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KERALA: THREE YEARS AND THE RAVAGES OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Owing to years of rampant mining, lack of scientific land-use policy, and a railway project in the offing, Kerala is no longer the safe haven it was, say experts. The alarm bells on climate emergency are yet to ring in Thiruvananthapuram, though.

RESEARCH



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SCIENCE



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FROM WESTERN IRAN**

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relative of the goats
was the bezoar ibex

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FIRs against them, two Meerut cops on the run

AMIT SHARMA
MEERUT, OCTOBER 23

TWO CONSTABLES of Meerut Police absconded Friday night soon after FIRs were registered against them amid the force's drive to weed out corrupt personnel. This takes the total number of absconding cops to four, including President's Gallantry Award recipient Bijendra Pal Rana and Sub-inspector Dinesh Kumar.

The two police constables who went missing Friday night, Rahul and Sandeep Nagar, were part of an alleged cow vigilante group which was extorting money from vehicles carrying cattle for the past four years. The racket is said to be running successfully in Meerut, Ghaziabad, Muzaffarnagar and the adjoining districts.

It flourished when UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath put a blanket ban on cow smuggling in the state and launched a drive against illegal abattoirs soon after taking over in 2017.

Meanwhile, the FIR was lodged against nine persons, including the two cops, at Meerut's TP Nagar police station. Five people have been arrested while four, including a right wing leader, are on the run. Raids are on to nab them.

Meerut SSP Prabhaa Chaudhary's special cell got inputs about an extortion racket on Dehli-Dehradun Highway following which he formed a team headed by SP(Rural) Keshav Prasad which caught five members on Friday itself.

"The gang was netting extortion money to the tune of Rs two lakh daily from vehicles carrying cattle from the animal market for their milk dairies or for personal use. Each truck had to cough up a minimum of Rs 2,000 to ensure a safe passage," said an officer of the special team.

The drive has seen 75 constables being sent to police lines as punishment since July and 53, including inspectors, moved out of their police stations.

Two fishermen rescued after cargo ship collides with boat off Tamil Nadu coast

Chennai: Two Indian fishermen were rescued by the Coast Guard after a cargo ship from Panama collided with a fishing boat off Tamil Nadu's coast on Saturday.

The collision — in which two fishermen were thrown off board and the crew of 17 members was injured — was due to negligence, general secretary of the South Asian Fishermen Fraternity Father Churchill said, demanding compensation.

"The Panama-flagged cargo ship Navious Venus bound for Mumbai from Singapore, did not stop after ramming the fishing boat. It was due to sheer negligence," he told PTI and urged authorities to seize the ship and arrest its captain.

"We are in the process of getting an FIR filed with the marine police," the SAFF chief said.

The Coast Guard confirmed the incident and said in a press release that the two men who were thrown off board from the boat — named "Shijumon" — were rescued from the waters on Saturday morning and taken to a Thiruvananthapuram medical college for treatment. **PTI**

FROM PAGE ONE

Uttarakhand: Bodies of 7 trekkers found; 12 dead, three still missing

their way out. One of the team members remains missing.

Counting the trekkers found dead Saturday, the number of casualties in rain-related incidents since October 17 in the higher reaches of Uttarakhand, triggering landslides and avalanches, has now crossed 75. Twenty-six people are injured.

SDRF Commandant Navneet Bhullar told *The Sunday Express* that they had deployed high-altitude teams, climbers and Army helicopters for the search and rescue operations, but were hamstrung due to bad weather and snowfall.

Bhullar said the trekkers who died in Uttarkashi had started their trek on October 14-15 from Harsil. "On October 19 we were informed by their tour organiser that the weather was worsening and the team was stuck at over 15,000 feet. We immediately responded, using two Advanced Light Helicopters (ALH). Continuous operations have been on since."

The SDRF Commandant added that in Bageshwar, two rescues had been made successfully, with the third ongoing. "At Pindari glacier, 34 people were stranded, including six foreign nationals, and all were rescued. Fortunately they had just started their trek when hit by bad weather. They were just 11 km from the last habitation and found shelter. At Kafni glacier we rescued 19 locals who had climbed up to take their goats for grazing and had got stuck."

At Sunderdhunga, Bhullar said, the 10-member team included five trekkers, a staff member and four porters-cum-guides from Khati village, where the trek started. "The four porter guides came back after bad weather hit and said there was an avalanche that had left four people dead while two were missing," Bhullar said.

Officials said they had received information regarding some locals also being stuck in Joling Kong in Pithoragarh, and SDRF teams would reach them by Saturday night.

West Bengal officials said Uttarakhand had identified five from the state who had died in the Uttarkashi incident as Tanmay Tiwari (30), Vikash Makal (33), Sourav Ghosh (34), Shuvayan Das (28) and Richard Mandol (31). Out of the six, four were from South 24 Parganas.

Of the two injured, one is Mithun Dari, from South 24 Parganas district. His elder brother Manoj Dari said Mithun was admitted at an Uttarkashi hospital. "On October 14 morning, the day he started the trek, he called me and said he would not be available on his phone for four-five days. On Friday morning I saw on the TV that his entire team was missing. Today morning, he called me."

Among those still missing is Sukhen Majhi, and the family said they had not got any word on Majhi's whereabouts.

Anthony Gayen, the brother-in-law of the deceased Vikash Makal, said: "We are in the dark on what exactly happened and if they are indeed dead because we have not got any information from the government. Everything we know is from the media. We request the West Bengal government to arrange to get their bodies home."

The family of Anita Rawat, 38, based in Hari Nagar in Delhi said she had left for the trek 10 days ago and was supposed to join a group of travellers from across the country. Anita's family originally hails from a village

in Tehri, Uttarakhand, and she had always been a keen trekker, when not helping run the family sweet shop.

"She loved travelling and had wanted to go on this trek for some time. Anita had told us she would be back before Karwa Chauth... Family members have gone for identification (of the body)," Rawat's uncle Dharmendra Singh Bhandari said.

The family's Jyoti Sweet Shop started as a small set-up, but business grew over the years and it is now run from a bigger store. The family said Rawat was a medical professional, and worked in Medanta Hospital before quitting her job to help run the business following her brother's death. Unmarried, she lived in a joint family.

Judicial infrastructure an afterthought, ad hoc, unplanned: CJI

halls available is 20,143 (including 620 rented halls)... Twenty-six per cent of court complexes do not have separate ladies toilets and 16% do not have gents toilets... Only 54% of court complexes have purified drinking water facility... only 5% have basic medical facilities," he said.

"Only 32% of courtrooms have separate record rooms... only 27% have computers placed on the Judge's dais with video-conferencing facility... These are the hard facts," he said.

Judicial infrastructure, the CJI said, "is important for improving access to justice and to meet the growing demands of a public that is more aware of its rights and is developing economically, socially, and culturally".

He said the building that was inaugurated in Aurangabad on Saturday was envisioned in 2011. "This is not the fault of any institution or organ of the state but is emblematic of a deeper structural problem that has plagued judicial infrastructure development in our country since independence," he said.

Stating that an effective judiciary can aid in the effective growth of the economy, the CJI said that "if we want a different outcome from the judicial system, we cannot continue to work in these circumstances".

He said he had sent a proposal for establishment of a National Judicial Infrastructure Authority to the Ministry of Law and Justice, and was hoping for a positive response soon. He urged the Law Minister to expedite the process and ensure that the proposal is taken up in the winter session of Parliament.

The CJI also said that there is a common notion that only criminals or victims of crime approach the courts and people take pride in stating that they have never seen a court building in their lifetime. "But, it is high time that we make efforts to remove the taboo associated with approaching courts for the affirmation of rights," he said.

"Courts are extremely essential for any society that is governed by the rule of law. Court buildings are not merely structures made of mortar and bricks. Rather, they actively assure the constitutional guarantee of right to justice. The courts in India have repeatedly upheld the rights and freedoms of individuals. They stood up whenever the individuals or society were at the receiving end of the executive excesses. It is an assurance that the seeker of justice, howsoever weak, need not worry about the might of the State," he said.

The Indian EXPRESS

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Shah takes stock of J&K security, seeks more protection for minorities

The Srinagar city witnessed unprecedented security as Shah arrived in Srinagar on Saturday morning and was received by J-K's Lt Governor Manoj Sinha. The establishment has put in place a three-tier security setup in place, detained hundreds, arrested several under Public Safety Act over the last ten days and seized two-wheelers in the last two days.

No sooner than he arrived in Srinagar, the Union Home

Minister drove to the residence of slain police officer Parvez Ahmad at Nowgam in the outskirts of Srinagar city. Ahmad, an Inspector with J-K Police's intelligence wing, was shot dead by militants in June this year. Shah offered a government job to his wife.

In the evening, Shah interacted at Raj Bhawan with the families of civilians, politicians and policemen killed by militants. Those included the fam-

ily of prominent Kashmiri Pandit chemist M.L. Bindroo, who was shot dead by militants in Srinagar on October 5 and the family of Sikh principal Supinder Kour, who was shot dead by militants on October 7 in Srinagar. He also met families of policemen Qazi Sagheer — killed in a gunfight with militants last year — and Arshid Ahmad. The Union Home Minister also met the family of Mohammad Shafi, a

civilian killed by militants on October 2 at Batamaloo Srinagar, family of BJP councillor Reyaz Ahmad Peer who was killed in militant attack earlier this.

Shah also flagged off the Srinagar-Sharjah direct flight. While the first direct international flight from Srinagar airport was inaugurated in February 2009 to Dubai, the weekly flight operation was later suspended.

Amit Shah to youth: Here's hand of friendship, help strengthen democracy

Government of India... I have come here to seek your cooperation. The administration has extended its hand of friendship towards you."

Officials in J&K administration said over 40,000 youth were connected through video conferencing and attended the event.

Shah said no one would be allowed to disrupt peace in Kashmir. "Come forward and strengthen the democracy here. From the perspective of peace, development, and infrastructure, this is the ideal situation, and no one would be allowed to stop it," he said.

The Union Home Minister said elections in Jammu and Kashmir would be held after the delimitation exercise is over. "Some people say they will not allow delimitation. Why should it not happen? Delimitation will happen, elections would follow, and then statehood would also be restored."

Referring to panchayats and District Development Council elections, Shah said his govern-

ment had opened these opportunities for the youth. Taking a dig at the political families in the Valley, he said, "What did 70 years of jamhoriyat (democracy) give: 87 MLAs, six MPs and three families... but Shri Narendra Modi has given 30,000 elected representatives in such a short time. Those who are making a noise are doing so because jamhoriyat has come out of the custody of three families, and it now belongs to the poor. Shri Narendra Modi brought democracy to the grassroots level."

The Union Home Minister said curfew in the Valley and a ban on internet in the aftermath of abrogation of Jammu Kashmir's special status and its bifurcation into two Union territories was done to safeguard Kashmiri lives. "For some time you suffered, but only saved your children... when the situation normalised, we opened everything," he said.

Asking the youth to set bigger targets, Home Minister Shah wanted them to use all opportunities that came their

way. "One thing you should always remember. Everyone's life is full of opportunities. Now it depends whether you want to move forward with a negative mindset or an optimistic mindset... Don't set small targets, don't think, whether you could complete it or not, just set the target and move in that direction with speed. God will definitely support you," he said.

He said the situation in Jammu and Kashmir had improved after the abrogation of the special status. "From 2014 to 2021, every year only 30 people died. Terrorism has decreased and stone pelting has ended. Nobody would be allowed to disrupt the peace in Jammu and Kashmir. We will deal with them strictly. No one would be allowed to interrupt development. It is our commitment," he said.

"Till now more than 4,00,000 people have lost their lives. Should we end it or not? Can development coexist with terrorism?" he asked. While the government can make efforts to end terrorism, it is the youth

who can end it. "It is the youth who have to end terrorism, you have to do it. You have to become the ambassadors of peace and development," he said.

Without naming them, Shah said he also wanted to seek an account from the three families. "Earlier, students used to go to Pakistan. We have built seven new medical colleges and 11 nursing colleges. There is no need to move out of the valley. This should have happened many years ago. In 2014, there were only 500 medical seats here. Today, there are 1,150 MBBS seats... We have NIT, IIM and polytechnic colleges now. Tell us why they didn't come in 70 years."

He said Jammu and Kashmir is the first place that has administered the first dose of coronavirus vaccine to 100 percent people and the second dose to 50 per cent of its population. "As per the population, Jammu and Kashmir was given the highest oxygen plants. It is because J&K has a special place in Modiji's heart," he said.

A month on, transfers of 2 judges, both linked to Calcutta HC, still on hold

Union law minister that the recommendations would be "cleared in a day or two".

"I seek cooperation and support from the government to enable access to justice and strengthen the democracy," the CJI had said at an event organised by the National Legal Services Authority.

The delay in notifying the two transfers has raised concerns in judicial circles over whether this might lead to a fresh standoff between the government and the Supreme Court. The collegium did not cite any reasons for its recommendations.

Justice Bagchi was recommended for a "re-transfer" to his parent High Court, which is the Calcutta High Court, just nine months after he had been transferred to the Andhra Pradesh High Court. The collegium had recommended his transfer from the Calcutta High Court on December 16, 2020, amidst an ongoing controversy at the time over allegations by Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy that a senior judge of the Supreme Court was interfering in the functioning of the Andhra Pradesh High Court.

While Justice Bagchi was transferred to the Andhra

Pradesh High Court, the Supreme Court collegium, which was at the time headed by former CJI S.A. Bobde, recommended the transfer of then Andhra Pradesh High Court Chief Justice J.K. Maheshwari as Chief Justice of the Sikkim High Court.

Justice Maheshwari is now a judge of the Supreme Court, having taken oath on August 31 this year. Justice Bagchi assumed charge as a judge of the Andhra Pradesh High Court on January 4 this year.

In its resolutions of September 16, the Supreme Court collegium recommended the transfer of Justice Soumen Sen to the Orissa High Court. Another senior judge of the Calcutta High Court, Justice Arindam Sinha, too was transferred to the Orissa High Court.

On May 24 this year, Justice Sinha had taken the unprecedented step of writing to all judges of the Calcutta High Court, raising questions over the intervention of the Acting Chief Justice of the court at the time, Justice Rajesh Bindal, to transfer the Narada sting case to the High Court, and to subsequently constitute a five-judge bench to hear it.

Justice Sinha had said that the manner in which the High Court had dealt with the CBI's plea opposing the bail given to four Trinamool Congress leaders by the lower court was "unbecoming of the majesty" of the High Court, which had been "reduced to a mockery".

Justice Sinha was sworn in at the Orissa High Court on October 8. Justice Bindal as-

sumed charge as Chief Justice of the Allahabad High Court on October 11.

'He didn't come home... next day, before his turn at the fertiliser shop, he died'

The district has around 3 lakh hectares of cultivable land. Last year, in the month of October and November, around 32,000 metric tonnes of fertilisers were consumed in Lalitpur. Sources said the district had stocks of 19,000 metric tonnes, but was struggling to meet demand following the rain last week. DM Kumar said the demand had suddenly increased.

Late monsoon rains have spurred demand for sowing of mustard, chana, wheat and other rabi crops, but farmers across the country have been struggling to access di-ammonium phosphate necessary to be applied at the time. Stocks are low due to a surge in international prices in the past six-seven months. *The Indian Express* had reported earlier that all-India stocks of DAP and muriate of potash on September 30 were less than half of a year-ago levels. The Department of Fertilisers is operating a 24X7 war room to run rakes as per demand, with the allocation to Uttar Pradesh mainly as of now to Aligarh,

Mathura, Agra, Mainpuri, Etawah, Farrukhabad, Kanpur, and other rake points near the state's potato- and mustard-growing tracts.

Sources said the other reason for the rush at shops in Lalitpur is that out of the total 270 shops in the district, just around 150 are functional. Others are closed because of various reasons, including their licences not being renewed. District officials are now looking at ways to reopen the shops as soon as possible.

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav demanded that the government compensate Pal's family, adding in a tweet that never in the history of Independent India has the farmer been so harassed and humiliated as now.

Lalitpur's wait though may be ending. Kumar told *The Sunday Express* that arrangements have been made for supply of fertilisers to the district and stocks were likely to reach soon.

After 3 yrs and memories of a lifetime, India play Pak today

for making ticket purchases "high-tech". "They only accept credit card payments (online). We aren't upmarket people, we don't have credit cards. And now, those who have extra tickets are demanding a very high price. Still we have come and we will get our tickets. We have come with a slogan -- Khelo

meri jaan, sath hai tumhara chacha aur poori Pakistan (Give it your best dears, with you are uncle and whole of Pakistan)."

India have been good at shutting out the outside noise, one of the reasons for their World Cup dominance when it comes to Pakistan. Virat Kohli puts things in perspective. "We are in a situation where we are in charge of what we need to do on the field. For that to happen, we need to be in the most balanced space possible. In games like these, such unnecessary stuff, from a professional point of view... it's fine as long as that stays outside our controlled environment and we focus on what we need to do as cricketers. Hence, I have always maintained that it (an India-Pakistan match) has never been different to any other game of cricket that we play."

His Pakistani counterpart, Babar Azam, speaks about the team's rendezvous with Prime Minister Imran Khan before coming to the UAE. He says Khan advised them to draw inspiration from the mentality and resolve of the 1992 World Cup-winning squad.

Iqbal agrees that Dubai has now taken the baton from Sharjah to carry forward the legacy of India-Pakistan cricket. Purely from a cricketer's point of view, the ex-Pakistan captain also considers India the bigger favourites to win the T20 World Cup. "As far as Sunday's game is concerned, there is no reason why Pakistan can't beat India. But being realistic, if Pakistan win, I don't see them going on to win the World Cup. However, if India lose to Pakistan, they can go on to win the World Cup because of the strong team they have. Pakistan doesn't have the strength to win X number of matches to win the World Cup. At the same time, I sincerely hope the Pakistani cricketers prove me wrong."

Avoid jail for drug users, seizure of small amounts: Social justice ministry

several high-profile cases, the latest being the arrest of actor Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan in an alleged drug bust on a cruise ship.

In the case of sections dealing with punishment for possession of different drugs and psychotropic substances, the ministry has suggested that the law exclude those caught with "small quantities" (meant only for personal consumption) from a prison term. Compulsory treatment in government centres has also been recommended for them.

Small quantities under the NDPS Act mean amounts less than those specified by the Union government by a notification in the Official Gazette. For instance, the government has set 100 grams as the limit for a small quantity of cannabis, and 2 grams in case of cocaine.

The NDPS was framed in 1985, taking into account India's obligations to the UN conventions. The Act prohibits trade, production, use and possession of drugs and psychotropic substances, irrespective of purpose, except for medical and scientific reasons. However, cases of possession for personal consumption or cases of drug use make up a majority of the NDPS cases. According to a study released by Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy last year, 97.7% of NDPS cases in Maharashtra in 2017 and 97.3% cases in 2018 involved were that of "possession for personal consumption".

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THE SUNDAY EXPRESS, OCTOBER 24, 2021

3 WEST BENGAL

Govt target: 1st dose of Covid vaccine to all adults by year-end

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, OCTOBER 23

WITH Durga Puja and Lakshmi Puja over, the state government is now concentrating on stepping up vaccination against Covid-19, wary that cases may increase. The government is aiming at expediting the vaccination process and ensure that all individuals in the state above 18 years of age are given their first dose by year-end.

State Chief Secretary Harikrishna Dwivedi on Thursday issued instructions in this regard to every district administration and district health officers.

During Durga Puja, the daily vaccination number dropped to around 7,000 from more than 10 lakh a day. After Dussehra, the number increased to 10 lakh for a day on October 18 but dipped again since.

Director of Health Services Ajay Chakraborty said, "Puja ended and we have to get back to our work now. This time it may be more challenging to control the Covid situation since people didn't behave responsibly enough... which was expected amid this pandemic situation. Maybe we need to fight harder this time as the rural and urban mixing is an additional threat after this festival.

However, we are ready to accommodate the emerging situation and our doctors and nurses are ready to sacrifice their own comfort and serve humanity."

A day after the Chief Secretary's instructions to step up vaccination, the daily vaccination number increased significantly on Friday, when it crossed the 12 lakh mark. A total of 12,29,565 persons were vaccinated, of whom 8,37,379 people got the first dose of the vaccine. The state also crossed the milestone of seven-crore doses. As of Saturday, 7,05,62,259 have been vaccinated, of whom 5,12,44,425 have received both their shots.

The target of the state administration is to achieve the first dose of vaccine takers numbers would be more than seven crore within this year.

A senior health department official said, "Vaccination picked up pace from September. Even in the flood situation, our 'ASHA' workers continued the door-to-door vaccination process. Now, after the rainy season is over, we are expecting the pace of vaccination to increase further and we will easily achieve the number that the state government expects to reach within this year."

'MAMATA UNDISPUTED LEADER'

Voting for Cong & Left same as pressing NOTA: Abhishek

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, OCTOBER 23

AHEAD OF next week's four Assembly by-polls in the state, Trinamool Congress (TMC) national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee on Saturday said his aunt and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee was emerging as the "undisputed leader" from Kashmir to Kanyakumari in the fight against the BJP, and added that voting for the Left or the Congress would be akin to opting for the NOTA (None of the Above) option on the voting machine.

The Diamond Harbour MP made the remarks in back-to-back rallies in Gosaba (South 24 Parganas district) and Khardaha (North 24 Parganas).

"In the 2024 Lok Sabha election, not the Congress, the TMC will fight against the BJP and oust their government from Delhi. Over the past seven years, the Congress has only conceded defeat to the BJP all over the country, while Mamata Banerjee thwarted all challenges posed by communal and undemocratic BJP. The Left and the Congress ended up with the ISF but the electorate of Bengal chose



TMCMP
Abhishek
Banerjee

Mamata Banerjee over any other party. Voting for them is the same as pressing the NOTA button. If anything, it will strengthen BJP's hands."

The MP said TMC was making its presence felt all over India and would form governments in Goa and Tripura. "It [TMC] is established that we are now national party among top five parties and Mamata Banerjee made it possible from her humble abode. The country is eagerly waiting for the results of by-polls in these four constituencies. People want a leader like Mamata. That is why they raised slogans such as 'Desh ki netri kaisi ho, Mamata didi jaisi ho'."

The TMC leader said that while the polls in Gosaba and Khardaha were necessitated following the deaths of the TMC candidates, the elections in Santipur (Nadia district) and Dinhatra (Cooch Behar) were being held because the victorious BJP candidates did not want to

give up their Lok Sabha seats.

"They dishonoured the verdict of people and that is why Jagannath Sarkar and Nisith Pramanik resigned even after they were elected from Santipur and Dinhatra. Even after that, they are seeking votes and people will reject them."

Predicting a "4-0 clean sweep" in the by-elections, Abhishek alleged that the BJP was trying to win the Santipur by-poll and gain political mileage using the recent communal violence in Bangladesh. He added, "The BJP state president [Sukanta Majumdar] has said that his party will win by-elections in Santipur because of the violence in Bangladesh. Isn't he ashamed? You [Majumdar] are trying to gain political mileage out of communal violence in Bangladesh where Hindus were tortured."

Lashing out at Union Home Minister Amit Shah, the MP asked him about the promises he had made in the run-up to the Assembly elections. "Home Minister Amit Shah promised Rs 2 lakh crore for the development of the Sunderbans before the Assembly polls, what happened to that promise? After the election, they have not been seen in

Bengal."

In contrast, he added, Mamata Banerjee "kept her promises". He added, "Here lies the difference between the BJP and the TMC. No one got Rs 15 lakh in their bank account, as promised by Narendra Modi in 2014. But all our social welfare projects — Krishakbandhu, Swastha Sathi, Kanyashree and Lakshmi Bhandar — are benefiting crores of people already."

The MP held the Biplab Deb government in Tripura responsible for the assault on his party members, and noted that Rajya Sabha MP Sushmita Dev was "attacked in the state" by the BJP on Friday. "Should that happen in a democracy? We will not cover down before them. We will drive out the BJP from Tripura, carrying a picture of Mamata Banerjee," he said.

Abhishek alleged that the BJP "harasses" anyone against them with help from central agencies. He added, "They summoned me several, times, interrogated me for nine hours. You can interrogate me for hours...that will not stop me from speaking against you [BJP leaders]. If you slit my throat, I will still shout 'Jai Hind', 'Jai Bangla'. Truth is on my side."


(WITH PTI INPUTS)

Bengal govt adopted 3-tier model to boost technical education: Minister

Kolkata: With a focus on experience-based education and hands-on training, the West Bengal government has adopted a three-tier model of skilling with vocational training centres at panchayats, ITI institutes at blocks and a polytechnic college at every sub-division of the state, a minister said on Saturday.

Technical Education and Skill

Development Minister Humayun Kabir said his department is in the process of setting up at least one polytechnic institute in every sub-division of the state. The government has identified 495 vocational training centres for upgrading and trying to converge technical education with the labour department to identify district-wise skill gap, he said. **PTI**

 बैंक ऑफ बड़ोदा Bank of Baroda <small>INCORPORATED IN INDIA</small>	Kadamtala Branch Aritant Tower, 121, K.N. Mukherjee Road Howrah - 711 101, W. B.	POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property)
(As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002)		
Whereas The undersigned being the authorised officer of the BANK OF BARODA under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated 04.05.2021 calling upon the borrower Shri Asit Kumar Mukherjee (borrower) Prop. M/s Bijay Enterprise and Mr. Partha Pratim Mitra (Guarantor) to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs.9829365.37 (Rupees Ninety Eight Lakhs Twenty Nine Thousand Three Hundred Sixty Five and Thirty Seven paise only) as on 26.04.2021 together with further interest thereon at the contractual rate plus costs, charges and expenses till date of payment 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 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 sub-section (4) of section 13 of the Act read with rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002 on this the 22nd day of October of the year 2021.		
The borrower / Guarantors / Mortgagees in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of the Bank of Baroda for an amount of Rs.9829365.37 (Rupees Ninety Eight Lakhs Twenty Nine Thousand Three Hundred Sixty Five and Thirty Seven paise only) and further interest thereon at the contractual rate plus Costs, Charges and expenses till date of payment.		
The Borrower's attention is invited to provision of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.		
Description of the Immovable Property		
Equitable Mortgage of all the piece and parcel of House measuring area 1 cottah 2 chittack 16.75 Sq.ft. comprising Holding No.-53/22/A, R.S. Dag No. 171, Khatian No. 63, L.R. Dag No. 486, at J. N. Lahiri Road, Mouza- Ballabhpur, P.S.- Serampore, Dist.- Hoogly 712201. The property belongs to Partha Pratim Mitra. Bounded: On the North by: 10 ft Wide Road, On the South by: 10 ft. Wide Road, On the East by: Building of Dipankar Chatterjee and On the West by: Municipal Road.		
Date : 22.10.2021, Place: Kadamtala	Authorised Officer Bank of Baroda	
"Reference is made to earlier possession notice under Sec13(4) of the SARFESA Act, 2002 dated 23-09-2021 published on 25-09-2021 which is hereby withdrawn on 22-10-2021. Fresh notice under Sec 13 (4) of the SARFESA Act, 2002 is hereby issued on 22-10-2021."		

974 new Covid cases, 12 more die

Kolkata: The number of new Covid-19 cases in West Bengal further increased on Saturday as it recorded 974 cases. In the past seven days, the number of new cases have steadily increased in the state. On October 16, West Bengal recorded 443 new cases of the coronavirus infection (Covid-19) in 24 hours. The next day, it increased to 624.

On Saturday, Chief Secretary Harikrishna Dwivedi ordered district administrations to announce micro-containment zones to curb the spread of infection. The Howrah district administration announced 14 places as micro-

containment zones later in the day. Bengal's Covid-19 infection tally has gone up to 15,85,466 cases. The bulletin added that twelve new deaths were recorded in the state, taking the fatality tally to 19,045.

The state recorded 808 Covid-19 recoveries in the past 24 hours. The number of people cured of the infection in the state has now gone up to 15,58,690, the health department bulletin said. The recovery rate among coronavirus patients in West Bengal now stands at 98.31 percent. West Bengal now has 7731 active Covid-19 cases. **ENS**



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Relationship Beyond Banking



Bengal Congress
chief Adhir
Ranjan
Chowdhury

'Centre trying to confuse people with drive on Covid jab numbers'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KOLKATA, OCTOBER 23

SENIOR CONGRESS leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury on Saturday alleged that the BJP government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is trying to "confuse" the people of the country with its campaign on Covid-19 vaccination figures.

The leader of the Congress in Lok Sabha claimed that Modi's campaign on administration of 100 crore vaccine doses was projected in a way that made it look like 100 crore people have been inoculated.

"On completion of 100 crore vaccine doses, 100 places were lit up. And the prime minister is trying to send across the message that 100 crore people have been fully vaccinated. This is not the fact," he said in a video posted on Facebook.

Chowdhury, who is also the West Bengal Congress chief, noted that India's population stands at 139 crore, of which 106 crore are adults.

He further pointed out that the government has said that 29 crore people have received double doses, which is just 21 per cent of the entire population.

"Only this 21 per cent is in the safe zone. Also, booster doses are not being given in the country as yet," the Congress MP from Berhampore stated.

India has started immunisation programmes way back in 1975 and country is called the "vaccine hub of the world", he maintained.

GOVT. OF BIHAR

BIHAR COMBINED ENTRANCE COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION BOARD
I.A.S. Association Building, Near Patna Airport, Patna-14.

POST GRADUATE DENTAL ADMISSION COUNSELLING (PGDAC)-2021
for MDS in Private Dental Colleges of Bihar

Website : bceceboard.bihar.gov.in


Adv. No.- **BCECEB(PGDAC)-2021/05** Dated : **23.10.2021**

Important Notice for MOP UP Counselling (Dental)

In continuation to earlier all published concerned Advertisement of PGDAC-2021, this is to inform all NEET(MDS)-2021 / PGDAC-2021 (MDS) candidates and all concerned that MOP UP Counselling for seat allotment / admission will be going to held offline. Detailed programme and process for MOP UP Counselling of PGDAC-2021 (Dental Course) has been published through Adv. no. BCECEB(PGDAC)-2021/04 dt. 23.10.2021 which is uploaded on Board's website : bceceboard.bihar.gov.in . All concerned kindly go through the advertisement uploaded on Board's website and do accordingly.

2. The online Registration and submission of Application Form will start from 26.10.2021 and close on 31.10.2021 (10.00 P.M.).

Controller of Examination

 बैंक ऑफ बड़ोदा Bank of Baroda		RAJBARI BRANCH Rajbari, Basanti Malancha Highway Mathbari Abad, West Bengal - 743 442		Appendix-IV, [Rule 8(1)] POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property)
<p>Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Bank of Baroda under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notice calling upon the Borrowers to repay the amount mentioned in the notice together with further interest, cost etc. thereon within 60 days from the date of the said notice. The Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below to exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act, read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the date mentioned below.</p> <p>The Borrowers/ Guarantors in particular and the 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 Bank of Baroda, Rajbari Branch for the amount and interest thereon.</p> <p>The Borrowers' 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.</p>				
Sl. No.	Name of the Borrower & Guarantor with address	1) Date of Demand Notice 2) Date of Possession 3) Outstanding Amount	Description of Immovable Properties	
1.	Borrower: Mr. Aynal Abedin Molla, S/o Esmail Molla of Charpara 2nd Part (3 No. Charadhabijikat) Nazat, 1 No. Sandeshkhali, North 24 Parganas, West Bengal- 743 442. Guarantor: Sariful Molla, S/o Aynal Abedin Molla of Kamari, North 24 Parganas, West Bengal- 743 442. A/c No. 20080500000770 A/c No. 20080600000839 A/c No. 20080600000964	1) 15.06.2021 2) 22.10.2021 3) Rs. 44,65,652.85 (Rupees Forty Four Lakh Sixty Five Thousand Six Hundred Fifty Two and Paise Eighty Five only) as on 31.03.2021 and further interest, incidental expenses, costs and charges etc. thereon.	Equitable Mortgage of Deed No. 151103177 for the year 2017 in respect of immovable property being all that piece and parcel of bastu land standing in the name of Mr. Sariful Molla, Guarantor, measuring an area of 25 Satak more or less together with one storied building measuring an area of 1200 sq. ft. more or less standing thereon and situated at Mouza- Bounian Abad, comprised in R.S. & L.R. Dag No. 2297 under R.S. Khatian No. 2587, J.L. No. 20, P.S. Sandeshkhali, District- North 24 Parganas, within the limits of Nazat No. 1 Gram Panchayat. The property is butted and bounded by North: Property of Achmat Ali Molla, South: Property of Moktar Molla, East: Road, West: Property of Fakir Molla.	
2.	Borrower: Mr. Sariful Molla, S/o Aynal Abedin Molla of Kamari, North 24 Parganas, West Bengal- 743 442. Guarantor: 1. Ail Molla, S/o Esmail Molla of Charpara Nazat 1 No. Sandeshkhali, North 24 Parganas, West Bengal- 743 442. 2. Mr. Saiful Molla, S/o Aynal Abedin Molla of Baunia, P.S. Sandeshkhali, Dist. North 24 Parganas, West Bengal - 743 442. A/c No. 20080500000757 A/c No. 20080600000986	1) 15.06.2021 2) 22.10.2021 3) Rs. 11,17,881.83 (Rupees Eleven Lakh Seventeen Thousand Eight Hundred Eighty One and Paise Eighty Three only) as on 31.03.2021 and further interest, incidental expenses, costs and charges etc. thereon.	Equitable Mortgage of Deed No. 151103801 for the year 2017 in respect of immovable property being all that piece and parcel of land measuring 3 decimal together with 152 sq. ft. shop room lying situated in R.S. and L.R. Dag 907, Khatian No. 525, J.L. No. 18, at Mouza- Kamari, Mahakuma- Basihat, P.S. Sandeshkhali, North 24 Parganas, within the limits of Hatgachi Gram Panchayat. The property is butted and bounded by North: 8 ft. wide road, South: 8 ft. wide road, East: Property of Sri Manoranjan Nayak, West: Property of Sri Sudarsan Jana & Sri Sanjay Baj.	
Date: 22.10.2021, Place: Rajbari				
Authorised Officer, Bank of Baroda				

Format C-1

Declaration about criminal cases

(As per the judgment dated 25th September, 2018, of Hon 'ble Supreme Court in WP (Civil) No. 536 of 2011 (Public Interest Foundation & Ors. Vs. Union of India & Anr.)

Name and address of candidate: **DHAJYA KONWAR, Resident Of Rupahibam, Post Office- Udaipur, Police Station- Demow, District- Sibsagar, Assam**

Name of political party: **Independent**

Name of Election: **Bye Election Assam, 2021**

Name of Constituency: **107 Thowra Legislative Assembly Constituency**

I, **DHAJYA KONWAR**, a candidate for the abovementioned election, declare for public information the following details about my criminal antecedents:

(A) Pending Criminal Cases				
Sl. No.	Name of Court	Case No. and dated	Status Case(s)	Section (s) of Acts concerned and brief description of Offence(s)
1.	Not Applicable	Dispur P.S Case No- 3234/2017	Pending Investigation	Section 120B/ 147/ 148/ 353/ 333/ 338/ 325/ 188 of Indian Penal Code
2.	Not Applicable	Dispur P.S Case No- 3750/2017	Pending Investigation	Section 143/144/145/147/ 149/152/427/336/353 of the Indian Penal Code read with Section 3 of PDPP Act
3.	Not Applicable	Crime Branch Case No- 01/2019	Pending Investigation	Section 120B/ 122/ 123/ 143/ 147/ 148/ 149/ 150/ 152/ 153/ 326/ 333/ 353 of the Indian Penal Code
4.	Not Applicable	Basistha P.S Case No- 2130/2019	Pending Investigation	147/148/353/333/ 342/325 of Indian Penal Code R/w Section – 3 of PDPP Act
5.	Not Applicable	Basistha P.S Case No- 2126/2019	Pending Investigation	147/148/342/353/333/325/ 435 of the Indian Penal Code read with Section 3 of PDPP Act
6.	Not Applicable	Basistha P.S Case No- 2129/2019	Pending Investigation	147/148/342/353/333/325/ 435 of the Indian Penal Code read with Section 3 of PDPP Act
7.	Court of Munsiff No- 4, Kamrup (M)	G.R-10778/2016	Evidence Stage	Section 120B/188 of Indian Penal Code
8.	Court of CJM, Kamrup (M)	G.R-6866/2011	Appearance Stage	Section 447 of the Indian Penal Code
9.	Hon'ble Gauhati High Court	a. Criminal Appeal- 121/2021 b. Criminal Appeal- 130/2020 c. Criminal Appeal- 173/2020 All above appeals are arising out of NIA Special Case No.- RC-13/2019	Pending in the Stage of Orders Pending in the Stage of Orders Pending in the Stage of Orders	Section 120B r/w 124A/ 153A/153B of the Indian Penal Code read with Section 18 and 39 of the U(A)PA
(B) Details about cases of conviction for criminal offences				
Sl No.	Name of Court & date(s) of order(s)	Description of Offence(s) & punishment imposed		Maximum Punishment Imposed
1.	Not Applicable	Not Applicable		Not Applicable
2.	Not Applicable	Not Applicable		Not Applicable
3.	Not Applicable	Not Applicable		Not Applicable



After bribe charge, Malik says all know who was in charge of RSS in J&K

VARINDERBHATIA
CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 23

DAYS AFTER he alleged that he was told he would get a Rs 300-crore bribe if he cleared two files belonging to "Ambani" and a "senior RSS functionary" during his tenure as Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) Governor, Satya Pal Malik said on Saturday that it would "not be correct" to name the person, but "everybody knows who was the RSS in-charge in J&K".

Speaking to The Sunday Express, Malik, who is currently serving as the Governor of Meghalaya, said: "It would not be correct to name the person, but you can figure out who was the RSS in-charge in J&K. But I feel sorry, I should not have taken the RSS's name. If anybody is functioning in his individual capacity or doing any business, only he should have been referred to. Irrespective of which organisation he is affiliated to, the organisation should not have been brought into it."

Meanwhile, asked about Malik's allegations, RSS leader Ram Madhav said in Surat, "ask him who or what it was". When told that he was in J&K at that time, he said: "Nobody from the RSS would do something like that; but I really don't know in what context he said it, or whether he said it or not. You should ask him... He may have said 'somebody said this'... I have no knowledge about this, nobody from the RSS ever does this... He said in 2014 that we are losing the elections, and that we have done injustice to farmers. Do we believe all this? This could be his opinion, what is the truth, we don't know."

Malik made these remarks at a "public meeting" in Rajasthan on October 17. In a video of his



Satya Pal Malik

speech, Malik says: "Two files came before me in J&K. One of them pertained to Ambani, the other to a senior RSS functionary. One of the secretaries told me these are shady deals, but you can get Rs 150 crore each from these. I rejected the offer saying I had come (to Kashmir) with five kurta-pyjamas, and will leave with just these. But, as a cautionary measure, I took time from the Prime Minister and went to meet him. I told him that this is the file, this is the ghapla (scam) in it, these are the people involved, and they take your name, you tell me what is to be done. If these projects are not to be cancelled, then I can leave and you can appoint anybody else in my place; but if I stay, I will not clear these project files. I praise the Prime Minister for his reply -- he told me there is no need for any compromise on corruption".

"People cannot imagine how corrupt J&K is. Across the country, the rate of commission for clearing such files is 4-5 per cent, but in J&K, they ask for 15 per cent commission. During my tenure, there was panic and no big corruption took place," he says.

Asked if he took action against those who were trying to bribe him or government officials for getting their projects cleared, Malik said: "They were not trying to bribe me. But there was a bribe in those projects. There were a few people who were taking it. There was no requirement for any further action since I cancelled both the projects. That punishment was sufficient."

Bangladesh protests: Jamiat claims attacks, cops say keeping watch

DEBRAJ DEB
AGARTALA, OCTOBER 23

AMID A series of rallies by Hindu organisations here against vandalisation of Durga Puja pandals in Bangladesh, the Tripura State Jamiat Ulama (Hind) submitted a memorandum to the office of Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb on Friday, alleging attacks on mosques and minority habitations in the past three days.

A senior Tripura Police officer said while there had been "a

few stray disturbances", there was no major incident of law and order. "We are providing security to nearly 150 mosques," the officer said, confirming vandalism at a mosque near Agartala. He said they were investigating the incidents and analysing CCTV footage.

Unakoti SP Rati Ranjan Debnath said they were probing an incident regarding an idol in the district of North Tripura. Pointing out that the idol was located in an abandoned place atop a hillock in Unakoti,

Debnath said: "There was heavy rainfall the past few days... It's hard to imagine anyone would walk over 45 minutes through thick vegetation to (carry out something like this) in an abandoned place. There is no communal tension here."

In its memorandum to the CM, along with the office of Director General of Police V S Yadav, Tripura Jamiat president Mufti Tayebur Rahman said a section of people were trying to disrupt communal harmony in the state. Speaking to reporters

on Friday evening, Rahman said: "No one from Hindu or Muslim communities of Tripura supported the heinous incidents (in Bangladesh). We also protested against it at the Bangladesh visa office."

BJP spokesperson Nabendu Bhattacharya said the party was against any such incident, and leaders of its minority morcha had reached out to "everyone across the state" to ensure peace.

On October 21, over 15 people, including three police personnel, had been injured when

activists of the VHP and Hindu Jagran Manch had clashed with police during a rally at Udaipur in Gomati district against the Bangladesh violence, ignoring Section 144 restrictions. The organisers claimed they had the required permission for the rally, but police had stopped them when they tried to make their way to areas near some minority-dominated parts.

Local RSS leader Abhijit Chakraborty, who was part of the rally, said, "We suspect some people might have tried to con-

fuse the administration that we would disrupt law and order."

The same day, massive rallies were held at Agartala and Dharmanagar in North Tripura district over the attacks on minorities in Bangladesh.

A three-day Bangladesh International Film Festival scheduled to start in Agartala on October 21 has been cancelled. Assistant Bangladesh High Commissioner at Agartala Md Jobayed Hosen told the media, "We considered the feedback we received and decided."



PROTEST MARCH

ISKCON members at a protest against the recent attacks on minorities in Bangladesh, in Kolkata on Saturday. Partha Paul

Amit Shah in Srinagar: Snipers, detentions, 'ban' on 2-wheelers

BASHAARAT MASOOD
SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 23

SHARPSHOOTERS ATOP buildings, bullet-proof mobile bunkers across the city, policemen in civvies on sensitive locations, an unofficial ban on two-wheelers, and hundreds of detentions, including under the Public Safety Act (PSA) --

Srinagar was put under a heavy security umbrella as Union Home Minister Amit Shah arrived on Saturday for his first visit to Jammu and Kashmir following the abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019.

With October alone seeing 11 civilian deaths in targeted killings in the Valley -- most of them migrant workers -- a jittery security establishment has

put in place a three-tier security set-up for the visit that will end on Monday. A senior officer said the security protocol, to thwart an attack during Shah's visit, was the strictest in recent years. The roads leading to the Raj Bhawan and Sher-i-Kashmir International Conference Centre where Shah is expected to chair an event on Monday have been closed for civilian movement.

'Quality education for each Dalit child': Arvind Kejriwal

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 23

FELICITATING 22 Dalit students who scored above 90% in their class XII exams, on the occasion of Valmiki Jayanti, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said he has "vowed to fulfil Babasaheb's dream" of quality education for all Dalit children.

A celebration of Valmiki Jayanti was held at Thyagaraj Stadium on Saturday, in which a "Pratibha Samman Sammaroh" was organised during which Kejriwal presented 22 Dalit students, who passed class XII from Delhi government schools with scores above 90%, with certificates and shields.

"Both B R Ambedkar and Lord Valmiki teach us that the only way to be successful, to flourish, is through education. Babasaheb dreamt for each and every Dalit child to get the highest quality of education. I promise to you all that it is my solemn resolve to realise his dream. I will make sure that what this country's leaders could not do in 70 years, I will make that happen and ensure that every Dalit child gets the best possible education on offer," said Kejriwal. On social welfare schemes available for the education of underprivileged children, he said, "This year, 2.5 lakh students have made the shift from private schools to government schools."

EASTERN POWER DISTRIBUTION COMPANY OF A.P. LTD.
Corporate Office, P&T Colony, Seethammadhara, Visakhapatnam - 12.
Tender Notice
Open tenders are invited through e-procurement for the work of "Supply of 3Phase Energy Meters, Allied Materials and Wiring of Meters with Allied Materials to agriculture services under YSR Uchchta Vyavasaya Vidut Padhakam in Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam, East Godavari and West Godavari Districts of APEPDC". Bid No. COM/O&C/APEPDC/989/ 29/2021-22
Further details can be viewed in www.appeprocurement.gov.in.
Sale of Tenders starts on 25.10.2021 at 4PM.
Contact: Phone No: 9891-2582260, 9440612587
Email: nagarpalikamahawa@gmail.com
Chief General Manager/O&C APEPDC, Visakhapatnam

कार्यालय नगरपालिका, महवा (दौसा) राज.
Email : nagarpalikamahawa@gmail.com फोन नं. 07461 284005
क्रमांक : नयाप्र/2021-22/782 दिनांक : 14/10/2021
:- निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना :-
नगर पालिका महवा द्वारा CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF STADIUM IN NAGAR PALIKA MAHWA RAJASTHAN कार्य को निविदा आमंत्रित की गई है जिसकी निविदा यूबीएन नं. DLB2122WSRC16459 है। निविदा सूचना एवं शर्तें राजस्थान उपग्रह पोर्टल को वेबसाइट www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in एवं eproc.rajasthan.gov.in पर देखी जा सकती है।
अनुभव कुमार मोना अधिकारी अधिकारी नगरपालिका महवा
Raj./Samwad/C/7517/2021-22

NATIONAL LAW INSTITUTE UNIVERSITY
Kerwa Dam Road, Bhopal-462044
Sealed Tenders are invited for providing printing service for customised degree, Degree Folders, Transcript sheets, Transcripts, provisional Degree, Certificates, Various Registers, Marksheet etc. in the NLIU, Bhopal.
The tender Forms may be downloaded from 21.10.2021 from the NLIU Website www.nliu.ac.in.
Last date of submission of Tender Forms is 02.11.2021 till 12.00 noon.
M.P. Madhyam/102395/2021 **REGISTRAR**

TENDER NOTICE
Sealed quotations affixing Rs. 25/- Court Fee Stamp are invited for supply of Drilling Accessories, Survey Equipments, Tents & Tarpaulin, PA System, PC Computer and Plotter cum Scanner so as to reach the office of the undersigned on or before 22nd November, 2021 during office hours.
The cost of tender paper is Rs. 100/- for each item on payment by crossed D/D or cash in favour of Director of Mineral Resources, Shillong- 793003. Self addressed stamp envelope is to be enclosed along with the request.
Sd/- (David D. Sangma, MCS)
Director of Mineral Resources, Meghalaya, Shillong.
MIPR No. 1265
dt. 22/10/2021

JAIPUR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Indira Circle, Jawahar Lal Nehru Marg, Jaipur-302004
No.: JDA/EE&TA to Dir.Engg.-II/2021-22/D-110 Date : 22.10.2021
NOTICE INVITING BID
NIB No.: EE & TA to Dir. Engg.-II/24/2021-22
Bids are invited for works given below in various zones as per details given below :-

S. No.	Zone	UBN No.	Cost of Work (Lacs)	A&F	Nature of Work	Last Date
1.	EE-PRN-North	JDA2122A0365	306.54	210/2021-22	Construction and Repair of Road Cut Done by PHED	15.11.2021
2.	EE-Elec.-I	JDA2122WLOB00372	1195.50	2220/2020-21	Electrification of JDA Scheme West Way Heights (Part-I)	11.11.2021
3.	EE-Traffic Works-I	JDA2122WLOB00373	15000.00	145/2021-22	Traffic Improvement and Beautification Works at B2 Bye Pass Junction, JDA, Jaipur, Rajasthan	22.11.2021

Details are available at Procurement Portal website www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in, www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in and www.jda.urban.rajasthan.gov.in and www.jda.urban.rajasthan.gov.in
Raj. Samwad/C/2021/27593 **Executive Engineer & TA to Dir. Engg.-II**

Karnataka Road Development Corporation Limited
(A Government of Karnataka Enterprise)
"Samparka Soudha", No.8, Dr. Rajkumar Road, Rajajinagar 1st Block, Bengaluru-560 010. Tele Fax: 080-22024000
E-mail : mdkrdcl@gmail.com & cekrdcl@gmail.com
No. KRDCL/IFB/2021-22/17 Date: 22-10-2021
TENDER NOTIFICATION
(On e-procurement basis)
1. Karnataka Road Development Corporation Limited (KRDCL) invites offer from agencies having experience in respect of following work as per the requirement of Bangalore City Traffic Police on item rate tender basis in two cover system as detailed below :

Sl. No.	Name of the work	Approximate Estimated Cost (Rs. In Lakhs)
1	Providing Comprehensive Maintenance services to the Existing 825 Nos of Solar Blinkers in Bengaluru under Road Safety Authority and Traffic Management Project to Bengaluru City Traffic Police.	222.75
2	Providing Comprehensive Maintenance services to the Existing 55 Nos of Pelican Signal Light in Bengaluru under Road Safety Authority and Traffic Management Project to Bengaluru City Traffic Police.	102.168
3	Providing Comprehensive Maintenance services to the Existing 250 Nos of Tablets (Digital FTVR) in Bengaluru under Road Safety Authority and Traffic Management Project to Bengaluru City Traffic Police.	201.420
4	Providing Comprehensive Maintenance services to the Existing Alcometers in Bengaluru under Road Safety Authority and Traffic Management Project to Bengaluru City Traffic Police.	19.385
5	Providing Comprehensive Maintenance services to the Existing Equipment of Interceptor in Bengaluru under Road Safety Authority and Traffic Management Project to Bengaluru City Traffic Police.	78.588

Earnest Money Deposit : As per e-portal & also submit the form of EMD Declaration. **Period of Services** : 3 Years.
2. Interested applicants may download bidding documents from the e-procurement portal www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in and submit the bids and EMD (Electronically) through e-procurement portal only.
3. The calendar of events for various activities is as follows:
a. The last date and time for submission of queries is 08-11-2021 up to 17:30 Hrs. The applicants may submit their queries through electronic mail : cekrdcl@gmail.com
b. Pre-bid meeting will be held on 10-11-2021 at 11.30 Hrs in the KRDCL Board Room, Bengaluru at the above address only for the tenders referring to Sl. No. (1) to (3).
c. The Last date and time for submission of Bids is 23-11-2021 up to 17.30 Hrs.
d. Date and time of opening of Technical Bids is 25-11-2021 at 11.00 Hrs.
*** Please note henceforth, any changes in the schedule will not be published through News papers and further changes will be updated only on e-procurement portal website.**
Sd/- Chief Engineer, KRDCL, Bengaluru
DIPR/Bengaluru/R.O.No.1951/2021-22
COVID-19. DO NOT PANIC, BE AWARE
Wear Mask 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing Maintain Hand Hygiene

Govt advisory to TV channels: Air Covid cautions

New Delhi: A day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address to the nation, in which he recommended caution during the upcoming festive period, the Union Ministry for Information and Broadcasting issued an advisory to all TV channels to carry messages informing people about the im-

portance of respecting and adhering to Covid-19 appropriate behaviour.

"It remains crucial to not let our guards down, especially in view of the upcoming festive season.

In the context of the upcoming festive season, the advisory said, "it is advised that

private satellite TV channels may broadcast messages and other content to inform people about the crucial need to adhere to COVID appropriate behavior, exercise due precautions, avoid crowded places, adhere to limits on public gathering, etc. and not let our guards down." **ENS**

Forced adoption: SFI leader sits on protest; Kerala govt offers help

SHAJU PHILIP
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, OCTOBER 23

THE CPI(M)-led government in Kerala got into damage control mode Saturday as the alleged forcible separation of a boy from his mother, an SFI leader, snowballed into a controversy even as the aggrieved woman sat on a protest in front of the

state secretariat.

State Women and Family Welfare Minister Veena George said the government will take Anupama S Chandran's demand for her child to the family court. She said before adoption formalities are completed, the court will be informed. It will also be told about the government investigation into the baby's adoption.

The state women's commis-

sion has also offered legal assistance to Anupama, 23, who held a protest in front of the state secretariat Saturday, demanding that her son be given back. She ended her stir after the government promised to look into her demand.

Anupama has alleged that her parents, local CPI(M) leaders, forcibly took away her son last October, three days after her delivery.

Jammu sub-judge sentenced to 10 years in jail for raping woman

ARUNSHARMA
JAMMU, OCTOBER 23

A FAST-TRACK court in Jammu on Saturday awarded ten years of rigorous imprisonment to a suspended sub-judge for raping a domestic help. The court also imposed a fine of Rs 50,000 on him.

Presiding Officer Khalil Choudhary further sentenced Rajesh Kumar Abrol to simple imprisonment of seven years and imposed a fine of Rs 20,000 for cheating the woman.

Abrol was suspended following the FIR and was subsequently arrested. The court said, "It is not only the duty of the court, but social and legal obligations are clearly enjoined upon it to impose adequate punishment according to law while taking into consideration not only the crime, but also the criminal... Furthermore, deterrence and reformation are primarily social goals."

Choudhary added: "It is the duty of the court to impose adequate sentence, for one of the purposes of the requisite sentence is

protection of the society and legitimate response to its collectively concise. The paramount principle that should be a guiding laser beam is that the punishment should be proportionate."

Abrol was convicted on Thursday for raping and cheating the domestic help on the pretext of providing her legal support. The court held that "all the evidence on record unerringly points towards the guilt of the accused."

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

Man stabbed to death in robbery bid

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 23

A 42-YEAR-OLD electrician was stabbed to death, allegedly by two unidentified armed assailants, in Central Delhi's Patel Nagar in what police suspect is a robbery bid. The man, Manoj alias Chhotu Ram, was on his way home and

meant to take his wife for 'karwa chauth' shopping soon after.

Police said the assailants took his phone, ring, chain and around Rs 1,100 in cash after stabbing him. Police have found CCTV footage from the spot and are conducting raids to nab them.

DCP (Central) Shweta Chauhan said the victim was a resident of Faridpuri in West

Patel Nagar, and originally hailed from Rajasthan. He is survived by his wife, a 13-year-old son and a five-year-old daughter, and was the sole breadwinner.

"Manoj was stabbed on the left side of his abdomen and declared dead by doctors at RML Hospital. We have got some vital leads and raids are being conducted," Chauhan said.

5 GOVT & POLITICS

BJP leader asks women not to go to police stations after dark; she says video clipped

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW, OCTOBER 23

OPPOSITION PARTIES in Uttar Pradesh hit out at BJP national vice-president Baby Rani Maurya on Saturday for allegedly asking women not to visit police stations after 5 pm, prompting a denial from her.

Maurya, a former Governor, said the video being circulated online is a "clipped" version, with her comments taken out of context.

On Friday, a video had emerged on social media of an event in Varanasi, where Maurya purportedly said, "...ek mahila adhikari, ek sub-inspector wahaaan baitthi hai. Lekin ek baat main zaroor kahungi. Paanch baj ke baad, andhera hone ke baad, kabhi thane mat jaana. Phir agle din subah jaana, jao to apne ghar se kisi ko bhai ko, apne pati, apne pita ko saath le kar jaana, agar zaroori ho. Lekin mahilaon ke liye yeh kaam hua hai..." (One woman officer or a woman sub-inspector sits there. But I will say that after 5 pm, when it gets dark, don't go to police station. Go there the next morning. If you go, go with a male member of family — your brother, husband or father...but for women, this work has happened!)

The BJP has been projecting Maurya as its Dalit face in UP ahead of the Assembly polls.

Maurya told *The Sunday Express*, "I don't have a lot to do with this statement. I was in Varanasi yesterday (Friday) on the occasion of Valmiki Jayanti at a Dalit hamlet where Dalit and Muslim women were in attendance. I was telling them about the Yogi government and Modi government's achievements..."

"The SP is in panic... they are scared and I don't know which statement they clipped and put on social media..." she added.

SP spokesperson Rajendra Choudhary said, "Whatever she said can be heard in the video. We have nothing to do with it at all. Her allegation is false."

Amid row over Pak friend, Capt may announce new party soon

KANCHAN VASDEV
CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 23

AMID A controversy over Pakistani journalist Aroosa Alam, and Punjab Deputy Chief Minister Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa's flip-flop on Saturday by saying that state police cannot inquire against her, former chief minister Amarinder Singh is preparing to announce his own political outfit before Diwali, it is learnt.

Randhawa, who had tweeted Friday to say that a probe will be conducted on Alam's alleged ISI links, Saturday said, "She is a foreign national. How can a state hold an inquiry against her? It should be done by RAW and NSA."

Amid his U-turn, a war of words ensued over Alam with Punjab Pradesh Congress

Marking SP as rival no. 1, Yogi calls it Kalyug avatar, Ram-drohi

Polls near, SP starts a new wing for SCs — led by ex-BSP veteran

LALMANI VERMA
LUCKNOW, OCTOBER 23

INDICATING THAT Samajwadi Party (SP) is the main opposition to BJP in next year's Assembly polls, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath tore into the party on Saturday, calling it a "kalyug avatar" of the Mahabharat. He said riots took place in every district of the state under the previous Akhilesh Yadav government, and that Hindus were harassed under that regime.

Adityanath's attack on the SP comes days after the Prime Minister, during an address in Kushinagar, also took on the party.

Accusing opposition parties in UP of being against Lord Ram, Adityanath said such "Ram-drohis" not only harmed the faith but also "disturbed the social fabric, harmed development and threw the state in the fire of riots" under their government. "Those who are not the well-wisher of Lord Ram can never be your well-wisher," he said.

Addressing a Samajik Patinidhi Sammalean for Vishwakarma Samaj, organised by BJP, Adityanath said, "Maintaining distance from Ram-drohis who shield terrorists, embrace rioters, tear the social fabric, would be better for your present, and also for the future of your coming generations."

Without naming the SP, or its leaders, he alleged that during 2012-17, an "entire family" was involved in plundering. "They had all the relations of Mahabharat — chacha, maama, naana, bhatija (uncles, grandfather, nephews, etc). They all reminded of the relations of Mahabharat."

He said, "*Mahabharat ka drishya agar dekhna thha toh 12 se 17 (2012 to 2017) ke beech me jo sarkar pradesh me thhi uska who jeevant kalyugi avatar thhi* (the



UP CM Yogi Adityanath in Varanasi, Saturday. PTI

government between 2012 and 2017 was a live demonstration of the kalyug avatar of Mahabharat."

Adityanath maintained that riots occurred in every district of UP in that period, and that Hindus were harassed. "If Hindus went to lodge a complaint, they themselves were booked m(in some case)," he said, adding that no one can dare get involved in riots under the present government.

"At that time (2012-17), riots occurred before your festivals — before Holi, Rakshbandhan, Vijaya Dashami, Deepawali, Janmashtmi, Shivratri, Ramnavmi. No one could celebrate festivals because curfew was imposed by that time," he claimed.

"Everyone lived in fear, under the shadow of curfew; they could not celebrate festivals."

"*Aur doosri taraf yeh log jaate they badi besharmi ke saath gol topi pehan kark; pradesh ki janata ko apmanit karne ka karya bhi karte they* (on the other hand, those people went around shamelessly, wearing skull caps to insult people of the state)," Adityanath said.

Adityanath also said that BJP protected the setu-bandh (Ram Setu) — built by sons of Lord Vishwakarma (Nal and Neel) — while the Congress, the SP and the BSP made efforts in 2005 to harm setu-bandh.

Adityanath was referring to the Sethusamudram shipping canal project controversy.

LALMANI VERMA
LUCKNOW, OCTOBER 23

THE BJP has started wooing OBCs and SCs with targeted sammelans across UP. The BSP has been holding meetings of the Brahmin community and appealing for "*bhainchara*" (brotherhood) with SCs. Not to be left behind, with state elections just months away, the SP too has joined the queue.

For the first time since the party was set up in 1992, it has formed a dedicated wing for Scheduled Castes (SCs): Samajwadi Baba Saheb Ambedkar Vahini. And in what its own leaders claim is a masterstroke, the party has appointed a Dalit leader who was with the BSP for 29 years to head this new wing.

"We have to take the ideologies of Bhimrao Ambedkar and Ram Manohar Lohia along. We have to make deprived and oppressed sections aware of the ideologies of both leaders and their contribution to society," says Mithai Lal Bharti, the man at the helm of the wing who switched sides two years ago.

"In view of the 2022 polls, our office bearers will reach out to Dalits and other deprived sections, and appeal to them to support SP and remove BJP from power. BJP is anti-reservation and anti-Constitution," he says.

Before joining SP in September 2019, Bharti had worked with BSP for 29 years and served as its Ballia district president, Purvanchal region co-ordinator and Bihar and Chhattisgarh in-charge.

Bharti, 48, says he is a post-graduate in Hindi from Purvanchal University. But what he really treasures from those days is an opportunity to serve a



SP chief Akhilesh Yadav with Mithai Lal Bharti, president of Samajwadi Baba Saheb Ambedkar Vahini. File

meal to Kanshi Ram when the BSP founder had visited his hometown Ballia in 1997-1998.

The SP, meanwhile, has high expectations from the new wing — until now, the party had dedicated wings for OBCs, Scheduled Tribes (STs), minorities, women and other sections.

"There was no separate wing for Scheduled Castes. There were demands from within the party and some student leaders to create such a wing to work exclusively among Dalits... Party national president Akhilesh Yadav ji had made an announcement about it much earlier but a separate vahini has been formed now," said Juhi Singh, SP state spokesperson.

Bharti says his first task is to set up organisational units from the national to state, district, sector and polling booth levels.

So far, SP did not have a dedicated programme for Dalit voters. The party's strength has always been support of the Yadav community among OBCs and Muslims. But with around 23 per cent vote share, SCs have played a significant role in UP politics.

In the 2012 Assembly polls, when the SP won a majority of 224 seats, it had bagged 58 reserved seats for SCs followed by

BSP (15), Congress (four), and RLD and BJP (three).

In 2017, SP could get only five SC-reserved seats as BJP recorded a victory that included 67 reserved seats, apart from three such seats each for BSP, and NDA allies Apna Dal and Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party.

According to SP's Scheduled Tribes cell chief Vyasji Gour, his wing was working for both STs and SCs until now. "But the tribal population is confined to limited areas. So the party has created a separate wing for SCs..." he said.

According to political observers, the new frontal organisation appears to be an attempt by SP to build inroads among BSP's Dalit vote base given how their 2019 alliance airtbrushed the bitter memories of 1995.

After the Babri demolition in 1992, the newly formed SP under Mulayam Singh Yadav and the fledgling BSP had allied to bring their OBC and Dalit core vote bases together to prevent the BJP from returning to power in the Assembly elections.

However, both parties and eventually their core voters — Yadavs and Jatavs — became bitter rivals after the infamous Lucknow guesthouse incident of 1995.

KARNATAKA BYPOLL Cong banks on minority votes: CM Bommai

Hanagal: With the Hanagal and Sindgi Assembly seat bypolls less than a week away, Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai said on Saturday the Congress is at the mercy of minority votes to win elections. He said the Congress remembers minorities only when elections are around.

"They have pushed them (minorities) into a well... whenever there is an election, they throw them a rope... but pull it back once the elections are over," Bommai said at an election meeting in the Chikkanshi Hosur village in Hanagal.

He also challenged former chief minister Siddaramaiah to visit the villages in Hanagal to see the development there before inviting him for a debate on a public platform.

ENS

Congress can't be alternative to BJP: Kerala CPI(M) to party central panel

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 23

WITH CHIEF Minister Pinarayi Vijayan leading the charge, the CPI(M)'s Kerala leadership has argued in the party's Central Committee, a meeting of which is underway in Delhi, that the Congress cannot be the "fulcrum" of anti-BJP Opposition unity and it cannot be considered as an alternative to the BJP.

Sources said the central committee members from Kerala argued that this understanding should reflect in the draft political resolution, which the party is preparing for its national conclave, Party Congress, to be held in Kannur in Kerala next year.

The last Party Congress held in Hyderabad in 2018 had concluded that the BJP was the "main threat" and that the BJP and the Congress cannot be treated as "equal dangers". The party had then decided that the main task is to defeat BJP and its allies by rallying all "secular and democratic forces" but this has to be done without a "political alliance" with the Congress.

Sources said the outline of the draft political resolution approved by the CPM politburo and presented before the Central Committee advocates continuation of this stand. But since then, the CPM had entered into electoral understandings with the Congress.

While the Left parties fought the Assembly elections in alliance with the Congress, the CPM was part of the Congress-



Pinarayi Vijayan

led alliance in Assam. In Tamil Nadu, the two parties were a part of the DMK-led alliance. CPM general secretary Sitaram Yechury argues for continuation of this tactical approach.

But Kerala leaders, sources said, believe that the Congress's approach to fight communism was insincere, and on many issues, opportunistic. They argue the Congress often takes a soft Hindutva approach.

Sources said Central Committee members from Delhi, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh supported this approach. But they believe that the Congress, which is still the main Opposition party with a presence in most states, cannot be ignored at the national level.

Sources in the Central leadership believe that there was no need to change the line taken during the last Party Congress or reopen the debate. They argue that instead of discussing the party's approach to the Congress, the party should be focusing on forging a wider unity in the wake of people's movements like the farmers' agitation and increasing trade union unity gaining strength.



Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra in Barabanki, UP. Express

Priyanka flags off 'Pratigya Yatras' with 7 promises

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW, OCTOBER 23

CONGRESS GENERAL secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra Saturday launched her party's 'Pratigya Yatras' in UP's Barabanki district with seven promises, including sops for farmers and jobs for 20 lakh people, ahead of next year's Assembly elections.

Also among the resolutions was one on reservation of 40 per cent tickets for women candidates.

Priyanka flagged off the three

10-day yatras for western UP, eastern UP and Bundelkhand. "The fourth one, for the Awadh zone, will be announced soon," said Congress spokesperson Anshu Awasthi.

Besides the job and reservation promises, Priyanka announced that the party would provide scooters and smartphones to girl students, give full loan waiver for farmers, buy wheat and paddy at Rs 2,500 and sugarcane at Rs 400 from farmers, halve electricity bills of all people, and distribute Rs 25,000 to each family as aid.

Goa CM to be replaced, says AAP; BJP denies

MAYURA JANWALKAR
PANAJI, OCTOBER 23

SENIOR AAM Aadmi Party leader Manish Sisodia Saturday claimed, citing "reliable sources", that the BJP was planning to replace Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant ahead of the state Assembly elections. The BJP dismissed the assertion.

The Deputy Chief Minister of Delhi, speaking to reporters in the national capital, claimed to possess an internal BJP document that made note of the Sawant government's "failures" in the coastal state, where elections will be held early next year.

Sisodia's statement comes a day after Sawant, state BJP chief Sadanand Tanavde and General Secretary (Organisation) Satish Dhond met Home Minister Amit Shah and BJP national president J P Nadda in New Delhi after they were called to the national capital.

BJP's Goa election in-charge

Devendra Fadnavis said: "That's absolutely false and baseless. It's like saying AAP will be replacing Arvind Kejriwal in Delhi."

Sisodia said: "We have learnt from very reliable sources that the BJP is going to change its CM in Goa. Just two months before the Assembly election, it is going to replace Pramod Sawant and appoint a new chief minister. They have done this in Uttarakhand, in Karnataka."

Sisodia claimed that the BJP had drawn up a '10-point failure list' which included issues such as "mismanagement" of Covid-19 and Cyclone Tauktae, "deteriorating" law-and-order, and "scams".

Goa BJP chief Tanavade said: "Who are AAP leaders in Delhi to decide our party's decision? Just months before the election, can there be a leadership issue? This is common sense. Will any political party do such a thing? These are all rumours. There was no such discussion in the meeting in Delhi. It was about the election



Manish Sisodia

strategy of the party. Today the PM has appreciated him (Sawant)."

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Saturday virtually addressed the people of Goa and spoke with beneficiaries of the flagship state programmes, including the Swayampurna Goa (self-reliant Goa) scheme.

Sawant had started the programme, modeled on the central Atmanirbhar Bharat programme, in October last year.

The Prime Minister interacted with seven people, including a sarpanch and a chairman of the municipal corporation. He

lauded Goa's "new model of development" and praised the Sawant government for playing a leading role in implementing the central schemes.

Modi also lauded Sawant's efforts for taking Goa to "new heights".

After the virtual programme, Sawant said: "The Prime Minister has appreciated the efforts of team Goa, of the officials. If we continue to work like this, Goa will become a model for the Swayampurna Goa and Atmanirbhar Bharat programme."

On his meeting in Delhi with Shah, Nadda and BJP's Goa election in-charge Devendra Fadnavis, the Chief Minister said: "The meeting was about preparing for the forthcoming Assembly election. We had a discussion regarding that."

Meanwhile, Sawant's office announced on Saturday: "CM is travelling out of state for a personal program and will not be available in the state for Public

EXPLAINED

Praise from top leadership

BESIDES THE Prime Minister lauding his government, CM Sawant received a pat on the back from Home Minister Amit Shah for the state's handling of Covid-19, during his visit to Goa on October 14, and from party chief J P Nadda during the latter's visit in July. Nadda had praised Sawant for his "very good work".

Meetings till Monday October 25, 2021".

Sources said he is traveling to Gujarat and is set to return Sunday

Sawant: Work during Covid, state schemes will help BJP win polls

LIZ MATHEW
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 23

WITH ASSEMBLY elections scheduled early next year, and ruling BJP in the state working on finalising its poll strategies, Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said the success of Swayampurna Goa, his government's flagship programme and the management of Covid-19 situation and the economy will be the highlights of the campaign.

While BJP's moves to get smaller parties in the NDA fold are "yielding results", parties such as Trinamool Congress and Aam Aadmi Party, which are trying to find their feet in Goa politics, will come a cropper, he said.

"Around 60 departmental schemes are being implemented in Goa," he said. Stating that first-dose vaccination figure in Goa is 100 per cent, and 75 per cent eligible people have received the



Pramod Sawant

second jab as well, Sawant told *The Sunday Express*, "Our Covid-19 management and financial management have been really successful."

Sawant, who is in Delhi for discussions with BJP leaders for the party's election preparations in the state, said the tourism sector, a big revenue generator for Goa, has been revived after the success of vaccination in the country. "We have also allowed, with the Centre's support, chartered flights and some international flights," he said.

On the political situation in the state, where new entrants TMC and AAP are getting many Congress leaders and workers, apart from civil society leaders, to join them, Sawant said: "BJP's position on ground is strong. We

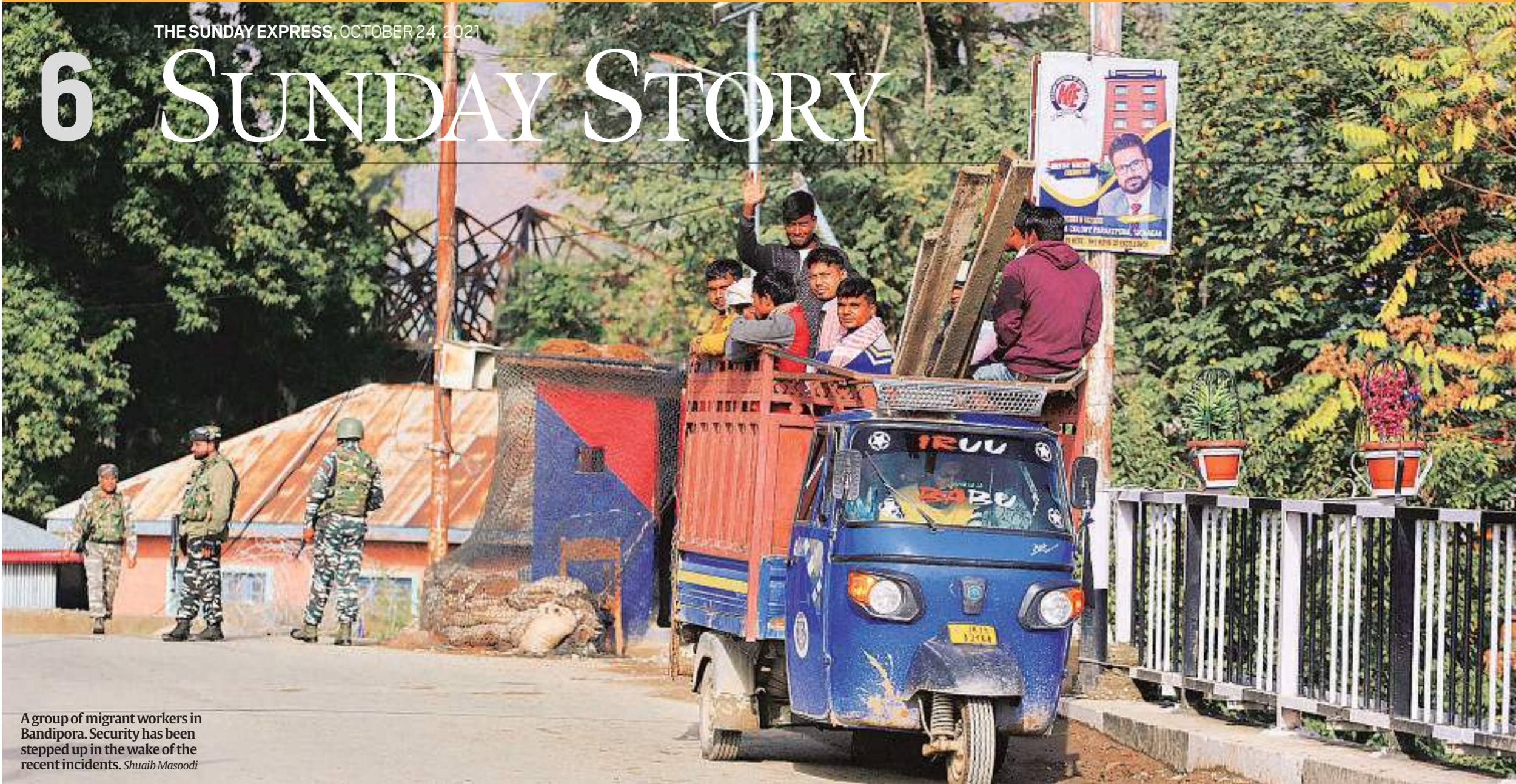
have the support of 27 MLAs and an Independent (legislator). Other parties such as MGP (Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party) and Goa Forward Party (are also with BJP), but there will be some developments — I think there could be some mergers. At present, Congress is the opposition party; despite its MLAs leaving the party, it still has a vote base..."

On TMC and AAP, Sawant said that "nothing is going to happen" despite the "hype" they have created — "because they do not have base voters..."

Stating that BJP will get a majority on its own in the 40 member Assembly, Sawant said, "*Bayees mein bayees paar* (22-plus seats in 2022) will be BJP's target. We are firming up various ideas... The main focus will be that the BJP government will make Goa self-reliant in its next tenure, for which we have already initiated programmes."

THE SUNDAY EXPRESS, OCTOBER 24, 2021

6 SUNDAY STORY



A group of migrant workers in Bandipora. Security has been stepped up in the wake of the recent incidents. Shuaib Masoodi

WINTER IS HERE

Recent civilian killings have led thousands of migrant labourers to leave the Valley. But, it's a relationship likely to survive.
DEEPTIMAN TIWARY & NAVEED IQBAL on an economy that rests on workers from the heartland, and on migrants who have found here a home

WITH A forlorn look on his face, Sajjad Wani is puffing cigarette after cigarette. The owner of a furniture-making unit in Pulwama's Litter in South Kashmir has a series of orders pending with him, but no workers to complete them. With logs of raw wood lying beside a row of intricately carved pieces and his machines covered in sawdust, the unit bears the look of a place that was busy till a few days ago.

On October 17 evening, one of his carpenters, Sageer Ahmed (55), was shot dead by suspected militants near his rented accommodation about 50 metres away from the unit. A resident of Saharanpur in Uttar Pradesh, Ahmed had arrived in Kashmir two years ago in search of work. Following his death, the seven other carpenters working at Wani's unit — all from Uttar Pradesh — left the Valley, fearing for their lives.

"Under normal circumstances they would have left in December before the snowfall. Now I don't know how to deliver my orders. There aren't many local carpenters available. Those who are, are either not good enough or absolutely lazy. Ahmed was not only very skilled at carving wood but also very hardworking. He was my chief carpenter and pretty much handled the operations of the unit," says Wani.

A few kilometres away, Farooq Mir, a farmer, is thrashing bundles of harvested paddy with his family members to separate grains from the chaff. "Usually this work is done by labourers from Bihar and UP. But after the Litter killing, all have run away... If they do not return next year, harvesting will be a problem," says Mir.

Over the past two decades, migrant labourers from India's heartland have become an integral part of Kashmir's economy. While they come from various states, including Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, those from UP, Bihar and West Bengal form the bulk. The Union Territory administration has no compiled data, and industry and trade bodies put their figure between two and four lakh. However, research scholars studying migrant patterns, and the 2011 Census data, say their actual numbers could be over 11 lakh in Kashmir Valley alone.

They are spread across sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, construction and brick kilns, or work as barbers and hawkers. In fact, it is difficult to find a barber shop in Kashmir run by a Kashmiri.

"While most labourers leave by the end of November or December, only to come back by March next year, barbers stay on. They have their families here too. But this time even they have run away," says Shamim Wani, who runs a bakery in Pulwama.

It is the second such exodus of migrant labourers from the Valley, the first seen soon after similar killings in the aftermath of the August 5, 2019, decision of the Centre, stripping Jammu and Kashmir of its special status and bifurcating the state into two Union territories. In the past two weeks, 11 civilians, including migrant labour and non-Muslim Kashmiris, have been killed. Those shot include Srinagar's famous pharmacist Makhani Lal Bindroo, a Kashmiri Pandit, and a teacher and a principal shot at their school, sending shockwaves up to Delhi. Most of the killings are confined to Srinagar and South Kashmir.

Sajjad Wani says he didn't have the heart to stop anyone from leaving. "I can't guarantee my own life in this place. How can I guarantee anyone else's? So I let everyone go."



At a Sopore tailoring unit, migrants say work has declined back home in Uttar Pradesh; barber shops like the one above, in Choora, Baramulla, are run almost exclusively by non-Kashmiris in the Valley. Shuaib Masoodi/Deeptiman Tiwary

and plastic garbage recycling. The estate's president, Javed Bhatt, says they have managed to retain most of their labour as they stay on the estate itself, and police provide perimeter security.

However, the same is not true of other sectors, Bhatt says, and local labour is hard to come by. "Kashmir's economy is heavily dependent on migrants, with their maximum presence in the construction business as masons, painters and carpenters. There are also household help from Jharkhand... Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has sold us a dream that Rs 60,000 crore investment is coming from Dubai. Who will invest if this kind of an environment continues and there is no workforce?"

What Bhatt draws confidence from is that workers who had left in the aftermath of the 2019 change returned next year as well as in 2021, despite Covid and security fears.

Fayyaz Malik, the general secretary of the Sopore Fruit Mandi, the largest wholesale market of apples in Kashmir, clocking an annual business of Rs 7,000 crore, says most of the buyers of their stocks are "outsiders". Non-locals are generally not involved in the plucking, segregation and packing of apples.

"Traders and agents of *arhatiyas*, along with their labour from various states, camp here for six months to buy fruits and transport them. If the number of buyers goes down because of the fear, prices of fruits will fall. Already we have not had a good harvest the past couple of years because of weather changes," says Malik.

Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Sheikh Ashiq says last week business leaders held a meeting with the divisional commissioner. "We all expressed our concern at what was happening with migrants in the Valley. We told the government that this is going to hamper your development goals. All infrastructure projects are going to be delayed," Ashiq says.

A senior government official said they are seized of the matter. "Security forces are doing their job and the situation will be back to normal. Ensuring security for a robust economic environment is a government's commitment," the official said.

Home Minister Amit Shah, who arrived in Kashmir on Saturday for his first visit post-August 5, 2019, and held a security review, recently announced that more than Rs 25,000 crore worth of investments have been locked in for J&K. The UT administration has claimed that JSW Steel is among four corporates which have decided to invest in the Valley.

Though Kashmir does not have much of an industry, it has always been a market for

THE UNREST IN NUMBERS

Incidents	2020 (Till July 15)	2020 (Total)	2021 (July 15)
Terrorism-related incidents	120	-	84
Civilians killed	19	37	15
			(11 in Oct alone)
Security personnel killed	25	46	7
Policemen killed	6	15	10
Militants recruited	85	172	69
Militants killed	(NA)	225	84

THE DISTRICT-WISE KILLING OF CIVILIANS IN 2021, TILL OCT 21

Sopore	4	Bandipora	1	Pulwama	1
Srinagar	10	Kulgam	5	Awantipora	5
Anantnag	4	Budgam	1	TOTAL	31

migrant labour. Locals say people have been coming from Bihar and UP to Kashmir for work for at least four decades.

Around the mid-2000s, when the UPA government announced a Rs 24,000 crore "reconstruction package" for Kashmir and the Valley saw relative peace, these numbers surged. This also coincided with the saturation of labour markets in popular destinations such as Delhi, Punjab and Mumbai.

With Kashmir free of the debilitating poverty of many parts of the country and enjoying a high literacy rate, locals are hard to find for menial jobs. Among the only places to fully implement land reforms, the Valley has few who do not own a piece of land or assets, helped by its low population density. One of the largest employers in the UT is the government.

"Given that locals may not be interested in menial work, migrants are not as such a threat," points out Prof Manish K Jha of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. As part of his research on migration in India, Jha says he has found that, in the past decade, migrants have started exploring newer areas like Kerala, Manipur and Kashmir, far away from the heartland states to which most of them belong.

"To begin with, it were people who had some level of skills who went to these places — a carpenter, a mason. Once they went, they realised that while their skills had a premium, there was also a shortage of labour. Then through their networks, they informed others back home and they started coming. Then some of them became brokers or mediators," Jha says.

Aijaz Ahmed Turrey, Academic Associate at IIM-Ahmedabad, says the locals who once engaged in such work have either been absorbed by an expanding economy of fruits,



ger, left for home in Bihar's Siwan district on October 23, confident he would return. "These things keep happening, there is nothing to fear. I have gone and come back several times. Yes there is fear, but I am sure things will settle down. There is no work back home," he says.

Mohd Lukman, 46, and Priyanshu Kumar, 23, who belong to the same village in Bettiah district of Bihar, share a rented room with four others, paying Rs 600 a month each, in Baramulla. They first came three years ago, after having worked in Punjab and Delhi.

"People there are very exploitative. They make you work for long hours and pay less than here. In Delhi I would get paid Rs 500 and work for two to three hours more. Here I get paid Rs 600 and can go home at 5 pm," says Lukman, who has four children.

According to the two, employers in Kashmir also arrange food for the labourers, which doesn't happen in Punjab. "Plus, here they treat you with dignity. You rarely have anyone using abusive language. Another great thing here is honesty. If they make you work extra, they pay you extra," says Lukman.

Suraj Sahni, a fruit hawker in Srinagar hailing from Badaun in UP, says locals are generally nice to migrants and there is a level of trust. "I can leave my stuff or payment pending here and know that if I come back two years later, I will get it. I can run credits even as a newcomer. This would not happen in Delhi," he says.

Priyanshu says for him the biggest attraction is the weather and better accommodation. "Until the winter sets in, it is pleasant here. You don't feel very tired. Rooms are bigger so even with more people it doesn't get claustrophobic," he says, adding that the months that he is not in Kashmir, he works in Uttarakhand.

While most people believe the migrants leaving is a temporary blip, and that they will return, what has taken a beating is the Centre's claim of restoring "normalcy" in J&K post abrogation of Article 370. "What can be more abnormal than the killing of migrant workers? It didn't happen even during the peak of militancy. And killing of Kashmiri Hindus and Sikhs is a throwback to those terrible times (of the early '90s)," says a Srinagar businessman who does not want to be identified.

The administration is alarmed. After the October 17 episode in which two migrant labourers were killed at their accommodation in Srinagar, it moved them into secured shelters that came up overnight in govern-

ment and school buildings. Sources said the migrants were also "encouraged" to leave, and their employers were told not to stop them if they couldn't ensure their security.

Top officials, including members of intelligence agencies and Central Armed Police Forces, have been stationed in the Valley since October 17. During his visit, Shah was briefed on the steps taken to prevent attacks on civilians among other issues.

L-G Sinha has said that "every drop of innocent blood will be avenged", and there have been a series of encounters since the killings, leaving 17 militants dead. Police claim many of them were behind the migrant killings. Scores of people have been picked up on suspicions of being "over-ground workers (OGWs)", while police have resumed pat-down frisking — a much-maligned routine stopped in the Valley a few years ago.

IG (Kashmir) Vijay Kumar blames the civilian killings on "hybrid terrorists" or "part time militants", using small arms such as pistols to target defenceless individuals in the dark, before speeding away on bikes. Police believe many of these shooters are radicalised individuals who might even hold regular jobs while carrying out "contract kills". It is thus harder for security forces to track them, tapping into their usual network. "In some cases, OGWs have been found directly involved," Kumar has said.

However, the 17 militants security forces have killed recently, and claimed them to be behind the attacks on civilians, were all Kalashnikov-wielding full-time operatives, and not armed with small guns. Sources say these men might have been involved in planning and not necessarily executing the killings.

The attacks on the civilians have coincided with an influx of small firearms dropped by drones from across the border, and increased infiltration since July. That the deployment of forces in the Valley is now down to pre-August 5, 2019, levels, has not helped matters.

Sources in the security establishment say things have been building up since July, when intelligence inputs first suggested non-Muslims could be targeted in the Valley. But there have also been some immediate triggers.

A senior officer says the very public Independence Day celebrations, with multiple Tricolours put up around the Dal Lake, and jingoistic slogans blared over loudspeakers, did not go down well at a time when the Valley is still bristling over the August 5, 2019, change, with no sign or restoration of statehood or elections around the corner. The officer says there are resumed whispers of plans for a "demographic change" in the Muslim-majority Valley, especially after the launch of a portal for Kashmiri Pandits to complain about the property they sold in distress sales, and a change in rules for buying of land in the Valley. "There is suspicion that a section of the local population supports these militants targeting outsiders," the officer says.

In September, security agencies say, they came across a social media post by The Resistance Force (TRF) — believed to be an offshoot of the Lashkar-e-Toiba — that discussed a "strategy" to target "non locals", and criticised the government's policies letting "outsiders" take up land and jobs in Kashmir. Sources said a TRF sleeper cell may be behind the recent attacks, and they were on the trail of some militants who had been identified.

But, Pulwama's Sajjad Wani, who has been in the furniture business for eight years, says any action has to come fast. "If police can't find and neutralise these militants by winter, I will frankly have to shut shop."

The Sopore Industrial Estate in North Kashmir has 56 units of different kinds, ranging from garments and furniture to PVC pipes

Mohammed Nadeem, who works in an embroidery unit at the Sopore estate, came to the Valley two months ago from Bijnor in UP. The father of three says he is afraid because of the killings but has little choice but to stay on. "I worked as a tailor in Bijnor. However, work has really dwindled over the past couple of years. Because of Covid, earnings are low and inflation is high. People are not buying new clothes. But there is work here."

Kamlesh Chauhan, 27, who has been coming to Kashmir since 2017 as a daily wa-

8 ECONOMY

STANDALONE NET PROFIT AT ₹5,511 CRORE FOR QUARTER ENDED SEPTEMBER

Strong credit growth, easing NPAs propel ICICI Bank Q2 profit by 30%

ENSE ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, OCTOBER 23

AIDED BY strong loan growth and lower provisioning, ICICI Bank on Saturday posted a 30 per cent rise in standalone net profit at Rs 5,511 crore in the second quarter ended September of FY22 as against a profit of Rs 4,251 crore in the same quarter last year.

Net interest income (NII) increased by 25 per cent year-on-year to Rs 11,690 crore in the second quarter from Rs 9,366 crore in the year-ago period. The bank's net interest margin rose to 4.00 per cent from 3.89 per cent in the

quarter ended June and 3.57 per cent in second quarter of FY21.

The net addition to gross non-performing assets (NPAs) declined by Rs 96 crore to Rs 41,437 crore in the quarter under review from Rs 38,989 crore. Gross NPA additions fell to Rs 5,578 crore from Rs 7,231 crore.

Recoveries and upgrades of NPAs, excluding write-offs and sale, increased to Rs 5,482 crore in the latest quarter from 3,627 crore in Q1-2022. The gross NPAs written off were Rs 1,717 crore. "With the increase in economic activity, disbursements across all retail products increased sequentially in Q2-2022," ICICI Bank said.

NET INTEREST INCOME UP

25%

■ Net interest income (NII) rose 25% year-on-year to ₹11,690 crore in second quarter from ₹9,366 crore a year ago. Net interest margin rose to 4% from 3.89% in the quarter ended June

Mortgage disbursements were close to the level seen in the quarter ended March 2021 (Q4-2021), reflecting the increase in

demand coupled with the bank's seamless customer onboarding experience through pre-approved offers and digitisation, it added.

Disbursements of personal loans and auto loans were close to March 2021 levels. The value of credit card spends grew 47.0 per cent sequentially in September 2022. Spends across most categories other than travel crossed March 2021 levels in September. "The bank continued to focus on providing the full suite of banking products to corporate clients and their ecosystems and lending to well-rated corporates," it said.

The retail loan portfolio grew by 20 per cent year-on-year and 5

per cent sequentially, and comprised 62.1 per cent of the total loan portfolio at September 2021. Including non-fund outstanding, the retail loan portfolio was 51.6 per cent of the total portfolio at September 2021. The bank continues to hold Covid-19 provisions of Rs 6,425 crore as of September 2021, the same level as June 2021.

As of September quarter, total assets under various resolution schemes were Rs 9,684 crore, or 1.3 per cent of total advances, as against Rs 4,864 crore at the end of June quarter. The bank has restructured loans worth Rs 4,158 crore under the second Covid-19 restructuring programme.

POWER MINISTRY NOTIFIES RULES

'Must run' status for renewable energy plants; formula set for timely recovery of gencos' costs

ENSE ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 23

IN A move aimed at boosting the use of renewable energy, the Power Ministry on Saturday notified rules requiring that power supply from renewable energy (RE) plants not be curtailed over commercial concerns, after a number of states have sought to cut procurement from renewables or renegotiate power purchase agreements (PPAs).

Punjab, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh have sought to renegotiate PPAs with renewable power generating companies (gencos).

The Power Ministry also notified rules allowing timely pass through of increase in costs for gencos due to changes in law, such as changes in state or central taxes and in government regulations.

"The investors and other stakeholders in the power sector had been concerned about the timely recovery of the cost due to change in law, curtailment of renewable power and other related matters," the ministry said in a release on Saturday.

THE NEW RULES

■ The notification of the Electricity (Promotion of generation from renewable sources of energy by addressing Must Run and other matters) Rules, 2021 classify solar, wind and hydro plants (in case of excess water leading to spillage) as "must-run" plants

■ The Electricity (Timely recovery of costs due to Change in Law) Rules, 2021 aim to ensure timely recovery of the costs for generators

The notification of the Electricity (Promotion of generation from renewable sources of energy by addressing Must Run and other matters) Rules, 2021 classify solar, wind and hydro plants (in case of excess water leading to spillage) as "must-run" plants. The rules provide that electricity supply

from must-run plants can only be curtailed in the event of technical constraints in the electricity grid or for reasons of security of the grid. Procurers will be required to pay must run plants as per PPAs in case supply is curtailed.

"These rules will help in achieving the targets of RE generation. This will ensure that the consumers get green and clean power and secure a healthy environment for the future generation," the ministry said.

The Electricity (Timely recovery of costs due to Change in Law) Rules, 2021 are aimed at ensuring timely recovery of the costs for generators due to change in law to promote investment in the power sector. "Timely recovery of the costs due to change in law is very important as the investment in the power sector largely depends upon timely payments," said a government release, noting that currently, the pass through of cost due to change in laws takes time and this can lead to developers becoming financially stressed.

The rules provide a formula for the adjustment in the monthly tariff due to changes in law.

SECTOR WATCH CONSUMER INTERNET COS

As Paytm heads for largest domestic IPO, more tech startups likely to follow suit

PRANAV MUKUL
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 23

FINTECH MAJOR and payments bank Paytm's parent company One97 Communications Ltd has received an approval from markets regulator Sebi to go ahead with its initial public offering (IPO), which the company claims will be the country's largest public debut.

EXPAND EXISTING BUSINESS LINES

■ Paytm, which got Sebi's nod for the IPO, plans to use ₹4,300 crore of the fresh issue to expand existing business lines and acquire new merchants and customers

Approval from Sebi

A nod from the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) means that the company can now go ahead and launch its IPO. Paytm, in July, had filed its draft prospectus, proposing to sell new shares worth Rs 8,300 crore, and existing shares worth as much. While the company has not finalised a timeline yet, it is expected to launch the public offering sometime next month around Diwali.

Planned use of funds

Paytm has said that it plans to use Rs 4,300 crore of the fresh issue to expand its existing business lines and acquire new merchants and customers. The company is expecting a valuation between \$20 billion and \$22 billion, and at last fundraise, it was valued at \$16 billion. The company has been in discussions with some foreign investors including Singapore's GIC and ADIA to participate in the IPO.

Next on the cards

Several Indian companies operating in the consumer internet space have gone public, including food-tech firm Zomato, its early investor Info Edge, in addition to online travel agencies MakeMyTrip.com and

yatra.com, which listed in the US, and e-commerce firms Infibeam and Indiamart.

Online travel agency Easy Trip Planners also went public recently in India. Up next, other than Paytm, companies including cosmetics firm Nykaa, logistics firm Delhivery, and online insurance aggregator Policybazaar are looking at an IPO to raise funds.

Road ahead for startups

Research analysts say that each startup should be seen as a separate business and investors should not see them as belonging to one basket.

"Tech companies or startups have to be seen from the larger perspective of how wide their business opportunity is and what they can do in future," said the research head of a leading brokerage firm. Investment experts also say that in case of fintech companies investors should carefully evaluate as banks have also enhanced their digital presence and have done the technology upgrades.

"For companies that have not been able to clearly define their business model and keep changing their focus, investors need to practice caution," said a senior official with a financial services firm.

China's indebted property market and Evergrande crisis

China Evergrande Group is wrestling with debts of over \$300 billion and the fate of China's second-biggest property developer is keeping global markets on tenterhooks



Buildings at the construction site of Evergrande Cultural Tourism City, an Evergrande Group project whose construction has halted, in Suzhou's Taicang, Jiangsu province, China. Reuters file

LAND SALES in China account for a third of their revenues, which stood at 27.3 trillion yuan (\$4.3 trillion) in 2020, according to Japanese bank Nomura

PROPERTY accounts for 40% of assets owned by Chinese households, as per Macquarie, raising concerns that if the bubble bursts, consumers may turn thrifty,

which would hit other economic sectors

VALUE OF NATIONWIDE LAND SALES slumped 17.5% in August from a year earlier, according to Reuters calculations using finance ministry data — the biggest slide since February 2020

CHINESE DEVELOPERS owed 33.5 trillion yuan (\$5 trillion), or a third of China's GDP, as of the end of second quarter, up more than two-fold from 2015, as per Nomura

LONG-TERM IMPACT: Many Beijing officials have tried to reassure investors the crisis will not spiral out of control and that creditors' interests will be protected, but its long-term impact on China's property sector and economy is highly uncertain

Source: Reuters

China has about 65 million empty homes, equivalent to the total number of households in France and the UK combined, due to a massive building boom and rampant speculation

Biological E to get \$50 mn from US DFC

Hyderabad: The US International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) will finance \$50 million to Biological E Limited to increase its COVID-19 vaccine manufacturing capacity.

A media invitation from the US Consulate here said chief operating officer of the DFC David Marchick and Biological E Ltd managing director Mahima Datla will formalise the financing agreement on October 25. "On October 25, US International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) Chief Operating Officer David Marchick and Biological E Limited Managing Director Mahima Datla will formalize a USD 50 million financing agreement to expand the company's capacity to produce COVID-19 vaccines," it said.

The agreement will help bolster near-term Covid-19 response efforts and will also benefit long-term global health in India and throughout the Indo-Pacific region, the US Consulate's invitation said. DFC is America's development bank and provides finance solutions to the most critical challenges in developing nations. **PTI**

Stay on Future-Reliance deal to continue: How SIAC order gives Amazon a leg up

AASHISH ARYAN
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 23

THE SINGAPORE International Arbitration Centre (SIAC) has ruled against lifting the interim stay that an emergency arbitrator had placed on the Future Retail-Reliance Retail deal in October last year. The ruling is a leg up to Amazon's claims that the deal between Kishore Biyani's Future Retail and Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Retail was a violation of its "contractual rights".

What does the latest ruling by SIAC mean for the Future Retail-Reliance Retail deal?

In the legal tussle between Amazon and Future Retail, so far Amazon.com Inc has had the upper hand when it comes to orders in its favour, be it from the SIAC or the Supreme Court.

In its ruling, the SIAC has held that the emergency arbitrator was right in putting an interim hold on the Future Retail-Reliance Retail deal and that they have not been "vitiated by any

Experts say the Singapore International Arbitration Centre's (SIAC) latest ruling will prove to be another stumbling block in the Future Retail-Reliance Retail deal, thereby delaying the possible merger as the Supreme Court ruling is also in Amazon's favour

subsequent events or proceedings".

Experts say that the latest ruling will prove to be another stumbling block in the Future Retail-Reliance Retail deal, thereby delaying the possible merger as the Supreme Court ruling is also in Amazon's favour.

Future Retail will, in all likelihood, wait for the final decision on the issue before going ahead either way with the plan, an expert said.

Earlier this year, the Supreme Court had upheld the enforcement of an order by the SIAC emergency arbitrator which had put on hold the Future Group's deal with Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd, a subsidiary of Reliance Industries Limited.

EXPLAINED

In its judgment, the apex court had held that such an award can be within the Arbitration Act as these orders were an "important step in aid of decongesting the civil courts" and providing quick interim relief to parties in the arbitration.

Why is Amazon opposed to a deal between Future Retail and Reliance Retail?

The whole tussle dates back to 2019 when Amazon had signed a deal with Future Coupons, the parent company of Future Retail. According to the agreement, which was then worth Rs 2,000 crore, Amazon had acquired 49 per cent in Future Coupons.

As part of the deal between Amazon and Future Coupons, Future Retail would be able to place its products on Amazon's online marketplace.

According to Amazon, the deal had then also given it a 'call' option, which enabled it to exercise the option of acquiring all or part of Future Retail's shareholding in the firm within 3-10 years of the agreement.

In August last year, when Future Retail signed a Rs 24,713-crore deal to sell its retail, wholesale, logistics and warehousing units to Reliance Retail, Amazon claimed that the deal violated the "contractual rights" it had with Future Coupons.

On its part, the Future Group had said that it had not sold any stake in the company, and was merely selling its assets and, therefore, not violated any terms of the contract.

Although Indian laws do not recognise the concept of international arbitration and emergency orders issued by such tribunals, the orders are usually "respected" by business houses.

GREEN INITIATIVE

Saudi to ensure oil mkt stability, but stresses on hydrocarbons

REUTERS
RIYADH, OCTOBER 23

SAUDI ARABIA'S crown prince Saturday said the world's top oil exporter aims to reach 'net zero' emissions of greenhouse gases, mostly produced by burning fossil fuels, by 2060 — 10 years later than the United States. He added it would double the emissions cuts it plans to achieve by 2030.

Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and his energy minister said Saudi Arabia would tackle climate change, but also stressed the continued importance of hydrocarbons and said it would continue to ensure oil market stability. They were speaking at the

ARAMCO AIMING TO EXPAND OUTPUT CAPACITY

THE CHIEF executive officer of Saudi Aramco, Amin Nasser, said it was counterproductive to "demonise" hydrocarbons, adding that the state-owned oil giant aimed to expand oil and gas production capacity



Saudi Green Initiative (SGI) ahead of COP26, the UN climate conference in Glasgow this month.

Amin Nasser, chief executive officer of state-owned oil giant Saudi Aramco, said it was counterproductive to "demonise" hy-

drocarbons. He said Aramco aimed to expand oil and gas production capacity while also achieving net zero emissions from its own operations by 2050, calling for more global investment to ensure adequate crude supplies.

BRIEFLY

Myntra CEO

New Delhi: Amar Nagaram, the CEO of Myntra, has put in his papers after three years of leading the fashion e-commerce platform, and will pursue his own venture, as per an email by Flipkart CEO Kalyan Krishnamurthy.

PhonePe suit

New Delhi: PhonePe has withdrawn its petition against BharatPe's Buy Now Pay Later (BNPL) Postpe platform which had alleged violation of PhonePe's trademark. PhonePe said it will file a fresh suit.

New Icra MD

New Delhi: Icra named Ramnath Krishnan as its managing director and group chief executive officer. **PTI**

9 THE WORLD

TOP OF THE WORLD



Energy exports form the backbone of the Saudi economy

SAUDI ARABIA Saudis pledge 2060 target of net-zero emissions

ONE OF the world's largest oil producers, Saudi Arabia, announced Saturday it aims to reach "net zero" greenhouse gas emissions by 2060, joining more than 100 countries in a global effort to try and curb man-made climate change. Although the kingdom will aim to reduce emissions within its own borders, there is no indication Saudi Arabia will slow down investments in oil and gas or relinquish sway over energy markets by moving away from the production of fossil fuels. Energy exports form the backbone of Saudi Arabia's economy, despite efforts to diversify revenue as the world increasingly looks to transition away from reliance on fossil fuels. The country is forecast to make \$150 billion in revenue this year alone from oil. **AP**

Police: Second key suspect in Bangladesh violence arrested

ANISUR RAHMAN
DHAKA, OCTOBER 23

BANGLADESH'S SECURITY agencies Saturday arrested a man in his 30s, who is believed to be the second key suspect behind the recent slew of violence against minorities and mob attacks on temples in Bangladesh during the Durga Puja festivities, police officials said.

Shaikat Mandal, one of the masterminds behind the October 17 mayhem in Pirganj sub-district of northwestern Rangpur, and his accomplice was arrested from Gazipur, on the outskirts of Dhaka on Saturday, elite anti-crime Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) officials said.

Mandal had gone live on Facebook, which incited people and triggered a wave of violence, an RAB official said.

At least 70 houses and shops belonging to Hindus were torched in attacks at Pirganj following Mandal's Facebook post on October 17.

His arrest comes a day after police arrested Iqbal Hossain, 35, the key suspect from Cox Bazar area, and the man who had allegedly placed the Quran at a Durga Puja venue in Cumilla.

Hossain is under a seven-day police remand as other security and intelligence agencies would join to interrogate him. **PTI**



RUSSIA, CHINA HOLD JOINT PATROLS IN PACIFIC

Russian and Chinese warships held their first joint patrols in the Western part of the Pacific ocean on October 17-23, Russia's defence ministry said in a statement on Saturday. **Reuters**

Pak: 10 killed in 2 days as supporters of radical group clash with police

M ZULQERNAIN
LAHORE, OCTOBER 23

SIX PEOPLE died on Saturday raising the death toll to 10 in ongoing fierce clashes between the police and radical Islamists in Lahore, as over 8,000 activists of the banned Tehreek-i-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) began a procession to Islamabad from here to stage a sit-in for the release of their party chief Saad Hussain Rizvi, who was arrested



TLP supporters protest in Lahore on Saturday. **Reuters**

last year amid demonstrations against France over the publica-

tion of "blasphemous" caricatures. Among the dead were three policemen and seven TLP workers.

The office of the chief minister of Pakistan's Punjab province confirmed the death of a policeman on Saturday, while the TLP claimed that five workers were killed by police during the protest in Lahore on Saturday.

On Friday, two policemen and as many TLP workers lost their lives in violent clashes in the city. **PTI**

Beijing ramps up testing, curbs as Covid cases rise

KJM VARMA
BEIJING, OCTOBER 23

AUTHORITIES in the Chinese capital are ramping up measures like testing and restricting hotel bookings as the total number of coronavirus cases climbed to nine on Saturday, while other parts of the country reported 38 locally transmitted Covid-19 cases, according to the National Health Commission.

This is in addition to the 32 cases reported on Friday.

The spike has prompted

SINGAPORE TO ALLOW TOURISTS FROM INDIA

Singapore: Singapore on Saturday announced the removal of India and five other South Asian countries from its travel restriction list as the island-state continues to adjust border measures in response to the global Covid-19 situation. All travellers with a 14-day travel history to Bangladesh, India,

Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka will be allowed to enter or transit through Singapore from Wednesday, the health ministry said. However, travellers from these countries will be subjected to tight border measures, which involve a 10-day, stay-home notice period at a dedicated facility, it said. **PTI**

health officials in Beijing and other provinces to step up with

measures like testing, isolation of communities, cancelling ho-

tel bookings, and the use of sanitisers and masks.

The current spike in cases has been attributed to an elderly couple from Shanghai who flew to several cities including the tourist city of Xian, and tested positive for Covid-19, sending officials on a leather hunt to trace scores of people who came in contact with them.

Within three days of an announcement that the couple had tested positive in Xian on Saturday, hundreds of close contacts of the couple had been identified. **PTI**

Erdogan orders removal of 10 ambassadors

ASSOCIATED PRESS
ISTANBUL, OCTOBER 23

TURKISH PRESIDENT Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Saturday that he had ordered 10 foreign ambassadors who called for the release of a jailed philanthropist to be declared persona non grata. The envoys, including the US, French and German representatives in Ankara, issued a statement earlier this week calling for a resolution to the case of Osman Kavala, a businessman and philanthropist held in prison since 2017 despite not having been

Kavala imprisonment raised global concern

OSMAN KAVALA has been in jail since 2016 over charges linked to a coup attempt in the same year, as well as to mass anti-government protests in 2013. Human rights groups and international ob-

EXPLAINED

servers have repeatedly called for his release, saying that his imprisonment was based on political considerations. The European Court of Human Rights has also called for Kavala to be freed.

convicted of a crime.

Describing the statement as an "impudence," Erdogan said he had ordered the ambassadors be declared undesirable.

"I gave the instruction to our foreign minister and said 'You will immediately handle the persona non grata declaration of these 10 ambassadors,'" Erdogan

MEANWHILE

BIDEN TO MEET POPE AMID RIFT WITH US BISHOPS

There's an intriguing subplot to President Joe Biden's upcoming meeting with Pope Francis. The world's two most prominent Roman Catholics will meet on Friday and celebrate a shared outlook on church teaching and vital social issues even as Biden faces unwavering opposition from many US Catholic bishops over his stances on abortion and LGBTQ rights.

Pak says no pact with US on use of airspace for ops in Afghanistan

SAJJAD HUSSAIN
ISLAMABAD, OCTOBER 23

PAKISTAN ON Saturday rejected reports about an agreement with the United States on the use of its airspace for intelligence operations in Taliban-ruled Afghanistan.

The Pakistani Foreign Office (FO) issued a statement in response to media queries regarding the news report alluding to formalisation of an agreement between the two countries to conduct military and intelligence operations against Afghanistan. The FO statement read: "No such understanding was in place."

However, it added: "Pakistan and the US have long-standing cooperation on regional security and counter-terrorism and the two sides remain engaged in regular consultations."

CNN had reported, quoting three sources familiar with the details of a classified briefing with members of the US Congress, that the US was nearing an agreement with Pakistan for use of its airspace to conduct operations in Afghanistan.

Pakistan's Opposition parties had also demanded the government to give an explanation on the reports that Pakistan had allowed the US military to use its airspace.

Earlier, Prime Minister Imran Khan in an interview had categorically said that Pakistan would "absolutely not" allow any bases and use of its territory for any sort of action inside Afghanistan.

"Absolutely not. There is no way we are going to allow any bases, any sort of action from Pakistani territory into Afghanistan. Absolutely not," Khan had told 'Axios on HBO' in

AFGHAN ROADSIDE BOMBING TARGETS TALIBAN, KILLS TWO CIVILIANS

Kabul: A roadside bombing targeting a Taliban vehicle in eastern Afghanistan killed at least two civilians Saturday, including a child, Taliban and health officials said. Four others were wounded. Two bombs detonated as a Taliban vehicle was passing by, killing one child, district police chief Ismatullah Mubarez said, adding that no Taliban fighters were harmed. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack but the Islamic State group is active in eastern Nangarhar province, where it has launched frequent attacks targeting the Taliban. A local hospital official said two bodies and four wounded civilians were transferred to the hospital after the attack. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to brief the media. Recently, IS has shown signs of expansion in Afghanistan, with attacks in the north, the south and the capital of Kabul. The group's ability to launch frequent attacks has cast doubt over the Taliban's ability to maintain security and stability in the embattled country. **AP**

an interview in June.

The Taliban seized power in Afghanistan on August 15, two weeks before the US' complete troop withdrawal on August 31 after a costly two-decade war. **PTI**

Indian-origin travel blogger killed in Mexico shootout

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LOS ANGELES, OCTOBER 23

A 29-YEAR-OLD California-based Indian-origin woman techie, who travelled to Mexico to celebrate her birthday, was one of the two foreign tourists killed in a shootout between two drug gangs in the Caribbean coast resort of Tulum, according to media reports.

Anjali Ryot was killed along with another German tourist on Wednesday night in the cross-fire, Californianewstimes.com news portal reported.

Ryot and her husband Utkarsh Shrivastava had gone to Mexico to celebrate her 30th birthday on October 22 from their current home at San Jose city in California, her father, K D Ryot, told PTI from his home in Himachal Pradesh.

Shrivastava informed her younger brother Ashish, who cur-



Neera Tanden

Indian-American Neera Tanden named White House staff secy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
WASHINGTON, OCTOBER 23

INDIAN-AMERICAN POLICY expert Neera Tanden, a close confidant of US President Joe Biden, has been named White House staff secretary, eight months after Republican lawmakers scuttled her nomination to another key post.

Tanden, 51, a senior adviser to Biden, was named White House staff secretary on a morning staff call on Friday, CNN reported.

The White House staff secretary is a behind-the-scenes but critical role in the West Wing, responsible for managing paper flow to the President from other areas of the administration and federal government. The person filling the job has been viewed as one of the most powerful in the building, it said.

In addition to her new duties, Tanden will keep her senior adviser title "and will continue to provide leadership on particular projects and initiatives", *Politico* reported, quoting a White House official. She will report to White House chief of staff Ron Klain.

The appointment does not require Senate confirmation.

"The Staff Secretary role is the central nervous system of the White House and moves the decision-making process and manages a wide variety of issues for the President," the White House official said. Tanden has "over two decades of experience in policy and management which are critical elements of the role. Her experience... will be a key asset in this new role," the official said.



Anjali Ryot was a California resident

rently lives in Chicago, that she was shot dead in the Caribbean coast resort of Tulum soon after they had taken ice cream from a stall following their dinner, he added.

Ashish informed the family in India about the tragedy on Oct 21.

Ryot's Instagram account listed her as a travel blogger from Himachal Pradesh, living in San Jose, California.

The incident happened when Ryot and four other tourists were dining on the terrace of La Malquerida restaurant when four men armed with assault rifles fired at an adjoining table in the premises around 10.30 pm, Spanish newspaper *El Pais* reported.

Aromatherapy spray from India, linked to US deaths, faces recall

MIKE STOBBE
NEW YORK, OCTOBER 23

US HEALTH officials may have solved the mystery of how four people in different states came down with a serious tropical disease even though none had traveled internationally: an aromatherapy spray imported from India.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Friday that investigators found the same type of bacteria that causes the disease, melioidosis, in a spray bottle found in one of the patients' homes.

The four people were from Georgia, Kansas, Minnesota and Texas. Two of them, one a child



An image of the bottle of the spray. Walmart/CDC via AP

in Georgia, died.

The spray found in the Georgia patient's home was made in India. The genetic profile of the bacteria in the bottle is similar to that of strains usually found in South Asia, the agency said.

The contaminated product is labelled "Better Homes & Gardens Lavender & Chamomile Essential Oil Infused Aromatherapy Room Spray with Gemstones," the CDC said. **AP**

FRUSTRATION INSIDE FACEBOOK ERUPTED OVER WHAT SOME SAW AS ITS HALTING RESPONSE TO EXTREMISM

Amid the Capitol riot, FB faced its own insurrection

ALAN SUDERMAN & JOSHUA GOODMAN
WASHINGTON, OCTOBER 23

AS SUPPORTERS of Donald Trump stormed the US Capitol on Jan 6th, battling police and forcing lawmakers into hiding, an insurrection of a different kind was taking place inside the world's largest social media company.

Thousands of miles away, in California, Facebook engineers were racing to tweak internal controls to slow the spread of misinformation and inciteful content. Emergency actions — some of which were rolled back after the 2020 election — included banning

Trump, freezing comments in groups with a record for hate speech, filtering out the "Stop the Steal" rallying cry and empowering content moderators to act more assertively by labelling the US a "Temporary High Risk Location" for political violence.

At the same time, frustration inside Facebook erupted over what some saw as the company's halting and often reversed response to rising extremism in the US.

"Haven't we had enough time to figure out how to manage discourse without enabling violence?" one employee wrote on an internal message board at the height of the Jan 6 turmoil.



Congress is investigating Facebook's part in the Jan 6 riots. **AP**

"We've been fuelling this fire for a long time and we shouldn't be surprised it's now out of control." It's a question that still hangs

over the company today, as Congress and regulators probe Facebook's part in the Jan 6 riots. New internal documents pro-

vided by former Facebook employee-turned-whistleblower Frances Haugen provide a rare glimpse into how the company appears to have simply stumbled into the Jan 6 riot. It quickly became clear that even after years under the microscope for insufficiently policing its platform, the social network had missed how riot participants spent weeks vowing — on Facebook itself — to stop Congress from certifying Joe Biden's election victory.

What Facebook called "Break the Glass" emergency measures put in place on Jan 6 were essentially a toolkit of options designed to stem the spread of dangerous or violent content that the social

network had first used in the run-up to the bitter 2020 election.

"As soon as the election was over, they turned them back off or they changed the settings back to what they were before, to prioritise growth over safety," Haugen said in interview with *60 Minutes*.

An internal Facebook report following Jan 6 faulted the company for having a "piecemeal" approach to the rapid growth of "Stop the Steal" pages, related misinformation sources, and violent and inciteful comments.

Facebook says the situation is more nuanced and that it carefully calibrates controls to react quickly to spikes in hateful and violent content, as it did on Jan 6. **AP**

THE SUNDAY EXPRESS MAGAZINE



POINT OF VIEW

Too Late for Truth

Writer Amitava Kumar on how a painting became a canvas for reflection on inequality and lack of social justice

BOOKS

- Interview with Manu S Pillai on his book *False Allies: India's Maharajahs*
- Review of Dhruvrajyoti Borah's *Elegy for the East*
- Review of Arundhati Subramaniam's *Women Who Wear Only Themselves*



PARTHA PAUL

Director Aparna Sen, 75, on co-winning the Kim Jiseok Award at the recent Busan International Film Festival, being outspoken and why women don't have to bear the burden of being virtuous all the time

'MY MORALITY TEACHES ME TO SPEAK OUT'

Alaka Sahani

You called winning the Kim Jiseok Award for *The Rapist*, at the recent Busan International Film Festival (BIFF), special.

Many years ago, when Donald Ritchie was the chairman, I was one of the jurors for this festival. At that time, I had met Kim Jiseok (the late South Korean co-founder of BIFF), who worked very hard to promote Asian movies. That's why this award has a special significance for me. I am very happy for my team whose hard work has been recognised. In India, the movie will most likely release on an OTT platform after doing the festival rounds.

You thought of the story of *The Rapist* some years ago. What prompted you to finally make the film?

The idea came to me about a decade ago. When you read about rape cases, they leave an impact. The 2012 Delhi gang-rape case was brutal. We don't know what the trigger is — why do men rape? What is it about a society that creates rapists? Is it just about inequality or the caste system? I have these questions in mind. Even though women are coming forward to speak about it, the frightening fact is that it continues to take place with impunity. In the case of the Hathras incident (2020), the victim's family was demonised. In the 2018 Kathua case of the Kashmiri girl Asifa Bano look at the way the perpetrators went about bragging about it. There are cases where people have videotaped the assault and shared it. It's because they think they won't be punished.

The film raises questions regarding the death penalty for rapists.

After some gruesome incidents, I have felt that these criminals have no right to live. But, that's not the right way to think. Are you putting someone to death so that you can set an example or instil fear in potential perpetrators? It has been proved by research that capital penalty does not deter people from committing crimes. They do it in a state of blind rage or passion or for a sense of power.

Has the intellectual and cultural environment in West Bengal, where you've grown up and worked, encouraged you to speak your mind?

Definitely, it has contributed. Also, there is



a certain kind of morality that was instilled in me. By that, I don't mean conventional morality, I mean intellectual honesty. My grandfather was a Brahmo Samaj preacher. Personally, I am an agnostic on the verge of being an atheist. The ethics and morality of my father and grandfather have been passed on to me. That has translated into humanism and a strong sense of morality. It teaches me to speak out.

How much of your political views are reflected in your movies?

Sometimes, practical considerations come in. I may not have dialogues or scenes expressing my views but I may suggest it. I don't want scenes from my movie to be censored; it is important that people watch the film. In *Ghahre Bairey Aaj* (2019), I could have named political parties but I didn't do that. I brought up issues that I wanted to talk about — the plurality of India that I love and how that has diminished.

You have handled different responsibilities as actor, director, writer, and editor of a magazine.

When I was an editor (of the Bengali fortnightly *Sananda*, a women's magazine), it helped me understand what was happening around us. That's when my idea of politics also grew stronger. As (writer-director) Rituparno Ghosh once remarked, most of my editorials were about communal harmony. The world

changed after the 1992 Babri Masjid demolition. People ask me why am I not making movies like *36 Chowringhee Lane* (1981) or *Parama* (1985) anymore. That's because the world around me has changed. Since I am occupied by what's happening around me, naturally I tend to tell those stories.

What has been exciting — to be in front of the camera or behind it?

Always behind the camera. My daughter (Konkona Sensharma) is an actor-director, so am I. During my time as an actor, we had to act coy and flutter our eyelashes all the time. After a while, I didn't care about that. A woman is portrayed either as helpless or virtuous. I didn't think it was incumbent upon a woman to bear the burden of being virtuous all the time. They can be corrupt too.

In a movie like *Parama*, you moved away from the conservative depiction of women. How did the audience react?

For people, *Parama* was an adulterous woman. I saw her as one making a sexual choice. Before that, being a progressive woman meant going for higher studies or marrying against the family's wishes. But being a mother of three, having an affair and not feeling guilty, created so much controversy. I know women who sneaked out to watch *Parama*, without telling their families. After its premiere, three

old ladies came up to me and said "Bless you, dear". The movie changed a lot of mindsets.

Your casting choices have been remarkable. Tell us about them.

Well, there are different ways of doing it. For the role of Violet Stoneham (in *36 Chowringhee Lane*), I wanted a real Anglo-Indian lady. Utpal da (Utpal Dutt) said, 'Are you mad? You want to cast a non-actor for your main character?' He then suggested Jennifer Kapoor's name. She was so graceful and I had my doubts if she could be dumpy, but she assured me that she could. I had met Nutan for *Parama* but didn't cast her. To me, Rakhee epitomised the *bahu* of a conservative north Kolkata household.

For *Mr. and Mrs. Iyer* (2002), I hadn't thought of Konkona. The desktop computer used to be in her bedroom. She has the habit of reading late into the night and I have the habit of working late. Sometimes, I would read out the scenes to her. One day, I looked up as I was reading and saw the expressions fleeting across her face. I thought my actor was right there.

It is 40 years since you debuted as a director. Have we reached a stage when we no longer need to use expressions like 'women director' and instead just say 'director'?

We have. However, it is the gaze that's important. (Filmmaker Satyajit) Ray and Rituparno portrayed strong women characters. Showing explicit violence, I would say, is the male gaze. Nandita Das showed a riot in *Firaaq* (2008) but there was nothing explicit. It's the same in *Mr. and Mrs. Iyer*. This, I think, is the female gaze. I am proud that many female actors have turned producers and are making non-mainstream movies.

Sixty years ago, you entered the world of movies when you acted in Ray's *Teen Kanya*. How do you look back at it?

My nature is not to look back. For some time, when the film was playing, I thought I should have done certain things differently. In *Mr. and Mrs. Iyer*, for instance, there is the girl who protested when Muslim guys are taken away, and she is slapped. Later, we see her eating phuchka with her friends and laughing. People are not in a continuous state of protest and they have lives. But I should have given her a black eye. This, I thought two years after the film was released. As for the awards that I have received, I don't think about them unless I have to write in my bio. My films have won several National Awards, but I don't dwell on them.

You have worked with some great directors such as Dutt in theatre, and Ray in films. How have they influenced you as an actor and director?

Utpal da was a leftist. I often argued with him about ideas of a revolution. He used to dismiss them and would call me a 'reactionary'. He had a great sense of discipline and working in theatre instils that in a person. He was very particular about being punctual and learning the lines.

Ray, of course, was a mentor, the way my father (critic and filmmaker Chidananda Dasgupta) was. But the idea was never to imitate Ray but to imbibe the essence of his work and ethics. He was very particular about every little detail on his sets. He was economical in the way he designed a shot or wrote a film. In one scene, he could impart a lot of information. This helped keep the length of the scene in control. These things stayed with me.

When he asked me how *36 Chowringhee Lane* has turned out, I told him: 'There are mistakes'. He said that was given, but was I able to create some moments? A film is not something you just watch, it's the human qualities and interactions that create a moment in the film and that stays with you. That's why one can watch Ray's movies again and again. It's like visiting your favourite holiday haunt or country house.

You were close to Ghosh and together you made a wonderful movie *Unish April* (1994). People have often spoken about the void since he left. What do you think of contemporary Bengali directors?

Ritu was a very talented filmmaker. He understood the middle-class Bengali psyche extremely well. His passing away definitely left a void. There are filmmakers like Kaushik Ganguly, who have filled that to some extent. I like some of Anjan Dutta's movies, as well. But, Ritu was popular and people enjoyed his brand of cinema.

Making an allusion to Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*, I am curious to know what does a female director require — support system, budget or people who believe in her?

We need all of that. Women filmmakers, particularly those married with children, have to have some space when they are left alone. In our country, men are not hands-on homemakers. At times, it's also about conditioning, especially in the case of women of my generation. We think we will manage everything. Then, one gets irritable and exhausted.

Konkona manages her time well, with her son (Haroon), acting, yoga classes and physical training. It's commendable when a woman is able to manage everything but she doesn't have to. Also, any director, irrespective of gender, needs a producer who believes in his/her vision and the product.



Kolkata

Record 100 cars to take part in Nazir Hoosein Memorial Drive

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
OCTOBER 23

FROM DELHI to Lansdowne, up to Mussoorie after passing through the snow capped peaks near Tilwara or Chopta before proceeding further north to Kufri via Shimla bypass and finally to Manali: the five-day Nazir Hoosein Memorial Drive by Team Firefox was launched on Saturday.

Organisers said there will be record participation for the non-competitive event and the 100-car field will begin their sojourn on November 8 from Greater Noida and conclude in Manali on November 12. The event will be held along the 'iconic' Himalayan Rally route to commemorate the birth anniversary of Hoosein, who is credited to be one of the persons to put India on the map of international motorsports.

Hoosein was a founder member of his club, the Indian Automotive Racing Club (IARC), and was the president of the Federation of Motor Sport Clubs of India (FMSCI) in 1984/85. However, in the racing circuit, Hoosein is perhaps most fondly remembered for starting an event that is believed to have reshaped Indian motorsport — the Himalayan Rally.

"I heard about it as a young child and it really drove my passion for rallying," said Gaurav Gill, a multiple time FIA Asia Pacific Rally champion. "I am very happy to see this tribute to the iconic rally route in the Himalayas seeing such good participation and look forward to its great success."

The first edition of the event was held in 1980, based on a safari rally format. Since then the concept stuck and the Himalayan Rally became an important fixture of the Indian calendar. This year, the NHMD will follow the route from the 1981 edition, the organisers said.

On November 11, the drivers will tackle the iconic route of the original rally — the Jalori Pass before halting in Manali. The final day will see participants cross over the Rohtang pass before concluding the drive in Manali. "The idea was to recreate the original route, for various reasons. In 40 years, a lot of the landscape has changed, and it will be interesting for former participants as well as fans to experience it," Rajan Syal, the chief executive of FMSCI, said.

Syal added that after a two-year pause owing to the pandemic, the event is an attempt to 'hark back the good times.' "Once we saw things slowly opening up, some of us involved with the motorsport community decided that we should do a drive, something to hark back the good times," Syal said. "That idea snowballed into doing something to commemorate Nazir Hoosein."

EMOTIONAL ROLLERCOASTER

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

Next change: An action-thriller?



Moeen Ali's teammates rush to him after he pulls off a stunning catch. AP

If Pakistan and India contest doesn't hold up to its hype, a shiver would go up the spine of ICC. The opening day games were a low-quality affair. Australia vs South Africa might have thrown up a last-over finish but it was artificial respiration at best to an otherwise life-less game. Worse was to follow in the West Indies vs England game. Luckily, the fielding in both games was top notch. The first game saw an Aiden Markram stunner. In

the second, Moeen Ali ran back from mid-off to almost near the boundary, and Dawid Malan back-pedalled from midwicket to well outside the in-ring to to claim their catches. The bowling has been good but made to look better by some poor batting. ICC would hope that West Indies rediscover their touch and Australia improve their batting. And of course, India and Pakistan brighten up the tournament with a thriller.

Markram on the mark



Aiden Markram's remarkable catch had shades of Dean Jones and Roshan Mahanama. We have the first great catch of the world cup which might prove pretty difficult to overshadow in the rest of the tournament as far as boundary catches go. Steve Smith had smashed a pull off Anrich Nortje and might well have been thinking of a six when he was given the shock of his life by Markram. From his position at long-on, Markram charged to his right and dived full length and to his right even as he twisted his body to pouch it. It's one thing to dive forward or to the side in the slips, but to do a side-ward plunge near the boundary and cover the angle is quite something else. No doubt, Smith was seen shaking his head and puffing out deep breaths in the dugout



The Aussies welcomed the T20 World Cup with new hairstyles. Glenn Maxwell, who dismissed South Africa skipper Temba Bavuma in the second over of the innings, sported a novel hairdo: fade on the sides and a top knot. When Maxwell removed Bavuma, his teammates came rushing to pat his head, bringing all the focus onto the hair. The look proved to be decisive on social media, with compliments mixed with comments on 'Maxwell's mid-life crisis'. Asked by Mark Nicholas during the break if it was his lucky hair-do, he replied: "It's because it's going in my eyes and there's no hairdresser on tour." Leggie Zampa, too, turned up having grown his hair out. Who knows, if Australia win their first T20 World Cup, perhaps an Aussie cricketer would draw inspiration from MS Dhoni, who went bald after India's 2011 World Cup win.



Absence of free agent Faf proves costly

And to think they couldn't find a place for Faf du Plessis. It was a shambles of a batting performance after two sweetly times fours by the skipper Temba Bavuma. From then on it was an inexorable slide to mediocrity. "When you are working with free agents, you have to come together. You have to find a balance that works for both the team and the free agents. With Faf in particular, we struggled to find that balance," said former captain Graeme Smith, who is the director of Cricket South Africa. Without that free agent Faf, the imbalance and lack of quality in the team was hard to hide. Watching in the stands was Smith himself, with a grim stare at the proceedings.

Up, down and up again

One didn't really have to look at the action in middle to understand which way the match was swinging. As Australia dug a hole for themselves, a glimpse at the Australian dugout told the match story. Captain Aaron Finch and coach Justin Langer sat looking calm, with wide grins as Steve Smith and Glenn Maxwell pulled Australia closer to South Africa's modest total. After a wobbly start, the duo steadied the Australian ship and Australia's captain-coach had little to worry about. But the smiles disappeared from their faces immediately after Smith walked back thanks to Markram. And once Maxwell got out, they looked worried, and Finch was already wiggling around. Within minutes, the cheerful mood in the dugout turned gloomy. It stayed that way until the last over and the smiles and fist pumps were back only after Marcus Stoinis helped Australia cross the finish line.

DDCA polls: Kotla turns into political battleground

NIHAL KOSHIE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 23

ELECTIONS FOR the Delhi and District Cricket Association (DDCA) to be held next week are turning out to be a microcosm of the politics of the day with the BJP and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) throwing their weight behind leading candidates.

Last week, leaders of the BJP's Delhi unit were asked to support the group helmed by Rohan Jaitley, son of the late Arun Jaitley. Jaitley senior was one of the most prominent BJP leaders, a union minister and a former president of the DDCA. Rohan, who has followed in his father's footsteps into cricket administration and is the current state association president, has thrown his hat in the ring again.

The president's election is a battle between two lawyers, Rohan and former additional solicitor general Vikas Singh, who claims to have the backing of AAP leaders.

Siddharth Sahib Singh, the brother of BJP MP Parvesh Verma (West Delhi), is spearheading a third group. His father, the late Sahib Singh Verma, was a senior vice-president of the BJP and a Delhi chief minister. Siddharth is contesting for the secretary's post which sees a three-way battle.

Contesting for the treasurer's post is another advocate Pawan Gulati, who is a maternal uncle of BJP MP from East Delhi Gautam Gambhir, a former India Test opener. Rohan said that he did not want to comment on the BJP state unit drumming up support for his group.

"This is an apolitical organisation, there are people with various political thoughts who work together for the betterment of the game. Whether someone is supporting someone, I don't want to comment on that. It is all hearsay," Rohan said on Saturday. Delhi BJP president Adesh Gupta had told this paper last week that the party is "seeking support for Rohan Jaitley's panel".

Vikas Singh, a senior Supreme Court lawyer, has made personal calls to members of the DDCA to talk about his 'anti-corruption campaign'.

He has also been in touch with AAP leaders in the run-up to the state cricket unit elections.

Singh calls the BJP state unit's call to lend support to Rohan's group a "desperate attempt" which is turning the DDCA election into a political battle.

"The Aam Aadmi Party is helping me. Raghav Chadha (MLA), Manish Sisodia (deputy chief minister) and Satyendra Jain (power minister), all three have advised MLAs to go door to door and tell voters they need to weed out corruption. That said, I am not an AAP candidate. Their campaign is an anti-corruption campaign," Vikas Singh says. "Look at the people they



The BJP state unit has backed Rohan Jaitley (left), Vikas Singh claims to have the support of AAP leaders.

(Rohan Jaitley group) are fielding. It includes Vinod Tihara (secretary's post) who has just come out of jail," Singh, who says he has support from friends across party lines, adds.

AAP has not officially supported any candidate.

Tihara was arrested last year for alleged violation of Goods and Services Tax (GST) norms and lodged in Meerut jail before getting bail. Rohan said that attempts were being made to run a smear campaign against his group. "Whether he has committed a fraud, let the courts decide. He has the opportunity for a fair trial. Let the law take its own course. If he is guilty, he will get convicted," Rohan said.

Both groups have highlighted their vision with focus on members and cricketers in their respective manifestos.

Building an indoor cricket facility, restructuring cricket activities and expanding the cricket window are some of the plans Rohan has put forward to members.

Vikas Singh talks about putting the DDCA's house in order and improving facilities for members, cricket academies in each district of the capital and starting the Delhi Premier League.

He says it is not the first time he has been up against the BJP. "In the Supreme Court elections also, the BJP issued a whip against me but I got the highest-ever margin," Singh, who was elected president of the executive committee of the SC Bar Association in February, said.

Former India player Kirti Azad, a Congress politician now, said he was supporting Vikas Singh because the need of the hour was to clean up the system in the DDCA. "The other candidates are like old wine in new bottle. Cricket needs to be the priority of those who run DDCA. Vikas Singh has promised change for the betterment of the sport and for members of the DDCA," the 1983 World Cup winner said.

The elections will be held over three days, October 25 to 27, and the results will be declared on October 28.

BRIDGE

Dealer: South Vulnerable: North/South

NORTH		WEST		NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	
♠ Q842				IS			
♥ 432		Pass	2S	Pass	3s		
♦ 42		Pass	Pass	Pass			
♣ KJ65							
SOUTH							
♠ 65							
♥ QJ109							
♦ K1063							
♣ 872							

West led the queen of diamonds. East noted to himself that dummy was pretty good and might well have gone on to 4S. How should East defend?

The West Hand: S-93H-A76D-QJ87C-A1094
The South Hand: S-AKJ1097H-K85D-A95C-Q3

I will show you how to defend in a moment. Here is what happened at many tables when this hand was played in a tournament. South let the queen of diamonds win. He won the continuation and drew trump. Then he led the queen of clubs. West took it and led back a club. South got rid of a heart and later he led a heart to the king, losing to the ace.

"Good thing I did not bid game," said North. "You did well to make three. In fact," he added, "you should not even make three." What did North mean? Could 3S have been set? The answer is yes. When the queen of diamonds was led, East knew two things.

He knew that West had the jack. He knew that he would like to lead the queen of hearts. How can East get this to happen?

East has to put the king of diamonds on the queen. His ten will be an entry later in the event that South takes his ace. Whether the defenders will know to do the right things is a different issue. What is important is that by playing the king on this layout, East insures that South can not keep East from getting in. Give East credit for trying. We will not know if West would have done the right things because he did not get the chance.

Dealer: South Vulnerable: North/South

NORTH		SOUTH (YOU)	
♠ Q874		♥ AJ93	
♥ Q742		♠ A83	
♦ AJ		♦ Q109	
♣ JQ74		♣ 83	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	Pass	Pass	1S
Pass	2C	Pass	2S
Pass	Pass	Pass	

South opens 1S in third seat and North responds with 2C.Drury. South has a full opening bid but facing a passed hand he estimates that game is not a good idea and he signs off in 2S. Dummy comes down with a maximum hand. Have you missed a game? Let's pretend that you are in a game. Blame partner if you wish, but try to take ten tricks. West leads two of clubs. Estimate your chances.

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.

Don't simply ___ from something; have something to ___ to - Harry Emerson Fosdick (6,6) (same word twice)

BOSEE						ABILTI					
IOPRR						ADENWT					

SOLUTION: OBESSE, PRIOR, TRIAL, WANTED
Answer: Don't simply reire from something; have something to reire to - Harry Emerson Fosdick

SUNDAY CROSSWORD 2344

QUICK CLUES

ACROSS

1. Tremble because of cold, fear, etc. (6)
4. Former Pakistan paceman Akhtar (6)
8. Scottish instrument (7)
9. Eat, devour or digest (7)
11. Meets (10)
12. A deep cut (4)
13. Tropical resin (5)
14. White ants (8)
16. Capital of Uzbekistan (8)
18. Pertaining to the Pope (5)
20. Ex-India paceman Yohannan (4)
21. Relative importance (10)
23. Moral (7)
24. Military pageants? (7)
25. University honour (6)
26. Grown-ups (6)

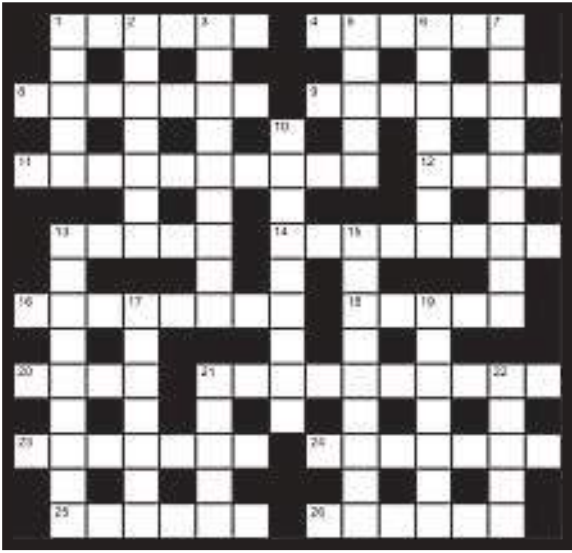
DOWN

1. Produce (5)
2. Beg (7)
3. Costly, not cheap (9)
5. Loose coverings for the head (5)
6. An African spear (7)
7. A shocking surprise (9)
10. Period of pregnancy (9)
13. Wasted away, very thin (9)
15. Officially rebuke (9)
17. Accommodation (7)
19. Prove superior (7)
21. Set in position (5)
22. Musical symbols (5)

CRYPTIC CLUES

ACROSS

1. Old Bob gives friendly direction to the crowds (6)
4. So soundly beaten that there is nothing in it (6)
8. Strongly confirm, with most weight (7)
9. Ties up bow on tanks (7)
11. The stories one tells (10)
12. Fight over pound owed (4)
13. Publican covering up a pretty plant (5)
14. See a quarter in the game and some monstrous goings-on here (4,4)
16. Upsets the officers and withdraws (5,3)
18. Southwest ring-road in Toledo, for



- example (5)
20. Maybe he's a German with an Italian eight (4)
 21. Profound colour group (4,6)
 23. Sights, but the bad singer takes nothing to heart. (7)
 24. From which the owner also hopes to get some brass 1 (3,4)
 25. A dangerous choice for mythological sailors (6)
 26. Acts like a miser for stretches of time (6)

DOWN

1. Military cover has become disorganised by a blow (5)
2. Their works are bound to receive public attention (7)
3. In Russia, at one time, endlessly having trouble finding sugar (9)
5. Minor risk revealed a bloomer (5,2)
6. Proved to be evergreens and one subsisted from them (5)
7. Saw and reported in the court? (9)
10. Passed exam, with reservations (9)

Solutions to 2343

QUICK CLUES Across: 6 Arjun, 7 Inferred, 10 Peckish, 11 Saddens, 12 Croatia, 13 Chatter, 14 Speedometer, 19 Reached, 21 Impulse, 23 Flemish, 25 Leopard, 26 Staggered, 27 Enemy, Down: 1 Ejectors, 2 Enlist, 3 High handed, 4 Efts, 5 Desert, 6 Aspect, 8 Radiant, 9 Astro, 13 Came in last, 15 Echoing, 16 Released, 17 Gruff, 18 Heyday, 20 Alerts, 22 Proper, 24 Head. CRYPTIC CLUES Across: 6 Mealy, 7 Invaders, 10 Dampish, 11 Despoil, 12 Claudia, 13 Furious, 14 Dreadnought, 19 Slapped, 21 Bradman, 23 Eardrum, 25 Immerse, 26 Hatching, 27 Extol. Down: 1 Farmland, 2 Myriad, 3 High handed, 4 Ovid, 5 Arroyo, 6 Medick, 8 Dishrag, 9 Bless, 13 Footbridge, 15 Empiric, 16 Temerity, 17 Askew, 18 Unwell, 20 Airman, 22 Armies, 24 Maid.

If it's your Birthday

Sunday October 24

Emotional security is high on your agenda, listen to loved ones and don't rock the boat. You'll feel happier if you are surrounded by people who really matter to you.

Monday October 25

You're on the up. Discipline and hard work, that's what today's about. You could also work hard at enjoying yourself. That's all taken care of, then.

Tuesday October 26

Short-term choices could have long-term results. It looks as if you're heading towards greater personal freedom, experimenting with new lifestyles and options.

Wednesday October 27

Overall, your trends are positive. And that should give you the leeway to break out of a tight spot and begin to consider your future options.

Thursday October 28

You're tempted to put choices off until tomorrow, yet decisions would best be taken sooner rather than later. You tend to take your time, but it will help if you work out what you want, and then ask people how they can contribute.

Friday October 29

You should have a great start to your new astrological cycle. You may be able to get loved ones to do things your way, by pressing the right emotional buttons. Make sure there's something in it for them.

Saturday October 30

You know that a positive attitude breeds a better life. So you may take responsibility for the good feeling which seems to infect people. You must now set out to help others.

SUDOKU 4634

Difficulty Level 3s

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 4633



YOUR WEEK AHEAD

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

Venus, the planet that gets your emotional juices flowing, is now lending you a helping hand, which has to be really good news. If all goes according to plan you should therefore soon be hitting the social heights. If you can put certain professional qualms to one side, you'll be able to enjoy taking a personal ambition to fabulous new lengths.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

We could see a rare flash of Taurean impatience, and the chances are that you'll emerge from the last few weeks eager and anxious to get on with your life. It could even feel as if certain responsibilities are now shifting, as one ends, another begins.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

Indulge yourself a little. Amongst the pursuits for which the classic Geminiian type is famous, are walking and talking. If you can manage to do both at the same time, there is no better moment than the present for a long expedition with some carefully chosen companions.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

You may have been taken aback by partners' recent statements and actions, and nobody could blame you if you feel slightly perplexed. This week gives you the chance to lift your morale by going out and blowing some money. A bout of extravagance could make you feel better.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)

This is one of those fine moments when you seem to be able to get on with other people so much better, but only if you put their interests first. The fact is that you have so much to learn by following their lead. At work, it's time to pick up a new skill. You never know when it will come in handy.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sept 23)

The best relationships are based around joint activities. It may be boring to take part in a hobby which doesn't interest you. It may even be downright tedious. However, just think of the emotional credit you'll gain. At home, partners expect you to agree with them.

LIBRA (Sept 24 - Oct 23)

Some astrologers would say that this week's stars bode extremely well for relationships with children. A psychological reading of your chart, on the other hand, might advise you to have the courage to be child-like or just young-at-heart yourself.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 22)

It's an ideal moment for being at home with the family. If you are far away you should therefore make yourself happy by creating as cosy a nest as possible. Simmering resentments can be left until later in the year, or even next year, with a little luck.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23 - Dec 22)

Your nomadic instincts are receiving a mild boost, so one way or another you should keep on the move. This is also, as it happens, an excellent moment for making deep, long-term emotional commitments, but only if you mean it. If you have any doubts, hold back.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

There never was a moment like this for spending large amounts of money on family and domestic goodies. The point is that every penny is likely to be well-spent, and nothing should be wasted. For once, you seem to have your finger on the pulse, and those who criticise you do so at their peril.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)

This week's splendid alignments call on you to treasure all polite and gracious company, not to mention wise and mature relationships. It's time to gird your loins and make a long-term commitment. Remember the old saying 'manners maketh man', and you can set out to charm others with your winning ways.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

The Moon and Venus inspire new dreams and, by all accounts, you are about to justify your reputation for being a recluse. One way or another, do be sure to set some time aside for doing only what you want to do, even if it means being alone.

Sunday Night Raw

Bragging rights at stake as Kohli's side look to maintain India's all-win record in World Cups against arch rivals Pakistan

EXPRESS AT
T20 WORLD CUP



SHAMIK CHAKRABARTY
DUBAI, OCTOBER 23

HOW MANY matches must Pakistan play before they beat India in a World Cup? In the 1990s, they had a great team but lost in 1992, 1996 and 1999. Since the turn of the century, as India became the game's biggest power, Pakistan gradually regressed.

How many cricketers from the Pakistan T20 World Cup squad will get into a combined XI? Babar Azam walks in. Shaheen Shah Afridi deserves a shout out, while Mohammad Rizwan deserves an honourable mention. If it were a Test match, the result might have been a foregone conclusion due to the gulf between the two teams. T20 cricket, though, is like a penalty shootout in football. As Virat Kohli said in the post-match press conference, sometimes just three-four balls can change the momentum.

Fixing their opening conundrum before the showpiece event should hold India in good stead. A brilliant IPL did the trick for KL Rahul in terms making himself the first-choice as Rohit Sharma's opening partner. Kohli will be at No.3. Ishan Kishan is in fabulous form of late, boasting three half-centuries in his last three T20 matches, including the warm-up fixture against England. Suryakumar Yadav, meanwhile, showed improvement during his 38 not out in the warm-up game against Australia. The team management rates Surya's versatile batting highly and he is likely to play.

Hardik Pandya is unlikely to bowl early into the tournament but he will be the team's No. 6 batsman. Kohli is clear in his thought process that at the death, Pandya's impact batting is what his team wants. "These things (uncertainty over Pandya's selection) from a talking or discussion point of view, feel very interesting that if he doesn't bowl, will he be left out? But we understand the value he brings to the team as a No. 6 batter and in world cricket, if you look around, there are specialists who do that job," the India captain said.

Kohli's rewind to Pandya's batting in Australia last year, his 22-ball 42 not out in Sydney to be precise, that helped India see off a tense 195 run-chase. But there's a catch. If Pandya doesn't bowl, who would be the team's sixth bowler? Kohli bowled a couple of overs in the warm-up game against Australia. Is he confident enough to do the job against Pakistan?

Playing only five specialist bowlers is high-risk, for if someone leaks runs, the void could be exposed. "We have considered a couple of other options to chip in for an over or two. So we are not bothered at all," Kohli said.

Against the team culture of India, Pakistan will turn to individual brilliance, like Akram's dream deliveries to dismiss Lamb and Lewis in 1992 or Zaman against India at the Champions Trophy.

On Saturday, Pandya didn't turn up at the nets, raising a few eyebrows.

Having an embarrassment of riches gives the Indian team management a happy problem. Ravichandran Ashwin is one of them. Using Washington Sundar's fastish off-spin in the Powerplay had been Kohli's favourite template in T20Is. Washington's injury paved the way for Ashwin's inclusion in the World Cup squad. At the nets on the match eve, the senior off-spinner had a good outing. He had wickets in consecutive deliveries against Australia. Ashwin, however, can't replicate Washington's power-hitting down the order and playing him at the expense of leggie Rahul Chahar would be a complete U-turn.

Over the past four years since the Champions Trophy final in 2017, India have made wrist-spin an integral part of their white-ball process. Given that Ravindra Jadeja is undroppable for his all-round ability, two conventional finger-spinners in a T20 game on a good Dubai pitch could be a luxury. As Kohli said, he expected good surfaces for the ICC event.

The BCCI has brought in MS Dhoni to the team set-up for the T20 World Cup, assuming that the former captain's title-winning experience would help the side that hasn't won an ICC event for eight years now. And so far, Dhoni has proved to be a hands-on mentor. He is giving throw-downs, talking to the players and offering advices to the batsmen.

Against the team culture of India, Pakistan will turn to individual brilliance, like Wasim Akram's dream deliveries to dismiss Allan Lamb and Chris Lewis at the 1992 World Cup final or Fakhar Zaman's match-winning hundred against India at the 2017 Champions Trophy final.

One big change for Pakistan, a team that revels in its unpredictability, is to announce the 12 for Sunday's game against India. Even a senior Pakistani cricket correspondent was surprised, calling it "very rare". Sarfaraz Ahmed's omission from the pack brought about a few questions at the presser, but Azam defended his selection. Young Haider Ali scored his runs at a strike-rate of around 180 at the National T20 Cup - Pakistan's lead-up to the world event - and for a side bereft of a power-hitter, he could be a fantastic choice if his captain shows boldness and drops one of the two veterans, Mohammad Hafeez or Shoaib Malik.

Azam put up a brave front when reminded about Pakistan's no-win record against India at the World Cups.

"Records are made to be broken and you never know what happens on any given day," said the Pakistan skipper. To make that happen, he will have to lead from the front. Pakistan's chances largely depend on their only world-class batsman, ranked second in the ICC T20I batting list. In the past, an India-Pakistan game used to be about India's batting versus Pakistan's bowling. That has changed with India's rise as a pace bowling superpower. Pakistan, on the other hand, would be concerned about Hasan Ali's profligacy in the death overs in the warm-up game against South Africa.

The one advantage, the Pakistan players is they are mentally fresher than their Indian counterparts. From the England tour to the T20 world Cup via the IPL, the Indian players have moved from one bubble to another. Kohli is aware of it. It's not easy. "...going forward, I understand we have lost some time without cricket (due to the pandemic), but in trying to cover that up, if you lose players, then world cricket is not going to be better off," he said.



Indian cricket team players train a day ahead of their match against Pakistan.

AP

Team India: T20's philharmonic orchestra

SANDIPG
OCTOBER 23

THE MOMENT Virat Kohli announced that this would be his last assignment as his country's T20 captain, the overarching narrative of India's World Cup pieced itself together. A linear storyline of whether he would bow out on a blazing high, with an elusive ICC trophy in his honours list, or the one unscaled peak of his career would remain unscaled.

It's harsh that his leadership mettle in white-ball cricket is weighed solely on the number of titles he has not won, or he has lost narrowly than on the identity he has forged for himself and the team. Two semifinal appearances and two lost finals in as many ICC tournaments are not, by any stretch of the imagination, outright failures.

Except in trophy-obsessed, world-dominance-fixated India. The country is intolerant to failures (that of sportsmen) than ever before. Their dreams are bigger and ambitions broader than ever before. An away series win here, or reaching the last four there, would no longer sate the aspirational, ambitious (and at times greedy too) India. Empowered, enlightened, moneyed, they want the country to dominate cricket like Australia for a chunk of this century or the West Indies in the last century.

At various points of Kohli's reign, India indeed have dominated all formats of the game, but without a glittering piece of silverware as proof of their success. A destiny-fulfilling opportunity awaits India over the next three weeks. In each of the last four ICC tournaments, from the Champions Trophy in 2017 to the World Test Champions, India had worn the favourites tag despite faults and flaws.

Almost flawless

In ODIs, they fretted over middle order, in Test, they fidgeted over their balance. But here, they have descended with the most flawless, or the least flawed, of their squads in an ICC event. This time, they are the more favourites than all other favourites.

It could not have been said about the team

when the UAE journey of the IPL began. The form of Suryakumar Yadav and Ishan Kishan was a concern, but now that both revived their touch towards the backend of the tournament, India boast an explosive as well as versatile batting line-up. That four of the top five are cross-format regulars illustrate the multi-dimensionality of their batting. The fifth, Yadav, could join the group in a not-so-distant future too.

Destructive lower order

Hardik Pandya demonstrated that prolonged absence from regular international cricket has not diminished his prowess to kill games. He, though, will have to share some of his heavy artillery batting shifts with Rishabh Pant and Ravindra Jadeja, making India's middle-lower order the most destructive in recent times. Should Pandya start bowling, as is expected in the latter stages, India would become even more a ferocious proposition.

The strongest suit is, undisputedly, their three-man Beates at the top, the deadliest triumvirate in T20 cricket. Should they hit the straps, which is regular, a batting treat of the highest class awaits. Two most non-violent hitters in cricket, Rohit Sharma and KL Rahul, followed by arguably the finest batsman of his time, Kohli. Sharma had a patchy IPL, Kohli was erratic, but it would be foolish to not wager on them piling runs. The magnitude of the tournament would just be the fuel that would power the Ferraris of modern cricket into race mode.

If their batsmen are race-cars waiting to vroom, their fast bowlers are thoroughbreds keen to gallop.

Bumrah the spearhead

If the IPL is a precursor, Jasprit Bumrah's verve should worry batsmen, even before they tune their eyes to his stilted, eight-step run-up. He can pull off at least half a dozen avatars—spearhead, calm-head, intimidator, enforcer, new-ball virtuoso, yorker-spitting machine. Under the giant shadow he casts, it's convenient to forgo those in the shades. But Mohammed Shami, with his ability to straddle lengths and the mastery of short-balls, is a dangerously understated bowler in this for-



mat. After years of struggling to crack the T20 code, he has strummed high-notes in the last three years. Combine them with one of Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Shardul Thakur—in most other teams both would be unquestioned starters—there is a dazzling blend of muscle and music, depth and deception.

Wealth of spin talent

Their depth is only paled by the riches in India's spin department. That India could afford to overlook Yuzvendra Chahal and Axar Patel, leave alone the likes of Ravi Bishnoi, would be difficult for most teams to fathom. The cunning of Jadeja, the mystery of Varun Chakravathy, the mastery of Ravi Ashwin and the devilry of Rahul Chahar could pose confusion for not only batsmen but also the team selectors. If the pitches tend to be low and lethargic as they had been in the IPL, Kohli could unleash all three. All four could harness even a smidgen of assistance from the pitch, but what makes them even more dangerous is that all four take the pitch out of the equation too.

So multifaceted the squad is that it could blossom anywhere in the world. Besides skills, the team has other requisites to triumph too, like their unbreakable spirit and imperishable courage.

The only flip-side to this concoction of skills and spirit is that if they fall short of winning the World Cup, it would be counted as a bona fide failure. Or another blot in Kohli's captaincy book. A peak that remains unscaled. The overarching narrative of Kohli's last assignment as T20 captain.

Champs self destruct in opening game

SANDIPG
OCTOBER 23

THERE COULDN'T be worse ways to launch a title defence. The West Indies, world champions, T20 ninjas, crash-landed to 55 all out in 14.2 overs, against the team they had topped to the title, five years ago at the Eden Gardens. If ever England went into the game with revenge on their mind, it might have ended in trading empathetic glances at their devastated opponents.

Memories of that electric night in Kolkata seemed distant, perhaps as distant as the virtue of logic and West Indies batsmen. It's fathomable if high-class bowling precipitates a meltdown, the torture of body and soul West Indies fast bowlers of the yore repeatedly subjected English batsmen to. But this was merely a case of what can, at best, be called a mockery of a batting show, a case of contagious and collective brainfreeze. A manual on how not to bat, in any format, at any level.

Evin Lewis mistimed his chip of Chris Woakes and was pounced adeptly by a springing Moeen Ali; Lendl Simmons struck the ball sweetly but straight into Liam Livingstone at deep midwicket. West Indies stumbled to 2/9 in 2.2 overs.

The situation called for knuckling and seeing through the storm. For a few overs, Chris Gayle and Shimron Hetmyer did exercise caution. But not for long. After thumping Ali for two gorgeous boundaries and dead-batting the third, conveying false notions that the most dazzling of West Indies fresh crop batsmen, Hetmyer dragged a flat, fast short of length ball straight to mid-wicket. So agast was he that he showered himself with a volley of abuse.

Eight balls later, Tymal Mills rushed Gayle into a pull, the only instance wherein a genuinely good ball, though not a non-negotiable delivery, winked out a wicket. More often than not, Gayle would have deposited the ball in the stands, but here, he underestimated Mill's steep bounce and pace. He would have escaped undamaged but for the athleticism and awareness of a back-peddalling Dawid Malan at midwicket.

Thereafter, it was just a matter of keeping the West Indies batsmen quiet. Ali was exemplary at that, rattling in 18 dot balls. Dwayne Bravo, unusually pushed up the order, cut a Chris Jordan ball straight to the fielder at backward point. Nicholas Pooran had a wishy-washy swipe outside the off-stump, his feet static, and edged to the keeper.

BRIEF SCORES: West Indies 55 all out in 14.2 ovs (Chris Gayle 13; Adil Rashid 4/2) lost to **England** 56/4 in 8.2 ovs (Jos Buttler 24 not out, Akeal Hosein 2/4)

Australia edge out SA by 5 wickets

Abu Dhabi: Australia endured some anxious moments before edging out South Africa by five wickets after their bowlers set it up with a clinical display in an ICC T20 WC match on Saturday. Needing eight runs in the final over, Marcus Stoinis (24 not out) hit Dwaine Pretorius from two fours and completed the job with two balls to spare. **PTI**

BRIEF SCORES: South Africa 118 for 9 in 20 overs (A Markram 40, K Rabada 19 not out; J Hazlewood 2/19, A Zampa 2/21) lost to **Australia** 121 for 5 in 19.4 overs (Steve Smith 35, Anrich Nortje 2/21) by 5 wkts.

WONDER AT WANDERERS

Tension lene ka nahi, tension dene ka, was our mantra in 2007



ROBIN UTHAPPA

I REMEMBER running in from long-on with my heart in my mouth as the ball seemed to hang for an eternity before it dropped into Sreesanth's palms. I knew that Sreesanth had astigmatism (an imperfection in the eye's curvature), and had issues with his eyesight. I was screaming internally, "oh god, please let him catch it, let him catch it" and I think I had almost reached mid-on when the ball settled safely into his hands.

We were the world champions! It's a feeling that no language can describe. Not English, not my mother tongue, nothing. At the moment it was like, 'what have we done here!' Even MS Dhoni was quite expressive as you would recall. He would soon settle down but I didn't sleep for



Misbah-ul-Haq on the ground as India celebrate winning the inaugural T20 World Cup in 2007. Reuters

the next three nights. I was 21, living a dream, and knew I was part of something special but what it exactly was, I couldn't tell. But oh the memories.

The Indian cricketing world would remember me for that bowl-out, I guess. For all practical purposes, it was my T20 debut. The Real debut against Scotland had been

a washout and so this big game was my first T20 game. And it was against Pakistan.

I had observed the hype as a kid and this was the time to experience it. The seniors all kept it simple. Only on the field, when I saw the intensity in the body language of Viru pa (Virender Sehwag), Yuvi pa (Yuvraj Singh), and Bhaji pa (Harbhajan Singh), did

I sense that this was a big game. They had all played Pakistan many times and perhaps knew better than us what it meant.

During that last over of regular game, it was running in my head that we didn't want to be the first Indian team to lose to Pakistan in a World Cup game.

The bowl-out wasn't foreign to us. We were ready. It was Venkatesh Prasad, our bowling coach and a smart cricketing brain, who first said that we should practice the bowl-outs. They had us split into batsmen vs bowlers. More often than not, it was the batsmen who won it. Viru pa, me, and Rohit (Sharma) were the three batters who hit the stumps the most.

That night, once the bowl-out was going to be on, I ran to MS Dhoni and said, 'I have to bowl, dude. You have to give me the ball'. Looking at my confidence and strong emotion, he said, 'okay'.

And I had Sachin paaji with me. Let me explain! In my mind, I was copying his seam-up action. He would have that slight pause as he gathered himself at the popping crease before the release. I had been aping it since I was a kid. During the training sessions, I saw that paaji's action gave me more hits. So, I decided, why not stick with it. It never hurts to have that ever-lasting hand of god, eh? I just went with it and boom,

bull's eye!

"Tension lene ka nahi, tension dene ka" was our mantra. It had started as a joke between players and it grew into a lovely culture. Lalu ji, our coach, would tell it to the players.

I fondly remember the non-match evenings we spent together. They had told us not to wander to the beaches after 6 pm and we didn't have to as we had great fun being together at the hotel. It was the pre-social media time. Heck, pre-WhatsApp time. The times of BBM messenger and the old Nokia 6110. No PlayStations either. Chatting with other human beings was still in vogue! We did plenty of that.

It was always about taking just one game at a time until we reached the semifinals. It was then, at least to me, that it sank in us that we could win this. I was happy that I could contribute properly in many matches.

There was a fifty against Pakistan in that bowl-out game, the 80+ partnership [84] with Yuvi pa in the semifinal against Australia, and an important run out of Imran Nazir, who was threatening to run away with the game, in the final.

I can't even say I was worried about the final or playing Pakistan as I was really worried whether I would be fit to play that game. I had sprained my left leg in the semifinal

and if it were not for the hard work of our physio John Gloster, I wouldn't have made it.

Chasing 158, Pakistan had rushed past fifty in just over five overs when Yousif Khan drove the ball to me at mid-off. I knew I couldn't put my weight on the left foot as well as I would have done with a fit leg and that I had to drive the power from my upper body. I did that and fired a direct hit at the striker's end to catch Nazir just short of the crease.

One final memory, and this would stay with me forever. The celebrations on the open-top bus ride in Mumbai. I was singing, dancing, and blowing kisses to the crowd. There were 150,000 people inside and outside the stadium that night. It took us five-and-half hours to reach the stadium. We got wet in the rain, we sweated as the sun came out. People kept throwing food at us — apples, sandwiches, soft drinks. "Khao khao, kima time ho gaya, you guys must be hungry!"

I will never forget the night. Only a handful in the world get to experience that indescribable feeling of being loved by millions. It was a beautiful moment that I would always remember. *Tension lene ka nahi, tension dene ka and love paane ka!*

(As told to **Sriram Veera**)