

6 WORLD **8** NATION

- Israeli troops battle militants across north Gaza
- North Korea will try again to launch a military spy satellite
- Uttarakhand: Men trapped in tunnel come on camera
- Maharashtra BJP announces date for MTHL inauguration

Manipur clash 'political problem', communities have completely got polarised: Lt Gen R P Kalita

'Unrest to continue if 4000 looted arms not seized'

GUWAHATI, Nov 21: Terming the ethnic clashes in Manipur as a "political problem", Eastern Army Commander Lt Gen Rana Pratap Kalita on Tuesday said incidents of violence will continue unless around 4,000 weapons, which were looted from security forces, are recovered from common people.

The Eastern Command General Officer Commanding-in-Chief also said India is giving shelter to anyone from Myanmar seeking refuge, including common villagers, army or police, in Mizoram and Manipur, but not armed cadres of militant groups of drug traffickers.

"Our efforts have been to contain the violence and motivate both sides of the conflict to come for a peaceful resolution of the political problem. Because ultimately, there has to be a political resolution to the problem," Kalita told reporters at an interaction organised by the Gauhati Press Club.

As far as the ground situation was concerned, the Indian Army's aim initially was to carry out rescue and relief operations for the people who



were displaced from their houses, he added.

"Thereafter, we are trying to contain the violence, which we have been largely successful at. But because of the polarisation between the two communities, Meiteis and Kukis, some sporadic incidents keep taking place here and there," Kalita said. Asked why normalcy has not returned to Manipur even after more than six-and-a-half months of beginning of the clashes, he said there have

(CONTD. ON PAGE-9)

Coordination between NE police forces will help tackle common problems: CM

GUWAHATI, Nov 21: Chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Tuesday stressed on the need for close coordination between police forces of the northeastern region as the different states share common problems such as drug trafficking and militancy.

He also asserted on the need for increased use of technology in policing to effectively prevent crime and bring criminals to book.

Speaking at the passing out parade at the North East Police Academy (NEPA) at Umiam in Meghalaya, Sarma said police forces of the northeastern states should work together since the problems are also the same.

He cited drug trafficking through Myanmar as a common menace, while also claiming that militant groups of different states "stay outside and work together and adopt common strategy."

"Our police forces should in-



crease understanding and adopt uniform policy to fight them," he said.

He urged the newly inducted policemen to maintain the spirit of camaraderie that has developed between them during training, emphasising that closer coordination at the field level will help in tackling crime more effectively than waiting for official communication between

the higher-ups. "We have to fight drug trafficking and other crimes and ensure that our senior citizens, women, children and other vulnerable sections are safe," the CM added. Altogether 377 trainees in the ranks of deputy superintendents of police to sub-inspectors from five NE states of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, (CONTD. ON PAGE-9)

India donates USD 2.5 million to UN agency for Palestinian refugees

JERUSALEM, Nov 21: India has donated USD 2.5 million to the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, prompting the UNRWA on Tuesday to welcome the generous contribution at a "difficult time", particularly in Gaza.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA), functional since 1950, carries out direct relief and work programmes for registered Palestine refugees. It is funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions from UN Member States.

India on Monday gave UNRWA USD 2.5 million as part of its annual contribution of USD 5 million for the year 2023-24 to support the agency's core programmes and services, including education, healthcare, relief, and social services provided to Palestinian refugees, the Representative Office of India at Ramallah said.

The contribution was handed over by the Representative of India (ROD) to Palestine, Renu Yadav, to

the director of Partnerships, Department of External Relations of UNRWA, Karim Amer.

The ROI underlined India's continued support for the agency's activities in the region and the services it provides to Palestinian refugees during the handover ceremony at UNRWA's field office in Jerusalem, an official press release said.

"Confirming that UNRWA received a very generous contribution from India yesterday (Monday), which is most welcome during these difficult times and in the face of huge needs across the region, particularly in Gaza," a spokesperson for UNRWA, Tamara Alrifai, told PTI.

The UNRWA has been struggling to provide basic services to hundreds of thousands of Palestinians since the October 7 Israel-Hamas conflict which has prompted more than two-thirds of the Gaza population - of approximately 2.3 million - to flee their homes. (CONTD. ON PAGE-9)

Shared India's perspective with Australia on issues with Canada: Jaishankar

NEW DELHI, Nov 21: External affairs minister S Jaishankar on Tuesday shared with Australia India's perspective on the strain in its relationship with Canada following Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's allegations of potential links between Indian agents and the killing of Sikh extremist Hardeep Singh Nijjar.

Jaishankar briefed Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong on the issues between India and Canada during the India-Australia Foreign Ministers' Framework Dialogue. "From our point of view, the key issue is really the space which is being given to extremism and radicalism in Canada," Jaishankar told reporters at a joint press conference with Wong.

He noted that Australia had a good and strong relationship with both India and Canada. "So, it was important that Australia get our perspective on the issue," Jaishankar said. The ties between India and



Canada came under severe strain following Trudeau's allegations in September of a "potential" involvement of Indian agents in the killing of Khalistani separatist Nijjar on June 18 in British Columbia. India had designated Nijjar as a terrorist in 2020.

India has rejected Trudeau's allegations as "absurd" and "motivated". Since Trudeau's remarks in

the Canadian Parliament, India and Canada have expelled a senior diplomat each. India has also forced "parity" in diplomatic presence at Canadian missions here leading to withdrawal for 41 diplomats.

India has said that Canada had not provided any evidence to back Trudeau's claims. "If you have a reason to make such an allegation, please share (CONTD. ON PAGE-9)

Assam Day celebrations to unveil rich culture at Pragati Maidan today

HT Bureau
GUWAHATI, Nov 21: The 42nd India International Trade Fair (IITF) 2023 is set to witness the vibrant celebration of Assam Day on November 22 at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi, said an official statement on Tuesday.

Minister for Industries & Commerce, Public Enterprises, and Cultural Affairs Departments, Bimal Borah, will grace the occasion as the chief guest.

As per the statement, a plethora of events is scheduled at Amphitheatre 1 from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm, showcasing Assam's rich cultural heritage. Attendees can immerse themselves in diverse dance forms like Satriya, Jhumur, Hajong, Bihu, and musical performances featuring renowned artists Bhriгу Kashyap and Ridip Rankit. The Assam Pavilion, inaugurated on November 14 by additional chief secretary Dr. Ravi Kota, has become a focal point for promoting various initiatives of

the Government of Assam. Visitors can explore the One District One Product (ODOP) scheme, Geographical Indication products like Assam Lemon, Gamusa, Muga silk, traditional dresses, and initiatives like Ease of Doing Business and Assam Start-Up. The Assam Pavilion accommodates five government departments/PSUs, including DIPR, Tourism, NEDFi, AIDC Ltd., and AGMC. Additionally, 32 MSME units and two Start-Ups are contributing to the vibrant display. Pavilion Director Shantanu Deori, Joint Director at the Commissionerate of Industries and Commerce, Govt of Assam, oversees the Pavilion's management.

Under the theme 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam - United by Trade,' IITF 2023 aims to foster global unity through commerce. The fair, continuing until November 27, provides a platform for states like Assam to showcase their economic and cultural prowess on the national stage.

BJP refutes reports of Jagat Sing Engti joining Cong

BOKAJAN, Nov 21: In a surprising turn of events, the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) Sarupathar Mandal Committee has vehemently denied claims of its former leader, Jagat Sing Engti, joining the Congress.

The committee asserts that such reports are entirely incorrect, challenging the credibility of the information. In a press conference at its office at Balipathar, the president of the Sarupathar Mandal Committee, Lokhiram Rongpi said that Engti left the BJP in the last Member of Autonomous Council (MAC) election which was held in 2022.

It may be mentioned that Engti joined the Congress on November 19 in a joining programme held in Diphu Club in Diphu.

Chairman of Sarupathar Village Development Committee, Silarson Rongpi and others were present in the press conference.

PM means Panauti Modi: Rahul on India's World Cup loss

BJP terms Cong leader's remark as shameful, disgraceful, demands apology

JAIPUR, Nov 21: "PM means Panauti Modi," Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said at an election rally in Rajasthan on Tuesday insinuating that Prime Minister Narendra Modi brings bad luck.

Referring to India's loss in the cricket world cup final against Australia, Gandhi used the term associated with bad luck. The word 'panauti' has been trending on social media since the defeat in the match, attended by Prime Minister Modi at the Ahmedabad stadium named after him.

Gandhi alleged Modi diverts people's attention while industrialist Adani picks their pockets.

He said Modi "comes on TV and says 'Hindu- Muslim' and some-



times goes to a cricket match. It is a different matter that the match was lost. Panauti."

"PM means Panauti Modi," Gandhi continued.

Meanwhile, the BJP on Tuesday lashed out at Rahul for his "panauti Modi" barb against the Prime Min-

ister, slamming his remarks as "shameful and disgraceful" and demanding an apology from him.

Hitting back, senior BJP leader and former Union minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said Gandhi's remarks about the prime minister of the country was "shameful, condemnable and disgraceful".

He has shown his true colours but he must remember as to how the Congress has sunk in Gujarat after his mother Sonia Gandhi called Modi, then chief minister of the state, "maut ka saudagar".

"I vehemently condemn Rahul Gandhi's comment about the prime minister," Prasad told reporters when asked for his reaction to the Congress leader's remarks. (PTI)

Assam Police observes Child Rights Week along with UNICEF



GUWAHATI, Nov 21: Celebrating Child Rights Week, Assam Police rolled out a series of outreach initiatives for children across the state in association with UNICEF, officials said on Tuesday.

The Child Rights Week celebrations by the Assam Police commenced on November 14 and culminated on Monday, which was World Children's Day.

"The Assam Police has always believed in protect-

ing and upholding the best interests of all children, who come into contact with our police system," director general of Police Gyanendra Pratap Singh said.

Through the 'Sishu Mitra Resource Centre', the state police force aimed to provide justice to every child in a timely manner as per the law, he added.

As a part of the 'Sishu Mitra Programme', which is one of the largest child-friendly policing programmes in the country, anchored by the Assam Police in partnership with UNICEF and UTSAH Child Rights Organisation, several outreach initiatives for children were rolled out, special DGP Harmeet Singh said.

"The Child Rights Week celebrations are a testimony to our continuing commitment towards children. By prioritising children and through our programmatic interventions, we wish to build a more sustainable culture of child protection within our policing system," he said. The week-long campaign was kickstarted with an essay-writing competition for children, themed around protection of children from child labour and Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM). (CONTD. ON PAGE-9)

Change in geo-politics on, only army can't win war: Lt Gen R P Kalita

GUWAHATI, Nov 21: Stating that a "change" is taking place in the geo-political sphere, Eastern Army Commander Lt Gen Rana Pratap Kalita on Tuesday said only the armed forces cannot win any future war without the involvement of the civil society. As a 'Guest of Gauhati Press Club', Kalita said the "change" has impacted the Indian Army, which is undergoing a huge transformation currently on five different verticals of the force.

"Russia-Ukraine war is going on, Israel-Hamas conflict is also on. There is also a lot of instability in our neighbourhood. So, the whole geo-politics is changing. There is a change which is taking place. And it impacts not only our country but our armed forces as well," he added.

As there are "changes" all around, a technological development is taking place and it is making an impact on the art of warfare, said the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Eastern Army Command.

"So, the war fighting methodology is also changing. That is the reason why 2023 has been identified as the year of transformation by the Indian Army. These are based on five main pillars," he told reporters here. The five verticals are force restructuring and optimisation, modernisation and technology infusion, processes and functions, human resource management, and (CONTD. ON PAGE-9)

Sarba also reviewed the progress of work on 15 floating jetties in the Brahmaputra river

Centre granted 25 inland waterways projects worth ₹ 1100 cr in NE: Sonowal

GUWAHATI, Nov 21: Union minister Sarbananda Sonowal on Tuesday said more than ₹ 1100 crore was granted for the development of 25 inland waterways projects in the Northeast region.

Sonowal, the union minister for Ports, Shipping, Waterways and Ayush directed officials to accord top priority to critical projects of his ministries in the Northeast and ensure their completion by January 2024.

The minister was chairing a review meeting here of ongoing projects of his ministries in the northeastern region.

Of the 25 inland waterways projects in the region, 15 programmes worth ₹ 850 crore were granted for Assam, Sonowal said.

He directed the officials to complete the seven floating jetties at Jogighopa, Pandu, Biswanath, Nimati, Bindhakata, Uriamghat and Sadiya in Assam.



In addition, permanent jetties at Bogibeel in Dibrugarh, and renovation of a jetty at Badarpur in Karimganj would also be completed while one permanent jetty being constructed at Sonamura in Tripura was also likely to be completed within the timeframe, he said. The minister also reviewed the

progress of work on 15 floating jetties in the Brahmaputra and 15 jetties in the Barak river.

He also directed officials of the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWA) to regularly dredge 88 identified shallow passages on the Brahmaputra river to ensure smooth passage of ships.

Taking Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of 'Transformation via Transportation forward, we have identified critical projects in the region that will be operational by January 2024,' he added. The Ministry of Ayush is currently implementing projects worth ₹ 286 crore across the Northeast and the Union Minister directed the Ayush officials to scale up and speed up the projects. The foundation stone laying ceremony of a Yoga and Naturopathy hospital worth ₹ 80.66 crores in Dibrugarh and for the new building of the Regional Research Institute of Homoeopathy and integrated Ayush Wellness Centre at Guwahati worth ₹34.33 crores will be done by January 2024. The minister also directed that the several buildings at Central Ayurveda Research Institute (CARI) in Guwahati, with an investment of ₹ 10.45 crores, (CONTD. ON PAGE-9)

Mamata announces slew of new policies, sub-sea cable landing station, industrial corridors

KOLKATA, Nov 21: West Bengal Chief minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday announced a slew of new policies including plans to double the state's exports, modernise its logistics and promote renewable energy manufacturing, while inaugurating the seventh Bengal Global Business Summit here.

Banerjee also announced a policy to promote bio-fuels and a new sub-sea cable landing station at the sea-resort of Digha to help improve internet connectivity in the eastern region.

The chief minister also said the state's economy was growing at 8.41 per cent and its GDP would touch USD 212 billion this fiscal. West Bengal was ranked sixth in terms of GDP among Indian states in a recent report by Forbes India. She also told a star-studded gathering of business leaders including petro-chemicals to retail tycoon Mukesh Ambani, energy baron Sanjeev Goenka and Wipro's Rishad Premji, that four new industrial corridors would be set up including Dankuni-Kalyani, Tajpur Raghunathpur, Dankuni-Jhargram and Durgapur to Cooch Behar in north Bengal.

Dankuni, eastern India's largest logistics hub, already boasts of 9 km of conveyor belts to carry goods and to and from storage silos, added her former finance minister and principal chief advisor Amit Mitra.

The Bengal Global Business Summit, an annual affair, is being attended by several hundred companies from 35 countries, including UK, US, Australia, Korea, Japan, Germany and France. Lashing out at the BJP-led Union government, she said, "I am sorry to say that the state is not getting any financial support from the Centre. We are not getting our share



of GST and wages under MGNREGA scheme have been stopped."

"But I am in favour of peace and happiness. Some people ask me which 'ism' do I follow. I tell them that I am neither in favour of Rightism nor Leftism. I believe in humanism," she said.

Highlighting the fact that the state was home to some 90 lakh MSME units employing 1.3 crore people, Banerjee pointed out that it also housed a large leather manufacturing complex which was being expanded to be the Asian continent's biggest, besides boasting of one of the largest IT hubs in the country. Banerjee said that the state's Durga Puja festival economy grossed over ₹ 80,000 crore this year. She also announced former India cricket skipper-turned-businessman Sourav Ganguly would be a brand ambassador for the state.

Reliance Industries chairman and MD Mukesh Ambani, while speaking on the occasion, announced an additional ₹ 20,000 crore investment for West Bengal over the next three

years. Ambani said the fresh investment will be in the areas of digital life solutions, retail and bio-energy. "We plan to invest an additional ₹ 20,000 crore in West Bengal in the next three years for enhancing digital life solutions, augmenting Reliance Retail footprint and on bio-energy," he said. The Reliance Industries has invested close to ₹ 45,000 crore in the last few years in the state, Ambani said. "Reliance will leave no stone unturned to accelerate Bengal's growth," he asserted.

The Reliance Foundation will also take up the task of renovating and restoring the iconic Kalighat Temple in Kolkata to regain its "original glory", Ambani added. Wipro Chairman Rishad Premji added, "West Bengal provides the right policy environment for expansion of IT industries." RPG's Sanjeev Goenka told the gathering that his firm has invested ₹ 25,000 crore in the state over the last few years as "decision making has been quick and efficient" and that the era of "go slows, strikes and unrest are of the past... the CM wants business".

The chief minister also claimed that her state was a model of tranquillity and good governance, though she also accused the opposition of running a campaign to smear the state's image. Banerjee said that in the last six editions of BGBS, proposals amounting to USD 190 billion have been received, and of those, projects worth USD 121 billion have already been launched or are at various stages of implementation. She also touched upon various social welfare schemes of her government including Kanyashree, free ration for the poor, and Lakshmi Bhandar direct cash benefit for women, among others. (PTI)

Stock markets recover from 2-day decline on firm global cues, easing rate hike worries

MUMBAI, Nov 21: Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty rebounded on Tuesday after two days of decline following buying in select metal and banking shares and a bullish trend in the US markets on easing rate hike worries.

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 275.62 points or 0.42 per cent to settle at 65,930.77 as its 18 components advanced while 12 declined. During the day, it jumped 427.21 points or 0.65 per cent to 66,082.36.

The broader Nifty went up by 89.40 points or 0.45 per cent to 19,783.40. As many as 30 NSE shares gained while 20 closed in the red.

JSW Steel was the lead gainer among Sensex shares, rising by 1.76 per cent. Tata Steel rose by 1.45 per cent, and Titan by 1.44 per cent.

Oil major Reliance Industries advanced 1.24 per cent, helping the indices snap two days of losses.

Among banking shares, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank and Axis Bank gained. Sun Pharma, Bharti Airtel, Tata Motors and Bajaj Finserv also advanced.

NTPC, Tech Mahindra, Maruti, State Bank of India and Larsen & Toubro were among the laggards.

Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services said, "Today, the market exhibited positive momentum, with attention centred on the minutes of the latest Fed meeting. The declining inflation and the recent cooling job data in the US provide foundation for a dovish comment from the Fed."

The drop in bond yields and the dollar index suggests mounting speculation regarding the potential peak in the interest rate cycle.

"This will attract funds to emerging markets. The gain in the broad market was led by consumer durables and realty, thanks to a strong rebound in festive demand," Nair added.

The US dollar index eased by 0.10 per cent to 103.33 ahead of the release of the Fed minutes later in the day.



In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge climbed 0.20 per cent and midcap index gained 0.14 per cent. Among the indices, consumer durables jumped 1.34 per cent, commodities climbed 0.77 per cent, healthcare (0.59 per cent) and financial services (0.37 per cent).

FMCG, industrials, IT, telecommunication and oil & gas were the laggards.

A total of 2,018 stocks advanced while 1,701 declined and 134 remained unchanged on the BSE.

In Asian markets, Seoul settled with gains while Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong ended lower.

European markets were trading on a mixed note.

The US markets ended in positive territory on Monday as bond yields eased as well the dollar weakened.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude declined 0.61 per cent to USD 81.82 a barrel.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹ 645.72 crore on Monday, according to exchange data.

The BSE benchmark declined 139.58 points or 0.21 per cent to settle at 65,655.15 on Monday. The Nifty slipped 37.80 points or 0.19 per cent to 19,694. (PTI)

ASEAN wants India to join RCEP for greater market access: Secretary-General Kao

JAKARTA, Nov 21: ASEAN Secretary-General Dr Kao Kim Hourn has said that the 10-member bloc of the Southeast Asian countries wants India to join the landmark Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) for greater market access as he asserted that all partners stand to gain from the inclusive, open and rule-based trade pact.

Dr Kao also said that India and ASEAN have been working together across different sectors - from space to investment, to tourism, to the defence sector and counter-terrorism, among others - and advocated expanding such cooperation in new sectors.

Talking to a select group of Indian journalists here on Monday evening, Dr Kao said joining the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) would benefit India as the agreement would provide greater market access. He added that all partners will gain from the inclusive, open and rule-based trade pact.

The RCEP is a free trade area (FTA) consisting of 10 ASEAN members (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines, Laos and Vietnam) and five of the bloc's dialogue partners -- China,



Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand.

The landmark agreement was signed in November 2020. Together, these RCEP participating countries account for about 30 per cent of the global GDP and 30 per cent of the world population.

India had pulled out of the RCEP as, according to officials, joining it would have resulted in fairly negative consequences for the country's economy.

"Looking ahead, of course, we hope to continue to expand the existing areas of cooperation and also to deepen our cooperation," he said, suggesting collaboration in the biotech sector, public health facility, renewable energy sector, people-to-people exchange, connectivity and in many other areas.

We stand to benefit from the partnership between ASEAN and India. At the moment, we have

many mechanisms for cooperation between the two sides, he added.

Recalling Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Jakarta in September to attend the ASEAN summit, he said the grouping highly value its "partnership with India." "We were delighted to welcome Prime Minister Modi to Jakarta, where he participated in the ASEAN India Summit. And we highly value our partnership with India," he said.

During the Summit on September 7 in Jakarta, Prime Minister Modi presented a 12-point proposal to expand cooperation between India and ASEAN in a range of areas such as connectivity, trade and digital transformation even as he called for building a rules-based post-COVID world order.

The prime minister had reaffirmed that ASEAN is the central pillar of India's Act East Policy and it fully supports ASEAN centrality and its outlook on the Indo-Pacific. Dr Kao said that ASEAN is a maritime community and India is a maritime nation.

"We can collaborate in the maritime sector, for example, maritime cooperation, which is one of the four priority areas under the ASEAN outlook on the Indo-Pacific." (AP)

Argentina's president-elect wants public companies in private hands, with media 1st to go

BUENOS AIRES (ARGENTINA), Nov 21: Argentina's right-wing president-elect gave the first indications on Monday of how he plans to start shaking up South America's second-largest economy: with a slew of privatisations.

Populist Javier Milei, a libertarian economist and self-described "anarcho-capitalist", won a presidential runoff election on Sunday with 55.7 per cent of the vote. He said on Monday that he would move quickly to privatise the country's state-owned media outlets and look to do the same with other public companies.

"Everything that can be in the hands of the private sector will be in the hands of the private sector," Milei told Buenos Aires station Radio Mitre.

Experts immediately questioned how far Milei would get in fulfilling that vision without the support of Argentina's National Congress, where his party holds a relatively small share of seats. However, some analysts said his resounding election victory could give him leverage.

"The decisiveness of the victory — a doubt until yesterday — allows him to signal to all parties who is in control of the transition and the formation of the Cabinet," said Mariano Machado, principal analyst for the Americas at Verisk Maplecroft, a global risk intelligence firm.

In his radio comments, Milei described the public media outlets he wants to make private as amounting to "a covert ministry of propaganda".

He complained during the presidential race that the coverage of his campaign in state-run outlets was highly negative.

Milei also signalled that he intends to act on some of his most controversial ideas from his campaign for slashing the size of the state and reining in Argentina's triple-digit inflation. They include reducing the num-

ber of government ministries by half, to eight.

He said he still wanted to close the Central Bank of Argentina, calling it "a moral decision", but appeared to put his plans for replacing the local currency, the peso, with the US dollar on the back burner.

"In conceptual terms, the central axis is to close the Central Bank, and subsequently, the currency (will be) whichever one Argentines choose freely," he said, characterising a potential change in the national currency as "a second-order issue".

Milei predicted it would take him up to half of his presidential term — "between 18 and 24 months" — to decrease inflation, which polls showed was the biggest concern for Argentine voters as consumer prices have increased 140 per cent over the past year.

"Working to reduce the size of the government and eliminate taxes," Diana Mondino, a lawmaker from Milei's Liberty Advances party who is widely seen as likely to be Milei's pick for foreign minister, wrote on social media. She posted a photo showing the newly elected president meeting with several key allies.

State-controlled energy firm YPF, the country's largest integrated energy company, is another entity the president-elect thinks should be privatised but only once its finances are shored up so it can be "sold in a very, very, very beneficial way for Argentines".

Milei claimed the company's balance sheet deteriorated after a majority stake was nationalised during the government of former President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner, who is now the outgoing vice president.

Monday was a public holiday in Argentina so financial markets weren't open, but the stocks of Argentine companies that trade in New York soared. YPF saw its share price increase 40 per cent after Milei talked of its privatisation. (AP)

Gold climbs ₹380; silver advances ₹100

NEW DELHI, Nov 21: Gold prices climbed ₹ 380 to ₹ 62,150 per 10 grams in the national capital on Tuesday amid strong global cues, according to HDFC Securities. In the previous trade, the precious metal settled at ₹ 61,770 per 10 grams. Silver also edged up by ₹ 100 to ₹ 76,400 per kilogram. In the global markets, both gold and silver were trading higher at USD 1,992 per ounce and USD 23.66 per ounce, respectively. Gold prices surged to a fresh swing high as the dollar and Treasury yields fell in the wake of expectations that Federal Reserve was done with raising interest rates, Samuil Gandhi, senior analyst of commodities at HDFC Securities, said. Traders will focus on minutes of the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) meeting which is going to be released later in the day for cues on monetary policy rate outlook, Gandhi said. (PTI)

Asian shares are mostly higher after Wall Street rally led by Microsoft gains

TOKYO, Nov 21: Asian shares were mostly higher on Tuesday after a rally on Wall Street led by gains in Microsoft following its announcement that it was hiring Sam Altman, former CEO of OpenAI, the ChatGPT maker. US futures were higher while oil prices fell.

Chinese markets were lifted by a report in the financial magazine Caixin that regulators have drafted a list of property developers who will be able to tap low-cost financing.

The moves to facilitate more lending come as the real estate industry remains mired in a crisis brought on by a crackdown on excessive borrowing and worsened by a broad economic slowdown.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng jumped 1 per cent to 17,958.33, while the Shanghai Composite added 0.5 per cent to 3,082.30.

"Hopes continue to build that China's unabating and deepening property slump ... will catch a break, if not stage a turnaround; in particular, as Beijing steps up stimulus efforts to backstop the downward spiral in the wider housing eco-system," Tan Boon Heng of Mizuho Bank said in a commentary.

Tokyo's benchmark Nikkei 225 edged

down nearly 0.1 per cent to 33,362.07. Australia's S and P/ASX 200 rose 0.2 per cent to 7,073.30 and South Korea's Kospi gained 0.9 per cent to 2,512.38.

On Wall Street, the S and P 500 gained 0.7 per cent to 4,547.38, coming off its third straight winning week. The Dow Jones Industrial Average added 0.6 per cent to 33,151.04 and the Nasdaq composite climbed 1.1 per cent, to 14,284.53.

Microsoft was the strongest force pushing the market higher, and it rose 2.1 per cent after saying was hiring Sam Altman for a new venture following his sudden dismissal as CEO of OpenAI. Microsoft said it will also continue its partnership with OpenAI, as fervour around artificial-intelligence technology and the huge profits it's expected to create wow Wall Street.

Stocks broadly drifted higher throughout the day before they took a turn upward in the afternoon when yields fell in the bond market following an auction of Treasuries. Easing Treasury yields have driven a strong rally for stocks in recent weeks.

This week is relatively light on reports that could sway the hopes on Wall Street that

have underpinned that drop in Treasury yields. Investors are convinced that inflation is cooling enough for the Federal Reserve to finally be done with its market-crunching hikes to interest rates. Traders also are moving up their expectations for when the Fed could actually begin cutting interest rates.

Despite Fed officials saying they may keep rates high for a while to ensure high inflation is definitively beaten, traders are thinking the first cut to rates could happen by early summer or maybe even by March. Cuts to rates tend to act like steroids for financial markets and offer oxygen across the financial system. The Thanksgiving holiday means the US government will release its weekly update on jobless claims on Wednesday instead of the usual Thursday. Other than that, the release of the minutes from the Fed's latest policy meeting on Tuesday and preliminary reports on US business activity on Friday are among the highlights.

That could make Nvidia's upcoming profit report on Tuesday the week's highest-profile event. Analysts expect it to say its earnings per share more than quintupled from a year earlier and that its revenue

soared to nearly USD 16.2 billion from less than USD 6 billion. Nvidia, which rose 2.3 per cent on Monday, carries huge sway on the S and P 500 and other indexes because it's the fifth-most valuable US stock. Much of that rise has been because of excitement around AI, and Nvidia's report could offer clues on how much all the talk about AI is translating into actual sales.

Best Buy, Deere, HP and Lowe's also will give their latest quarterly updates this week. The yield on the 10-year Treasury, which is the centrepiece of the bond market, dipped to 4.40 per cent from 4.44 per cent late Friday. The two-year yield, which moves more on expectations for Fed action, slipped to 4.89 per cent from 4.90 per cent late Friday.

In energy trading, benchmark US crude fell 30 cents to USD 77.53 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It added USD 1.79 on Monday. Brent crude, the international standard, shed 28 cents to USD 82.04 per barrel.

In currency trading, the US dollar inched down to 147.51 Japanese yen from 148.37 yen. The euro cost USD 1.0961, up from USD 1.0941. (AP)

'Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham': UK Oppn Leader Keir Starmer on FTA with India

LONDON, Nov 21: The UK's Opposition Leader Keir Starmer has described the ups and downs of the government's negotiations towards a free trade agreement (FTA) with India as 'Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham' and committed the Labour Party to pursuing an "always happy" bilateral relationship.

During his speech at a Diwali celebration in the Houses of Parliament complex in London organised by the British Indian think tank 1928 Institute last week, Starmer referenced the Bollywood box-office hit which translates as sometimes happy, sometimes sad. India and the UK are currently in the 14th round of FTA negotiations to enhance the GBP 36-billion bilateral trading partnership, with several expected completion points having passed.

"We will be rebuilding Britain's reputation on the international stage and that means a new strategic partnership with India," said Starmer.

"The Tories are working on a free trade

agreement, I think. It's all a bit stop-and-start. In fact, you could almost call the negotiations 'Kabhi Kushi Kabhie Gham'. But Labour wants more than that — we want a deeper understanding. You can call it an always happy relationship. A relationship based on our shared values of democracy, aspiration and respect," he said.

The FTA talks began in January last year with Diwali 2022 set as the initial deadline by then prime minister Boris Johnson. Under the Prime Minister Rishi Sunak-led Tory government, no new time-lines have been set but both sides are keen to get things signed off before a general election year in India and the UK in 2024.

Meanwhile, the Opposition Labour Party, which is leading the opinion polls over the governing Conservatives ahead of the expected polls, is keen to reach out to Britain's estimated 1.9 million strong Indian diaspora electorate.

"To British Indians, I want to express my admiration and respect for everything

you do for our country. Without your efforts, this country would be diminished in so many ways," said Starmer, who was joined by senior members of his shadow cabinet at the event last Wednesday.

His shadow foreign secretary, David Lammy, shared reflections from his wide-ranging discussions with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, who was in the UK on a five-day visit last week.

"We talked, of course, about the free trade agreement. We talked about development aid and partnership across South Asia and also, Africa... about tech and digital, and the huge contribution science and tech can make in an age of AI (artificial intelligence)," he said.

In addition to leaders representing the Hindu faith, a cross-section of parliamentarians and activists joined the community cohesion-themed Diwali event which included messages of goodwill and solidarity by prominent members of the Jewish, Islamic and Christian faiths.



"In these times, the message of light over darkness, of good over evil and knowledge over ignorance is so important," said Anneliese Dodds, chair of the Labour Party and shadow women and equalities secretary. (PTI)

EXTENSION OF TUNNEL PORTALS BY CUT & COVER
E-Tender Notice No. CON/2023/OCT/04 Dated: 20-10-2023. Open tender through e-Tendering System is invited from experienced and reputed Contractor (s)/firm (s) for the following works: **E-Tender No. CE/CON/J-7/TN/2023/06. Name of work:** Extension of Tunnel portals by cut & cover (Portal-1 of Tunnel No. 3 by 30m, Portal-1 of Tunnel No. 4 by 36m & Portal-2 of Tunnel No. 7 by 30 m) in between Vangalchugpara to Khongsang under jurisdiction of Dy. CE/CON/Jiribam in connection with construction of new BG Railway line from Jiribam to Imphal. **Tender Value:** ₹13,44,13,485.42. **Date & time of closing of Tender:** 14.30 hrs. of 07-12-2023 & opening at 15.30 hrs. of 07-12-2023. For details please visit www.ireps.gov.in.
Chief Engineer/Con/7
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
 (Construction Organisation)
 Serving Customers With A Smile

AFFIDAVIT

I, Sri Ajay Singh Karki, resident of Vill.- Hawaitpur, PO- Hawaitpur, PS- Kheroni, Dist.- West Karbi Anglong, Assam, affirm that my father's correct name is Lakshman Singh Karki, whereas in some of my documents it has been recorded as Laxman Singh Karki, and my mother's correct name is Sabita Karki, whereas in some of my documents it has been recorded as Sabita Karki.

Lakshman Singh Karki, i.e., my father's correct name, and Laxman Singh Karki are the names of the same and one person and Sabita Karki, i.e., my mother's correct name, and Sabita Karki are the names of the same and one person.

LOST

I, Junmoni Das, S/o- Kushal Das have lost the H.S.L.C. marksheet bearing the Roll--B19 625, No--0288, in the year of April 2019 while I was on the way from Kachua towards Kampur on 15/11/2023. If it is found by anyone please contact address below.

Junmoni Das,
 S/o - Kushal Das.
 Lanka Gaon.
 PO- D Dapara.
 PS- Kachua.
 Dist- Nagaon.
 Ph no- 9395117356.
 Pin- 782428.

18th session of AASU commences at Lakshminath Bezbarua Khetra, Morigaon

HT Correspondent

MORIGAON, Nov 21: The 18th session of the All Assam Students' Union (AASU), the largest student organisation in the country, began on Tuesday at Lakshminath Bezbarua Khetra in Morigaon. The event is set to conclude on November 23 and has attracted over ten thousand delegates from across the state.

The vibrant atmosphere at Lakshminath Bezbarua Khetra was evident from the morning, with the main meeting hall dedicated to the martyrs of the 1974 food movement, Gagen Ingti, and Putul Saikia. The main entrance gate, modelled after the Patekibori Satra, added to the symbolic significance of the venue.

The inaugural day saw the participation of thousands of student representatives from various parts of Assam and the North-east. The session's opening was marked by the inauguration by Jurshing Bordoloi, president of the historic Tiwa Rajdarbar. The main stage, dedicated to the martyrs Gagen Ingti and Putul Saikia, was inaugu-



rated by Dr Lilakanta Barthakur, principal of Morigaon College.

Several events were inaugurated during the day, including the guest house by

prominent educationist Punaram Nath, the late Professor Pradip Kumar Saikia Memorial Book Fair by Dr Kamal Chandra Nath, the late educationist Deben-dranath Hazarika Memorial Trade Fair by Dibyajyoti Tamuli, and the food fair by Naveen Chandra Konwar. Additionally, the quiz and debate competitions were inaugurated by Dr Bishnu Prasad Upadhyay and Dr Bhaben Chandra Neog, principals of Morigaon Ghankanta Barua College and Jagiroad College, respectively.

The afternoon session involved the registration of delegates, and the delegates' camp was inaugurated by the chief advisor of the reception committee and former MLA Harendra Bora. The event will feature the opening ceremony by veteran artist Ashok Deka on Wednesday. The present executive committee of AASU will hold its last central executive meeting at night. Representatives from six districts of the state arrived in Morigaon on Tuesday for the session.

Pijush Hazarika addresses BJP party meeting in Kokilamari



HT Correspondent

DEMOW, Nov 21: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Nitai-Panidehing Mandal organised a Jana Sabha in Kokilamari near Demow of Thowra Constituency on Monday, with the presence of state water resources minister Pijush Hazarika.

Thowra MLA Sushanta Borgohain welcomed the attendees, and Pranab Chetia, secretary of BJP District Committee, anchored the meeting.

During his address, state water resources minister Pijush Hazarika highlighted the government's efforts in the last two years, providing ₹ 34 crore to Thowra Constituency from the Water Resources Department. The foundation stone laid at the event signifies an erosion protection scheme involving Geo Bag protection and

Porcupine screens.

Minister Hazarika outlined the developmental works undertaken in Assam under the leadership of chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma. He criticised the Congress Party and APCC president Bhupen Borah. Urging people to cast their votes for the BJP Party, Hazarika expressed confidence in winning 12 seats in the upcoming Lok Sabha Election.

After the meeting, Hazarika, in a media interaction, predicted significant victory margins for the BJP, citing increased support compared to the previous Jorhat Lok Sabha Election. The event saw the participation of Thowra MLA Sushanta Borgohain, Jorhat MP Topon Kumar Gogoi, Mayor Borgohain (District BJP President), and other BJP leaders from Thowra and Nitai Panidehing Mandal.

Cattle heads recovered from car in Sootea

HT Correspondent

BISWANATH CHARIALI, Nov 21: In a recent incident in Sootea, an 120 car with registration number AS 02 AH 0403 met with an accident on NH 15 on Mornoi bridge near Sootea police station. The driver of the car fled the accident scene, leaving the car behind.

Upon inspection by the Sootea police, three cattle heads were found inside the car. The police team recovered the cattle heads and seized the car. It was revealed that the cow smugglers are using new techniques for cattle trading, often involving the theft of cows from household cowsheds.

The incident underscores the challenges faced by law enforcement in curbing cattle smuggling, with smugglers adopting creative methods to evade authorities.

Leopard injures one

HT Correspondent

SIVASAGAR, Nov 21: Early on Tuesday morning, a mature leopard entered the campus of Sivasagar Commerce College, situated on the banks of the historic Sivasagar Borpukhuri. The leopard reportedly injured a man in the nearby police colony before seeking refuge in the marshy area of Jamuna Garkhawoi.

Forest department officials are currently attempting to locate the leopard for tranquilization. The incident has raised concerns about the presence of wild animals in populated areas, highlighting the need for wildlife management measures to ensure the safety of both humans and animals.

Police fire on drug mafia in Nagaon, one injured

HT Correspondent

NAGAON, Nov 21: In the early hours of Tuesday, police fired on a suspected drugs mafia, identified as Hekmat Ali, at Nagaon Borghat bypass chariali. The incident occurred after the arrest of Ali, who was found in possession of suspected narcotics, including brown sugar, in the Sam-aguri Bijaagaoon area on Monday afternoon.

A police team led by SDPO, Kalibor, apprehended Ali and seized ₹ 32,000 in cash along with his luxury car (registration number AS02AM 5097). Following Ali's statement, the police were en route to Nagaon Borghat bypass to conduct another raid on a drugs dealer. However, as the police vehicle reached Borghat bypass chariali, the arrested drugs mafia allegedly attacked the police personnel, attempting to escape. Faced with this situation, the police fired on Ali, injuring him in the right leg. He was immediately admitted to Nagaon BF Civil Hospital and later referred to Gauhati Medical College and Hospital for further treatment. The incident unfolded as the police sought to control the situation during the arrest and prevent the escape of the suspected drugs offender.

Successful conclusion of Byatikram's International Writer's Meet 2023 in Guwahati

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Nov 21: Byatikram MASDO celebrated the successful conclusion of the second edition of the "Byatikram International Writer's Meet 2023" in Guwahati from November 16th to 19th. The four-day event brought together distinguished poets and writers from nine countries for a celebration of literature and cultural exchange.

Participating writers included Ahmed Al-Shahway (Egypt), Dr Malachi Edwin Vethamani (Malaysia), Jona Burghardt (Argentina), Maja Panajotova (Bulgaria), Shastri Bakry & Amri Rivani (Indonesia), Sofya Yechina (Russia), Tobias Burghardt (Germany), and Mohammad Aminur Rahman (Bangladesh), alongside notable Indian writers.

The inaugural ceremony, held at Hotel Vivanta,

NEEPCO observes Vigilance Awareness Week 2023

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Nov 21: The North Eastern Electric Power Corporation Limited (NEEPCO) observed Vigilance Awareness Week from October 30 to November 5, 2023, in various offices and projects across the country, following the guidelines of the Central Vigilance Commission. The theme for this year's Vigilance Awareness Week was "Say no to corruption; commit to the Nation."

The awareness week, observed annually during the week of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's birthday (October 31), reaffirms the commitment to promoting integrity and probity in public life through citizen participation. NEEPCO believes that corruption hinders the nation's

progress, emphasizing the need for vigilance across all sections of society.

On October 30, 2023, the chief vigilance officer (CVO) administered the pledge at the headquarters, with senior officers from technical, finance, and human resource wings in attendance. Similar pledge administrations occurred in Guwahati office and other projects/offices, conducted by Heads of Projects (HOPs) or Senior Most Officers.

Banners displaying the observance of Vigilance Awareness Week 2023, along with banners promoting awareness about a Corruption-Free India for a developed nation, were prominently placed in all NEEPCO offices.

Sensitization programs, including talks and discussions on the theme, took place at various project locations, such as TGBPP, RHEP, PHEP, TrHEP, AGTCCPP, and Corporate HQ. Talks on Preventive Vigilance, Discipline, and Punishment (PIDPI) were delivered in all NEEPCO projects and offices. Special activities, such as volleyball competitions, walkathons, debates, quiz competitions, essay writing competitions, and essay and drawing competitions in schools, were organized to raise awareness about corruption and the importance of vigilance. The events aimed to instill a sense of responsibility and commitment to integrity among NEEPCO employees and the communities they serve.

BTR govt celebrates thanksgiving ceremony marking three years of peace and progress



HT Correspondent

KOKRAJHAR, Nov 21: The Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) government organised a grand thanksgiving ceremony at SAI Stadium in Kokrajhar on Monday to celebrate three years of peace and progress. The event was attended by a massive gathering, acknowledging the success of the UPPL-BJP-GSP alliance government in the BTR.

During the ceremony, gratitude was extended to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union home minister Amit Shah, and Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma for their unwavering support during the

government formation and their continued commitment to the progress of the Bodoland Territorial Region.

The celebration included virtual addresses by distinguished personalities, such as Rajmohan Gandhi (grandson of Mahatma Gandhi), Tapan Kumar Deka (IPS Director IB, Govt of India), Dr Niketu Iralu (statesman & peace activist), and Nitin Gokhale (strategic analyst). A spectacular display of torchlight illuminated the path to peace and progress in the BTR.

The event showcased multi-community cultural demonstrations, and prominent figures like Pramod

Boro (chief executive member of BTR), Assam cabinet ministers Ashok Singhal and Urkhao Gwra Brahma, deputy CEM Gabinda Chandra Basumatary, and MLAs Lawrence Islary, Jiron Basumatary, and Joyanta Basumatary were in attendance.

CEM Pramod Boro expressed gratitude for the transformation of Bodoland from a region of violence and fear to one of peace and progress. He credited the leadership of PM Narendra Modi, home minister Amit Shah, and chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma for their efforts in ushering peace in the region.

Minister Urkhao Gwra Brahma highlighted the successful completion of three years of the BTR government under the leadership of CEM Pramod Boro. He emphasised the instrumental role of PM Narendra Modi, home minister Amit Shah, and chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma in restoring peace to the region. Brahma expressed confidence in achieving new heights of progress and development under their visionary leadership.

Body of drowned youth recovered after 14 days in Dibrugarh

HT Correspondent

DIBRUGARH, Nov 21: The body of a youth who drowned in the Brahmaputra River 14 days ago was found floating at Mohanaghat area in Dibrugarh on Tuesday morning. The deceased has been identified as Ananta Kakoti. Ananta Kakoti and his brother Diganta Kakoti drowned in the

Brahmaputra River on November 8 while offering pind dan (homage to the departed soul) at Mohanaghat. Diganta fell into the river while going to offer pind, and his younger brother Ananta jumped in to rescue him. Unfortunately, both of them drowned due to the strong current. The body of Diganta Kakoti was found floating in the

Mohanaghat area on November 13. After 14 days of search, Ananta Kakoti's body was recovered on Tuesday morning. The family members have confirmed the identity, and the body has been sent for postmortem. Once the postmortem is completed, the body will be handed over to the family for the last rites.

Legal sensitisation program on women's safety held at Assam Women's University

HT Correspondent

JORHAT, Nov 21: A legal sensitisation program focusing on the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH) and other relevant laws was conducted by the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Jorhat, in collaboration with Assam Women's University. The event took place at the university's Auditorium on Monday, targeting faculty and students.

The secretary-cum-judicial officer, Devojoyti Bhuyan, delivered the welcome address to kick off the program. Dr Ajanta Borgohain Rajkonwar, the Vice-Chancellor of Assam Women's University, served as the chief guest. She emphasized the significance of the POSH Act in protecting women and stressed the need for its awareness across all

sections of society.

P Das, District & Sessions Judge-cum-Chairman of DLSA, Jorhat, spoke as the guest of honour. He highlighted that while there are laws for the protection and prohibition of crimes against women, lack of awareness acts as a significant barrier to achieving their objectives.

Sanjukta Bhuyan, district mission coordinator at the District Hub for Empowerment of Women, Jorhat, served as a resource person, delivering a detailed PowerPoint presentation on the POSH Act. The program concluded with remarks and a vote of thanks from Tapan Kuman Gohain, the Registrar of Assam Women's University. The initiative aimed to raise awareness and educate the university community about legal measures to ensure the safety of women at the workplace.



Khanapara, featured an introduction to the global poets and was inaugurated by Dr Rita Chowdhury, a prominent Assamese writer. Special felicitations were presented by the Jeevan Ram Mungi Devi Goenka Public Charitable Trust.

Governor reviews labour welfare and tea tribes department activities



HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Nov 21: Governor Gulab Chand Kataria chaired a meeting at Raj Bhavan to assess the activities of the Labour Welfare Department. In the presence of labour welfare department minister Sanjoy Kishan, principal secretary B Kalyan Chakravarty presented an overview of the department's initiatives.

The presentation covered various schemes aimed at the well-being of the state's working population, including budget utilisation, factory rules, and inspection regulations. The Governor acknowledged the

crucial role of the department in conducting factory inspections to ensure the safety of labourers. He emphasised the need to take decisive actions against child labour and urged the department to focus on the rehabilitation of rescued children, providing them access to education and healthcare.

Highlighting both central and state government schemes for labourers' welfare, the Governor urged the department to raise awareness about these schemes within the labour community. Additionally, he addressed the pension issue of the working class.

In a separate meeting on the Welfare of Tea Tribes, minister Sanjoy Kishan and principal secretary Dr JB Ekka presented an overview of the department's activities. Governor Kataria stressed the paramount importance of education for the tea garden community. He urged the implementation of measures for student coaching and creating awareness about scholarship opportunities. The Governor also emphasised the need to increase scholarship amounts for students from the tea tribe and Adivasi communities.

The meetings were attended by senior officials from the Labour Welfare Department, Welfare of Tea Tribes and Adivasi Department, and Raj Bhavan.

Tragic accident claims lives of two college students in Dibrugarh

HT Correspondent

DIBRUGARH, Nov 21: In a heart-wrenching incident, two students from Lahowal College lost their lives in a tragic accident near Bokul, 5 km from Dibrugarh. The incident occurred on Tuesday afternoon when a speeding KTM bike carrying three final-year Higher Secondary students lost control and collided with a metallic road sign post. The victims, identified as Abhijit Baruah and Ridip Chetia, succumbed to their injuries at the scene, while the third student, Akash Deep Baruah, sustained critical injuries and was

rushed to the Assam Medical College and Hospital for treatment.

Eyewitnesses reported that the cause of the accident was attributed to triple riding and over-speeding. The accident has cast a pall of sorrow in the area, impacting the students and teachers of Lahowal College. Local residents expressed concern about the trend of over-speeding by youngsters, emphasizing the need for the traffic department to address the issue more effectively. They pointed out that negligence in enforcing traffic regulations has contributed to such incidents. Over-speeding and

rash driving have been identified as significant factors leading to road accidents in the region.

Residents urged youths, especially college students, to recognize the seriousness of these issues and adhere to traffic rules to prevent further tragedies. This accident follows another recent hit-and-run incident in Dibrugarh, where a worker from Jalan South tea estate lost her life, and five others sustained severe injuries. The injured individuals are currently receiving treatment at the Assam Medical College and Hospital (AMCH).



বাজীৰু নিৰ্বাচন আয়োগ, অসম
State Election Commission, Assam

Check Your Name in Final North Cachar Hills
Autonomous Council Electoral Roll

Navigate to <https://sec.assam.gov.in/electoral-roll/NCHAC-2023/>

Download PDF Electoral Roll

1 Select District Name

2 Select Constituency Name

3 Select Polling Station Name

Download

Janasanyog /D/13814/23/22-Nov-23

QUOTE OF THE DAY

The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.- Eleanor Roosevelt

December 3: All awaiting keenly

As the assembly elections in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh loom on December 3, political tension escalates, with both the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Congress closely monitoring the record turnout, led notably by women voters. The BJP asserts that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's charisma remains an electoral asset, while the Congress anticipates significant wins, potentially shaking the BJP's stronghold in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. Crucially, December 3 marks a pivotal moment for the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA). Depending on the results, INDIA will chart its course for alliance talks ahead of the upcoming Lok Sabha polls. The success of the Opposition's attempt at unity hinges on this, especially considering the setback when the Congress chose to contest independently in Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh. In Madhya Pradesh, the Congress posed a formidable challenge to the ruling BJP, prompting a reliance on Modi's image. Simultaneously, the Samajwadi Party's seat-sharing plea was rejected, leading to exchanges of words between party leaders.

The INDIA bloc, after an optimistic start, faces uncertainties, with Rajasthan also awaiting its turn to influence the political narrative. The prevailing anticipation leans towards Congress victories in all three states, solidifying its position as a formidable force and affirming the INDIA bloc's reliance on Congress leadership. December 3 serves as the litmus test for the INDIA bloc's relevance, determining whether it will emerge as the defining alliance for the 2024 general elections. Conversely, BJP victories could unravel the INDI-Alliance, dealing a blow to its constituents. The vulnerability of the INDI-Alliance is attributed to the Congress's actions. The original concept aimed at presenting a united front against the BJP, but the Congress's reluctance to share seats in key states disrupted this unity. A Congress triumph in Rajasthan would further underscore its self-sufficiency within the alliance, emphasizing that the INDIA bloc cannot thrive without Congress leading from the front. The harsh reality is that, among the INDI-Alliance parties, only the Congress holds the potential to defeat the BJP. The BJP's reliance on women voters, particularly those benefiting from the Prime Minister's welfare schemes, adds an intriguing dimension. The extension of the free ration scheme for five more years was a strategic move, aimed at securing support from women who prioritize food security over other considerations.

December 3 will also unveil the electorate's stance on the INDIA bloc's demand for a 'Caste Census'. Congress victories would validate the need for such a census, reinforcing Rahul Gandhi's vocal advocacy. Conversely, BJP wins may indicate a weariness with caste dynamics influencing elections. The call for a 'Caste Census' aligns with the Opposition's push for equitable participation of Other Backward Castes in governance. Congress victories would signify that the era of 'Mandal' politics is far from over, posing a formidable challenge to the BJP's 'Kamandal' narrative. Rahul Gandhi's departure from traditional Congress thinking on the 'Caste Census' may resonate with the electorate, reflecting in the December 3 results and affirming the Congress as the linchpin of the INDI-Alliance. In its current form, the Congress strives to reclaim its former glory amid a growing discontent with Modi's rule. The timing appears opportune, with a surge in the Congress's winnability rating, marking a significant shift after a decade of political dynamics. December 3 emerges as the D-Day when numerous political arguments will find resolution, shaping the trajectory of Indian politics in the coming years.

Far Right outsider Javier Milei wins presidential elections in Argentina

By: Satyaki Chakraborty

In a big setback to the Left in Latin American region, Far Right outsider Javier Milei defeated the Left coalition's Peronist economy minister Sergio Massa in a close contest in the Presidential elections held on Sunday November 19. Milei got around 55 per cent of the votes polled as against the Peronist minister and sealed his election as the new President of the second largest country in the Latin American continent.

The victory of the Far Right candidate in the Argentina presidential elections is a reversal of the process of pink tides in the Latin American countries in the presidential elections of the last two years. After the election of the leftwing Morena party candidate Obrador as the President of Mexico in 2018, in most of the presidential elections in the region, the left wing candidates won. These countries so far include Bolivia, Peru, Chile, Guatemala, Honduras, Columbia and most importantly Brazil. Only on October 15 this year, the leftwing candidate got defeated in Ecuador in the presidential elections. After that, the right victory took place in Argentina. The term of the President is for four years. The victory of the Far Right Milei has both political and economic implications for the immediate future of the economy of the region. Milei, who is called the Donald Trump of Argentina, has a completely different political and economic perspective about the future of the Argentine economy and its links with the other countries of the region. He fought on a completely different platform as against the pro public sector programme of the Peronist government.

His campaign promise to dollarize Argentina, if enacted, is expected to thrust the country into a new developmental path. No country of Argentina's size has previously turned over the reins of its own monetary policy to Washington and the multinational corporations. With his coming, the collaboration planned between Mexico, Brazil and Argentina—the three largest economies of the continent for having synergy in economic activities, will also get a jolt. Brazil and Mexico are bent on diluting the role of the US companies

in the development of their respective economies, but the President elect wants full involvement of the US in the economic rehabilitation of Argentina which is facing an inflation rate of around 140 per cent this year.

Milei, a social conservative with ties to the American right, opposes abortion rights and has called climate change a "lie of socialism." He has promised to slash government spending by closing Argentina's ministries of culture, education, and diversity, and by eliminating public subsidies. Milei's programme of cutting the role of the state in development of Argentina has been welcomed by his mentor Donald Trump. Who tweeted on his platform Truth 'I am proud of you. Make Argentina great again.'

Outside of his controversial plan for dollarization, Milei's political program includes slashing regulations on gun control and transferring authority over the penitentiary system from civilians to the military; both measures part of a tough-on-crime approach. He proposes using public funds to support families who choose to educate their children privately and even privatizing the health sector, which in Argentina has always been in public hands. This specific plan for dismantling the government subsidized health system was one of the key points in the campaign by the Left candidate Massa.

The Left coalition has accepted the verdict gracefully and preparing for the next round of battle. The Peronists and its Left allies have ruled Argentina for many terms and have solid base among the underprivileged. The coalition leaders are waiting for the takeover of the new President and the result of the implementation of his promised programmes. Political analysts are of the view that in a vast country like Argentina it is not possible to give relief to the underprivileged by cutting the role of the state. Already, the country's population is polarized. The impact of Milei's unconventional programmes will decide which way the wind will blow during 2024. The Left in other countries of Latin America are watching with keen interest the coming developments in the crisis ridden economy of Argentina. (IPA Service)

Opposition in Bangladesh failing to unseat Sheikh Hasina

Many keen political observers believe that the principal opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) has come to a dead end on the road. Their strategy has been violent to demand that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina should step down and an interim government to hold a free, fair and inclusive national election.

BNP has announced to boycott the upcoming national election in January 2024. The party and its alliance have called for a countrywide general strike (hartal) and blockade (oborod).

The blockade was announced in protest of breaking up the BNP's 28 October rally allegedly by police in conjunction with the 'golden boys' of the governing Awami League. Political historian Mohiuddin Ahmad said the opposition alliance envisages winning the election. If they access that they will not win, or even win a reasonable number of seats in the parliament, then they threaten to boycott the elections. Demanding Hasina to quit power and form an interim government to oversee the elections is not happening. The rewritten constitutional provisions have deleted the sections for holding elections under a caretaker government, said Ahmad.

Winter in Bangladesh comes as a blessing when flowers bloom across the gardens and parks in the country. The village women prepare traditional pita (traditional cake made from fresh rice harvest). Some schools are done with their final exam. While others plan vacations during the winter.

The vibrant tourist industry is now challenged with negative business. This awkward situation has been caused by opposition actions and the governing party along with its alliance joining the election fest. In fear of political actions, the customers cancelled their vacation plans.

Ahmad said it is understood what the BNP wants. But the party leaders before they were arrested and sent to prison had not spelled out what they wanted to do after they won the election.

They have not promised that they will abrogate all draconian laws which hinder democracy. They did not say they would ensure accountability and transparency and zero-tolerance for corruption and human rights abuse of law enforcement agencies.

They did not say that the judiciary would become independent with no political influence and not harass and intimidate opposition, critics, and dissidents. The opposition party has not spoken a word about freedom of expression, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly and freedom of the press. Arson, agitation and protest rallies will not change the policy of the government. After boycotting the election they have nowhere to go but sink in a black hole. There are reasons BNP is aggressive, arrogant and refuses to dialogue with the government parties. Thus arrogance of the BNP has led the party to the end of the road.

Nonetheless, BNP for long is leaderless or rudderless and floating without any compass. The present party leaders are powerless and do not have the guts to manage the party autonomously. It's no longer news that BNP is managed by a remote controller – sitting in London by a self-exiled leader. The party chairperson Khaleda Zia is serving jail terms and is restricted in her house. She is barred from politics and unable to contest any elections. The ailing leader with medical complications often shuttles between her home and the hospital.

The party's de facto leader Tarique Rahman (56) is Senior Vice-Chairman of BNP. A spoiled brat of the military dictator General Ziaur Rahman (1977-1981) and former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia. The 93-year-old former President Prof Badrud-za Chowdhury once blamed Tarique arbitrarily established a political "powerhouse outside the Prime Minister's Office" when her mother Khaleda was the Prime Minister (2001-2006).

Tarique never attended any BNP's central committee or high command's meetings, but he dictated his decisions. Several ministers and secretaries of various ministries sought his decision and approval of government projects from the popularly known place in upscale Banani, the 'Hawa Bhaban', the office of the delinquent.

His schoolmates said he was a flop in the class exam. A below-average student in BAF Shaheen School and College in Dhaka was a timid person and not vocal. He was kicked out of the school for failing

an annual exam. Later he was a dropout from studies. The high school certificate and college degree were obtained fraudulently. Khaleda Zia never expressed embarrassment that her son established a parallel government. She never stopped him from messing with government administration.

Instead, she indulged his son to run an unauthorised powerhouse and also rein the party. Corruption during Khaleda Zia's regime was not spatial but horizontal – the 'prince' did it all. Discontentment among the senior party leaders and ministers began to surface, which the Prime Minister tried to pacify. He hated the senior BNP

leaders including those Ministers who were inducted into the newly born party by his assassinated father Ziaur Rahman. He surprised many BNP leaders. He advocated that the country should be governed by new generation (XGen) politicians and not left with the 'old haggards'.

In the October 2001 election, understanding that the BNP may not be elected to power, he cleverly forged an alliance with the Islamist party Jamaat-e-Islami, which surprised many BNP leaders.

In fact, several senior BNP leaders and ministers were 1971 liberation war veterans and also those from the leftists and communists who joined the nationalist party during the tenure of Zia were uncomfortable with the presence of Jel. The Islamist party opposed the independence of Bangladesh and collaborated with marauding Pakistan troops. The youths of Jel were recruited to form the death squad, Al Badr.

The death squad, a secret outfit abducted hundreds of intellectuals, tortured them in secret locations and later killed them, which was the saddest episode of the liberation war history.

The Pakistan military committed genocide of 3 million, targeting the Hindus, but Muslims who belonged to the Awami League and people sympathetic to independent Bangladesh were also slaughtered and buried in hundreds of mass graves all over the country.

The occupation forces deliberately used rape as a weapon of war to create a new generation of "saccha (genuine) Pakistanis". The crackdown created 10 million war refugees of Hindus and Muslims alike.

The war refugees were forced to take shelter in neighbouring states of India. The war has also caused internal displacement of 25 million in search of safe refuge.

The refugees were sheltered in India until Bangladesh was liberated in December 1971. Millions of refugees trekked home to their homesteads only to find their villages were parched, houses looted and torched by local militia. The Jel leader of the eastern province of Pakistan, Ghulam Azam, fled to Pakistan in 1971 living behind his compatriots and Islamic militia to fight alongside the Islamic army.

Later Jel party was banned. Imbued in the 1974 constitution and declared that any party with a religious objective will not be registered as a political party.

Civil society challenged the self-styled professor Ghulam Azam as the Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh in 1991, arguing that he was a citizen of Pakistan and should be deported. He, however, held the position until 2000. Azam hated the independence of Bangladesh and believed the territory (Bangladesh) would be under the hegemony of India. Azam was convicted of crimes against humanity in July 2013.

In a development on November 19, the apex court upheld the scrapping of Jamaat-e-Islami's registration as a political party, barring the party from contesting any polls. The Appellate Division of Supreme Court upholds a verdict from the High Court that prevents the party from running for elected office, writes the private news portal bd-news24.com.

This means that Jel is left with no scope to contest the upcoming elections scheduled in early January. It could not be ascertained whether Jel has any alternative plan to participate in the national election. A senior journalist who is familiar with the Jel policy said that the party leaders of Majlis-e-Shura, the highest policy-making body of the Jel will meet soon, to discuss the future of the party and relay the decision to the members.

With Jel put out of circulation, the wings of the BNP have been clipped from forming an electoral alliance or having a strong ally in the anti-government movement. (The author is an award-winning independent journalist based in Bangladesh. He could be reached at salemsamad@hotmail.com)

S. African solidarity with Palestinians

By: Asad Mirza

After 7th October, following Hamas's unprecedented surprise attack on Israel, much of the international community rushed to voice its concern about the escalation in tensions, but few took a moment to condemn Israel's aggression against the Palestinians. However, as Israel continues to bomb Gaza and attack Palestinians in the occupied West Bank, several governments have started to turn critical of Israel's actions – some more directly than others. Surprisingly, even the number of nations, condemning Israel's brutal military oppression in Gaza, doesn't exceed a two-digit list.

In contrast there are some nations like South Africa, which have vociferously condemned the Israeli brutalities in Gaza on unarmed Palestinian children, youth and aged. On 17th November, the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) said he had received a joint request from five countries to investigate the situation in the Palestinian territories.

Prosecutor Karim Khan said the referral had come from South Africa, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Comoros and Djibouti. South Africa said the request was made "to ensure that the ICC pays urgent attention to the grave situation in Palestine." Though, Israel is not a member of the court and does not recognise its jurisdiction, the ICC can investigate nationals of non-member states in certain circumstances, including when crimes are alleged to have been committed in the territories of member states.

Perhaps the emotional connect between S Africa and Palestine exists because of the two prominent leaders of the non-aligned movement i.e. Nelson Mandela and Yasser Arafat, from these two countries respectively, and recalling the experience of apartheid themselves, the S African leaders could better understand the plight of the Palestinians and raise their voice in their support. The South African government has made its position clear expressing support for the Palestinians amid the ongoing attacks by Israel in the Gaza Strip, though also condemning resistance group Hamas for attacking and kidnapping Israeli civilians.

"We, who enjoy the freedom from Apartheid, can never, ever be the ones who agree to an apartheid form of oppression. This cannot be tolerated. This brutality should not be accepted." Foreign Minister Naledi Pandor said in parliament on 14th November while deliver-

ing a Ministerial Statement on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.

"These actions remind us of our experiences as Black South Africans living under Apartheid. This is one of the key reasons South Africans, like people in cities all over the world, have taken to the streets to express their anger and concern at what is taking place in Gaza and the West Bank," she said. Taking a proactive action last week, South Africa withdrew all its diplomats from Tel Aviv for consultation over Israel's assault in Gaza. The S African government also instructed the Foreign Ministry to take the necessary diplomatic measures to deal with the conduct of the Israel ambassador to South Africa, Eliav Belotserkovsky, whose conduct, they said is becoming very untenable. Belotserkovsky is accused of disparaging comments against people raising their voices against attacks on Palestinians.

South Africa is among a handful of African countries maintaining diplomatic ties with both Israel and Palestine. Yet, it has strongly advocated for Palestinian freedom and has called for a two-state solution.

Lesiba Teffo, a political scientist at the University of South Africa, commenting on the S African government's response told Anadolu news agency that S Africa and Palestine have had historic relations for decades and that it is important for them to support the Palestinian cause for freedom. "Palestine was with South Africa during the struggle against apartheid, while Britain and America never supported us but they were ever supporting Israel. This context is important," he told Anadolu. Teffo also said South Africa has been consistent in supporting Palestine over the years.

Dirk Kotze, another professor of politics at the same university, told Anadolu that South Africa's ruling African National Congress (ANC) has had historical links with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) since the time of late anti-apartheid hero and first Black South African President Nelson Mandela. Siyabulela Mandela, the great-grandson of Nelson Mandela in an interview, said that despite South Africa being liberated from the senseless violence and oppression, he (Nelson) was able to recognise the fact that our freedom is not complete until the people of

DEGREE OF THOUGHT By: Saleem Samad

advocates that the country should be governed by new generation (XGen) politicians and not left with the 'old haggards'.

In the October 2001 election, understanding that the BNP may not be elected to power, he cleverly forged an alliance with the Islamist party Jamaat-e-Islami, which surprised many BNP leaders.

In fact, several senior BNP leaders and ministers were 1971 liberation war veterans and also those from the leftists and communists who joined the nationalist party during the tenure of Zia were uncomfortable with the presence of Jel. The Islamist party opposed the independence of Bangladesh and collaborated with marauding Pakistan troops. The youths of Jel were recruited to form the death squad, Al Badr.

The death squad, a secret outfit abducted hundreds of intellectuals, tortured them in secret locations and later killed them, which was the saddest episode of the liberation war history.

The Pakistan military committed genocide of 3 million, targeting the Hindus, but Muslims who belonged to the Awami League and people sympathetic to independent Bangladesh were also slaughtered and buried in hundreds of mass graves all over the country.

The occupation forces deliberately used rape as a weapon of war to create a new generation of "saccha (genuine) Pakistanis". The crackdown created 10 million war refugees of Hindus and Muslims alike.

Palestine are free.

Siyabulela, an independent consultant on human rights, peace and conflict resolution, and spoke with Global National's Farah Nasser while in Toronto where he was interviewed on stage at the Journalists for Human Rights annual gala.

Mandela said that his great-grandfather, the first Black president of South Africa, was considered idealistic for thinking that there was a solution to apartheid in his country and people would consider it a miracle if it happened - and then it did.

Meanwhile last week, President Cyril Ramaphosa joined a growing chorus of international voices against what many has termed "the genocidal operation" of the IDF in Gaza.

The SA Parliament also last week debated whether to cut diplomatic ties with the Jewish state. Leading parties in parliament, notably the ruling ANC and the third largest party, Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), favour cutting diplomatic ties with Israel.

In recent years, human rights organisations and legal experts have increasingly described Israel's policies toward Palestinians as apartheid, adding to a longstanding

debate about whether this is an accurate way to categorise the country's practices.

Human rights groups have argued that the Israeli government's policies on land access, restrictions on movement, and limitations on the right to vote meet the ICC's standard and that it has institutionalised racism against Palestinians in order to ensure Israeli Jews remain the dominant group across Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories (OPT), which includes the West Bank and Gaza. Israel and its allies, including the U.S. and the European Commission, have rejected this assessment.

Overall, it makes one wonder what is holding back the so-called Islamic states from taking any firm step against the Israeli aggression, like S Africa? Their own selfish interests and their lust for power, as most of them are monarchies and in no way are obligated to uphold the wish of their people, which recent demonstrations in some Arab states have shown. It would not be wrong to surmise that the current conflict has shown the leopard's true spots. (The author is a Delhi-based senior political and international affairs commentator)

POST BAG

(Head) ache for India in the finals

Sir/Ma'am

It was a very painful sight to watch almost 1.3 lakh Indian supporters in the Narendra Modi stadium and a billion outside with sulking faces and drooping heads. Who would have imagined a team that has performed so phenomenally well in the whole series would have to bite the dust on the night of the final! The Indian team got off to a flying start with Rohit Sharma unleashing mayhem on the Australian bowling attack smashing a quickfire 47 off 31 balls but after his dismissal, it was like we were watching a white ball test match. The intent was not visible the last night which is hurting more than the loss. The Australian team on the other hand proved that no matter how they performed the whole series they are a completely different side when they are in the finals. Travis Head and Marnus Labuschagne made it look so easy which was looking difficult for the Indian team. We are sad but it doesn't mean that we are not proud of our Men in Blue. We will keep supporting and bolstering their courage so that they get the Yellow brigade the next time.

Noopur Baruah,
Tezpur
barooahnoopur@gmail.com

Discussion on 'Career Related Workshop' at AASU's Morigaon Session

Sir/Ma'am

The 18th session of the All Assam Students' Union (AASU) started in Morigaon on November 21, 22 and 23. This session discusses 'career related workshops'. By participating (offline/online) career awareness meetings organized by various educational institutions, groups, organizations and answering questions on various career topics free of charge by phone (9435188630) on every Saturday in between 6pm to 9pm, I have come to know that after passing the final examinations of high school and higher secondary, most of the students are not aware of what kind of career opportunities they can get in the future by studying in various subjects. In view of this issue, AASU may take special steps. The various branches of the All Assam Students' Union, such as regional, sub-divisional and district branches, can take measures to organize 'career related workshops' at all functions organized on various occasions and students will benefit from emphasis on publishing career articles along with other articles in Souvenir of various sessions. Students will also benefit from gifting career related books at special felicitation programs organized by AASU. I hope, the 18th session of the All Assam Students' Union will discuss these issues and adopt a resolution.

Dr. Buljit Buragohain,
Azara, Guwahati – 781 017,
Mobile No: 09435188630
buljit@gmail.com

Mahua Moitra's plight is testament to the kismet of women politicians in India

By: **Prerna Dhoop and Vandana Dhoop**

At a time when parliament finally passed a law reserving one-third of total seats for women in the House of the People and Legislative Assembly of every state, the targeting of MP Mahua Moitra under the guise of unsubstantiated charges is a reminder of how 'gender' and the 'performance of femininity' shape the life of women leaders across the political sphere.

Let's observe the statistics first. The Rajya Sabha has only 31 women among 239 total members and in the Lok Sabha, only 82 of the 539 members are women. When it comes to the Government of India, only 10 women find representation in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 79-member council of ministers, out of which only two hold cabinet rank. The picture at the state level is bleaker, with the national average of women in state assemblies being around 9%. India's rank on the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index 2023 is 127 out of 146, with the country trailing behind neighbours like Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

In the 2019 general election, out of the 435 candidates that the Bharatiya Janata Party fielded, 12.6% were women. Women constituted 12.9% of the total candidates fielded by the Indian National Congress. On the other hand, some regional parties' selection of women candidates was quite commendable. Of the total number of candidates fielded by West Bengal's All-India Trinamool Congress, 37.1% were women.

Evidently, what are typically viewed as 'gender neutral' public institutions and political parties in India are exclusively 'for, by and of' men. Rather, 'masculinity' is the defining feature of Indian politics. On its own, the Women's Reservation Act, 2023 cannot enable greater political participation of women and their equal representation in parliament and politics.

In a 2021 book titled Women, Power, and Political Representation: Canadian and Comparative Perspectives, the authors have acknowledged that the introduction of gender quotas has improved women's participation in Canadian politics. However, Canadian women still face many informal and formal barriers – not just when they seek to gain access to political power but also once they have gained that power. They have cautioned that, "women need not just be present in politics, but rather should have access to key positions of power where they can act as gatekeepers, agenda setters, and political insiders". The Moitra matter reinforces the same lesson.

Indian politics has constructed a sexual imagery of women leaders that primarily focuses on their character, physical appearance, dress, demeanour and family. They are closely watched and their performance minutely scrutinised. While their success is understated and mostly shrouded under the carpet, their failure is wholly attributed to their gender.

Indian news reporting on women MPs like Moitra is pervaded by gendered perceptions of ambition, visibility, competitiveness, suitability and capability. Her association with a

leading businessman and fight with an ex-lover over Henry, their pet dog, have become more newsworthy than her attendance and performance in parliament. Conversely, her participation in parliamentary debates, the type of questions she has raised, and the veracity of her criticisms of the kleptocratic tendencies of the ruling dispensation have been largely ignored.

None of those pillorying Moitra have bothered to analyse how many of questions she has raised in Parliament have a direct link with her businessman friend, Darshan Hiranandani, whose office staff helped her upload those questions. When it is common practice for MPs to share their login details and even one-time-passwords (OTPs) with personal assistants, office staff, policy clerks, interns and others – the authors and almost all LAMP fellows who have worked with MPs from different political parties will easily vouch for this fact – why is Mahua Moitra being singled out?

The Lok Sabha Ethics Committee, which was established in 2015 to oversee the moral and ethical conduct of members and examine cases of misconduct referred to it, has been operating without a proper written 'Code of Conduct for Members of Lok Sabha' and a mandatory 'Declaration of Members' Business Interests'. It is highly probable that in the absence of these two important documents, the committee can cherry-pick cases involving MPs from opposition parties while going easy with ruling party members. Further, the committee can also conduct hearings without following a fair, just and impartial procedure – as was seen in the Moitra mat-

ter, where she was not allowed to cross-examine those who had levelled grave charges against her. This violates the norms of natural justice in a constitutional democracy.

It has not escaped anyone's notice that the committee has been super swift to investigate Moitra's alleged association with Hiranandani. On the other hand, its response has been extremely tardy with respect to the conduct of BJP MP Ramesh Bidhuri who made communal and sexist comments against several MPs including Danish Ali, a member of the Ethics Committee.

In order to avert sexual objectification, increase their acceptability within politics and be 'likeable' among the masses, women leaders have taken to supposedly asexual, respectable and dignified titles like 'Didi' Mamata Banerjee (elder sister), 'Behenji' Mayawati (sister), 'Amma' Jayalalitha (mother). Even Moitra has chanted 'Jai Ma Durga' and invoked the powerful Hindu goddess on X (formerly Twitter) to fight off the attacks on herself from the BJP. We cannot forget that as a woman politician, she has to work overtime to not let the scandal blight her political career.

Unfortunately, there exists zero female solidarity in Indian politics. Women politicians do not get the requisite support from peers in their own political party, nor are formal institutional mechanisms available to check misogyny and bullying. When the Ethics Committee quizzed MP Moitra about her private life, none of the women members of the committee responded. Women leaders find it extremely difficult to support their ilk across party lines because they

are unable to reconcile their gender identity and political differences. Explaining the reality of female misogyny, feminist writer Chimamanda Adichie has commented, "[A]nd there are many women in the world who do not like other women." This is writ large in Indian politics.

Ireland's landmark 2009 report on 'Women's Participation in Politics' has found that factors such as 'less confidence', 'gendered culture' and 'gender bias in political parties' in candidate's selection procedures adversely affect women politicians. Particularly in India, because the Parliament, state assemblies and political parties are mainly led and run by men, the culture of behaviour and the informally accepted norms of language, views and expressions render the political sphere unsuitable for women.

Moitra walked out of the Ethics Committee's meeting as a mark of protest and lashed out against the committee's unfair procedure, manner of investigation and content of the questions. While people were left agast at her audacity, the ruling dispensation has called her remarks 'explosive'. Kimberle Crenshaw's words can be used to describe the Indian society for which "saving honour from shame is a priority. Unfortunately, this priority tends to be more readily interpreted as obliging women not to scream rather than obliging men not to hit".

With such a deep-seated culture of misogyny, what will it take for Indian lawmakers to remodel Parliament into a truly diverse, inclusive and accommodating place of work? (Courtesy: *The Wire*)

Shraddha Walkar murder: Stop isolating women in interfaith relationships

By: **Mythreya Ramesh**

We take pride in our exhaustive gender coverage. Your insights and ideas help us dig deeper and tell stories that really matter. Become a Q-Insider and shape the news with us.

The last time Shraddha Walkar's father Vikas Walkar spoke to her was in mid-2021, over the phone. This was almost a year before she was murdered, allegedly by her live-in partner Aaftab Amin Poonawala in May 2022 in Delhi's Chhatrapur. The murder came to light several months later in November 2022.

Speaking to The Quint, Vikas said, "I didn't approve of the relationship because his religion is different from ours." Shraddha Walkar was practically cut off from her family, who claim to have no idea that she was in an abusive relationship. Her friends, on the other hand, knew about Aaftab's alleged assaults – until all communication stopped in mid-May this year.

Details about how Shraddha's body was allegedly chopped into 35 pieces and disposed of across Delhi emerged on 14 November, two days after the accused – 28-year-old Aaftab – was arrested by the Delhi Police. In its 6,600-page-long charge sheet in relation to case, accessed by The Quint earlier in February, the Delhi Police wrote:

"...Tortured and tormented Shraddha decided to break up with the accused several times but she could not because she had no support system and she was largely banking on the accused, or rather, she was at no return point."

How did no one try to reach Shraddha since May?
"This is very common for women in interfaith and inter-caste marriages. They are cut off, practically disowned by their families, making it more difficult for them to not only speak about their abuse but also seek help." - Kavita Krishnan, Feminist Activist & Author, told The Quint.

Feminist activists say that while abuse is the responsibility of the abuser, one must not forget how silence and isolation enable the person, leading to brutal incidents like the Shraddha Walkar case.

"In this case, the father had not spoken to her for over a year. There are families – irrespective of their educational and financial background – who do not talk to their daughters for years because they got married or is in a relationship they do not approve of. Where do women go in such a situation, when there is a complete lack of support system?" - Shabnam Hashmi, Social Activist and Human Rights Campaigner.

Internalised guilt & 'I told you so'
It is harder for women in interfaith and inter-caste relationships to seek help against domestic abuse, because in most cases, the family 'verbally disowns' them.

"Even if they do not disown and merely disapprove of her relationship, she will still hesitate to complain about her partner for fear it will confirm their prejudices," Kavita Krishnan elaborated. Then, there is the internalised guilt.

"Survivors of abuse – in marriages and relationships that do not conform to the so-called societal norms – hesitate to even talk about it or consider their options because they chose their partner despite all odds. They want their family and friends to be there for them, not say 'I told you so,'" Krishnan told The Quint. Shraddha's 59-year-old father, too, had a similar response.

"I told her not to live with him. Yeh galat hai. I told her not to take this relationship forward... Nahi toh biradarai se bahar nikal jao. She didn't listen to me."

Isolation is exactly what the abuser wants

A Delhi Commission for Women counsellor, who works on the ground in North Delhi, noted that isolation is exactly what the abuser wants. As a part of

her day-to-day work, she counsels women in distress, including those in interfaith and inter-caste relationships.

"From what I have seen, men who are abusive want their partners to be isolated, because they know that no one will notice signs of emotional and physical abuse. For example, in Shraddha's case, Aaftab would have known that no one would try to reach out to Shraddha immediately – neither her family nor her friends because she was cut off from them. She actually took a very hard decision to stay, because she had no other choice. It makes abusers emboldened," she says.

This is true, asserted Hashmi. "The first thing that an abuser wants is to cut off the woman's relationship with her mother. When men know that their partner is being watched, that she might tell her parents who will stand up for her, or that she might reach out to help, they are more cautious. This is why the first thing any abuser wants to do is to cut off his partner's communication lines. It is the first red flag."

Self-doubt about their decision-making

Madhubala, a feminist activist, who was working with Jagori NGO, explained that apart from the internalised guilt, women in such marriages also develop self-doubt over their decision-making.

"I don't want to mince my words but our society is casteist, communal, and anti-women. It does not like it when women go beyond the role defined for them. And, when women do not conform to it, like by choosing their partner, families make two things clear – You do not belong to us, you are on your own," Madhubala said, adding that, when the relationship turns abusive, the survivors start questioning themselves and not their partner.

"I have seen multiple cases where the families say – 'Dekha tumhe yeh decision li. Hum the tumhare saath, ab kaha hai? Do you really think you can stand on your own?' But women just want to hear that their families are with them and that they can come back to their parents or friends' homes in such a situation. I cannot stress enough how emotionally taxing it is for women to come out with their stories." - Madhubala to The Quint.

Hashmi added, "There is a very small fraction of families in India that tell women that it is their right to live with dignity."

'Demand better': What can be done?

Feminist activists say that we, as a society, must demand better – put the interest of women and survivors ahead of the political issue of communalising interfaith relationships.

"Not just domestic abuse, women who are in 'love marriages' or 'relationships' hesitate to even say that their partner is alcoholic, or their marriage is increasingly becoming toxic. If parents and communities make it clear to women and stand with them, it will make a difference," Krishnan said.

"Whether it is the state government or the central government, put pressure on the elected representatives for sustained, non-judgmental and respectful justice."

"As someone who works with survivors of domestic violence, there are not enough shelter homes in the country. When we are working on the rehabilitation of one survivor, activists do not have the resources to work on another. There are times when we take survivors to our homes and offices because they have nowhere else to go. The system has completely let down women, and is not doing much to fix it." - Shabnam Hashmi to The Quint.

"The issue is not men from one community being abusive towards women from another community. Making this the focus simply surpasses the actual cause," added Krishnan. (Courtesy: *The Quint*)

Can transgender women have a period?

By: **Veronica Zambon**

Transgender women do not experience typical menstrual periods. However, people may experience physical and emotional symptoms similar to premenstrual syndrome and premenstrual dysphoric disorder.

Transgender women may undergo gender-affirming treatment, such as hormone therapy. As a side effect of hormone therapy, they may experience symptoms similar to those of premenstrual syndrome (PMS) or premenstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD).

While some symptoms of PMS and PMDD are physical, others are emotional or psychological.

In this article, we discuss whether trans women can experience symptoms similar to those of PMS. We also look at the symptoms that can result from hormone therapy and provide tips on how to track them.

The United Kingdom's National Health Service (NHS) states that a period is the part of the menstrual cycle in which blood, comprising uterine lining, leaves the body. People who do not have ovaries and a uterus do not experience periods.

However, PMS and PMDD are terms that refer to the physical and emotional symptoms that people may experience before their period begins. These conditions occur due to fluctuations in hormones.

The symptoms of PMDD are similar to those of PMS but are more severe.

Transgender women can transition in a variety of ways. One way that a person may transition is through the use of gender-affirming hormone therapy.

Transgender women who undergo hormone therapy may take oral, transdermal, or injectable versions of estrogen. They may also use anti-androgens, such as progesterone.

The anti-androgen that healthcare professionals most commonly prescribe is spironolactone, although they may also prescribe progesterone.

Hormone therapy for transgender women aims to help alleviate gender dysphoria in several ways, including:

- changing how the body distributes fat
- promoting breast growth
- reducing male pattern hair growth

Estrogen can affect the body in various ways, and transgender women may experience several side effects while taking supplemental estrogen. Progesterone can also cause side effects.

Although researchers have not studied this area of trans health,

the International Association for Premenstrual Disorders (IAPD) notes that the hormones may cause symptoms similar to those of PMDD.

Therefore, while transgender women will not experience the bleeding part of the menstrual cycle, they can experience other PMDD-like symptoms, such as sore breasts, rapid mood shifts, and irritability.

How do trans women experience PMS-like symptoms?
A anecdotal evidence suggests that transgender women experience PMS- or PMDD-like symptoms at the same time each month. However, researchers have not studied this area of transgender health.

The IAPD suggests that some transgender women may be more sensitive to estrogen hormones than others. This increased sensitivity may lead to PMDD-like symptoms.

Emotional and psychological experiences
Some transgender women report emotional and psychological symptoms similar to those of PMS.

The Office on Women's Health note that these symptoms can include:

- irritability
- tiredness
- sleeping too much or too little

- appetite changes
- anxiety
- rapid changes in mood
- loss of interest in sex

Both progesterone and estrogen can cause irritability and rapid mood shifts. Estrogen injections can also cause other symptoms, including anxiety, because they lead to high, fluctuating levels of estrogen.

Physical experiences
The possible physical symptoms of PMS in women include:

- swollen or tender breasts
- bloating
- cramping
- headaches
- gastrointestinal symptoms, such as nausea
- appetite changes

Some transgender women may experience some of these symptoms, including headaches and swollen, tender breasts, as a result of hormone therapy.

Tips for tracking PMS-like symptoms

Trans women can track their symptoms in several ways, the

most simple of which is to keep a diary. People can note down which symptoms they experience when, which may help them discover any patterns.

Another option is to use a period-tracking app. Several free and inclusive apps allow people to input a variety of symptoms. After a few cycles, the app can begin to estimate when a person will experience symptoms.

It is important to discuss any adverse symptoms or changes with a

healthcare professional. Tracking their symptoms may help people determine what is usual for them and what is not.

How to be an ally
There are many ways to be an ally to people who are transgender.

Do not make assumptions about a person's gender or sexual orientation
People should only use the pronouns that an individual uses when introducing themselves. Anyone who is not sure should ask the person rather than risk misgendering them.

It is also important to remember that people who are trans-

gender can be heterosexual, gay, lesbian, or bisexual or have another romantic or sexual orientation.

People should not assume that those who are transgender automatically have a certain sexual orientation.

Do not ask a person what their 'real name' is

Many people who are transgender change their name to one that reflects who they are, rather than using the name that they received at birth. It is important to use the name that the person introduces themselves with unless they say otherwise.

People should also avoid asking a person who is transgender what their "real name" is. This question implies that the name they have given is not who they are, invalidating them.

Do not assume a person has to transition in a certain way to be transgender

People may transition in different ways. Some people may transition socially, whereas others may transition with the help of gender-affirming procedures, such as hormones and surgery.

It is important never to say that a person is not transgender because they have not transitioned using a certain method.

Similarly, people should never ask a person who is transgender what genitals they have or ask invasive questions about their sex life. These questions are generally inappropriate to ask



Winter is here: skincare essentials for travellers

By: **Shabnaz Husain**

If you are fond of the cold weather, travelling during winter might be one of the ways to enjoy your favourite holiday destination.

Winter makes your skin really dry and travelling makes it tired. The situation is often worse for travellers, with cold weather bringing their own set of troubles.

Between the dry, cooler air, long travel, and all the changes in the schedule, diet, and environment, it's important to pack products that will moisturize and repair your skin in order to keep you looking your best.

Packing beauty essentials for a winter vacation can be quite a hassle.

Maintaining a healthy skincare routine becomes even more essential when you're on the move, and here are the skincare essentials you'll need to deal with wintry weather if you're travelling.

When you are heading on a winter vacation – stuffing a variety of sunscreen, lip balm, moisturizers, and hair styling products into your suitcase will make your journey comfortable for your outwardly outlook and refreshing your vital organs.

Winter is harsh on your skin if you are travelling to snow bound areas/mountainous hills with family in winter vacation

then your skin care regime is required to adapt to the changing seasons

Apart from passport, Aadhar cards, tickets, credit cards, which are absolutely essential travel documents, you will need the means to make yourself attractive, while travelling even though it is hard to look fashionable.

Think about travel essentials and how to limit your grooming needs, so that you look pleasing and enjoy your trip. Travelling light is an advantage, so you need items that are compact and portable. Get yourself a spacious shoulder bag and two small, plastic lined cases, for your toilet and make-up. Your beauty aids should be within easy reach, so that you can freshen up your make-up and alight from your journey looking attractive and self-confident. Searching for a lipstick or comb in a cluttered handbag can really test your patience.

A short hairdo that you can just brush and arrange is good, while for long hair, take along a headband and hair clips, to keep your hair tidy. Remember to take a scarf along to protect your hair from over-exposure to the sun, as well as from wind and dust. You will need it if you are out motoring, boating or even walking by the seaside or hills.

The make-up items and clothes you carry

depend on what your trip entails. If you are holidaying in a big city and expect to meet people, you will need a few good clothes and accessories, for dining out. Take a few in-between outfits that are neither too casual, nor too dressy. You will also need make-up cosmetics for the night. The lighting at night demands more colour, so include darker shades of lipstick, blush-on, eye-shadow and mascara. A hair-piece can provide instant glamour. Don't forget to take your perfume, one or two good accessories and a neutral evening purse that goes with your dressy outfits. These will help to add the finishing touches.

If you are on a sightseeing trip or on a vacation by the sea or mountains, the emphasis will be on comfort. Casual wrinkle-free clothes, light weight shoes and sunglasses will be needed. On a vacation, one probably needs to carry more skin care cosmetics and fewer make-up aids. An anti-tan sunscreen or sun block would be good. The effects of sun exposure are greater by the waterside, or near snow, because water and snow are reflective surfaces. By the sea, avoid sun-exposure between noon and 3 p.m. Apply broad spectrum sunscreen when out in the sun, not only on the face, but on all exposed areas. Apply the sunscreen 20 minutes before going out. If you are out in the sun for

more than an hour, re-apply the sunscreen. Use high SPF of 30 and above for sensitive skin.

Apart from sunscreen, you need skin and hair care essentials, like cleanser, moisturizer, leave-on conditioner and hair serum. For your make-up, carry powder compact, eye-pencil, kajal stick and lipsticks that are suitable for day wear. Perhaps, a lip gloss will do. By the beach, you need make up products that are "waterproof" or "long lasting" and provide a matte finish.

You will also need pressed powder (compact) and powder blush-on. Remember to take a few tissues. If you have oily skin, or the weather is hot and humid, pre-moistened tissues are what you need. Carry them in your handbag when you go out, to clean and refresh your skin. Apart from these, take a deodorant and talcum powder.

Travel adds a wonderful dimension to one's life and personality. It enriches our experience and broadens our outlook. Travel also means a time that is refreshing and renewing. There is nothing more enjoyable than getting away from everyday and unwind. If you have taken care of your travel needs, all you have to do is relax and enjoy! (The author is international fame beauty expert and is called Herbal Queen of India)

The front line of the war, now in its 7th week, has shifted to the Jabaliya camp, a dense warren of concrete buildings near Gaza City

Israeli troops battle militants across north Gaza, which has been without power or water for weeks

DEIR AL-BALAH (GAZA STRIP), Nov 21: Israeli troops battled Palestinian militants in an urban refugee camp and outside the gates of a nearby hospital on Tuesday as the army expanded operations across northern Gaza, where residents have been without electricity, water or access to humanitarian aid for weeks.



The front line of the war, now in its seventh week, has shifted to the Jabaliya camp, a dense warren of concrete buildings near Gaza City that houses refugees from the 1948 war surrounding Israel's creation and their descendants.

Israel has been bombarding the area for weeks, and the military said Hamas fighters have regrouped there and in other eastern districts after being pushed out of much of Gaza City.

Fighting has also intensified outside the Indonesian Hospital on the outskirts of Jabaliya, where a strike killed 12 people on Monday. Health officials said on Tuesday that hundreds of patients and displaced people are trapped inside with dwindling supplies after some 200 were evacuated the day before.

The war sparked by Hamas' surprise October 7 attack into Israel has exacted a heavy toll on Palestinian civilians, particularly those who remain in the north after Israel repeatedly called on people to flee south.

It's unclear how many people remain in the north, but the UN agency for Palestinian refugees estimates that some 160,000

people are still in its shelters there, even though it is no longer able to provide services. Some 1.7 million Palestinians, about three fourths of Gaza's population, have fled their homes. Hundreds of thousands of displaced people have packed into UN-run schools and other facilities across southern Gaza. As the shelters have overflowed, people have been forced to sleep on the streets outside, with little shelter from winter rains that have hit the region in recent days.

Across Gaza, there are shortages of food, water and fuel for generators to power basic infrastructure. There has been a territory-wide blackout since Israel cut off fuel imports at the start of the war.

Israel continues to strike what it says are militant targets across Gaza, including in the southern evacuation zone, often killing women and children, and officials have said it may soon expand its operations in the south.

Tens of thousands of Palestinians in the north had sheltered in hospitals, but those have steadily been emptied out as the

fighting has reached their gates, and most are no longer operational.

Marwan Abdallah, a medical worker at the Indonesian Hospital near Jabaliya, said heavy fighting prevented ambulances from bringing wounded people in. Munir al-Boursh, a senior Health Ministry official who said he was inside the hospital, told Al-Jazeera television by phone that Israeli forces had besieged it, forcing health workers to bury 50 bodies in the courtyard. "The situation is unimaginable," he said. "We are trapped inside the hospital."

There was no immediate comment from the military.

Palestinian officials said an Israeli shell struck the hospital on Monday, killing 12 people. Israel denied shelling the hospital, but said its troops returned fire on militants who targeted them from inside.

Some 200 wounded patients and their companions were evacuated from the hospital to southern Gaza on Monday, but up to 600 wounded people and some 2,000 displaced Palestinians remain stranded there, according to Gaza's Health Ministry.

A similar standoff has played out in recent days at Shifa Hospital, Gaza's largest, where over 250 patients and medical workers are stranded after the evacuation of 31 premature babies.

Israel has provided some evidence in recent days of a militant presence at Shifa, where its troops have been operating since last week. But it has yet to substantiate its claims that Hamas had a major command centre beneath the facility, allegations denied by Hamas and hospital staff.

Michael Ryan, a senior World Health Organisation official, said Monday that care for complex medical cases — including major cancer and kidney dialysis patients — is no longer available in Gaza and that remaining hospitals would likely be overwhelmed by some 5,500 births expected in the next month.

"The hospital situation — the primary health care system situation — in Gaza is catastrophic," he said. In the north, "it is the worst you can imagine."

More than 12,700 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza, according to the Palestinian Health Ministry in the West Bank. Officials there say another 4,000 are missing. Their counts do not differentiate between civilians and combatants. Israel says it has killed thousands of militants.

The Palestinian Health Ministry bases its count on information gathered by its counterpart in Hamas-ruled Gaza, which has

been unable to fully update casualty figures for more than 10 days because of the breakdown in services and communications in the north.

About 1,200 people have been killed on the Israeli side, mainly civilians during the October 7 attack, in which Hamas dragged some 240 captives back into Gaza. The military says 68 Israeli soldiers have been killed in Gaza ground operations.

The military said forces are "preparing the battlefield" in the area of Jabaliya. It said they struck three tunnel shafts where fighters were hiding and destroyed rocket launchers. Footage released by the military shows Israeli soldiers patrolling on foot as gunfire echoes around them.

Residents said there had been heavy fighting as Israeli forces tried to advance under the cover of airstrikes. "The (Israeli) occupation is trying to besiege the camp," said Hamza Abu Mansour, a university student. "They are facing stiff resistance."

It was not possible to independently confirm details of the fighting.

Military footage from other areas in the north in recent days has shown widespread destruction, with nearly every building appearing to be damaged or destroyed.

Israel, the United States and Qatar, which mediates with Hamas, have been negotiating for weeks over a hostage release that would be paired with a temporary cease-fire and the entry of more humanitarian aid. (AP)

NKorea will try again to launch a military spy satellite in the coming days

TOKYO, Nov 21: North Korea told Japan on Tuesday that it will launch a satellite in the coming days in violation of UN resolutions, its apparent third attempt to fire a military spy satellite that drew immediate rebukes from its neighbours.

North Korea is eager to operate spy satellites to deal with what it calls escalating US-led military threats. But its two previous attempts to place a spy satellite into orbit earlier this year ended in failure due to technical issues.

Japan's coast guard said North Korea notified Tokyo of its plan to launch a satellite sometime between Wednesday and November 30. The notice identified three maritime zones where debris from the rocket carrying the satellite may fall. Two are in the waters between the Korean Peninsula and China and the third in the Philippine Sea, Japanese coast guard spokesperson Kazuo Ogawa said.

Ogawa said the areas are the same as the ones North Korea identified for its failed satellite launches in May and August, implying the third attempt would have a similar flight path. North Korea has given Japan the launch information because Japan's coast guard coordinates and distributes maritime safety information in East Asia.

The North's notification came a day after rival South Korea warned it to cancel its launch or face consequences. South Korea's military suggested Seoul would suspend a 2018 inter-Korean agreement to reduce tensions and resume front-line aerial surveillance and live-firing drills in response to a North Korean satellite launch.

UN Security Council resolutions ban any satellite launches by North Korea because they are seen as a cover for testing its missile technology. North Korea says it needs a space-based surveillance system to better monitor its rivals, but South Korea says the North's launches are also designed to enhance its long-range missile programme.

Since last year, North Korea has carried out about 100 missile tests as part of its



efforts to modernise its arsenal of nuclear-capable weapons targeting the United States and its allies. Many foreign experts say the North still has the few remaining technological hurdles to overcome to possess functioning nuclear-tipped missiles.

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida asked officials to coordinate with other countries to ask North Korea to cancel its launch. He said Japanese destroyers carrying Aegis-class radars and PAC-3 missile defence systems on Okinawa have been activated to stand by in case of an unexpected development.

"Even if the purpose is to launch a satellite, if ballistic missile technology is used, it is a violation of the United Nations Security Council resolutions, and this is a matter that greatly affects the safety of the people," Kishida said.

During trilateral phone talks, senior officials from Japan, South Korea and the US affirmed their cooperation to "strongly request North Korea to cancel" its launch plan, according to Japan's Foreign Ministry. South Korea's Foreign Ministry separately urged North Korea to withdraw the launch plan immediately, saying that Seoul will sternly deal with "an illegal provocation by North Korea" in close coordination with Washington and Tokyo.

After the second launch failure, North Korea had vowed a third attempt would take place in October, but failed to follow through. South Korean officials said the delay was likely because North Korea is receiving Russian technology assistance. (AP)

Polish police arrest woman with Islamic extremist sympathies who planted explosive device in Warsaw

WARSAW, Nov 21: Polish authorities say that they have arrested and pressed charges against a 38-year-old Polish woman with Islamic extremist sympathies who planted an explosive device on a street in central Warsaw earlier this month. There were no injuries.



Police said in a statement published on Monday that the woman placed the device in Warsaw on the night of Nov. 10-11 and then took a train back to her home in western Poland.

Nobody was hurt, but the device had the potential to hurt many people, police said. "The makeshift explosive device filled with gas containers and nails could have caused a serious threat to the health and lives of many people," the statement said.

It added that she was charged with "causing danger and bringing danger to the life and health of many people, as well as preparation for causing such danger."

Police used CCTV footage to track her movements. After planting the device in

Warsaw, she headed to the central train station in the capital and then traveled to the western Polish city of Wroclaw, and was arrested at her home in the nearby town of Strzelin.

Police described the suspect as a Polish woman interested in Middle Eastern affairs, but wouldn't give any more details about her. They released a video showing police fingerprinting and handcuffing her, and also showed some of the objects they said they found in her home. Among them was an image of Osama bin Laden.

"Police officers secured items and gadgets related to the Islamic State, as well as items that could have been used to construct another explosive device," police said. (AP)

Chinese Premier Li to attend virtual G20 leaders' summit convened by India

BEIJING, Nov 21: Chinese Premier Li Qiang will attend the virtual G20 Leaders' Summit at India's invitation on Wednesday, the Chinese Foreign Ministry announced here on Tuesday.

The G20 virtual summit will take forward key outcomes and action points firmed up at the annual conclave of the grouping in September under India's presidency, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in New Delhi said in a statement.

The summit will also delve into the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war and the Israel-Hamas conflict. It is also expected to push for the effective implementation of various decisions taken at the bloc's annual summit in New Delhi over two

months back, the statement said.

Li will attend the meeting at the invitation of the Indian government, China's Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Mao Ning told a media briefing, state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

Leaders of all G20 Members, including the Chair of the African Union, as well as nine Guest countries, and Heads of 11 International Organisations, have been invited to attend the virtual summit. India hosted the G20 Summit in New Delhi on September 9-10.

India holds the G20 Presidency until November 30, 2023. The G20 Troika during the Brazilian G20 Presidency in 2024 will comprise India, Brazil, and South Africa. (PTI)

Islamabad HC reserves judgement on jail trial of Pak's ex PM Khan



ISLAMABAD, Nov 21: A two-member panel of Islamabad High Court on Tuesday reserved the judgement on an intra-court appeal by Pakistan's former premier Imran Khan against his jail trial in the cipher case.

A single-judge bench of the same court had earlier turned down the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman's appeal against his trial in the Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi. The 71-year-old former premier has been kept in the Adiala Jail since September 26 when he was shifted there from the District Jail in Attock.

The IHC panel of justices Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb and Saman Rafat Imtiaz heard the intra-court appeal and reserved the judgement after completing the hearing process.

The panel is expected to announce its judgement at 5:30 pm on Tuesday. The cipher case is about the allegations that Khan and his foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi March last year violated the secret laws of the country while handling a communication sent by Pakistan's embassy in Washington.

The duo was indicted on October 23 and their formal trial has already begun with the recording of statements by witnesses.

The Islamabad High Court (IHC) had upheld the indictment when challenged by the cricketer-turned-politician. However, the IHC had stayed the trial until adjudication on the intra-court appeal. (PTI)

Argentina's president-elect wants public companies in private hands, with media first to go

BUENOS AIRES, Nov 21: Argentina's right-wing president-elect gave the first indications on Monday of how he plans to start shaking up South America's second-largest economy: with a slew of privatisations.

Populist Javier Milei, a libertarian economist and self-described "anarcho-capitalist", won a presidential runoff election on Sunday with 55.7 per cent of the vote.

He said on Monday that he would move quickly to privatise the country's state-owned media outlets and look to do the same with other public companies.

"Everything that can be in the hands of the private sector will be in the hands of the private sector," Milei told Buenos Aires station Radio Mitre.

Experts immediately questioned how far Milei would get in fulfilling that vision without the support of Argentina's National Congress, where his party holds a relatively small share of seats. However, some analysts said his resounding election victory could give him leverage.

"The decisiveness of the victory — a doubt until yesterday — allows him to signal to all parties who is in control of the transition and the formation of the Cabinet," said Mariano Machado, principal analyst for the Americas at Verisk Maplecroft, a global risk intelligence firm. In his radio comments, Milei described the public media outlets he wants to make private as amounting to "a covert ministry of propaganda".

He complained during the presidential race that the coverage of his campaign in state-run outlets was highly negative.

Milei also signalled that he intends to act on some of his most controversial ideas from his campaign for slashing the size of the state and reining in Ar-

gentina's triple-digit inflation. They include reducing the number of government ministries by half, to eight.

He said he still wanted to close the Central Bank of Argentina, calling it "a moral decision", but appeared to put his plans for replacing the local currency, the peso, with the US dollar on the back burner.

"In conceptual terms, the central axis is to close the Central Bank, and subsequently, the currency (will be) whichever one Argentines choose freely," he said, characterising a potential change in the national currency as "a second-order issue".

Milei predicted it would take him up to half of his presidential term — "between 18 and 24 months" — to decrease

inflation, which polls showed was the biggest concern for Argentine voters as consumer prices have increased 140 per cent over the past year.

"Working to reduce the size of the government and eliminate taxes," Diana Mondino, a lawmaker from Milei's Liberty Advances party who is widely seen as likely to be Milei's pick for foreign minister, wrote on social media. She posted a photo showing the newly elected president meeting with several key allies.

State-controlled energy firm YPF, the country's largest integrated energy company, is another entity the president-elect thinks should be privatised but only once its finances are shored up so it can be "sold in a very, very, very beneficial way for Argentines".

Milei claimed the company's balance sheet deteriorated after a majority stake was nationalised during the government of former President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner, who is now the outgoing vice president. (AP)

Germany's defense min is the latest foreign official to visit Kyiv

KYIV, Nov 21: German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius made an unannounced visit to Ukraine on Tuesday and vowed to keep supporting Kyiv's efforts to win its war against Russia.

His trip came a day after US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin traveled to Ukraine and pledged American support "for the long haul," including an additional USD 100 million in weapons from US stockpiles.

The visits appeared to be part of an international political effort to keep the war in the public mind as other issues clamor for attention, including the Israel-Hamas conflict.

European Council President Charles Michel reportedly was also due in Kyiv on Tuesday,



which is the 10th anniversary of what Ukraine calls its Revolution of Dignity. That uprising that brought momentous change for Ukraine, pushing it closer to the West and bringing confrontation with Moscow.

Ukraine's fight to push out the Kremlin's forces has lasted almost 21 months. A recent Ukrainian counteroffensive apparently has yielded no

major changes on the battlefield, and another tough winter of attritional warfare lies ahead.

Germany is the second biggest single provider of military and financial support to Ukraine after the United States, and German officials said Pistorius aimed to assess the effectiveness of its aid as well as take stock of the fighting during his visit.

"I am here again, firstly to pledge further support," Pistorius said at the start of his second Kyiv visit, adding that he also wants to "express our solidarity, our deep solidarity and admiration for the courageous, brave and costly fight that is being waged here."

Pistorius was to meet his

Ukrainian counterpart Rustem Umerov, German news agency dpa reported.

Meanwhile, two Russian missiles struck a hospital in the eastern Donetsk region, wounding six people and possibly leaving more buried under rubble, Ukrainian Interior Minister Ihor Klymenko said Tuesday.

Russian forces attacked Ukraine overnight with 10 Shahed-type drones, four S-300 missiles and one Iskander-K cruise missile, Ukraine's air force said Tuesday.

Nine Shahed drones and the Iskander-K missile were successfully intercepted on Monday night, it said. No casualties were immediately reported. (AP)

Fans lined up for hours outside the Nilton Santos Olympic Stadium where temperatures soared to 41 degrees Celsius, with a heat index of nearly 59 C

Taylor Swift's Rio tour marred by deaths, muggings and a dangerous heat wave

RIO DE JANEIRO, Nov 21: The deaths of two people, muggings and a dangerous heat wave left legions of Taylor Swift's Brazilian fans angry and disappointed in the three-day Rio de Janeiro leg of the pop superstar's Eras Tour, which concludes on Monday night.

Gabriel Mongenot Santana Milhomem Santos, 25, a fan who had travelled from the country's center-west region to see Swift, was stabbed to death on a Copacabana beach about 3 a.m. on Monday, Rio's police said in a statement.

It was the second death of a Swift fan in four days. On Friday, 23-year-old Ana Clara Benevides Machado fell ill during the singer's first show in the city, and died later that evening at a hospital.

Fans also reported fainting from extreme heat, being mugged or getting caught up in a police raid.

Rio's Municipal Health Department said Benevides, who, accord-

ing to a friend, passed out during Swift's second song, "Cruel Summer," experienced cardiorespiratory arrest, but the exact cause of her death is not yet known.

Rio's Forensic Medical Institute examined the body on Saturday and said additional laboratory tests had to be conducted, the online news site G1 reported. In a statement posted on Instagram, Swift said Benevides' death left her with a "shattered heart."

Before the show on Friday, fans lined up for hours outside the Nilton Santos Olympic Stadium where temperatures soared to 41 degrees Celsius (105 Fahrenheit), with a heat index of nearly 59 C (138 F). Inside the stadium, concertgoers complained of unbearable heat and some said they had difficulty getting access to water.

"I didn't imagine that my dream could turn into a nightmare," said fan Kleisia Menezes, who told R7



TV that she had gotten stuck with hundreds of other people on one of the ramps to a VIP area Saturday as security officers blocked the entrance. Once security let them through, she said, people started running and she fell on a hot metal floor that burned her leg and back.

"They took me to the doctor ... and I saw that I wasn't the only person to have fallen in this chaos," she said. "Many people fell and burned themselves."

Ultimately, that night's show was postponed, after tens of thousands of fans had spent hours lining up in the heat. Swift announced on Instagram that it was necessary "due to the extreme temperatures in Rio."

A fan who identified herself as Julia Alvarenga said she was upset that Swift didn't decide to cancel earlier. "My friend, can you see how much I'm sweating, how all the pores in my body are dilated from the sweat?" Alvarenga asked, visibly angry, in a video posted on X,

formerly known as Twitter. She then pointed to her waist, highlighting the extreme measures she had taken to attend a concert for which she knew she would stand in line for hours. "I'm wearing a diaper, a geriatric diaper," she says, urging the artist to appear. "Come on stage, I want to see you!"

The postponement was followed by chaos outside the stadium. Under a light rain, a mass of concertgoers left the area, which is close to one of Rio's working-class neighborhoods, known as favelas.

Videos shared on social media showed groups of pickpockets robbing fans of their belongings, scenes not so unusual to Rio residents, but far from the postcards many tourists have seen of the "cidade maravilhosa." Many took refuge inside a Burger King, ducking for cover under tables and behind the counter in the kitchen area. (AP)

Destinations open for tourists except extreme north: Sikkim govt



GANGTOK, Nov 21: The Sikkim government has said that all popular destinations in the Himalayan state are open for tourists, except for extreme parts of North Sikkim.

Sikkim government's Tourism and Civil Aviation Department, Additional Secretary, Bandana Chettri said that all the regions of the state under different districts, namely Gangtok, Namchi, Soreng, Pakyong and Gyalshing are safe to visit and the weather conditions in these areas are very soothing in this festive season.

"Except for the extreme Northern part of Sikkim which is not accessible, all other destinations of the state are open for tourists and there is no untoward situation as the impact of flood in Teesta has since normalised," said an advisory on Monday.

The Himalayan state was hit by a flash flood in the Teesta river, triggered by a cloudburst in the early hours of October 4 in which 40 people were killed. Over a million tourists visit Sikkim every year with tourism industry being the core economic activity. The National Geographic channel has featured Sikkim in the list of coolest destinations to visit in 2024. (PTI)

The event will be attended by tourism ministers, senior officials of various northeastern states, other state governments and heads of many tourism and hospitality associations, they said.

Sharing details about the event, the tourism ministry said, "There will be no use of SUP (single-use plastic), a digital and paperless route will be followed, as well as a tree plantation drive will be undertaken."

The event will include an exclusive session dedicated to business meetings between tourism stakeholders in the northeast and domestic and international buyers.

Knowledge sessions and panel discussions would deliberate on the advances and development of connectivity in the region, it said.

The air connectivity in the northeast has increased tremendously in the last few years. At present, there are more than 16 airports providing accessibility to tourist destinations in the northeast region, the ministry said.

The Ministry of Tourism has collaborated with the Ministry of civil aviation under their RCS-UDAN Scheme. As part of this collaboration, 53 tourism routes have become operational of which 10 routes are exclusively for the Northeast region.

"The three vistadome trains operating in the northeast region have greatly contributed to not only connectivity, but also in enhancing its tourism appeal," it said.

To take forward the "Travel for LiFE", a sectoral programme initiated by the Ministry of Tourism under the aegis of Mission LiFE, the ministry is working with all stakeholders in the tourism ecosystem including the state governments, industry, destinations and tourists, officials said.

The "Travel for LiFE" programme aims to position India as a leader in promoting sustainable and responsible tourism and using tourism as a vehicle for achieving Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. (PTI)

Shillong set for International Tourism Mart

In sync with Mission LiFE

SHILLONG, Nov 21: Meghalaya's scenic capital Shillong is all set for a three-day mega event starting Tuesday that will highlight the tourism potential of India's northeast region and its rich biodiversity while laying emphasis on the government's Mission LiFE.

Nearly 100 delegates, including domestic and international ones, would be participating in the 11th edition of the International Tourism Mart (ITM) which is slated to be inaugurated here by Union Tourism minister G Kishan Reddy in the evening, officials said.

This ITM is going to be a "unique event" as it has been planned as a "green" event by adopting low-carbon options on the lines of the action points formulated by the Ministry of environment, forest and climate change for the implementation of Mission LiFE, officials said.

Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment) is an India-led global mass movement to nudge individual and community action to protect and preserve the environment.

The ITM 2023 will be held in Shillong from November 21 to 23, the tourism ministry said on Monday.

The ministry, in a statement, said it has sanctioned the development of 22 viewpoints in the northeast region at the cost of ₹ 44.44 crore to provide world-class infrastructure and related services for the highway network through commercial spaces, logistic parks, and traveller facilities such as wayside amenities.

The ITM is an "annual event held by the Ministry of tourism in one of the Northeastern states on a rotation basis, with an objective to provide a bigger platform to the stakeholders in the Northeast to interact with their counterparts from both within the country and overseas markets as well as to create awareness about the tourism potential of Northeast region," the ministry said.

The earlier editions of this ITM have been held in Guwahati, Tawang, Shillong, Gangtok, Agartala, Imphal, Kohima and Aizwal. Shillong will be hosting this event for the second time, since its inception, the officials said.

The ITM aims to highlight the northeast region's unique tourism

Only BJP speaks against money culture in elections: Khandu

CM urged party workers to create awareness on govt's welfare schemes

ITANAGAR, Nov 21: Arunachal Pradesh chief minister Pema Khandu claimed that the BJP is the only party that boldly speaks against money culture in elections.

Attending a massive meeting of the BJP at Seppa, the headquarters of East Kameng district, along with Union earth science minister Kiren Rijiju and MLAs of the district, Khandu on Monday called upon the party workers to fight money culture in elections.

Hailing BJP as the only party that can deliver, Khandu said that BJP is the cleanest amongst all political parties, a party communique said here.

"BJP is the only party that can boldly speak against money culture in elections. I urge you all to



campaign for a fair election that is based on performance and not on which candidate can pay how much in cash or kind," he said.

'Rahul, Priyanka to visit Tripura in December'

AGARTALA, Nov 21: Senior Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi will visit Tripura in December, a senior party leader said here on Tuesday. Rahul and Priyanka Gandhi are busy campaigning for the assembly elections. Once it gets over, they will visit Tripura to seek blessings from Maa Tripurasundari, AICC secretary Sarita Laitphlang told reporters at the Congress Bhavan here.

"The counting of votes in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana, Chhattisgarh and Mizoram will take place on December 3. After government formation in these states, Rahul-ji and Priyanka Gandhi will visit the state. Most probably, they will come separately in the second and third week of December," she said. Earlier, TPCC president Ashish Kumar Saha and Laitphlang held a meeting with leaders of Mahila Congress to prepare for next year's Lok Sabha polls. The northeastern state has two Lok Sabha constituencies, West Tripura and East Tripura. The BJP had won both the seats in the 2019 elections. (PTI)



The annual ritual of the Raid Mylliem performed at khlieh Lewduh by the five clan and the eleven clan. UB Photos

Chumoukedima dist to ensure road safety for Hornbill Fest visitors

HT Correspondent

DIMAPUR, Nov 21: With 10 days remaining for the 10-day Hornbill Festival at Kisama in Kohima district from December 1, the Chumoukedima district administration is taking all measures to ensure road safety for the visitors to the festival. Chumoukedima deputy commissioner Abhinav Shivam on Tuesday held a coordination meeting in his office with a special focus on the safety of visitors to the upcoming festival on Dimapur-Kohima 4-lane NH-29. The meeting discussed necessary measures to be taken to mitigate if any incident occurs.

During the meeting, the officials suggested forming a committee under the District Disaster Management Authority where all the members of the National Highways Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd (NHIDCL) as well as the contractors involved in the project would be included for immediate assistance during crucial times.

Other issues discussed were mapping those areas that needed more attention so that first-hand manpower could be placed accordingly in those areas. Various departments have also been directed to submit mitigation plans in case of any incident. The meeting directed the home guards and medical departments to provide machinery and ambulances and deploy them somewhere near the areas that need first-hand manpower so that safe passage is ensured for outsiders who will be visiting the festival. It also directed the NHIDCL to prepare a contingency plan to mitigate any incidents. The Chumoukedima district administration is putting in all efforts to make the festival a grand success by incorporating assistance from various departments and stakeholders.

On November 15, officials from the Chumoukedima district administration, in collaboration with NHIDCL officials, conducted a joint verification of the Dimapur bypass (Chumoukedima section), a part of the Dimapur-Kohima 4-lane package 1 and 2. They held extensive discussions with the NHIDCL and the engineering, procurement and construction contractor to ensure a pothole-free Dimapur-Kohima road for the festival.

6th North East India Fashion Week concludes

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Nov 21: The sixth edition of North East India Fashion Week - The Artisans Movement ended on a high with host of top weavers and designers showcased their creations at the finale day on Tuesday.

The fashion week, which began at the Koro Happa River Island in Jollang, Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh on November 18, showcased more than 30 designers and weavers from all across Northeast India, designer and CEO Yana Ngoba Chakpu informed. The fashion extravaganza is being organised by One Arunachal, a registered NGO dedicated towards raising awareness and preserving the traditional and cultural oneness of Arunachal Pradesh.

Arunachal Pradesh chief minister and chief guest of the event Pema Khandu, speaker PD Sona, state MLA and chief patron of the event Tech Kaso, Tripura minister and

ARTISANS MOVEMENT



guest of honour Bikash Debbarma among other distinguished guests, attended the inaugural ceremony of the festival on 19 November.

On November 21, top designers presenting their creations includes Angie Ngoba Namchoom, Yajir Mara, Bezai Jaboju, Jibom Roley, Konyak weaver Angap, Siang Yangda Waii, Yana In Style and Joram Nampi. Yana Ngoba's flagship event, North East India Fashion Week - The Artisans Movement aims to systematically conduct a series of pilot studies towards improving the prospects for inclusion, empowerment, and quality of life of artisans and weavers in

northeast India. The event will commemorate the movement & showcase the talents of artisans from northeast India. More than 30 designers and weavers will participate in the 3-day fashion event.

Speaking about the sixth edition of North East India Fashion Week, chairman One Arunachal Shri Joram Tat said, "Through North East India Fashion Week- The Artisans Movement, we strive to identify artisan role models, boost self-esteem within the artisan community, advocate for their skills, and offer a platform to showcase their unique talents. With the valuable support of our NGO, we are committed to training and promoting the weavers and designers from the region through ongoing skill development and capacity building. This endeavor aims to enhance employability, secure better livelihoods, dignify labor, and establish a brand presence with global market connections."

SHORT NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

Sealed tender affixing non refundable court fee of Rs. 8.25 (Rupees eight and twenty five paise) only are invited in plain papers from the Govt. registered contractors of Agriculture Department of Class-I, II & III category, according to their eligibility for submitting tenders for the work stated below. The tender will be accepted up to 3.00P.M. on 28-11-2023 and will be opened on the same date and place at 3.30 P.M.

Sl. No.	Name of works	Value of works (Approx.) (Rs.)	Time of completion of works	Earnest money	Remarks
1	Repairing of canal from Arun Urao house to Bishu Urao house at Ketenghora village under South Nayekgaon VCDC, Kokrajhar District	3,92,157.00	30 days		
2	Repairing of Burachara Jamphwi under Burachara VCDC in Kokrajhar District	4,90,196.00	30 days		
3	Repairing of canal of Jonaligaon village under Jonaligaon VCDC in Kachugaon Dev. Block, Kokrajhar District	3,92,157.00	30 days		
4	Improvement of Mwkhranjani canal from Gaide Basumatary paddy field to Binoy Basumatary paddy field at Chotomaigaon village under South East Bashbari VCDC, Kokrajhar District	5,88,236.00	30 days		
5	Improvement of Banyaguri canal from Baneswar Goyary paddy field to Suchil Brahma paddy field at Banjaguri under Bashbari VCDC, Kokrajhar District	5,88,236.00	30 days		
6	Improvement of Goraimari canal from Sudhr Brahma paddy field to Laokob Brahma paddy field at Goraimari village under Palashguri VCDC, Kokrajhar District	5,88,236.00	30 days		
7	Construction of Agril. Canal at Milon Roy paddy field at Haribhita village under Baruapara VCDC under Titaguri Dev. Block, Kokrajhar District	4,90,196.00	30 days		
8	Construction of Agril. canal bundh at Subhodh Ch. Nath paddy land under Bhotgaon VCDC, Kokrajhar District	4,90,196.00	30 days		
9	Repairing of Agril. Bundh at Daijijhari village Haloadol VCDC of Kokrajhar Dev. Block in Kokrajhar District	4,90,196.00	30 days		
10	Construction of Khwirguri Agril. Bundh under Ramfalbi VCDC, Dotma Dev. Block in Kokrajhar District	6,86,273.00	30 days		
11	Construction of Agril. canal from Moma Hamputa River from Bepanbari house to Sankosh river under Shimultapu VCDC, Kachugaon Dev. Block in Kokrajhar District	5,88,236.00	30 days		
12	Repairing of Agril. Canal at No. 1 Lotamari village under Nandipur VCDC, Kachugaon Dev. Block, Kokrajhar District	6,86,275.00	30 days		
13	Canal repairing from Pirosh Basumatary's house to Sachida Narzary paddy field under Baimai VCDC of Kachugaon Dev. Block, Kokrajhar District	4,90,196.00	30 days		
14	Construction of Agril. Canal at Bhadiyaguri village under Ballimari VCDC of Kachugaon Dev. Block in Kokrajhar District	3,92,157.00	30 days		
15	Construction of Agril. Canal at Manin paddy field at Khagrabari village under Borobada VCDC of Kachugaon Dev. Block in Kokrajhar District	3,92,157.00	30 days		
16	Canal cutting at Janaligaon village under Jonaligaon VCDC of Kachugaon Dev. Block in Kokrajhar District	3,92,157.00	30 days		
17	Canal cutting at Bantijhora village under Jonaligaon VCDC of Kachugaon Dev. Block in Kokrajhar District	3,92,157.00	30 days		
18	Construction of Agril. Canal in front of Majadabri VCDC office to Haraputta river via Junes Hembrom house in Kokrajhar District	4,90,196.00	30 days		

Terms and Conditions:-

- Rates are to be quoted on flat percentage basis on above/ below/ as per on schedule of rates of Irrigation, 2019-20 & CPWD(SOR) 2021, values of the work.
- Selected contractors will have to enter to an agreement in F-2 Form.
- Earnest money to be deposited in the form of Fixed deposit/Bank draft etc. in favour of Executive Engineer (Agri), Korkajhar Division, BTC, Kokrajhar.
- Rates are to be quoted both, in figure and in words, clearly and legibly.
- The undersigned is not bound to accept the lowest quoted rate and reserves the right to reject any/ all tenders without assigning any reason thereof.
- If there happens to be a holiday on the stipulated date, the tenders will be received and open on the next working day.
- Payment will be made to the contractors subject to availability of fund received from the Govt. of Assam under the specified head of account.
- Latest copies of Labour License/ PAN Card/GST etc. and updated registration certificate must be enclosed with the sealed tender.
- Detail estimates and schedule of rates can be seen in the office during office hours.
- GST/Tax / VAT etc. as applicable will be deducted at source.
- Earnest money against the work in form of FDR/ Call Deposit from any Nationalized Bank duly pledge to the undersigned will have to be submitted along with Tenders as per criteria.
- Each Tenderer shall submit attested Xerox copy of the financial sound certificate along with the tender and other relevant documents.
- Tenders/their authorized representatives may be present at the time of opening of tenders etc.

Sd/- (R. Kakati)
Executive Engineer (Agriculture),
Kokrajhar Division, BTC, Kokrajhar

Men trapped in tunnel come on camera, rescue effort in Uttarakhand enters 10th day

UTTARKASHI (U'KHAND), Nov 21: The first visuals of the 41 workers trapped inside Silkyara tunnel emerged Monday, raising hopes of families anxiously awaiting their evacuation as a multi-pronged rescue effort entered its 10th day.

The visuals were captured using an endoscopic camera sent in through a six-inch pipeline, which was pushed Monday through the rubble of the collapsed portion of tunnel on Uttarakhand's Char Dham route.

In a video released by the rescue agencies, the workers wearing yellow and white helmets, are seen receiving food items sent to them through the pipeline and talking to each other.

Officials watching them on a screen are heard giving instructions, asking them to clean the lens and show themselves on camera. They are heard asking them to come near the mouth of the pipeline and use the walkie-talkies, apparently sent down earlier.



Relatives have talked earlier to the trapped workers through the four-inch compressor tube that already existed. Food items like dry fruit were also being sent through that pipe.

But the new wider 'lifeline', which pierced through 53 metres of rubble, has come as a boost to the morale of the rescue workers. Communication is much better and larger quantities of food can now

be sent in.

"I talked to him this morning," Sunita Hembrum, whose brother-in-law Pradeep Kisku is among the trapped labourers, told PTI. She has come to Silkyara from Banka in Bihar.

"Oranges have been supplied to them through the new food pipe. Efforts are also underway to send khichdi to them. He was fine," she said. "Earlier we had to shout to

make ourselves audible but today his voice was clear," she said.

According to officials, food items like dalia, khichdi, sliced apples and bananas can be sent in through the new pipeline. Also, mobile phones and chargers could also be sent to the workers.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami on Tuesday, the second day in a row, to enquire about the progress of the rescue effort.

On social media, Dhami said he informed the PM about communicating with the workers using the endoscopic camera. "The prime minister said it is our top priority to rescue all the workers safely," the CM posted.

The tunnel collapsed following a landslide early on November 12, leaving 41 workers trapped behind a huge mound of debris.

On Friday afternoon, efforts to drill through the debris with a huge auger machine received a setback when it encountered a boulder.

Apart from resuming this operation, which involves inserting sections of a steel pipe as the machine drills through, rescue agencies have begun work on a bunch of alternative plans.

These include drilling more than 80 metres vertically from above the tunnel to reach the two-kilometre built-up stretch where the workers are now confined.

Drilling from the other, Balkotend, of the tunnel is another alternative on which the rescue agencies are working. Drilling parallel tunnels is also being considered.

Some of the heavy machinery for these new approaches has reached the disaster site.

A road has also been constructed to haul up a 75-tonne machine up the hill to begin vertical drilling.

In Delhi, the government issued an advisory to private television channels, asking them to be sensitive in their coverage of the rescue operations. (PTI)

Maharashtra BJP announces date for MTHL inauguration

MUMBAI, Nov 21: The BJP's Maharashtra unit has claimed that the Mumbai Trans Harbour Link (MTHL), touted as India's longest sea bridge, will be thrown open for public use on December 25, but the government agency implementing the project said although it is 97 per cent complete, the remaining work is not likely to get over by that time.

The MTHL is a six-lane 21.8 km road bridge between Sewri (Mumbai) and Chirle (Navi Mumbai). The project, being implemented by the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA), will link south Mumbai with Navi Mumbai township. Once completed, it would be the longest sea bridge in India and would cater to 70,000 vehicles daily, officials said.

On Monday, the Maharashtra unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) said on X that the "Atal Bihari Vajpayee Sea Link" will be inaugurated on December 25 this year, on the birth anniversary of the late prime minister after whom it is to be

named. However, when contacted, an MMRDA source said, "The construction work of the sea link is nearly 97 per cent complete. But the work of electrification, erection of poles on the bridge, toll booths and integration of the entire system is yet to be done."

"Some of the work orders for erecting poles and others were issued in June this year. The project cannot be completed by December this year," the source said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had laid the foundation stone for the project a few years back. The work was partially affected during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Although the ruling BJP has announced the date of the MTHL inauguration, the Maharashtra government has not made any announcement about its inauguration yet.

In May this year, chief minister Eknath Shinde and deputy CM Devendra Fadnis visited the MTHL and drove a vehicle on the bridge, also known as the Sewri-Nhava Sheva Trans Harbour Link. (PTI)

BJP urges EC to act against Congress for 'misleading' ads, resorting to 'corrupt' practices

NEW DELHI, Nov 21: The BJP on Tuesday accused the Congress of putting out advertisements in the form a news or opinion piece about a wave in its support in the Rajasthan assembly polls and demanded action from the Election Commission against the state's ruling party.

A BJP delegation, which included Union minister Mansukh Mandaviya and former minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, moved the EC with complaints against the Congress as they also charged the party with resorting to "corrupt" practices by asking people to give missed calls on a mobile number to get benefits of its guarantees if it retains the power in the state.

"A registered number was generated for the caller, creating an impression that only the caller would benefit by voting for a particular candidate or party, specifically the Congress party," the party delegation, which also included its IT department head Amit Malviya and another leader Om Pathak, said.

The Congress inserted this advertisement and chief minister

Ashok Gehlot also posted on X about it, their complaint said.

Mandaviya told reporters that this creates a narrative that only those who register themselves will get the benefits and others will not, and added it aims to mislead voters.

Prasad highlighted the BJP's another complaint which noted that the Congress issued Hindi advertisements in a couple of leading dailies about its "lahar" (wave). The manner in which it was put out made it a deliberate attempt to make an impression in the minds of voters that it is a news/opinion published after a survey.

"It is a violation of the Model Code of Conduct and also the Press Council of India's guidelines on advertisement," he told reporters.

"The said advertisement is false, frivolous and wholly unverified, contrary to the actual facts and statistics available on record," the BJP's memorandum to the EC said and demanded stringent action, including FIR, against the Congress. It also sought action against the newspapers concerned.

The EC should direct the Congress to issue a public apology and put out in the same space a clarification to the effect that there is no wave in the party's support, it said.

"We also requested the EC to issue guidelines to ensure that such an incident is not repeated in future polls," Prasad said.

Hitting out at the Congress for its missed call advertisement, the BJP's memorandum said, "That giving a missed call and in return the caller is assigned with a registration number, which amounts to like distributing of coupons to the voters, that is an extreme corrupt practice."

The Congress has violated the provisions of the Indian Penal Code and electoral laws besides the Model Code of Conduct, the BJP said.

Seeking an FIR, the BJP urged the EC to immediately stop Ashok Gehlot and his party from publishing or disseminating "misleading" advertisements. The commission should issue an advisory to voters about such malpractice and exhort them to not fall prey to it, the party said. (PTI)

Stalin lauds late Jayalalithaa for designating CM as TN music varsity's chancellor

CHENNAI, Nov 21: Tamil Nadu chief minister M K Stalin on Tuesday praised former chief minister late J Jayalalithaa for naming the CM of the day as chancellor of the state-run music and fine arts university.

Addressing the second convocation of the Tamil Nadu Dr J Jayalalithaa Music and Fine Arts University here, Stalin said it is the one and only university in the country set up for music and that is its unique feature.

Only in this state-run varsity in Tamil Nadu is the chief minister the chancellor -- a special feature that distinguishes it from other institutions, he pointed out. Fully funded by the state government, the Tamil Nadu Music and Fine Arts University was established in 2013 when Jayalalithaa was the chief minister. She was also the varsity's first chancellor. Later, the university was named after Jayalithaa in 2019, three years after her death, by the AIADMK regime at the time.

Stalin, stating that he is not "talking politics" but only "spelling out a fact", said an institution can grow only if the CM functions as chancellor -- seemingly expressing opposition to the Governor's position as chancellor of universities.

If the post of chancellor is held by "others", the very purpose of achieving growth would be defeated, the chief minister opined, adding that



former chief minister Jayalalithaa considered this and decided that the CM of the day shall be the music varsity's chancellor -- and implemented it accordingly.

"We can wholeheartedly appreciate her (Jayalalithaa) for this. Considering the present situation, I too heartily laud her," he said.

At the convocation ceremony, the university conferred honorary doctorates on iconic playback singer P Sushheela and noted music historian B M Sundaram.

Pointing to the awarding of the doctorates, Stalin said he could take such decisions reflecting the wishes of the people, as he is the varsity's chancellor.

"That is why we say that the chief minister should be the chancellor of all (state-administered) universities. For this purpose, we have passed bills in the assembly," the chief minister

said, and added that related matters are before the Supreme Court.

The Tamil Nadu government had recently approached the Supreme Court over files and bills, "kept pending" by Governor R N Ravi.

Stalin said that education must be brought under the state list from the present concurrent list, as allocated in the Constitution, reiterating his stand on the issue. Only then, states can achieve the goal of education and higher education for all, he said.

"I am not saying this only for the sake of Tamil Nadu; but this is for all the states in India," he said, adding that hindrance-free access to education for all is the ideal of the Dravidian model of governance.

Stalin announced that the state grant for the music varsity would be increased to ₹ 3 crore from the next fiscal and an allocation of ₹ 1 crore for purposes including a research centre would be provided.

On 18 November, 2023, the Tamil Nadu assembly re-enacted bills returned by Governor Ravi and sent them again to Raj Bhavan.

The ruling DMK is battling for designating the chief minister as the chancellor of state government-run universities. The governor is at present the chancellor of state varsities, barring the music university. (PTI)

LDF convenor claims IUML gravitating to ruling bloc; Kunhalikutty rejects his remarks

KANNUR/MALAPPURAM (KER), Nov 21: A day after IUML supremo Sayyid Sadik Ali Shihab confirmed his party's commitment to the Congress-led UDF, ruling LDF convenor E P Jayarajan on Tuesday continued to praise the opposition ally, and hinted that some League leaders are interested in joining the LDF.

Despite overtures from the CPI(M)-led LDF, Thangal made it clear on Monday that the IUML would not deviate from its responsibility to strengthen the UDF in Kerala.

However, Jayarajan suggested that some IUML leaders are interested in joining the CPI(M)-led alliance and believes they will eventually come around.

Replying to a question by the media, he also said senior IUML leader P K Kunhalikutty was a leader who adopts the right stand on issues, and there were many such leaders in that party.

The League is a party that can win many seats on its own but Congress cannot succeed without their support, Jayarajan told reporters in Kannur.

However, Kunhalikutty outrightly rejected the Left leader's statements and said Jayarajan was making such

remarks as he had no knowledge about the history and style of functioning of the IUML.

"The League has only one stand and that is the one being taken by Thangal. The last word in the party is that of its state supremo. I have no opinion other than the one taken by him," he told the media in Malappuram.

The senior League leader further said he had served as the general secretary of the party for several decades and a minister in many governments.

He said he was also serving as the assembly leader of the party since the 1990s.

"I am not a person who takes a stand contrary to that of Panakkad Thangal in any capacity," Kunhalikutty added.

Thangal, addressing the IUML Wayanad district council camp in Sultan Bathery, on Monday reiterated his party's unwavering commitment to strengthening the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF). He said that the party has numerous reasons to remain steadfast in its alliance with the UDF.

His statement came amid an alleged bid by the

CPI(M)-led LDF to woo the key Congress ally into its fold.

Days after IUML MLA and Malappuram district general secretary P Abdul Hameed was nominated to the Left-controlled director board of the Kerala State Co-operative Bank, now called Kerala Bank, Thangal said that this does not indicate a shift in the alliance.

Highlighting the party's role in ensuring unity and co-operation within the UDF coalition, the IUML supremo also rejected the speculation of a possible association with the LDF.

In an embarrassment for the UDF, a key member of IUML had participated in the Left government's outreach programme, Nava Kerala Sadas, here on Sunday despite it being boycotted by the Congress-led opposition alliance.

IUML's state general council member N A Abubakar not only participated in the morning session of the programme but was also seen sitting right beside chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan, adding fuel to the speculation that the League may switch over to the LDF by ending its several decades-old alliance with the Congress. (PTI)

Rajasthan polls: Shah accuses Congress, Gehlot govt of being 'anti-backward class'

JAIPUR, Nov 21: Union home minister Amit Shah on Tuesday accused the Congress party and the Ashok Gehlot government in Rajasthan of being "anti-backward class".

Addressing a public meeting in poll-bound Rajasthan's Khairthal in Alwar district, the senior BJP leader said the Congress in Rajasthan has worked to appease its vote bank.

"Congress party and Gehlot government are anti-backward class. For many years, the Congress party opposed the report of the Mandal Commission and the Congress party did not give constitutional recognition to the Backward

Classes Commission," Shah said.

He said it was the Narendra Modi-led government at the Centre that gave constitutional recognition to the Backward Classes Commission.

Shah said the Modi government has given 27 per cent reservation to the backward classes in all education systems of the Centre.

Today, 27 per cent of the ministers in the Modi government are from backward classes and the Centre has worked to advance the backward classes.

The home minister said the Gehlot government is indulging in appeasement politics and working for its

vote bank.

"Appeasement is at its peak in the state. Tailor Kanhaiya Lal was murdered in broad daylight, Section 144 was imposed during Hindu festivals, bulldozers ran on Ram Darbar and communal riots happened everywhere. The BJP governments do not let communal riots break out," he said.

He urged the people to vote for the BJP's double-engine government and ensured that it will make Rajasthan a riot-free state.

Referring to the alleged 'red diary', Shah said it contains all the misdeeds of the Gehlot government and details of corruption that took place in the state. (PTI)

Climate change hits women's health harder

NEW DELHI, Nov 21: Manju Devi suffered in pain for two months last year as she worked on a farm near Delhi, unable to break away from duties that sometimes had her standing for hours in the waist-deep water of a rice paddy, lifting heavy loads in intense heat and spraying pesticides and insecticides.

When that pain finally became too much to bear, she was rushed to a hospital. The doctors' verdict: Devi had suffered a prolapsed uterus and would need a hysterectomy. She hadn't said a word to her family about her discomfort because of societal taboo over discussing a "women's illness," and with two grown children and three grandchildren looking to the 56-year-old widow to help put food on the table, Devi had relied on painkillers to stay in the fields.

"I endured excruciating pain for months, scared to speak about it publicly. It shouldn't take a surgical procedure to make us realise the cost of increasing heat," she said, surrounded by women who told of undergoing a similar ordeal.

As the annual UN-led climate summit known as COP is set to convene later this month in Dubai, activists are urging policymakers to respond to climate change's disproportionate impact on women and

girls, especially where poverty makes them more vulnerable.

Their recommendations include securing land rights for women, promoting women's cooperatives, and encouraging women to lead in developing climate policy. They also suggest that countries — especially developing countries like India — commit more money in their budgets to ensure gender equity in climate policies.

A Group of 20 leaders who met in New Delhi in September also recognised the problem, calling for accelerating climate action with gender equality at its core by increasing women's participation and leadership in mitigation and adaptation. Devi is a farm worker in Syaraul, a village of about 7,000 a couple of hours southeast of Delhi in Uttar Pradesh, one of India's biggest and most populous states.

Several other middle-aged and older women from the village described similar injuries leading to hysterectomies.

The link between phenomena like uterine prolapse and climate change is indirect but significant, said Seema Bhaskaran, who tracks gender issues for the nonprofit Transform Rural India.

"Women in rural, climate-affected communities often bear the brunt of physically

demanding agricultural work, made more strenuous by climate change-related challenges like erratic weather and increased labour needs," Bhaskaran said.

"While climate change doesn't directly cause uterine prolapse, it magnifies the underlying health challenges and conditions that make women more susceptible to such health issues."

About 150 km away in Nanu village, 62-year-old farm worker Savita Singh blames climate change for a chemical infection that cost her a finger in August 2022. When her husband moved to Delhi to work as a plumber, she was left alone to tend the couple's fields.

As rice and wheat yields fell due to shifting climate patterns and a surge in pest attacks, Singh's husband, who retained decision-making power, decided to increase the use of pesticides and insecticides. It was up to Singh, who had opposed the increases, to apply the chemicals.

"With the rise in pest attacks in farms, we have started using more than three times pesticides and fertilisers in our farms and without any safety gear my hand got burned by the chemicals and one of my fingers had to be amputated," she said. (PTI)

No. UDB/Tender/01/2022-23/

Date: 17/11/2023

SHORT NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed tender affixing a non-refundable Court fee stamp of Rs. 8.25 (Rupees eight & twenty five paise) only with a validity period of 180 Days which will subsequence to be converted and drawn up in the printed of F-2 form are invited from the registered contractors of Class-II and Class-I (A, B & C) category of Assam PWD (Road & Building) and BTC according to their eligibility for submitting tenders for the works under SOPD & various schemes under BTR for the year 2022-23 as stated below. The tenders will be received by the undersigned up to 12.00 Noon on 16/12/2023 and will be opened on the same date & place at 2.00 P.M.

Sl. No.	Name of work	Tender Amount (In Rs.)	Cost of Tender Paper	Time of Completion of Work
1	Const. of Community Toilet at Khanghlabari Shiv Mandir under 15 th Finance Commission	14,28,912.00	Rs. 500.00	3 (three) months from the issue of Formal Work Order
2	Const. of cultural stage at Dhupguri village Shivashram under SOPD	17,00,000.00	Rs. 500.00	3 (three) months from the issue of Formal Work Order
3	Const. of Community Toilet at Sonaigaon VDC under 15 th Finance Commission	14,28,912.00	Rs. 500.00	3 (three) months from the issue of Formal Work Order
4	Const. of Community Toilet at Santipur VDC under 15 th Finance Commission	14,28,912.00	Rs. 500.00	3 (three) months from the issue of Formal Work Order
5	Const. of Community Toilet at Chapangaon VDC under 15 th Finance Commission	14,28,912.00	Rs. 500.00	3 (three) months from the issue of Formal Work Order
6	Const. of Community Toilet at near Begapara St Mary Catholic Church under 15 th Finance Commission	14,28,912.00	Rs. 500.00	3 (three) months from the issue of Formal Work Order
7	Const. of Community Toilet at Station Block (South part) Shiv Mandir under 15 th Finance Commission	14,28,912.00	Rs. 500.00	3 (three) months from the issue of Formal Work Order

Detailed N.I.T. may be seen in all working days during office hours in the office of the undersigned. Tender papers will be issued to the contractors or their authorized agents from 22/11/2023 to 16/12/2023 in the office of the undersigned on payment. The contractor should submit attested copy of latest Registration certificate, labour certificate, latest Income Tax, GST Registration, PAN Card along with the tenders. In case the office remains closed on tender issuing/receiving/opening date the same will be issue/received/opened on the next working day. The successful tenderer has to be submitted 1% (in case of ST/SC/OBC) and 2% (in case of General category). Performance Security Deposit money against the work in the form of Demand Draft / Banker's Cheque only from any nationalized Bank duly pledge to the Block Development Officer, Udalguri Development Block, Udalguri as mentioned above have to be deposited at the time of allotment of work. The BTC authority reserves the right of accepting or rejecting the tender papers without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd/-

Block Development Officer,
Udalguri Development Block

IPR(BTC)-2023-24/792

Relations with CM 'very cordial'; conflicts can be resolved: Bengal Guv

KOLKATA, Nov 21: West Bengal Governor Dr CV Ananda Bose said he shares a "very cordial" relationship with chief minister Mamata Banerjee and hasn't faced any difficulties while working in the state. Bose, who completed a year as the governor on Tuesday, said his priority is the well-being of the people of the state.

"I see the governor-CM relationship in two levels. As individuals, our relation is very cordial which is based on mutual respect and understanding. As far as the relationship between the governor and the CM is concerned, the perception may be different because the elected chief minister and the nominated governor need not necessarily think alike on every issue," Bose told PTI in an interview at the Raj Bhavan here.

"My role as the governor is upheld in the Constitution. I work for the well-being of the people. When we apply the yardstick of constitutional propriety, certain actions of the government, not only this government, may be found to be wanting. There the governor has to step in. That may lead to apparent conflicts. But conflicts can be resolved because our constitutional democracy has the inner strength to reconcile conflicts," Bose added.

"I haven't faced any difficulties in working as the governor here. I have been a civil servant. I have



worked with various political parties. I go by what is right, what is proper, what is ethical, what is good. I have my own standards and those are not my subjective standards, but objective because they are based on the Constitution, the law of the land," he added.

On ruling Trinamool Congress' allegations that he is running a parallel administration from Raj Bhavan and interfering in the state's affairs, Bose said, "In a democracy, anyone can express their views freely, frankly and fearlessly. The governor's views need not necessarily be of the government. Such dichotomy is natural to democracy. I go ahead which I think is right, legal, and constitutional. That's my approach.

"In a democracy, criticism should be there. Somebody should be there to hold a mirror before you. I do not think that criticism should be shunned. Criticism is good and it should be welcomed. That's the beauty of democracy, I welcome it."

On allegations that the state's failure to contain the law and order prompted the governor to open the "anti-corruption cell" at Raj Bhavan, Bose referred to hundreds of petitions alleging corruption on various issues pouring in at his office.

"There is no question whether the state government has failed or succeeded. There are certain aberrations in society and corruption is one of such. Action has to be taken

against it and eradicate it. It's a dynamic process," he added.

On his priorities as a governor in the years ahead, Bose said he would keep on working for the people of Bengal.

"My priority is the people of Bengal. Whatever I can do for them, I will do. I will also offer constructive cooperation with the state government and uphold the principles of federalism. My next priority will be to translate into action PM Narendra Modi's vision of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' also includes Atmanirbhar Bengal," he added.

On the state assembly passing the West Bengal University Laws (Amendment) Bill 2023 under which the chief minister shall, by the virtue of his/her office, be considered the chancellor of all state-aided universities, replacing the governor, Bose said the matter is sub-judice at the Supreme Court and would follow what the apex court decides.

"This issue is before the Supreme Court. Not particularly in respect of Bengal, but also in respect of some other states, the issue is the same. Whatever the Supreme Court decides, I will follow in letter and spirit. When and if I am the chancellor, I will exercise the powers of the chancellor without fear and favour. I will be a chancellor who does not leave things to chance," he said. (PTI)

4 persons killed, 11 injured in bus accident on highway in Gujarat

GODHRA, Nov 21: Four persons were killed and 11 others injured when their private luxury bus rammed into a stationary bus on a highway near Godhra town in Gujarat's Panchmahal district on Tuesday, an official said.

The deceased included two children, he said.

The accident took place on Dahod-Godhra highway at around 3.30 am when an Indore-bound bus was undergoing repairs on a roadside after the vehicle stopped due to a technical issue, Godhra Sub-Divisional Magistrate Pravinsh Jayatavat said.

"The driver of another luxury bus coming from Dahod couldn't spot the stationary bus ahead and rammed his vehicle into the parked bus from behind. Four passengers - two women and two children - were killed in the accident," he said.

Eleven other passengers received injuries. While nine of them were undergoing treatment at a civil hospital in Godhra, two other seriously injured persons were referred to Vadodara for medical assistance, the official said. (PTI)

Man tries to kill children after argument with wife

NEW DELHI, Nov 21: A 35-year-old man allegedly attacked his two minor children following an argument with his wife and later tried to attempt suicide in northwest Delhi's Bharat Nagar area, police said on Tuesday.

Rakesh, a resident of J J Colony, is an alcoholic and unemployed, they said.

Rakesh had an argument with his wife on Monday night and tried to kill their children, aged two and five. Later, he tried to commit suicide, a senior police officer said.

The man and his children are undergoing treatment at a hospital, police said. (PTI)

Problem screen use hits attention, higher-level thinking: Study

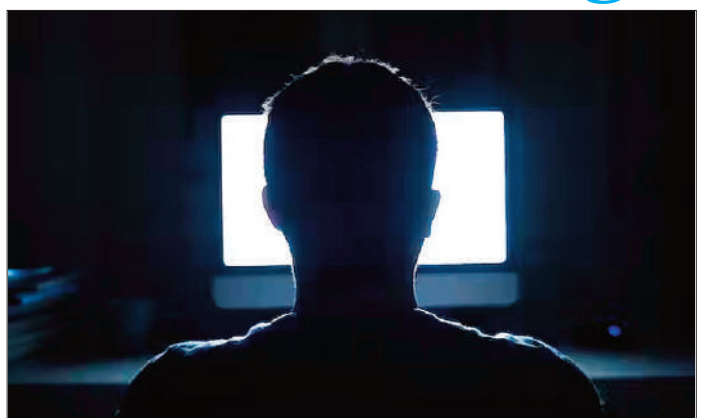
NEW DELHI, Nov 21: Problematic screen use impairs a range of cognitive processes, in particular the ability to concentrate and the so-called executive functions, which include impulse control, planning, organisation and problem solving, a study shows.

The research, published in the journal *Neuropsychology Review*, is an overview of more than 30 studies of people who fall into the broad category of disordered screen use.

The classification includes excessive gaming, internet browsing, or use of social media or smartphones, that result in serious negative effects on the person's life.

These effects can include deterioration in mental health, poorer performance at school or work, social isolation and relationship problems, and neglect of personal health or hygiene, the researchers said.

Disordered screen use shares characteristics with behavioural addictions like problem gambling, and some people may even develop symptoms of severe dependency like those associated with addictions to alcohol and il-



licit substances.

The researchers from Macquarie University in Australia identified 43 studies that assessed the neuropsychological effects of disordered screen use, ultimately including 34 in their analysis.

Twenty of the 34 included studies were on online and offline gaming, 12 were on internet use, and one each on social media and smartphone use, the researchers said.

The bias towards gaming and internet use were due to these platforms having been around longer, while smartphones and so-

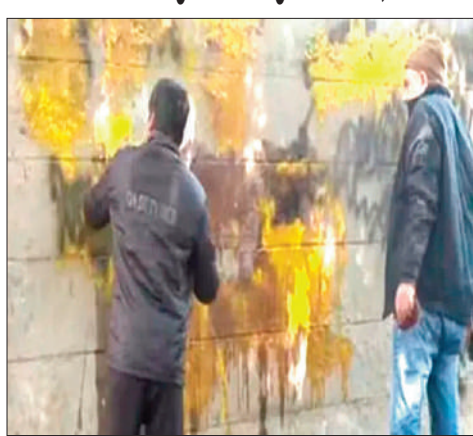
cial media are relative newcomers to the screen-use landscape.

The research mostly looked at young males, and tested a total of 58 different neuropsychological measures, with most examining attention and executive functioning.

"This is the first time anyone has reviewed all the available evidence together," said study lead author, Mic Moshel from Macquarie University.

"The studies used different tests, which makes it more difficult to compare apples with apples, but there was clear evidence

Pro-Khalistan graffiti on Delhi flyover: Police arrest Haryana youth, raids underway in Punjab



NEW DELHI, Nov 21: Almost two months after pro-Khalistan graffiti was found on a flyover here, Delhi Police's Special Cell has arrested a 38-year-old man from Haryana, officials said on Tuesday.

The accused has been identified as Malak Singh alias Malik, a resident of Kurukshetra in Haryana, they said.

He painted the graffiti in Delhi and other parts of the country at the behest of Gurpatwant Singh Pannu, the chief of banned organisation Sikhs for Justice, police said.

On September 27, 2023, multiple pro-Khalistan graffiti mentioning "Delhi banega Khalistan SFJ" and "Khalistan Zindabad SFJ" were found sprayed under and over Yudhister Setu, Kashmir Gate, a senior police officer said.

Later, a video also appeared over the internet where Pannu claimed that Khalistani Sikhs from Canada have reached Delhi to target the Parliament House to avenge the assassination of Nijjar, and various graffiti have been sprayed in Delhi, the officer said.

"During investigation, a person wearing a turban was spotted near the spots. The suspect boarded a Punjab-bound bus and de-boarded it at Pipli, Kurukshetra. Later, the alleged person was identified as Malak Singh.

"On Sunday, police arrested Singh who was involved in the painting of graffiti on the walls of Yudhister Setu, near the Kashmir Gate Metro Station on the direction of SFJ handler

Pannu," Special commissioner of police (Special Cell) HGS Dhaliwal said.

He was also involved in three other incidents of pro-Khalistan graffiti in Haryana before the G-20 Summit, Dhaliwal said.

Singh inclined towards Khalistan ideology since childhood. In 2018, after the announcement of Referendum 2020 by Pannu, he started following SFJ videos and messages, police said.

During the farmers' agitation in 2020, he came to the Singhu Border, where he came into contact with sympathisers of the SFJ and Khalistan, from whom he came to know about various Youtube channels, social media IDs and mobile numbers of Pannu, and other SFJ and Khalistan sympathisers, Dhaliwal said.

Later, he came in contact with Pannu and started discussing the Khalistan movement and the referendum. Gradually, he won Pannu's trust, and then, as per the directions of Pannu, Singh painted "Khalistan welcome G20 in Delhi" on April 5 in Kurukshetra. Later on September 5, he painted "G20, Punjab is not part of India, SFJ" at Kurukshetra railway station, they said.

Just before the G-20 Summit, Singh wrote, "G20 Punjab is not India Khalistan Referendum SFJ zindabad" on a Kesari flag and placed it near the HUDA City Centre, Gurugram, Haryana. The final one came on September 27 near Kashmir Gate ISBT, police said.

He took photos and videos of the slogans and sent to Pannu, which were later uploaded by the SJF chief on various social media platforms. He also destroyed digital evidence by erasing the data of the mobile phone used for making photos and videos of the said graffiti, police said.

During the analysis of Singh's mobile phones, it was found that he was directed to paint pro-Khalistan slogans at Delhi Airport and other government buildings in the national capital on November 19 when the final match of the ODI Cricket World Cup was being played, Dhaliwal said.

Pannu had also extended threat in his latest videos in which he urged Sikhs not to travel by Air India flight on November 19. Pannu also referred to the final match of the Cricket World Cup in those videos, police added. (PTI)

ED attaches ₹ 752-crore assets of Cong's National Herald, claims party cheated donors and shareholders

NEW DELHI, Nov 21: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Tuesday said it has attached immovable assets and equity shares worth about ₹ 752 crore as part of its ongoing money laundering investigation against the Congress-promoted National Herald newspaper and companies linked to it.

The provisional attachment order came as the elections in five states of Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Telangana and Mizoram are in progress and the counting of votes is scheduled to

be held on December 3.

The Congress called the agency action as "petty vendetta tactics" and dubbed the ED a "coalition partner" of the BJP which, it claimed, is staring at a certain defeat in the assembly polls.

The federal probe agency alleged in a statement that in this case the shareholders and donors of the Congress were "cheated" by the office-bearers of AJL and the party. A provisional attachment order has been issued by the federal probe agency under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act

(PMLA) against Associated Journals Ltd. (AJL) and Young Indian (YI). The National Herald is published by AJL and owned by Young Indian Private Limited. Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi are majority shareholders of Young Indian with 38 per cent shares held by each one of them.

In the statement, the ED said it has issued an order to provisionally attach properties worth ₹ 751.9 crore in the money laundering case being investigated under the PMLA. (PTI)

Contd. from Page 1...

Coordination between NE

Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura passed out after completing the basic course at NEPA. Having undergone training in different aspects of policing, including law, social science, cyber laws and police operations, they will also receive post-graduate diploma in police administration and investigation from the Sardar Patel University of Police, Security and Criminal Justice, Jodhpur.

Sarma urged the new recruits to use technology for policing and stay abreast with the latest advancements in science and technology. He said the concept of 'smart police' by integrating technology with policing was floated in 2014 and this has changed the face of modern policing in the country.

"Now, law enforcement agencies have skillfully integrated science and technology to tackle the ever-evolving complexity of crime. Data analytics, forensics and surveillance have altered crime fighting.

"As technology continues to advance, landscape of policing evolves and it will require more dynamic effort," he said. Sarma pointed that "predictive policing" to stop future crimes by best use of resources is gaining popularity among law enforcing agencies, and police forces of the region must also constantly keep themselves updated with latest technology. He also urged police personnel joining the force to adopt zero tolerance towards crime and criminals, and act with empathy towards citizens. (PTI)

India donates USD 2.5

Earlier on November 19, India had delivered 32 tonnes of "humanitarian assistance to the people of Palestine" via the El-Arish Airport in Egypt. Since 2018, India has given USD 27.5 million to UNRWA.

During an Extraordinary Virtual Ministerial Pledging Conference for UNRWA held on June 23, 2020, India announced that it would contribute USD 10 million to UNRWA over the next two years.

Prior to the war in Gaza, UNRWA was already facing an increased demand for services resulting from a growth in the number of registered Palestine refugees, the extent of their vulnerability, and their deepening poverty. The agency is mandated to provide assistance and protection to some 5.6 million Palestine refugees registered with it across its five fields of operation.

Its mission is to help Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank, including East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip achieve their full human development potential, pending a just and lasting solution to their plight. UNRWA services encompass education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, protection, and microfinance among Palestinian refugees.

During the first-ever Indian Prime Minister's visit to Palestine in February 2018, India increased its annual financial contribution fourfold to the UNRWA core budget, from USD 1.25 million to USD 5 million.

India has also made a strong appeal to other traditional donors of UNRWA to consider enhancing their contributions as well as to non-donor member states to consider contributing to the agency in solidarity with the Palestine refugees. (PTI)

Shared India's perspective

the evidence with us. We are not ruling out an investigation and looking at anything which they may have to offer. They haven't done so," Jaishankar said during a visit to the UK last week. (PTI)

Assam Police observes

Besides, awareness programmes were conducted in schools, colleges and universities, covering almost 50,000 children of the state, said the Special DGP, who is also the convener of the Sishu Mitra Programme.

UNICEF's state chief Madhulika Johanthan said, "Our engagement with the Assam Police, this children's week, has provided children with a powerful platform to advocate for their rights. This is an excellent start for children and young people to participate in decision-making." (PTI)

Brown sugar suspect

later referred to the Gauhati Medical College and Hospital for better treatment. Police also recovered Rs 32,000 in cash from his possession and seized his car, officials said. (PTI)

Change in geo-politics

jointness and integration. Kalita said, "Only the armed forces cannot win any future war. It is a whole of nation's effort. The whole nation's every segment has to participate in future battles which is proven by the recent Israel-Hamas conflict as well as Russia-Ukraine conflict," he added.

In a war in the present time, no segment of the population is left alone and it brings in the importance of civil-military fusion, Kalita said. "We need to harmonise the security needs with the socio-political and socio-economic needs of the country. That's why we need to achieve synergy in all the segments," he added. (PTI)

Centre granted 25 inland

be completed soon so that it can be inaugurated by December 2023. "Ayush is a major area of interest for our government led by the Prime Minister and the Northeast has a rich potential in this sector. Out of at least nine construction projects currently undergoing in the region, we expect concrete movement in these three projects," he added.

Out of the total 830 approved Ayush Health and Wellness centres in the region, 495 have become operational. Of the 33 integrated Ayush hospitals approved in the region, nine are already functional, Sonowal said. A total of eight Ayush education undergraduate and postgraduate institutions are being supported by the Ayush Ministry while three new Ayush institutes in Sikkim's Gangtok, Keirao in Manipur and Assam's Dudhnoi have been also approved. (PTI)

'Unrest to continue if 4000

been some legacy issues between the three communities that live in the state -- Meitei, Kuki and Naga. The Lieutenant General pointed out that earlier also there had been conflicts between the Kukis and Nagas in the 1990s when almost 1,000 people were killed.

"What has happened now is that both the communities have completely polarized. Though the level of violence has come down, more than 5,000 weapons were taken away from various police stations and other places.

"Out of that, only about 1,500 weapons have been recovered. So, around 4,000 weapons are still out. Till the time these weapons are out in society, this sort of sporadic violent activities will continue," he added.

Kalita, however, said weapon smuggling along with drugs through the Indo-Myanmar border has been checked, although some isolated incidents may be there.

"But since 4,000 weapons are already out in the open, I think there is no requirement of weapons to come from outside," he stressed.

More than 180 people lost their lives and several hundreds were injured since ethnic clashes broke out in Manipur on May 3, after a 'Tribal Solidarity March' was organised in the hill districts to protest against the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status.

Meiteis account for about 53 per cent of Manipur's population and live mostly in the Imphal Valley. Tribals -- Nagas and Kukis -- constitute little over 40 per cent and reside in the hill districts.

On the refugee crisis from Myanmar, Lt Gen Kalita said, "Any instability in our neighbourhood is not in our interest. It definitely impacts us as we share the common border. The problem of the Indo-Myanmar border gets accentuated because of the difficult geography and terrain conditions, and lack of development."

He further said as the border is porous and people are from the same ethnicity on both sides of the border, a lot of free movements take place, and it becomes difficult for the forces managing the borders to identify who are the people from India and who are from Myanmar.

"We are giving shelter to anybody who is seeking refuge, whether it is a common villager or Myanmar Army or Myanmar Police. There is a due process that is followed. Whenever they want to come in, the weapons are obviously separated.

"Thereafter there is a proper identification, which is carried out so that the undesirable elements are segregated. We get in touch with the MEA and (Myanmar) Embassy. Generally, all these Myanmar Army personnel will be taken to Moreh (in Manipur) and then handed over to the (Myanmar) force," Kalita said.

He further explained the direction is very clear to the forces on the border that the common villagers seeking refuge to escape the conflict in Myanmar are not stopped and whenever they are ready, they are sent back.

"While doing that, the directions are very clear that no armed cadres will be allowed to come. Any armed cadres trying to come are addressed in an appropriate manner. There is a definite check on people with drugs and arms, and anybody caught is handed over to the police following the due procedure," Kalita said.

Currently, the Assam Rifles is managing the Indo-Myanmar border in Manipur and Mizoram and they have border outposts in both the states along the international border, he added.

More than 31,000 people from Myanmar have been living in Mizoram. These foreigners, mostly from Chin state, fled following a military coup in Myanmar in February 2021. Many also took shelter in neighbouring Manipur.

In the last few weeks, dozens of Myanmar soldiers stationed near the international border with India fled to Mizoram following intense gunfights with militia group People's Defence Force (PDF). They were later escorted back to their country through Moreh in Manipur. (PTI)

'Ae Watan Mere Watan' is a timeless story: Sara Ali Khan

PANAJI, Nov 21: Actor Sara Ali Khan on Tuesday said her upcoming movie "Ae Watan Mere Watan" is a timeless story of India's freedom struggle that has the ability to inspire the current generation.

Directed by Kannan Iyer, the period drama is backed by Dharmatic Entertainment Production, and produced by Karan Johar, Apoorva Mehta and Somen Mishra.

The makers presented an exclusive showcase of the thriller drama film, inspired by true events, at the ongoing 54th edition of International Film Festival of India (IFFI).

"This is a film based on the Indian freedom struggle, but it is a timeless story. The current generation should take inspiration from this. The freedom struggle ended in 1947 but even after that, as a woman, child, and actor everyone struggles. We should find inspiration



within ourselves," Sara told reporters on the sidelines of IFFI.

As a history student, the actor said, the film turned out to be an interesting opportunity. The movie is written by Darab Farooqui and Iyer.

"I am a history student. Also, time travel won't be possible so how will I go to the Quit India Movement and relive those emotions that people faced at that point of time... I have got this chance by doing this movie," she said.

The makers today also conducted a session on "Drawing inspiration from history to create an immersive cinematic experience for today's audiences". Iyer said while the team has taken creative liberties to make the story engaging, they have remained true to the essence of actual events that took place during the Quit India Movement of 1942.

"I would like to share that Sara has been so open to every nuance of the character she plays. She is a modern young woman, who transformed into the part so seamlessly. I would like to thank her for being on this journey with me," he added. (PTI)

Opening IFFI one of proudest moments of my life: Stuart Gatt



PANAJI, Nov 21: British filmmaker Stuart Gatt, whose movie "Catching Dust" opened the 54th International Film Festival of India (IFFI), says sharing his film with the Indian audience was an "important moment" for him.

Starring Erin Moriarty, Jai Courtney, Dina Shihabi, Ryan Corr, Jose Altit, Gary Fannin and Olwen Fouere, the desert drama set in the isolation of Texas' Big Bend was screened on Monday night at the INOX multiplex in Panaji here.

Gatt said the experience of participating at IFFI was "incredible".

"It is an important moment for me to share my film with the Indian audience. It has been an amazing movement. You work very hard on the film and to see this kind of response is incredible," the director told PTI on the sidelines of the ongoing annual film gala here.

"Catching Dust", set in the isolation of Texas' Big Bend, follows a lone trailer on an abandoned commune, which has become the reluctant hideout

for Geena and her criminal husband, Clyde.

"Exhausted by his controlling ways, Geena decides to leave, when a trailer suddenly arrives carrying a couple from New York. Ignoring the risks their presence will bring, Geena convinces Clyde to let them stay, a decision that will have dangerous consequences for them all. The film captivates the audience at a profound level of finding solace in the face of evident hopelessness and despair," read the plotline of the film.

Gatt, who is half Indian with his mother hailing from South India, said the audience's response to his film was amazing.

"Remove the fact that I am half Indian, but as a filmmaker, it is a huge accolade to open the IFFI with my film. IFFI is a festival which is very much respected. If you add in the personal thing, being of Indian heritage for me, it is one of the proudest moments of my life. Maybe the proudest moment," he said. (PTI)

Chiranjeevi condemns Mansoor Ali Khan's remarks on Trisha



HYDERABAD, Nov 21: Cinema veteran Chiranjeevi on Tuesday condemned actor Mansoor Ali Khan's "reprehensible" comments about Trisha, calling them "distasteful and disgusting".

In a recent interview, Khan, who had an important cameo in the Lokesh Kanagaraj-directorial "Leo" starring Vijay, made derogatory remarks about not getting the chance to share screen space with Trisha during the film's shoot schedule in Kashmir.

Trisha said the comments made by Khan are "sexist, disrespectful, misogynistic, repulsive and in bad taste" and she will never work with the actor ever again. "My attention was drawn to some reprehensible comments made by actor Mansoor Ali Khan about Trisha. The comments are distasteful and disgusting not just for an artiste but for any woman or girl. These comments must be condemned in the strongest words. They reek of perversion. I stand with Trisha and every woman who has to be subject to such horrid comments," Chiranjeevi posed on X. Trisha thanked the Telugu cinema icon for standing by her side. She also found support in her "Leo" director Kanagaraj and singer Chinmayi Sripada among others. "Leo" is currently streaming on Netflix. (PTI)

Vir Das wins first Int'l Emmy Award for best comedy, dedicates honour to India

NEW DELHI, Nov 21: Actor-comic Vir Das has become the first Indian to win the International Emmy Award for his Netflix stand-up special "Vir Das: Landing" in the best comedy category and has dedicated the honour to his home country, India.

The 51st International Emmy Awards Gala was held at the New York Hilton Midtown in New York City on late Monday night.

This was the second nomination and maiden win in the segment for Das, who shared the trophy with popular British teen sitcom "Derry Girls" season three.

Das said he has immense gratitude holding the International Emmy trophy for best comedy for "Vir Das: Landing", his fourth stand-up special with the streamer.

"This one is for my team and for Netflix without whom this wouldn't have been possible.

"This journey has been nothing short of extraordinary, and to win this accolade for my fifth special with Netflix feels like a cul-



mination of passion, perseverance, and the undying support of people around the globe who have given so much love to "Vir Das: Landing", the comedian said in a statement. Das, also known for films such as "Go Goa Gone" and "Delhi Belly", won the award for "Vir Das: Landing", a show about what it means to be truly global while looking for home. His last stand-up special "Vir Das: For India" was nominated for an International Emmy in the best comedy category in 2021.

This award is not just a recognition of his work but a celebration of the diverse stories and voices from India, he said.

"Stories that make us laugh, reflect, and, most importantly, unite. This one is for India, for Indian comedy and for the community of artists at large," the comic added.

The other nominees in the best comedy category were "El Encargado" from Argentina and French show "Le Flambeau" season two. (PTI)

Sonam radiates natural beauty with the softness of Aloe Vera in ITC Vivel's latest campaign

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Nov 21: With youthful exuberance and fresh energy, Sonam Kapoor steps into the brand world for ITC Vivel as the new brand ambassador, starring in the latest TVC.

Over the years, ITC Vivel has given consumers the experience of soft and well-nourished skin with their range of soaps. Set in the midst of the richness of aloe vera and a world that is curated in nature, Sonam Kapoor captivates as a symbol of natural beauty, appealing to the sensibilities of the young, contemporary Indian consumers.

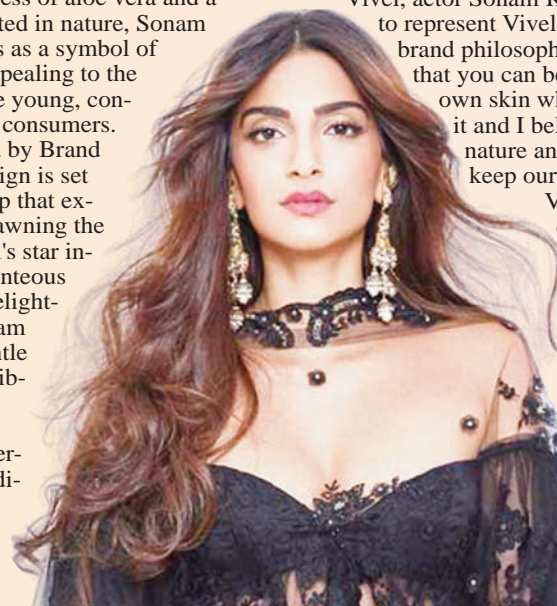
Conceptualized by Brand David, the campaign is set against a backdrop that exudes freshness, dawning the spotlight on Vivel's star ingredient - the bounteous Aloe Vera. The delightful film with Sonam highlights the gentle and nurturing attributes of the Vivel Aloe Vera Soap, rendering it the perfect choice for individuals of all age groups.

Sameer Satpathy, Chief Execu-

tive, Personal Care Products Business Division, ITC Limited, said, "We are excited to have Sonam Kapoor on board as a brand ambassador for Vivel. With her truly pleasant personality, she brings a new freshness and energy to the brand, and complements the ethos of nourishing and nurturing skin."

Commenting on her association with ITC Vivel, actor Sonam Kapoor said, "I'm excited to represent Vivel as I resonate with the brand philosophy. I've always believed that you can be comfortable in your own skin when you truly take care of it and I believe that the goodness of nature and its bounty has a way to keep our skin soft and radiant."

Vivel Aloe Vera soap is a delightful treat for the skin filled with the abundance and goodness of aloe vera and vitamin E. Embrace the gentle touch of nature with a daily dose of nourishment with the Vivel Aloe Vera range available across retail stores and e-commerce platforms at INR 30 for 100g, and INR 100 for a pack of five 100 gm soaps.



Bollywood getting into spaces like IFFI with its money: filmmaker Arvind Sinha

PANAJI, Nov 21: Bollywood is making its way into film festivals like IFFI through money and it's unfair on independent filmmakers who need government support and a platform to promote their work, said veteran documentary filmmaker Arvind Sinha on Tuesday.

Sinha heads the non-feature film section of Indian Panorama at the ongoing International Film Festival of India (IFFI), which opened on Monday evening here in Panaji.

"What is to be promoted (through IFFI) is good cinema. Bollywood has its own money, finance, muscle power, through all these things they are getting into these spaces," the renowned documentary filmmaker told



reporters here.

Sinha said it is not the fault of Bollywood but people "who are making the decision should have clarity that public taxpayers money should not

be spent on filmmakers like Karan Johar" as he has a lot of money. "They (IFFI organisers) have to support the documentary filmmakers, feature filmmakers who need support.

There are no rajas-maharajas to support the artists, the government should support any work of art...

"Why should these spaces be given to those who already

have everything? They don't need support from the government. What are they doing here? The film festival is not for them. The film festival should be for good cinema," the director said in a reference to the heavy Bollywood presence at the ceremony on Monday.

Actors Shahid Kapoor and Madhuri Dixit performed at the opening event. Dixit was also honoured with the Special Recognition for Contribution to Bharatiya Cinema Award at the ceremony, hosted by Karishma Tanna and Aparshakti Khurana.

Also present were Vijay Sethupathi, Karan Johar, Sara Ali Khan, Pankaj Tripathi, Shantanu Moitra, Jisnu Sen-gupta, Shriya Saran, Divya Dutta, and Shreya Ghoshal.

Johar and Khan unveiled the first look of their upcoming film "Ae Watan Mere Watan" last night. Fronted by Khan, the movie is set against the backdrop of 1942's Quit India Movement. Directed by Kannan Iyer and produced by Johar's Dharmatic Entertainment, "Ae Watan Mere Watan" will arrive on Prime Video.

The teams of "Ae Watan Mere Watan" and "The Archies" also had special sessions at the movie gala.

Speaking about the entries for the Indian Panorama section, Sinha said the number of films had increased this time but one can't say the same about quality. The segment was introduced in 1978 as part of the IFFI umbrella to promote Indian films along

with India's rich culture and heritage with the help of cinematic art.

"The quantity has increased but quality has not really kept up with the quantity. It would have been nice, if quality went also, it would have gone up. But that is the trend that did not happen," he said.

The official selection of the Indian Panorama consists of 25 feature films and 20 non-feature films which will be screened at the 54th IFFI.

"Andro Dreams" is opening the non-feature film section, which will also showcase titles including "1947: Brexit India", "Baasan", "Back To The Future", "Behrupiya - The Impersonator", "Nansei Nilam", "Pradakhshina", and "The Sea & Seven Villages". (PTI)

Barcelona and Madrid among teams hit by 'FIFA virus' as players get injured on international duty

MADRID, Nov 21: The latest international break is proving costly for several European clubs, including Spanish powerhouses Barcelona and Real Madrid.

Both teams will be depleted by the injury absences of important players affected by the "FIFA virus" while on duty with their national teams.

Not long after Madrid confirmed injuries to Brazil forward Vinicius Junior and France midfielder Eduardo Camavinga, Barcelona saw midfielder Gavi arrive from his stint with Spain in European Championship qualifying on crutches be-

cause of a serious injury that will likely see him miss the rest of the season. Gavi, who was in tears when he limped off the field in the 26th minute of Spain's 3-1 win over Georgia on Sunday, will need surgery in the coming days to repair a complete tear of the anterior cruciate ligament in his right knee.

Premier League champion Manchester City apparently avoided a scare — Erling Haaland's ankle injury sustained in a friendly between Norway and the Faeroe Islands on Thursday doesn't seem to be too serious. Paris Saint-Germain wasn't so lucky with Warren Zaire-Emery, a

17-year-old midfielder who hurt his right ankle when he became France's youngest scorer on his international debut in a record 14-0 rout of Gibraltar in European qualifying on Saturday.

Manchester United also may be in trouble after goalkeeper André Onana couldn't finish Cameroon's World Cup qualifier on Friday, while Inter Milan saw defender Alessandro Bastoni pick up an injury while on duty with Italy.

Media in Spain and other countries refer to injuries sustained on international duty as the "FIFA virus." And the injury to Gavi is another ex-

ample. "A very high price," read a front-page headline by the Marca sports daily on Monday, along with a photo of Spain forward Ferran Torres holding Gavi's jersey after he scored one of the team's goals in the second half. Some in Spanish media were quick to blame Spain coach Luis de la Fuente for not taking Gavi out of the game moments earlier when he received a knock to the same knee. The match meant little for Spain because it had already secured its spot at Euro 2024. Local reports said Barcelona was considering making a formal complaint to the Spanish soccer federation.

De la Fuente said the Gavi injury was one of the "toughest" moments of his coaching career but noted that it had nothing to do with the knock he received earlier.

"This can happen at any time. It was an accident," De la Fuente said. "It's a very difficult moment. It's difficult for him, his club, his teammates, for me and for the federation. We are devastated."

De la Fuente rested some of the other regular starters who had played in the team's 3-1 win at Cyprus on Thursday, but the 19-year-old Gavi started again after playing the entire match last week.

Clubs receive financial compensation when their players get injured with their national team and miss more than 28 days, but Gavi's absence will be felt by Barcelona because he was one of the key players in coach Xavi Hernandez's squad that this season is on track to play in the knockout rounds of the Champions League after two consecutive eliminations in the group stage.

Madrid, already in the next round of the Champions League and fighting for the Spanish league lead, will be without Vinicius for about two months because of a muscle tear the forward sustained

in Brazil's 2-1 loss at Colombia in World Cup qualifying on Friday. The 23-year-old Vinicius has scored six goals for Madrid this season, including three in the team's last two matches.

Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti will also be without Camavinga for some time. The 21-year-old midfielder tore a ligament in his right knee while practicing with the French national team. Camavinga started all four of Madrid's Champions League games and appeared in all 13 of its Spanish league matches this season. (AP)

WENGER IS CURRENTLY SERVING AS FIFA'S CHIEF OF GLOBAL FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT

Wenger commits himself to 'digging out' football talent in India

BHUBANESWAR, Nov 21: Legendary coach Arsene Wenger on Tuesday committed himself to "digging out talent" in India and place the country on world football map, as he inaugurated the FIFA-AIFF academy here.

Former Arsenal coach Wenger, currently serving as FIFA's chief of global football development, did not give any time frame when India would start producing "great players" but made it known that without proper grassroots development, the country will remain as it is now.

"Our project is to identify talent in India, to put the best talent together, give them a good coaching programme, give them a good education and a good level of competition and make them great players," Wenger said.

"Our huge effort is to dig out talent and make them as good as they can be," he said after witnessing the signing of MoU between the All India Football Federation (AIFF) and the Odisha government. Fifty under-14 players -- including 15 from Odisha -- will be selected by the FIFA coaches in the first batch and they will get training at the academy for two years.

Odisha government will take care of the boarding, lodging, accommodation and education of the players, and FIFA will provide the



technical know how and the coaches. FIFA has already recommended Spain's Sergi Amezua Fontrodona -- who was previously involved with developing football in China as project director -- to be the academy head coach for two years and an Indian will assist him for a few months. A foreign assistant coach will be appointed in four-five months.

"With such a huge population, the potential in India is huge, for you to be on top of the world. That is what we want to achieve together. How long will it take, I don't know," Wenger said.

"But one thing is for sure, if we don't educate we will be where we are at the moment. With the quality of education, you get great players. Our target is to develop top level players here and get India on the map among the best countries in the world," said the celebrated coach. He emphasised the necessity of catching players young if the country wants to reach the top level. "No country has more right over another country to be on the top of world. It's just down to educating your children (in football)."

"India is a country which has invested a lot in education. It is a job you have to learn like any other job. And unfortunately, it starts at a very young age, you cannot start playing football at 15 years of age,

you have to start at 5 or 6 years of age." Wenger made a round of inspection of the academy, which is up for running with top-class facilities. It was initially planned as an Odisha state football academy.

"We just visited the facilities, the qualities of infrastructure are great. We delegate our own coach and develop a system over the years."

"Hopefully in the future, we will be rewarded if we do well. Our focus now is give this academy first and get the first players out in three-four years who can play at the top level."

Wenger and his team took stock of the facilities at the academy like the dormitories, dining area, study rooms, coaches rooms and common areas.

AIFF president Kalyan Chaubey said that India can qualify for the FIFA U-17 World Cup on merit -- through the players coming out of this academy.

India had featured in the 2017 FIFA U-17 World Cup as host country.

"Let us dream to qualify for the Under-17 World Cup on merit. We must try to become one of the best in the U-17 age group and thereafter we can think of becoming one of the top countries in the world."

"We will get our best national team in under-17 category in the coming three years." (PTI)

Messi seeks 1st goal against Brazil in World Cup qualifying

RIO DE JANEIRO, Nov 21: Lionel Messi has few barriers yet to break in soccer. One of them will be in reach Tuesday, when Argentina visits Brazil in a South American World Cup qualifying match.

The 36-year-old Messi has scored 31 goals for Argentina in World Cup qualifying encounters, but none of those came against Brazil, home or away. He has five goals against the archrival, all in friendly matches.

Brazil's soccer confederation said all 69,000 tickets for the clash at the Maracana Stadium are sold. Both teams will play after defeats in the previous round; the locals lost 2-1 at Colombia and the World Cup champion was defeated at home 2-0 by Uruguay. Many Brazilian fans are keen to watch Messi in a match that could be his last in Rio de Janeiro playing for Argentina. In the same arena, the star lost the 2014 World Cup final to Germany, and beat the host in the decider of the 2021 Copa America.

Argentina leads the 10-team South American qualifying group with 12 points from five matches. Uruguay is second with 10 points. Colombia has nine and Venezuela eight. Brazil will host the World Cup champions in fifth position, with seven points.

Ecuador, Paraguay and Chile have five points each. Bolivia has three and Peru one.

The 2026 World Cup in the United States, Mexico and Canada

will include 48 teams, meaning direct entry for the top six teams from South America. The seventh-place team can earn a berth in an intercontinental playoff.

Optimism is in short supply in Brazil, which lost its two latest matches and is struggling under new coach Fernando Diniz. A defeat to Argentina could be the team's first ever in a home match of World Cup qualifying, and the hosts will have several absences for that encounter.

Carlos Augusto is likely to start as left-back for the first time. Jesus will take the role of injured Vinicius Junior up front and teenage sensation Endrick is likely to play in the second half.

The 17-year-old Endrick, who will join Real Madrid next year, spoke in a press conference about his expectations of playing against Messi for the first time.

"For me, Pelé is the king and no one will get near him. Messi is phenomenal, the best in the world again, and I want to enjoy playing against him, a man I only saw in the videogames," the striker said. "I am more of a Cristiano Ronaldo fan, but it will be wonderful to see Messi up close." Argentina will arrive in Brazil late on Monday and have its final training session for the clash in Buenos Aires. Coach Lionel Scaloni did not speak after Sunday's training, and had most of the practice behind closed doors, but gave hints of where his doubts are. (AP)

HI names 34-member core probable group for national women's coaching camp



BENGALURU, Nov 21: Hockey India on Monday named a 34-member core probable group for the senior women's national coaching camp to be held here from November 22 to December 10.

India are scheduled to take part in the 5 Nations Tournament in Valencia between December 15 to December 22. Besides India, Ireland, Germany, Belgium, and hosts Spain are the other teams.

It is a key step in the Indian team's preparations for the all-important FIH Hockey Olympic Qualifiers to be held in Ranchi from January 13.

"It is important for us to continue to maintain our momentum and ensure we remain in the right frame of mind going into important competitions next year," Indian women's hockey team chief coach Janneke Schopman said in a release. "Our sights are set on the Paris Olympics and to ensure a spot, we have to perform well at the FIH Hockey Olympic Qualifiers Ranchi 2024."

Indian players will return to the camp after a dominating performance at the Asian Champions Trophy in Ranchi earlier this month. India claimed the gold medal, defeat-

ing Japan 4-0 in the Final.

The Indian team, which had won a bronze medal at the Asian Games, also remained unbeaten in the tournament that also saw participation from China, Korea, Malaysia, and Thailand. "The five-nation tournament is a good chance for us to test ourselves against European teams and also plan our strategies and make modifications as and when needed," Schopman said.

Indian Women's Hockey Team 34-member Core Group: **GOALKEEPERS:** Savita, Rajani Etimaru, Bichu Devi Kharibam, Bansari Solanki **DEFENDERS:** Deep Grace Ekka, Gurjit Kaur, Nikki Pradhan, Udita, Ishika Chaudhary, Akshata Abaso Dhekale, Jyoti Chhatr, Mahima Chaudhary **MIDFIELDERS:** Nisha, Salima Tete, Sushila Chanu Pukhrabam, Jyoti, Navjot Kaur, Monika, Mariana Kujur, Sonika,

Neha, Baljeet Kaur, Reena Khokhar, Vaishnavi Vitthal Phalke, Ajmina Kujur **FORWARDS:** Lalremsiami, Navneet Kaur, Vandana Katariya, Sharmila Devi, Deepika, Sangita Kumari, Mumtaz Khan, Sunelita Toppo, Beauty Dungleung. (PTI)

Pak name Gul, Ajmal as bowling coaches for upcoming tour of Australia, NZ

LAHORE, Nov 21: Former Pakistan bowlers, Umar Gul and Saeed Ajmal have been appointed as the fast bowling and spin bowling coaches of the national squad for the upcoming tour of Australia and New Zealand.

Umar, a member of the 2009 World T20 winning squad, has worked before with the Pakistan team as bowling coach, while this is the first time Saeed has been given an assignment with the national side.

The Pakistan cricket board said that initial assignments for both former stalwarts would include the Test series against Australia scheduled from 14 December 14 to January 7 and the T20I series against New Zealand from January 12 to 21 next year.

The board has already named Muhammad Hafeez as the Director and head coach of the Pakistan squad and fast bowler Wahab



Riaz as the new chief selector in a spate of changes after the national team's poor World Cup campaign.

The induction of Umar and Saeed and Hafeez's assignment basically means that the foreign coaches, including Mickey Arthur, Grant Bradburn will no longer be working with the national side.

Bowling coach, South Africa's Morne Morkel had already resigned last week while the fielding coach has also been changed.

Umar previously served as the bowling coach during the three-match T20I series against Afghanistan, and the subsequent series against New Zealand at home. He has also been the bowling coach for Quetta Gladiators in the Pakistan Super League.

He has also coached the Afghanistan squad.

Saeed, the champion off-spinner, whose career was derailed in 2015 after the ICC officials had reported his bowling action, represented his country in 35 Tests, 113 ODIs, and 64 T20Is, picking up 447 wickets across the three formats.

He has also served as the spin bowling coach with the PSL franchise Islamabad United. (PTI)

Pankaj Advani wins World Billiards C'ship for 26th time

DOHA, Nov 21: Indian cueist Pankaj Advani won the IBSF World Billiards Championship title here on Tuesday for a staggering 26th time, beating compatriot Sourav Kothari in the final.

Advani defeated Kothari 1000-416 in a rematch of last year's title clash in Kuala Lumpur.

He had won his first world title in this competition way back in 2005. While Advani has won the 'long format' for the ninth time, he triumphed in the 'point format' championship on eight occasions, besides winning the World Team

Billiards Championship once. In this tournament, Advani defeated fellow Indian cueist Rupesh Shah 900-273 in the semi-finals.

It saw breaks of 259 and 176 from the defending champion, while Shah managed a 62 break only in the 900-up format.

In the other half of the draw, Kothari pulled off a close win against Dhruv Sitwala, prevailing 900-756 in his semi-final match.

Kothari had breaks of 223 and 82, while Sitwala scored 199 and 188. (PTI)

Mbappe has reached 300 career goals faster than Messi or Ronaldo



league titles as a teenager. Mbappé then replicated another of Henry's accomplishments when he won the 2018 World Cup in his first major tournament with France. Henry won the 1998 tournament.

Mbappé has also been com-

pared with Brazil great Pelé for his precocity. But in terms of style, his devastating speed he places him closer to Henry, who was 30 years old when he reached 300 goals.

"He's a goalscorer, he delivers assists, he knows how to do

everything," Henry said. "Of course, there's room for improvement, but that's not the point."

With his 17th career hat-trick, Mbappé brought his season tally to 21 goals in 19 matches. It was the PSG star's 46th goal in 74 international appearances. He is now just five goals behind Henry on France's all-time scoring list and 10 off teammate Olivier Giroud's national record total.

Jean-Pierre Papin, a former Marseille and AC Milan striker who scored 30 goals for France, believes Mbappé still has plenty of room for improvement.

"When you're not even 25 and you've scored 300 goals, the best is yet to come," Papin told L'Equipe newspaper. "Such precocity, such regularity, is rare, almost unique. He's someone who, if he is not injured, can manage to score between 45 and 55 goals each year, for years to come."

The exact number of goals in

Pelé's career will forever be a topic for debate. He often said one of the reasons he should be considered the greatest player of all time was because of his feat of scoring more than 1,000 goals. But many dispute his count because Pelé included goals scored in friendlies or matches against semi-professional or even amateur teams.

When asked how many goals Mbappé could reach, Henry jokingly hinted at the 1,000 mark, then said "it's up for him to decide." "He's a guy who breathes soccer, who prepares himself well, who doesn't do everything and anything, his professionalism and desire to play are always there," Henry said. "300 goals? There are some who haven't even managed that in training."

"I know where I want to go and I want to score a lot more than 300 goals," he told TFI broadcaster. "I've always wanted to make history in my sport." (AP)

Warner rested for T20s against India, says his ODI World Cup career not yet finished

MELBOURNE, Nov 21: The selectors have decided to rest David Warner for the five-match T20 series in India following Australia's ODI World Cup triumph in Ahmedabad.

Warner, who was Australia's leading run-getter with 535 runs in the triumphant campaign, was originally part of the squad to be led by Matthew Wade. The squad, for the series beginning in Visakhapatnam on November 23, was announced last month.

All-rounder Aaron Hardie has already joined the squad as Warner's replacement. "Selectors decided Warner would return home on the back of a successful yet demanding World Cup campaign," Cricket Australia said in a statement on Tuesday.

Earlier this year, Warner hinted that the home series against Pakistan could be the last of his Test career but remains determined to carry on in the shorter formats. Reacting to a post on social media sig-



nalling the southpaw had played his last ODI World Cup, the 37-year-old on Tuesday said: "Who said I am finished?"

Warner's absence from the T20s means that only seven members of Australia's World Cup winning squad will remain in India. They are Sean Abbott, Travis Head, Josh Inglis, Glenn Maxwell, Steve Smith, Marcus Stoinis and Adam Zampa.

India named their squad on Monday night and only three players from the World Cup were picked for the T20s including skipper Suryakumar Yadav, Ishan Kishan and Prasidh Krishna.

Shreyas Iyer will be available for the last two games in Raipur and Bengaluru.

Australia T20 squad: Matthew Wade (c), Aaron Hardie, Jason Behrendorff, Sean Abbott, Tim David, Nathan Ellis, Travis Head, Josh Inglis, Glenn Maxwell, Tanveer Sangha, Matt Short, Steve Smith, Marcus Stoinis, Kane Richardson, Adam Zampa. (PTI)

AASPA members condole Pradip Phukan's death

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, Nov 21: The members of the All Assam Sports Pensioner's Association are deeply saddened by the sudden death of one of its founder members Pradip Phukan, popularly known as Tikori, on Monday. Members condole his death and recalled his enormous contribution to the association since it's humble beginning. Members also prayed to the almighty for his eternal peace and conveyed their heartfelt condolences to the members of the bereaved family to overcome the loss.

BWF nomination for Satwiksairaj and Chirag Shetty

NEW DELHI, Nov 21: Indian badminton stars Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty were on Tuesday nominated for the Player Year of the Award by the Badminton World Federation (BWF).

The men's doubles pair of Satwik and Chirag won numerous tournaments in recent times, including a historic gold medal at the Asian Games in Hangzhou, China.

It was the latest triumph in Satwik and Chirag's long list of achievements, which includes the 2022 Commonwealth Games gold medal, the 2022 Thomas Cup title and the 2022 World Championships bronze.

Additionally, they have triumphed at prestigious tournaments such as the Asia Championships, Indonesia Super 1000, Korea Super 500 and Swiss Open Super 300 — all in one remarkable year.

The season's most outstanding athletes will be honoured at the prestigious BWF Player of the Year Awards in Hangzhou on December 11. The awards ceremony will be held during the annual BWF World Tour Finals gala dinner.

There are eight award categories, including three for para badminton. The nominees were ratified by the BWF Council and selected based on performances from November 1, 2022 to October 31, 2023.

An outright winner of the Eddy Choong Most Promising Player will be announced on the evening.

The BWF World Tour Finals will be played at the Hangzhou Olympic Sports Centre Gymnasium from December 13-17. (PTI)

Neha chases Sneha in final leg to make bid for Order of Merit

CHENNAI, Nov 21: Neha Tripathi, the only player to have won three legs of the Hero Women's Pro Golf Tour this year, will make a final bid for the Order of Merit when she tees up for the 16th and final leg of the 2023 season here on Wednesday.

Neha, who won the 15th Leg of the Tour, is only Rs. 27,792 behind long-time leader Sneha Singh on the Hero Order of Merit.

With a win here, Neha can take the Order of Merit even if Sneha finishes in second place.

If both fail to win the title here, Neha must make more than Rs. 27,792 to overhaul Sneha.

Sneha, meanwhile, must ensure that even if Neha does not win, she should not finish too far ahead of her. (PTI)

ICC moves men's U-19 World Cup from Sri Lanka to South Africa

AHMEDABAD, Nov 21: The ICC on Tuesday moved next year's men's U-19 World Cup from Sri Lanka to South Africa, 11 days after the world governing body provisionally suspended the island nation's cricket board due to government interference.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) Board met here and "confirmed the terms of the suspension" of Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) and also the shifting of the age-group showpiece.

"The U19 World Cup has been shifted to South Africa from Sri Lanka due to SLC's suspension. In fact, participating nations were apprised some days back after SLC got suspended. South Africa hosted the U19 WC in 2020. The decision got approval at ICC Board meeting in Ahmedabad," an ICC Board member told PTI.

"Sri Lanka's bilateral and domestic cricket will not be affected by this."

It was, in fact, Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) that had reached out to the ICC and notified about the government interference in the running of the sport in the country after being knocked out in the league stage of the just-concluded World Cup following a forgettable outing.

The SLC and the country's sports ministry have been at loggerheads for some time now. The government had accused SLC officials of being involved in corruption and mismanagement.

In a statement issued after its Board meeting, the ICC said, "After hearing representation



from SLC, the ICC Board decided that Sri Lanka can continue to compete internationally both in bilateral cricket and ICC events after being suspended recently for breaching its obligations as a Member in particular the requirement to manage its affairs autonomously and without government interference."

However, funding to SLC will be controlled by the ICC and the ICC Board.

SLC president Shammi Silva had recently warned that the country could lose the hosting rights of the U-19 World Cup, scheduled to be held from January 13 to February 4, if the government's interference continued.

In a statement released on Monday, SLC had

said, "While SLC focuses on resolving the suspension issue, it appears that the minister of sports is pursuing a different agenda through media manipulation without pursuing legal avenues to address the allegations."

"This raises concerns about its intention to influence public opinion and other stakeholders to achieve its objective of taking control of SLC through the misuse of his powers."

"SLC calls for a fair and unbiased examination of the facts and remains focused on its mission to uphold the integrity of cricket in Sri Lanka and is confident that the truth will prevail in due course." (PTI)

ICC introduces stop clock in men's ODI and T20Is, five-run penalty on third offence

AHMEDABAD, Nov 21: Bowling teams in men's ODI and T20Is will be imposed a five-run penalty if the bowler exceeds the 60 second limit of bowling the next over for the third time in an innings, the sport's governing body ICC said on Tuesday.

It will be used on a trial basis initially. The decision was taken at the International Cricket Council (ICC) Board meeting here.

"The CEC agreed to introduce a stop clock on a trial basis in men's ODI and T20I cricket from December 2023 to April 2024. The clock will be used to regulate the amount of time taken between overs."

"If the bowling team is not ready to bowl the next over within 60 seconds of the previous over being completed, a 5-run penalty will be imposed the third time it happens in an innings," said the ICC in a statement. The ICC also made a change to its process of banning a pitch from international cricket.

"Changes to the pitch and outfield monitoring regulations were also approved, including a simplification of the criteria against which a pitch is assessed and increasing the threshold for when a venue could have its international status removed from five demerit points to six demerit points over a five-year period," the ICC added. (PTI)

NEW DELHI, Nov 21: World Cup winning skipper Pat Cummins, by his own admission, has fallen in love with 50-over cricket all over again but the jury remains out on the future of the ODI format, whose relevance in modern-day cricket is being debated for some time now.

India is the heartbeat of world cricket and near-packed stadiums for majority of World Cup games over the course of 45-day long event was expected at the spiritual home of the game. It was not a surprise that India has delivered the most attended ODI World Cup ever.

More than a record 1.25 million people thronged the stadiums but the same buzz and fanfare will most likely be missing when there is a bilateral series happening anywhere in the world including India.

The players and the purists love Test cricket while T20 is the format that enjoys unmatched popularity and is being used as a tool to spread the game globally. The attention spans are shorter than ever in the digital age and not all have the time and zeal to spend eight hours for an ODI game.

The ICC event in India has shown that the format has plenty of takers if it is a world event but the bilateral ODIs don't inspire the same confidence going ahead.

That begs the question: Should ODIs only be played in a World Cup year? If not, then should the format be tweaked on the advice of legends like Wasim Akram and Sachin Tendulkar.

The format is not high on priority for most teams with India featuring only in six ODIs next year and Pakistan don't have any match scheduled till November 2024 even though they host the Champions Trophy the following year.

During the World Cup, Akram opined that the format should be reduced to a 40 overs a side while Tendulkar wants to break the ODIs to four innings of 25 overs each to break the "monotony".



"I have a problem with ODI cricket right now. Very rarely do you see nowadays in One-day cricket something interesting happen in those (middle) 30 overs. Just go to 40 overs, you'll have more action during that period."

"I don't know if it's going to happen, but I think 40 overs would be more interesting, especially for bilateral series. Nowadays the audience, we do know their (attention) span is lesser than the nineties, because of T20 format and because of social media. We have to adapt," Akram told Fox Sports.

His menacing bowling partner Waqar Younis also expressed his views on the subject in the middle of the World Cup he was commenting on.

"ODI cricket is too friendly for batters. Suggestion @ICC 2 new balls to start, take away 1 ball after 30 overs, continue with the other. At the end that ball will only be 35 overs old. We'll see some reverse at the end. Save the art of #ReverseSwing," he posted on social media.

However, the comments of Cummins after the World Cup triumph on Sunday night were a good advert for the ODI format. Unlike the slam bang T20 format, ODI cricket is played in gears and does challenge the cricketers more.

It is a challenge Cummins and his team enjoyed in a global event but the same can't be said about a bilateral contest.

Cricketers who have experienced male puberty, can't compete in women's cricket despite gender reassignment: ICC



AHMEDABAD, Nov 21: In a major policy decision, the ICC on Tuesday barred cricketers, who have been through any form of male puberty, from competing in international women's game regardless of whether or not they have undergone surgery or gender reassignment treatment.

The ICC said it was taking the decision to protect the integrity of international women's game and the safety of players.

In a statement, the ICC said, "The ICC Board approved new gender eligibility regulations for the international game following a nine-month consultation process with the sport's stakeholders."

"The new policy is based on the following principles (in order of priority), protection of the integrity of the women's game, safety, fairness and inclusion, and this means any Male to Female participants who have been through any form of male puberty will not be eligible to participate in the international women's game regardless of any surgery or gender reassignment treatment they may have undertaken."

Gender reassignment and treatment have been a hotly-debated topic in world athletics for years.

The ICC, while firming up rules for gender eligibility for international women's cricket, left the issue at the domestic

level in the hands of the member boards.

"The review, which was led by the ICC Medical Advisory Committee chaired by Dr Peter Harcourt, relates solely to gender eligibility for international women's cricket, whilst gender eligibility at domestic level is a matter for each individual Member Board, which may be impacted by local legislation. The regulations will be reviewed within two years," said the ICC.

ICC Chief Executive Geoff Allardice said the world governing body had arrived at the decision following "extensive consultations".

"The changes to the gender eligibility regulations resulted from an extensive consultation process and is founded in science and aligned with the core principles developed during the review."

"Inclusivity is incredibly important to us as a sport, but our priority was to protect the integrity of the international women's game and the safety of players," said Allardice.

Meanwhile, the Chief Executives' Committee (CEC) endorsed a plan to accelerate the development of women match officials, which includes equal match-day pay for ICC umpires across men's and women's cricket, and ensuring there is one neutral umpire in every ICC Women's Championship series from January next year. (PTI)

Fancied players advance to pre-quarterfinals in ITF Women's World Tennis Tour

BENGALURU, Nov 21: India's fourth seeded Vaidehi Chaudhari including other fancied players who played their first round matches, advanced to pre-quarterfinals of the ITF Women's World Tennis Tour, without much ado here on Tuesday.

Vaidehi overcame the challenge of wild card entrant and compatriot Anjali Rathi in straight sets 6-3, 6-3 while sixth seed Jenny Duerst of Switzerland dashed the hopes of qualifier Yashaswini Panwar of India with a 6-3, 6-2 win. Italy's seventh seeded Diletta Cherubini outclassed Anastasia Sukhotin in straight sets 6-1, 6-2. In a notable result, recently-crowned national champion Shrivalli Rashmikaa Bhamidipaty overcame a late fightback by Humeria Bahamus before emerging a 6-1, 7-5 victor.

Using her strong forehand to the maximum, the 21-year-old Rashmikaa achieved an early



break in the second game, to take a 3-0 lead before breaking her opponent's serve once again in the sixth game, before wrapping up the first set 6-1. However, her 22-year-old opponent, waged a fightback in the second set. After breaking her opponent's serve in the second game, Humeria fought hard to hold her serve to make it 3-0. The momentum changed in the seventh game where Rashmikaa achieved a crucial

break after several deuce and advantages and won the eighth.

With one more break in the 11th game, Rashmikaa served out for the match. Later, Rashmikaa teamed up with Vaidehi to beat the pair of Subitha Maruri and Prathiba Narayan Prasad 6-0, 6-3 to enter the quarterfinals in the doubles. Earlier, Asian Games gold medallist Rutuja Bhosale was felicitated by the Bowling Institute while KSLTA presented the champion with a cheque of Rs 1 lakh for her brilliant achievement at the quadrennial Games. Rutuja who has been seeded third for the singles main draw, will begin her campaign on Wednesday but gave a sample of her form when she paired with Kazakhstan's Zhibek Kulanbayeva and almost blanked the duo of Akanksha Dileep Niture and Nidhira Rajmohan 6-1, 6-0 to enter the doubles last four. (PTI)

It was most attended ODI World Cup ever but jury still out on 50-over format's relevance

"I must say, maybe because we won, I did fall in love with ODI again this World Cup. I think the scenario where every game really matters, it does mean a bit different to just a bilateral," he acknowledged.

"I mean, the World Cup's got such rich history, I'm sure it's going to be around for a long time. Yeah, there's so many wonderful games, so many wonderful stories within this last couple of months. So, I think there's definitely a place."

The view and constraints of the average fan must also be taken into consideration by the ICC which might be forced to make changes to the ODI format in the near future.

Two Indian fans, who travelled the length and breadth of the country following the team in the World Cup, had a time to remember but they too want immediate changes to how the 50-over game is played.

"In the current scenario, it should be two innings of 20 overs each packed into six hours. Toss and conditions get nullified to a certain extent. Eight hours is way too long and needs to change," said Gurgaon-based Inderpreet Khurana referring to the World Cup final where the evening dew made batting easier for Australia.

He was in attendance for both the marquee games in Ahmedabad, the India-Pakistan showdown and World Cup final.

Atrav Kapur, who travelled to Chennai, Kolkata, Ahmedabad, Dharamsala and Lucknow for the India games in the league stage, is a fan of ODI cricket but doesn't see it surviving in its current version.

"Given that the biggest ever ICC rights deal has been signed recently and a big chunk of that is the 2027 ODI WC, I think ODIs will be 'forced' to survive. Though, on the whole, it's bound to slowly wind up - I don't think audiences can sustain watching a game for 7+ hours anymore - it's too long for a single day."

"Bilateral ODI cricket is meaningless at the moment," he reckoned. (PTI)