



TAMING UNRULY TRAFFIC

Traffic cops introduce one-sided parking norms to ensure unhindered movement on roads

ROOPA LALL

PORT BLAIR, OCT 20/--/ Parking of two-wheelers and four-wheelers on both sides of roads is one of the major reasons for traffic congestion and slow movement of traffic in the city. In order to ensure smooth flow of traffic keeping in mind the rising number of vehicles on city roads, the Traffic Police here on an experimental basis has introduced parking on one side of roads. Initially, these rules were introduced at

roads at Aberdeen Bazaar and if found to be successful, the norms will be introduced in other roads in the city witnessing chaotic parking on a daily basis, according to Dy SP (Traffic) while speaking to EOI on Thursday. Besides, traffic cops are also working out a plan to make some bylanes in the city as one-way traffic. The traffic police have been receiving complaints from the citizens that some bylanes in the city have been witnessing daily traffic chaos owing to



coaching centres operating on these roads. Parents park their cars on both sides of the roads, making the road congested and halting the smooth flow of traffic. In order to put an end to the problems of motorists, the Traffic Police has plans to introduce one-way traffic on such roads, the DySP (Traffic) said. Meanwhile, in its bid to help curb road accidents caused by the lack of visibility, reflector tapes and stickers are pasted in a road stretch from Flag Point to Corbyn's

Cove junction near the new petrol pump.

"The steep rise in individual vehicles, both two-wheelers, and four-wheelers coupled with narrow roads is the prime cause of an increase in

congestion on city roads. Besides enforcement of traffic rules & regulation, it is important that the Traffic Police carry out awareness generation campaign about traffic rules through various activities and drives,

appealing to two wheelers to wear helmets while driving a two-wheeler, avoid drunk driving, avoid rash driving and wrong side driving, as they are some major factors behind the road mishaps", said a resident.

DNA greets K Ganeshan on his 74th birthday



PORT BLAIR, OCT 20/--/ The Daily Newspaper Association (DNA) has greeted Mr. K. Ganeshan, President, DNA on his 74 birthday and wished him a long and healthy life on Thursday.

HISTORY IN MAKING

PORT BLAIR, OCT 20/--/ A team of doctors of Health 4 U Multi-specialty clinic, Port Blair have successfully performed hair transplant of a patient. This is the first such successful hair transplant in the A&N

First hair transplant surgery conduct at Health 4 U Clinic

Islands by a team of doctors led by Dr Ashok T (Dermatologist & Hair Expert). The hair transplant procedures were performed at Sanjeevani hospital wherein doctors performed the procedures for two-days.



perform such procedures in hospitals on the mainland. The successful hair transplant in the islands has offered an opportunity to all those who want to go for hair transplant at normal rates. There are also many many cosmetology procedures done at Health 4 U Multi-specialty Clinic for hair and skin like plasma rich protein therapy for hair & skin, peeling, vampire facial, wart removal etc. These are advanced dermatology and cosmetology procedures. The Dermatology team of Health 4 U Clinic consists of Dr Ashok (Dermatologist and Hair Expert) and Dr. Priyadarshini, (Dermatologist and Cosmetologist). The Director, Health 4 U, Dr. Kunal told EOI that his hospital has plans to introduce more advanced treatment modalities like laser, hydra facial as it works with the motto to provide the best and better health care at the doorstep of the islanders.

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In Today's Paper...

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■ Modi asks people to adopt concept of 'reduce, reuse and recycle'
— PAGE 6

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FESTIVAL Collection

ABERDEEN BAZAR | BATHU BASTHI

PM to launch drive to recruit 10 lakh people at 'Rozgar Mela' tomorrow

NEW DELHI, OCT 20 /--/ Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch 'Rozgar Mela', a drive to recruit 10 lakh people, on October 22 via video-conference and appointment letters will be given to 75,000 candidates during the ceremony, the PMO said on Thursday.

The PMO said this will be a significant step forward towards fulfilling the continuous commitment of the Prime Minister to providing job opportunities for the youth and ensuring welfare of citizens. The development comes amid the Opposition's constant criticism of the BJP-led government on the issue of unemployment.

Opposition parties have alleged a lack of adequate employment opportunities, a charge



rejected by the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

The drive will also help the BJP counter the Opposition in the poll-bound states of Himachal Pradesh and Gujarat. In June this year, Modi had asked various government departments and ministries to undertake the recruitment of 10 lakh people on a "mission mode" in the next year and a half.

According to the Thursday's statement, the direction from Modi came following a review of the status of human resources in all government departments and ministries, the PMO said.

The new recruits, selected from across the country, will join 38 ministries or departments of the Government of India. The appointees will join the government at various levels in Group A and B (Gazetted), Group B (Non-Gazetted) and Group C. The posts on which appointments are being made include the central armed force personnel, sub-inspectors, constables, LDC, stenographer, income tax inspectors and MTS among others, it read.

These recruitments are being done by ministries and departments either by themselves or through recruiting agencies such as UPSC, SSC and the Railway Recruitment Board. For expeditious recruitment, selection processes have been simplified and made technologically enabled, the PMO said. (PTI)



Union Minister for Home Affairs and Cooperation Amit Shah at the inauguration of MCD's Tehkhand Waste to Energy Plant, at Tughlakabad, in New Delhi

Routine immunisation suffered due to Covid-19, it has to be put back on track: Mandaviya

PUNE, OCT 20 /--/ Union health minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Thursday said routine immunisation was affected due to the coronavirus pandemic and the earlier vaccination programme has to be brought back on track.

Speaking at the annual general meeting of the Developing Countries Vaccine Manufacturers Network (DCVMN) here, Mandaviya said India achieved the feat of administering 100 crore coronavirus vaccine doses in nine months and 200 crore in 18 months. Today, around 70 per cent of the population in the country is fully vaccinated against coronavirus, he said.



Mansukh Mandaviya

India's coronavirus vaccination programme began on January 16, 2021. Lauding vaccine makers Serum Institute of India, Bharat Biotech, Biological E and Zydus Cadila, the minister said they have helped the government at every step on the vaccine front. My expectation from you (stakeholders) is that you don't just focus on vaccines for Covid-19, but we have to think about routine immunisation as well. Routine immunisation was affected due to Covid-19 and it has to be brought back on the track. We have to make rapid progress on this front, he said.

India runs one of the world's largest universal immunization programmes targeting millions of people every year, including children, and protecting them from multiple diseases. Mandaviya highlighted four focus points in relation to vaccines -- knowledge, technology, social and economic. On the knowledge front, he suggested an active collaboration between universities and organisations abroad. The health minister said the industry-academia collaboration should be encouraged and added there is a need to focus more on research and development of vaccines, which India is doing. Mandaviya said the best technology in the medical field that is available in the world must be brought to India, a global leader in vaccine manufacturing. The health minister cited the example of Covishield vaccine for coronavirus which was developed by the Oxford University and AstraZeneca, a British-Swedish pharma company, and the technology was transferred to the Pune-based Serum Institute of India, which in turn manufactured it. Mandaviya said ensuring affordable and good quality vaccines should be a priority for stakeholders. If production is scaled up, then prices will obviously come down and help Indian vaccines reach all parts of the world, the minister added. (PTI)

Mistry slams Tharoor over allegations of 'irregularities' in Cong prez poll

NEW DELHI, OCT 20 /--/ Congress's central election authority chairman Madhusudan Mistry on Thursday accused Shashi Tharoor's team of having two faces -- one for the party's poll body and one for the media -- and rejected allegations of irregularities during the just-concluded AICC presidential poll, sources said. In his response to Team Tharoor's letter in which "extremely serious irregularities" were flagged in the conduct of the election in Uttar Pradesh, Mistry said the poll body satisfied the candidate on every complaint but despite that he raised all those points in the media before bringing them to "our notice". "I am sorry to say that you had one face before me which communicated that you're satisfied with all our answers and action and different face in the media which made all these allegations against us," Mistry said in his letter to Tharoor's chief election agent Salman Soz, according to sources. The campaign team of Tharoor, who lost the party's presidential polls to Mallikarjun Kharge, had written to Mistry, flagging "extremely serious irregularities" in the conduct of the election in Uttar Pradesh. Besides demanding that all votes from Uttar Pradesh be deemed invalid, Tharoor's campaign team had also separately raised "serious issues" in the conduct of the election in Punjab and Telangana.

In his letter to Mistry, Soz had said the facts are "damning" and the election process in Uttar Pradesh is "devoid of credibility and integrity". In his response to Team Tharoor, Mistry said: "You say in your letter that 'we kept quiet in the party's interest and we saw unjust and unfair treatment that prevented us from operating on a level playing field'. We satisfied you on every complaint you made to us and you agreed to all of them and expressed that you're satisfied, despite that you raised all those points in the media before bringing them to our notice." "You tried creating a mountain out of a mole by creating an impression that the entire exercise was unfair to your candidate," he said. To put the record straight, Mistry said he must state that the party's poll body showed Tharoor's team the list of all the voters two days before the candidate filed their nomination. (PTI)

Tough road ahead for Kharge as challenges galore for Cong

NEW DELHI, OCT 20 /--/ Tough tests await newly elected Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, the party's first non-Gandhi chief in more than 24 years, as he steers the 'grand old party' through the many challenges on the road to the 2024 general elections. The situation in which he takes over is a tough one for the Congress with the party's chances in the upcoming Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh elections not looking very bright, infighting simmering in states such as Rajasthan and Karnataka, and hurdles in abundance for Opposition unity in the run up to 2024. Kharge has many things favouring him as he assumes the party's top spot after a high-octane election, defeating a worthy opponent in Shashi Tharoor. He is known to be a unifier who takes everyone along. A Dalit from Karnataka, 80-year-old Kharge trounced his 66-year-old rival Tharoor in a historic election, the sixth in the party's 137-year-old history. He will formally take over on October 26. Kharge's elevation to the party's top post comes when the Congress is in power in just two states on its own Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh and faces a very aggressive incumbent BJP in



Mallikarjun Kharge

Assembly elections, including in his home state Karnataka. Kharge's selection also comes at a time when the party is reeling under internal rumblings and high-profile exits after a series of electoral debacles that have reduced it to a shadow of its former formidable self.

Kharge will have to fend off BJP's allegations of being a front for the Gandhis and remote-controlled by them. The newly elected Congress president also faces the challenge of a generational divide in the party and has

to maintain a balance between experience and the youth going forward. Political commentator Rasheed Kidwai said there are several challenges before Kharge as he has to coordinate with Team Rahul Gandhi, which occupies key posts and positions in the All India Congress Committee (AICC), the Congress Working Committee (CWC) and in most states. The next challenge is constituting the CWC, in which most of the G-23 protagonists who supported him hope to get accommodated. Kidwai told new agency PTI. Kharge also faces the immediate challenge of the Rajasthan political crisis as he needs to "tame a defiant Ashok Gehlot and get a role for Sachin Pilot", said Kidwai, the author of several books, including '24 Akbar Road: A Short History Of The People Behind The Fall And Rise Of The Congress'.

Kharge also has to firm up a broad alliance for the 2024 general elections with TMC's Mamata Banerjee, DMK's MK Stalin, JD-U's Nitish Kumar, and TRS's K Chandrababhan Rao among others, Kidwai said. Echoing similar views, political commentator Sanjay Kumar said there are a lot of challenges for the

Not just future of Sena but democracy at stake: Uddhav

MUMBAI, OCT 20 /--/ Former Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray, who is fighting a legal battle to claim the legacy of the Shiv Sena founded by his father late Bal Thackeray, on Thursday claimed that not just the future of party but democracy in the country was at stake.

Thackeray was addressing a function at the Shiv Sena Bhavan in Dadar area of Mumbai where he inducted former minister Sanjay Deshmukh from Yavatmal into his faction. Addressing a gathering after the induction, Thackeray said despite claims that the Shiv Sena had split and was finished, people were still coming to him.

The Thackeray-led Maha Vikas Aghadi government collapsed in June this year after a



rebellion led by MLA Eknath Shinde. Shinde was later sworn in as the chief minister with the BJP's support. The Election Commission earlier this month barred the Shiv Sena factions led by Thackeray and Shinde from using the party name and its election symbol 'bow and arrow' in the November 3 Andheri East Assembly by-poll.

It allotted 'Shiv Sena - Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray' as the party name for the Thackeray faction, and 'Balasahebanchi Shiv Sena' (Balasaheb's Shiv Sena) as the name for the Shinde group. The EC also allotted new poll symbols to the rival groups. Thackeray on Thursday said: "The common man and especially civilised people of the state are not agreeing with what has happened and are extending their support."

They tell me don't give up, fight, we are with you. We don't agree with what's happening." "People whom I thought would never be politically close are coming out in support. Similarly, people of different religions and regions are extending support. It is not just the future of Shiv Sena but the democracy of the country is at stake," the former chief minister added.

Uddhav said people need to ask themselves whether democracy will stay alive or they would go back to slavery. "My future and that of my party will be decided by the people and the party cadre," he said. Deshmukh, who joined the Thackeray faction on Thursday, was an MLA for two terms from Digra in Yavatmal.

He had earlier been with the Shiv Sena and also served as a minister in the Congress-led Democratic Front government between 2002 and 2004. He was also with the BJP for a brief while. (PTI)

UP CM meets RSS chief, sources say they discussed population issue

PRAYAGRAJ, OCT 20 /--/ Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath on Thursday met RSS head Mohan Bhagwat here, with the two leaders learnt to have discussed the population issue.

According to sources, Adityanath flew from Lucknow to meet Bhagwat and the two were together for about an hour. The two had lunch together after which the CM returned, they said, adding that both discussed the population issue.

Adityanath also invited the RSS chief to Deepotsav at Ayodhya on October 23. Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) leader Dattatreya Hosabale had on Wednesday said religious conversion and migration from Bangladesh were causing "population imbalance" and called for strict implementation of

anti-conversion laws. Bhagwat had attended an RSS meet here from October 16 to 19 in which the population problem was discussed.

The Uttar Pradesh State Law Commission had last year submitted to chief minister a draft population control bill and made a slew of recommendations, including additional incentives to public servants for adopting the one-child norm and banning those who violate the two-child policy from contesting local bodies polls. The recommendations were made in the 19th report on Population Control, Stabilisation and Welfare. The report along with the draft Uttar Pradesh Population Control, Stabilisation and Welfare Bill, 2021 was handed over to the CM. But, no further action was initiated.

Meanwhile, deputy chief minister Keshav Prasad Maurya said whatever issue the RSS raises is always in the interest of the nation and added its concern over population problem would get support of the nation. When asked by the media in Lucknow if the government will bring a policy on the issue of population control, Maurya said, "We will have to wait for what the government will do once a meeting is held over it. What I am saying is my personal opinion." "The number of people opposing this issue is very small. Even among them the good people are in support. See, problems will appear if 100 people start living in a house made for 10 people," he added.

A few months ago, Adityanath had said population control programmes must not lead to

an "imbalance" by focusing on "native" residents while the growth rate of some community remains high, a possible reference to Muslims. He said "population stabilisation" should be uniform across different sections of people, and expressed concern over the likelihood of "anarchy" at some point if there are "imbalances" in a country. "It should not happen that the speed of population growth or the percentage of some community is high and we stabilise the population of the 'moolniwasi' (natives) through awareness or enforcement," the chief minister had said.

Such situation could have an adverse impact on religious demography and after some time "disorder" (avayastha) and "anarchy" (arajakta) could begin in that country, the CM had said. (PTI)

Gehlot hits back at Rajyavardhan over comments on Kharge, says BJP leaders should read history

JAIPUR, OCT 20 /--/ Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot on Thursday hit back at BJP MP Rajyavardhan Rathore over his comments on new Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge and said leaders of the saffron party should read history before speaking.

Rathore had on Wednesday called newly elected Congress president Kharge a "rubber stamp" and alleged that the party's internal polls to elect a new

chief were a "fraud". In his response, Gehlot told reporters: "These people have no shame. New boys have come... they do not understand that they should read history and then learn to speak so that their image is not spoiled."

"They have no knowledge... What is a rubber stamp? Sonia Gandhi herself went to his (Mallikarjun Kharge) place yesterday (on Wednesday)." Kharge won the polls for the post of Congress president, the results of which were announced on Wednesday. He was pitted against Shashi Tharoor. Gehlot, long known as a loyalist to the first family of the country's oldest party, added that if there was any leader in India who commanded respect, it was Sonia Gandhi.

"She refused to become PM, got the UPA (United Progressive Alliance) government formed at the Centre twice and also got many state governments

religion and caste," Gehlot said. The Rajasthan CM added that the BJP should not indulge in 'panchayat' (politics) about the Congress and instead take care of its own house.

The veteran Congress leader also attacked the BJP over some of its leaders allegedly acting as informers of the British, while adding that the history of the Congress' sacrifice dated back to the pre-Independence era. Gehlot was referring to

some leaders of the RSS, the BJP's ideological mentor, who allegedly did not participate in the freedom movement and acted as informers of the British. The Rajasthan chief minister also targeted his Himachal counterpart Jai Ram Thakur over his comment on the old pension scheme and said he had once advised the BJP leader to examine the scheme and introduce it in his state in the interest of government employees. (PTI)

Opposition leaders meet CS to discuss DBRAIT issues

PORT BLAIR, OCT 20/--/ A delegation of Opposition Parties in the islands met the Chief Secretary, A & N Administration at



his chamber on Thrusday and discussed with him the issues pertaining to the students of DBRAIT. The Chief Secretary informed the delegation the action taken by the A & N Administration to resolve the issue of DBRAIT students. The Chief Secretary informed the leaders of the opposition parties that the Administration with the intention to help the students had taken up the issues with the Pondicherry

University. The delegation urged the Chief Secretary to take all possible measures to end the deadlock in the DBRAIT so that the students can appear at the examinations. The Chief Secretary has assured the delegation that the Administration will continue to pursue the issues pertaining to the students admitted in the B.Tech courses during the year 2020 and 2021 and Lateral Entry students with the Pondicherry University. The delegation consisted of MrRangalalHalder, President, PCC, Mr. G. Bhasker, Chairman, Congress Campaign Committee, Mr. D. Ayyappan, Secretary, CPI (M) A & N State Organising Committee, Mr. AL Kulandai, State Organiser, DMK, Mr. ManikyaRao, President, Telugu Desam, A & N Islands, Mr. Biji George, General Secretary, TDP and SmtMinotiBiswas of A & N Democratic Congress & Ex-Adhyaksha, ZillaParishad.

Competitions organized to commemorate establishment of Provisional Govt of Azad Hind (PGI)

PORT BLAIR, OCT 20/--/As part of week-long activities to commemorate the establishment of Provisional Govt. of Azad Hind (PGI), drawing and patriotic songs competition were organised in various schools. Elocution competition on the theme 'PGI and Andaman' was conducted in JNRM today in which students from JNRM, TGCE, ANCOL and Law College participated. The purpose of the week-long activities is to create awareness among the general masses and particularly the young generation about the contribution of NetajiSubhas Chandra Bose in the freedom struggle. Prizes will be distributed to the winners of all

competitions at Andaman Club on Oct. 23, 2022 at 4 pm. Surviving members of INA/ IIL personnel will be felicitated.

Meanwhile, as part of the weeklong function, Quiz competition will be



organized in QMS Humfrygunj and Nukkad Natak will be presented at various locations by school children on Oct.22, 2022.

3-days in-service training for School heads of Wimberlygunj zone

PORT BLAIR, OCT 20/--/Dr.S.Radhakrishnan, District Institute Of Education & Training (DIET) organised a 3-days in-service training programme for the School Heads of Wimberlygunj zone at Dr. S.R.DIET ,Garacharma from 17th to 19th Oct 2022, on school leadership and management. Mr.GyanSheelDubey was the chiEf guest in THE inaugural function. 40 Headmasters or teachers in-charge of primary schools of Wimberligunj zone were deputed by the DEO Wimberlygunj to attain the training programme. The training programme will benefit the heads of the primary school on smooth running the school and on handling the teachers and students.

Online date collection of marine fish catch launched

PORT BLAIR, OCT 20/--/ The online data collection of marine fish catch from 74 fish landing points/ centers in the Islands with the support of the ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute(CMFRI), Kochi has



been launched on Wednesday. This is the first time, the marine fish catch data is collected from the archipelago with statistically supported software. The move was the outcome of a Memorandum of Understanding between the ICAR-CMFRI and the Department of the Fisheries of the Andaman and Nicobar Administration.

As part of the MoU, ICAR-CMFRI introduced its sampling methodology for the estimation and analysis of the catch data through Fish Catch Survey and Analysis (FCSA) software from landing centers of the islands by using electronic tablets. The Department in collaboration with CMFRI also trained the enumerators and deployed to collect the catch data using ICAR-CMFRI methodology.

In a brief function held today in the mini conference hall, Secretariat, Mr. G Sudhakar, Secretary (Fisheries) announced the launch of online fish catch data methodology of CMFRI's methodology in the Islands. The programme was participated by Director and team of Scientist from CMFRI, Cochin and Officers and Field Officials of the Department of Fisheries through online mode. Speaking on this occasion, the Secretary (Fisheries) expressed his happiness on the commencement of the

programme for generating a reliable database on marine fish catch and fishing efforts which will help fix various developmental plans in the island's marine fisheries sector. The support of CMFRI will help estimate

both resource-wise and fishing gear-wise fish landings, he said. He also sought ICAR-CMFRI's technical support in the development of deep-sea fishing, seafood clusters, promotion of mariculture activities, like seaweed farming and cage fish farming in the Andaman Islands. In his address, Dr A Gopalakrishnan, Director, CMFRI highlighted about the contribution of his institute on collecting marine fish catch data from all the fish landing centres in the country using this software, which is recognized by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the UN. "Though the data is collected for research purposes, CMFRI shares the information with the government of India and the coastal states who have inked MoU with the institute", he said. ICAR-CMFRI already signed MoU with Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Keralaand Tamil Nadu in collecting marine fish catch data. He also remarked that the A&N Islands have huge potential for highly prospective for the marine ornamental fishery, seaweed farming and cage fish farming and assured all technical support for promoting these activities. Earlier, Mr. Har minder Singh, Director of Fisheries, A&N Administration also spoke on the benefits of online Fish Catch Data Collection for effective planning and Development of Fisheries in A&N Islands. Dr. J Jayasankar, Principal Scientist of ICAR-CMFRI and Dr K Gopal, Joint Director of Fisheries, Andaman & Nicobar Administration also spoke on the occasion.

Nukkad Natak to mark 'World Tobacco Day



PORT BLAIR, OCT 20/--/ A Nukkad Natak was organized by the students of Govt. SS School CFO Nallah on 19TH October 2022, to mark the observance of 'World Tobacco Day'. The Pradhan, GP Shivapuram, Mr. VenkateswarRao arranged the celebrations of the event at Govt Saw Mill Betapur. He and the ACF in-charge, Mr.

Jaison arranged a visit of the children to Saw Mill where different art work from wood is on display. The students also saw the operation of the saw mill. The ACF in his speech informed about the ill-effect of tobacco consumption. The function concluded with the vote of thanks.

—KARTIK

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A conservative is a man with two perfectly good legs who, however, has never learned to walk forward

Franklin D. Roosevelt

Not a bed of roses for Kharge

Octogenarian Mallikarjun Kharge's victory was anyone's guess. But how he will steer the Grand Old Party as the newly elected Congress president can't just be guessed. A loyal Congress soldier, he predictably defeated party MP Shashi Tharoor by a massive margin to become the sixth non-Gandhi president in the party's 137-year-old history and the first in the last 24 years. Tharoor, who alleged foul play and said that there was a pro-Kharge bias in the run-up to the poll, graciously accepted the verdict. After the announcement of Kharge as president-elect, the incumbent Sonia Gandhi, her son Rahul Gandhi and daughter Priyanka Gandhi Vadra must give him a free hand and not make the new party boss a rubber stamp as is being anticipated by many of the party members. For the Congress veteran, who assumes charge of the party at its most critical juncture, the trickiest challenge is posed by the experiment of being a non-Gandhi president, after a break of 24 years. It is more of a bifurcation of authority, with the political leadership represented by the Gandhis while the AICC executive is headed by Kharge. He has to establish that he is actually in charge. Kharge's victory is historic because he succeeds Sonia Gandhi, the longest-serving party leader, who has been in office since 1998, with the exception of the two years between 2017 and 2019 when Rahul Gandhi presided.

For Kharge, the lofty post is certainly not going to be a bed of roses. The task of reconstruction of the party organisation and politics — Congress's serial electoral routs indicate that nothing less will do — must be undertaken in a particularly challenging set of circumstances. The challenges before him are many, the biggest being the deep-seated factionalism in the organisation. Bringing rival factions in Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka to the conciliation table to make the party a cohesive unit is definitely going to be a major task before him. Likewise, reviving the party in Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh is another key job. But, ultimately winning elections will be his greatest test. How he makes workers repose faith in the Congress and especially in his leadership will decide the fate of the party. Senior leaders like Kapil Sibal, Sunil Jakhar, Ghulam Nabi Azad, RPN Singh, Jitin Prasada, Ashwani Kumar and Hardik Patel resigned citing lack of vision in the leadership. Now, with Kharge at the helm, the exodus of party leaders will hopefully be checked.

At the Centre and in the states, Congress confronts a two-faced challenge — overtaken by the more organised and ideologically driven force of the BJP in some arenas, and pushed onto the backfoot in others by far more agile regional outfits. In this climate, if it is to become winnable again, it must begin by defining, redefining and updating its positions on key issues, ranging from the place of minorities in a post-Hindutva polity, the form and content of nationalism in the 21st century, to the economic road-map after the pandemic.

Ordinary complainants often treated like accused in police stations

REFLEX ACTION

Nantoo Banerjee

Last month, the alleged murder of a 19-year-old girl receptionist, Ankita Bhandari, in the Vanantara resort in Bharatiya Janata Party-ruled Uttarakhand's Pauri district sparked massive outrage across the country. The girl went missing on September 18 following which a missing complaint was lodged by her parents without any avail. The girl was allegedly pushed from a cliff into the river Ganga by the owner and two of his employees for "refusing to indulge in prostitution with hotel guests." Only after her body was found, the police were forced to act under massive public protests. Three people, including a BJP leader's son, Pulkit Arya, along with two others were arrested for her alleged murder. Uttarakhand DGP admitted that the girl was forced to commit 'wrongful activities'.

Also last month, the people in West Bengal were highly agitated about the police inaction to trace two teen-aged Kolkata school students who went missing. The police had allegedly refused to note a FIR and asked the complaining parents to make general diary entries instead, saying the boys might be out for fun. Days after, the bodies of the two boys were found in a canal. They were strangled and killed. Under fire for not being proactive in investigating the shocking murder of the two young boys, Kolkata police was reprimanded by West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. Immediately after, the case was handed over to the state Criminal Investigation Department (CID) for a probe. Unfortunately, police refuse to learn. In the first case, the police might have been fully aware of the sex racket run by the Uttarakhand resort owner, a BJP leader's son. In the other case, the police might have decided to go easy as the parents of the "missing" boys were ordinary citizens without any major ruling party link. The two unfortunate crime incidents may be different, but they seem to have a common thread — the political connection or absence of it. Police in most states are too busy in protecting political parties in power and their private interests to take note of the common man's complaints. This could explain the reason behind the growing crime rates in the country — recorded or unrecorded. Police are rarely pulled up for rising crime rates. A state subject, the police portfolio generally comes directly under the chief minister.

The recent report of National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) showed alarming increase in crime against women and incidences of rape, kidnapping, killing and child trafficking. The reliability of the NCRB report depends on the nature of data supplied by state governments which are known to often under-report crimes to save their own back. The crime against women in India increased by 15.3

percent in 2021 over the previous year. Last year, 4,28,278 cases of 'crime against women' were registered as against 3,71,503 cases in 2020. The number of registered rape cases increased from 28,046 in 2020 to 31,677, last year. Kidnapping cases increased from 84,805 in 2020 to 1,01,707 in 2021. Last year, the rate of violent crimes was highest in BJP-ruled Assam, (76.6 crimes per one lakh population). It was followed by Aam Aadmi Party-led Delhi (57) and Trinamool Congress-governed West Bengal (48.7).

The multi-dimensional political pressure on police in states has been constantly rising. The perennially understaffed and under-equipped forces are often in a dilemma over what needs to be tackled first — public peace or protection of political masters' private interests. Police are one of the society's most ubiquitous organisations and policemen happen to be a government's most visible representatives. At times of crisis, danger and difficulty, when an aggrieved citizen does not know what to do and whom to approach, the nearest police station and a policeman happen to be the most appropriate and approachable unit and person for him. Police are expected to be the most accessible, interactive and dynamic organisation in any society. Broadly, police are expected to play a twin role in a society — maintain law and protect order. However, the ramifications of these two duties are numerous, which result in making a large inventory of duties, functions, powers, roles and responsibilities of the police organisation.

The inventories of police jobs are also quite complex. They relate to investigations, crime prevention and detection, maintenance of order and security, enforcement of social legislation, collection of intelligence, natural calamities and disaster management and democratic election-related duties among others. Police are required to collect intelligence about political activities, labour activities including strikes, student agitations, exploitations, communal tensions, criminal activities or those potentially destructive to peace. To ensure that the police power is used for legitimate purposes, various countries have adopted safeguards making police accountable and creating independent oversight

authorities. In India, the political executive has the power of superintendence and control over police forces to ensure accountability. However, the Second Administrative Reforms Commission had noted that this power is often manipulated and ministers have misused police forces for personal and political reasons. Experts had recommended that the scope of the political executive's power must be limited under law. The higher judiciary is often losing faith in politically-controlled state police to conduct investigations on highly sensitive issues and assigning central agencies such as CBI and ED with the task of inquiry into critical cases seemingly involving state authorities.

Despite police being directly under state chief ministers, forces ironically remain highly understaffed and under-equipped. Published reports show state police forces are understaffed to the extent of 24 percent against sanctioned vacancies. Constabulary comprises about 86 percent of the state police. Constables are typically promoted once during their service, and normally retire as head constables. This weakens their incentive to perform well. In India, crime per lakh population increased by 28 percent over the last decade (2005-2015).

However, convictions had been alarmingly low. In 2015, convictions were secured only in 47 percent of the cases registered under the Indian Penal Code of 1860. The Law Commission observed that one of the reasons behind this is the poor quality of investigations. CAG audits have found shortages in weaponry with state police forces. For example, Rajasthan and West Bengal had shortages of 75 percent and 71 percent respectively in required weaponry with the state police. The Bureau of Police Research and Development also noted a 30.5 percent deficiency in stock of required vehicles with the state forces.

Generally, police are also known to be extremely corrupt. This may also be impacting on crime detection and apprehension rates. In a large and populous country like India, police forces need to be well-equipped, in terms of personnel, weaponry, forensic, communication and transport support, to perform their role well. Most importantly, police need to have full operational freedom to carry out their responsibilities professionally under satisfactory working conditions (e.g., regulated working hours and promotion opportunities), while being held accountable for poor performance or misuse of power under financial and political influence. Unfortunately, political influence is making police increasingly corrupt and little concerned about the common man. (IPA)



People busy in last minute purchases for the festival of Dhanteras at Chitpur in Kolkata--Arijit Ganguly

President Putin losing options in Ukraine after latest reverses

FOCUS

Anjan Roy

The Ukraine war is taking a turn after seven and a half months which is worrying strategic experts and militaries in Europe in new ways.

If initially the worry was about an outright defeat of Ukraine and presence of Russia in eastern parts in a more aggressive posture, the prospect of an outright Russian defeat is looking even more threatening. A huge explosion on a bridge offering the only life line for Russian armies in Crimea has severely jolted the Russian dispensation. The bridge has been so badly damaged that rail movement on it has been stalled. The bridge provided the basic supplies to the Russian army in occupied Crimea.

As if to rub the salt into the wound, the Ukrainians are now going to town, announcing release of a postage stamp commemorating the destruction of the bridge. The head of Ukraine Post has announced the release of the postage stamp along with a first-day cover. Such news of open defeat and defiance could no longer be hidden from the Russian public and this is damage whatever credibility that Kremlin still had with its people, reports indicate. NATO, the umbrella defence organisation of the western alliance, is seriously worrying about a tactical nuclear weapon

use by a cornered Russia under its President Vladimir Putin. All the efforts of the Russians on ground have come to a nought before the coordinated effort of the Ukrainians.

As if to forestall any such disastrous move by the Russian president and to warn Russian leadership about the costs of any of Putin's drastic moves, US president, Joe Biden, had articulated about the consequences for Russia of any nuclear move. In fact, Biden's open threat of counter offensive has surprised even US officials of his administration.

Domestic troubles are also mounting for Putin, with opposition to his war plans are getting louder and vociferous. Even those people aligned with Putin are now shouting about the failures and total discomfiture of Russia before the global audience. Sources fear that if the domestic situation gets hotter for Putin, he would be driven to extremes for his survival. Some of the

military experts are fearing that Putin has become imbalanced in a practical way and adopting ever more desperate steps. His mobilisation effort is becoming a sort of boomerang for his dispensation as scores of younger Russians are defying the effort to conscript and sending them to the war field. These segments of society are leaving the country in droves.

Those who have been however drafted are facing serious shortages in facilities, let alone training and equipment. The western media is reporting that even as the water is approaching, these recruits have not been given even beds for their night stays and are forced to sleep on yoga mats.

Besides, the infamous private army of Russia, which had played critical roles in Syria and other countries where Russia had undertaken military roles, are turning against Putin's regime. Wagner leaders are complaining that the Russian operations in Ukraine were total uncoordinated and

therefore it was difficult for them to make any meaningful interventions. Wagner's chief in Moscow is in a grumpy mood and showing signs of giving up its interventionist role in Ukraine. On the other hand, the Central Asian satellite nations which had supported Russia in many such operations, are saying that he Putin regime is avoiding drafting white Russians and using their people to do the dirty jobs.

Besides, their numbers are being used as cannon fodder and are perishing in the Ukrainian offensives. Devoid of proper weapons and training, these drafted soldiers are simply not equipped in facing the agile and expert military operations of Ukraine. As these failures are mounting and the reports are reaching the Russian public, the tide is turning fast against Putin. His ever so carefully nurtured macho image has been dented and it no longer holds. Thus, Putin is facing a severe domestic threat.

In the face of this, NATO sources had confirmed their worst fears about Putin and his next moves. A nuclear intervention would surely isolate Russia from the global orders and even alienate its firm ally till now China. For President Putin, the survival with honour intact, is at stake. (IPA)

Conventional Crossword						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	8		9			
10		11				
	12	13				
		14		15		16
17	18	19	20			
		21		22		
23	24	25		26		
27			28			
29				30		

ACROSS				DOWN			
1	Adverse fate	4	Periods of time	1	Mythical monster	2	Above
8	Energy	11	Corroded	3	Musical note	4	Flightless bird
9	Trading centre	12	Prevalent	5	Coarse files	6	Specialised skill
10	Prayer ending	14	Homo sapiens	7	Place for pigs	11	Of the kidneys
15	Result of addition	17	Mashed fabric	13	Ridiculous sham	16	Of recent time
17	Male sheep	21	Bivalve mollusc	18	Ornamental coronet	20	Army rank
23	Proverb	26	Gag	22	Additional	23	Donkey
26	Gag	27	Certain	24	Owing	25	Precious stone
28	In favour of	29	Line between abutting edges				
30	Check						

SUDOKU : 3672								
7				3				
			7			6		
1		6	5			7		2
	4				8			6
	5		6	1	7		4	
3			4				9	
9		8			4	6		7
	7				1			
			3					8

Yesterday's Solution 3671								
3	5	7	8	9	6	4	1	2
8	1	6	3	4	2	5	7	9
2	9	4	1	7	5	3	6	8
9	6	8	7	3	4	1	2	5
7	2	5	6	8	1	9	4	3
4	3	1	5	2	9	6	8	7
1	4	2	9	5	8	7	3	6
6	7	9	2	1	3	8	5	4
5	8	3	4	6	7	2	9	1

Yesterday's Cross Word Solution 1680								
D	I	M		M	E	N	A	C
R		I	D	O	L		D	O
U		L		D	I	G	E	S
M		L	E	T		P	E	
	F		O		E	S	T	E
B	O	O	T	S		P	E	
R	U		A	R	A	B	L	E
A	S	T		T	E			A
S	E	E		I	N	N	S	
S	T	R	A	N	D		T	A

DISCLAIMER

The views in the articles published here are absolutely the views of the author and The Echo of India does not stand liable for them.

REVISED SEVA SUCHNAYEIN

All the sailings are subject to weather conditions

INTER ISLAND SECTOR:
· Sindhu will sail for Campbell Bay via Nancowry on 27.10.2022 (Thu) at 1500 Hrs from Haddo Wharf and will sail for Port Blair on 29.10.2022 (Sat) at 0900 Hrs from Campbell Bay via Nancowry. Passenger Tickets for on-ward journey will be issued to the general public from 25.10.2022 (Tue) onwards at STARS Ticketing Counter, Phoenix Bay.

LITTLE ANDAMAN:
· Sindhu will sail for Little Andaman on 22.10.2022 (Sat) at 0900 Hrs from Haddo Wharf and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 2100 Hrs from Little Andaman.
· Sindhu will sail for Little Andaman on 25.10.2022 (Tue) at 0900 Hrs from Haddo Wharf and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 2100 Hrs from Little Andaman.
****Passenger tickets for the above sailing (i.e. for 25th October, 2022) will be issued to the general public on 22.10.2022 at STARS Ticketing Counters.

DIGLIPUR & MAYABUNDER:
· MV Dering will sail for Diglipur via Mayabunder on 22.10.2022 (Sat) at 1900 Hrs from Haddo Wharf and will sail for Port Blair on 23.10.2022 (Sun) at 1230 Hrs from Diglipur via Mayabunder. Passenger tickets for the above sailing will be issued to the general public from 20.10.2022 onwards at STARS Ticketing Counters.
· MV Dering will sail for Diglipur via Mayabunder on 26.10.2022 (Wed) at 1900 Hrs from Haddo Wharf and will sail for Port Blair on 27.10.2022 (Thu) at 1230 Hrs from Diglipur via Mayabunder. Passenger tickets for the above sailing will be issued to the general public from 25.10.2022 onwards at STARS Ticketing Counters.
MV Dering will sail for Diglipur via Mayabunder on 29.10.2022 (Sat) at 1900 Hrs from Haddo Wharf and will sail for Port Blair on 30.10.2022 (Sun) at 1230 Hrs from Diglipur via Mayabunder. Passenger tickets for the above sailing will be issued to the general public from 27.10.2022 onwards at STARS Ticketing Counters.

FORESHORE SECTOR:
Note: Passenger tickets for the Foreshore Sector vessels will be issued to the general public at STARS Ticketing Counters two days prior to her scheduled departure date.

21.10.2022 (FRI)
SHAHEED DWEEP & SWARAJ DWEEP
· MV Baratang will sail for Swaraj Dweep on 21.10.2022 (Fri) at 0630 Hrs from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 0900 Hrs from Swaraj Dweep.
· MV Strait Island will sail for Shaheed Dweep on 21.10.2022 (Fri) at 0630 Hrs. from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 0845 Hrs from Shaheed Dweep.
· MV Strait Island will sail for Shaheed Dweep on 21.10.2022 (Fri) at 1100 Hrs from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 1600 Hrs from Shaheed Dweep.
· MV Strait Island will sail for Swaraj Dweep on 21.10.2022 (Fri) at 1300 Hrs from Shaheed Dweep Jetty and will sail back to Shaheed Dweep on the same day at 1430 Hrs from Swaraj Dweep.
· MV Baratang will sail for Swaraj Dweep on 21.10.2022 (Fri) at 1400 Hrs from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 1630 Hrs from Swaraj Dweep.
· MV Kamorta will sail for Swaraj Dweep on 21.10.2022 (Fri) at 1700 Hrs from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail back to Port Blair on 22.10.2022 (Sat) at 0600 Hrs from Swaraj Dweep.

RANGAT
MV Chouldari will sail for Rangat via Swaraj Dweep & Long Island on 21.10.2022 (Fri) at 0615 Hrs. from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 1300 Hrs from Rangat via same route.

22.10.2022 (SAT)
SHAHEED DWEEP & SWARAJ DWEEP
· MV Bambooka will sail for Swaraj Dweep on 22.10.2022 (Sat) at 0630 Hrs from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 0900 Hrs from Swaraj Dweep.
· MV Strait Island will sail for Shaheed Dweep on 22.10.2022 (Sat) at 0630 Hrs. from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 0845 Hrs from Shaheed Dweep.
· MV Chouldari will sail for Shaheed Dweep on 22.10.2022 (Sat) at 1100 Hrs from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 1600 Hrs from Shaheed Dweep.
· MV Chouldari will sail for Swaraj Dweep on 22.10.2022 (Sat) at 1300 Hrs from Shaheed Dweep Jetty and will sail back to Shaheed Dweep on the same day at 1430 Hrs from Swaraj Dweep.
· MV Bambooka will sail for Swaraj Dweep on 22.10.2022 (Sat) at 1400 Hrs from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 1630 Hrs from Swaraj Dweep.
· MV Kamorta will sail for Swaraj Dweep on 22.10.2022 (Sat) at 1700 Hrs from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail back to Port Blair on 23.10.2022 (Sun) at 0600 Hrs from Swaraj Dweep.

RANGAT
MV Baratang will sail for Rangat via Shaheed Dweep, Swaraj Dweep, Strait Island & Long Island on 22.10.2022 (Sat) at 0700 Hrs. from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on 23.10.2022 (Sun) at 0700 Hrs from Rangat via same route.

23.10.2022 (SUN)
SHAHEED DWEEP & SWARAJ DWEEP
· MV Bambooka will sail for Swaraj Dweep on 23.10.2022 (Sun) at 0630 Hrs from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 0900 Hrs from Swaraj Dweep.
· MV Chouldari will sail for Shaheed Dweep on 23.10.2022 (Sun) at 0630 Hrs. from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 0845 Hrs from Shaheed Dweep.
· MV Strait Island will sail for Shaheed Dweep on 23.10.2022 (Sun) at 1100 Hrs from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 1600 Hrs from Shaheed Dweep.
· MV Strait Island will sail for Swaraj Dweep on 23.10.2022 (Sun) at 1300 Hrs from Shaheed Dweep Jetty and will sail back to Shaheed Dweep on the same day at 1430 Hrs from Swaraj Dweep.
· MV Bambooka will sail for Swaraj Dweep on 23.10.2022 (Sun) at 1400 Hrs from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 1630 Hrs from Swaraj Dweep.
· MV Chouldari will sail for Swaraj Dweep on 23.10.2022 (Sun) at 1700 Hrs from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail back to Port Blair on 24.10.2022 (Mon) at 0600 Hrs from Swaraj Dweep.

CS launches telemedicine services through 'eSanjeevani'



PORT BLAIR, OCT 20/--/ In its efforts to provide better health care facilities to the people in the remote part of A&N Islands, the Health Department ON Wednesday started telemedicine services through 'eSanjeevani' application in Isles. The Chief Secretary, Mr. Keshav Chandra as the chief guest launched the telemedicine services at a brief function held in the conference hall of the Secretariat in the presence of Commissioner-cum Secretary (Health), Mr. Nikhil Kumar, senior Officers of Administration, Doctors of Health Department and others.

Congratulating the health officials for the successful launch of the eSanjeevani, the Chief Secretary remarked that the launch of tele-consultation in the Territory is a revolutionary step in the annals of these Islands. To have a facility of such magnitude, overcoming the distance and the problems faced by the people residing in remotest parts of the Islands is not only a game changer, but also a life saver, he said.

The Chief Secretary mentioned that thousands of people and children especially the poorest of the poor who are not able to get specialized health care for some or the other reasons will now be benefitted from the launch of this eSanjeevani application. Providing specialized treatment sitting at Headquarter for the people in the remotest part of the A&N Islands is an excellent work, the Chief Secretary said.

The Chief Secretary urged for conducting workshops, training and proper dissemination of this facility available for the people of remote Islands. He further directed for maintaining a data mechanism on the number of tele-consultations conducted and how it is benefitting the people.

Earlier, welcoming the Chief Secretary and other officials, the Secretary (Health), Mr. Arjun Sharma informed that the eSanjeevani is a telemedicine consultation service which has been launched in 10 Health Centres in A&N Islands spread across the 3 Districts and covering all the

blocks except Nancowry block due to connectivity issues which will be covered shortly. He said that people residing in the remotest Islands will have access to specialized medical care with the Specialist available in GB Pant Hospital. A weekly schedule of specialists has been prepared and initially, 10 PHCs have been identified in which telemedicine services will be started, he said. The Secretary further informed that eSanjeevani application has been developed by CDAC and it is prescribed by GoI as a telemedicine facility in which the records of the patients viz. video conferencing, patients records are stored and can be accessed at a later stage, whenever it is required, he added.

Informing about the facets of eSanjeevani, the Nodal Officer eSanjeevani, Dr. P Lal said, this telemedicine application has been started by the GoI. There are two types of eSanjeevani i.e. eSanjeevani OPD and eSanjeevani HWC.

Under, eSanjeevani OPD, a citizen can directly consult a doctor available on the eSanjeevani app while eSanjeevani HWC is a doctor to doctor telemedicine system by which consultation can be made by the Medical Officer of PHC/CHC or Community Health Officers of Health & Wellness Centers with specialists at Referral Hospital.

A tele-consultation was also done through video conference with the Doctor at PHC, Campbell Bay during the launch. The tele-consultation was provided by Dr. Pragadish, Child Specialist for a child suffering from respiratory problems.

Initially, 10 peripheral Health institutions have been identified and equipped to start tele-consultation applications with Specialists of G.B Pant Hospital. They are CHC, Rangat, CHC, Diglipur, District Hospital, Mayabunder, HWC, Baratang, HWC, Kadamtala, HWC, Hutbay, HWC, Campbell Bay, BJR, Hospital CarNicobar, HWC, SwarajDweep and HWC Shaheed Dweep.

NAN scam: Chhattisgarh CM never met any HC judge, state govt tells SC

NEW DELHI, OCT 20/--/ Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel never met any high court judge, the Chhattisgarh government told the Supreme Court on Thursday, rejecting a top central government law officer's suggestion about his probable complicity in the state's PDS scam. The Supreme Court was hearing an Enforcement Directorate plea seeking transfer of a PMLA case related to the 'Nagrik Apurti Nigam' (NAN) or the Public Distribution System (PDS) scam outside the state.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the ED, had referred to the WhatsApp chat of an alleged close aide to the chief minister that a judge had met the CM two days before bail was granted to some of the accused in the NAN scam case.

We took instructions. The chief minister never met any high court judge, senior lawyer Kapil Sibal told the court on Thursday. Mehta responded, saying he had only referred to the WhatsApp chat.

The apex court bench comprising Chief Justice Uday Umesh Lalit and Justices Ajay Rastogi and S Ravindra Bhat, meanwhile, refused to further hear the ED's plea on account of paucity of time and unavailability of the special bench to finish the hearing and adjourned it to the week commencing November 14. The CJJ, who will demit office on November 8, and the other two judges are part of three separate benches and they come together for this case only by disturbing the regular functioning of the other

three courts.

Though, we heard advocates appearing for the parties at some length, but considering the facts and circumstances on record and particularly the fact that the submissions would not be over in one session, the matter is released from being part heard, the order said.

Ordering re-sealing of the documents filed by the ED and the state government, the bench said the apex court registry is directed to list the matter before an appropriate bench in the week of November 14, after taking appropriate instructions from the CJJ.

Chief Justice Lalit said since he would not be hearing the case anymore, he will not make any remarks.

At the outset, some lawyers sought adjournment of the hearing as the special bench sat around 3.35 pm, and after some discussion, the CJJ decided to release the case from his bench and from the status of being part heard.

The ED's plea will now be heard afresh by another bench constituted by the successor CJJ.

Earlier, the Enforcement Directorate, which is seeking transfer of the PMLA case outside Chhattisgarh, had claimed a judge had met the chief minister two days before bail was granted to some of the accused.

Alleging "collusion" between the accused and "highly placed persons", the ED had told the bench that 72 out of 170 witnesses have turned hostile. It is impossible to have a free and fair trial in the case if it is held in the state, the anti-money

laundering agency had said.

"The learned judge meeting the CM (chief minister) also is good enough, two days before the bail. I have nothing more to say. I did not want to say this. If this cannot shock your lordships' conscience, nothing can," Mehta had told the bench.

"Everything is not entered into in black and white. There would not be an agreement signed by the chief minister and the learned judge," he had said.

While hearing the matter on September 26, the apex court had highlighted the gravity of ED's claim, saying it stood on a "completely different footing" as a judge was allegedly a party to "some kind of conversation".

Besides seeking transfer of the PMLA case outside Chhattisgarh, the ED has sought cancellation of anticipatory bail granted to some high-profile accused in the money laundering case.

It recently submitted a sealed cover report containing some objectionable WhatsApp messages, indicating the alleged involvement of the constitutional functionaries, to the bench.

The ED had alleged that some high constitutional functionaries of the state along with members of the SIT were weakening the case with the connivance of the accused, which included two senior IAS officers. Prior to this, the Chhattisgarh High Court had granted anticipatory bail to IAS officers Anil Tuteja and Alok Shukla in the money laundering case related to the Chhattisgarh Civil Supply Corporation scam.(PTI)

7TH NATIONAL AYURVEDA DAY CELEBRATED BEFITTINGLY

Exhibition, recipe competition and awareness talks marks the event



PORT BLAIR, OCT 20/--/ Every year, the Ministry of Ayush celebrate Ayurveda Day on Dhanvantari Jayanti / Dhanteras. This is also, the Ministry is celebrating the day in collaboration with all the Ministries and departments of Government of India with the campaign for six weeks so that every person of the nation is made aware of the traditional system of medicine. The theme for the celebration is 'Har Din HarGhar Ayurveda'.

Along with the rest of the country, various programmes, including medical camps, poshan camps, awareness talks are being conducted by the Health Department in various parts of the Islands.

The main function of '7th National Ayurveda Day' was organized at the Community Hall, Chouldari village on Thursday by the AYUSH Wing of Directorate of Health Services and A & N State AYUSH Society. Mr. Nikhil Kumar, Comm-Cum-Secretary (Health) graced the event as chief Guest and Smti.

PrAMILAKUMARI, Adhyaksha, Zilla Parishad was the guest of honour. Mr. Arjun Sharma, Secretary (Health) welcomed the gathering with his inaugural speech.

A powerpoint presentation on 'Evolution of Ayurveda and Healthy Living through Ayurveda' was presented by Dr. Rekha, Specialist Panchakarma. A play on the significance of Healthy Lifestyle by families was performed by the Health staff of PHC Chouldari. An exhibition on Ayurvedic Medicinal Plants, Dry Herbs, Panchakarma procedures and Healthy food recipes was inaugurated by the chief guest. ANMs, ASHAs and Anganwadi workers of nearby villages participated in the recipe competition and the selected recipes were awarded with cash prize along with certificates by the Chief Guest.

In her address, the Adhyaksha, ZP, S/Andaman praised the initiatives and programmes being taken up by the Health Department for the betterment of the health of people and emphasized the importance of Ayurvedic system.

While addressing the gathering, the Commissioner-cum-Secretary (Health) highlighted the significance of the ancient Ayurvedic Health System which is very much embedded in the society and households of our country.

He stressed on the preventive as well as curative aspects of Ayurvedic Therapies in public health.

He also mentioned about the efforts of Govt. of India through Ministry of AYUSH for the mainstreaming of AYUSH Systems; and appealed the gathering to inculcate the principles of Ayurveda in their daily routine for Healthy living.

Prakriti Parikshan (assessment of body constitution) and specific advice on diet and lifestyle was given to the general public by the Ayurveda doctors. The immunity booster AyushKadawas also distributed among the gathering consisting of Govt. Officials, IRBnJawans, students and local residents.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks given by Dr. Anil Agarwal, Mission director (NHM & NAM). D

Dr. MunniSinghania, DHS, Dr. Kalyan P. Kadbhane, DD (AYUSH), Smti. Tapasi Pradhan, Gram Panchayat, Smti. Chaitali, Member, Panchayat Samiti, Chouldari village and Dr. Supriya Roy, PHC Chouldari were also present, along with many other officials of the area.

No. SP(D)/N&MA/MB/66/2022/3165
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE
NORTH & MIDDLE ANDAMAN DISTRICT
Mayabunder dated the 20th October, 2022

PRESS RELEASE

General public is hereby informed that on 08/10/2022, case vide FIR No. 45/22 dated 08/10/2022 U/S 363 IPC was registered at Police Station Diglipur on the suspected abduction/ kidnapping of a minor boy namely Rohit Mondal S/o Ranjan Mondal (17 years 06 months) from Gandhi Nagar, Diglipur. All possible efforts are being carried out to search the missing boy in and around Diglipur Tehsil but whereabouts of the missing boy couldn't be traced till date. Descriptive roll of the boy is furnished below:

PHOTOGRAPH	DESCRIPTION	
	Age	17 yrs. & 06 months
	Height	167 cms
	Hair Colour	Black
	Eye's Colour	Normal Black
	Complexion	Fair
	Face	Round
	Education	Studying in XI th Std.
	Wearing	Black colour full sleeve T-Shirt & Blue half pant and black shoe
	Body Built	Normal
	Missing place	Gandhi Nagar, Diglipur
	Missing Date	06/10/2022

General public is requested to pass on any information related to the above boy to the following phone numbers 03192-272223, 9434285670, 9474232107, 100 or to any nearest Police Station.

MP: Four dead, six injured as house with firecrackers collapses after blast

MORENA, OCT 20/--/ Four persons, including three members of a family, were killed and six others injured after a house, where firecrackers were stored by a tenant, collapsed following a blast in Banmore town of Madhya Pradesh's Morena district on Thursday, a senior police official said.

The impact of the blast was so severe that the ground-plus-one-storey structure was reduced to rubble, while two nearby houses were damaged. The tenant's wife, their eight-year-old daughter, 18-year-old son and one more person died in the incident that occurred around 11 am, he said.

The cause of the blast is yet to be known, officials said. "Four persons were killed and six others injured in the blast incident," Inspector General of Police (IG) Chambal Range Rajesh Chawla said. Banmore police station in-charge Biresh Kushwaha said the house belonged to a man named Nirmal Chand Jain. The first floor of the house was given on rent to Jameel Khan, who resided there with his family. He had stored large quantity of firecrackers in the house without permission, an-

other official said.

"Around 11 am, a blast took place there. Its intensity was so severe that the entire structure collapsed and a few people got trapped under the debris," he said.

The deceased were identified as Jameel Khan's wife Anno Khan (35), their daughter Zoya and son Mehmood, he said, adding that one more person died in the incident. However, Jameel Khan survived as he jumped over the terrace immediately after the blast.

Of the six injured, two were taken to Gwalior after being given preliminary treatment at Banmore local hospital, while the rest are being treated in Banmore, the IG said. A case was registered in connection with the incident, the official said. Meanwhile, Morena Superintendent of Police (SP) Ashutosh Bagri told PTI that the cause of the blast is not clear yet. The quantity of crackers was not much, he said, adding that it cannot be said with certainty that the blast took place because of gunpowder or due to cylinder blast. Experts are examining the site to find out the reason behind the blast, he said.(PTI)

CM welcomes SC stay on Calcutta HC's job annulment order

KOLKATA, OCT 20 /--/ Chief minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday welcomed the Supreme Court stay on Calcutta High Court's order directing annulment of the appointment of 269 candidates as teachers, and said she was "not in favour of anyone losing jobs".

Mamata, without taking names, also said that she admired people who fought for "genuine reasons". "I do not know much about this case. On part of our government, education minister Bratya Basu is entitled to say anything in this regard. You know that the matter is subjudice. But I admire people who protest and fight for genuine reasons," she told reporters after returning from her north Bengal tour. "I do not want anybody to lose job. I want everybody to continue working. I am happy that the Supreme Court has given this order," she added. The apex court on Tuesday, staying the Calcutta high court order, asked each of the 269 candidates to file affidavits to defend their appointment and directed the appointing authority to scrutinise the legality of the same.

A division bench of the Calcutta High Court had on September 2 upheld an order of its single bench that directed the CBI to

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— Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee

investigate alleged irregularities in school appointments. The petitioners before the single bench alleged that although they appeared for the Teachers Eligibility Test (TET) -2014, no list containing the marks of candidates and indicating their respective merit positions was ever published and that an additional panel of 273 candidates was prepared "illegally", who were granted one additional mark out of over 20 lakh



Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee at the inauguration of Kali Puja of Janbazar Sammilita — Photo: Shyamal Maitra

candidates who appeared for the test. It was claimed that by dint of this one additional mark, 269 candidates got qualified for the job of teachers and were subsequently appointed. Meanwhile, agitation demanding jobs by candidates, who claimed to have cleared TET in 2014, entered its fourth day on Thursday. The chief minister, during a programme in Siliguri on Wednesday, had stated that her government would make all possible efforts to provide jobs to people.

Mamata, in an apparent reference to the ongoing protest by TET-2014 candidates, hit out at Opposition parties, blaming them for causing disturbances in the state. "I want employment opportunities to be generated here. There are forces that do not want people to get jobs. They are creating hindrances... We will not stop employing people. We will employ them regularly and not take away jobs," she had said. State education minister Bratya Basu has also urged the agitating candidates to withdraw the sit-in outside the primary education board office. Basu claimed that some parties want the impasse to continue for political gains. (PTI)

Modi asks people to adopt concept of 'reduce, reuse and recycle'

PM and UN Secy Gen launch Mission LiFE

KEVADIA, OCT 20 /--/ Prime Minister Narendra Modi and United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres on Thursday launched Mission LiFE, a global plan of action aimed at saving the planet from the disastrous consequences of climate change.

The launch of the mission, aimed at encouraging people towards sustainable living, comes ahead of next month's mega UN climate meet in Egypt. The action plan - a list of ideas on lifestyle changes that can be taken up as climate-friendly behaviour - along with the logo and tagline for Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment) were jointly launched by Modi and Guterres at Kevadia in Gujarat. Modi asked people to adopt the concept of 'reduce, reuse and recycle' and circular economy and said India is committed to tackling the menace of climate change. The Prime Minister said Mission LiFE will strengthen the concept of a people planet. The mission

signifies lifestyle of the planet, for the planet and by the planet".

Mission LiFE aims at following a three-pronged strategy for changing people's collective approach towards sustainability. This includes nudging individuals to practice simple yet effective environment-friendly actions in their daily lives (demand), enabling industries and markets to respond swiftly to the changing demand (supply), and to influence government and industrial policy to support both sustainable consumption and production (policy). Modi said the prevailing notion that climate change is an issue only related to policy leaves this all important issue only to the government or international organisations. "People are experiencing the effects of climate change in their surroundings, and in the last few decades unexpected calamities were witnessed. This makes it amply clear that climate change goes beyond just policy-making,

he said. The Prime Minister said the mantra of Mission LiFE is 'Lifestyle For Environment'. The mission will connect the people's power for the protection of the earth, and teach them to utilise its resources in a better way. Mission LiFE makes the fight against climate change democratic, in which everyone can contribute within their capacity, Modi said. Mission LiFE inspires us to do all that can be done in our everyday life to protect the environment. Mission LiFE believes that the environment can be protected by making changes in our lifestyle," he said. For example, a person goes to a gym on a vehicle that runs five kms on per litre (fuel). If the person goes there on a bicycle, then both the goals of protecting the environment and achieving personal fitness will be met, he said. The Prime Minister also gave an example of the adoption of LED bulbs in India for reducing electricity bills and protecting the environment. This led to massive

savings and environmental benefits and this is a recurring permanent benefit," he said. Modi said that Mission LiFE emboldens the spirit of the P3 model- that is Pro- Planet People". It unites people of the earth as pro-planet people, uniting them all in their thoughts. It functions on the basic principle of "lifestyle of the planet, for the planet and by the planet, he said. Mission LiFE will encompass every lifestyle related to the conservation of nature, which our ancestors adopted, and that can be made a part of our lifestyle today, the Prime Minister said. The annual per capita carbon footprint in India is only about 1.5 tonnes, compared to the world average of four tonnes per year. Nevertheless, India is working at the forefront to solve global problems like climate change, he said. Gujarat chief minister Bhupendra Patel and external affairs minister S Jaishankar were among those present on the occasion. (PTI)

Mamata comes out in Sourav's support yet again, asks why he was not sent to ICC

CM sees political vendetta

KOLKATA, OCT 20 /--/ Chief minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday targeted her guns on the BJP-led Central government for allegedly depriving former Indian cricket skipper Sourav Ganguly by not nominating him for the ICC chairman's post, terming it an act of "shameless political vendetta".

Mamata, who said she would have spoken out on the issue even if master cricketers like Sachin Tendulkar or Mohammad Azharuddin were similarly deprived, alleged that Ganguly was robbed of the chance to fight the election to "secure someone else's interests". "Why was he not sent to ICC? It is to secure someone's interest (in the cricket board). They have kept the position vacant so that someone else can contest. I had spoken to various BJP leaders, but he was not allowed. He has been deprived. This is a shameful political vendetta," she told reporters here. Earlier this week, the TMC boss expressed shock over Ganguly's "removal" as BCCI President and had sought Prime Minister Narendra Modi's intervention so that the former India captain is allowed to contest the elections for International Cricket Council head.

"The BJP is depriving those who have brought laurels to the country for its own selfish motive. Had it been Sachin Tendulkar or Azharuddin, I would have supported them too in the interest of sports," said the chief minister, who was Union minister of state for sports in the early '90s. Mamata wondered why Ganguly was not given a second term as Board of Control for Cricket in India chief even though Union Home Minister Amit Shah's Son Jay Shah was allowed a similar second stint as BCCI secretary. "If Sourav Ganguly's tenure ends as BCCI President, then Jay Shah's tenure should end too. I see cricket as India, not anything else. Sourav is a decent fellow and hence is not saying anything," she said. Later, addressing a programme in the city, Mamata claimed had India contested, it would have won the ICC chairman's post.

"Those who are eligible to contest were not allowed to file nomination. It has been done to secure the post for someone. I feel ashamed because of such cheap politics that is at play," Mamata said. Roger Binny, a 1983 World Cup-winning squad member, has been elected as the 36th president of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), taking over from Ganguly. However, the sports body's AGM on Tuesday concluded without discussing the ICC election. Rejecting Mamata's claim, the West Bengal BJP said the chief minister is trying to politicise the issue and stoke 'Bengali sentiment' over Ganguly. "There is no politics in it, but she is trying to find one. She is insulting not only Sourav Ganguly but also Roger Binny, a member of the world cup-winning team. The BCCI is an autonomous body, unlike sports bodies in West Bengal, which the TMC leaders are helming," BJP state spokesperson Samik Bhattacharya. The saffron camp had earlier asked her to appoint Ganguly as the state's brand ambassador replacing Bollywood megastar Shah Rukh Khan if she was "so concerned" about Ganguly. (PTI)

SC seeks Centre, states' response to plea against hate crimes and speeches

NEW DELHI, OCT 20 /--/ The Supreme Court on Thursday sought response from the Centre and the states to a plea seeking directions for taking appropriate steps to stop hate speeches against the Muslim community. A bench of Justices Ajay Rastogi and CT Ravi Kumar issued notices to the Centre and all states while tagging the matter with other pending petitions on the issue pending before another bench. Petitioner Shaheen Abdullah has moved the top court also seeking direction to the Centre and states to initiate independent, credible and impartial probe into the incidents of hate crimes and hate speeches across the country. At the outset, senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the petitioner, said something needs to be done to tackle the problem and action must be taken against those making hate speeches or indulging in hate crimes.

The bench said the prayer in the plea is very vague and no specific instances have been mentioned. It said cognizance can be taken where an FIR has been lodged in a case. Sibal, however, submitted the prayer in the petition is not vague and mentions recent incidents of hate speeches. He added several petitions have been filed in the last six months to stop hate crimes but such incidents are still continuing. In his petition, Abdullah has also sought invoking the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) and other stringent provisions to curb hate crimes and hate speeches. He has said the Muslim community is being "targeted and terrorised" by the participation of the members of the ruling political party in delivering the hate speeches. "The spread of hate towards Muslims and other minorities gets accelerated and becomes all the more far reaching in its impact as a result of the support, directly or indirectly, extended to radical miscreants, who engage in acts of hate crimes, physical violence as well as communally charged speeches by the ruling political party", it said. (PTI)



Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacting with United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, in Kevadia

Kharge to assume role as Cong chief on Oct 26

NEW DELHI, OCT 20 /--/ Newly elected Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge will take over his new assignment at a function at the All India Congress Committee (AICC) headquarters on October 26. The certificate of his election to the post will also be presented to him at the function on the day and he will assume his new role from then on. The Congress on Wednesday elected 'loyalist' Mallikarjun Kharge as its new president, the first non-Gandhi to head the 137-year-old party in 24 years and succeed long-time chief Sonia Gandhi. The 80-year-old Kharge trounced his 66-year-old rival, Shashi Tharoor bagging over 84 per cent of the votes in the presidential election. Kharge

polled 7,897 Pradesh Congress Committee delegate votes out of 9,385, while Tharoor bagged 1072. "Function for the presentation of the certificate of election to the newly elected Congress President Shri Mallikarjun Kharge will be held on Wednesday the 26th October 2022, at 10.30 am at AICC Headquarters, 24 Akbar Road, New Delhi," AICC general secretary K C Venugopal said on Twitter. Among those invited for the event include CWC members, PCC presidents, CLP leaders and leaders of Congress legislative councils, besides all AICC office bearers and heads of frontal organisations and various departments and cells. (PTI)

Liz Truss resigns as UK PM after just 45 days amid open revolt

Rishi Sunak seen as frontrunner for post

LONDON, OCT 20 /--/ Embattled British Prime Minister Liz Truss on Thursday resigned as the Conservative Party leader saying she can no longer deliver the mandate she was elected on last month, ending her tenure at 10 Downing Street in London after just 45 days in the job following an open revolt against her chaotic leadership.

The 47-year-old outgoing Prime Minister will stay in charge until her successor is elected by the governing Tory party, with a speeded-up leadership election to be completed by next week. Her former leadership rival, Rishi Sunak, is seen as a frontrunner in that race but a consensus within a divided Tory party remains elusive, with the Opposition Labour Party renewing calls for an immediate general election. "I recognise though that given the situation, I cannot deliver the mandate on which I was elected by the Conservative Party," Truss said in a brief statement outside 10 Downing Street. The embattled leader said she had spoken to King Charles III to notify him of her resignation and also met the 1922 Committee chair Sir Graham Brady, in charge of Tory leadership elections. "We have agreed that there will be a leadership election to be completed within the next week. This will ensure that we remain on a path to

deliver our fiscal plans and maintain our countries economic stability and national security. I will remain as Prime Minister until a successor has been chosen," added Truss. A downcast Truss, who stepped out of 10 Downing Street with her husband, said she had taken over at a time of great instability but ultimately admitted she had failed in her mission to deliver her economic agenda. "Truss was Britain's third female Prime Minister after Margaret Thatcher and Theresa May. Sunak, who lost out to Truss' now failed tax-cutting agenda in the leadership race last month, is seen as a key contender to step up to the post. But the picture remains extremely uncertain due to deep infighting within Tory ranks. Loyalists of former Prime Minister Boris Johnson believe the party should bring him back, given his solid electoral mandate from the 2019 general election. However, Truss' current troubles are themselves reminiscent of how Johnson was dragged out of office and forced to resign in early July amid an open revolt by a growing number of his MPs and ministers. The latest turmoil comes a day after Suella Braverman's explosive exit from the Cabinet after admitting a breach of the ministerial code by discussing government policy in private emails and a scathing parting attack on her boss.

"Not only have we broken key pledges that were promised to our voters, but I have had serious concerns about this government's commitment to honouring manifesto commitments, such as reducing overall migration numbers and stopping illegal migration, particularly the dangerous small boat crossings," the Indian-origin former Home Secretary wrote in her resignation letter. Her exit came over what experts believe was a relatively low-level ministerial breach but reflects more serious differences between Braverman and Truss over the country's immigration policy. The outgoing Prime Minister attempted to move on from the latest crisis by swiftly appointing Grant Shapps as the new Home Secretary. But coming just days after she sacked Kwasi Kwarteng as chancellor and brought in Jeremy Hunt who has since reversed all of her economic agenda, the latest Cabinet upheaval was widely expected to only speed up Truss' exit from 10 Downing Street. To make matters even worse, the Speaker of the House of Commons ordered an investigation into reports of bullying and mishandling of some Tory MPs being made to vote with the government on an Opposition motion on Wednesday night. (PTI)



British Prime Minister Liz Truss

Pak court dismisses NAB appeals against former President Zardari's acquittals in corruption cases



ISLAMABAD, OCT 20/--/The Islamabad High Court on Thursday dismissed appeals by the country's top anti-corruption watchdog against the acquittal of former President Asif Ali Zardari in a slew of graft cases filed against him over two decades ago. The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) had filed these graft cases against Zardari in the 1990s. The Pakistan People's Party (PPP) leader was later acquitted in 2014 and 2015. However, the NAB challenged Zardari's acquittal in the Islamabad High Court (IHC).

But after its failure to present any evidence, the NAB on Wednesday filed an application expressing its desire not to further pursue these cases, as the available evidence was based on photocopies, which did not comply with the country's laws of evidence. The anti-corruption body also told the court that it wanted to withdraw its appeals. IHC Chief Justice Athar Minallah, after hearing the pleas, ruled that the case was not based on merit.

The court told you many times that this appeal is not warranted on merit, he said. NAB Additional Prosecutor General Jahanzeb Khan Bharwana agreed with the judge's remarks and said that is why the relevant authority had approved their withdrawal of the appeal. We are accepting NAB's request to withdraw the appeals and also rejecting them on the basis of merit, the

IHC chief justice said, further pointing out that the appeals were not even justified on the basis of merit. The Islamabad-based accountability court on November 24, 2015, exonerated PPP Co-chairperson Zardari from charges of using an official position for monetary benefits in the SGS and Cotecna corruption cases.

In another case known as the ARY Gold reference, former late premier Benazir Bhutto, Zardari and others allegedly allowed ARY Gold owner Haji Abdul Razzaq to import gold and silver without paying duties between 1995 and 1997, inflicting a hefty loss to the national exchequer.

Zardari's name also came up in the Ursus case which was about the alleged misappropriation of funds in buying 5,900 Russian and Polish tractors at a cost of Rs 150,000. In 2014, the accountability court acquitted Zardari in both the ARY Gold and Ursus tractors cases due to a lack of evidence. Zardari spent years behind the bars in the cases before he was exonerated, raising a huge question mark on the country's anti-corruption departments and judiciary. IHC Chief Justice Minallah also pointed out that the former president was acquitted on merit by the lower court and the failure to pursue the appeals strengthened the perception that the cases were politically motivated. (PTI)

Pakistan's Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa govt denies deal with Taliban

PESHAWAR, OCT 20/--/Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government on Thursday categorically denied reports about reaching any deal with the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and instead asked the militant group's leadership to call back their men to Afghanistan. Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Mehmud Khan was personally monitoring the situation that emerged after alleged regrouping of the Taliban militants in hilly parts of the Swat district, his aide told reporters. Chief Minister Khan has vowed that his government would not compromise on security, as well as, the law and order situation in the district, his Special Assistant on Information Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif said during a press conference.

The KPK government recently held a meeting with the local commanders of the TTP about ending the menace of terrorism in the province, Saif said, adding

that the talks had created an impression on social media that the provincial government had reached a deal with the militant group about handing over some areas in Malakand division and former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) to the militant group. Saif stressed that the information doing rounds of social media was incorrect and that there was no such understanding with the militant outfit that demands the imposition of Sharia law across Pakistan.

The talks with the TTP were held within the parameters of the Constitution and the law of the land, said Saif, adding that no deal has been finalised yet to this effect with the militants. Responding to a question, the official clarified that the chief minister had clearly said that his government would go to any extent for the maintenance of public order in the province. About the Mingora bypass road incident, where police

had killed two people on suspicion of being terrorists, the special assistant clarified that it was not an act of terrorism but a criminal incident that is being probed by the police.

Saif also appealed in his personal capacity to the TTP leadership to call back their men from Swat to Afghanistan and stressed that Pakistani militants must disarm themselves in order to establish lasting peace in the Malakand division and tribal districts.

The people of Swat from all walks of life held wide-ranging protests after the re-emergence of the Taliban in parts of the district in the wake of talks between the TTP and the government. The social circles demanded immediate action against the TTP regrouping in their former strongholds.

The forces launched a massive combing operation in mountainous areas of Swat a few days ago to flush out militants who reportedly fled back to Afghanistan. (PTI)

Russia seeks to regain ground, hits Ukraine's infrastructure

KYIV, OCT 20/--/Russia's troops fought on Thursday to regain lost ground in areas of Ukraine that Russian President Vladimir Putin has illegally annexed while Moscow tried to pound the invaded country into submission with more missile and drone attacks on critical infrastructure.

Russian forces attacked Ukrainian positions near Bilohorivka, a village in the Luhansk region of eastern Ukraine. In the neighbouring Donetsk region, fighting raged near the city of Bakhmut. Kremlin-backed separatists have controlled parts of both regions for 8 years.

Putin declared martial law in Luhansk, Donetsk and southern Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions on Wednesday in an attempt to assert Russian authority in the annexed areas following a string of battlefield setbacks and a troubled troop mobilisation.

The unsettled status of the illegally absorbed territory was especially visible in the Kherson region's capital, where military officials have replaced Kremlin-installed civilian leaders amid a mass evacuation and an ongoing Ukrainian counteroffensive.

Kherson city was one of the first urban areas captured by

Russia when it invaded Ukraine, and it remains a prime target for both sides because of its key industries and major river port. Thousands of the city's 250,000 residents streamed out of the city in anticipation of intensified assaults. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's office said on Thursday that Ukrainian forces continued to engage the enemy, mounting 15 attacks on Russian military strongholds in the Kherson region.

Meanwhile, Russia continued its stepped-up attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure, dispatching drones and missiles to eight regions.

At least three civilians died and 14 were wounded in overnight attacks across Ukraine, according to the Ukrainian president's office.

In Kryvyi Rih, Russian strikes damaged a power plant and another energy facility, cutting electricity to the central Ukraine city of about 600,000 residents.

Apart from being Zelenskyy's hometown, Kryvyi Rih is home to several large metallurgical factories that are key to Ukraine's economy. Regional governor Valentin Reznichenko said the city sustained serious damage.

Ukrainian authorities said missile and drone strikes ignited several fires in the southern city of

Mykolaiv, with four drones hitting a school. Another school in Komyshevukha, a village in the Zaporizhzhia region, also took four drone strikes and sustained damage. Authorities reported no casualties.

Russia's sustained attacks on Ukraine's infrastructure prompted authorities to ask residents to reduce their energy consumption from 7:00 am to 11:00 am starting Thursday and to dim city street lights. They warned of rolling blackouts. Now, every illuminated business sign, billboard or washing machine can lead to serious emergency shutdowns, Reznichenko said.

Despite the Kremlin's claims to the contrary, a leading Russian military expert unwittingly acknowledged that Iran has supplied Russia with drones it uses in Ukraine.

Ruslan Pukhov, head of the Moscow-based think tank Centre for Analysis of Strategies and Technologies, asked journalists before a television interview not to ask him where the drones came from, unaware that he was live on air.

Pukhov said that we all know that they are Iranian-made, but authorities haven't acknowledged that. Russian Foreign Ministry

spokeswoman Maria Zakharova on Thursday dismissed reports that Moscow is using Iranian-made drones in Ukraine as rumours and far-fetched assumptions.

In Brussels, the European Union on Thursday imposed sanctions on Iran's Shahed Aviation Industries as well as three Iranian armed forces generals for undermining Ukraine's territorial integrity by helping to supply Russia with drones.

In another sign of Russia's wavering mobilisation, Ukrainian authorities said more than 3,000 Russians have so far called a dedicated hotline for those who don't want to take part in the war and want to surrender.

Hotline spokesman Vitalii Matvienko said more recently-drafted Russian soldiers are calling now, with some reaching out in tears out of fear of the possibility that they'll be drafted.

When the Ukrainian counteroffensive is advancing, the number of calls is rising, Matvienko told The Associated Press in an interview. Ukraine says it guarantees the safety of anyone who surrenders in line with international law and that they can either return to Russia or apply to live in some European Union countries or in Ukraine. (AP)

Indonesia says contaminated medicines linked to 99 deaths

JAKARTA, OCT 20/--/Indonesia has found contaminated medicines that are suspected of being linked to the deaths of 99 children this year due to acute kidney injury, officials



said Thursday. Indonesia's Food and Drug Monitoring Agency said it was tracing 26 medicinal

syrops used to treat fevers, coughs and colds, noting that testing showed five such medicines had ethylene glycol levels that exceeded the safe threshold, it said in a statement. The Health Ministry, which banned all syrup medicines on Wednesday, is working with the food and drug agency to determine which other drugs to potentially withdraw as a preventive measure, Health Minister Budi Gunadi Sadikin said.

There have been 206 cases of acute kidney injury in children reported from 20 provinces in Indonesia this year, and a death rate of 48%, the Health Ministry said Wednesday. Previously, there were only a few cases of kidney injuries, only one or two every month. But at the end of August there was a spike in cases that got our attention. It is an atypical progressive acute kidney injury. We call it atypical as the cause is still under investigation or unknown, said Mohammad Syahril, a spokesperson from the Health Ministry. However, the agency cautioned that other risk factors can also cause acute kidney injury. The Food and Drug Monitoring Agency, together with the Ministry of Health, pharmaceutical experts, clinical pharmacology experts, the Indonesian Pediatrician Association and other related groups are exploring other risk factors. Syahril said there is no evidence of any link between the kidney injuries in these cases and the COVID-19 vaccine or virus infection. (AP)

Bodies of 26 Ethiopians found in mass grave in Malawi

BLANTYRE, OCT 20/--/Officials in Malawi have exhumed the bodies of 26 suspected Ethiopian migrants from a mass grave 255 kilometres (155 miles) north of the capital city, Lilongwe. Villagers found the bodies in a forest located near the main road that connects Malawi and



Tanzania, which is known as a route traffickers use to transport people to South Africa. The early evidence suggested the men buried in Mtanganga Forest may have suffocated while travelling in a van, police said. Investigators are looking into the deaths as a potential human trafficking case. Arrangements are underway, through the Ministry of Health, to bring a pathologist to do the postmortem so that we have an official version of the cause of death, Rodney Simwaka, the commissioner of the Mzimba District in the Northern Region of Malawi, said.

Simwaka told The Associated Press he heard Wednesday morning that villagers had found dead bodies near a timber factory. Evidence collected at the scene indicated the men were Ethiopian nationals between the ages of 25 and 40, Malawi police spokesperson Peter Kalaya said. In July, police impounded a 30-tonne (33-ton) tanker truck carrying 42 Ethiopians into Malawi along the route from the border with Tanzania. Authorities said at the time that some of the passengers looked frail and in urgent need of medication and nourishing food. One of the migrants, the only one who spoke English, told police the group had been in transit for at least four months to get to Malawi. (AP)

Hacker holds Australian health insurer's data for ransom

CANBERRA, OCT 20/--/A cybercriminal was holding for ransom an Australian health insurer's customer data including diagnoses and treatments, in the nation's second major privacy breach in a month, officials said on Thursday. Trade in Medibank shares has been halted on the Australian Securities Exchange since Wednesday when police were alerted that the company had been contacted by what it described as a criminal who wanted to negotiate over the stolen personal data of customers.

Medibank, which has 3.7 million customers, said on Thursday the criminal had provided a sample of 100 customer policies from a purported haul of 200 gigabytes of stolen data. Details included customer names, addresses, birth

dates, national health care identification numbers and phone numbers. Cybersecurity Minister Clare O'Neil said most concerning was that records of medical diagnoses and procedures had also been stolen. Financial crime is a terrible thing. But ultimately, a credit card can be replaced, O'Neil told reporters. The threat that is being made here to make the private, personal health information of Australians made available to the public is a dog act, she added.

The thief had threatened to sell Medibank data to third parties and singled out records of 1,000 politicians, media personalities, actors, LGBTQ activists and drug addicts for exposure. Nine Network News reported.

We found people with very interesting diagnoses, the thief

reportedly wrote to Medibank. Medibank declined to comment on the reported threats and would not release details beyond its statement to the Australian Securities Exchange. The Medibank breach came a month after a cyberattack stole from telecommunications company Optus the personal data of 9.8 million customers. The Optus breach, which compromised the personal data of more than one-third of Australia's population, prompted the government to propose urgent reforms to privacy laws that would increase penalties for companies that fail to protect customers' data and limit the quantity of data that can be retained.

O'Neil said cybercrime was a growing problem around the world and that Australia needed to be better prepared. We are

going to be under relentless cyberattack essentially from here on in, and what it means is that we need to do a lot better as a country to make sure that we are doing everything we can within organizations to protect customer data and also for citizens to be doing everything that they can, O'Neil said.

Combined with Optus, this is a huge wake-up call for the country and certainly gives the government a really clear mandate to do some things that frankly probably should have been done five years ago, but I think are still very crucially important, she added, referring to privacy law reforms that the government hopes to pass through Parliament this year. O'Neil described the Medibank breach as a ransomware attack, which the government defines as an

attack with malware that locks or encrypts files so that the owner can no longer access them. O'Neil's office later said she misspoke and meant that the culprit had demanded ransom. Medibank said its systems had not been encrypted by ransomware and its usual customer activities continued.

Medibank chief executive David Koczkar said his company was working with specialized cybersecurity firms as well as police and government experts in response to the breach.

I unreservedly apologise for this crime which has been perpetrated against our customers, our people and the broader community, Koczkar said in a statement. I know that many will be disappointed with Medibank and I acknowledge that disappointment, he added. (AP)

NEUFC 1-3 EBFC



Cleiton Silva handed East Bengal FC the lead in the 11th minute as Charis Kyriakou doubled it in the 52nd and Jordan O'Doherty netted the third in the 84th as Matt Derbyshire ulled on back in added time for NorthEast United FC at the Indira Gandhi Athletic Stadium in Guwahati. Both sides have played two games but are yet to win a point.

Pant and Karthik can be accommodated in playing XI if Hardik is fifth bowler: Gavaskar

MUMBAI, OCT 20 /--/ The great Sunil Gavaskar feels India can accommodate both Dinesh Karthik and Rishabh Pant in the playing XI by making Hardik Pandya the fifth bowling option in the upcoming T20 World Cup. The Rohit



Sharma-led side, who will open their campaign against Pakistan in Melbourne on Sunday, have two wicketkeeper-batter options in Karthik and Pant, both of them vying for a spot in the XI. As the India think-tank ponders over its team combination ahead of the Pakistan clash, the legendary 73-year-old feels both could be accommodated. It's just that maybe, if they decide to go with six bowlers, with Hardik Pandya being the sixth bowler, then he (Pant) may not be able to find a place," Gavaskar said on Star Sports show Cricket Live'. "But if they decide to go with Hardik Pandya as a fifth bowler, then Rishabh Pant has an opportunity to bat at number six and Karthik maybe at number seven, followed by the four bowlers. So, that could well happen, we just have to wait and see. "They would certainly want a left hander in the middle, but looking at the top four, who are in such good form, you sometimes say to yourself, How many overs Rishabh Pant is going to get in?" "Is he going to get three or four overs? And for three or four overs, is Karthik or Rishabh better?" So, these are all the situations they will look at and they'll take a call on this, he said. Gavaskar also spoke about Pakistan pace gun Shaheen Shah Afridi and said the he looked to have returned to full fitness in the warm-up match against England. Shaheen returned with figures of 2-0-7-0 in his comeback match against England on October 17. (PTI)

Famous Five: Shaheen and Lockie can spell doom for batters

NEW DELHI, OCT 20 /--/ Wahab Riaz's extraordinary over to Shane Watson at the Adelaide Oval during the

five bowlers, who have the ability to make a difference for their respective teams. With no Jasprit Bumrah in



2015 ODI World Cup will forever remain etched in the memory of those who were fortunate to witness raw aggression at its best. The famous punch line Pace is Pace Yaar was born after Wahab's over and its loose English translation would mean real pace is real deal. As we move towards the main round of T20 World Cup at the business end of the Australian winter, pace will rule the roost although on slightly slower tracks, fuller lengths will be equally important.

While spinners are expected to play a key role on the Australian tracks despite the soggy weather, those with scary pace will provide an x-factor as there would still be enough bounce. The PTI looks at

the Indian line-up, the Men In Blue' are missing a trick. And despite Mohammed Shami' brilliance in the warm-up game against Australia on the other day in Brisbane, the bowling unit doesn't inspire much confidence. Hence in the list, there are no Indian bowlers although their ability is unquestionable and on their day, they could certainly get the best out. ■ **Shaheen Shah Afridi (Pakistan)** : He is the Crown Prince' of world cricket's speed merchants. He is coming back from a serious knee injury but the manner in which he got Afghanistan's flashy opener Rahmanullah Gurbaz leg before showed that he has picked up from where he left before his injury. There was literally no rustiness as

Home ministry will decide on Indian team's travel to Pakistan but chances aren't much: Anurag Thakur

NEW DELHI, OCT 20 /--/ Sports Minister Anurag Thakur on Thursday said the home ministry will take a call on the Indian cricket team's travel to Pakistan for the Asia Cup next year but feels chances of the players going across the border "aren't much". Thakur though is expecting that Pakistan team will come to India to compete in the 50-over World Cup next year, saying "all are welcome". BCCI secretary Jay Shah, who is also the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) chief, had on Tuesday said that Indian team will not travel to Pakistan for the continental event and they would like to compete in the tournament at a neutral venue. It had prompted Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) to say that it may affect its team's participation in the World Cup in India. "All teams who qualify for (World Cup) are invited (to compete on the Indian soil). Many times Pakistan teams have come to India and played. I feel India is not in a position to be dictated (by someone) and there is no reason for anyone to do that. "I expect all countries to come and compete," Thakur told a select gathering of journalists when asked about the controversy that erupted after Shah's statement. Asked on the possibility of the Indian team travelling to the neighbouring country for Asia Cup next year, Thakur said, "Possibilities are always there. Who

thought there will be COVID-19. Anything can happen but the chances (of Indian team travelling to Pakistan) are not much. "...It's a decision that will be taken by the home ministry. Overall, players' safety and security is an important matter." It was pointed out that international teams have started touring Pakistan, of late, but Thakur deflected the question. Asked further, Thakur said, "That is a security concern. The government will take a call on that. Let the time come, let us see the situation at that time." Thakur spoke after it was announced that the fifth edition of the Khelo India Youth Games will be held across



Possibilities are always there. Who thought there will be COVID-19. Anything can happen but the chances (of Indian team travelling to Pakistan) are not much. ...It's a decision that will be taken by the home ministry. Overall, players' safety and security is an important matter Sports Minister Anurag Thakur

Clinical Sri Lanka seal Super 12 berth with 16-run win over Netherlands



GEELONG (VICTORIA), OCT 20 /--/ Kusal Mendis stood tall with a gritty 79 as Asian champions Sri Lanka bounced back from their early debacle to seal their Super 12 berth with a 16-run win over the Netherlands in the T20 World Cup here on Thursday. Facing an early elimination after being shocked by Namibia in the T20 World Cup opener at the same venue on Sunday, Sri Lanka rode on the wicketkeeper-batter's 44-ball knock to post a stiff 162

for 6 after Dasun Shanaka opted to bat. In reply, the Dutch, who led group A with wins over Namibia and UAE, managed 146 for 9 as the Lankan spin twins Wanindu Hasaranga (4-0-28-3) and Maheesh Theekshana (4-0-32-2) stymied their chase with perfect death over execution. For the Dutch, opener Max O'Dowd came up with a valiant 71 not out from 53 balls (6x4, 3x6) but he lacked the final flourish with hardly any support from the middle and lower

order batters. The Lankans now have four points from three matches in group A to confirm their Super 12 berth, while the Dutch will have to await the result of group A finale between UAE and Namibia later in the day to know their fate. The Netherlands, who have concluded their group A campaign with four points, have a net run-rate of -0.162. A win for Namibia later in the day could be a heartbreak for the Dutch as the former have a superior NRR of 1.277. (PTI)

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