

6 WORLD

8 NATION

22 सितम्बर, 2023 | केंद्रीय कार्य

- 'No place for aggression, hate, intimidation in country amid online threats to Hindus'
- N Korea's Kim sets forth steps to boost Russia ties as US and Seoul warn about weapons deals
- 'Stable govt with strong majority made passage of women's bill in Parl possible'
- Rahul demands immediate implementation of women's reservation bill

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Six people were killed in the clash at Mukroh in West Karbi Anglong last year

Mukroh clash: Rumi Phukan panel submits report

GUWAHATI, Sept 22: An enquiry commission formed by the Assam government to probe into a clash that claimed six lives at the Assam-Meghalaya border, has submitted its report.

The one-man commission headed by Justice (ret'd) Rumi Phukan submitted the report on Wednesday to the additional chief secretary of the home and political department of Assam government, sources said.

The contents and recommendations of the report on the clash, which took place on November 22 last year at the disputed Mukroh village in West Karbi Anglong district, have not been made public as yet. "The period to complete the enquiry was extended twice as



sought for till September 22 this year. The Commission examined a large number of witnesses and documents produced by the forests as well as police departments and different organizations," a press state-

ment said.

Six people, including a forest guard and five villagers from Meghalaya, were killed in violence at the disputed location in the early hours of November 22 last year

after a truck allegedly laden with illegally felled timber was intercepted by Assam forest personnel. The clash took place between a joint team of Assam police-forest protection force and villagers of Mukroh in West Jaintia Hills district of Meghalaya.

The disputed area on the Assam side falls in Makoilum village near Kheroni forest range. The entire conflict area falls within a disputed border location between Assam and Meghalaya, which claimed that the killing took place in their respective territories.

On November 24 last year the Assam government had announced that it constituted the enquiry commission headed by Justice (Ret'd) Phukan. (CONT'D. ON PAGE-9)

India slams China for pre-meditated target on Arunachali sportspersons

NEW DELHI, Sept 22: India has lodged strong protests with China over its denial of accreditation for the Hangzhou Asian Games to some of the Indian sportspersons from Arunachal Pradesh, and asserted that New Delhi reserves the right to take "suitable measures" to safeguard its interests.

Union external affairs ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi on Friday said as a mark of India's protest against China's discriminatory behaviour, Union youth affairs and sports minister Anurag Singh Thakur has cancelled his scheduled visit to China for the Games.

Describing the Chinese action as targeting of the sportspersons in a "pre-meditated" manner, Bagchi said the move violates both the spirit of the Asian Games and the rules governing their conduct as they "explicitly prohibits discrimination" against competitors from member states. He said a "strong protest" has



been lodged against China's "deliberate and selective obstruction" of some of India's sportspersons.

"The government of India has learnt that the Chinese authorities have, in a targeted and pre-meditated manner, discriminated against some of the Indian sportspersons from the state of Arunachal Pradesh by denying them accreditation and

entry to the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou, China," Bagchi said. India has asserted that it reserves the right to take "suitable measures" to safeguard its interests.

"In line with our long-standing and consistent position, India firmly rejects differential treatment of Indian citizens on the basis of domicile or (CONT'D. ON PAGE-9)

Canada's allegations against India based on communications, intelligence network's inputs

TORONTO, Sept 22: Canada's allegations of India's involvement in the killing of a Sikh separatist in Surrey that sparked a diplomatic row between the two nations are based on both human and signals intelligence and inputs from an ally from Ottawa's Five Eye intelligence network, a media report has said citing the Canadian government sources.

Tensions flared between India and Canada early this week following Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's explosive allegations of the "potential" involvement of Indian agents in the killing of Khalistani extremist Hardeep Singh Nijjar on his country's soil on June 18 in British Columbia. India had designated Nijjar as a terrorist in 2020. India angrily rejected the allegations as "absurd" and "motivated" and expelled a senior Canadian diplomat in a tit-for-tat move to Ottawa's expulsion of an

Indian official over the case.

The Canadian government has amassed both human and signals intelligence in a months-long investigation of the Sikh man's death that has inflamed relations with India, CBC News, a division of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, reported on Thursday quoting sources.

That intelligence includes communications involving Indian officials themselves, including Indian diplomats present in Canada, say Canadian government sources.

The intelligence did not come solely from Canada. Some were provided by an unnamed ally in the Five Eyes intelligence alliance, the public broadcaster said. Canada is part of a 'Five Eyes' network which is an intelligence alliance consisting of the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, Canada and New Zealand. The report said the (CONT'D. ON PAGE-9)

Former Meghalaya CM gets legal notice for defaming businessman

SHILLONG, Sept 22: TMC leader and former Chief Minister Mukul Sangma was served a legal notice on Friday after he "wrongly" labelled Henry Lalremsanga, the chairman of 2B's Group of Companies, as a drug kingpin.

Henry's counsel K Kharmawphlang issued a legal notice to Sangma asking him to tender an unconditional apology within seven days for incorrectly labelling Lalremsanga as a 'drug kingpin'.

The notice was in response to the statements made by Mukul on September 19 and 20.

The legal notice demanded the former Chief Minister to tender an unconditional apology and retraction of the false and malicious statements within 7 days of the receipt of this notice.

It also demanded for an immediate halt to making or publishing any more false and defamatory remarks against Lalremsanga and a payment of ₹ 20 crore within 7 days of the receipt of this notice as compensation for injury to Lalremsanga's reputation.

"Failure to comply with the demands within the stipulated time will compel Lalremsanga to pursue both criminal and civil legal actions, holding the perpetrators accountable for their defamatory statements," the notice said. It said, "This legal notice serves as a final opportunity for reparation for the damage caused to Lalremsanga's reputation. It is highlighted that a person in public life is expected to exercise a degree of restraint



while making public speeches, as underscored by the Hon'ble Supreme Court." The legal notice also served to address the unfounded accusations and character attacks made against Lalremsanga during a state Assembly session and subsequent media talks.

"Lalremsanga was wrongfully arrested in 2013 in relation to a seizure of medical supplies, despite holding a valid license for such supplies. He was discharged by the Special Court, ND & PS Act, Patiala House Court, New Delhi in 2018, citing lack of evidence of any offence committed," the notice said. "The recent defamatory statements, void of factual basis, have caused significant distress to (CONT'D. ON PAGE-9)

Manipur govt files status report in SC on recovery of arms

NEW DELHI, Sept 22: The Manipur government on Friday told the Supreme Court it has filed a status report on recovery of arms from "all sources" in the ethnic violence-hit state.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre and Manipur government, told a bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud the status report is for the "consumption" of judges only. On the issue raised before it that the CBI should be asked to give updates of the probe being conducted by the agency in 11 FIRs transferred to it in cases involving sexual violence against women and children in the state, the bench said it has already appointed "seasoned" IPS officer Dattatray Padsalgikar to supervise the investigation of criminal cases.

"Allow a little bit of time to the officer to take charge, monitor the situation and then we may ask for a status report," said the bench, also comprising Justices J B Par-

diwala and Manoj Misra.

The CJI said Padsalgikar, a former director general of police of Maharashtra had himself gone to Manipur to oversee the process. He is one of the most highly respected officers from Maharashtra, Chandrachud said.

In its August 7 order passed on a batch of pleas, including those seeking court-monitored probe into the cases of violence, besides measures for relief and rehabilitation, the apex court had appointed Padsalgikar to supervise the CBI investigations into the FIRs transferred to it as also the cases being handled by the state police agencies.

During the hearing on Friday, Mehta said he has placed before the court a report on recovery of weapons.

"That is for your lordships' consumption," he said. The solicitor general informed the bench about a short affidavit in the matter. (CONT'D. ON PAGE-9)

Man endangering passengers' life arrested

AGARTALA, Sept 22: Police have arrested the man who attempted to open an emergency door of a Guwahati-Agartala Indigo flight mid-air, endangering the lives of his co-passengers and crew members on board.

The accused, Biswajit Debath (41), hailing from West Tripura's Jirania, admitted that he suffered from depression and wanted to jump from the plane, police said on Friday. "Biswajit has been arrested for 'endangering the lives of hundreds of passengers' and getting into a scuffle with crew members on board, officer-in-charge of the Airport Police Station at Agartala, Abhijit Mandal told PTL. He will be produced before a court on Friday, Mandal said. "Biswajit has confessed that he suffers from depression and was trying to jump from the flight by opening the emergency door mid-air. We are investigating the matter," the police officer said. (PTI)

2 arrested, urea seized in UA

BOKAJAN, Sept 22: The police in Karbi Anglong arrested two youths and seized 300 bags of urea from a truck heading towards Nagaland.

The accused have been identified as Ranjan Bhujan (20), a resident of Titabor in Jorhat and Rokib Ali (27), a resident of Mokokchong in Nagaland.

The police recovered the urea during a routine checking of vehicles on National Highway 39 when it recovered the urea.

The truck, bearing the registration number 'AS 03 BC 8888' was carrying the urea hidden below a layer of bags of refined flour. The urea was being taken to Dimapur in Nagaland. Along with the urea 100 bags of refined flour was also seized.

The vehicle also did not have valid documents. Further investigations are on.

AFD team reviews of biodiversity conservation project

GUWAHATI, Sept 22: The French Development Agency (AFD) visited different national parks and wildlife sanctuaries in Assam to assess the progress made under the Assam Project on Forest and Biodiversity Conservation in the state. The team was on a six-day visit to the state from 11 September to 16 September.

The three-member AFD mission team, including Lise Brueli, country director, Akshita Sharma, Sector portfolio manager, biodiversity and Alice Jurgens Rios, project manager, South Asia, AFD, along with project director, Sandeep Kumar, IFS, PCCF Wildlife, visited different sites and interacted with the project beneficiaries around the Manas National Park, the Pobitora



Wildlife Sanctuary and the Nagaon forest division.

The project, which started in 2012, is now in its second phase with an inclusive vision that keeps local communities at the heart of

conserving wildlife, plants, and ecosystems.

The mission kicked off with a visit to the Manas National Park, where the team took stock of the different (CONT'D. ON PAGE-9)

Assam Guv takes stock of development activities

GUWAHATI, Sept 22: Assam Governor Gulab Chand Kataria took stock of the activities undertaken by the panchayat and rural development department in the presence of its state minister Ranjit Kumar Dass on Friday.

Principal Secretary of the department J.B. Ekka gave a detailed presentation of the activities and achievements of all the schemes of the department.

The Governor said, "In 28 districts of the state I have witnessed the progress achieved by the department in rural development. While some schemes made phenomenal progress, the success of others are not as comprehensive as they should be. Therefore, there should be more departmental intervention."

Speaking about PM Awas Yojana, the Governor asked the department to set time bound targets and try to achieve the targets for the benefits of the people.

With regard to the Amrit Brikshya Andolan, where the state made an emphatic record of planting one crore saplings of the tress having commercial value, the Governor asked the department to engage people under MGNREGA to look after the plants at least for one year until they grow to a certain height. He also asked the department to depute an officer who will be exclusively dedicated to monitoring the implementation of the schemes at the block level. Moreover, the Governor also asked the department to engage the workers under MGNREGA for (CONT'D. ON PAGE-9)

NIT-Silchar director meets students, assures action

SILCHAR, Sept 22: NIT-Silchar director, Dilip Kumar Baidya on Friday met the students who are on an indefinite hunger strike over the alleged suicide of the third-year boy in the college's hostel and promised them that their demands would be fulfilled within two days.

The meeting comes a day after 10 students, who were on hunger strike, had to be hospitalized as their health conditions deteriorated, and the condition of one turned critical. Baidya apologized to the students who have been protesting after the boy from Arunachal Pradesh was found dead last Friday for not meeting them earlier.

Meeting the students for more than an hour at the New Gallery of the institute, he urged them to withdraw from the hunger strike. The students, however, remained adamant, maintaining that the protest would continue till they get written assurances.

Among their demands is the resignation of dean of academics BK Roy, whom they blame for the suicide, and that no disciplinary action should be taken against the students for the protest.

Baidya told them that Roy has been temporarily re-

moved from the post, and will be removed permanently within the next two days.

"We apologize for not reaching out on time. We are ready to fulfill all the demands of the students within the next two days," he said. The students have been alleging that Roy had insulted the victim who got six backlogs in his first-semester examination, which was held in 2021.

Due to the lockdown, he was at his home in Arunachal Pradesh and failed to attend the online classes due to lack of internet connectivity, resulting in the backlog, they claimed.

He had appealed to the authorities to conduct a special examination so that he could clear the backlogs, but Roy allegedly insulted him. Following this incident, he locked himself in his room and later his body was found hanging, they said.

Before the meeting, in a notice, registrar KL Baishnab appealed to the students to call off the agitation and resume classes, and also warned that, otherwise, the authority will be constrained to close the college for an indefinite period (CONT'D. ON PAGE-9)

Botanists to explore Ayurvedic plant's role in local ecosystem

Therapeutic plant smilax turbans rediscovered in Kurung Kumey

ITANAGAR, Sept 22: The pristine forests of Arunachal Pradesh's Kurung Kumey district are now home to smilax turbans, a long-lost plant species akin to a well known Ayurvedic therapeutic plant.

Botanists have recently rediscovered the smilax turbans in the forests in Kurung Kumey, 500 km away from where it was last collected 95 years ago.

The plant, an endemic species of Arunachal Pradesh, is a wild counterpart of Chopchini, also known as smilax china, a well known Ayurvedic therapeutic plant, according to a report in the website of the department of science and technology.

It was last collected in 1928 by F Kingdon-Ward and the researchers presented detailed description, illustrations, microscopic images, distribution, phenology, field and comparisons with



closely related species after the rediscovery to facilitate its identification and eventual conservation.

The feat came during recent exploratory endeavours aimed at locating the wild relative of Chopchini (smilax

china) in the country.

Ritesh Kumar Choudhary, a leading scientist of the Pune-based Agharkar Research Institute and his doctoral student Geetika Sukhramani successfully identified the plant blooming in Kurung Kumey district. The information about the rediscovery was uploaded in the website.

According to the report, the rediscovery is not only a scientific milestone, but also holds immense ecological importance. The researchers will now explore the role of this native species in the local ecosystem and its interaction with other flora and fauna. The findings could potentially have implications for medicinal research as various smilax species have been known for their therapeutic properties in traditional medicine, it said. Chopchini possesses anti-inflammatory (CONT'D. ON PAGE-9)

Sensex, Nifty extend losses into 4th session; HDFC shares weigh

MUMBAI, Sept 22: Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty stayed on the back foot for the fourth straight session on Friday as investors offloaded health-care, consumer durable and commodity stocks amid a weak trend in global markets.

Foreign fund outflows and heavy selling in HDFC Bank shares also hit investor sentiments, traders said.

After oscillating nearly 500 points between gains and losses during the day, the 30-share BSE Sensex declined 221.09 points or 0.33 per cent to settle at 66,009.15. During the day, it hit a high of 66,445.47 and a low of 65,952.83.

The Nifty fell 68.10 points or 0.34 per cent to end at 19,674.25.

In the early trade, the benchmark indices had climbed after global financial firm J P Morgan said it plans to include Indian government bonds (IGBs) or government securities (G-Secs) into its Emerging Market index from next year, a move that will bring down borrowing cost for the government.

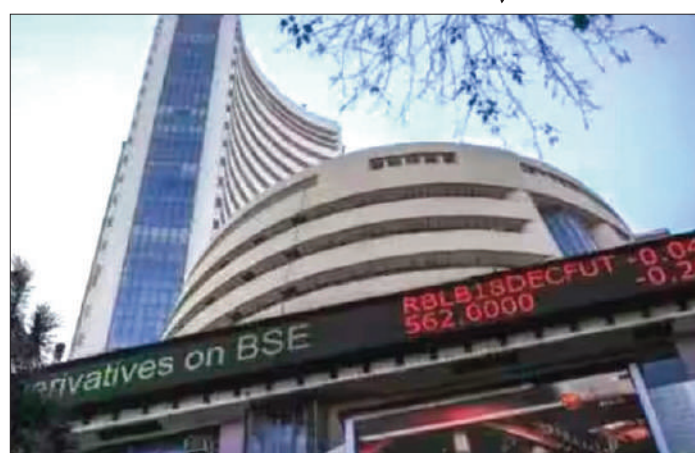
On a weekly basis, the BSE benchmark fell 1,829.48 points or 2.69 per cent, and the Nifty declined 518.1 points or 2.56 per cent.

"Domestic markets closed on a sombre note as mixed cues from US and Asian markets weakened domestic investors' confidence. Nevertheless, PSU bank stocks outperformed as India's inclusion in JP Morgan's government bond index led to a decline in bond yields.

"...risk-averse sentiment prevailed due to the ongoing ascent of US bond yields and concern over higher rates for a prolonged period," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

Wipro was the biggest loser among Sensex firms, sliding 2.32 per cent, followed by HDFC Bank, Power Grid, UltraTech Cement, ITC, ICICI Bank and Tata Motors. IndusInd Bank, Maruti, State Bank of India, Mahindra & Mahindra, Asian Paints and Bajaj Finserv were among the gainers.

In the broader market, the BSE



midcap gauge declined 0.14 per cent and smallcap index gained marginally by 0.04 per cent.

"Downward spiral continued in the markets despite recovery in other Asian peers, as investors booked profits for the 4th straight session after the recent upsurge.

"While Indian market valuations have become expensive, other bigger concerns like rising crude oil prices, firm US Dollar index and treasury yields coupled with con-

tinuous FII selling have been denting the sentiment," Amol Athawale, Vice President - Technical Research, Kotak Securities Ltd, said.

Among the indices, consumer durables fell by 0.84 per cent, realty declined by 0.73 per cent, commodities (0.62 per cent) and oil & gas (0.45 per cent).

Capital Goods, bankex, consumer discretionary and industrials were the gainers.

J P Morgan to add G-Secs to its emerging markets index from next year



NEW DELHI, Sept 22: Global financial firm J P Morgan has said that it plans to include Indian government bonds (IGBs) or government securities (G-Secs) into its benchmark Emerging Market index from next year, a move that will bring down borrowing cost for the government.

The inclusion of the IGBs will be staggered over a 10-month period from June 28, 2024 to March 31, 2025, indicating one per cent increment on its index weight.

"India's weight is expected to reach the maximum weight threshold of 10 per cent in the GBI-EM Global Diversified, and approximately 8.7 per cent in the GBI-EM Global index," J P Morgan said in a statement on Friday.

This would help attract higher foreign flows, as many overseas funds are mandated to track global indices. It will also help bring in large passive investments from overseas, as a result of which more domestic capital would be available for industry, as crowding out would be reduced. Commenting on the issue, Economic Affairs Secretary Ajay Seth said, "it is a welcome development showing confidence in the Indian Economy."

Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran said "we welcome this development. JP Morgan has made this decision on their own. It attests to the confidence that financial market participants and financial markets, in general, have on India's potential and growth prospects and its macroeconomic and fiscal policies. Just as long-term equity investors have been amply rewarded by investing in Indian markets, so will long-term investors in Indian government bonds be, Nageswaran added.

In her Budget speech for 2020-

21, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had said, "Certain specified categories of government securities would be opened fully for non-resident investors, apart from being available to domestic investors as well."

The specified securities, which will be listed on the indices, will not have a lock-in requirement.

This was long pending and there were certain issues including with regard to taxation, which the government has ironed out in the last many months.

Some of the experts openly expressed views that the gains from inclusion of IGBs to global indices are greater than the risks.

According to Axis Mutual Fund, passive trackers of the above indices hover at around USD 250 billion and the staggered approach implies an inflow of USD 1.5 - 2 billion per month in the 23 identified bonds.

"This flow is likely to boost India's profile on the world stage and further strengthen local fundamentals. We believe the RBI could conduct sterilization operations during this inclusion period buffering Forex reserves and the currency," it said.

"This JP Morgan index is USD 240 billion and India will be 10 per cent of it, which means USD 24 billion. This will reset the base rate for India and the yield should come down sharply. India's cost of borrowing will come down," said AUM Capital National Head-Wealth Mukesh Kochar. Since Covid, the fiscal deficit in India has remained elevated due to higher borrowing, Kochar said, adding this event will ease borrowing pressure as a large part of the borrowing will be observed by this route and banks' Treasury will be flushed with mark-to-market gains. (PTI)

Tea trade unions seek 20 pc bonus; planters ask them to reconsider demand

KOLKATA, Sept 22: Trade unions sought a 20 per cent bonus for tea garden workers in Dooars and Terai of West Bengal, while planters' bodies asked them to reconsider their demand because of financially stressed estates in the region, officials said.

A meeting between the constituent bodies of the West Bengal Consultative Committee of Plantation Associations (CCPA) and operating trade unions of tea gardens was held here on Thursday to decide on the rate of bonus for 3.5 lakh tea workers of Dooars and Terai for the 2022-23 financial year.

"The meeting was held in a cordial atmosphere where both sides presented their views. While the unions have demanded payment of bonus at 20 per cent, the CCPA has made a plea to them to reconsider their position in recognition of the present financially stressed condition of the tea industry," the plantation associations' committee said in a statement.

Asked about the meeting, Joint Forum of Trade Unions convenor Zia-ul-Alam said that CCPA expressed their difficulties in progressing on negotiations during

Thursday's meeting.

"They started from 8.33 per cent and made an offer of 8.50 per cent as the base rate across the group," Alam claimed.

Planters' bodies could not be reached for their comment.

"They asked unions for a substantial reduction from 20 per cent," said the official of the umbrella organisation of trade unions working in the tea sector.

From the very beginning of the negotiations, participating representatives of unions unitedly stood for a 20 per cent base rate with flexible considerations for the financially stressed gardens, Alam said.

He claimed most of the gardens in the Dooars and Terai region had "offered a 20 per cent bonus to their workers for FY22 (2021-22), and some of the estates could not pay that much because of their deteriorating financial conditions."

The meeting for bonus negotiations was adjourned, the CCPA said. It added that the next round of the meeting is scheduled to take place in the first week of October. A separate meeting for the annual bonus of workers of Darjeeling tea gardens was held recently. (PTI)

Sterlite Power acquires Beawar Transmission to develop power project in Rajasthan

NEW DELHI, Sept 22: Sterlite Power on Friday said it has acquired Beawar Transmission Ltd for developing an electricity transmission project in Rajasthan.

Beawar Transmission is a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) of REC Power Development and Consultancy Ltd.

The SPV was awarded to Sterlite Power through tariff-based competitive bidding in August, a company statement said.

"Sterlite Power announces the acquisition of Beawar Transmission Ltd from REC Power Development and Consultancy Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of REC Ltd," it said.

The company did not share the financial details of the acquisition.

Through the Beawar Transmission Ltd, the company will build the Green Energy Corridor project on Build, Own, Operate, Transfer (BOOT) basis, for a period of 35 years, as per the statement.

This is Sterlite Power's 19th power transmission project in India acquired through tariff-based competitive bidding, the company said, adding that it now has ₹ 12,000 crore worth of projects under management.

"Sterlite Power is proud to be building the green energy corridor that will enable the flow of 20 GW of renewable energy," Sterlite Power Managing Director Pratik Agarwal said in the statement.

The Beawar Transmission will entail construction of three integral components. Initially, a 350 km 765kV transmission corridor connecting the renewable energy zone of Fatehgarh III to the substation at Beawar will be developed.



Then, a 3,000 MVA 765/400kV Substation at Beawar will be constructed and finally, there will be construction of two LILLO lines, covering approximately 120 km.

In March, the Sterlite Power won Part G Phase III of the project, titled Fatehgarh III Beawar Transmission Ltd. With the completion of both parts F and G, the transmission line will be among the largest green energy corridors in the country. Sterlite Power is a leading private sector power transmission infrastructure developer and solutions provider with a robust portfolio of 32 completed, sold and under-construction projects covering about 15,350 circuit km of transmission lines across India and Brazil. (PTI)

Suzlon Group secures 29.4 MW wind capacity order from BrightNight

NEW DELHI, Sept 22: Suzlon Group on Friday said it has secured a new order to install 29.4 MW wind capacity from BrightNight in Maharashtra.

The capacity is a part of BrightNight's 100 MW wind-solar hybrid project in Osmanabad in Maharashtra, Suzlon Group said in a statement.

"Suzlon will install 14 units of S120 -140m wind turbine generators with a hybrid lattice tubular tower and a rated capacity of 2.1 MW each," it said without disclosing the order value.

The project is expected to be commissioned in phases, beginning April 2024, and curb 2.5 lakh tonnes of CO2 emissions per year, it added.

Suzlon will execute the project with a scope of supply, installation, and commissioning. Additionally,

Suzlon will offer post-commissioning operation and maintenance services.

JP Chalasani, Chief Executive Officer, Suzlon Group said, the power generated from this project will target the Commercial and Industrial (C&I) customer segment, creating deeper penetration of renewable energy in India.

Pune-based Suzlon Group is one of the leading renewable energy solutions providers in the world with more than 20 GW of wind energy capacity installed across 17 countries.

BrightNight is a global, independent power producer with a 38 gigawatt (GW) portfolio. The company works with customers across the US and Asia Pacific to design, develop, and operate safe, reliable, custom built, large-scale renewable power projects. (PTI)

Rupee rises 19 paise to close at 82.94 against US dollar

NEW DELHI, Sept 22: The rupee appreciated 19 paise to 82.94 (provisional) against the US dollar on Friday, as the inclusion of India in the JPMorgan bond index boosted investor sentiment.

Forex traders said the decision of JPMorgan Chase & Co to include Indian government bonds in its benchmark emerging market index is expected to have far-reaching implications for India's debt market and global investors.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 82.75 against the US dollar and touched the lowest level of 82.97 in the day trade.

The rupee finally settled 19 paise higher at 82.94 (provisional) against the previous close. On Thursday, the rupee settled at 83.13 against the US dollar.

India's inclusion in a major global bond index will open doors

to increased foreign investment in the nation's debt market, traders said. Analysts expect India's inclusion in a major global bond index will lead to a direct inflow of USD 20-25 billion in the debt over the 18-21 months.

"The Indian rupee outperformed in the week gone and rebounded after three weeks of downfall after India's bond inclusion in the Global Bond Index. Though the inflows will come next year, the sentimental impact has been seen on the local rupee," Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst, HDFC Securities, said. The impact of the announcement may not be sustainable amid a rally in the greenback and foreign fund outflows from domestic equities amid a surge in the short-term US bond yields. In the near-term, spot USDINR is likely to trade in the range of 83.15 to 82.60, Parmar added. (PTI)

BMW Golf Cup 2023 India chapter concludes

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Sept 22: The BMW Golf Cup 2023 national finals concluded at the DLF Golf and Country Club, Gurugram, marking the end of the prestigious amateur golf tournament's India chapter. The event saw 39 regional tournament winners compete in the grand finale.

The national final winners, Arhaan Nanda, Akshay Ojha, and Oona Khanna, will proudly represent India at the World Final of the BMW Golf Cup, scheduled to be held in South Africa.

Vikram Pawah, president of BMW Group India, commented, "The BMW Golf Cup has been around for more than a decade and remains young and attractive for our customers and prospects. This competition inspires many golf aficionados across the country, making it the perfect fit for our customer-centric engagements. We congratulate all the winners on their success and wish them the best of the golf experience at the 'World Final' of BMW Golf Cup in South Africa."

The exclusive, invitation-only BMW Golf Cup 2023 was held across 12 cities and 15 tournaments on India's finest golf courses. Over 1500 amateur golfers participated in 2023. The winners from these regional tournaments competed in the National Final of the BMW Golf Cup 2023.

India is one of 50 participating countries at the World Final of BMW Golf Cup 2021, which is a global series featuring 1,000 qualifying tournaments involving 100,000 players. The BMW Golf Cup is an amateur golf tournament series designed for customers, prospects, and opinion leaders and provides the right mix for exclusive social interaction.

The BMW Golf Cup has three categories: A (for handicaps up to 12), B (for handicaps 13 - 28), and ladies category (for handicaps up to 28). The winners, runners-up, and second runners-up of the individual handicap categories qualify for the National Final.

Lions Haat Bazaar 2.0 to start from today

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Sept 22: A remarkable initiative, 'Lions Haat Bazaar 2.0', is set to make history in North East India as it returns for its second edition at Sonaram Field in Guwahati on September 23 and 24. This project involves collecting old and new clothes and household items through a drive conducted by various Lions Clubs. These collected items are then cleaned, sorted by size and category, and made available for sale to disadvantaged individuals using free coupons.

Chairman of Lions Haat Bazaar-2.0, Bijay Harlalka, shared that free coupons worth Rs 2,000 each have been distributed to approximately 5,000 poor and needy people for this purpose. Beneficiaries can simply visit the venue and use their coupons to purchase items of their choice, ensuring that the donation process maintains dignity. The event is expected to benefit over 10,000 individuals, who will also receive free food through the Feed the Hunger program, organised by the Lions Club of Guwahati Umang. Furthermore, a free

health checkup camp will be held at the venue in collaboration with Marwari Hospitals and Lions Eye Hospital. VDG 2 Seema Goenka, who leads the Lions Haat Bazaar initiative, highlighted that all 21 Lions Clubs in Guwahati have come together for the second time to serve the needy in such a dignified manner. The project has garnered significant contributions of old and new household items from various parts of the city, and public enthusiasm for this unique endeavour has been substantial, according to VDG 2 Pankaj Poddar. The project's inauguration will be conducted by Lions 322 multiple GST coordinator Raj Kumar Agarwal and district governor 322G Nirmal Kumar Bhura, with the presence of PDGs and other distinguished individuals. Lions PDG Sudhir Choudhary, senior member Manoj Bhajanka, district GST coordinator Dilip Sarad expressed their gratitude for the support and cooperation received from Guwahati's Lions Clubs to ensure the project's success. A similar program was organised in 2019 and proved to be a resounding success.

NEW YORK, Sept 22: Shares in Europe were mostly lower Friday after mixed trading in Asia following a broad retreat on Wall Street driven by worries over interest rates. Germany's DAX shed 0.3 per cent to 15,526.55 and the CAC 40 in Paris sank 0.7 per cent to 7,163.97. Britain's FTSE 100 was up 0.3 per cent, at 7,702.08.

The future for the S and P 500 edged 0.1 per cent higher while that for the Dow industrials was virtually unchanged. On Thursday, the S and P 500 lost 1.6 per cent for its worst day since March. The Dow Jones Industrial Average dropped 1.1 per cent and the Nasdaq composite lost 1.8 per cent.

Shares in Chinese markets surged late Friday, with Hong Kong's benchmark up more than 2 per cent following a report by Bloomberg saying that regulators are considering lifting limits on share ownership by foreigners.

The report cited unnamed people "familiar with the matter" who said Beijing is considering relaxing rules that cap foreign ownership in domestic publicly traded firms to help

lure investors to the local market. The report could not be immediately confirmed. Local media cited the Bloomberg report, which comes as capital outflows have increased amid uncertainty over the outlook for the Chinese economy and for foreign investment in the communist-ruled country.

Meanwhile, the Chinese central bank issued a list of 10 "systemically important" banks, including the biggest state run banks, and said it would step up supervision

of those financial institutions.

The Hang Seng in Hong Kong gained 2.3 per cent to 18,057.45 while the Shanghai Composite index advanced 1.6 per cent, to 3,132.43. Tokyo's Nikkei 225 fell 0.5 per cent to 32,402.41 as Japan's central bank kept its benchmark interest rate at minus 0.1 per cent, as expected. In a statement, it pledged flexibility in its policies.

"Japan's economy is likely to continue recovering moderately for the time being, supported by

factors such as the materialisation of pent-up demand" after the pandemic, the Bank of Japan said in a policy statement.

It forecast that even though inflation has surpassed its 2 per cent target, it is likely to subside. That suggests the central bank is still wary of falling back into deflation, or chronically falling prices that can sap economic growth.

In Seoul, the Kospi shed 0.3 per cent to 2,508.13. Australia's S and P/ASX 200 slipped 0.2 per cent to 7,049.20 even as the government reported a USD 14.2 billion budget surplus for the last fiscal year.

It was the first time the nation's books were balanced in 15 years, with officials citing low unemployment and high prices for the country's commodities, including iron ore, coal and gas. On Thursday, Wall Street fell sharply in an ugly day for stocks worldwide.

That followed a drop of 0.9 per cent from Wednesday after the Federal Reserve indicated it may cut interest rates next year by just half of what it had earlier predicted. The Fed has already hiked

its main interest rate to levels unseen since 2001, which helps slow inflation but at the cost of hurting investment prices.

High-growth stocks are typically among the hardest hit by high rates, and Big Tech stocks took the brunt of the pain for a second straight day. Amazon fell 4.4 per cent, Nvidia dropped 2.9 per cent and Tesla lost 2.6 per cent.

Cisco Systems also took a hit after it said it would buy Splunk, a cybersecurity company, for roughly USD 28 billion in cash. Cisco fell 3.9 per cent, while Splunk jumped 20.8 per cent.

On the winning side of Wall Street, FedEx rose 4.5 per cent after it reported stronger profit for the latest quarter than analysts expected. Stock prices tend to fall when rates rise because stocks are riskier investments. Why chance their big swings when Treasuries are paying higher interest?

In other trading Friday, US benchmark crude oil gained 58 cents to USD 90.21 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. (AP)

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MANIPUR VIOLENCE

Five arrested village defence volunteers released on bail



IMPHAL, Sept 22: A special court in Manipur on Friday granted bail to the five village defence volunteers who were arrested by police for possessing weapons amid an agitation for their release, officials said.

They were released on bail after furnishing a PR bond of ₹ 50,000 with certain conditions, they said.

In its order, the court said the five accused "shall co-operate with the investigation", make themselves available before the investigating authorities and "not influence prosecution witnesses."

The court also directed the youths "not to leave the state of Manipur without its prior permission."

Rejecting the remand prayer of Manipur police for judicial custody, the court said, "all the accused persons have not yet

committed any prejudicial activities against the state till the time of the arrest."

Defying curfew restrictions, hundreds of women sat in front of the Cheirap court premises in Imphal West district, where the hearing was held demanding the release of the five youths.

The state had witnessed widespread clashes between security forces and protesters on Thursday after demonstrators attempted to storm police stations as part of "court arrest agitation" over government's failure to release the five youths.

The five were arrested by Manipur Police on September 16 for possession of weapons and donning camouflage uniforms. They were later produced before the judicial magistrate in Imphal East which remanded them to police custody till Friday. (PTI)

Situation in two Imphal districts tense but normal

IMPHAL, Sept 22: The situation on Friday in the twin districts of Imphal East and West where curfew was imposed a day before, remained tense but normal.

Curfew was imposed on Thursday after protesters stormed police stations demanding the release of five youths who had earlier been arrested for carrying sophisticated weapons and wearing camouflage uniforms similar to army fatigues.

More than 30 people, mostly women, received minor injuries after they attempted to storm police stations at Porompat and Heingang in Imphal East district and Singjamei and Kwakeithel in Imphal West district prompting security forces including RAF

personnel to fire several rounds of tear gas shells.

The Imphal East and Imphal West district authorities have, however, exempted officials of the municipality, electricity, health, PHED, media persons and flight passengers going to the airport from the purview of the curfew.

However, curfew was relaxed in the rest of Imphal valley comprising of Thoubal, Kakching and Bishnupur districts to facilitate the general public to purchase essential items including medicines and food items.

In Thoubal district curfew has been relaxed from 5 am to 9 pm and in Bishnupur from 5 am to 5 pm. (PTI)

₹ 16 lakh spl package for waste collection, drainage clearance in Dimapur

'₹ 14 lakh has been allotted for acquisition of a waste collection trucks and ₹ 2 lakh for drainage clearance activities'

HT Correspondent
DIMAPUR, Sept 22: Amid rising cases of dengue and perennial water logging woes in Dimapur, the Dimapur District Planning and Development Board (DPDB), under the MLA Common Pool, allocated a special package of ₹ 16 lakh to the Dimapur Municipal Council (DMC) for acquisition of waste collection truck and drainage clearance.

Of this, ₹ 14 lakh has been allotted for acquisition of a waste collection trucks and ₹ 2 lakh for drainage clearance activities.

Longkumer, who is also the DPDB chairman, said a sum of ₹ 10 lakh is collected from each MLA's Local Area Development Programme (LADP) fund for developmental and maintenance activities in the district annually.

Longkumer said ₹ 1 lakh was allocated

previously to the Dimapur revenue officer for surveying clogged drainage and land encroachments.

DMC administrator W Manpai Phom said the allocation was approved at the DPDB meeting on September 19.

Phom said the board also approved the implementation of a roster involving use of smaller vehicles for segregated waste collection multiple times a day to ensure that a clean Dimapur throughout the day.

Meanwhile, in the backdrop of hospitals in Dimapur being overwhelmed by people with dengue-like symptoms, health and family welfare minister P Paiwang Konyak held a meeting with doctors, officials and the media at Dimapur district hospital on Thursday.

Konyak said the state government is



aware of the dengue upswing, especially in Dimapur and Mon. However, he added that the situation has not yet reached epidemic proportion.

Saying that the recent surge in dengue cases in Dimapur is not alarming, the minister urged the public not to panic.

Konyak also said the situation in Dimapur did not warrant dengue to be declared as an epidemic.

Referring to the recent data analysis collected from various hospitals, he said out of 100, around 70% exhibited mild fever with dengue-like symptoms while only about 30% were confirmed dengue cases.

Konyak said out of the 30% dengue positive cases, only two to three cases were classified as severe, necessitating blood transfusion.

Meghalaya spent over ₹ 22 crore to 124 consultants: CM

SHILLONG, Sept 22: Meghalaya government has spent over ₹ 22.56 crore for 124 consultants appointed for different departments, chief minister Conrad K Sangma said on Friday. He was replying to a query raised by TMC MLA Miani D Shira in the Assembly.

Sangma said 59 consultants have been appointed specifically for externally aided projects (EAPs).

He said the consultants are technical experts, who are brought into the system on a task basis. They are engaged mainly for the centrally sponsored schemes (CSS) and EAPs. In both the categories, the consultants are mandated by the guidelines, he added. He said there are certain cases where the consultants are also empanelled and they can be used by different departments. Citing the Unity Mall project as an example, the chief minister said ₹ 130 crore was sanctioned for Meghalaya.

"We are among the three states in the country that have been able to do it within 6 months. This is because we were able to get expert advice," he said adding, "The government of India and EAPs have mandated the services of the consultants which are very highly technical."

'Availability of internet services in some areas of Churachandpur and adjoining Bishnupur district'

Manipur govt serves show cause notice to private telecom company



IMPHAL, Sept 22: The Manipur government has served a show cause notice to a private telecom company over the availability "of internet data services in mobile phones in some areas of Churachandpur and adjoining Bishnupur district on September 20" while the suspension of mobile

data service is still in force, an official said.

Commissioner (Home) T Ranjit Singh, in a letter to Ashish Bansal, chief technical officer, Airtel, Imphal on Thursday remarked it is "a serious lapse on the part of service provider and this lapse might have led to the dissemination of inflammatory and provocative clips and messages in various social media platforms leading to communal tension, hatred and rumours," the official said.

The letter said, "Considering the very sensitive and volatile law and order situation currently prevailing in the state, the aforesaid lapses have been viewed very seriously by the state government, and this amounts to violation of the government orders."

The state government has asked Airtel to give a written explanation of its lapses by Friday. The state government also sought to know "who are responsible officers for such act" and "explanation as to why appropriate legal action should not be taken against Airtel for violation of government orders." (PTI)

Spiritual leader Kabita Behen passes away in Tripura

AGARTALA, Sept 22: Kabita Devi, the in-charge of Prajapita Brahma Kumari Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya in Tripura and Bangladesh, died here on Friday. She was 55.

Kabita Devi, popularly known as Kabita Behen, was suffering liver ailments for the past few years, officials said.

"She was admitted to a private hospital here last week after her condition deteriorated. She breathed her last on Friday," Dipak Upadhyay, brother of the deceased, told PTI.

Born in Assam's Tezpur, she established the school in Agartala in 1995 and remained engaged in spiritual activities till her death.

Chief Minister Manik Saha visited the Prajapita Brahma Kumari Ishwariya Ashram at Aralia, on the outskirts of the city, to pay his last respects. "I am shocked to hear the demise of Kavita Devi. Let her soul rest in peace. Om Shanti," the chief minister said in a Facebook post.

Former chief minister Manik Sarkar accompanied by his wife also rushed to Aralia to pay floral tributes to the departed soul. (PTI)



Government of Assam

Ceremonial Distribution of Relief under Assam Microfinance Incentive and Relief Scheme (AMFIRS), 2021 Category - III



Assam Microfinance Incentive and Relief Scheme, 2021

- First of its kind scheme in the country.
- Objective is to give relief to eligible borrowers who have availed small loans from different microfinance lending institutions and banks in Assam.
- Borrowers, whose accounts have become NPA as on 31 March 2021, will be covered under Category-III.
- Borrowers having NPA with outstanding principal amount upto ₹25,000 will be prioritised.

Venue: Chief Minister's Conference Hall, CM Block, Janata Bhawan, Dispur
Date: 23 September 2023

Chief Guest
Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma
Chief Minister, Assam

Guest of Honour
Smti. Ajanta Neog
Minister, Finance, Women & Child Development, Assam

Benefits already disbursed

- Under Category-I, more than 8 lakh borrowers have received incentives worth ₹1,600 cr.
- Under Category-II, more than 1 lakh borrowers have received relief worth ₹190 cr.



Under Category-III, with financial aid worth ₹291.00 cr, from the government, 2.22 lakh borrowers in Assam will receive "No Dues Certificate" from lenders.

A huge financial burden will be taken off poor Microfinance loan borrowers by the Government, making them credit-worthy again

FINANCE DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM

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QUOTE OF THE DAY

The trouble with the rat race is that even if you win, you're still a rat. - Lily Tomlin

Khalistan movement: Unrest in Canada

Canada has found itself in the midst of escalating tensions surrounding the Khalistan movement, which seeks an independent Sikh state in Punjab. Recent events have thrust this issue into the spotlight, particularly allegations of India's involvement in the assassination of prominent Sikh separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar in British Columbia, a Canadian province on the west coast. In a speech to Canada's Parliament on Monday, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau acknowledged "credible claims" suggesting Indian agents' involvement in Nijjar's June killing. Nijjar, the chief of the 'Khalistan Tiger Force,' had been a vocal advocate for the Khalistan movement within Canada's Sikh community. India vehemently denied these accusations, further deepening the rift. The current accusations are the culmination of decades of developments that have drawn Canada into the Khalistan conflict. These tensions escalated recently when Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, the leader of the banned outfit Sikhs for Justice (SFJ), issued threats against Hindus in Canada and Indian diplomatic missions in Ottawa, Toronto, and Vancouver. Pannun's aggressive rhetoric included declarations of "Death to India" and plans for a Khalistan state referendum in Canada on October 29, 2023. Pannun, who referred to Nijjar as his 'brother,' has also alleged the involvement of the Indian High Commissioner to Canada, Sanjay Verma, in Nijjar's killing. Sikhs for Justice has repeatedly called for the expulsion of the high commissioner and some diplomats, even issuing "death threat" posters against them.

To understand Canada's involvement in the Khalistan issue, it's crucial to delve into history. During the 1900s, the first wave of Sikh migrants, primarily men, moved to Canada to work as laborers in British Columbia and in Ontario's manufacturing sector. The India-Pakistan Partition in 1947 played a significant role in encouraging Sikhs from Punjab to leave their homeland. Canada's appeal stemmed from its "shared values and principles," including a focus on "humanity" and "equality." Canada now hosts the largest Sikh community outside India, with approximately 770,000 Sikhs identifying as such in the 2021 census. Despite Canada's smaller overall population, Sikhs make up 2.1% of the population, compared to 1.7% in India. Neilesh Bose, an associate professor at the University of Victoria, highlights that Sikhs constitute a significant segment of the South Asian community in Canada, amplifying their influence on Canadian perceptions of South Asia.

In today's Canada, Sikhs hold notable positions in society and politics. Jagmeet Singh, leader of the New Democratic Party, is Sikh and has been vocal about Sikh issues in India. Trudeau appointed four Sikh individuals to his Cabinet in 2015, surpassing India's count at the time. It's important to emphasize that not all Sikhs in Canada support the separatist movement, and not all Khalistan advocates endorse extremist methods. Senior Sikh leaders must intervene to ensure that relations between Canadian Hindus and Sikhs remain harmonious and in the interests of the Indian people as a whole. The complex landscape of Canada's involvement in the Khalistan issue calls for a delicate balance of diplomacy and understanding.

The India-Canada saga: A bilateral drama takes center stage on the global arena

The assertion made by Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, implicating Indian intelligence in the killing of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a designated terrorist in India, on Canadian soil, has triggered a severe strain in bilateral relations. Trudeau characterized the alleged act as an "unacceptable violation of our sovereignty" and responded by expelling an Indian diplomat. In retaliation, India expelled a Canadian diplomat and dismissed the charges as "absurd." The stage is now set for a potential worsening of relations, with the risk of further escalation looming.

The persistence of the Khalistan movement within the Sikh diaspora has long posed challenges to India's relations with Western countries. However, the situation took a sharp turn following the 2020-21 farmers' protests, resulting in a series of surreal events. These events ranged from the sudden arrival and subsequent arrest of Sikh radical Amritpal Singh Sandhu in Punjab in April, to violent protests at Indian diplomatic missions in various Western capitals. These incidents were followed by a sequence of almost simultaneous killings of Khalistan militants in Pakistan and Canada, along with the mysterious death of another individual in the United Kingdom (UK).

Canada has attributed one of these killings to India. The covert nature of these backstage operations makes them difficult to trace and assess for obvious reasons. However, Canada's decision to elevate this issue to the diplomatic forefront, similar to how London responded when the Russian dissident Sergei Skripal was poisoned, raises significant questions.

Firstly, the question arises: why did this happen? While it may be tempting to attribute it solely to Trudeau's efforts to appease the Canadian Sikh "vote-bank," such an explanation is logical but ultimately insufficient. There are deeper and more complex structural factors at play here, with far-reaching implications in the long term. Secondly, what lies ahead? The ongoing investigation and the possibility of a public inquiry suggest that a protracted and challenging road lies ahead for all parties involved.

To grasp the rationale behind Ottawa's decision, it's essential to delve into the



signaling and the deeper political factors underpinning this bilateral rupture. If Ottawa's allegations prove to be accurate, this would mark a potentially unprecedented instance of covert assassination by Indian intelligence on Western soil. The manner in which it was carried out, with the target being shot by unidentified assailants, suggests minimal effort was made to conceal the operation's origins. In this context, India's message to Canada is crystal clear: if you do not take action against Khalistan militants or downplay our security concerns, we will take matters into our own hands. Undoubtedly, this development has elicited jubilation among many in India.

However, Ottawa's countermesssage carries significant weight. It's important to note that Ottawa's primary allies are not New Delhi, but its Five-Eyes allies, which include Australia, New Zealand, the UK, and the US. By taking this stance, Canada is not just aiming to discourage India from employing similar tactics in the future; it is also signaling to its allies that there are boundaries to the West's alignment with India. It would be erroneous to assume that India will not face consequences, especially considering the somewhat muted responses from other Western countries, many of which are investing in India as part of their strategy to counterbalance China. Canada's decision to make these allegations public has emboldened a substantial group of unspoken

India skeptics within the corridors of Western power. Furthermore, India's response to Canada's allegations is exacerbating these concerns rather than mitigating them.

Pointing out Canada's potential hypocrisy, in light of the West's extensive history of intervention for authoritarian regimes, and its robust global covert operations network, is undeniably accurate but may prove futile. Under the leadership of Trudeau, Ottawa has chosen to leverage this incident to highlight the stark contrast in value systems between a conservative India and Western liberals grappling with their own challenges.

This inherent political mismatch, often downplayed for strategic reasons, is greasing the wheels of this collision. It elucidates why the Western nations do not share India's perspective on this matter, viewing New Delhi's concerns as an exercise in exaggerating threats. While it's uncertain whether Washington DC or London will actively support Ottawa in keeping India at arm's length, the political ramifications of Ottawa's front-and-center actions will resonate far and wide. The heightened Western sensitivity surrounding foreign interference in their domestic politics poses the risk of India being lumped together with China and Russia, potentially constraining New Delhi's strategic maneuvering space in the future. Even if conservative parties gain prominence in the West, which may be seen by

some in India as a solution to this impasse, it might not completely mitigate the accruing reputational and diplomatic damage.

This leads us to the second question: what comes next? With his position now entrenched, Trudeau has little recourse but to substantiate his allegations with concrete evidence. Given the meticulous approach taken by Ottawa so far, the likelihood of Canada producing compelling evidence cannot be discounted. However, the nature of this evidence, its presentation, and its intended audience all remain uncertain. In an ideal scenario, the United States could act as a discreet mediator, facilitating a behind-the-scenes agreement, crafting dignified exit strategies for both parties, and helping to diminish the prominence of the Khalistan issue. This would not only apply to Canada but also to the UK, Australia, and New Zealand.

However, if this doesn't materialize, Ottawa has two potential courses of action. It could opt for the release of evidence through a formal public inquiry, a move that could constrain even those conservative Canadian politicians advocating for stronger ties with India. Alternatively, Ottawa might employ a "media drip" strategy, similar to what Ankara did concerning Riyadh when unveiling the bungled Saudi operation involving the assassination of Jamal Khashoggi, a critic of the regime, in Istanbul. Turkey strategically leaked fragments of evidence to the media, effectively tarnishing the global image of the crown prince irreversibly. If Canada chooses the second option, the potential reputational toll on New Delhi could be exceedingly high. It has the potential to shatter the perception that India is akin to the new Israel, not due to any inability to carry out untraceable covert operations (as it certainly can), but because its alignment with the West has inherent limitations, even at its highest point. It's important to recognize that under such circumstances, India is likely to remain resolute, with its media countering negative international coverage, and Opposition parties rallying in support of the national interest. *(The writer can be reached at dipaknewslive@gmail.com)*

Havana declaration of G77+ China summit is a charter of global South in this decade

By: Satyaki Chakraborty

Just four days after the holding of the G 20 summit in New Delhi on September 9 and 10 this year, the G77+ China held its historic summit in Havana on September 15 and 16 and came out with its Havana Declaration which was an unequivocal charter of action for the Global South within the United Nations.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi hosted the G20 summit and the Government of India as also the ruling party BJP went the whole hog by claiming that the Summit was a tremendous success. Indian PM worked hard for bringing consensus on the Delhi Declaration and it goes to his credit that finally, an unanimous statement was possible. Another positive thing was the admission of the African Union as the new member of the G-20. Next year at the summit in Brazil, it will be G 21.

But whatever gains India made at the Delhi summit, especially the inclusion of the AU as the new member lost its impact by the time the Havana summit of G-77+ China attended by more than one hundred countries ended on September 16. India was not represented neither by the Prime Minister nor the External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar. A senior official of the EAM represented India at the high profile summit which was attended mostly by the head of the states PM was supposed to be busy preparing for the Special session of Parliament, but what about the Foreign Minister? He could have attended the summit and still could have comfortably been present at the Special session which began on September 18.

The net result was that the impression gained ground among the African and the Latin American countries that India which pioneered the non aligned movement and gave direction to G77 in earlier, has lost interest in the future of this grouping and is now focusing more on improving relations with the western nations like USA, UK, and others. Indian PM or EAM could have met with the new generation of head of states who have taken over in some of the Latin



American countries promising a bright future for their people. Colombian president Gustavo Petro was there while the Brazilian president Lula da Silva took a leading part in the deliberations.

The Havana declaration says "We stress the urgent need for a comprehensive reform of the international financial architecture and a more inclusive and coordinated approach to global financial governance, with greater emphasis on cooperation between countries, notably by increasing the representation of developing countries in global decision-making and policy-making bodies that will contribute to increasing the capacities of developing countries to access and develop science, technology and innovation". The text also criticizes digital monopolies and other unfair practices that hinder the technological development of the developing countries.

The Declaration also attacks "sanctions" and "coercive economic actions" against developing countries. "We emphasize that such actions not only undermine the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter and international law, but also seriously impede the advancement of science, technology and innovation and the full realization of economic and social development, particularly in developing countries."

Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel stressed at the opening of the summit that one of the aims of the event was to seek common positions so that the countries of the Global South could take their demands to other international forums. On the same day, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres pointed out that "global systems and structures have failed" the countries of the Global South.

President Lula on September 16 criticized the sanctions imposed by the United States

against Cuba, defended the reformulation of the global governance system and also questioned technology companies. "It is particularly significant that, at this time of great geopolitical transformations, this summit is being held here in Havana. Cuba has been an advocate of fairer global governance and is even the victim of an illegal economic embargo. Brazil is against any unilateral coercive measure. We reject Cuba's inclusion on the list of states that sponsor terrorism," said the Brazilian head of state.

At the start of his inaugural speech, the Cuban president emphasized the importance of the group, which currently has 134 members: "Today we are two-thirds of the UN's members, home to 80% of the world's population," he said.

Diaz-Canel also paid tribute to former Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez, recalling that he used to say that "we presidents go from summit to summit, while the peoples go from abyss to abyss." He called for joint efforts to coordinate joint actions between the countries of the global South in order to "change the rules of the game" and achieve the "pending democratization of the system of international relations".

"It is the peoples of the South who suffer most from poverty, hunger, misery, deaths from curable diseases, illiteracy, human displacement and other consequences of underdevelopment," said Diaz-Canel. He described the international economic order as "unjust and ecologically unsustainable".

Diaz-Canel questioned the international patent system and made a special complaint about international military spending and the irrationality of the fact that these resources cannot be used to improve the living conditions of the majority. "Estimates indicate that 9% of world military spending could finance

adaptation to climate change in 10 years, and 7% would be enough to cover the cost of universal vaccination against the pandemic," he estimated.

In the opening speech of UN Secretary General Guterres, he started by saying that the countries of the Global South are "caught in a web of global crises". "Poverty is increasing and hunger is growing. Prices are rising, debt is exorbitant and climate disasters are becoming more frequent," said Guterres. "Global systems and structures have failed them," adding that "the conclusion is clear: the world is failing developing countries."

The UN Secretary-General noted that in recent decades, the G77 countries and China "have lifted hundreds of millions of people out of poverty and have come together in the United Nations in search of global solutions and solidarity."

"To change this, we need action at the national level to ensure good governance, mobilize resources, and prioritize sustainable development. And we need action at the global level that respects national ownership, with the aim of building an international system that defends human rights and looks after the common interest," he said. In this sense, Guterres recognized that "many current global institutions reflect a bygone era." He highlighted the need to update the UN Security Council, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.

The G77+ China summit has assumed special importance in view of the move by the Letean Latin American governments to collaborate effectively for bringing synergy in the utilization of their natural resources. Mexico and Brazil are the leading countries pioneering this move and now Columbia, Honduras and Chile have joined the move with full efforts. These Latin American nations are looking to replace their existing developers from the western countries.

India has got the appropriate technology to assist the development programme of these LA nations. That way, India lost a good opportunity for economic interaction. It is imperative that the Indian policy makers give due attention to the building better relationship with the G77 nations. *(IPA Service)*

Nijjar murder has similarities with assassination of Saudi journo Khashoggi

By: K Raveendran

The pace at which the India-Canada diplomatic row is deteriorating, manifesting in tit for tat diplomatic expulsions, suggests that Khalistan activist Hardeep Singh Nijjar's killing may be an action replay of the murder of Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi, a Saudi-born critic of the Saudi royal family, particularly crown prince Mohammed bin Salman, which soured US-Saudi relations even more than the alleged involvement of Saudi elements in the dastardly 11/9 terrorist attack against America. Khashoggi was last seen entering the Saudi consulate in Istanbul in October 2018 reportedly for obtaining documents relating to his proposed marriage to fiancée Haticce Cengiz, who lived in Turkey. But the leading Saudi journalist never emerged out of the consulate. The US Central Intelligence Agency arrived at the conclusion that Khashoggi was murdered at the instance of crown prince Mohammed bin Salman, but the Trump administration sat over the report as 'classified'. Two years later, however, the report was declassified, when its contents became public. But the final report, when published, omitted bin Salman's name.

When president Joe Biden assumed office, he refused to deal with the Saudi Crown Prince for as long as 18 months, although that latter had become the de facto ruler of Saudi Arabia and took complete charge of Saudi affairs, giving them a positive and rather progressive turn, including a dose of religious reforms in the otherwise most conservative Saudi traditions and culture. Mohammed bin Salman even emerged as the liberator of Saudi women, who now enjoy unthinkable rights and privileges in the traditional Saudi society.

It was only in the wake of US plan to counter Russia's Putin in the aftermath of the Ukraine war that Biden changed his approach towards the crown prince. Ahead of Biden's so-called 'pilgrimage' to Saudi Arabia, the US decided to grant immunity to the crown prince, which made the president's engagements with Mohammed bin Salman possible. Although the decision took care of the immediate diplomatic concerns, there is still suspicion about the crown prince's role in the ace journalist's assassination. A court in the US, where Khashoggi's fiancée filed a petition, is yet to declare its verdict in the case.

The Indian government had for long designated Hardeep Singh Nijjar as a terrorist, but the Khalistani activist had been carrying on relentlessly in Canada. New Delhi had even announced a cash reward on his head. The man was shot dead outside a gurdwara in a Vancouver suburb on June 18. The killing led to protests outside the Indian consulate in Vancouver, with protesters alleging the involvement of foreign hands. The Canadian authorities had come to the conclusion that the killing may have been the result of rivalries between separatist groupings in the country.

But thanks to developments in Canadian politics, which saw Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's ratings plummet, the murder has assumed additional political importance. Making up nearly 2 percent of the total population, Sikhs are a prominent vote bank in Canadian politics and Trudeau's party has been nurturing the community for its electoral value. This soft approach has encouraged Canada's Khalistani elements to step up their operations, which also extend to other countries such as the UK and Australia.

The Indian government has accused of Khalistanis of randomly picking up Hindu temples in Canada to vandalise and disfigure them with pro-Khalistan graffiti. Similarly, in March this year, the Indian High Commission in Ottawa was attacked by the separatist elements, in incidents similar to those that have taken place in London and other places, where the Indian flag had been pulled down on a number of occasions. New Delhi has been urging Canada and other government to take action against such offences, but has been unhappy with the response from the authorities.

It turns out that when Trudeau came to Delhi for the G20 summit, he had tried to drum up support for the stand that the Khalistani separatist's murder amounted to a violation of his country's sovereignty, but the campaign did not elicit any positive response, which forced him to soft pedal. But he did raise the matter with Prime Minister Modi, who apparently made light work of it. When back home, however, Trudeau escalated the issue by hinting at a role for India in Nijjar's murder and declaring that any involvement of a foreign government was not unacceptable, triggering a diplomatic rebuttal from the Indian side, which is not clear yet. From the way developments are overtaking each other, it appears that things are headed for a lot more deterioration. *(IPA Service)*

POST BAG

The DM who brought water

Sir/Ma'am

A recent incident in Uttar Pradesh has left everyone puzzled as Divya Mittal, the district magistrate of Mirzapur was transferred just after she did a commendable job of arranging a piped water connection to Lahuria village. It is to be noted that the people of Lahuria village got access to tap water after 76 years of Independence.

Divya Mittal happened to irk some local politicians as she did everything single-handedly without involving the politicians. She also did not invite the local politicians to the joyous event. She did something that no government in these seventy-odd years of Independence even tried to implement. We have heard just big words for these seventy-odd years and every government that has come to power has only put lipstick on the pig which is still happening.

The "change" is still an alluring dream but officers like Divya Mittal know how to make those dreams a reality. The going is tougher for good people but we should not stop our march.

Noopur Baruah,
Tezpur
barooahnoopur@gmail.com

Career for Women in Police

By: Ranjan K Baruah

We see police in our daily life, be it traffic police or others; police play an important role in our society. In any situation when there is disturbance or any other violence or similar issues, police officials and staff reach the destination where police is needed. There are male and females in police services but we see less females in police than males.

We have been hearing about INTERPOL and more importantly we have seen in many movies about Interpol. Established in 1923, the Organization has expanded from a group of 20 national representatives to a membership comprising nearly every country in the world.

The International Criminal Police Commission, as INTERPOL was originally called, was founded in 1923 at a police congress in Vienna, Austria that brought together representatives from 20 countries.

For the first time 7th September has been observed as International Day of Police Cooperation. The day was designated by the United

Nations General Assembly during its 77th session in December 2022, the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Policing, together with INTERPOL, highlights the vital role of women in policing. The focus for the day is women in policing which is important for peace in any society.

We should be aware that women police officers play a crucial role across the full spectrum of policing, from crime prevention to criminal investigations, the protection of human rights, and safety and security. Evidence shows that their full, equal and meaningful participation in all policing functions is vital to achieving more effective, efficient and accountable services.

Based on available data today, the average global representation of women in domestic police services is approximately 18.2 per cent, having increased by two percent in the past five years.

In 2021, across 52 countries with available data, the ratio of women within the police ranged from five to 46 percent, with most countries between 15 and 20 per cent. While



the numbers are improving, renewed collective commitment and effort is needed by the international community to achieve meaningful growth.

Women constitute 11.7% of India's police forces, with Ladakh Police leading the states/UTs with a 28.3% women component

even as J&K figures at the bottom of the table with just 3.3% women in its police organization. There are only a few all women police stations. These bring more opportunities for young women to join police forces.

From the career perspectives it is a choice for many young women to become police of-

ficials or constables. I have met many girl students who dream to join police services and serve the nation. More women in police will attract younger girls to be in the services as the police are one of the most visible representatives of the state. As such, women's visibility and participation, in national police services and United Nations policing, continues to inspire young girls.

To become police officers one must complete graduation in any discipline. Aspirants may appear in the civil services examination conducted by Union Public Service commission or state public commissions. Through these exams one may join Indian Police Service or State Police Services.

Similarly graduates may also try for Sub Inspectors in state police or Central Armed Police Forces. The entry as constable needs senior secondary passed candidates. There are some relaxations in age when it comes to ST /SC students or similar reserved categories. *(The author is a career mentor and skill trainer and can be reached at 8473943734 or bkranjn@gmail.com)hills*

Coal India Limited MT Recruitment 2023 – 560 Posts

Last Date: 12/10/2023

Coal India Limited (CIL) has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 560 Management Trainee vacancy to work in CIL. Candidates will be selected based on their GATE 2023 score. Interested and eligible candidates may apply online.

Name of post: Management Trainee

No of posts: 560 posts

Discipline-wise vacancy:

Mining: 351

Civil: 172

Geology: 37

Scale of pay: Selected candidates will be placed as Management Trainee in E-2 Grade in the scale of pay of Rs 50,000 – 1, 60,000/- at the initial Basic of Rs 50,000/- per month during the training period. On successful and satisfactory completion of 1-year training period and passing the test conducted for the purpose, regularization will be in E-3 Grade in the scale of pay of Rs 60,000 – 1,80,000/- at the initial Basic of Rs 60,000/- with probation for 1 year, if not extended.

Eligibility Criteria of Coal India Limited MT Recruitment

Age Limit: The Upper Age Limit is 30 Years as on 31st August 2023 for General (UR) & EWS category candidates.

Age Relaxation: Category-wise relaxation in Upper Age Limit is mentioned below:

OBC (Non-Creamy Layer) – 3 Years

SC / ST – 5 Years

For Persons with Disabilities:

^ General (UR) – 10 Years

^ OBC (Non-Creamy Layer) – 13 Years

^ SC / ST – 15 Years

GATE 2023 Score: Candidate must have appeared for Graduate Aptitude Test in Engineering (GATE) – 2023 and qualified.

Educational Qualification:

Mining/ Civil: BE/ B.Tech/ B.Sc (Engg.) in relevant branch of Engineering with minimum 60% marks.

Geology: M.Sc. / M.Tech. in Geology or Applied Geology / Geophysics or Applied Geophysics with minimum 60% marks.

Qualifying Marks: The minimum qualifying marks for GENERAL (UR), OBC (Non-Creamy Layer) & Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) category candidates are 60%. For SC, ST and Persons with Disability (PwD) candidates, relaxation of 5% is given in the minimum qualifying marks i.e. 55%.

Selection Process of Coal India Limited MT Recruitment

Eligible candidates must have appeared for GATE- 2023.

Based on the GATE-2023 Scores/Marks and requirement, candidates will be short-listed discipline-wise, category-wise in a ratio of 1:3 for further selection process.

The final merit list will be prepared for each discipline on the basis of GATE-2023 Scores/Marks.

Application Fee:

General/ OBC/ EWS: Rs.1180/- (fee Rs 1000+GST 180/-)

SC/ST/PwD/ Coal India Ltd Employees: Nil

Payment Mode: Online

Important Dates of Coal India Limited Recruitment 2023

Opening date of Online Submission of Application: 13th September 2023

Last date of Online Submission of Application: 12th October 2023

RBI Assistant Recruitment 2023 – 450 Assistant Vacancy, Online Apply

Last Date: 04/10/2023

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 450 Assistant vacancy. Interested and eligible candidates may apply online.

Name of post: Assistant

No of posts: 450 posts

Category-wise vacancy:

SC: 45

ST: 56

OBC: 71

EWS: 37

UR: 241

No of posts @ Assam: 26 (at Guwahati)

Pay Scale: Selected Candidates will draw a starting basic pay of ₹20,700/- per month in the scale of ₹20700 – 1200 (3) – 24300 – 1440 (4) – 30060 – 1920 (6) – 41580 – 2080 (2) – 45740 – 2370 (3) – 52850 – 2850 (1) – 55700 and other allowances, as admissible from time to time.

Eligibility Criteria of RBI Assistant Recruitment

Age Limit: Candidates' age must be between 20 and 28 years. Candidates born not earlier than 02/09/1995 and not later than 01/09/2003 (both days inclusive) are only eligible to apply.

Age Relaxation: Category-wise age relaxation is as mentioned below.

SC/ST: 5 years

OBC: 3 years

PWD/ UR: 10 years

PWD/ OBC: 13 years

PWD/ SC-ST: 15 years

Educational Qualification: Bachelor's Degree in any discipline with a minimum of 50% marks (pass class for SC/ST/PWD candidates) in the aggregate and the knowledge of word processing on PC.

Local Language Proficiency: Candidates applying for post in a particular recruiting Office should be proficient in the language (i.e., know to read, write, speak and understand the language) of the state/ any of the states falling under the recruiting Office.

Application Fee:

SC/ST/PWD/EXS: Rs 50/-plus 18% GST

UR/EWS/OBC: Rs 450/-plus 18% GST

Important Dates of RBI Assistant Vacancy 2023

Starting Date of online application submission: September 13th, 2023

Last Date of online application submission: October 04th, 2023

Date of Online Preliminary Test: October 21st, 2023 & October 23rd, 2023

Date of Online Main Test: December 02nd, 2023

BVFCL Recruitment 2023 – 14 Manager, Engineer & Officer Posts

Last Date: 30/09/2023

Brahmaputra Valley Fertilizer Corporation Limited (BVFCL) has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 14 Sr. Manager (Chem.), Manager (Chem.), Engineer (Prod), Dy. Manager (BOE) and Officer (Fire) posts. Interested and eligible candidates may apply online.

1. Sr.Manager (Chemical)

No of posts: 01 (UR: 01)

Educational Qualification: Full time B.E/B.Tech Degree in Chemical Engineering with 12 years post qualification relevant executive experience in operation of Ammonia- Urea complex in PSU/ a large Private Sector industry out of which 04 years should be at Managerial level with proven knowledge of modern technological developments. The candidate should have minimum 03 years recent experience in the field of operation of Ammonia plant.

Scale of pay: Rs.32900-3%-58,000/-

Age Limit: 51 years (as on 01.08.2023).

2. Manager (Chemical)

No of posts: 01 (UR)

Educational Qualification: Full time B.E/B.Tech Degree in Chemical Engineering with 10 years post qualification relevant executive experience in operation of Ammonia-Urea complex in PSU/ a large Private Sector industry out of which 03 years should be at Managerial level with proven knowledge of modern technological developments. The candidate should have minimum 03 years recent experience in the field of operation of Ammonia plant.

Scale of pay: Rs.29100-3%-54,500/-

Age Limit: 50 years (as on 01.08.2023).

3. Engineer (Production)

No. of posts: 10 (UR-05, OBC-03, SC-01 & ST-01)

Educational Qualification: Full time B.E/ B.Tech Degree in Chemical/ Mechanical/Electrical Engineering with 03 years post qualification executive experience in line in a PSU/ a large Private Sector process industry. The candidate having experience in Material Handling/ Water Treatment Plant of process industry will be preferred.

Scale of pay: Rs.16,400-3%-40,500/-

Age Limit: 40 years (as on 01.08.2023).

4. Dy.Manager (BOE)

No. of posts: 1 (UR)

Educational Qualification: Full time B.El B.Tech/B.Sc. (Engg)/ AMIE in any discipline. BOE (Boiler Operation Engineer) certificate is essential. 08 years post professional qualification Executive experience in process plant of State /Central Government undertakings Private Sector industry, as high pressure Boiler Operation Engineer.

Scale of pay: Rs.24,900-3%-50,500/-

Age Limit: 48 years (as on 01.08.2023).

5. Officer (Fire)

No. of post: 1 (UR)

Educational Qualification: Full time B.E/B.Tech in Fire Engineering with 03years post qualification executive experience in Fire in a PSU/ a large Private Sector industry.

Scale of pay: Rs.16,400-3%-40,500/-

Age Limit: 40 years (as on 01.08.2023).

Important Dates of BVFCL Vacancy 2023

Starting date of submission of online registration: 31st August 2023

Closing date for submission of online application: 30th September 2023

RFRI Jorhat Recruitment 2023 – 7 Lower Division Clerk (LDC) Posts

Last Date: 29/09/2023

Rain Forest Research Institute (RFRI), Jorhat has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 7 Lower Division Clerk (LDC) posts in Rain Forest Research Institute (RFRI), Jorhat. Interested and eligible candidates may apply.

Name of post: Lower Division Clerk (LDC)

No of posts: 7 [UR: 5, OBC: 1, ST: 1]

Scale of Pay: Level-2 of 7th CPC Pay Matrix; Rs.19900-63,200/-

Eligibility Criteria of RFRI Jorhat Recruitment

Age Limit: Candidate age must not be below 18 years and not exceeding 27 years.

Age Relaxation: Age relaxation up to 5 years will be allowed for the departmental candidates. Relaxable for Government Servants in accordance with the instructions or orders issued by the Government of India time to time.

Educational Qualification: Candidate must be 12th class passed from a recognised Board.

Typing Skills: A typing speed of 30 words per minute in English or 25 words per minute in Hindi on manual typewriter Or Typing speed of 35 words per minute in English or 30 words per minute in Hindi on computer.

Application Fee: Non-refundable amount of Rs.500/- (Rupees Five Hundred only) is to be deposited to this office Savings Bank Account No. 393102010059274 (IFS Code: UBIN0539317) with Union Bank of India, Jorhat branch in favour of Director, ICFRE- Rain Forest Research Institute, Jorhat and proof of payment/deposit of application fee is to be attached with the application form. ST and women candidates are exempted from payment of fees.

How to Apply for RFRI Jorhat Recruitment ?

Interested candidates who fulfil all the requirements and are willing to serve anywhere in India may apply to the Director, Rain Forest Research Institute, Sotai Deovan, Jorhat-785010, Assam along with self-attested copies of:

Certificate of proof of age.

Certificates/ Mark-sheets of educational qualification.

Certificate issued by the competent authority in prescribed format in support of claim belonging to Persons with Disability, as applicable. In case the certificate is in a local vernacular language, its English translation should be submitted.

Certificate in support of claim for age relaxation/fee concession, as applicable.

OBC candidates who will apply against the reserved post, they have to mandatorily submit valid Non Creamy Layer Certificate issued by competent authority.

The envelope containing the application should be marked as "Application for the post of _____ (with post code)

Last date for receipt of application is 29.09.2023.

SSC Delhi Police Recruitment 2023 – 7547 Constable (Executive) Posts

Last Date: 30/09/2023

Staff Selection Commission (SSC) has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 7547 Constable (Executive) Male and Female posts in Delhi Police. Interested and eligible candidates may apply online.

Name of post: Constable (Executive)

No of posts: 7547 posts [Male: 5056, Female: 2491]

Category-wise vacancy:

UR: 4555

EWS: 810

OBC: 429

SC: 1301

ST: 452

Pay Scale: Pay Level-3 (Rs 21700- 69100)

Eligibility Criteria of SSC Delhi Police Recruitment

Nationality/ Citizenship: Candidates must be the citizen of India.

Age Limit: Age limit of the candidates should be from 18 to 25 years as on 01.07.2023 (i.e., Candidates should not have been born earlier than 02-07-1998 and later than 01-07-2005).

Age Relaxation: The category-wise age relaxation is as mentioned below.

SC/ ST: 5 years

OBC: 3 years

Ex-Servicemen: 3 years

Educational Qualification: Candidate must 10+2 (Senior Secondary) passed from a recognized Board.

Professional Qualification: Male candidates must possess a valid driving license for LMV (Motor Cycle or Car) as on the date of PE&MT. Learner License is not acceptable.

Application Fee :

UR/ OBC: Rs. 100/-

Women, SC, ST, PwD & ESM: Nil

Payment Mode: SBI Challan/ Net Banking by using Visa, Master Card, Maestro, RuPay Credit/ Debit Card .

Important Dates of SSC Delhi Police Recruitment 2023

Starting date of submission of online application: 1st September 2023

Last date of submission of online application: 30th September 2023

IDBI Bank Assistant Manager Recruitment 2023 – 600 Posts, Apply Online

Last Date: 30/09/2023

IDBI Bank has released an employment notification for the recruitment of 600 Junior Assistant Manager (Grade "O") vacancy. Interested and eligible candidates who wants to pursue their career in Banking and Finance sector may apply online.

Name of post: Junior Assistant Manager (Grade "O")

No of posts: 600 posts

Category-wise vacancy:

UR: 243

SC: 90

ST: 45

EWS: 60

OBC: 162

Eligibility Criteria of IDBI Bank Assistant Manager Recruitment

Age Limit: Candidate age must be minimum 20 years and maximum 25 years as on August 31, 2023 i.e. a candidate must have been born not earlier than 31.08.1998 and not later than 31.08.2003.

Age Relaxation: Category-wise age relaxation is as follows:

SC /ST: 5 years

OBC (Non-Creamy Layer): 3 years

PWD: 10 years

Educational Qualification:

Candidates should be Graduate from any discipline from a university recognized by Government of India or an equivalent qualification recognized by Government of India. Passing only a diploma course will not be considered as qualifying the eligibility criteria. # Candidates are expected to have proficiency in computers. # Proficiency in regional language will be preferred.

Application Fee:

Others (Application fee + Intimation Charges): Rs. 1000/-

SC/ ST/ PWD (Intimation Charges): Rs. 200/-

Payment mode: Pay the fee through online by using Debit Cards (RuPay/ Visa/ MasterCard/ Maestro), Credit Cards, Internet Banking, IMPS, Cash Cards/ Mobile Wallet)

Selection Process of IDBI Recruitment

The selection process will comprise of Online Test followed by personal interview of the candidates, who have qualified in the online test. The online test will be objective in nature. The details of the same are furnished hereunder:

Section/s	No. of Questions	Max Marks
English Language	40	40
Quantitative Aptitude	40	40
Gen/Economy/Banking		
Awareness/Computer/IT	60	60
Logical Reasoning, Data Analysis & Interpretation	60	60

The applicants will be called for the Online Test based on the information provided by them in the online application form, subject to scrutiny at a later date.

The applicants, who are successful in the On-line test, would be called for a personal interview.

Important Dates of IDBI Bank Recruitment 2023

Starting date of submission of online application: September 15th, 2023

Last date of submission of online application: September 30th, 2023

India has angrily rejected Trudeau's allegations as 'absurd' & 'motivated' & expelled a Sr Canadian diplomat in a tit-for-tat move to Ottawa's expulsion of an Indian official over the case

Canada says no place for aggression, hate, intimidation in country amid online threats to Hindus

TORONTO, Sept 22: The Canadian government has said the circulation of an online video in which Hindu Canadians are told to leave the country is offensive and hateful, asserting that acts of aggression, hate, intimidation or incitement of fear have no place in Canada.

The video was circulated amid escalating tensions between India and Canada following Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's explosive allegations of the "potential" involvement of the "potential" involvement of Indian agents in the killing of Khalistani extremist Hardeep Singh Nijjar on his country's soil on June 18 in British Columbia. India had designated Nijjar as a terrorist in 2020.

India has angrily rejected Trudeau's allegations as "absurd" and "motivated" and expelled a senior Canadian diplomat in a tit-for-tat move to Ottawa's expulsion of an Indian official over the case.

Public Safety Canada, the department responsible for matters of public safety, emergency management, national security, and emergency preparedness, said the circulation of the video is offensive and hateful and is an affront to all Canadians and "the values we hold dearly".



"There is no place in Canada for hate," it said on Thursday night in a post on X.

"Acts of aggression, hate, intimidation or incitement of fear have no place in this country and only serve to divide us. We urge all Canadians to respect one another and follow the rule of law. Canadians deserve to feel safe in their communities," it added.

Indo-Canadian lawmaker Chandra Arya from Prime Minister Trudeau's party has earlier expressed dismay at the "glorification of terrorism" and hate

crime targeting Hindus in this country in the name of "freedom of expression" in Canada.

"A few days back Khalistan movement leader in Canada and the president of Sikhs for Justice which organises the so-called referendum Gurpatwant Singh Pannun attacked Hindu Canadians asking us to leave Canada and go back to India," Arya, a member of the Liberal Party of Canada, said.

"I have heard from many Hindu-Canadians who are fearful after this targeted attack. I urge Hindu-Canadians to stay

calm but vigilant. Please report any incident of Hinduphobia to your local law enforcement agencies," the Indo-Canadian MP posted on X.

The Khalistan movement leader is trying to provoke Hindu Canadians to react and divide the Hindu and Sikh communities in Canada, Arya said.

Canada's public safety minister Dominic LeBlanc said all Canadians deserve to feel safe in their communities.

"All Canadians deserve to feel safe in their communities. The circulation of an online hate video targeting Hindu Canadians runs contrary to the values we hold dear as Canadians. There is no place for acts of aggression, hate, intimidation or incitement of fear," he posted on his official X account.

Emergency preparedness minister Harjit Sajjan in a post on X said: "To Hindu Canadians and Indians from all backgrounds: Anyone who says you do not deserve to be safe & welcomed in your home does not embody the values of freedom and kindness we hold dear as Canadians. Do not let others delegitimise or question your place and love for Canada." (PTI)

Ukraine launched a missile strike on Russia's Black Sea Fleet headquarters

KYIV, Sept 22: Ukraine carried out a fiery missile strike on Friday on the main headquarters of Russia's Black Sea Fleet, a Russian official said. Videos and photos showed large plumes of smoke over the building in Sevastopol in annexed Crimea.

The Russian-installed governor of Sevastopol, Mikhail Razvozhaev, said there was no information about casualties. He said firefighters were battling a blaze, and more emergency forces were being brought in, an indication that the fire could be massive. A stream of ambulances were arriving at the fleet's headquarters and shrapnel was scattered hundreds of metres (yards) around, the Tass news agency reported. Razvozhaev initially warned Sevastopol residents that another attack was possible and urged them not to leave buildings or go to the city centre.

He later said there was no longer any air strike danger but reiterated calls not to go to the central part of the city, saying roads were closed and unspecified "special efforts" were underway. Ukrainian officials, who have claimed responsibility for a series of other recent attacks on Crimea, didn't immediately announce Kyiv launched the strike.

Sevastopol residents said they heard explosions in the skies and saw smoke, Russian news outlets reported. Images circulated in Ukrainian Telegram channels showed clouds of smoke over the seafloor. The Associated Press could not immediately verify the videos.

The attack comes a day after Russian missiles and artillery pounded cities across Ukraine, killing at least five people as President Volodymyr Zelenskyy met with President Joe Biden and congressional leaders in Washington with an additional USD 24 billion aid package being considered. (AP)

Biden hosts Zelenskyy at WH; announces new military aid package for Ukraine

WASHINGTON, Sept 22: The United States will give USD 325 million in new security assistance to Ukraine, President Joe Biden has announced as he hosted his Ukrainian counterpart Volodymyr Zelenskyy at the White House and

vowed to defend the war-struck country from Russian aggression.

The White House meeting on Thursday was the sixth in-person meeting between the two leaders.

"Mr. President, the brave people of Ukraine - and that's not hyperbole; the people of Ukraine have shown enormous bravery and have inspired the world with their determination to defend these principles," Biden told Zelenskyy in the Oval Office of the White House.

"Together with our partners and allies, the American people are determined to see to it that we do all we can to ensure the world stands with you, and that is our overwhelming objective right now," he said, welcoming the Ukrainian leader for the third time at the White House this year.

"Our regular dialogue has proved that our countries are really, truly allies and strategic friends.

And we greatly appreciate the vital assistance provided by the United States to Ukraine to combat Russian terror," Zelenskyy said.

Reiterating his pledge to defend Ukraine's sovereignty, Biden said during the bilateral meeting later that the US will continue to support Ukraine's diplomatic effort to deliver a just and lasting peace that protects its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

"Russia alone stands in the way of peace. It could

end today. Instead, Russia is seeking more weapons from Iran and North Korea. It would violate multiple UN Security Council resolutions that Moscow itself voted to put in place," he said.

Biden announced the next tranche of US security assistance worth USD 325 million to Ukraine, including more artillery, ammunition, and anti-tank weapons. "And next week, the first US Abrams tanks will be delivered to Ukraine," he said. The two leaders also reached a new agreement to strengthen Ukraine's defence capabilities, under which Washington will help Kyiv improve its air defence during the winter season to help protect its people. (PTI)



N Korea's Kim sets forth steps to boost Russia ties as US and Seoul warn about weapons deals

SEOUL, Sept 22: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un ordered unspecified steps to further develop relations with Russia after his recent visit to the country as his foreign rivals warn that any cooperation on military weapons would be dangerous and bring consequences.

Experts speculated North Korea and Russia likely discussed banned arms transfer deals and other cooperation measures during Kim's six-day trip last week. They say the two countries are serious about sharply boosting their ties while they are engaged in separate confrontations with the West.

During a Politburo meeting on Wednesday, Kim arranged for work to be done on further developing bilateral ties at "a new high level at the practical stage" to consolidate "the success" of his Russia trip, the official Korean Central News Agency said Friday. Kim underscored the need to

expand bilateral cooperation in every field, making a substantial contribution to the promotion of the well-being of the people of the two countries, KCNA said.

While travelling in Russia's Far East, Kim met with President Vladimir Putin and visited key Russian military and technology sites. The two suggested they would cooperate on defence issues but gave no specifics, which left South Korea and its allies — including the United States — uneasy.

Observers say Kim could ship ammunition to refill Putin's exhausted arms stores to back his war efforts in Ukraine in return for receiving sophisticated weapons technologies and economic aid.

The US, South Korea and their partners have warned that Russia and North Korea would pay a price if they proceed with such deals in breach of UN Security Council resolutions that ban any

weapons trade with North Korea. Russia, a permanent member of the UN Security Council, voted for those UN resolutions.

Speaking before the UN General Assembly on Wednesday, South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol said any action by a permanent UN Security Council member to circumvent international norms would be dangerous and "paradoxical". Yoon said that South Korea, together with its allies, "will not sit idly by" over a possible Pyongyang-Moscow weapons deal that he said would pose a threat to not only Ukraine but also South Korea.

Many experts say North Korea would seek Russian help to complete the development of high-tech weapons systems such as spy satellites, nuclear-powered submarines and powerful long-range missiles. They say Kim wants to modernise his weapons arsenals to wrest greater concessions from the US and South Korea. (AP)

Syria and China announce strategic partnership as Asian Games diplomacy kicks off

BEIJING, Sept 22: China and Syria announced the formation of a strategic partnership on Friday as Chinese leader Xi Jinping kicked off a series of diplomatic meetings ahead of the upcoming Asian Games. Xi met Syrian President Bashar Assad in the southern Chinese city of Hangzhou, which is hosting the 15-day sports competition.

"In the face of the unstable and uncertain international situation, China is willing to work with Syria to firmly support each other ... and jointly safeguard international fairness and justice," Xi said in a video clip posted online by state broadcaster CCTV. Assad's visit parallels in some ways that of Russian President Vladimir Putin last year for the opening ceremony of the Beijing Winter Olympics. Both leaders are virtual pariahs in the West but welcomed by China as it tries to expand its global influence and promote an alternative to the US-led international order.

The Syrian leader will attend the Asian Games opening ceremony on Saturday night along with the king of Cambodia, the crown prince of Kuwait and the prime ministers of Nepal, East Timor and South Korea, China's Foreign Ministry has said.

Xi also met Kuwaiti Crown Prince Sheikh Meshal Al Ahmed Al Jaber Al Sabah on Friday and said he would work with him to take bilateral relations to a new level, CCTV reported.

Both meetings took place at the West Lake state guest house. West Lake is a scenic tourist destination that has inspired Chinese painters over the centuries.

Cambodian King Norodom Sihamoni arrived on Friday at the airport in Hangzhou. CCTV video posted online showed him walking down the stairs from his plane to the tarmac for a red carpet welcome that included the Asian Games mascots. Assad, who is making a rare trip abroad, is looking for ways to emerge from the international isolation brought on by a brutal war at home that shows no sign of ending after 12 years. He was expected to discuss economic assistance from China, which could play a major role in Syria's future reconstruction. Syrian state TV quoted Assad as thanking Xi and his government for standing on the side of the Syrian people "during the crisis and suffering."

China has backed Assad, using its veto on the UN Security Council eight times to block resolutions against his government. (AP)



Azerbaijan sends food, other aid to Nagorno-Karabakh after ending an offensive against Armenians

YEREVAN, Sept 22: Azerbaijan said it was delivering food and other humanitarian aid to Nagorno-Karabakh on Friday, two days after the region's ethnic Armenian separatist government called a cease-fire in a short but intense fight with Azerbaijani forces.

Nagorno-Karabakh's 120,000 people have suffered severe shortages of food and medicine since late last year when a blockade began of the road connecting the region to Armenia. Improving the supply of food and other basic needs will be a key issue in building stability in the region, which is within Azerbaijan but had been under the control of ethnic Armenian forces since 1994.

Azerbaijan on Tuesday launched intense fire on Armenian positions in what it called an "anti-terrorist operation," demanding that the Armenians lay down their arms and the separatist government disband. A day later, Nagorno-Karabakh authorities agreed to the military demands, but talks on how the region will be reintegrated into Azerbaijan have not reached final agreement.

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan on Friday said at a government meeting that there was no immediate need for the region's ethnic Armenians to leave their homes, but said Armenia is prepared to receive as many as 40,000 evacuees if needed.

Azerbaijan's emergency ministry said 20-ton trucks with food and hygiene products as well as two trucks with bread were dispatched to Nagorno-Karabakh on Friday, travelling on the road from Aghdam, which lies east of the region. Supplies for Nagorno-Karabakh previously had come from Armenia, to the west.

Jeyhun Bayramov, Azerbaijan's foreign minister, said at the United Nations on Thursday that his country is deter-

mined to guarantee Nagorno-Karabakh residents "all rights and freedoms" in line with the country's constitution and international human rights obligations, including safeguards for ethnic minorities. Talks with Nagorno-Karabakh in the Azerbaijani city of Yevlakh will continue, he said. Nagorno-Karabakh came under the control of ethnic Armenian forces backed by the Armenian military in separatist fighting that ended in 1994. Armenian forces also took control of substantial territory around the Azerbaijani region. Azerbaijan regained control of the surrounding territory in a six-week war with Armenia in 2020. A Russia-brokered armistice ended the war, and a contingent of 2,000 Russian

peacekeepers was sent to the region to monitor it.

The agreement left the region's capital, Stepanakert, connected to Armenia only by the Lachin Corridor, along which Russian peacekeepers were

supposed to ensure free movement. But a blockade by Azerbaijan deprived Nagorno-Karabakh of basic supplies for the last 10 months, until Monday, when the International Committee of the Red Cross was able to make a delivery via that road from Aghdam. Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan said at the UN that Azerbaijan's offensive this week targeted critical infrastructure such as electricity stations, telephone cables and internet equipment, killed more than 200 people and wounded 400 others, including women and children. More than 10,000 people fled their homes to escape the offensive, he said.

Electricity and phone service were knocked out, leaving people unable to contact each other, and "Azerbaijani troops control main roads in Nagorno-Karabakh, which makes it impossible to visit and get information on the ground," he said. (AP)



Sudan's military leader warns the war in his country could spread beyond its borders

ABUJA (NIGERIA), Sep 22: The war in Sudan could spread beyond the northeast African country's borders if it is not stopped, Sudan's army chief told the United Nations General Assembly, while urging world leaders to designate the rival paramilitary force as a terrorist group.

"The nature of this war is now a threat to regional and international peace and security. ... This is like the spark of war, a war that will spill over to other countries in the region," Sudan's Army Chief Gen. Abdel Fattah Burhan told world leaders late Thursday.

Sudan plunged into conflict in April when long-simmering

tensions escalated between the military, led by Gen. Burhan, and the rival Rapid Support Forces, commanded by Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo. Both had joined forces in 2021 to seize power in a coup that cast aside Sudan's pro-democracy forces.

The conflict has killed at least 5,000 people and wounded 12,000 others, according to Volker Perthes, the U.N. envoy in the country, who announced his resignation last week.

Gen. Burhan said the Sudanese military has "knocked (on) all doors to stop this war" and asked the U.N. to designate the RSF as a terrorist

group. The RSF, he said, has committed "all sorts of crimes that give grounds for such a designation," including receiving the help of "outlaws and terrorist groups" from other countries.

"Those who have supported killing, burning, raping, forced displacement, looting, stealing, torture, trafficking of arms and drugs, bringing mercenaries or recruiting children - all such crimes necessitate accountability and punishment," Burhan said.

Both the Sudanese military and the RSF have been accused by Amnesty International of extensive war crimes, including deliberate killings of civil-

ians and mass sexual assault.

At least 4.6 million people have been displaced in the fighting, according to U.N. data. Children are among those affected the most, with at least 1,200 of them killed in displacement camps because of a deadly combination of measles and malnutrition.

The conflict must be resolved for Sudan to transition to democracy through a peaceful election, Burhan said.

"We are still committed to our previous pledges to transfer to the people of Sudan with great national consensus and consent so that the armed forces will leave politics once and for all," he said. (AP)

The 4-nation grouping also launched its website to enhance cooperation between the member countries & partnerships across the globe

India, US, Israel & UAE launch new I2U2 website & private enterprise partnership on UNGA sidelines

NEW YORK, Sept 22: The I2U2 Group, consisting of India, the US, Israel, and the UAE, has launched a Private Enterprise Partnership to increase awareness of its initiative in business communities and support projects that further its goals.

The four-nation grouping also launched its website to enhance cooperation between the member countries and partnerships across the globe.

The launch announcement was made during the I2U2 Sherpas meeting in New York on the sidelines of the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly by India's Ministry of External Affairs Secretary (Economic Relations), Dammu Ravi, Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs Di-

rector-General Ronen Levi, UAE's Ministry of Foreign Affairs Minister Ahmed Ali Al Sayegh, and US Department of State Under Secretary Jose W. Fernandez.

According to a press release, the I2U2 Private Enterprise Partnership was signed between the US Department of State and the US-UAE Business Council, the UAE-Israel Business Council, and the UAE-India Business Council.

The public-private partnership aims to draw greater awareness to the potential of the I2U2 Initiative, particularly in the seven key sectors, namely water, energy, transportation, technology, space, health, and food security, according to the Memorandum of Un-



derstanding.

It also aims to mobilise the private sectors within the I2U2 countries to identify, explore, and participate in specific projects that further the goals of this initiative.

"This new public-private partnership will work to increase

awareness of the I2U2 initiative in business communities and support projects and other efforts that further the goals of the initiative," a press release by the US Department of State said.

"Secy (ER) Dammu Ravi attended the Sherpas meeting of the I2U2 countries in New York on

the sidelines of UNGA 78. The Sherpas unveiled the new I2U2 website, which will enhance cooperation between India, Israel, the US and the UAE & partnerships across the globe. They also launched the I2U2 Private Enterprise Partnership." External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi posted on social media platform X.

Established last year, the grouping aims to "identify bankable projects and initiatives to tackle some of the greatest challenges confronting our world, with a particular focus on joint investments and new initiatives in water, energy, transportation, space, health, food security, and technology," according to the newly launched website. (PTI)

₹ 2072.67 crore spent, 85.04% of target houses constructed under PMAY (U)

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Sept 22: Under the leadership of chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and minister for Housing and Urban Affairs Ashok Singhal, state's Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) program (PMAY-U) is making remarkable strides. As of September 22, 2023, the program has approved 551 Detailed Project Reports (DPRs), signalling the green light for 1,72,544 dwelling units. Impressively, 1,64,367 houses have already been constructed, showcasing unwavering commitment.

On the financial front, the program has received a substantial Central Share (CS) of ₹ 1526.52 crores, complemented by a corresponding state share of ₹ 546.15 crores. Every rupee has been meticulously invested, and Utilisation Certificates (UCs) have been submitted to both the government of India and the government of Assam. The total expenditure now stands at an impressive ₹ 2072.67 crores.

PMAY(U) goes beyond housing, with the Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme (CLSS) providing interest subsidies totalling ₹ 79.79 crores to 3,466 beneficiaries. Although CLSS benefits concluded



after March 31, 2022, its legacy lives on.

Demonstration Housing Projects (DHPs) are showcasing a path forward. A project in Fatasil Ambari, featuring 40 dwelling units, is actively under construction, emphasising inclusivity and progress. The In-Situ Slum Redevelopment (ISSR) component is also gaining momentum, with a project of 64 dwelling units sanctioned by the ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), government of India, in North Lakhimpur Municipality.

Construction is progressing rapidly, promising improved living conditions for those in need.

The success of PMAY(U) is attributed to the adoption of best practices, which extend beyond bricks and mortar. These practices include an enhanced state subsidy, additional support for economically weaker sections, empowerment of landless beneficiaries, and community engagement through innovative initiatives like foundation-laying stone ceremonies and

housewarming celebrations. Notably, CM Sarma has personally penned appreciation letters to over 1,05,247 PMAY-U beneficiaries, reinforcing the government's commitment to individual well-being. Furthermore, the 'Back Log Clearance Drive 2023' is already yielding remarkable results, with 1,410 delayed houses completed and 1,308 non-started houses now under construction.

In summary, Assam's Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Housing for All - Urban is a beacon of hope, progress, and community empowerment. These milestones, achievements, and best practices underscore the dedication of the state government to transform lives and ensure that the dream of owning a home becomes a reality for all.

It is worth recalling that on June 25, 2015, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the groundbreaking Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) program, with the primary aim of providing sustainable housing solutions to underprivileged urban families across the nation by 2022. A significant development occurred on August 10, 2022, when the Union Cabinet approved an extension of the scheme's duration until December 31, 2024.

Dibrugarh Police seize 348 grams of suspected heroin

Three Naga women apprehended in Joypur

HT Correspondent

DIBRUGARH, Sept 22: In a significant drug seizure operation, Dibrugarh Police arrested three Naga women in the Joypur area of Dibrugarh district, confiscating 348 grams of suspected heroin worth approximately ₹ 1.5 crore.

The trio, who had allegedly transported the contraband from Dimapur to Arunachal Pradesh via Duliajan, were intercepted by Joypur Police. Upon inspection, the police discovered 348 grams of suspected heroin concealed within 29 soap cases in their possession.

A police spokesperson explained, "They were traveling in a vehicle with registration number AS-06AJ5275 while en route to Arunachal Pradesh. We received a tip-off regarding their movements and initiated an operation under the jurisdiction of Joypur Police Station. We detained three female drug peddlers and seized suspected heroin from them."

Dibrugarh Police shared the news on their official social media account, stating, "A team from



Joypur Police Station, led by the Officer-in-Charge of Joypur and the Deputy Superintendent of Police from Namrup, recovered 29 soap cases containing approximately 348 grams of suspected heroin and arrested four drug dealers. The vehicle used for transportation has also been seized."

The individuals were allegedly trafficking the narcotics to Arunachal Pradesh for distribution within the state. The car used for this purpose was also impounded by the Assam Police. The driver of

the vehicle, in addition to the three women from Arunachal Pradesh, was taken into custody by the authorities in connection with the case.

A case has been registered at the Joypur Police Station in Dibrugarh district in connection with the seizure of the heroin consignment.

"We have initiated our investigation, and the three women are currently in police custody. At this stage, we cannot provide further details about the case," stated a police official.

Illegal timber seized in Kheroni

HT Correspondent

KHERONI, Sept 22: In a crackdown on illegal timber transportation, the Forest department's patrolling party intercepted a pickup truck loaded with illicit timber from Doyangmukh, West Karbi Anglong, under the jurisdiction of Southern Range, Kheroni, West Karbi Anglong.

The incident unfolded when the patrolling team encountered the pickup truck at Doyangmukh. The vehicle, bearing registration AS02 1097, was en route from Dima Hasao to Lanka in the neighboring district. Upon sighting the Forest officials, both the driver and helper of the truck hastily fled the scene. Subsequently, the seized pickup truck was transported to the office of the range officer, Southern Range, Kheroni, West Karbi Anglong. Officials estimated that the confiscated timber amounts to approximately 75 cubic feet.

BJP Nilip Mohila Morcha organises free health check-up camp in Koilamati

HT Correspondent

KOILAMATI, Sept 22: BJP Nilip Mohila Morcha conducted a free health check-up camp at the Chokihola Friday Weekly market. The health camp was organised in accordance with the directives of the BJP District Mahila Morcha - East Karbi Anglong District Committee. Dr Tenzing Ingti, the in-charge of Chokihola Block Primary Health Centre, led a team of 17 health personnel in conducting the health checks. Dr Ingti reported that more than 150 individuals took advantage of the camp's services.

Phudang Phangchopi, president of Nilip BJP Mohila Morcha - EKADC, stated that the free health check-up camp had greatly benefited the residents of Vophong Teron.

The event was attended by Pobitra Rongpi, Member of Autonomous Council (MAC); Mary Timungpi, vice president of Nilip BJP Mohila Morcha - EKADC, and members of the BJP Mohila Morcha - EKADC.

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Pradhan Mantri Bharatiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana is a campaign-public welfare scheme of Government of India, launched to provide quality medicines at affordable prices to the masses through special Kendras known as Pradhan Mantri Bharatiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana Kendra (PMBJK). Interested candidates willing to open a PMBJK in Karbi Anglong district are hereby asked to contact DC's Office, Karbi Anglong, Diphu as early as possible.

Eligibility Criteria:

- 1) A self-owned or leased shop space of 120 sq. ft and above, with all legal documents in place.
- 2) He/She must be a B.Pharm/D.Pharm License Holder/ a Registered Doctor/ Registered Medical Practitioner/ NGOs & Charitable Trust too can apply.

Note: The Scheme provides for incentives upto Rs. 5 lakhs per Kendra. The complete details may be seen at the website janaushadhi.gov.in

Date: 15th to 22nd September, 2023

Time: 11:00 AM

Venue: Room No. 17,
DC's Office,
Karbi Anglong, Diphu.

Freshers' Day celebration at Dhing College

HT Correspondent

NAGAON, Sept 22: The 58th College Freshers' Day at Dhing College was graced by the presence of Diganta Biswa Sarma, a distinguished litterateur and recipient of the Sahitya Akademi Award. The event took place a few days ago and was celebrated with great enthusiasm.

The program commenced with the hoisting of the college flag by Dr Biman Hazarika, the college principal. Following this, an inauguration ceremony was held, where a wall magazine was unveiled by Abdul Kadir, the door of the book fair was inaugurated by Dr Pankaj Kumar Bora.

During his address at the open session, Diganta Biswa Sarma emphasised the importance of students having access to educational tools, likening a student without a pen to a soldier without arms, both of whom would lack value in their respective domains. He accentuated the need for transformation in society and urged individuals to initiate change within themselves to bring about a transformation in society.

KSS to hold literary seminar

HT Bureau

DIPHU, Sept 22: The Kokborok Sahitya Sabha (KSS) has invited the general secretary of Karbi Lammet Amei (KLA), a Karbi literary body, Joying Tokbi as a resource person to the International seminar on Kokborok and other languages and literature of Northeast India, to be held on October 1 and 2 at Agartala in Tripura.

During the two-day seminar organized by KSS, Tokbi will speak on Karbi language and its literature. The conference will also feature plenary speeches, panel discussions, and paper presentations on various topics related to Kokborok and other languages and literatures of the Northeast. It will also provide a platform for exchanging of ideas, networking with peers and building connections with experts in the field of literature. Renowned and eminent personalities from various places including Bangladesh, Assam and Odisha will also participate in the literary programme.

Minister Ashok Singhal seeks blessings on Paryushan Festival's Uttam Soch Day

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Sept 22: On the fourth day of the Paryushan festival, which coincided with Uttam Soch Day, Ashok Singhal, the state minister of Urban Development and Irrigation, visited Acharya Pramukh Sagar Ji Maharaj at Mahavir Dharmasthal in Fancy Bazar, Guwahati. The purpose of his visit was to seek the blessings of Acharya Pramukh Sagar Ji Maharaj.

During the visit, Acharya Pramukh Sagar Ji Maharaj blessed minister Ashok Singhal by presenting him with Amrit Kalas and a garland made of coral crowns. As part of his Dharm Pravachana on this occasion, Acharya Pramukh Sagar Ji Maharaj emphasised the significance of the Paryushan Festival, a time when the arrival of Gods and Goddesses is celebrated.

Acharya Pramukh Sagar Ji Maharaj also stressed the importance of cultivating good habits on this fourth day of the Paryushan Festival. He believed that adopting good habits could lead to success and prosperity in life. The Acharya expressed concerns about the prevailing state of the world, where increasing greed often accompanies rising profits. He reflected on a time when people lived in peace and dedicated themselves to spiritual practices.

However, he observed that today's society is dominated by mobile phones, which he considered a dangerous distraction. He



believed that as people pursued more opportunities, they grew further apart from their true selves.

Minister Ashok Singhal, in his speech, praised India's rich traditions, values, and culture, highlighting chaturmas as one of the valuable traditions. The minister inaugurated the event by lighting a lamp and unveiling the image of Shri Pushpadanta Sagar Ji Maharaj.

During the event, various individuals performed traditional rituals to welcome the guests. Kamal Jain applied a tilak, Shri Digambar Jain Panchayat president Mahavir Jain presented a gamosa, and secretary Birendra Sarawagi and Ashok Chabra offered a chadar. Omprakash Sethi, the chief publicity convener of the Samiti, greeted the guests with garlands.

Minister Singhal also extended congratulations to four brothers and sisters who had observed penance for 32 days as part of the festival. The Paryushan Parva, a significant event in Jainism, began on September

19 at the Sri Digambar Jain Temple in Fancy Bazar and will continue until September 29.

The festival features various activities, including Shanti Dhara for world peace at 5:30 am, Vishesh Puja recitations starting at 6:15 am, and sessions of Swadhyaya, meditation, Pratikraman, and Maha Aarati (ceremonial evening prayer) from 6 pm onwards.

The Paryushan Festival brings together people of all ages and genders, who participate in collective worship and ceremonies. This year, Anita Jain, Sangita Jain, Nemichand Jain, Vijay Sabalawat, and Kapil Jain are observing a 32-day fast for self-purification.

The festivities will culminate with a procession from the Jain Temple on September 28 (Chaturdashi Day), during which all those who have observed the fast will be honoured in a fitting manner. Kishore Kumar Jain, the convener of the publicity committee, shared these details in a press release.

Month-long awareness campaign against excessive pesticide conducted

HT Correspondent

NAGAON, Sept 22: The District Agriculture Office in Nagaon has undertaken an extensive month-long awareness campaign aimed at addressing the issue of excessive pesticide use in vegetables and crops within the district. The campaign, spanning over 66 awareness programs, was conducted across 22 agriculture development circles in the region.

The primary objective of this initiative is to educate farmers and the local community about the responsible and need-based application of pesticides, especially in vegetable farming. The campaign seeks to create awareness among agricultural stakeholders about the potential risks associated with the indiscriminate use of pesticides.

During the awareness campaign, experts from the agriculture department shared information on best practices for pesticide use and emphasised the importance of adhering to recommended guidelines. They stressed the need for balanced and controlled pesticide application to ensure both crop protection and public health.

Notably, the campaign was prompted by findings from special expert surveillance teams. These teams conducted investigations on samples collected from vegetable carriers en route to Guwahati from Nagaon. The results of the investigation revealed that, particularly in carrots, pesticides were being applied in quantities exceeding the registered limits. Such practices can potentially pose health hazards to consumers and the environment.

Guv Kataria advocates exclusive marketing for 'One District One Product' programme

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Sept 22: Governor Gulab Chand Kataria held a meeting with officials from the Industries and Commerce department, joined by Industries and Commerce minister Bimal Borah, at the Raj Bhavan's conference hall. During the meeting, secretary of Industry, Commerce, and Public Enterprises, Dr Lakshmanan S, presented a comprehensive overview of the department's activities and the status of various state schemes' implementation.

Governor Kataria expressed his satisfaction with the uniqueness of each district in the state and their potential for development as distinct industries. He highlighted the market potential for products such as bamboo, cane, and terracotta crafts. Governor Kataria proposed the idea of establishing a market under the 'One District One Product' program where each district could showcase its unique products.

Industries and Commerce minister Bimal Borah confirmed that they plan to establish this market either at Srimanta Sankardeva Kalak-



shetra or at the Maniram Dewan Trade Centre. The meeting also reviewed the state's entrepreneurial activities and the availability of loans from banks.

The attendees included commissioner and secretary to the Governor SS Meenakshi Sundaram, commissioner of Industry, Commerce,

and Public Enterprises Oinam Sarankumar Singh, MD of ASIDC Manvendra Pratap Singh, MD of ATCL Rakesh Agarwal, secretary to the Governor Swapna Dutta Deka, secretary of Industry, Commerce, and Public Enterprises Arpan Saikia, and other senior officers.

Rahul demands immediate implementation of women's reservation bill

NEW DELHI, Sept 22: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Friday demanded immediate implementation of the women's reservation bill and expressed "100 per cent regret" that the proposed legislation during the UPA government did not include reservation for OBCs. He also demanded that the government should conduct a caste census and make public its findings along with that of the previous caste census conducted during the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) rule.

Noting that the government's intention behind bringing the bill was political, he said it will not be implemented in the next 10 years as it has been linked to the population census and delimitation exercise.

The bill was meant for diverting attention from the growing call for a caste census, he said.

"The truth is that this bill will be implemented in 10 years from now, if it is implemented at all," he claimed at a press conference at the party headquarters, a day after Parliament approved the legislation to reserve a third of seats in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies for women.

Gandhi said that while he favoured the bill, he sought more reservation for women from backward classes and other sections as per their population ratios.

Asked if he regretted that the erstwhile UPA government did not give OBC quota in its women's reservation bill that was passed by Rajya Sabha in 2010, Gandhi said, "There is 100 per cent regret. We should have done that back then and we will get this done now."

The women's reservation bill is a good thing, but two "footnotes" of census and delimitation have been attached to it which will take many years to give this reservation to women, he said.

The Congress said delimitation and census were "poor excuses" for the postponement of the bill's implementation and alleged that the entire exercise was to create an election issue, without actually implementing it.

The opposition party also dubbed the bill a "teasing illusion".

Gandhi said, "The BJP came up with the idea of a special session. We appreciated that idea. With a lot of fanfare and pomp we moved from the old building to the new building. The prime minister in a very dramatic gesture carried the Constitution of India from the old building to the new building and he said that he is passing a very important law and we agree with him."

"Women's reservation is a central step in the empowerment of women in India and it is a critical step. But, when we read the fineprint, we found something very interesting. Two little sub-texts were there - this will be done after

delimitation and that this will be done after Census. What it means is that this bill will be implemented a decade from now," he said.

"So this is a diversionary tactic," he said, asserting that the government is trying to divert attention from the issue of caste census.

The Congress leader said he was shocked to find that only three secretary-level officers in the Government of India are from Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and only five per cent of the budget is allocated for them. The budgetary allocation for OBCs, Dalits and tribals put together is just six per cent, he said. "This is a shocking finding."

The central question now is how many OBCs are there in India and how many are from other communities in India, he said and pitched for a caste census.

"If we want to distribute power to the people of India, we want to know this number; otherwise we are working without data.... All this data is available as the census has already been done. Why is the prime minister not releasing this data," he asked.

"What is this delay in this census. The caste census should be done now and the last caste census data should be released at once," Gandhi said.

On the BJP's assertion of the party having a significant number of MPs and MLAs from OBCs, Gandhi said, "You can ask any MP or MLA on how much they participate in law-making, how much they participate in how the money in India is spent, they will tell you there is no participation."

"And as the prime minister keeps saying he an OBC leader, I want him to explain why only three OBC (officers) are there in the Government of India and why the OBC community which is the backbone of this country is responsible for only five per cent of the budget," he noted.

Gandhi said the BJP has not been able to respond to this question and when he mentioned it, "I saw in their face the panic. Because this is the truth and this is what they are trying to distract India from - the fact that the large mass of Indian people do not have any power."

Asked whether they will provide OBC reservation among women, he said one has to do this step by step.

Gandhi asserted that the independence movement was a beginning when it was the first step towards distribution of power. "The data from the caste census is another way of transferring power to the people of the country. We have to transfer power to women, tribals, OBCs, Dalits and caste census is its foundation."

"If in our time it was less, in their time it is less too, and it is bad," he asserted. (PTI)

Stable govt with strong majority made passage of women's bill in Parliament possible: PM



NEW DELHI, Sept 22: Prime Minister Narendra Modi asserted on Friday that a decisive and stable government enjoying a strong majority at the Centre made the passage of the women's reservation bill in Parliament possible after it was left hanging for close to three decades.

Addressing an event organised by the BJP's 'Mahila Morcha' to felicitate him for the passage of the bill, he said it is no ordinary legislation but is the declaration of the new democratic commitment of a new India.

In a jibe at regional parties such as Bihar's Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) and Uttar Pradesh's Samajwadi Party, he said even those who had torn the previous bills seeking reserved seats for women in legislatures had to support the proposed law this time due to the emergence of women power in the last one decade of his government.

Before making a move on the bill, his government worked to empower women with a slew of schemes and other measures and strengthened them, Modi said, noting that every party had to support it.

"We took decisions for the benefit

of women at all levels and didn't let anyone's political interest become a roadblock in the way of women's reservation. Earlier, whenever such a bill came in Parliament, only formalities were done and committed efforts were not made. Attempts to insult women were also made," the prime minister said.

Attacking those, including some opposition MPs in Parliament, who questioned the use of 'Nari Shakti Vandan' terminology by the government for the bill, he asked should not women of the country

be paid obeisance and their honour enhanced.

The BJP is set to make the passage of the bill a major talking point of its poll campaign for the five state elections expected in November-December and the Lok Sabha elections likely in April-May next year; more so as those women voters who are persuaded by the welfare factor rather than social faultlines are seen to have emerged as an important voting bloc in recent years.

The prime minister said it was the BJP's good fortune that its gov-

ernment got the opportunity to pass the bill. The party's commitment made for the last three decades has now been fulfilled, he said.

Some decisions have the power to change a country's fate, Modi said, describing the proposed law as one such measure that will infuse new confidence among women and multiply India's strength to advance.

A new history was made on September 20 and 21, Modi said, referring to the days the bill was passed by the Lok Sabha and then by the Rajya Sabha. "It was our good fortune that people gave this government the chance to do so," he said, adding future generations will discuss this.

It was made possible because people elected a strong, stable and decisive government that has a full majority, the prime minister asserted. It was passed with record support and a long-held dream was finally fulfilled, he said.

This shows how the country takes big decisions where there is a decisive government enjoying a strong majority, Modi said. The self-confidence of women is touching the sky and their entry into decision-making will multiply the

country's strength to power ahead, he added.

This is proof of fulfilling "Modi's guarantee" that he will usher in a new era of women-led development, the prime minister said amid loud cheers from the women present at the BJP headquarters.

Citing a number of his government's schemes and decisions for women's welfare, Modi said it has made every attempt to unshackle women with programmes for their security, respect and prosperity.

"From family to panchayat, from the economy to education and entrepreneurship, our sisters and daughters are doing unprecedented work in every field today. Women have played a significant role in taking India to the moon. Be it in startups, self-help groups or social campaigns, the role and participation of women are becoming the strength of the country," he said.

BJP president J P Nadda said governments earlier practised appeasement politics but it was Modi who has worked to empower women with decisions like the ban on triple talaq men and the passage of women's reservation bill. (PTI)

Protests spread over Cauvery issue in Karnataka; home minister says police well prepared

BENGALURU, Sept 22: As protests continued in various parts of Karnataka on Friday over the release of Cauvery water from Karnataka to Tamil Nadu and a call for a bandh has gone out, police have tightened security across the state.

The protests, which erupted after the Supreme Court refused to interfere with orders of the Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA) and the Cauvery Water Regulation Committee (CWRC) directing the state to release 5,000 cusecs of water to neighbouring Tamil Nadu, have intensified.

Farmer organisations and pro-Kannada outfits staged protests in the Cauvery river basin districts of Mysuru, Mandya, Chamarajanagara, Ramanagara, Bengaluru and other parts of the state expressing their anger and urging the state government not to release water to the neighbouring state.

Karnataka has been maintaining that it is not in a position to release water, after taking into account its own need for drinking water and irrigation for standing crops in the Cauvery basin areas, as there has been water scarcity due to deficit monsoon rains. Protests have also spread to districts like Chitradurga, Ballari, Davangere, Koppal and Vijayapura.

Farmers under the aegis of the Raitha Hitarakshana Samiti continued to protest near the statue of Sir M Visvesvaraya in Mandya. They were today joined by Nirmalanandanatha Swamiji, the head of Adichunchanagiri Math, a prominent religious seminary in the old Mysuru

region, which is also the Cauvery belt.

Addressing the protesting farmers, the seer said that the state and central government should present the facts before the Supreme Court and protect the interest of the farmers and people of the state.

He said the math would speak to the state government and central ministers on behalf of the farmers. "There is a need for a distress formula (for water sharing) at the earliest."

The district Raitha Hitarakshana Samiti has called for a bandh in Mandya on Saturday, which is likely to affect normal life in the district as it is being supported by various organisations.

On farmers and organisations protesting in various places demanding that the Karnataka government not release water and instead protect the interests of the state, Home Minister G Parameshwara said, "There is nothing wrong with it. It is their right to protest and the government has no objection to it. But public property should not be destroyed, they should not indulge in any illegal activity and cause inconvenience to people. I appeal to them in this regard."

Police are well prepared to handle the situation in case there are any untoward incidents, he said, adding, that personnel have been deployed near KRS dam in Mandya district and other places where the protests are happening.

Bengaluru police commissioner B Dayananda held meetings with his subordinates and instructed all the deputy commissioners of

police in the city to be on high alert and step up security in their respective jurisdictions, especially in Tamil dominated areas to avoid any untoward incident. The police commissioner told PTI that all necessary security measures have been taken. Officers have been instructed to ensure that no incident of stone pelting takes place on any Tamil Nadu registered buses or private vehicles, he said.

Karnataka Rakshana Vedike activists led by Praveen Shetty staged a protest in Bengaluru's K R Puram by blocking the highway. He and scores of activists were detained and taken away by the police. Sloganeering -- demanding justice, blocking roads, burning of tyres and effigies marked the protests in various parts of the state.

Some Kannada organisations laid siege to Tore Kadanahalli (TK Halli) pumping station in Mandya which supplies water to Bengaluru city, urging officials to stop supplying water to the capital city for lack of support from there to the Cauvery protest. Police teams have been deployed at the spot. Karnataka BJP leaders met under the leadership of former chief minister Basavaraj Bommai in Bengaluru to discuss the line of action the party should follow. Party presidents and leaders from Cauvery basin districts were present at the meet.

Stating that it is clear that the government has failed in the Cauvery issue and its consequences are being seen, Bommai said, "I have seen the (court) proceedings and our lawyers have not argued effectively". (PTI)

Jaishankar embarks on 9-day US visit

NEW DELHI, Sept 22: External Affairs minister S Jaishankar on Friday began a nine-day visit to the US, primarily to attend the annual session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in New York and to host a special event on Global South. Following the completion of the 78th UNGA-related engagements, Jaishankar will visit Washington DC from September 27 to 30 for bilateral meetings with his American interlocutors.

"During his visit to New York from September 22 to 26, the External Affairs minister (EAM) will be leading the Indian delegation for the high level week at the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said.

"In keeping with India's support for Global South, the EAM will be hosting a special event 'India-UN for Global South: Delivering for Development'," it said in a statement. Jaishankar would also attend various plurilateral and bilateral meetings in New York.

"The EAM will also be meeting with the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres and Dennis Francis, President of the 78th Session of the UN General Assembly," the MEA said. (PTI)

Stalin sanctions ₹ 10 lakh to bring TN child by air ambulance from Turkey

CHENNAI, Sept 22: Tamil Nadu chief minister M K Stalin on Friday sanctioned ₹ 10 lakh to bring to Chennai by air-ambulance a two-year old girl child, hailing from the state, and now being treated at a hospital in Turkey.

Stalin's order follows an appeal seeking help from the parents of the child.

The child, Sandhya took ill on September 7 while she was travelling with her father Manoj on a flight to Chennai from US (San Francisco). The flight, hence, made an emergency landing at Istanbul in Turkey, an official re-



lease here said.

Admitted to Istanbul Medicana Hospitals, she is being treated in intensive care. Manoj, having spent all the money he had for medical care, sought Stalin's help to bring the child to Tamil Nadu for further treatment.

Manoj was already ad-

vised by the hospital in Turkey that his child may travel only under the supervision of a medical team with requisite respiratory support devices since she has severe breathing difficulty.

Considering the appeal of the child's parents for help, Stalin ordered ₹ 10 lakh assistance to bring Sandhya here, the government said. On the directions of the chief minister all steps are being taken by the Commissionerate of Rehabilitation and Welfare of Non-Resident Tamils to bring the child here. (PTI)

India-Canada row: Cong calls for 'intensive diplomatic engagement' to resolve crisis

NEW DELHI, Sept 22: Amid the India-Canada diplomatic row, the Congress on Friday reiterated that the fight against terrorism has to be uncompromising and called for "intensive diplomatic engagement" to resolve the "serious crisis" while ensuring security of Indians in that country. Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh also asserted that the security of thousands of Indian students and professionals studying and working in Canada must be protected at all times.

"The Congress reiterates that our fight against terrorism has to be uncompromising especially when terrorism threatens India's sovereignty, unity and integrity. The Congress hopes that intensive diplomatic engagement between the two countries will help resolve the current serious crisis between India and Canada," he told reporters here when asked about the diplomatic row.

In a blunt and clear message, India on Thursday asked Canada to come down hard on terrorists and anti-India elements operating from its soil and suspended visa services for Canadians, as escalating tensions between the two nations over the killing of a Khalistani separatist in June pushed their ties to an all-time low. Tensions flared between India and Canada early this week following Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's explosive allegations of a "potential" involvement of Indian agents in the killing of Nijjar on his country's soil on June 18 in British Columbia. India had designated Nijjar as a terrorist in 2020. India angrily rejected the allegations as "absurd" and "motivated" and expelled a senior Canadian diplomat in a tit-for-tat move to Ottawa's expulsion of an Indian official over the case.

Speaking about the row, Ramesh said there are over 300,000 Indian-origin stu-

dents studying in Canada as well as thousands of professionals belonging to different communities, religions, castes languages from India working there and contributing to Canada's economic growth and Indo-Canadian relations.

"We have an institute called the Shastri Indo-Canada institute named after India's second prime minister. Clearly India and Canada have had a long economic engagement, technological engagement, our nuclear programme for example...Our reactors are called CANDU (Canada Deuterium Uranium), this cooperation goes back to the 1960s to the time of Homi Bhabha," he said.

"So, clearly India and Canada have had a very close relationship. The security of thousands of Indian students, professionals, studying and working in Canada must be protect at all times.

"We believe that intensive diplomatic en-

gagement which I am sure the government of India is engaging in is the only way to resolve the current crisis which is indeed very serious and as I have said on matters relating to sovereignty, integrity, unity our fight has to be absolutely uncompromising," the Congress leader said.

Signalling a hardening of its position, India also asked Canada to downsize its diplomatic staff in the country, arguing that there should be parity in strength and rank equivalence in the mutual diplomatic presence. The size of Canadian diplomatic staff in India is larger than what New Delhi has in Canada. On Wednesday, India had also issued a strong advisory asking its citizens travelling to or residing in Canada to "exercise utmost caution" in view of the growing anti-India activities and "politically-condoned" hate crimes and criminal violence in Canada. (PTI)

4th edition of 'Nadi Utsav' focusses on India's riverine cultural heritage

NEW DELHI, Sept 22: Panel discussions with environmentalists, film screenings, presentations by eminent artists, puppet shows and exhibitions are among the many activities planned for the fourth edition of the 'Nadi Utsav' which started here on Friday on the banks of the Yamuna river.

The three-day event will host discussions on a number of topics, including rivers in ancient texts, cultural heritage along the rivers and rivers in folk and cultural traditions.

Organised by National Mission on Cultural Mapping (NMCN) of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) and the Janapada Sampada Division, the initiative was conceived to create awareness and sensitise people about their ecology and environment.

As many as 18 films, out of which six have been produced by the IGNCA, will be screened during the event. Traditional puppeteer and contempo-



rary theatre artist Purn Bhat will perform a puppet show, 'The Yamuna Gatha', on the occasion, informed the organisers.

"Nadi Utsav' is an attempt to document riverine culture, its tradition, rituals and water wisdom. In the race of modernity, we have forgotten to thank our rivers and this is an oppor-

tunity to do so now. This event is an initiative to remember the connection with rivers. A book fair will also be organized during the three-day event, in which various publishing houses will bring their books related to rivers and environment," said Abhay Mishra, assistant director of NMCN at IGNCA, in a statement.

A total of three types of exhibitions, including 'Sanjhi' exhibition, based on 16 ghats of the country; a photography exhibition related to river civilisation; and an exhibition of paintings made on rivers by school children of Delhi reflecting what they think about rivers is also among the attractions of the event.

The three-day event will also see cultural programs, including singing by folk singer Chandan Tiwari from Bihar and Bharatanatyam performance by Shweta Devendra and her team from Bhopal.

IGNCA, which comes under the purview of the Ministry of Culture, has been organising 'Nadi Utsav' for the last few years.

It commenced in 2018, with its inaugural event on the banks of the Godavari River in Nashik. The second edition took place on the banks of the Krishna River in Vijayawada, and the third on the banks of the Ganga River in Munger. (PTI)

Ex-cop Waze wanted to create terror in the mind of Ambanis, says NIA court

MUMBAI, Sept 22: Former policeman Sachin Waze wanted to create terror in the mind of the Ambani family, a special court here observed in its order denying bail to him in the Antilia bomb scare case and the killing of businessman Mansukh Hiran.

The court held that though the gelatin sticks planted near Antilia, the Ambani residence, were not connected to a detonator, it was sufficient to create terror in the minds of people.

Special NIA judge A M Patil denied bail to Waze on September 16 and the detailed order was made available on Friday.

Citing statements of witnesses, the court said the applicant and the co-accused in the case had tried to spread terror in the mind of the Ambani family and had eliminated Hiran after conspiring with each other.

"It was a well-planned murder. Every precaution was taken to escape the clutches of law. It is not a simple allegation under a section of the Indian Penal Code. In such a situation if the applicant is released on bail, there is every possibility of him tampering with the witnesses," the court observed.

"It is amply clear that though the gelatin sticks were not connected to the detonator, it was sufficient to create terror in the minds of people. Here in this case, the attempt of the applicant was to create terror in the mind of a particular section of people and that

is the Ambani family," the order stated.

As seen from the prosecution story, Waze conspired to "regain clout", it said.

The court said that when the incident took place in February 2021, the accused was attached to the Crime Intelligence Unit (CIU) and was entrusted with duties as a police officer.

However, upon perusal of the statements of witnesses, it is seen that bringing the SUV from Hiran, parking it near Antilia along with a note and gelatin sticks and the murder were not part of Waze's duties, it said. In his plea, Waze is silent about how these activities were part of his duty, but he wants to take advantage of the point of obtaining the prior sanction for the prosecution of a government servant, the court observed.

On Waze's contention of internal rivalry in the police department, the court said his bail plea is silent "as to with whom he had rivalry in the police department and how he has been implicated in the false case".

On the grounds of the delay in the trial, the court said that the chargesheet and electronic evidence were huge and there were 10 accused in the case.

According to the NIA, Waze, then an assistant police inspector with the Mumbai crime branch, parked an SUV with explosives outside Antilia as part of a conspiracy. (PTI)

SC agrees to hear plea for FIR against TN minister Udhayanidhi Stalin, others

'The court has issued interim directions earlier when it came to individuals'

NEW DELHI, Sept 22: The Supreme Court Friday agreed to hear a plea seeking registration of an FIR against Tamil Nadu minister Udhayanidhi Stalin and others over his "eradicate Sanatan Dharma" remark, which the petitioner likened to hate speech.

A bench of Justices Aniruddha Bose and Bela M Trivedi issued notices on the petition filed by Chennai-based lawyer B Jagannath who said the apex court has passed several directions, including for registration of FIR, in similar cases. Senior advocate Dama Seshadri Naidu, appearing for the petitioner, alleged Udhayanidhi asked school students to say Sanatan Dharma was not good while other religions were.

"I would understand if an individual rants against a particular community or faith of a group of people. But it causes concern when the State unleashes its machinery," the lawyer said.

Udhayanidhi, also a well-known film actor, is the son of Tamil Nadu chief minister and ruling DMK chief M K Stalin.

When the bench asked him why did he not approach the Madras High Court with the petition, Naidu said, "This court has taken note of similar matters where individuals make such a statement against another's faith but in this case it is a minister making the statement. Here it is State which



is telling the school students that so and so religion is wrong."

Naidu claimed circulars have been issued asking students to speak against a particular faith. He said the question is can a constitutional authority make such speeches.

"These are impermissible. A batch of petitions has already been admitted and I should not be asked to go to the high court now. The court has issued interim directions earlier when it came to individuals. Here, I am concerned with the State. I was compelled to approach the court as he is a min-

ister, and when we went to register FIR, no one registered it," the lawyer said. Responding to a query by the bench, the senior lawyer said he is seeking a restraining order against Udhayanidhi Stalin to prevent him from making any such statement in the future and registration of an FIR. He said the petitioner also wanted students to be kept out of the controversy.

"Although we are issuing notice, you are turning the Supreme Court into a police station by approaching it for registration of FIR. You should have gone to the high

court," the bench told the lawyer.

Naidu sought tagging of the plea with the pending petitions related to hate speeches, a prayer which the court disallowed.

In his plea filed through advocate G Balaji, the petitioner has sought direction to the Tamil Nadu police chief to immediately register a First Information Report (FIR) against the organisers of the conclave and those who allegedly made "hate speeches" there including ministers Udhayanidhi Stalin, PK Sekar Babu and others.

The petitioner has also urged the court to declare as unconstitutional the participation of the state ministers in the event titled 'Sanatana Dharma Eradication' conference in Chennai on September 2, 2023. He has sought a direction from the court to the higher education department of the Tamil Nadu government to ban holding of events against 'Hindu Dharma' at all secondary schools.

The petition said it would have been a welcome step if the conference was called to eradicate casteism and other ills plaguing a religion. It deplored that no FIR has been filed against Udhayanidhi Stalin, Sekar Babu or the organisers of the event despite the uproar caused by the remarks of the youth welfare and sports development minister which shows "bias, favouritism and discrimination". (PTI)

LS, RS worked more than scheduled time during special session



NEW DELHI, Sept 22: Both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha worked more than their scheduled time during the special session of Parliament. It was also the only session in the 17th Lok Sabha when the lower house did not lose any time due to adjournments, according to data compiled by a think tank.

The special session which concluded on Thursday, a day ahead of its schedule, saw the historic women's reservation bill being passed by both houses - the only bill to be passed in this session. Discussions on 75 years of Parliament and the success of Chandrayaan 3 were also held.

According to the data compiled by PRS Legislative Research, Lok

Sabha sat for over 31 hours, around eight hours more than the scheduled time of 22 hours 45 minutes. This makes the working time of Lok Sabha around 137 per cent of its scheduled time. Rajya Sabha functioned for 27 hours 44 minutes, against a scheduled time of 21 hours 45 minutes, working for 128 per cent of its planned time.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla had announced at the end of the session that the productivity of the lower House was 132 per cent for this session, which was revised later to 160 per cent.

No time was lost to adjournments in this session in Lok Sabha. Rajya Sabha lost around one and half hour to adjournments. (PTI)

Farmers protest across Punjab to demand compensation for losses

AMRITSAR/HOSHIARPUR, Sept 22: Farmers in Punjab held dharnas in many places on Friday to demand adequate compensation for losses suffered during the recent floods.

Farmers gathered in Amritsar in response to a call from the Samyukt Kisan Morcha and organised a protest in front of the deputy commissioner's office to press for fair compensation.

Balkar Singh Dudhala, the Samyukt Kisan Morcha spokesperson, said in a statement that different outfits gathered under its banner to demand that the Punjab and the central governments provide compensation of ₹ 1.68 lakh per acre for the crops damaged during the floods. The farmers also demanded compensation to level the soil that rose due to floodwater entering the fields. They want another ₹ 1 lakh compensation for each animal killed during the floods, he said.

The floods in July and August caused massive damage to crops and property, the farmers said. Before dispersing from the protest sites, the farmers submitted memorandums on their charter of demands to the respective deputy commissioners.

Several farmers' organisations in Hoshiarpur held a dharna for over three hours in front of the district administrative complex to demand compensation from both the state and the Union governments.

They were led by Harbans Singh Sangha, the general secretary of the Kisan Committee Doaba Punjab. All the speakers who addressed the gathering expressed dissatisfaction with the central and the state governments for "turning a deaf ear" to the farmers' demands. They also warned of intensifying the protest if their demands are not met. In Ludhiana, hundreds of farmers gathered at the call of the Samyukt Kisan Morcha and sat on a dharna in front of the deputy commissioner's office.

They demanded a special package to compensate for the huge losses caused by the floods.

The protesters were addressed by Avtar Singh Mahalon of the Bharti Kisan Union (Lakhnowal), Raghubir Singh Benipal of the Jamhoori Insaf Morcha and Baldev Singh Latala of Kul Hind Kissan Sabha, among others. (PTI)

Kumaraswamy meets Shah Nadda as JD(S) allies with BJP

NEW DELHI, Sept 22: In a boost to the BJP in Karnataka ahead of 2024 Lok Sabha polls, Janata Dal (Secular) has decided to ally with the party following a meeting of its leader H D Kumaraswamy with home minister Amit Shah and party president J P Nadda.

After the meeting, Nadda said on X, "I am happy that JD(S) has decided to be the part of National Democratic Alliance. We wholeheartedly welcome them in the NDA. This will further strengthen NDA and vision of Hon PM Narendra Modi Ji for 'New India, Strong India'." Shah said the JD(S) has expressed its trust in Modi's vision of a developed India.

"I warmly welcome JD(S) to the NDA family. Their association will lead Karnataka on the path of development and pave the way for a stronger NDA and a stronger India," he said. Kumaraswamy said the alliance with BJP "has been sealed and discussions will continue on seat sharing".

Headed by former prime minister H D Deve Gowda, the JD(S) has long been a strong third player in the southern state where the Congress and the BJP have been the two main parties. The regional party came third in the recent assembly polls in the state, where the Congress scored a big win. (PTI)

Contd. from Page 1...

Mukroh clash: Rumi Phukan

to probe the circumstances leading to the incident. It was given a two-month time frame to investigate the matter and submit a report accordingly.

Assam and Meghalaya have a longstanding dispute in 12 areas along the 884.9-km-long inter-state border and the location where the incident took place is one of them. The two states had signed a memorandum of understanding in March last year in the presence of Union home minister Amit Shah in New Delhi towards ending the disputes in six areas. Meghalaya was carved out of Assam in 1972 and had since then challenged the Assam Reorganization Act, 1971, which is recognized by Assam as its border. (PTI)

India slams China for

ethnicity. Arunachal Pradesh, is and will always remain an integral and inalienable part of India," he said. "Further, as a mark of our protest against the Chinese action, the Union minister of information and broadcasting and youth affairs and sports of India has cancelled his scheduled visit to China for the Games," Bagchi added.

Meanwhile, Union minister Kiren Rijiju also strongly condemned the denial of visa by China to Wushu athletes, saying the northeastern state is not a disputed territory but an inalienable part of India. In a strongly-worded statement, Rijiju said, "Arunachal Pradesh is not a disputed territory but an inalienable part of India. The entire people of the state resolutely oppose any illegal claim of China on its land and people. International Olympic Committee should reign in China's illegitimate action." (PTI)

Canada's allegations against

diplomatic crisis unfolded progressively behind the scenes. Canadian officials went to India on several occasions seeking cooperation in the investigation of Nijjar's death, the report claimed. Canada's National Security and Intelligence Adviser Jody Thomas was in India for over four days in mid-August, then again for five days in September. That last visit overlapped with a tense meeting between Prime Minister Trudeau and Indian counterpart Narendra Modi, it said. "Canadian sources say that when pressed behind closed doors, no Indian official has denied the bombshell allegation at the core of this case — that there is evidence to suggest Indian government involvement in the assassination of a Canadian citizen on Canadian soil," it added.

Canada is weighing retaliation but has taken no decision yet, said government sources in Ottawa.

On Thursday, India asked Canada to come down hard on terrorists and anti-India elements operating from its soil and suspended visa services for Canadians, as escalating tensions between the two nations over the killing of Nijjar pushed their ties to an all-time low.

India also asked Canada to downsize its diplomatic staff in the country, arguing that there should be parity in strength and rank equivalence in the mutual diplomatic presence. The size of Canadian diplomatic staff in India is larger than what New Delhi has in Canada.

When asked about the intelligence reports, Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland said she couldn't comment without risking the investigation and Canada's obligations to its Five Eyes partners.

"That partnership rests very much on those... intelligence conversations being held in confidence," she told CBC News Network.

Asked if Canada is thinking about retaliating by pausing visa processing for Indian visitors, Freeland said the government is focused on bringing the killers to justice. "This is not about geopolitics. This is about Canada and the safety of Canadians in Canada. This is about the rule of law," she said.

Prime Minister Trudeau Thursday said Canada is not looking to "provoke or cause problems" with India as he urged New Delhi to take the matter "extremely seriously" and work with Ottawa to "uncover the truth".

"We call upon the government of India to take seriously this matter and to work with us to shed full transparency and ensure accountability and justice in this matter," Trudeau said while responding to questions on the diplomatic row between India and Canada.

"We are a country of the rule of law. We are going to continue to do the work necessary to keep Canadians safe and to uphold our values and the international rules-based order. That's our focus right now," added Trudeau, who is here to attend the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York. When asked whether his government would take any retaliatory measures following India's suspension of visa services for Canadians, Trudeau said that his government was not looking to provoke or cause problems.

The Canadian government has not released its evidence and has suggested it could emerge during an eventual legal process, the CBC report said.

The US on Thursday said it supports Canada's efforts to investigate allegations of India's involvement in the killing of Nijjar, observing that no country can get any "special exemption" for such kind of activities. The US government has not confirmed or denied that it was the Five Eyes ally providing some of the signals intelligence.

However national security advisor Jake Sullivan told reporters at a White House news conference that the United States has been in frequent contact with Canada on this issue.

"I'm not going to get into the substance of private diplomatic conversations, but we are in constant contact with our Canadian counterparts. We are consulting with them closely. We support the efforts that they are undertaking in this investigation and

we have also been in touch with the Indian government as well," he said.

"We have deep concerns about the allegations and we would like to see this investigation carried forward and the perpetrators held to account. That is what the US has stood for from the moment this emerged in public and we will continue to stand for that until this fully plays its way out," he said.

Refusing to respond to questions on the evidence of Canadian allegations, Sullivan said he is not going to speak to either intelligence or law enforcement matters from this podium.

"I will let that process play out. We are in, as I said before, continuous communication and consultation with the Canadian government and we will remain so as we go forward," he said (PTI)

Former Meghalaya CM gets

Lalremsanga, his family, and the businesses he oversees. These statements have also indirectly tarnished the image of the Mizo community," it added.

Legal counsel for Lalremsanga contended that the ill-conceived remarks are not only detrimental, but are made with deliberate intentions to gain political mileage, thereby knowingly causing harm to his reputation. It was further stressed that these baseless allegations have resulted in irreversible damages, impacting longstanding business relationships and causing extreme mental and emotional distress to Lalremsanga and his family.

In response, the TMC leader said he is yet to receive any such notice. "I will see what type of legal notice is given and what are the provisions of law under which he (Henry) is sending me this notice. There are also certain aspects which their legal team will know, so we will deal with them as they come," Sangma said. "Inside the August House, my statement was very clear. It has been more of an advisory to the chief minister, it is only he who has taken it outside the House. He should be served with the legal notice," he further said. (PTI)

Manipur govt files status report

"I have a short affidavit also which says that whatever issues are being debated here are already being brought to the notice of the (apex court-appointed) committee..." he said, adding the panel is seized of the matter. The top court had earlier appointed a three-member committee of retired high court judges headed by Justice (retd) Gita Mittal, to oversee relief and rehabilitation of the victims of ethnic violence in the state.

The all-woman panel headed by Justice (retd) Mittal, a former chief justice of the Jammu and Kashmir High Court, also comprises justices (retd) Shalini P Joshi and Asha Menon. Mehta said the matter can be kept for September 25 so the court can go through the status report as well as the affidavit.

"Last time we had said that the status report on recovery of arms shall be shared with the court," the bench said, adding the affidavit can be shared with the petitioners, but not the status report.

Advocate Vrinda Grover, appearing for the petitioners' side, raised the issue of return of the bodies of two women who were gang-raped and killed on May 4 to their families. "We have written to the nodal officers, we have written to the committee. From May till end of September now, the bodies have not been returned," she argued.

Mehta said the committee has already taken cognizance of it and issued some directions to the authorities which are being implemented.

Senior advocate Indira Jaising, also representing the petitioners, said the CBI has not filed any update on the investigation being conducted by it.

She said the court-appointed committee has been sending updates, but there is no update on CBI's investigation so far. "Your lordships have been pleased to appoint an officer who is supervising it," Mehta said, referring to Padsalgikar. "I am not complaining anything about the officer. All I am saying is a status report should be given to this court," Jaising said. One of the advocates referred to a report filed by the court-appointed committee, saying it has made certain recommendations.

"The operative part of the report says that it is seeking directions from your lordships to accept the recommendations and thereafter pass appropriate orders," he said. The bench said it will take up the matter on September 25 and issue directions on the committee's report as well as the affidavit filed by the Manipur government. The top court had on September 6 asked the Manipur government and the law enforcement agencies to file a status report on the recovery of arms from "all sources". The top court's direction came after it was told huge cache of arms and ammunition were looted from police armories, and innumerable illegal weapons were being used by rival groups involved in ethnic clashes.

"Keeping in mind the sensitivity of the issue, the status report (on recovery of arms) shall be made available only to this court," the CJ had said, adding he, personally as a judge, was against filing of documents that were available only to the court and not the litigants.

Manipur plunged into a vortex of violence in May over a high court order directing the state government to consider including the non-tribal Meitei community in the list of Scheduled Tribes. This order led to rampant ethnic clashes. More than 160 people have been killed and several hundred others injured since ethnic violence first broke out in the state on May 3 when a 'Tribal Solidarity March' was organised in hill districts to protest against the majority Meitei community's demand for ST status. (PTI)

AFD team reviews of

forest staff facilities developed under the project and interacted with officials concerned on protected area management, including grassland management and invasive

weed management, were held. It was followed by the inauguration of a Banashristi Store by the country director, AFD at the Assam State Zoo cum Botanical Park in Guwahati. Banashristi stores sell products produced by the forest-fringe communities, including unique handicrafts and handloom products. The team also visited a plantation site at Amsoi in the Nagaon Division. Under Phase II, plantations would be raised on about 12,500 hectares in priority sites across Assam. Of the total, more than 75% area has already been covered.

The key focus areas of the project are to build the capacity of the forest department staff for improved wildlife management and fringe communities in alternate livelihood opportunities to enhance their income. The AFD team also interacted with local communities at the Ouguri Ecotourism Committee near the Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary, where they also visited ongoing training sessions on food processing and weaving. The AFD team appreciated the efforts made by the project team including the department and the agencies associated with the project in taking the project deliverables forward.

NIT-Silchar director

or take stern actions. The agitating students have been demanding a proper investigation into the incident, besides financial, legal and emotional support for the victim's family. They also demand that a high-level committee be formed for academic reforms at NIT-Silchar.

After the victim's body was found, the students had allegedly vandalized Roy's residence. To control the situation, police had lathi-charged them, in which 40 students were injured, many of whom were critical. (PTI)

Assam Guv takes stock of

cultivating horticultural plants like papaya, banana, avocado and other cash crops as a pilot project as these fruits have high market value.

The Governor also asked the department to study the life style change brought about by PM's Awas Yojana among the beneficiaries who got better dwelling houses under the scheme. This is required to increase the magnitude of the scheme with regard to its access and reach. The Governor also asked the department to hold programmes at the rural areas and discuss the success stories of woman entrepreneurs of SHGs for generating awareness among the villagers.

The governor also took stock of the developments taking place under the state animal husbandry and veterinary department in the presence of minister Atul Bora. Principal secretary of the department Manish Thakur gave a detailed presentation of the activities of the department.

The presentation highlighted the livestock population of the state, steps taken towards departmental reforms and strengthening of the service delivery system through infrastructure, logistics, manpower and medicines. He also highlighted the status and achievements of the centrally and state sponsored schemes.

"The department should strengthen the network of milk collection centres to empower the milk farmers to enable them to get the maximum value for their milk. More cooperative societies should be set up to strengthen the dairy sector," Kataria said.

He highlighted that PM Modi's dream of doubling the farmers income can be achieved if the farmers get engaged in cattle rearing, poultry and dairy production along with their agricultural practices.

Therapeutic plant smilax

properties and enhances the functioning of the immune system besides overall well-being. Along with these are its beneficial effects on reproductive health and gastrointestinal system, which makes Chopchini a highly valuable botanical resource for traditional Ayurvedic therapy.

Meanwhile, a comprehensive report has been compiled for the Arunachal Pradesh forest department to protect the rediscovered plant species from any risks and assure its long-term survival, the website said.

The rediscovery underlines the importance of preserving unique bio-diverse ecosystems and offers scientists the opportunity to learn more about the species. It can also lead to the development of new pharmaceuticals, herbal remedies, or agricultural commodities that could benefit human health and livelihoods, the report said.

It also suggested ways of examining and preserving smilax turban within its indigenous environment, while also conducting rigorous surveillance of its population dynamics and ecological interrelationships.

There are approximately 262 distinct species of the plant across the globe with 39 of them growing in India, it said.

Smilax turban first came to light in the early 20th century when it was described by the scientists F T Wang and Tang based on specimens collected between 1911-1928 by the botanists, I H Burkill and F Kingdon-Ward during their explorations in Arunachal Pradesh.

After its initial identification, the plant seemingly vanished from the scientific records and remained hidden from the world for long 95 years.

Choudhary said, "Rediscovering smilax turban after almost a century is a remarkable achievement for the scientific community. This extraordinary plant which was neglected and underexplored has long been considered a holy grail of botanical rediscoveries and our successful efforts are a testament to the significance of preserving biodiversity and conducting thorough explorations in remote regions."

The rediscovery of smilax turban serves as a reminder of the mysteries that still lie hidden in the world's most remote and bio-diverse regions and the importance of preserving these unique ecosystems, he added. (PTI)



₹ 1,000 CR SHOULD BE NEW BOX OFFICE BENCHMARK FOR FILMS: SALMAN KHAN

MUMBAI, Sept 22: Bollywood star Salman Khan on Thursday said films entering the 'Rs 100 crore club' is now a thing of the past and going forward movies need to aim for the "benchmark" of Rs 1,000 crore to succeed at the box office. The 57-year-old star was speaking at the trailer launch event of the upcoming Punjabi film 'Maujaan Hi Maujaan', starring Gippy Grewal.

"This Rs 100 crore mark is going to be the rock bottom now. Everything is going to be Rs 400-600 crore plus now for the Punjabi industry, Hindi industry, every industry. Even Marathi films are doing those

numbers right now. "Basically, people are going to the theatres once again to watch movies. I think Rs 100 crore is not going to be a very big deal. I think the benchmark should be Rs 1,000 crore for a film right now," Khan told reporters here.

"Maujaan Hi Maujaan", a slice-of-life family entertainer, is directed by Smeep Kang. Grewal, who launched the trailer of his last release 'Carry On Jatta 3' with Aamir Khan in Mumbai, said he is happy to witness the commercial success of Punjabi films in recent times. "When our films used to do a business of Rs 10-15 crore, we would be surprised.

Last time when we were on stage, people asked if our film ('Carry On Jatta 3') could do Rs 100 crore. We didn't know what to say then. But by God's grace, everything went well. Now, if Salman sir is saying (the business will be big for 'Maujaan Hi Maujaan'), then something huge will happen," the Punjabi cinema star added. To this Khan quipped, "Mere pe mat jaana bhai, picture pe jaana kyunki mere khud ke predictions meri films pe nahin chal rahe. (Don't listen to what I say, judge the film for what it is because my predictions don't seem to be working for my own films.)" (PTI)

From running mobile repair shop to doing a YRF movie: Ashutosh Ujjwal's dream-like journey in films

NEW DELHI, Sept 22: Rahul Gandhi, Smriti Irani and Ashutosh Ujjwal? The first-time actor says, tongue firmly in cheek, that he could well be the next famous person with an Amethi connect after the Congress leader and the Union minister.

Both Gandhi and Irani have fought and won elections from Amethi in Uttar Pradesh. "I was born in Semrauta village in a district near Lucknow called Amethi, the place from where Rahul Gandhi lost the elections. Earlier Rahul Gandhi was a VIP, now it's Smriti Irani. A third VIP to come from there would probably be me. But I don't believe it," Ujjwal quipped.

The 34-year-old doesn't have a regular struggle story of how he got a break in films with "The Great Indian Family" and yet his journey into showbiz is the stuff of dreams.

In the movie, which released on Friday, he plays a close friend of Vicky Kaushal's Bhajan Kumar.

"Starring in this film was a dream that I hadn't even dreamt about. I don't have a struggle story... That I slept on a footpath or friends helped me survive here in Mumbai... Nothing of this sort happened with me because I had landed the job even before coming here. Coming to Mumbai isn't as difficult as surviving in this city. It tests your patience as there's a lot of uncertainty. It's been a relatively smoother ride for me," he told PTI in an interview.

Before Ujjwal turned towards acting, he was a journalist in Noida with a prominent media group for

about five years until he decided to do something of his own in 2020. He initially "unsuccessfully" ran a mobile repair shop in his village in 2014, Ujjwal said. Between his shop and journalism, the actor also did some odd jobs in Varanasi.

"In 2015, a media organisation reached out to me saying they like the political and social satires that I used to write on Facebook. That's how I entered journalism.

While working as a journalist too, I did some acting. "I left journalism because I wanted to do something of my own. I had thought about doing stand-up comedy, but that dream remained unfulfilled as COVID-19 hit the country and the lockdown was announced," Ujjwal, also an author, said.

When Ujjwal returned to Noida post lockdown, he received a DM (direct message) on his Instagram account from the casting team of Yash Raj Films, the production banner behind "The Great Indian Family". Directed by Vijay Krishna Acharya, the family drama follows the story of Bhajan Kumar (Kaushal), who battles an identity crisis when a letter claims he was born as a Muslim.

"They said they wanted me to feature in some of their projects. I didn't know if it was a joke or if it was really happening to me. Since the message came from a verified account, I, at least, knew it was not fraud. I sent my details. I found out it's for a film. They probably liked what I did in my audition videos and I was called to Mumbai. That's how my journey into films began." (PTI)

Zeenat Aman, FHF collaborate for 'Don' special in film's 45th anniversary

MUMBAI, Sept 22: Veteran actor Zeenat Aman has joined hands with not-for-profit organisation, Film Heritage Foundation (FHF), for a special event to celebrate 45 years of "Don".

The action thriller film directed by Chandra Barot, featured megastar Amitabh Bachchan dual role of the titular 'Don' and his look-alike Vijay. Aman played female lead Roma. Titled Zeenat Aman Rewind To Don', the event will be hosted on September 29 at the 1000-seater Regal Cinema in Colaba here.

The presentation will feature a three-hour screening of the restored version of the original "Don", which released on May 12 in 1978, and a conversation session with Aman about her life and career. The session will be moderated by filmmaker and founder of FHF, Shivendra Singh Dungarpur.

The restored version of "Don" was previously screened by the FHF last year during a nationwide four-day film festival titled 'Bachchan Back To The Beginning' on the occasion of the cinema icon's 80th birthday.

Aman said she is excited to watch "Don" on big screen once again.

I am so happy to be presenting the special screening of 'Don' with Shivendra Singh Dungarpur of Film Heritage Foundation and looking forward to our conversation.

"Unfortunately, I missed watching the film at the Bachchan Back to the Beginning Festival last year, but I am excited that it is being presented at a special screening and I can't wait to watch it back on the big screen on September 29th. I know that even 45 years after its release, the original Don is still a blockbuster," the actor said in a statement.

Dungarpur said it is an honour to present a special screening of "Don" followed by a conversation session with Aman.

"When we screened 'Don' at the 'Bachchan Back to the Beginning' festival last year, the audience fell in love with Roma all over again. Her tremendous charisma and her aura of grace and sensuality is timeless and it is no wonder that she continues to be a star today.

"I am looking forward to my conversation with her that will give the audience a rare opportunity to listen to a diva walk down memory lane and to watch the original Don with the original Roma on the big screen," he said. (PTI)

VICKY KAUSHAL ON COLLABORATING WITH KATRINA KAIF: IT HAS TO HAPPEN ORGANICALLY



MUMBAI, Sept 22: Actor Vicky Kaushal says he would love to collaborate with his superstar wife Katrina Kaif for an on screen project, but it has to happen "organically".

Vicky, who tied the knot with Katrina in 2021, said he is aware of the fans' curiosity to see them in a film together and they are waiting for the right script.

"We would love to see ourselves in a movie together. But it has to happen organically and for the right reasons, not just because we are together, and that there's a curiosity about watching us in a film together. "I feel, when you organically fit the bill, in a real sense, that this is a perfect cast and that's when it should happen. I believe it will happen soon. I hope it happens soon," the 35-year-old actor told PTI. Kaushal's family drama film "The Great Indian Family", released in theatres on Friday. It is directed by Vijay Krishna Acharya and produced by Yash Raj Films.(PTI)

Parineeti Chopra, Raghav Chadha reach Udaipur for their wedding



JAIPUR, Sept 22: Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Raghav Chadha and actor Parineeti Chopra reached Udaipur on Friday ahead of their wedding over the weekend.

Top politicians and film personalities are expected to attend the pre-wedding functions on Saturday and main ceremony on Sunday at The Leela Palace Udaipur.

The 34-year-old actor and politician were accompanied by their families as they reached Dabok Airport in Udaipur from where they left for their hotels.

Parineeti's sister Priyanka Chopra Jonas is also expected to arrive in Udaipur on Saturday for the wedding.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal will also attend the ceremony with

his wife and children. Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann is also expected.

The wedding on Sunday may see guests such as Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel.

Parineeti and Raghav, 34, got engaged in May in Delhi in a private ceremony attended by family members and political leaders. (PTI)

Was questioned when I decided to make women-centric movies, says Milan Luthria

MUMBAI, Sept 22: Filmmaker Milan Luthria on Friday said that many in the film industry questioned his decision to make Vidya Balan-starrer "The Dirty Picture" at a time when it was more common to feature male actors in leading roles.

At the trailer launch press conference of his OTT debut series "Sultan of Delhi", the director recalled going against the tide with the film, a story inspired by the life of South actor Silk Smitha.

Luthria's new show is based on Arnab Ray's book "Sultan of Delhi: Ascension" and revolves around Arjun Bhatia (Tahir Raj Bhasin), who works with Delhi's biggest illegal arms dealer, Jagan Seth

(Vinay Pathak).

"Many times in my career people have asked me, 'Why am I doing something?' My answer has always been, 'Why not?' So, when I moved from male-dominated scenarios in my films to female-centric movies, they asked me, 'Why?' and I said, 'Why not?' When I decided to do something on OTT, again they asked me, 'Why?' and I said, 'Why not?'.

"I get to meet new people, get to interact with new teams, it enriches me, and this is what keeps me going. It is also because the material that came my way, the book, itself was a springboard, writers and directors are always looking for strong scripts," Luthria

told reporters here.

The filmmaker said he has been trying to collaborate with Supam S Verma and they are finally sharing the directorial responsibilities on the Disney+ Hotstar show.

Luthria, also known for his film "Once Upon a Time in Mumbai", praised the cast and crew for helping him have a "fantastic learning experience" on the series.

Verma, who has previously appeared on popular OTT shows like "The Family Man", "Rana Naidu", and "The Trial", said he had great experience recreating the 1960s era in "Sultan of Delhi".

"He (Milan) had created a world that was vibrant and fun, it was almost like

watching a Western with that kind of scope on Indian screens. The cast was amazing. I was having a blast every single day because the 60s is the era of innocence, of people discovering themselves, and it is India coming together post the wounds of the Partition, earning its freedom, finding its voice, and in that you bring crime, friendship, love. It is a wonderful time period to get into." Known for his nuanced portrayal in films like "Mardaani" and "Chhichhore" Tahir Raj Bhasin echoed similar sentiments and said it was an interesting experience for him to live the world of the 1960s through his character of Arjun Bhatia. (PTI)



Asian Games: Chance for Chopra-led India to showcase its sporting prowess

HANGZHOU, Sept 22: Led by Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra, India will seek to showcase its ascendancy as a sporting power at the Asian Games, which opens formally on Saturday after an unprecedented one-year delay due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

India will hope to surpass the 70 medals (16 gold, 23 silver and 31 bronze) won in 2018 in Indonesia with largest contingent of 655 athletes competing in 39 sports in Hangzhou to show the world the rapid strides the country has made in sports since the historic performance in Tokyo Olympics in 2021.

For a country that aspires to host the Olympics in near future,

an eighth-place finish in 2018 Asian Games is far from satisfactory, and it will seek to rise higher in the medal tally in Hangzhou, which will host the world's biggest multi-sport event after the COVID-19 pandemic.

India have not finished in the top-5 in medal tally standings since the 1986 edition in Seoul.

The catchline is 'Iss baar, sau paar' (this time crossing 100 medals).

Though 100 medals may not be possible, India is expected to surpass the last edition's count with athletics once again set to contribute the lion's share. Last time, track and field athletes had won 20 medals and this time at least 25



podium finishes are expected.

For the first time in the Asian Games history, India will be having five Olympic medallists in their ranks led by javelin superstar Chopra, who will be defending his title, raising hopes of the country grabbing more gold medals than the 16 won in 2018.

The other Olympic medallists are weightlifter Mirabai Chanu, shuttler PV Sindhu, wrestler Bajrang Punia and boxer Lovlina Borgohain. Still, it is difficult to predict the gold medal count for India. Sindhu has been struggling for some time, Chanu has had fitness issues recently while Bajrang started training only a few months ago after taking part in the

wrestlers' protest.

Borgohain and Chopra have, though, become world champions recently. Borgohain will also shoulder the responsibility of being the Indian contingent flag-bearer during the opening ceremony on Saturday along with the men's hockey team captain Harmanpreet Singh. The eight-gold show in athletics in 2018 will be hard to repeat but hockey (men and women), kabaddi (men and women), chess and archery can swell India's yellow metal tally.

Going by current form, India can win gold in both men's and women's hockey competitions. India can also win a gold each in men's and women's kabaddi and

make amends for missed chance in Jakarta. The men's team had won a bronze and the women's settled for a silver last time.

Shooters had given nine medals in 2018, including two gold, but they may not be able to surpass the tally this time. In boxing, the likes of Nikhat Zareen and Borgohain are favourites to win a medal but it is difficult to predict the colour. The same is the case with the wrestlers who had won three medals, including two gold, in 2018. By hosting the world's biggest multi-sporting event, China is heralding its opening from the pandemic, a giant competition which will be the biggest ever in its history. (PTI)

THE AUSTRALIAN TEAM SUFFERED DUE TO FREAK DISMISSALS

'Five-star' Shami shows his class as India restrict Australia to 276



MOHALI, Sept 22: Mohammed Shami displayed his artistry with impressive figures of 5 for 51, reminding all and sundry of his skills while helping India restrict Australia to 276 in the first ODI here on Friday.

Shami, who doesn't seem to feature in India's first XI plans for the World Cup, literally made a statement with his second five-wicket haul in ODIs.

His performance also put tremendous pressure on the weakest link among pacers Shardul Thakur (0/78 in 10 overs), who has been selected in the 15, primarily due to his batting skills.

Shardul would consider himself unlucky that Shreyas Iyer dropped a dolly at mid-off when David Warner had hardly got off the blocks.

In conditions conducive for batting, India skipper KL Rahul opted to bowl and

Shami was literally unplayable in his opening spell, and then came back to remove a set Steve Smith (41 off 60 balls) in a short second stint, to disturb the visiting team's momentum.

Stockily built wicket-keeper Jos Inglis (45 off 45 balls) and Marcus Stoinis (29 off 21 balls) added 62 runs for the sixth wicket to take Australia past 250-run mark but it was certainly below par as Shami got Stoinis in the nick of time to put the brakes on their scoring.

Warner (52 off 53 balls), Smith and Marnus Labuschagne (39 off 49 balls) all got starts but the lack of conversion did hurt the Aussies on a day when the Indian bowling unit was supremely effective without being exceptional.

All eyes were trained on Ravichandran Ashwin (1/47

in 10 overs) and he did find his rhythm in the second spell after looking rusty during the first spell. He went for 36 in his first six overs but Rahul changed his end during the second spell and it read 4-0-11-1.

The Australian team also suffered due to freak dismissals, first when Labuschagne missed an Ashwin delivery while trying to play a reverse sweep and the ball ricocheted off Rahul's pads with the batter out of his ground.

Then it was Cameron Green (31 off 52 balls), who was slowly but steadily setting it up with Inglis before a miscommunication led to his run-out.

But no praise will be enough for Shami, probably the most versatile seam and swing bowler of his generation, who has magic in those fingers and wrists. (PTI)

MotoGP: India's distorted map broadcast live during practice; organisers apologise

GREATER NOIDA, Sept 22: A huge controversy erupted ahead of MotoGP's India debut when a distorted map of the country – with Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh missing from it – was broadcast live during the opening practice session of the premier two wheel racing event here on Friday.

Within hours of the matter being flagged by some social media users, MotoGP on its official account on X, formerly Twitter, posted an apology for the gaffe. "We'd like to apologise to our fans in India for the map shown earlier a part of the MotoGP broadcast. It is never our intent to make any statement other than that of support and appreciation for our host country," MotoGP stated.

"We're excited to be able to enjoy the IndianOil Grand Prix of India with you and we're with you and we're loving our first taste of Buddh International Circuit," it added. FMSCI (Federation of Motor Sports Clubs of India) president Akbar Ebrahim was sitting in the race control room of BIC when the embar-

assing error was brought to his notice. "It is highly regrettable that an erroneous map of India was broadcast by MotoGP TV today during the telecast of Grand Prix of India. We are aware that MotoGP have issued a public apology. "The FMSCI advises its motorsports affiliates to be extremely careful and correct on the depiction of the India Map and Indian Tricolor," said Ebrahim.

Practice is scheduled for Friday in all classes -- Moto 2, Moto 3, and MotoGP. The qualifying will be held on Saturday and the main races are scheduled for Sunday.

India is hosting a motorsport event of this magnitude for the first time since the 2013 Formula 1 Indian Grand Prix, which was dropped from the calendar due to financial, taxation and bureaucratic issues.

Dorna and Fairstreet have signed a seven-year MoU for the MotoGP race in India.

The success of the race is important for the organisers with India being the world's largest two-wheeler market. (PTI)

OCA takes up issue with Chinese authorities after Indian wushu players from Arunachal denied accreditation

HANGZHOU, Sept 22: The Olympic Council of Asia's (OCA) acting president Randhir Singh on Friday said it is actively pursuing with the Chinese authorities the issue of denial of accreditation to three Asian Games-bound Indian athletes from Arunachal Pradesh.

The three female wushu players from Arunachal Pradesh – Nyeman Wangsu, Onilu Tega and Mepung Lamgu – have been denied accreditation, which also works as visa, for the Asian Games that officially gets underway here on Saturday.

The three players were scheduled to fly out of India on Friday night with eight other members of the wushu contingent but were forced to stay back without proper clearance as their accreditation could not be downloaded.

"We had a meeting yesterday with

the working group as well and this has been taken up in the working group meeting. They are taking it up with the government and we are also taking it up with the government," veteran administrator Randhir said in a press conference.

"It is under discussion with us as well. This is outside of what the government to government is happening. We are from the OCA side of it. We are doing it."

The northeastern Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh is viewed by China in its entirety as Chinese territory. Wushu is a multidisciplinary martial art that is believed to have originated in China.

"This has been brought to our notice yesterday, and we are taking up this matter with the Organizing Committee and we are trying to find a solution. We will then inform you



about it. We are on it now," said Vinod Tiwari, the OCA's acting director general.

However, Wei Jizhong, chairman of OCA's ethics committee, claimed the "Indian athletes have been granted the visa to enter China."

"These Indian athletes have al-

ready got the visa to enter China. China didn't refuse any visa. The problem is according to Chinese govt regulations, we have the right to give them different kind of visas. We have an arrival visa, we have a paper visa, and we have a passport as visa," Jizhong said.

"Unfortunately, these athletes didn't accept this visa. I don't think this is OCA problem because China has an agreement to let all the athletes who have certified eligibility to come to compete in China. This is clear. The visa has already been granted," Jizhong added.

The Indian government has also lodged a strong protest with China over the issue, saying that New Delhi reserves the right to take "suitable measures" to safeguard its interests.

External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said as a mark of India's protest against China's discriminatory behaviour, Union Information and Broadcasting and Sports Minister Anurag Singh Thakur has cancelled his scheduled visit to China for the Games. (PTI)

Anurag Thakur cancels China visit following denial of visa to Arunachal athletes

NEW DELHI, Sept 22: Union Sports Minister Anurag Thakur on Friday decided to cancel his upcoming visit to Hangzhou for the Asian Games as a mark of protest against China's decision to deny visas to three Indian wushu players from Arunachal Pradesh.

Female players Nyeman Wangsu, Onilu Tega and Mepung Lamgu have been denied accreditation, which also works as visa for the Asian Games that officially open on Saturday in Hangzhou.

"Union Minister for I&B and Youth Affairs & Sports @anuragthakur cancels visit to China for the Asian Games as India strongly protests China's targeted and pre-meditated discrimination against Indian sportspersons from

Arunachal Pradesh by denying them accreditation and entry to the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou, China," a Sports Ministry statement said.

The northeastern Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh is viewed by China in its entirety as Chinese territory.

"Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, issues statement underscoring the fact that in keeping with our long-standing and consistent position, India firmly rejects differential treatment of Indian citizens on the basis of domicile or ethnicity. Arunachal Pradesh was, is and will always remain an integral and inalienable part of India," the statement added. (PTI)

Mohammad Hafeez steps down from PCB Technical Committee ahead of ODI WC

LAHORE, Sept 22: Former captain Muhammad Hafeez has stepped down from PCB's Cricket Technical Committee ahead of the ODI World Cup shortly after a review meeting of Pakistan's poor performance in the Asia Cup.

During the two-day session, two changes were made with pacer Zaman Khan and spinner Abrar Ahmed in line to replace injured Naseem Shah and all-rounder Faheem Ashraf when the final 15-member World Cup squad is announced on Friday.

"I decided to leave Pakistan cricket technical committee. I served as honorary member. I would like to thank Zaka Ashraf sb for giving me this opportunity. I m always available whenever Zaka Ashraf sb need my honest suggestions for Pakistan cricket. My best wishes for Pakistan

cricket as always," Hafeez wrote on 'X'.

Apart from Hafeez, the review meeting, which was called by Pakistan Cricket Board chairman Zaka Ashraf following the national team's loss to India and Sri Lanka in the Asia Cup, was attended by captain Babar Azam, head coach Grant Bradburn, Chief Operating Officer Salman Nasser, Head of International Cricket Usman Wahla and former skipper Misbah ul Haq.

Team director Mickey Arthur and the bowling, batting and fielding coaches of the team on line along with vice captain Shadab Khan were also there in the meeting. Hafeez's announcement has added more fuel to a controversy over why chief selector Inzamam-ul-Haq chose not to attend the review meeting. (PTI)

Champion head coaches mark return to ISL as new look Odisha FC host Chennaiyin FC

HT Bureau GUWAHATI, Sept 22: Odisha FC will host Chennaiyin FC at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar on September 23, Saturday, as two former Indian Super League (ISL)-winning head coaches Sergio Lobera and Owen Coyle return at the helm of their new teams for the 10th season of the competition.

The Juggernauts stare at a potentially exciting season with Lobera having brought along some of his trusted lieutenants in Mourrada Fall, Ahmed Jahouh, Lenny Rodrigues, Amey Ranawade, and Cy Goddard to Odisha FC. A strong start could help them get some positive momentum under their belt.

Coyle bagged the ISL League Winners Shield with Jamshedpur FC in 2021/22 and hence he returns to Chennaiyin FC amidst rousing expectations to



repeat similar heroics. His teams average 2.4 goals per game against Odisha FC in the ISL and the tactician will be hoping to set a similar tone right from offset this year.

The Brazilian forward was the joint-highest goal-scorer in the ISL with 12 strikes last season. He netted once in every 128 minutes, which was the fastest such rate amongst play-

ers who played a minimum of 1000 minutes in ISL 2022/23. Mauricio will be eyeing enthralling the home ground with his dynamic playmaking skills against Chennaiyin FC.

Chennai's frontline will be strengthened by the comeback of Rafael Crivellaro, who is one short of becoming the leading assist maker in the team's history. He is currently tied with Anirudh Thapa with nine of those and the 34-year-old will have major responsibilities on his shoulders spearheading his side's attacking endeavours in Bhubaneswar.

Chennaiyin FC has never won a game in their seven away trips to Odisha FC. The Marina Machans have only won against them at neutral venues (both in 2021) since 2016.

"We are very excited. We are going to start our new season.

We are ready. I think this will be the most competitive ISL season that I have experienced. This is my fifth year working in ISL. There are very good teams. We are going to play very strong teams but we are excited. We accept the challenge. The first game against Mohun Bagan Super Giant in the AFC Cup was difficult but we need to continuously work, analyse the games as professionals. For me as a coach, in the first half we did many good things, playing XI vs XI, we compete well against very good teams but now it's a new chapter. We are starting a new season – the first game at home in front of our supporters against a good team and we are excited about this," Odisha coach Lobera spoke about the upcoming season and their loss against the Mariners in the AFC Cup on Tuesday.



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