Jaiswal, Lalit Kishore Prasad and Santosh Kumar.

The investigation found that the award of contracts covers a range of beneficiaries: from JD(U) ex-state secretary Anil Singh, whose family got projects worth at least Rs 80 crore, to BJP MLA Vinod Narayan Jha's nephew, who was awarded contracts worth around Rs 3.5 crore in 2019-20 when his uncle was PHED Minister.

On Wednesday, Jaiswal had defended Prasad, saying that his "family and aides had got contracts in 2019-20 when he was an MLA".

On Thursday, JD(U) leader Anil Singh's son Mrityunjay Kumar told *The Indian Express*: "My family has been in the contract business for over 40 years. We have carried out road work, and taken up other contracts inside and outside Bihar. We have been doing our work in a professional manner. The allotment of Nal Jal contracts has nothing to do with the political affiliation of my father. We qualified through the bidding process."

The Indian Express found that Kumar and his wife Ankita Singh are directors of Fadle Chem Pvt Ltd, which was allotted Har Ghar Nal Ka Jal contracts in 2019-20.

Another beneficiary, Mohammed Sarfaraz of Sheikhpura whose brother Mohammed Khalid got contracts in Ariari, said: "I engage in politics but I am not associated with any specific party. I am the former mukhiya of Chordagah panchayat." (WITH INPUTS FROM LIZ MATHEW)



POWER MOVES: Punjab CM Charanjit Singh Channi performs bhangra on stage with students at IK Gujral Punjab Technical University in Kapurthala. A video was also shared by the CM's Office Twitter handle. *Express*

Congress high command calls Channi to Delhi for 'cabinet list'

KANCHAN VASDEV
CHANDIGARH, SEPTEMBER 23

THE CONGRESS high command Thursday called newly appointed Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi to Delhi – amid confusion over the final list of names for his council of ministers.

Channi, who arrived in the national capital in the evening, discussed the list with All India Congress Committee (AICC) general secretary in-charge of Punjab affairs Harish Rawat. Channi also met party leaders KC Venugopal and Harish Chaudhary. He was scheduled to meet Rahul Gandhi but it could not be confirmed if the meeting took place.

State Congress president Navjot Sidhu was not called to Delhi.

Working president of the Punjab Congress, Sangat Singh Gilzian, and party leader Manpreet Singh Badal were also in Delhi, sources said.

Sources privy to the development said that Channi and his team and Sidhu have shortlisted 23 MLAs out of which 15 would be inducted. The list is to be vetted by Rahul Gandhi.

'Reciprocal tourism' likely as India set to allow foreign tourists

DIVYAA
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 23

AS INDIA looks to restart tourist visas and allow international tourists after a gap of one-and-a-half years, "reciprocal tourism" may be the way forward, according to sources in the Ministry of Tourism.

On Wednesday, while addressing the Global Covid Summit hosted by US President Joe Biden, Prime Minister

Cong says no place for anger in politics, Capt hits back: Is there for insult?

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 23

A DAY after former Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh called Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra "inexperienced", questioned the way the party was being "run from Delhi" and vowed to defeat state Congress chief Navjot Singh Sidhu in the Assembly polls scheduled next year, the Congress on Thursday said it was natural for elders to get angry but reminded him that there is no room for anger in politics.

The Congress's suggestion seemed to have irked Singh more, as he hit back, asking whether there is space for humiliation and insult in a "grand old party" such as the Congress.

Singh's remarks came after Congress spokesperson Supriya Shrinate, while replying to a question on Singh's outburst, told reporters at an AICC briefing that "he is perhaps of my father's age. Elders get angry... they get very angry, and at times say so many things in anger. But we all respect his anger, his age, and his experience. I hope he will reconsider it."



Amarinder Singh

But, she added, "there is no place for anger, envy... personal comments... revengeful feelings have no place in politics. We hope he will be sensible and reconsider what he has said because he is a strong warrior of the Congress party... such remarks don't suit his stature..." Replying to another question, Shrinate said people take decisions in politics, some for their own interests and some for the interests of their constituency.

Reacting to Shrinate's comment, the former CM's media adviser, Raveen Thukral, put out a tweet quoting Singh as having said, "Yes, there's no space for anger in politics. But is there space for humiliation & insult in a grand old party like @INCIndia? If a senior party leader like me can be treated like this, I wonder what the workers must go through!"

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 23

THE GOVERNMENT Thursday placed an order for 118 new Arjun Mk-1A battle tanks, which have superior firepower, all-terrain mobility and multi-layered protection compared to older models. Arjun has been a mainstay of the Army for the last 15 years.

The new tanks, developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation, will be manufactured at the government's Heavy Vehicles Factory in Chennai. The order is worth Rs 7,523 crore.

The government said in a statement that the new variant of the Main Battle Tank (MBT) has 72 new features and more indigenous features compared to the Mk-1.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had handed over the MBT Arjun Mk-1A to Army Chief General MM Naravane in Chennai on February 14.

"The state-of-the-art MBT Mk-1A is a new variant of Arjun Tank designed to enhance fire power, mobility and survivability. Infused with 72 new features and more indigenous content from the Mk-1 variant, the tank would



As compared to the Mk-1, the new tank has 72 new features and more indigenous ones, the government said.

PB

ensure effortless mobility in all terrains, besides precise target engagement during day and night," the statement said.

It said the DRDO designed it "by incorporating numerous upgrades on Arjun MBT, the in-service main battle tank with the Indian Army".

"It can take on the enemy during day and night conditions and in both static and dynamic modes. By virtue of these capabilities, this indigenous MBT proves to be at par with any contemporary in its class across the globe. This tank is particularly configured and designed for Indian conditions and hence it is suitable for deployment to protect the frontiers in an effective manner."

The government also said that the production of these tanks will

open up avenues in defence manufacturing for over 200 Indian vendors with employment opportunities to around 8,000 people. This will be a flagship project showcasing the indigenous capability in cutting edge defence technologies, the statement said.

The MBT Arjun Mk-1A has been designed and developed by Combat Vehicles Research and Development Establishment (CVRDE), along with other laboratories of DRDO within two years (2010-12). Extensive trial evaluation was conducted in various phases covering over 7,000 km (both in DRDO and user trials) of automotive and substantial firing of various ammunitions during 2012-2015, the statement mentioned.

instisted upon mutual recognition of vaccination certificates.

Officials say the opening up is expected to be phase-wise to gauge the response and implications, if any. "Deliberations are on – when to open, how to open, and for whom. Keeping in view low infection rate in the country and vaccination status, calibrated opening is being contemplated," said a senior official, adding that they were expecting a complete reopening by January 2022.

9 ECONOMY

SENSEX: 59,885.36 ▲ 958.03 (1.63%) NIFTY: 17,822.95 ▲ 276.30 (1.57%) NIKKEI: 29,639.40 ▼ 200.31 HANG SENG: 24,510.98 ▲ 289.44 FTSE: 7,078.64 ▼ 4.73 DAX: 15,628.51 ▲ 121.77

International market data till 1900 IST

CORPORATE WATCH
IL&FS TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS LTD

NFRA finds lapses in ITNL audit: FY18 losses 'understated' by at least ₹2,021 cr

ENSECONOMICBUREAU
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 23

THE NATIONAL Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA) has found major lapses in the audit of IL&FS Transportation Networks Ltd (ITNL) for FY18, conducted by EY network firm SRBC and Co LLP.

The audit quality report found that ITNL's losses for FY18 were understated by at least Rs 2,021 crore and that its financial statements did not appropriately value the Rs 3,346-crore exposure to its subsidiaries, associates and joint ventures. The report also found that the appointment of SRBC & Co as statutory auditor of ITNL was illegal, as firms related to the auditor had provided management and other non-audit services that they are prohibited from providing to their clients to ITNL in the relevant period.

"The initial appointment of SRBC & Co LLP, and the continuation of SRBC & Co LLP, as statutory auditor of ITNL, was prima facie illegal and void," the NFRA said. It has also previously given an audit quality report on the statutory audit of IL&FS Financial Services (IFIN) by KPMG network firm BSR & Co, finding similar violations of rules on the provision of non-audit services by statutory auditor and even debarred a former Deloitte India partner for his role as statutory auditor of IFIN for FY18.

Defaults by the IL&FS Group, including ITNL, in 2018 had led to a severe liquidity crunch for non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) and triggered the government to move to supersede the board of directors of the group.

"The company's losses during 2017-18 were understated by at least Rs 2,021 crore on account of unjustified reversal of Expected Credit Loss

"The company's losses during 2017-18 were understated by at least Rs 2,021 crore on account of unjustified reversal of Expected Credit Loss on loans given to the SPV and on trade receivables, and due to incorrect impairment valuation"

NATIONAL FINANCIAL
REPORTING AUTHORITY
IN AUDIT QUALITY REPORT

(ECL) on loans given to the SPV and on trade receivables, and due to incorrect impairment valuation," the NFRA said in its audit quality report.

The regulator noted that there was a "clear attempt to obscure material information in the financial statements" regarding the ECL reversal.

"We are disappointed with the conclusions in the Audit Quality Review report of ITNL for FY2017-18. SRBC & Co LLP (SRBC) had performed the audit as per the applicable standards and highlighted the issue relating to going concern in our limited review report for the June 2018 quarter," a spokesperson for SRBC & Co said, adding the firm had fully cooperated with the NFRA over its two-year enquiry and provided all requested information.

The NFRA noted that the audit firm had failed to appropriately "evaluate the use of the going concern basis of accounting" by management and failed to note implications of this in its report.

The regulator also concluded that SRBC & Co's engagement quality control partner "failed to report material misstatements known to him" and that he did not exercise due diligence in obtaining information to evaluate judgements made by the firm's engagement team.

ASK FOR CLARITY ON FORM IN WHICH BONDS SHOULD BE HELD

G-Sec Retail Direct: Mkt players seek easy KYC, interoperability

SUNNY VERMA &
SANDEEP SINGH
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 23

FOR EFFECTIVE implementation of the RBI Retail Direct platform for Government Securities (G-secs), market participants are pushing for tweaks in the rules, seeking relaxation in KYC norms, interoperability for buyers and a clarity on whether bonds bought through the retail direct platform must be held in demat form. Investments done directly by retail investors in G-sec may also not reflect in the single record of all financial assets, as being envisaged under the account aggregator guidelines, sources said.

The Reserve Bank of India in July unveiled a scheme allowing retail investors to directly participate in the G-sec market. They can open and maintain a 'Retail Direct Gilt Account' (RDG Account) with the RBI through a portal, which will also provide access to primary issuance of G-secs and the secondary market as well. G-secs held in demat mode are reflected in the CSDL or Constituent Subsidiary General Ledger (SGL) account of the depositories.

TN CM releases book on journey of Srinivasan Services Trust

ENSECONOMICBUREAU
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 23

TAMIL NADU Chief Minister M K Stalin on Wednesday released a book *A Silent Revolution* that traces the 25-year journey of Srinivasan Services Trust, the social arm of TVS Motor Company and Sundaram-Clayton.

The book, which marks Srinivasan Services Trust's work in rural development, was penned by Snigdha Parupudi and published by HarperCollins India. "Twenty five years ago when we set up SST, we were not quite sure how our social work will shape up. Our premise was centred around group's guiding values of maintaining trust," Srinivasan Services Trust managing trustee Venu Srinivasan said.

EXPLAINED
What is the scheme

THE PRESENT scheme announced by RBI enables individual investors to directly open on-line Retail Direct Gilts account with the central bank. Now, a retail investor can place a direct bid on NDS-OM as well as trade in the secondary market.

"If a demat account holder in CDSL sells the G-Sec to a buyer whose demat account is with NSDL, then transfer between these accounts is not online; it entails pre approval from the Public Debt Office (of the RBI) and hence not seamless. This is in sharp contrast to the transfer of other securities between these two Depositories, whose systems are interoperable. The PDO is the depository for G-secs and is outside the ambit of the Depositories Act," a source in the debt market said.

Sources said this lack of interoperability may create liquidity is-

sues for trading in the secondary market in a stock exchange, as settlement has to be done on T+2 (transaction plus two days) basis.

In 2005, RBI created its online platform, Negotiated Dealing System (NDS-OM), operated by the Clearing Corporation and Indian Ltd (CCIL), for issue of G-secs. At present, the RBI's Core Banking Solution (E-Kuber), trading platform (NDS-OM), depository system (PDO/SGL) and clearing and settlement by CCIL, together provide a comprehensive, seamless end-to-end platform for trading and settlement of G-secs for banks and select institutional investors on T+1 basis with settlement guarantee.

The present scheme announced by RBI enables individual investors to directly open on-line Retail Direct Gilts account (account) with the central bank. Now, a retail investor can place a direct bid on NDS-OM as well as trade in the secondary market. So far, only institutional players like banks, primary dealers, insurance companies, mutual funds, foreign portfolio investors and high net worth individuals had direct access to this platform. Gilts are normally traded on NDS-OM in lots of

Rs 5 crore each, but retail investors have been allowed to trade with a minimum investment of Rs 10,000.

Sources said fresh mandate on KYC with the RBI should not be mandatory as bank already have KYC on the investors and can also use the common KYC mechanism being used across financial service providers. "The scheme is also silent on whether G-secs held in this retail account in SGL mode can be demated. Moreover, as RBI is not a Financial Information Provider under its Account Aggregator Directions, the investment held in this account will not reflect in the single record of all financial assets. These issues need to be addressed," a market participant said.

Some industry executives feel that G-secs should be held preferably on the stock market's depository platform instead of the SGL system for convenience of investors. "Slightly over 50 per cent of Sovereign Gold Bonds (SGB) are held in demat mode. Although SGBs are available for subscription in SGL mode also, retail investors prefer demat mode. We believe this can be made the preferred mode for G-secs also," they said.

Digital cos data hegemony may lead to attention economy: CCI Chairperson

ENSECONOMICBUREAU
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 23

COMPETITION COMMISSION of India Chairperson Ashok Kumar Gupta on Thursday, while addressing a conference by Assocham, flagged that data hegemony by some digital firms may lead to "attention economy" in which big tech players work to capture user attention, build profiles of their choices and sell those to advertisers.

While noting rapid changes are happening in markets, which are increasingly shifting to a digital platform-centric configuration, he said these platform markets are by their very nature "winner-takes-all or winner-takes-most". WITH PTI

SURGES 1.63%; NEARS 60,000

Sensex shrugs off Fed taper talks, hits record

ENSECONOMICBUREAU
MUMBAI, SEPTEMBER 23

DRIVEN BY retail investors, stock markets continued to scale new highs on the back of abundant liquidity and strong global cues, with Sensex almost on the verge of hitting the 60,000 level.

Led by realty, banking and capital goods shares, the Sensex jumped 958 points, or 1.63 per cent, to 59,885.36 and the NSE Nifty Index shot up 276 points, or 1.57 per cent, to 17,822.95 as retail investors continued their buying frenzy despite valuations ballooning to high levels.

The upsurge was on the back of impressive gains in realty stocks on the back of economic recovery. US markets are leading the bull rally from the front, ignoring even tapering indications from the US Federal Reserve. All previous bull markets in India – 1992-92, 1994, 1998-2000 and 2003-07 – were

BoE split over QE widens

London: The Bank of England said inflation would rise above 4 per cent later this year, and two policymakers called for an early end to its quantitative easing programme. It kept its interest rate unchanged at 0.1 per cent on Thursday and stuck to its 895 billion pound asset purchase target. **REUTERS**

followed by corrections of 5 per cent, 10 per cent and even 20 per cent. "But this will change and the market will correct, perhaps soon, since valuations are hard to justify," said V K Vijayakumar, chief investment strategist at Geojit Financial Services.

Meanwhile, the rupee rebounded 23 paise to close at 73.64.

Private bank deposit share rises to 30.5% at the cost of PSBs: RBI

ENSECONOMICBUREAU
MUMBAI, SEPTEMBER 23

SHARE OF private sector banks in total bank deposits continued to rise "at the cost of public sector banks" and stood at 30.5 per cent against 29.5 per cent a year ago, according to the Reserve Bank of India data.

Private banks account for about half of the deposits of financial and non-financial corporations as well as rest of the world sectors, the RBI said. Out of total Rs 154.43 lakh crore deposits, private banks account for Rs 46.23 lakh crore as of March 2021. While there were 21.13 lakh bank accounts, private banks had 3.35 lakh accounts and PSU banks 14.68 lakh accounts.

"With the downward shift in the interest rates on term deposits, the share of term deposits carrying less than 6 per cent interest rate surged to 69.0 per cent in March 2021 from 21.3 per cent a year ago," the RBI said. The interest rate bracket "5 to less than 6 per cent had highest concentration (36.8 per cent) of term deposits, it said.

According to the RBI, majority of term deposits were originally

HOUSEHOLD SECTOR

64.1%

■ Among institutional categories, the household sector held 64.1 per cent share in total deposits.

contracted for 'one year to less than three years' maturity. The share of short-term deposits (original maturity of less than one year) rose to 32.8 per cent (25.4 per cent a year ago); in terms of residual maturity, 75.7 per cent of the term deposits were due for maturity within one year. Among institutional categories, the household sector held 64.1 per cent share in total deposits. Individuals – including Hindu Undivided Families (HUFs) – were the major constituent of the household sector and contributed 55.8 per cent in aggregate deposits, the RBI said.

Bank deposits of non-financial corporations surged by 18.8 per cent during 2020-21 and their share in total deposits increased to 16.2 per cent in March-2021, it said.

BRIEFLY

AGMs get time

New Delhi: Companies will get an additional time of two months beyond September to conduct their annual general meetings for the fiscal year ended March 2021.

'Job recovery'

New Delhi: Recovery in employment after Covid disruptions has been uneven, said CME. Employment in August was 5.7 million lower than it was in 2019-20.

Amazon jobs

New Delhi: Amazon India on Thursday said it has created more than 1.1 lakh seasonal job opportunities. Separately, it said it has infused Rs 450 crore into Amazon Pay.

'Bottomed out'

New Delhi: The economy has bottomed out and the formal sector is likely to get back to pre-Covid levels by the end of this year, ex-Deputy Chairman of erstwhile Planning Commission Montek Singh Ahluwalia said.

OYO IPO

New Delhi: OYO is planning to raise up to \$1.2 billion via an IPO and is expected to file draft red herring prospectus next week, sources said. **PTI**

Antitrust probe

Brussels: Google is seeking to settle an EU antitrust investigation into its digital advertising business, a person familiar with the matter said. **REUTERS**



TAIGUN LAUNCHED

Brand director of Volkswagen Passenger Cars India Ashish Gupta launching the Taigun. The vehicle, priced at a range of Rs 10.49-17.49 lakh, is the brand's first product offering in the mid-size SUV segment. Credit: Company

Most states to submit discom project report by Oct 31, says Singh

ENSECONOMICBUREAU
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 23

POWER MINISTER R K Singh said on Thursday all states were working on preparing proposals to reduce losses and modernise state power distribution companies to avail of funds under the Centre's Rs 3.03-lakh-crore discom reform scheme.

"All states are preparing their schemes (reports)... In my meetings most states said they will be able to submit their schemes by October 31," he added.

Singh said most states would be able to submit detailed project reports on efforts to cut losses

by October 31, the final deadline under the scheme, which was later extended to December 31. The Minister added the government had also agreed to extend the time frame for state governments to pay subsidy arrears to discoms to four years from three years after discussions with state governments keeping in mind the stress on state finances due to the pandemic.

He noted that a recent spike in power demand had prompted him and the Coal Minister to speak with the Environment Minister about coal mines where production had not yet been started as they were still awaiting clearances.

Some users facing 'difficulties', will 'streamline' I-T portal: Infy

ENSECONOMICBUREAU
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 23

INFOSYS ON Thursday acknowledged that some users continue to experience difficulties in accessing the income tax portal and assured that it is working expeditiously, in collaboration with the Income Tax Department, to further stream-

line end-user experience.

The Bengaluru-based company said the portal has seen steady increase in usage over the last few weeks, and more than three crore taxpayers have logged into it and successfully completed various transactions.

"Even as the portal makes sustained progress with crores of taxpayers successfully performing transactions, the company ac-

knowledges the difficulties some users continue to experience and is working expeditiously, in collaboration with the I-T Department, to further streamline end-user experience," Infosys said in a statement.

It added that over the last few weeks, the portal has seen steady increase in usage with "taxpayers' concerns being progressively addressed".

Rajasthan Medical Services Corporation Limited (RMSC)
D-Block, Swasthya Bhawan, C-Scheme, Jaipur-302005
Phone No: 0141-2223887, Fax: 0141-2228065 E-mail: mdmsco@nic.in; edepmmsco-rj@nic.in
CIN:U24232RJ2011SGC035067 Website: www.rmssc.health.rajasthan.gov.in
No. F-8/RMSC/EPMM-6/NIB-624/2021-22/1097 Dated: 20.9.2021

Notice Inviting Bid (NIB-624/2021-22)

Sealed Single Stage Two-envelopes unconditional online Bids for Two Year Rate Contract, are invited on behalf of the Governor of Rajasthan for the procurement of Goods as listed below, from *Manufacturer/Direct Importer* only as per the Bidding Schedule given below:

S.No.	Detail	Information
1	NIB No.	624/2021-22
2	Name of goods	1. Wheel chair 2. Patient Attendant Benches with mattress
3	Estimated Bid value	Rs. 2,60,76000/-
4	Bid download start date and time	20.09.2021 : 06:00 p.m.
5	Last date, time of receipt of bid	11.10.2021 : 06 p.m.
6	UBN	MSC2122GLR00080

Details of the bidding documents can be accessed or download from the website "sppp.raj.nic.in" or "www.diponline.org" or "https://eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in" or "www.rmssc.health.rajasthan.gov.in".
Raj, Samwadi/C6419/2021-22 Executive Director (EPM), RMSC, Jaipur

NPCL NOIDA POWER COMPANY LIMITED
CIN:U31200UP1992PLC014506

Notice Inviting Bids for Procurement of Power on Short Term basis

Bids are invited by "Noida Power Company Limited having its registered office at Electric Sub-station, Knowledge Park-IV, Greater Noida – 201310 (U.P.)" for procurement of up to 160 MW power during 11.10.2021 to 31.03.2022 as per the Guidelines of Ministry of Power, Govt dated 30.03.2016. Bid Document is available on www.mstcecommerce.com.

The Company reserves the right to reject all or any of the Bids or cancel the bidding process at any stage without assigning any reasons whatsoever and without any liability.

For any clarification, contact at e-mail ipowertrading@noidapower.com or mobile no. 9718804966.

Head (Power Purchase)

RailTel
(A Government of India Undertaking)
CIN No L64202DL2008GO107965
Tender No: RGIL_ER_2021-22_1315-1318
Dt: 23.09.2021
RailTel/E-Region invites E-Tender from eligible bidders for "Hiring of dark fibre in Bharat Coking Coal Ltd.'s Area in Jharkhand State for RailTel Corporation of India Ltd., Eastern Region."

Tender Notice & Tender Document are available on www.railtelindia.com and <https://www.ireps.gov.in>. Addendum/corrigendum will be uploaded in RailTel website only.

DELHI JAL BOARD : DELHI SARKAR
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (SOUTH) II
JAL SADAN : LAJPAT NAGAR : NEW DELHI-110024
STOP CORONA: "Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene"
NIT No. 24/S-II/2021-22
Press Tender

S. No.	Name of work	Reserve price	Date of release of tender in e procurement slution	Last date and time for download & RTGS through e procurement solution
1	Replacement of existing old/ damaged badly silted up sewer line Gali No.11 Govind Puri under EE(S) II (AC-51)	29,24,255/-	2021_DJB_208570_7 18.9.2021	6.10.2021 upto 2:00 PM
2	Improvement of water supply by Providing / replacement of old GI networks in B-Block Transit Camp Govind Puri under EE(S) II (AC-51 Kalkaji)	35,51,927/-	2021_DJB_208570_8 18.9.2021	6.10.2021 upto 2:00 PM
3	Improvement of sewerage system by replacement of outfall of C-Block peripheral sewer line at Defence Colony by trenchless technology under EE(S) II (AC-42 Kasturba Nagar)	Item rate	2021_DJB_208570_9 18.9.2021	6.10.2021 upto 2:00 PM
4	Replacement of existing old water lines frm Budha Chowk to C-Lal Chowk at Gali No.7 Govind Puri under EE(S) II (AC-51 Kalkaji)	47,13,932/-	2021_DJB_208570_10 18.9.2021	6.10.2021 upto 2:00 PM

Further details in this regard can be seen at govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in

ISSUED BY P.R.O (WATER)
Advt. No. J.S.V. 418 (2021-22)

Sd/-
(Ashok kumar)
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (SOUTH) II

10 The World

TOPOF THE WORLD



Heidi Crowter arrives at the High Court in London, Thursday. AP

BRITAIN

Woman with Down syndrome loses abortion law challenge

A WOMAN with Down syndrome lost a court challenge against the British government Thursday over a law allowing the abortion up until birth of a fetus with the condition. Heidi Crowter, 26, and two others took the Department of Health and Social Care to court, arguing that part of the Abortion Act is discriminatory. Abortions in Britain are allowed up till 24 weeks of pregnancy. But the law states that terminations can be allowed up until birth if there's "a substantial risk that if the child were born it would suffer from such physical or mental abnormalities as to be seriously handicapped," which includes Down syndrome. Crowter has said that she found the legislation "offensive" and disrespectful. AP

USA

Carmakers, Intel, Apple to attend White House meet on chip shortage

INTEL CHIEF Executive Pat Gelsinger plans to attend a virtual White House meeting on the global chip shortage on Thursday, along with representatives from companies including Apple, Microsoft, Samsung Electronics, GM and Ford, sources said. The meeting will be hosted by US Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo and National Economic Council Director Brian Deese. Topics will include the impact of the coronavirus Delta variant on chip supplies and how to better coordinate between chip producers and consumers. REUTERS

ISRAEL

Custody case opens over boy, 6, sole survivor of cable car disaster

A TEL AVIV family court held its first hearing Thursday in a custody battle over a six-year-old boy, the sole survivor of an Italian cable car disaster, who was taken to Israel by his grandfather without permission of family in Italy. Family members based in the two countries dispute who should look after Eitan Biran, whose parents, younger brother and 11 other people all died when a gondola plunged to the ground in northern Italy in May. REUTERS

'WHAT WOULD IT BECOME? JAIKUS? JAIAUKUS?': WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECY

US rules out adding India or Japan to security alliance with Australia, UK

LALIT K JHA

WASHINGTON, SEPTEMBER 23

THE US has ruled out adding India or Japan to the new Indo-Pacific trilateral security partnership with Australia and Britain.

On September 15, US President Joe Biden, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson jointly announced the formation of the trilateral security alliance AUKUS, under which Australia would get a fleet of nuclear-powered submarines for the first time.

"The announcement of AUKUS last week was not meant to be an indication, and I think this is the message the President also sent to (French President Emmanuel) Macron, that there is no one else who will be involved in security in the Indo-Pacific," White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki told reporters at her daily news conference on Wednesday.

Psaki was responding to a question if countries like India and Japan whose leaders would be in Washington this week for the first in-person Quad Summit



US President Joe Biden with UK Minister Boris Johnson in the Oval Office of the White House on Tuesday. AP

would be made part of the new security alliance.

The Quad comprises India, the US, Japan and Australia. US President Joe Biden is hosting the first in-person Quad summit at the White House on September 24.

"On Friday you'll have the Australians there (for the Quad summit). But then you also have India and Japan. Would you envision for them a similar kind of military role that you've now defined for with the Australians?" a journalist asked.

"AUKUS? What would it be-

come? JAIKUS? JAIAUKUS?" Psaki said in lighter moments before giving answer to the question.

The trilateral security alliance AUKUS, seen as an effort to counter China in the Indo-Pacific, will allow the US and the UK to provide Australia with the technology to develop nuclear-powered submarines for the first time.

China has sharply criticised the trilateral alliance, saying such exclusive grouping has no future and will gravely undermine regional stability and aggravate the arms race and hurt international non-proliferation efforts. PTI



Haitian deportees arriving to the airport in Port-au-Prince earlier this week. NYT

US special envoy to Haiti quits over 'inhumane' migrant deportations

DAINA BETH SOLOMON & HUMEYRA PAMUK
CIUDAD ACUNA, WASHINGTON, SEPTEMBER 23

THE US special envoy to Haiti resigned in protest in a letter that blasted the Biden administration for deporting hundreds of migrants back to the crisis-engulfed Caribbean nation from a camp on the US-Mexican border in recent days.

Daniel Foote, a career diplomat named to his post in July, said conditions in Haiti were so bad that US officials were confined to secure compounds. He said the "collapsed state" was unable to support the infusion of returning migrants.

"I will not be associated with the United States' inhumane, counterproductive decision to deport thousands of Haitian refugees and illegal immigrants," Foote said in a letter addressed to Secretary of State Antony Blinken that circulated publicly on Thursday.

Haiti, the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere, has gone through profound instability in recent weeks, including a presidential assassination, gang violence and a major earthquake.

The US has returned more than 1,400 migrants from the camp in Del Rio, Texas to Haiti — including families — and moved over 3,200 people for processing away from the encampment, Department of Homeland Security officials said on Thursday. At its peak on Sept. 18 there were some 15,000 people there.

The population has been reduced to around 4,000 by expulsion flights, detentions and releases. Others have left the dusty riverbank for Mexico to avoid being sent home.

Filippo Grandi, the head of the UN refugee agency, warned that this week the US expulsions to Haiti might violate international law.

Foote submitted his resignation to Blinken Wednesday, a State Department spokesperson said, adding that Washington was committed to the long-term well-being of Haiti, as well as offering help to returning migrants.

The resignation follows growing pressure on the administration of US President Joe Biden from the United Nations and his fellow Democrats over the treatment of Haitians in the sprawling impromptu migrant camp.

REUTERS



MEANWHILE

NOBEL CEREMONIES TO BE CURTAILED AGAIN

The Nobel Prize ceremonies will be reined in and scaled-down for the second year in a row due to the coronavirus pandemic, the foundation behind the coveted prizes said. The winners of this year's prizes in chemistry, literature, physics, medicine and economics, as well as the Nobel Peace Prize, are set to be announced between Oct 4 and Oct 11.

Tensions growing as Washington, allies deepen Indo-Pacific involvement

DAVID RISING

BANGKOK, SEPTEMBER 23

WITH INCREASINGLY strong talk in support of Taiwan, a new deal to supply Australia with nuclear submarines, and the launch of a European strategy for greater engagement in the Indo-Pacific, the US and its allies are becoming more assertive in their approach toward a rising China.

China has bristled at the moves, and the growing tensions between Beijing and Washington prompted UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on the weekend to implore US President Joe Biden and Chinese leader Xi Jinping to repair their "completely dysfunctional" relationship, warning they risk dividing the world.

But the underlying issues have not changed, with China building up its military outposts as it presses its maritime claims over critical sea lanes, and the US and its allies growing louder in their support of Taiwan, which China claims as part of its territory, and deepening military cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.

On Thursday, China sent 24 fighter jets toward Taiwan in a large display of force after the island announced its intention to join a Pacific trade group, the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, that China has also applied to join.

On Friday, Biden hosts the leaders of Japan, India and Australia for an in-person Quadrilateral Security Dialogue.

It comes a week after the dramatic announcement that Australia would be dropping a contract for conventional French submarines in favor of an Anglo-American offer for nuclear-powered vessels. AP

New US EPA rule sharply limits HFCs, gases used as refrigerants

MATTHEW DALY

WASHINGTON, SEPTEMBER 23

IN WHAT officials call a key step to combat climate change, the US Environmental Protection Agency is sharply limiting domestic production and use of hydrofluorocarbons, highly potent greenhouse gases commonly used in refrigerators and air conditioners.

The new rule announced Thursday follows through on a law Congress passed last year and is intended to decrease US production and use of HFCs by 85% over the next 15 years, part of a global phaseout designed to slow global warming.

The administration also is taking steps to crack down on imports of HFCs, greenhouse gases that are thousands of times more powerful than carbon dioxide. President Joe Biden has pledged to embrace a 2016



Hydrofluorocarbons are commonly used in refrigerators and A/Cs. AP

global agreement to greatly reduce HFCs by 2036.

White House climate adviser Gina McCarthy, a former EPA administrator, said the new rule was "a win on climate and a win on jobs and American competitiveness." The rule is set to take effect in late October.

EPA Administrator Michael Regan said the phasedown is backed by a coalition of industry

EXPLAINED
E Significant move

HYDROFLUOROCARBONS (HFCs) are considered a major driver of global warming, and are much more powerful greenhouse gases than carbon dioxide. The new rule to restrict their use is expected to reduce harmful emissions by the equivalent of 4.5 billion metric tonnes of carbon dioxide by 2050, according to officials. This is reportedly similar to three years of emissions from the US power sector.

groups that see it as an opportunity to "supercharge" American leadership on domestic manufacturing and production of alternative refrigerants. AP

One to charge them all: EU demands single plug for phones

ASSOCIATED PRESS

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 23

THE EUROPEAN Union unveiled plans Thursday that would require smartphone makers to adopt a single charging method for mobile devices.

The EU Commission proposed legislation Thursday that would mandate USB-C cables for charging, technology that many device makers have already adopted. The main hold-out is Apple, which has resisted the bloc's efforts for a unified standard. iPhones come with the company's own Lightning charging port, though the newest models come with ca-



EU proposed legislation that would mandate USB-C cables for charging

bles that can be plugged into a USB-C socket.

The push by the EU will certainly be cheered by the millions of people who have searched through a drawer full of cables for the right charger. But the EU also wants to cut down on the 11,000

metric tons of electronic waste thrown out every year by Europeans.

The commission said the typical person living in the EU owns at least three chargers, and use two regularly, but 38% of people report not being able to charge their phones at least once because they couldn't find a compatible charger. Some 420 million mobile phones or portable electronic devices were sold in the EU last year. "Chargers power all our most essential electronic devices. With more and more devices, more and more chargers are sold that are not interchangeable or not necessary. We are putting an end to that," Thierry Breton, the EU's internal market commissioner, said.

Taliban official says strict punishment, executions will return

KATHY GANNON

KABUL, SEPTEMBER 23

ONE OF the founders of the Taliban and the chief enforcer of its harsh interpretation of Islamic law when they last ruled Afghanistan said the hard-line movement will once again carry out executions and amputations of hands, though perhaps not in public.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Mullah Nooruddin Turabi dismissed outrage over the Taliban's executions in the past, which sometimes took place in front of crowds at a stadium, and he warned the world against interfering with Afghanistan's new rulers.

"Everyone criticised us for the punishments in the stadium, but we have never said anything about their laws and their punishments," Turabi said, speaking in Kabul. "No one will tell us what our laws should be. We will follow Islam and we will make our laws on the Quran."

Since the Taliban overran Kabul on Aug 15 and seized control of the country, Afghans and the world have been watching to see whether they will recreate their harsh rule of the late 1990s. Turabi's comments pointed to how the group's leaders remain entrenched in a deeply conservative, hard-line worldview, even if they are embracing technological changes, like video and cellphones.

Turabi, now in his early 60s, was justice minister and head of the so-called Ministry of Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice — effectively, the religious police — during the Taliban's previous rule.

At the time, executions of convicted murderers were usually by a single shot to the head. For con-



Mullah Nooruddin Turabi

TALIBAN UNLIKELY TO PARTICIPATE IN UNGA; DIPLOMATS OF OLD GOVT STILL IN OFFICE

United Nations: The Taliban, who rule Afghanistan after overthrowing the government of President Ashraf Ghani, are unlikely to represent their country at the high-level United Nations General Assembly session as representatives of the ousted dispensation still occupy the office at the UN, a Pakistan's Dawn newspaper said on Thursday. Afghanistan is scheduled to address the on-going UN General Assembly session on Sept 27. On Sept 20, the Taliban-controlled government had sent a letter to UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, saying it wanted to participate in the 76th UNGA session in New York. PTI

victed thieves, the punishment was amputation of a hand.

Turabi said the same punishments would be revived.

"Cutting off of hands is very necessary for security," he said, saying it had a deterrent effect. He said the Cabinet was studying whether to do punishments in public and will "develop a policy". AP

Be patient, engage, don't isolate: Pak's Qureshi details Taliban plan

EDITH M LEDERER

UNITED NATIONS, SEPT 23

BE REALISTIC. Show patience. Engage. And above all, don't isolate. Those are the pillars of an approach emerging in Pakistan to deal with the fledgling government that is suddenly running the country next door once again — Afghanistan's resurgent, often-volatile Taliban.

Pakistan's government is proposing that the international community develop a road map that leads to diplomatic recognition of the Taliban — with incentives if they fulfill its requirements — and then sit down face to face and talk it out with the militia's leaders.

Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi outlined the idea Wednesday in an interview with The Associated Press on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly's meeting of world leaders. "If they live up to those expectations, they would make it easier for themselves, they will get acceptability, which is required for recognition," Qureshi told the AP. "At the same time, the international community has to realize: What's the alternative? What are the options? This is the reality, and can they turn away from this reality?"



Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi

He said Pakistan "is in sync with the international community" in wanting to see a peaceful, stable Afghanistan with no space for terrorist elements to increase their foothold, and for the Taliban to ensure "that Afghan soil is never used again against any country."

"But we are saying, be more realistic in your approach," Qureshi said. "Try an innovative way of engaging with them. The way that they were being dealt with has not worked."

He urged the US, the IMF and other countries that have frozen Afghan government funds to immediately release the money so it can be used "for promoting normalcy in Afghanistan." And he pledged that Pakistan is ready to play a "constructive, positive" role in opening communications channels with the Taliban because it, too, benefits from peace and stability. AP

FRANCE'S QUANDARY: HOW TO ACT AS AN INDEPENDENT POWER WHILE DEPENDING ON ALLIES

France, which is striving for global power, is still struggling to get it

MAX FISHER

SEPTEMBER 23

FOR FRANCE, the recent geopolitical drama — its nixed submarine sale to Australia, and its furious response to the United States' jumping the deal — encapsulates a problem the once-mighty nation has struggled with for decades: how to assert itself as an independent power, which French leaders see as essential, while maintaining the alliances on which they know France relies.

Reconciling that dilemma between independence and reliance has animated and bedeviled French strategy ever since World

War II left most of Europe subjugated to foreign superpowers.

Although Americans sometimes see French willfulness as animated by vanity or a desire to reclaim long-lost imperial pride, French leaders are keenly aware that they lead a medium-sized power in a world dominated by larger ones.

The planned submarine sale follows a long line of moves calibrated to project French power, maintaining the country's ability to steer its own fate, while aligning with the allies whose help Paris knows it needs, paradoxically, to stand on its own.

But losing the contract highlighted the difficulty of achiev-

ing both. So did France's response. Recalling its ambassador to Washington was meant to show that it was not afraid to stand up even to allies. At the same time, in seeking European support against the perceived US betrayal, Paris demonstrated that it feels compelled to seek outside support even in this.

"For the French, independence has always meant autonomy," said Bruno Tertrais, deputy director of the Foundation for Strategic Research in Paris.

"But that has never been 100% independent. What matters is that it's 99% independent," he said, but he added that this brings "fundamental tensions" that cannot



French President Emmanuel Macron ahead of an official event. NYT

be resolved so much as managed.

The history behind why French leaders feel they must try anyway, and the challenges they have faced ever since, both underscore why the recent events so infuriated Paris.

The war and its aftermath, which left Europe divided between US and Soviet forces and

saw Washington exerting new pressure on its now-junior allies, many of which it also militarily occupied, convinced the French that accepting a future as one of many in a US-led alliance, as the British and West Germans had, would mean subjugation.

The arrival of the nuclear era, with its threat of total annihilation,

convinced the French that they would have to secure their own way in the world, even if it would sometimes upset the allies whose help they would need to do it.

Charles de Gaulle, president from 1959 to 1969, sought Washington's help in unifying Western Europe against the Soviets. But he also undermined US influence at every turn, the better to assert French leadership instead.

He oversaw France's emergence as a nuclear power, ejected US troops from France, withdrew from NATO and tried to persuade West Germany to loosen its ties to that same alliance.

"The fact that he did this

while expecting continued protection of the NATO alliance only added to the Americans' exasperation," historian John Lewis Gaddis wrote.

As the era of nuclear stand-offs has faded, France has shifted to more contemporary tools. It leverages its UN Security Council seat to act as diplomatic peer to the major powers. It sends peacekeepers to global hot spots. And it sells sophisticated weapons abroad.

President Emmanuel Macron of France has sought a more supportive approach than de Gaulle. Although he signed on to an EU trade deal with China, he has otherwise aligned with

the U.S.-led push to contain it, exerting pressure within Europe and supply arms to like-minded countries abroad.

But Macron has maintained that independent streak, pushing for the European Union, for example, to take over regional military duties from Washington-led NATO.

It highlights the challenge in his 21st-century update on Gaullism: cultivating a unified Europe that can stand as peer to the United States or China. This was supposed to bring France, as informal leader, a vehicle for its ambitions and, for all Europe, escape from American dominance. NYT



Kolkata



Bhubaneswar to host 2021 Junior Hockey World Cup



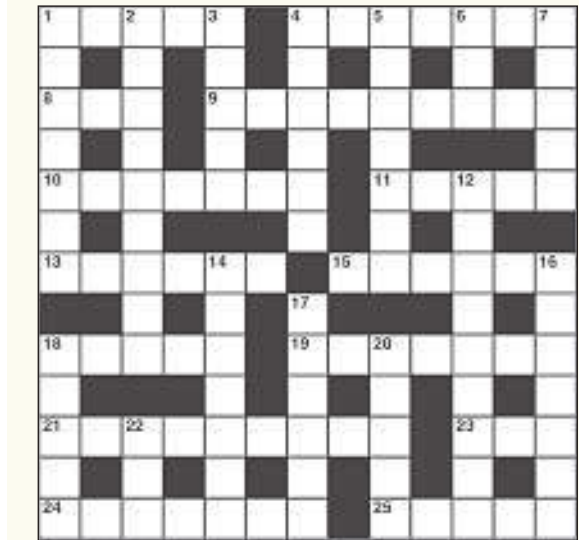
India beat Belgium 2-1 to win the Junior Hockey World Cup in 2016, the country's first title since the 2001 edition. *File*

Odisha was on Thursday named the host of this year's FIH men's hockey Junior World Cup in November-December. The event will be staged at Bhubaneswar's Kalinga Stadium from November 24 to December 5. Odisha and Uttar Pradesh had both expressed interest in hosting the marquee event but the former was picked for being the national team's title sponsor as well. Lucknow had hosted the tournament's last edition in which India claimed the top honours in 2016. Odisha has earlier hosted the senior World Cup in 2018, the FIH World League in 2017 and the Champions Trophy in 2014. The 16 teams competing are hosts India, South Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, South

Man Utd lose 1-0 at home to West Ham in League Cup third round

Manchester United were knocked out in the third round of the League Cup by West Ham United on Wednesday. Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's team came up with a 1-0 defeat after Argentine midfielder Manuel Lanzini scored the only goal in the match from a Ryan Fredericks cutback. This was West Ham manager David Moyes' first victory in management at Old Trafford in seven years after he was sacked as United coach. The Hammers will next play Manchester City, the reigning four-time champions of the competition, as they chase their first domestic title since winning the 1980 FA Cup. The United lineup had a completely different look to the one that beat West Ham 2-1 in their Premier League meeting earlier this week. Cristiano Ronaldo was among the players that had been given a rest for this clash. This was United's second loss this month after they came up short in a Champions League 2-1 away loss to Swiss team Young Boys. They next play Aston Villa on Saturday. **AP**

CROSSWORD 4543



- ACROSS**
1 Awkward situations golfers try to get into (5)
4 How happy cowboys might be? (7)
8 Put on some salad dressing (3)
9 Powered flight? (9)
10 Only a fraction may be claimed (7)
11 Badly cared for timber (5)
13 Raw recruit that is found at the castle (6)
15 Capital form of punishment (6)
18 Poses for money (5)
19 Troops didn't finish course (7)
21 Better value for money? How absurd! (9)
23 Not a smart-looking boat but the reverse (3)
24 A quick reply by one who is foiled (7)
25 It collapses when there's anarchy or Red revolution (5)
- DOWN**
1 He keeps a lot to himself (7)
2 I leave ridiculous organisation; it's farcical (9)
3 The south side is hot and humid (5)
4 It's used to lift - or bring down (6)
5 It's forbidden and badly one hundred take it (7)
6 Haul up the fishing line (3)
7 Two kings embracing are not seen so often (5)
12 Medicated preparation reduced by 10% (9)
14 How one may make progress on one's feet (7)
16 Seaside bank that may appear in the current recession (4,3)
17 Regret sounding like an angry dog to one lady (6)
18 Father gets through one daily (5)
20 Enjoyment got us excited (5)
22 I'm quiet. He probably won't be (3)

Solutions Crossword 4542: Across: 1 Memory lane, 8 Light, 9 Ingrate, 10 Fetlock, 11 Ridge, 12 Biscuit, 14 Saw fit, 17 Habit, 19 Houdini, 21 Neutron, 22 Union, 23 First flush. Down: 2 Eighths, 3 Outdo, 4 Yoicks, 5 Algeria, 6 Eland, 7 Pedestrian, 8 Left behind, 13 Caterer, 15 Fairies, 16 Why not, 18 Bluff, 20 Usual.

JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip.

What is pride? A__ that emulates the ___. - William Wordsworth (6...5)

FMAER	EEXSTT
<div></div>	<div></div>
KWORS	EHTVCK
<div></div>	<div></div>

ANSWER: PRIDE, FAME, WORKS, SPECTRE, KAVECH

How World Rugby plans to tackle concussions and dementia

The world body plans to limit full-body contact training time per week

SHIVANI NAIK
MUMBAI, SEPTEMBER 23

GNARLED, CRACKED and poetically scarred they might have been in the past, Rugby Union is now dealing with the pile-up of concussions and early-onset dementia. World Rugby was compelled to reckon with this reality of the bleeding obvious and the non-bleeding unseen trauma last December, when former England hooker Steve Thompson led a group of retired players in a landmark legal case against WR, the Rugby Football Union and the Welsh Rugby Union after being diagnosed. On Thursday, WR unveiled new guidelines that limit full-blooded contact training to 15 minutes a week to help reduce impact injuries in training.

What do the fresh guidelines mandate? The game's governing body, along with International Rugby Players (IRP), announced a six-point checklist. It recommended restricting midweek contact training to two days, broken down into three categories: 15 minutes per week of full-contact training during which players may go full throttle and operate at high speed in body-to-body collisions, 40 minutes of controlled contact utilising tackle shields and pads, running at reduced speeds, and 30 minutes of live set-piece training with lineouts, scrums and mauls at a high intensity.

The 600 players surveyed had said elite pros averaged 19 minutes of full contact training per week, which WR are looking to reduce.

Will it be implemented? While not mandatory, the guidelines are expected to be adopted at all levels by WR. "It would certainly be our intention to write it into the terms of participation for future Rugby World Cups," Mark Harrington, World Rugby director of technical services was quoted by Sport 24, hinting at the rules being enforced in the leadup to the 2023 World Cup qualifiers. "It is a soft guideline for the minute, but I think over time it will gain some teeth."

How was the study conducted? World Rugby combined with top tier clubs Leinster, Clermont Auvergne and Benetton Treviso to assess the mechanism, incidence and intensity of head impact events using mouth-guard technology and video analysis according to The42. The Prevent



England's 2003 World Cup winner Steve Thompson led a group of players to file a lawsuit against World Rugby last year for negligence in promoting safety. *Reuters*

Biometrics technology recorded the largest ever comparable head impact database in the sport. Four contact elements were studied: volume of full-contact in minutes, intensity of collisions, density of the impacts within the timeframe, and the unpredictability of the hits.

Are there similar trends in other sports?

There are parallels with the NFL which limited full-contact training back in 2011. The Guardian quoted Eanna Falvey, WR's chief medical officer, as saying "this is not a neat comparison as the NFL is contested by 32 teams that are more easily regulated. Furthermore, 70 to 80% of NFL player injuries occur during training compared to 30 to 40% in rugby." Independent studies conducted at the University of South Wales found rugby players were harmed by repetitive blows. Reduction in blood flow to the brain and cognitive function could result from cumulative effects and not one-off incidents of concussion, all pointing to the necessity of reduction in full-contact training where possible. Headers in football and bouncers in cricket have blipped on the scanner, but talk of policing both faces scorn and resistance.

Is everyone welcoming it in Rugby Union? Somewhat. Australia coach Dave Rennie, while stating that these measures were nec-

essary, aired some concerns, telling Sydney Morning Herald: "35 to 40 percent of injuries happen at training, that means 60-65 percent happen in games. "We're making sure we're getting conditioning load and contact load into them so that they can deal with it on game day, and they've got the technique required."

He sought clarity on 'full contact' including when players donned full body padded suits, a staple in modern rugby training. "We suit our boys up a bit. I guess they would still have that full contact, bone on bone. But they're often in three or four-minute hits. I understand the importance of looking after the athlete, but we also need to understand that they need to be trained, appropriately, to deal with the physical nature of our game."

What about the 15-minute claim?

All Blacks coach Ian Foster asked for expanding the 15-minute rule, though by 'his 'gut feel,' 15 minutes felt about right. The Otago University in New Zealand is undertaking parallel research on understanding the "nature and frequency of head impacts" in the game.

Rennie though had a bemused bite at the 15 minutes dictat. "Who's timing it? I'm sure there has been a lot of work that has gone on to come up with these numbers. They're talking at every level. Are they going to have 1st XV coaches with a stopwatch? I'm not certain how that will pan out."

HC asks Centre to start inquiry into Batra allegations

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 23

STAYING THE Table Tennis Federation of India's (TTFI) Rules and Regulations for a National Camp, the Delhi High Court on Thursday said that it was appalled with the conduct of TTFI and asked the Centre to conduct an inquiry into the complaint filed by Manika Batra, who is a top-ranked player in the country.

The court at the outset of the proceedings took exception to TTFI's decision to re-constitute the committee, which was looking into Batra's complaint, soon after the first hearing of her petition on September 20 and said it was anguished with the conduct of TTFI in the matter.

"If this is the way the national sports federations are going to function, then the government might as well takeover all these federations," said Justice Rekha Palli while hearing the petition filed by Batra against the TTFI's decision to not include her in the contingent being sent for the upcoming Asian Table Tennis Championship in Doha.

Batra, in the petition has also sought quashing of the Rules and Regulations for National Camp dated August 4 which make it mandatory for the players to join a national coaching camp and an enquiry into the management of TTFI, particularly the conduct of national coach Soumyadeep Roy - whom she accused of asking her to lose an Olympic qualifier match in March in favor of one of his trainees at his private academy. During the hearing on Thursday, Batra gave up the prayer for including her name in the contingent.

Additional Solicitor General Chetan Sharma on Thursday told the court that there was nothing in the sports code that permitted the TTFI to bar a candidate for not attending a camp and that they will be conducting an independent inquiry in the matter. Batra's counsel told the court that she decided to take private coaching as she had an apprehension that she will not be fairly treated by the national coach due to the past events.

The court said that the rule mandating compulsory attendance at the national camp has been enforced at a point when there was a complaint pending against the national coach and the argument that the rules were already in contemplation "does not inspire confidence". "I am of the view that the operation of the rules is required to be stayed till the next date," Justice Palli said.

Regarding the enquiry, the court said the Centre will proceed to hold the enquiry at the earliest in which the Roy may also place his stand. Granting four weeks for completion of the enquiry, the court listed it for hearing on October 28.

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



SUDOKU 4604

Difficulty Level 2s
Instructions
To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Difficulty Level
1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius



SOLUTION SUDOKU 4603



DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

If you're a perfectionist, like so many members of your sign, you may be finding current pressures rather hard-going. However, if you are ready to take life as it comes, there'll be much to stimulate and entertain you, perhaps opening a window on a completely new world.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

It may seem that you have now had your last chance to take an important decision on money, perhaps involving partners and close friends. However, the present lull is but a temporary phase. While you're in it, it could feel as if it's lasting forever.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

Delays are inevitable, but there's nothing to worry about. At such times, when life slows down, you must take the opportunity to reflect on the state of your life so far, and consider just where your current activities are taking you. Do you really want to be the centre of attention? If not, alter your course now.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

Discreet discussions are likely quite soon and if these involve your work, the outcome will include welcome long-term benefits. An increasingly lively social life will provide the absolutely perfect counter-balance to your steadily accumulating responsibilities.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)

The general impact of current planetary influences is to deepen your mental processes. The result will be a mood of increasing seriousness combined with delays and, quite possibly, broken arrangements in your social life. But, then, you're getting used to that.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sept 23)

Significant discussions are becoming more intense and serious, now there's a hint that there is more to be settled before agreement is reached. Concentrate on getting your home affairs straight and establishing order in family arrangements, and if you have any doubts, let partners set the pace.

LIBRA (Sept 24 - Oct 23)

This could be a critical time for all money matters. You'd be well advised to get hold of more information, although you must wait a little longer before deals are finalised to everyone's satisfaction. Romantic partners continue to make extra demands and I suspect you're ready to deliver whatever they ask.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 22)

You should know by now that it's much better to let other people understand what you're really feeling, otherwise you can't complain if you are misunderstood. Partners genuinely want to help, so put your suspicions to one side and welcome whatever assistance is offered.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23 - Dec 22)

Certain proposals must be left on ice for a little while, at least until you have had time to digest what partners have said and done. You must continue to discuss your plans and proposals in as much detail as is required. Never feel you have to make a final decision until you are ready.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

Although you are often in an outgoing and sociable mood, you have a tendency to go behind people's backs, even if well-intentioned. Don't be surprised if friends are bemused by your behaviour. After all, you have been putting out confusing signals.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)

It's an excellent time to broaden your horizons and diversify your affairs. Not only is your career involved in this reassessment, but so is a whole range of leisure and social activities. But, first, you must finalise financial plans as soon as you can.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

Why not live up to your reputation and be more tolerant in your dealings with loved ones? The demands you make on them have more to do with your own high expectations than the reality of the current situation. In other words, you'll do yourself a power of good by being more realistic.

KKR move into Iyer gear

Kolkata's impact opener smashes 53 off 30, Tripathi hits unbeaten 74 off 42 to make light work of chase



Venkatesh Iyer's knock at the top of the order contained four fours and three sixes. [iplt20.com](#)

SYNOPSIS: Iyer rocks, Tripathi dazzles after MI lose way

SHAMIK CHAKRABARTY
SEPTEMBER 23

THROUGH THE unearthing of Venkatesh Iyer and the pyrotechnics of Rahul Tripathi, Kolkata Knight Riders' upsurge continued. They came to the second phase of the IPL on just four points and playing serious catch-up. Back-to-back hammering of Royal Challengers Bangalore and Mumbai Indians have now parachuted them to the top four. MI's total, 155, was below par. But on a slow Zayed Cricket Stadium pitch in Abu Dhabi, they had a star-studded bowling line-up to defend it. Iyer and Tripathi, however, made the chase a walk in the park for KKR, breaking the MI hoodoo in the process. This was their first win against their bogey team in two years. More importantly, after a seven-wicket victory with 29 balls to spare, they command one of the healthiest net run-rates among all teams.

Iyer rocks

The beauty of the IPL is that it gives young players an outlet to get out of relative obscurity and come into prominence. Iyer is the latest on the list. Even four months ago, the 26-year-old was a bench-warmer. As the left-hander revealed after the last game, it was KKR head coach Brendon McCullum's decision to include him in the playing eleven. Caught in the opening quagmire during the first phase, the team management acted in desperation. It is turning out to be a masterstroke.

His unbeaten 41 off 27 balls against RCB was impressive but without scoreboard pressure. Against MI, he faced a tougher chal-

POINTS TABLE					
	M	W	L	NRR	Pts
DC	9	7	2	+0.613	14
CSK	8	6	2	+1.223	12
RCB	8	5	3	-0.706	10
KKR	9	4	5	+0.363	8
RR	8	4	4	-0.154	8
MI	9	4	5	-0.310	8
PK	9	3	6	-0.345	6
SRH	8	1	7	-0.689	2

lenge—they were chasing and he was up against arguably the most well-rounded attack in the league. He didn't flinch. He attacked Trent Boult and Adam Milne, two seasoned international bowlers, with disdain and wasn't afraid to use his feet against the spinners. He swung with gaiety, a six and four off Milne. He stood and walloped when Jasprit Bumrah missed his length by a few inches. He swept Rahul Chahar from outside the off-stump to deep midwicket-boundary. He shimmed down the track and hit a six off Krunal Pandya. Iyer reached his maiden IPL half-century off 25 balls and when eventually Bumrah castled him on 53, KKR were just 28 runs away from victory.

His backstory makes his rise even sweeter. Iyer traded a career in chartered accountancy and management to play cricket on his mother's insistence. He made his IPL debut six years after playing his first domestic T20 fixture for Madhya Pradesh. At this rate, he could be a millionaire in the open auction next year.

Tripathi dazzles

He is an IPL thoroughbred, but Tripathi didn't mind being overshadowed by his jun-



Rahul Tripathi hit eight fours and three sixes in a whirlwind of a knock. [iplt20.com](#)

ior partner despite outscoring him. In not-so-easy conditions, his 74 not out off 42 balls was superb. The pace of MI's fast bowlers worked to Tripathi's advantage. A case in point – when he tried to flick Bumrah and got a leading edge, the ball sailed over the third man boundary. Also, the radar didn't work for Boult and Milne, worsening matters for their team. When playing the spinners, Tripathi was proficient at picking them off the hand. Aided by greasy surface, thanks to evening dew, their match-winning 88-run partnership off 52 balls was the game's joie de vivre.

MI lose way

The pitches at this venue usually wear a

greenish look with a decent covering of grass, but historically spinners have taken 40 per cent of wickets at this ground in limited-overs cricket. The reason is the slowness of the surface. Even for the fast bowlers, bounce is somewhat parabolic.

So KKR captain Eoin Morgan had no hesitation to insert MI and even less reluctance to start off with spin. He read the pitch perfectly, but his counterpart, Rohit Sharma, countered that with sheer class. Rohit's out-smarting of Varun Chakravarthy was the best piece of cricket in the second leg IPL yet.

Against the mystery spinner, the MI skipper stayed beside the line of the ball, gave the bowler a good look at the stumps, and induced him to bowl straight. Varun took the bait and was lofted-driven over mid-off for a four.

The spinner failed to preempt Rohit's next move. The latter decided to stay behind the line this time, outwitting the bowler. Varun yet again bowled straight, a tad leg-stumpish, ball. Rohit swept him in the cow corner for another four.

Quinton de Kock was taking on the seamers at the other end and after nine overs the defending champions were 77 for no loss. Then KKR rallied, first through a vicious Sunil Narine leg-cutter that bounced a little more to have Rohit caught at long-on. A choke followed that saw MI lose two wickets for 16 runs in four overs.

Another phase towards the back-end had MI 28/2 in four overs. The game turned on its head, in favour of KKR.

BRIEF SCORES: Mumbai Indians: 155 for 6 in 20 overs (Quinton de Kock 55, Rohit Sharma 33; Lockie Ferguson 2/27, Prasidh Krishna 2/43) lost to **Kolkata Knight Riders:** 159 for three in 15.1 overs (Rahul Tripathi 74 not out, Venkatesh Iyer 53; Jasprit Bumrah 3/43).

EMOTIONAL ROLLERCOASTER



Hot heads, calm minds and everything in between at the game

Bizarre Pollard



21 off 15 was pedestrian going by Pollard's reputation. [iplt20.com](#)

Fourth ball of the 19th over, Kieron Pollard uncharacteristically hunkered down for what looked like a ramp shot (or was it a scoop?!), but had conveyed his design a tad too early for Andre Russell to slither in a leg-side yorker.

A surprised Pollard froze for a moment, before letting the ball through his legs, like a fancy little dummy in football, or as if he had suddenly spotted a snake beside his feet. Everyone around, including Pollard, could not resist laughing. It was not the first time in his bizarre knock that he left the ball.

He did it more conventionally—shouldering the arms—in Prasidh Krishna's last ball of the 18th over. He shaped to dab it fine through third man, but the ball ducked sharply into his body, strangling him for room. So, at the last moment, he pulled out of the stroke. Not often do you see Pollard leave the ball once, to see him do twice in the space of two balls was bizarre. And the blow hot, blow cold knock ended bizarrely too—in a run out, of entirely his own fault, responding lazily to the striker's call.

Rohit's bat doesn't have nine lives

Sunil Narine has the wood on Rohit Sharma in IPL, and it wasn't surprising that he got his man for the ninth time. There was a rasping cutter that



seamed away like a leg cutter that comprehensively beat Sharma who was playing the line. With Quinton de Kock, who couldn't get going against spinners with a strike rate of 70+ against the tweekers at that point, it was left to Sharma to try up the ante. He went for the slog sweep but was unable to get under the ball or swing with the turn, it wasn't a surprise that he air-lifted it straight to long-on. Narine's celebration was also muted. He turned around, waited for Shubman Gill to pouch it, clenched his right fist and slowly raised it up and down. There was no expression on the face; just that slow-mo pumping of the fist at getting his man again.

Prasidh finds his chirpy click

Prasidh Krishna wasn't himself in his opener when he came on to bowl the last over of the power play. Instead of his seam-up, back-spun deliveries, especially as Quinton de Kock wasn't yet as fluent, he went for slower ones to start off with. One disappeared over long-off and he lost his line and tailed a couple on the pads which were smacked to the boundaries. He bled 16 runs that over and was out of action until the 13th over. Luckily, he started with his stock weapons this time and took out Suryakumar Yadav with a seaming delivery around the off stump that induced an edge. Needless to say, he was joyous and found his tongue too, saying something to Ishan Kishan who shouldered arms. Krishna is one of those young Indian bowlers who is never shy of having a word and he was back in his elements.



Mooku-mela raja and other Cheeka-isms!

To hear Krishnamachari Srikanth on commentary for T20 games is almost like watching him bat. A non-stop stream-of-consciousness jabber, utter delight in seeing big hits, a constant stream of advise to the batsmen or the bowler, and an unbridled use of colloquial Tamil. *"Udaathara, Pottu Saathu machan!"* (Don't let it go, slam 'em mate!) was his advice to Ishan Kishan. He has a host of typical Cheeka-isms: *Mooku mela raja* (On top of the nose, Raja!) Is a miscue that sends the ball straight up for a dolly of a catch to the fielder. *Dil-ku-Duddu!* (Cash for guts!) is his desperate plea to batsmen to not to muck around but to blast that white ball. *Dil-ku-duddu machi . . . adura-adura* (hit hit). He takes the mickey off other commentators and also is sporting enough to



take some back as well. Let's end with a story from when he was a selector of Tamil Nadu Ranji team. He asks a debutant his batting strategy and the nervous batter told him that he will defend compactly and respect the attack. Srikanth, so goes the story, wore an incredulous look and snorted *"Defend aa? Dei! Poi adira! (Just go and whack)"*!

How Warner's sluggish feet are impacting his form this season?

SANDIP G
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 23

DAVID WARNER resumed the IPL from where he had left off before the break—his form shattered, his morale tattered. Agonisingly for Sunrisers Hyderabad and Australia, Warner has not been himself for a while. After the slump in Ashes 2019, he bounced back with a triple century against Pakistan and enjoyed a profitable 2020, but this year, he seems to have reacquainted with the ghosts of two years back.

In seven IPL games, either side of the five-month break, he laboured for 193 runs at a strike rate of 108, his worst in any season, lost captaincy and was benched for a match. Even more worryingly, he has looked genuinely out of touch and found multiple ways to get out.

What was Warner's undoing against Delhi Capitals?

South Africa tearaway Andre Nortje opened him up like a professional would an

amateur, or like a can of cola.

The Australian opener shaped up for a predetermined get-away-from strike leg-side tap-in, only that he misjudged Nortje's lightning pace, steep bounce and the hint of away movement the Dubai surface offers for pacers in the first few overs. The short-of-length ball took the splice of his blade and bobbed towards the point fielder. Swing and bobbled towards the point fielder. Swing and seam movement have been his familiar nemesis, but pace and bounce rarely so. In his best of times, he relishes both pace and

bounce, the ball coming on nicely onto his bat.

But he looks far from his best. The two previous balls illustrated the depth of his woes. He missed a fast but full ball, which a peak Warner would have thundered through covers, before nervously bounce, the ball coming on nicely onto his bat.

What is the trouble eating him?

One of his trusted allies seems to have deserted him. His quick feet, which usually bails him out of trouble, often compensating for his hard (but fast) hands. He doesn't make



David Warner's quick feet, which usually bail him out of trouble, have let him down so far.

The trouble is exaggerated when is facing really quick bowlers, like Nortje, Kagiso Rabada (who has nailed him four times in T20s alone) and Jasprit Bumrah, a telltale sign that his reactions are slowing down, bit by bit.

giant strides, backwards, sideways or forwards, but his feet movement are swift, precise and decisive from the first ball he faces. But in all the three balls he faced against Delhi Capitals, his feet move sluggishly, a touch too late in responding to the synapses of his mind. A side-on frame of his dismissal captures the travails of his feet.

As he makes contact with the ball, a touch early than he had anticipated, he is hopping, balancing just on his back-toe, front-leg in the air, and the bat-face pointed upwards rather than facing the ground.

The front-on view shows that he is on the

move, his head falling over, and not over the ball. Put simply, he got himself into a difficult position to play the shot, because his feet were not moving as fluently as they often do.

Was it an aberration?

Warner has played little cricket this year, a couple of Test matches in January, a clutch of Marsh Cup games, and seven IPL games. So maybe, he was rusty, not in peak match-form and fitness. Maybe, as the tournament progresses, he would rediscover the destructible Warner we know. But nigglingly, the same set of problems has haunted him throughout this IPL—feet not where he wants them to, head drooping, balance going off-kilter and subsequently failing to time the ball. Not always could his raw power and hand-eye coordination rescue him.

The trouble is exaggerated when is facing really quick bowlers, like Nortje, Kagiso Rabada (who has nailed him four times in T20s alone) and Jasprit Bumrah, a telltale sign that his reactions are slowing down, bit by bit.

It's a larger concern because he normally plays (and flays) fast bowlers better than he would the spinners, especially in the sub-continent, where Ravi Ashwin, Shakib Al

Hasan and Harbhajan Singh are among the top-five who have dismissed him the most in the IPL. So in the World Cup, to be played in the Emirates, it would be a trial by both pace and spin.

How bright are his comeback-to-form hopes before the T20 World Cup?

He would get at least six games in the IPL, considering that Sunrisers are short of batting firepower upfront. Jonny Bairstow's absence is a definite largesse for him—had the English batsman not stayed back, Warner would have continued to bench-warm. Moreover, Sunrisers have been patient with him, affording time to revive the form of one of their biggest match-winners and personalities. Warner, too, has looked to plough through the trough, channelling inner strength from the tough times he had endured in his life and career.

He's a tough character, and would not go down without fighting tooth and nail to dust up his form.

There's a kind run-in of fixtures—Sunrisers encounter Punjab Kings and Rajasthan Royals next. Both sides don't have the sort of bowlers that could torment them.