

Assam: Former minister Nilamani Sen Deka expelled from Congress



Opposition Congress in Assam on Wednesday expelled former minister Nilamani Sen Deka with immediate effect for "violating" party discipline.

Assam Pradesh Congress Committee general secretary (Admin) Apurba Kumar Bhattacharjee in an

Deka, an executive member of the state unit, has been expelled as directed by APCC president Bhupen Kumar Borah "for repeatedly violating the party discipline".

"It may be mentioned here that earlier also on several occasions he was asked not to

statements against the party, and in spite of his written assurance, he is engaging in anti-party activities," Bhattacharjee said. Deka was the agriculture minister in the erstwhile Congress government during former Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi's tenure, and unsuccessful

the assembly elections from Dharampur constituency in 2016. The two-time MLA had grabbed headlines in July 2013 when he, also the then horticulture and food processing minister, said that eight persons can have a proper meal for only Rs 20.

Akhilesh demands court-monitored probe into Siddharthnagar woman's death during police raid

LUCKNOW(KCN): Samajwadi Party (SP) president

and a police team in a Siddharthnagar village.

sitting high court judge so that the police can not hush up

ries suffered in the clash that ensued after the police team reached the Islamnagar village to conduct a raid in connection with alleged cow slaughter.

The SP chief visited the village to meet the family members of the woman.

While the victim's relatives claimed she was shot by cops during the raid, the police said a post-mortem examination found deep wounds on the woman's body but ruled out any gunshot injury.

Yadav, however, said **CONTINUED ON: P-7**



Akhilesh Yadav on Wednesday demanded a high court-monitored probe into the death of a woman during a clash between local people

Yadav said he would take the matter up in the Uttar Pradesh assembly as well.

"It is necessary to probe the case under the monitoring of a

the matter. I will take up the matter in the state assembly," Yadav told reporters in Siddharthnagar. The 50-year-old woman died of inju-

Arrested in 2015 after her driver spilled the beans, Indrani Mukerjea set to walk out of jail on bail

MUMBAI(KCN): More than six years after she was arrested for the alleged murder of her own daughter, Indrani Mukerjea is set to leave Mumbai's Byculla women's prison as the Supreme Court granted her bail in the case on Wednesday.

While the trial of the Sheena Bora murder case is far from over, the story has seen some bizarre turns and twists so far.

Sheena Bora (24) was killed sometime in April 2012 if the investigators are to be believed, but the crime came to light three years later with the arrest of Shyamvar Rai, Indrani's former driver, for illegal possession of weapon on August 21, 2015.



During the interrogation, Rai told the police that he knew of a murder that had taken place in April 2012.

Indrani Mukerjea, a former media executive and the wife of media baron Peter Mukerjea, had strangled her daughter Sheena in a car with the help of her former husband Sanjeev Khanna, Rai said. Four days later, the police arrested Indrani.

They also arrested Khanna, her former husband.

Indrani maintained that she was being falsely implicated in the case.

Mumbai Police claimed **CONTINUED ON: P-7**

CM to attend consecration of Tara Tarini temple today



BHUBANESWAR(KCN): Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik will attend the consecration of the revamped Tara Tarini temple near Berhampur on Wednesday. Senior officials including Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra

Mahapatra and ST Secretary VK Pandian visited the temple on Tuesday ahead of the Chief Minister's visit to review the arrangements.

As a large number of people are expected to turn up at the

temple, the two officers took stock of the security arrangements. They visited the main temple, 'Mundan' (tonsur-

cussions with priests and servitors of the temple regarding the arrangements. Later, they reviewed the arrangements for crowd control, drinking water supply, power supply and fire security for the event.

US, banks, unveil plan to ease food crisis from Russia's war

BONN (KCN): The U.S., several global development banks and other groups unveiled a multi-billion-dollar plan Wednesday meant to address a worldwide food security crisis exacerbated by



and climate damage to crops.

Tens of billions will be spent on supporting farmers, addressing the fertilizer supply crisis, and developing land for food production, among other issues. The Asian Development Bank will contribute funds to feeding Afghanistan and Sri Lanka and the African Development bank will use \$1.5 billion to assist 20 million African farmers, according to Treasury.

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Inter-American Development Bank, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the World Bank will also contribute tens of billions in the coming months and years to support food producers and address supply shortage issues.

The plan stems from a meeting that Yellen convened in April at the International Monetary Fund and World Bank spring meetings, where she called on powerful nations to look for specific ways to combat a looming crisis over food insecurity around the globe that Russia's war in Ukraine has made even worse.

Russia and Ukraine produce a third of the world's wheat supply, and the loss of commodities due to the war has resulted in soaring food prices and uncertainty about the future of **CONTINUED ON: P-7**

Congress to hold state-level 'shivirs' across country on June 1-2, to communicate 'Udaipur Declaration'

NEW DELHI(KCN): The Congress on Wednesday said it will hold state-level "shivirs" across the country on June 1 and 2 to communicate the decisions of the "Udaipur Declaration" adopted after a three-day "Chintan Shivir".

AICC general secretary and chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said similar conclaves will also be held at the district level on June 11 to send across the party's message to the grassroot-level workers.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the All India Congress Committee

the Udaipur Chintan Shivir. After the conclusion of the "Nav Sankalp



(AICC) general secretaries and in-charges of various states at the party headquarters here over Tuesday and Wednesday to discuss the recommendations and decisions taken at

Chintan Shivir" and the adoption of the "Udaipur Declaration", under the guidance of the general secretary (organisation), all the in-charges and general secretaries of the

Congress held deliberations and post these two days of discussions, certain decisions were taken, Surjewala said.

"On June 1 and 2, there will be state-level shivirs in all the states, in which the highlights, points and the way ahead taken from the Udaipur Declaration will be communicated to the leaders and grassroot-level workers.

The shivirs will be attended by our MPs, MLAs, MP and MLA candidates, District Congress Committee **CONTINUED ON: P-7**

90th Birthday ceremony of Sahitika Santanu Acharya celebrated



Cuttack Sadar(KCN) : Renowned Sahitika Santanu Acharya's 90th Birthday ceremony observed by Paharaja Pratibha Puja Parisad(PPPP),Cuttack at his Bhubaneswar Sahid Nagar residency. On behalf of Parisad President

Byanga Poet Pratap Chandra Behera, General Secretary Piyush Ranjan Parida, Treasurer Gobinda Chandra Pradhan,The Arohan - Bhubaneswar Senior member Alok Kumar Behura, Eminent Sahitika

Nirupama Acharya, Arun Nanda Foundation charman social worker Karunakar Pradhan were present and observed birthday ceremony with sweets, Uttariya, garlands and paid best wish.Eminent writer Santanu Acharya

gave the slogan to all societies as per Utkal Gourab Madhusudan Das, Esteemed Poet Gopal Paharaj like poets, freedom fighters and how they dedicate themselves for the betterment of society it has to follow.

HBS organizes 'Summer Bash'



Kolkata (KCNP): 'Summer Bash' on Heritage Business School, Kolkata organized its annual cultural programme

18th May 2022. The programme witnessed some of the fabulous cultural dance performances and recitations organized by the students. The programme was inaugurated by Prof. K.K.Chaudhuri, Director, Heritage Business School in the presence of other faculty, staff and students.

Odisha government set to launch Navchetana programme to reduce drug abuse among children

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): As educational institutions have reopened following reduction of Covid cases, Odisha government is set to launch Navchetana programme under National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (NAPDDR).The programme will be implemented in 10 selected districts - Puri,

Jagatsinghpur, Cuttack, Angul, Khurda, Sundargarh, Ganjam, Balasore, Kalahandi and Kendrapara for the next three years with an aim to reduce adverse consequences of drug abuse. District Social Security Officers have been directed to implement the programme as per the State action plan prepared on the line of national action plan.

Contractual worker of SAIL agitated with eight fold demand



Barbil (KCN): All contractual workers of Bolani Ores Mines of SAIL, went on a strike on Wednesday, May 17th. The Keonjhar mining workers union which is affiliated to CITU and SWFI led the agitation for an eight

fold demand. Indramani Behera Senior leader of CPI(M) said all employees demands immediate finalization of wage settlement, payment with full arrears, non curtailment of

gratuity benefits, enhancement of wages of all contractual workers, compassionate employment to dependents of employees who died of COVID infection and that such deaths were to be treated by

the SAIL management as in the course of employment, RMD should not be discontinued, opposition to arbitrary decision of NPS and to disinvestment and privatization move of any SAIL unit.

Boost For Start Up Eco-System

New Delhi (KCN): Minister of Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal today chaired the 4th meeting of National Startup Advisory Council (NSAC) in New Delhi.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister assured continued government support in developing startup ecosystem. He appreciated the work done by NSAC members and urged them to focus on tier 2 and tier 3 cities where limited VC funding is available. He also emphasized on the need for capacity building and generating awareness about various initiatives of the government to promote startups in such cities. Members of the council have also been visiting states and interacting with startup entrepreneurs and students in educational institutions to understand and find ways to energize the startup ecosystem.

The Council deliberated upon important matters relating to startup ecosystem including protecting ownership of startups with original promoters, incorporating in India, listing in India, developing innovation hubs, etc. The members also shared progress on programs presented in earlier

NSAC meetings including National Mentorship Program, Investor-Startup Matchmaking Portal, Incubator Capacity Development Program, etc.

The Minister also launched NavIC Grand Challenge which aims at promoting adoption of NavIC as geo-positioning solution,



a key proponent for digital Aatmanirbharta. The applications for the grand challenge are open on Startup India's website (www.startupindia.gov.in) and it aims to identify and handhold solutions of startups which are engaged in developing NavIC enabled drones.

Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) had constituted the National Startup Advisory Council to advise the Government on measures needed to build a strong ecosystem for nurturing innovation and startups in the country to drive sustainable economic growth and generate large scale employment opportunities.

Besides the ex-officio members, the council has non-official members, representing various stakeholders such as founders of successful startups, veterans who have grown and scaled companies in India, persons capable of representing interests of investors, incubators and accelerators into startups, representatives of associations of stakeholders of startups and representatives of industry associations.

It is a one of its kind congregation wherein the policy making process is driven as part of collaboration between all the key stakeholders of the Startup ecosystem.

Secretary, Department of Space also highlighted upon the various measures being undertaken by the Government in both

strengthening NavIC's capabilities and in creating a holistic ecosystem of software and hardware around the same. In the meeting, Prasar Bharti showcased trailer of the second edition of Startup Champions 2.0 which will be aired on bouquet of Doordarshan channels in coming months. The meeting was attended by key stakeholders, officials and existing startups in the country. Some of them include Manoj Kohli, Country Head, Softbank India; Deepak Garg, Founder & CEO, Rivigo Service; Abhiraj Bhal, Co-founder, Urban Company; Lizzie Chapman, Co-founder & CEO, Zest Money; Kunal Upadhyay, IIM Ahmedabad; Rajan Anandan, Sequoia Capital; Karthik Reddy, Chairperson, Indian Venture and Alternate Capital Association; Prashanth Prakash, Partner, Accel and others.

During the course of the meeting, the members also shared many interesting insights and views about the startup ecosystem and gave recommendations as to how the ecosystem can be strengthened further through various initiatives and programs.

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Rishabh Sharma and Roshni Kashyap's love story film 'Ek Naradham'



Bombay(KCN, Sanjay Sharma Raj): Most of the romantic family dramas have been the biggest hits in every era, which is probably why Producer Preeti Sharma is making her first love story film 'Ek Naradham' with a lot of hard work and dedication. Its shooting has just been completed at Khanvel Resort, Silvassa and post production is on. The film is being produced under the banner of R R Media

and directed by Ajay B Saha. The director of this film, Ajay has previously directed the film 'Apna Haq' and the short film, 'Pyaar Ke Liye' and is directing his upcoming film, 'Mera Saathi Mera Pyaar' and now the film, 'Ek Naradham'. The main actor of the film is Rishabh Sharma, who has worked as a child artist in many hit films like 'Veer', 'Aao Wish Kare' and serials like 'Mrs

Tendulkar', 'Jai Jai Jai Bajrangbali' etc and he has made a name in the world and now this is his first film as a hero. Rishabh Sharma says about the film, "I am playing the character of Rahul, who is the son of a very big businessman and he falls in love with Dolly (Roshni Kashyap), a girl working in his office. This is how the story progresses. This is my first film as a hero, I hope people will love it like before."

The film is being produced under the banner of 'RR Media'. The film is being produced by Preeti Sharma. The director is Ajay B Saha. The co-producer of the film is Farida Shadriwala. Cinematography by Kamal, story screenplay and dialogues by Ramesh Harishankar Tiwari and music by Baba Jagirdar. The main actors in this film are Rishabh Sharma, Roshni Kashyap, Sanjeev Bawra and others.

Vijay's 'Bigil' crosses Rs 100 crore mark in three days

CHENNAI: Tamil three days since its season.



superstar Vijay's Diwali release, "Bigil", has crossed the Rs 100-crore mark worldwide in just

release. The film, directed by Atlee Kumar, is the big Tamil release of the ongoing festive

release. ALSO READ: 'Bigil' review - Thalapathy's 'message' is flawed in this more massy than 'Mersal' film

Industry tracker and columnist Sreedhar Pillai tweeted: "#Bigil does it in style in super fast time, crosses 100 cr worldwide in 3 days! Extraordinary! Phenomenal! ALSO READ: 'Bigil' madness - Rioting charges on 32 Vijay fans in Krishnagiri Trade analyst and film critic Ramesh Bala wrote on Twitter: "#Bigil has taken more

than 100 crs+ Opening at the WW Box Office. Vijay is known as Thalapathy to Tamil fans and the film continues his winning streak at the box-office. Incidentally, this is his third release with Atlee after "Theri" and "Mersal". With both earlier films emerging blockbusters, Vijay fans hope "Bigil" will repeat the box-office feat.

ALSO READ: A Bigil-esque script - Two schools in Erode helping girls play their way to success "Bigil" is a sports action film that has Vijay in dual roles as father and son. As the father, he plays a local don and as the son he is the coach of a women's football team. The actor underwent training for the coach's character.

Add Cucumber to Your Summer Skincare Routine

Cucumbers are one of the cheapest, easily available and best summer-friendly natural ingredients that helps the skin breathe and rejuvenate especially during intense heat waves. Filled with essential nutrients such as



vitamins, minerals and antioxidants, Cucumber is 96 percent water so you can mix it with other natural ingredients to create a mask that will help to exfoliate the skin and soak up cucumber's soothing qualities.

Its high water content not only hydrates your skin, but also helps main-

tain the water-balance of your body, and simple DIY

preparations can work wonders for your skin, targeting a range of beauty woes including skin inflammations, puffiness, wrinkles, fine lines and even cellulite.

Cucumber is an excellent source of silica, the beauty mineral that improves your skin, leaving it rejuvenated and lightening skin color over a period of time.

Cucumber is a natural toner. For oily skin, you can apply cucumber juice by itself on the face and wash it off with plain water after 15 minutes. You can also mix cucumber juice with a little rose water. This would make a good toner. Apply it on the face and rinse off with plain water after 15 minutes. Blend and mix two spoons of rose water to cucumber puree and apply the paste to your face. Then rinse with cool water to close and tighten the pores. Cucumber is also an astringent. Apart from toning and refreshing the skin, it closes the pores and reduces oiliness.

The effect of cucumber is gentle on the skin. That is why it is a traditional remedy for the delicate skin around the eyes, helping to reduce dark circles and brighten the skin. In fact, it also helps to reduce swelling and puffiness around eyes, due to its anti-inflammatory properties. Grated cucumber or cucumber juice may be ap-

Shahnaz Husain

plied daily on the skin around eyes, washing off with plain water after 15 minutes. Make a creamy blend of cucumber, coconut oil, carrot seed essential oil and aloe vera gel. Place the cream in ice cube trays and freeze. Apply the frozen cream around the eyes; be careful not to let it go inside your eyes. This mask will get rid of the dry circles, puffiness, and keep the little crow's feet around the eyes at bay.

When applying a cucumber face mask, gently massage the mask into your skin in small circular motions. This helps the ingredients to penetrate your pores. It also stimulates blood flow on the surface of your skin. Allow the mask to sit on your skin for 10 to 15 minutes, then rinse off with cold water. Don't forget to apply a good eye cream for moisturization afterwards. You can make a skin toner with cucumber juice, mixing the juice of one cucumber with one tablespoon of rose water and one cup of mineral water. It will not only tone the skin, but also remove tan over a period of time. Or, mix cucumber juice with one teaspoon of mint juice and a cup of mineral water. This will suit oily and acne prone skin.

The juice of one cucumber can also be mixed with half teaspoon lemon juice, one teaspoon aloe vera juice and one cup rose water. Chill the mixture in the fridge. This toner will

close the pores and also moisturize the skin, without making it oily.

You can also mix one tablespoon of cucumber juice with one cup coconut water. It makes a most refreshing skin toner, also cooling the skin. It is also a skin whitening beauty treatment if used over a period of time and lightens skin blemishes.

Take 10 gms of rose petals and put them in a bowl. Add two cups of hot water to cover them and let them infuse in the water. Leave overnight. Next morning cool and strain and then add one tablespoon of cucumber juice and the contents of one Vitamin E capsule. Mix well. Put in a spray bottle and use it to spray a fine mist on the face. It helps to tone, refresh and nourish the skin.

Refrigerate two cucumber slices for at least half hour, and apply them on tired eyes for combating any puffiness after a hectic, exhausting day, in peak summer season.

Remember, that home beauty recipes should not be made in large quantities.

Store your home-made toner in your refrigerator, so that it is ready and ideal for refreshing the skin in summer.

The author is international fame beauty expert and is called herbal queen of India

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Forest Right Act: Ensuring indigenous rights and climate justice

In India, 705 ethnic groups are notified as Scheduled Tribes (STs) spread across 30 States or Union Territories. These are considered to be India's indigenous peoples. These indigenous people constitute the



second largest tribal population in the world after Africa. As per 2011 census, with a population of 104.3 million, they comprise 8.6% of the total population of India – almost 90% of them living in rural areas. There

are, however, many more ethnic groups that would qualify for Scheduled Tribe status but which are not officially recognized. India has several laws and constitutional provisions, such as the Fifth Schedule for mainland India and the Sixth Schedule for certain areas of northeast India which recognize indigenous peoples' rights to land and self-governance.

The 107th plenary meeting of the United Nations General Assembly held on 13th September 2007 adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples through a Resolution. India is a signatory to this. The UN Resolution No. 61/295 of 2007 which had formed the basis of UN discussions, the concept of indigenous people was explained as below:

"Indigenous communities, peoples, and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing on those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural

patterns, social institutions, and legal systems".

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has used the combined phrase 'indigenous and tribal populations' when it adopted the Indigenous and Tribal Populations Convention in 1957 (No. 107). The current Convention in use is of the year 1989 (No. 169)25. These



Conventions do not offer any formal definition of the term 'indigenous people'. Article 1 of the 1989 convention, however, states that the convention applies to "(a) tribal peoples in independent countries whose social, cultural and economic conditions distinguish them from other sections of the national community, and whose status is regulated wholly or partially by their own customs or traditions or by special laws or regulations; Under the Paris Agreement, India had committed to creating a cumulative carbon sink of 2.5-3 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent by 2030. Currently, India's forest and tree cover is about 24 percent of its geographical area, according to [India's State of Forest Report 2017](#) and India has repeatedly highlighted that it wants to bring at least 33 percent of its total area under green cover. The draft of India's National Forest Policy 2018 also [mentions](#) that to achieve the national goal for eco-security, the country should have a minimum of one-third of the total land area under forest and tree cover.

Pratap Kishore Mohanty

The Gram Sabha has the authority under the Forest Rights Act to issue authorization for the use of forest lands for other purposes. No one has the authority to exploit any forest for their own interests without their permission. This act also protects the livelihoods of the forest's varied inhabitants. So, if the government aims for effective implementation of the Forest Right Act, 2006, it can be said that it is the greatest strategy to maintain the forest and protect the rights of residents

The forest bureaucracy is using India's climate action commitments and initiatives to maintain and strengthen its grip over the country's forests. 69 The National Afforestation Programme, National REDD+ policy, Green India Mission, and \$6 billion in compensating afforestation devolution proposed to help India reach its targets for increasing forest carbon reserves are all forest bureaucracy centered. Joint Forest Management, an exclusive forest department-controlled programme with huge institutional support, is being considered for community participation. 70 The Indian government's Protected Area (PA) network, where carbon benefit accrual is "very viable" because "community extraction is prohibited," is another essential technique for conserving forest carbon stocks. 71 The exclusionary conservation paradigm used to administer India's protected areas has backfired. For STs/OTFDs, the exclusionary conservation strategy used in the management of India's protected areas has resulted in significant levels of social injustice. Indian experience with regard to the symbiotic relationship of indigenous communities and forest



ecology is quite unique in the sense that more than 30% of the landmass is being habituated by the indigenous groups who have been protecting the forest ecosystem on their own traditional way. The indigenous communities who had been residing within these forest landscapes for time immemorial have never been given their due share of rights over such landscapes simply for the fact that during the colonial period all these areas were

declared as "Reserve Forest, Sanctuary and National Parks" They had been given a raw deal by the successive government of India policy regimes with more emphasis on biological diversity and ecological

restoration and conservation. But with the enactment of the Forest Right Act in the year 2006, the Government of India recognized the fact that historical injustice is done to the forest dwellers, and hence this Act would undo the injustice and apart from endowing the indigenous communities with their right over forest resources both individual as well as community ownership but also empowered them to manage the common property resources.

The Act is still in force and it is quite satisfying that this single piece of legislation could address the livelihood, economic and ecological security of not only the indigenous landscapes of India rather it has been able to ensure India's promise and commitment towards the welfare of indigenous communities and contributing towards our obligation towards the global climate justice protocols and Sustainable Development Goals.

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Brajrajnagar bypoll: Naveen may campaign

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): Chief Minister and BJD supremo Naveen Patnaik is likely to campaign for the bypoll to the now that the Covid pandemic has receded. Western Odisha districts are considered to be the traditional stronghold of the BJP and



Brajrajnagar Assembly constituency with the ruling party's main rival BJP deciding to rope in a host of senior leaders including five union ministers for electioneering. As the BJD had won the seat for the first time in the history of the constituency in the 2019 assembly elections, the party has started making all out efforts to retain the seat in the bypoll. The BJP has smelt a chance in the bypoll as its candidate was defeated in the last Assembly elections with a margin of only 12,000 votes.

Besides, the bypoll will be the last test for the political parties at least in Western Odisha before the 2023 general elections and the ruling BJD wants to maintain its overall dominance in the region. A senior leader of the ruling party said that the Chief Minister wants the party to increase the victory margin in the bypoll compared to the last election. If required, he will also campaign in the constituency for a day or two

its candidate Radharani Panda had won from the constituency in 2014 Assembly elections. Sources in the ruling party said that Panda has her network in the constituency and is likely to give a strong challenge to the ruling party candidate Alaka Mohanty who is banking on sympathy wave besides Naveen's charisma to win the election.

A senior BJD leader said that the BJP can match the BJD in the constituency in organisational spread and the Chief Minister may have to campaign for the party candidate. The Chief Minister had campaigned for party candidates in bypolls to Tirtol and Balasore Assembly constituencies virtually during the peak of Covid pandemic. Meanwhile, the BJD submitted a list of 40 member star campaigners to the Election Commission of India which included the Chief Minister and two Ollywood actors Arindam Roy and Akash Dasnayak.

Pakistan begins talks with IMF to resurrect enhanced bailout package to support its sagging economy

ISLAMABAD: Talks between Pakistan and the International Monetary Fund began on Wednesday to resurrect an enhanced bailout package to support the sagging economy of the cash-strapped country. Pakistan has repeatedly been seeking international aid to support its failing economy. The talks are being held in the Qatari capital Doha, the finance ministry tweeted.

The negotiations are expected to continue into next week, it said. Finance Minister Miftah Ismail, Minister of State Aisha Ghouse Pasha, Finance Secretary Hamed Yaqoob Shaikh, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) Acting Governor Murtaza Syed, Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) Chairman Asim Ahmad and other senior officials from the finance division are participating in the talks taking place virtually.

Ismail who travelled to Washington last month and met with the Fund officials had said that the effort was not just to revive the USD 6 billion IMF bailout package

signed by former prime minister Imran Khan in 2019 but also to add another USD 2 billion to it. The 2019 agreement has never been fully implemented due to the failure of the Khan's government to fulfil its commitments made with the fund, which so far has released only USD 3 billion under the agreed programme. Ismail said he had also requested the global lender to extend the programme for one year till June 2023.

Pakistan would also try to secure the release of the next tranche of USD 1 billion before the end of this financial year on June 30. Among other issues, the finance support from the US would also be part of the talks, sources said. In another development, Pakistan's business community has urged the government to immediately put curbs on the import of luxury goods as the country is heading towards an economic chaos. "Pakistan is heading towards economic

crisis," warned Employers' Federation of Pakistan (EFP) President Ismail Suttar. Worsening balance of payments position, high inflation, depleting foreign exchange reserves and political uncertainty had led the country to an alarming economic situation, Suttar was quoted as saying by The Express Tribune newspaper. "It is devastating that Pakistan has been consistently facing a trade deficit since 2003," he said, adding that immediate action and implementation of strict policies to control the situation is the need of the hour.

Pakistan definitely needs to curb non-essential imports, AL Habib Capital Markets Head of Research Fawad Basir emphasised. "It will help to a certain extent but this should be the starting point," he said. However, some experts are of the view that avoiding imports would be very difficult for Pakistan. Pakistan Business Council (PBC) Chief Executive Officer Ehsan Malik under-

lined that most of the "imports are unavoidable at least in the short run - such as fuel, food, machinery, chemicals and medicines". "Others are materials necessary for domestic manufacturing and exports, like cotton and man-made fibres," he said. "That leaves a small portion of around 5% where import restrictions can work without hurting the economy."

That portion included mobile phones and vehicles in completely built-up form, Malik said, adding that dry fruits and pet food were also included. The curbs could range from high duty to outright ban, he said. "High duty will have limited effect as demand for these items is not elastic and will not diminish even with high rates of duty," he pointed out. AHL Head of Research Tahir Abbas said the country needs to impose financial emergency to curb non-essential imports, particularly the luxury goods, to save foreign exchange reserves.

With 'SRIJAN' portal, Centre intensifies drive for 'Atmanirbharata' in defence

NEW DELHI: The defence ministry on Wednesday said it has intensified the drive for indigenisation of defence items being carried out by state-run manufacturers.

customised reports to assess the performance of the DPSUs," it said. The ministry said relevant information like details of items to be indigenised, tenta-

third list of over 100 military systems and weapons that will be put under import restrictions under a staggered timeline of over three-and-half years.

four-and-half years. In the last few years, the government has taken a series of measures to promote domestic defence production. India is one of the



It said the progress of the indigenisation process by the defence public sector under a k i n g s (DPSUs) is being reviewed on weekly basis by Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar. The ministry said a comprehensive user-friendly 'dashboard' on the SRIJAN portal has been developed to monitor the status of progress of the indigenisation process.

"This dashboard enables real-time end-to-end updates of various activities being taken up by the respective DPSUs during the process of indigenisation," the ministry said in a statement. "It provides transparent information, analytics and various

diverse order quantity, concerned DPSU, route of indigenisation to be adopted, details of in-charge nodal officer, requests for proposal and project sanction order have been kept in public domain to make it accessible to the industry. "The dashboard will be accessible by industry shortly. The industry partners can view the details on the dashboard and avail opportunity as per their capabilities in order to become partners in 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat'," the ministry said.

In a major push towards defence indigenisation, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh last month unveil the The defence ministry said orders worth more than Rs 2,10,000 crore are likely to be placed on the Indian industry in the next five years as part of the items covered in the third list. The first "positive indigenisation" list of 101 items that included towed artillery guns, short-range surface-to-air missiles, cruise missiles and offshore patrol vessels was issued in August 2020. In May last year, the government approved restrictions on the import of an additional 108 military weapons and systems such as next-generation corvettes, air-borne early warning systems, tank engines and radars under a staggered timeline of

largest importers of arms globally. According to estimates, the Indian armed forces are projected to spend around USD 130 billion (one billion is equal to 100 crores) in capital procurement in the next five years. The government now wants to reduce dependence on imported military platforms and has decided to support domestic defence manufacturing. The Defence Ministry has set a goal of a turnover of USD 25 billion (Rs 1.75 lakh crore) in defence manufacturing in the next five years that including an export target of USD 5 billion (Rs 35,000 crore) worth of military hardware.

LDF convenor EP Jayarajan slams state Congress chief K Sudhakaran's remarks against Kerala CM

KOCHI: Reacting sharply over the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC), K Sudhakaran's statement against the Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan the

an ordinary politician". "Sudhakaran's statement is highly reprehensible. It is a vulgar term that is not commonly used by even an ordinary politician," the LDF

Tuesday. Alleging that the Congress leaders are reacting out of balance and he (Sudhakaran) used an uncultured expression, Jayarajan said, "This is tantamount

anything in violation of all that." Demanding the arrest of the KPCC president, he further said, "it is a serious crime to insult a Chief Minister to spoil the atmosphere of peace." Stating the incident as a "tantamount" to insulting the people of Kerala, he asked the leaders of the All India Congress Committee (AICC) for their take and called for a protest. "Mass protests should be staged to protest this stance. This is tantamount to insulting all the people of Kerala. People should realize that this is Congress and this is the United Democratic Front (UDF)," he said.



Left Democratic Front (LDF) convenor EP Jayarajan said that it is "highly reprehensible" and "vulgar term" that is not commonly used by "even

convenor said on Tuesday. The KPCC president had used the slang 'the dog with a broken chain' against the Kerala CM while addressing the mediapersons on

to insulting Kerala. The Chief Minister can be criticized politically and administratively. But it is a sad fact that the KPCC president has gone so far as to say

Punjab farmers end protest after AAP government accepts several demands

CHANDIGARH: Punjab farmers ended their protest at the Chandigarh-Mohali border on Wednesday after the Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann-led state government accepted several of their demands.

The development came after representatives of more than 20 farmer bodies held a marathon meeting with Mann at Punjab Bhawan here.

Conceding one of the key demands of the protesting farmers,

Mann announced a fresh schedule for staggered sowing of paddy on June 14 and June 17, thus restricting the total number of zones to just two instead of the earlier four.

However, the border belt across the fence has been excluded from the zonal restrictions and farmers of this region have been allowed to sow paddy from June 10. Notably, it was earlier decided to undertake paddy cultivation in a staggered manner by

dividing the entire



state into four zones with dates of sowing being June 18, 22, 24 and 26 but the farmer bodies had rejected this schedule.

Mann told the farmer leaders that the state government has already issued a noti-

fication to procure the

entire moong (green gram) crop at a minimum support price (MSP) of Rs 7,275 per quintal, according to an official statement. He also said the state government is finalising modalities to also procure maize at MSP to give a boost to its ambitious programme of crop diversification.

On the issue of MSP for Basmati crop, Mann said he will call on Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday to urge the Centre to announce MSP on Basmati crop so as to encourage growers to cultivate it in a big way.

He told Samyukt Kisan Morcha members that he will also take up the contentious issue of change of rules for appointment of top officers to the Bhakra Beas Management Board with Shah. Later, Rural Development Minister Kuldeep Singh

Dhaliwal said Mann will also raise with Shah the issue of giving bonuses on wheat to farmers.

Mann urged the union leaders to give him at least a year's time to bring farmer-friendly reforms in the agriculture sector.

He said his office and residence are always open to resolve any issue related to farmers' welfare.

He urged farmers to shun the path of agitation and said if they have any grouse against the government, they should sit across the table to find an amicable solution.

On Tuesday, the chief minister had termed the farmers' protest "unwarranted and undesirable".

Responding to another issue raised by the representatives of farm unions, Mann said the state government will soon come out with a comprehensive policy for bestowing ownership rights on cultivators in posses-

Shanti hospital conducts 1st cancer robotic surgery

CUTTACK: Shanti Memorial Hospital, Cuttack has con-

ducted the first robotic cancer surgery on a 45-year-old woman, who was admitted with history of rectal bleeding. Initial evaluation and subsequent colonoscopy showed a tumor in the rectum. The patient was subsequently referred to the department of surgical oncology for treatment.

us she was anemic due to blood loss over the last two months. patient had a very good recovery, started taking food



Chief Consultant surgical oncologist Dr Prashant Chandra Das said, "When the patient presented to

After blood transfusion and subsequent evaluation through MRI pelvis and CT chest, cancer was detected in the lower rectum."

The patient underwent abdominoperineal resection with CMR Robotic platform, a procedure conducted for the first time in the State. The surgery involved the removal of the diseased rectum via surgeon controlled robotic arms and creation of stoma. The

from the next day of surgery itself, and was discharged on the sixth post operative day.

"Robotic surgery is a boon for cancer patients. Less pain, better cancer clearance, easy access to difficult areas of body and early recovery with the globally validated cutting edge technology are some of the advantages of the surgery," added Dr Das

IREDA focus on setting up small power grids in Odisha

BHUBANESWAR: Indian Renewable

Kumar Das said the agency has sanc-

aluminium by 2030.

"At this rate greenhouse gas emission or release would be three times higher and the requirement of electricity would go up by three times. It is an urgent requirement that the carbon release to be reduced considerably by shifting focus to and by giving topmost priority for viable use of renewable energy," Mishra pointed out. Director (Technical) of IREDA Chintan Navinbhai Shah and Vice President (Commerce) of UCCIL Ashok Kumar Sharda also spoke.

Later, Rural Development Minister Kuldeep Singh



many villages here are still difficult to approach or connect with the main grid. Speaking at joint workshop on 'Greening India Through Renewables' conducted jointly by Utkal Chamber of Commerce and Industry Limited (UCCIL) and IREDA, CMD of IREDA Pradip

and Aluminium and that has resulted in fast depleting coal stock. This makes Odisha the second largest carbon-emitting state in the country. The State has produced 40 million tonne steel, 3.4 million tonne aluminium by 2021-22. The production target is 1000 million tonne steel and 10 million tonne

Odisha eyes Rs 500 cr from red sanders felled by cyclone Titli

BHUBANESWAR: Cyclone Titli, which ravaged Gajapati district in 2018, is all set to bring windfall gains for the State government after four years. The government is likely to earn over Rs 500

thus likely to fetch high price. Officials in the State Forest, Environment and Climate Change department said process has been initiated for global e-tendering and e-auction sale of 810.18 tonne

The Committee officials have been asked to review the global market status for red sanders and also approve the general, special and buyers-specific terms and conditions for e-auction sale of the tim-

ber often described as 'red gold.'

"As soon as the terms and conditions are finalised we will go for international bidding," said Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF) Sisir Kumar Ratho. He said the terms and conditions finalised a few months back required some changes, accordingly the OFDC has been asked to submit a

fresh proposal to the government at the earliest. Though the State government expects to earn a revenue of around Rs 500 crore from the global sale of the timber, officials said the auction could



crore from the sale of red sanders, also known as red sandalwood or 'Rakta Chandan', that were felled by the cyclone. The red sanders are said to be over 100 years old. The trees had been planted by the then Maharaja of Parlakhemundi in 1912. The density of the wood is also said to be much more compared to other red sandalwood found in the country,

timber that have been recovered from the trees. After Centre relaxed the export norms for Odisha to sell the valuable wood last year, the Forest department has formed a committee involving Odisha Forest Development Corporation (OFDC) to prepare terms of reference and determine a suitable strategy for marketing of the wood in log form.

ber often described as 'red gold.'

fetch much more than the expected value as price of high-grade red sanders sometimes do cross Rs 1 crore per tonne in the international market. Red sanders has also been included in the 'endangered' category of International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List. There are only around 60 living trees in the district that have survived the cyclone, officials said.




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Arrested in 2015 after her driver spilled the beans, Indrani Mukerjea set to walk out of jail on bail

Continued from page-1

that Bora, her daughter from an earlier relationship, was killed by Indrani and Khanna in a car which Rai was driving, and the body was buried in a forest in neighbouring Raigad district the next day.

The body had been found in a decomposed state a month after the murder but remained unidentified for three years till Rai's alleged disclosure, the police said.

The case was transferred to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in September 2015.

In November 2015, the CBI arrested Peter Mukerjea for allegedly being part of the conspiracy.

Indrani and Peter were unhappy with Sheena Bora's relationship with Rahul, Peter Mukerjea's son from earlier marriage, the CBI said.

There was also a financial dispute between Sheena and her mother, it added.

In 2016, Rai sought to become a prosecution witness, claiming that he had had remorse for what he had done, and wanted to make a full disclosure.

When the trial began in 2017 and Rai's turn to depose came, he made shocking revelations. Indrani had planned Bora's murder with Khanna, he told the court.

She contacted Rai through her assistant and spoke to him on Skype, promising to take care of his family's medical and education needs if he helped them with the killing, he claimed. Indrani told him that he would not have to do anything besides driving the car, Rai said.

On the day of the crime, Rai said, he and Indrani picked up Sheena in Indrani's car, then he gagged Sheena while Khanna held Sheena's hands and Indrani strangled her.

Indrani then sat on the dead Sheena's face and asked him to drive on, he said.

Indrani denied the allegations in the court. Rai had been lying, and on one occasion when the two of them were being brought to the court in the same vehicle, he asked for Rs 50 lakh for "remaining silent," she alleged.

During her bail hearing, where she argued in person, Indrani claimed that Rai brought the sum down to Rs 5 lakh later, but she did not entertain him as she was innocent.

During their incarceration, Indrani and Peter filed for divorce, which was granted by a family court in the city on October 4, 2019.

While in prison, Indrani filed as many as 10 bail applications.

At one point she claimed there was a threat to her life and sought that she be released on bail. The trial court, however, rejected her plea saying she was safer inside the Byculia women's prison than outside.

Subsequently, she claimed that the body found in the Raigad jungle was not Sheena's, and there were forensic differences between the decomposed body found in 2012 and the remains exhumed in 2015 from the same spot by the police.

In December 2021, Indrani wrote a letter to the CBI, making a sensational claim that Sheena was alive.

A former woman police official lodged in the Byculia prison told her that while on vacation in Srinagar in 2017, she had seen someone who looked like Sheena, the letter said.

As per the arguments in the SC during Indrani's bail hearing, 67 witnesses, including Rai, and some forensic experts have deposed during the trial in the special CBI court here, and over 180 witnesses remain to be examined.

The trial came to a halt during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The presiding judge was transferred in 2021 which again stopped the trial.

A new judge was appointed last month. Peter Mukerjea was granted bail by the Bombay High Court in February 2020. Khanna and Rai continue to be behind bars.

BPCL privatisation stalled as two bidders walkout, one left

NEW DELHI: Privatisation of BPCL, which was dubbed India's biggest ever, has been stalled with just one bidder left in the fray after two others walked out over issues such as lack of clarity in fuel pricing, a top source said.

The government had planned to sell its entire 52.98 per cent stake in Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) and invited



Expression of Interest from bidders in March 2020. At least three bids came in by November 2020 but only one remains now after the others withdrew from the race.

"We are in a single bidder situation and it doesn't make sense that the single bidder dictates the narrative. So the disinvestment process is stalled for now," the source, who wished not to be identified, said.

The privatisation of India's second-largest state oil refining and fuel marketing company had not attracted much interest first due to the volatile global oil price scenario and later due to a lack of clarity in domestic fuel pricing.

Public sector fuel retailers, which control 90 per cent of the petrol and diesel market, sell petrol and diesel at prices below the cost. This has forced private sector retailers Reliance-bp, Rosneft-backed Nayara and Shell into a situation where they either sell fuel at losses or lose market in case they raise prices to the level of cost.

Mining mogul Anil Agarwal's Vedanta group and US venture funds Apollo Global Management Inc and I Squared Capital Advisors had expressed interest in buying the government's 53 per cent stake in BPCL. But the two funds withdrew after failing to rope in global investors amid waning interest in fossil fuels. The government had not invited financial bids, the source said.

The government was to seek financial bids once bidders completed due diligence and the terms and conditions of the share purchase agreement were finalised. There is talk of the government now wanting to take a **Akhilesh demands court-monitored probe into Siddharthnagar woman's death during police raid**

Continued from page-1

that such incidents are rising in the state. "In Chandauli, police made up a story that a woman hanged herself. In Lalitpur, there is an allegation of rape against an inspector. The police of the state are infamous for fake encounters. Deaths are reported in police custody."

Inflation was at its peak in the state but businessmen were making profits, the SP leader alleged.

The domestic economy has collapsed and prices of petrol, diesel, LPG, edible oil, power and essential commodities have increased manifold, he said, adding that demonetisation and GST have affected small industries.

The BJP is using its divisive politics and creating hatred among the people to divert their attention from core issues, Yadav claimed.

"The BJP is shying away from the question of rising inflation. BJP-RSS is involved in a conspiracy of dividing the society," he added.

fresh look at BPCL privatisation, including revising the terms of sale.

Another source said that considering the geopolitical situation and energy transition, the government may offer a 26 per cent stake along with management control. This will limit the amount of money a bidder has to put upfront to buy the company.

At the current trading price of BPCL on the



stock market, the government's 53 per cent stake is worth over Rs 38,000 crore. On top of this, the bidder would have had to shell out another Rs 18,700 crore towards an open

Congress to hold state-level 'shivirs' across country on June 1-2, to communicate 'Udaipur Declaration'

Continued from page-1

presidents, Pradesh Congress Committee office-bearers and prominent leaders of the party. "As a follow-up exercise, a similar one-day shivir will be held on June 11 at the district Congress committees. The idea is to carry forward up to the grassroots the various highlights and points on which a way forward has been decided for the party at the Udaipur Nav Sankalp Chintan Shivir," he added.

The party leaders also decided that a three-day "Azadi Gaurav Yatra" shall be undertaken by all the district units between August 9 and August 15, where 75 people, in accordance with the 75th anniversary of India's independence, will work permanently and hundreds and thousands will join them.

"On August 15, the pradesh Congress committees will organise a major function to commemorate the sacrifices and lessons of the freedom movement," Surjewala said.

The Youth Congress and the National Students' Union of India (NSUI) will undertake the "Rozgar Do Yatra" and "we will be conferring with their leadership and the way forward will be decided at that point of time", Surjewala said.

The meeting of the office-bearers comes immediately after the Chintan Shivir, where Congress leaders from across the country brainstormed to evolve ways and means to make the party election-ready.

The Congress has brought a host of structural changes within the organisation in a bid to overhaul it, with a focus on granting 50 per cent representation to people below 50 years of age and giving 50 per cent poll tickets to them starting the 2024 Lok Sabha election.

The party has decided to implement the "one family, one ticket" and the "one man, one post" formulae, with the exception of allowing only those family members to get a poll ticket who have worked for a period of five years in the organisation.

The Congress has also decided to create new departments -- a public insight department, an election department and an assessment and training department.

It has decided that no one shall hold a party post for more than five years.

In this context, following the Udaipur Declaration, New Delhi DCC president Virender Kasana has submitted his resignation to Congress chief Sonia Gandhi.

Kasana also met senior party leader Ajay Maken after his resignation to re-confirm his commitment to the Congress.

"Congrats Kasana Ji! Hope others to follow," Maken said in a tweet.

offer to minority shareholders.

If the government were to sell a 26 per cent stake, the financial outgo of the bidder would total no more than Rs 37,000 crore. The government has not made any formal statement on withdrawing the stake sale of BPCL.

Vedanta chairman Anil Agrawal had last week told PTI that the government has withdrawn the offer to sell its stake in BPCL and will come up with a new strategy. BPCL is India's second-largest oil marketing company after Indian Oil, and with refineries in Mumbai, Kochi, and Madhya Pradesh, it has the third-largest refining capacity after Reliance and Indian Oil.

Industry sources said petrol price was deregulated in 2010 and diesel in 2014 but the government continued to have a say in the pricing of the two fuels. For the record, the oil ministry maintains that oil companies have the freedom to decide on pricing, but prices are put on hold every time there are elections in the country.

Indian Oil, BPCL and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) held prices for a record 137 days between November 2021 and March 2022 during assembly elections in five poll-bound states despite the increase in international crude oil prices.

US, banks, unveil plan to ease food crisis from Russia's war

Continued from page-1

food security globally, especially in impoverished countries.

As part of the effort to address the crisis, Secretary of State Antony Blinken will convene meetings in New York on the sidelines of the U.N. over the next two days focusing on feed insecurity. The State Department says that in 2021, more than 193 million people worldwide experienced acute food insecurity, an increase of 40 million people from the year before. As many as 40 million are projected to be pushed into poverty and food insecurity by the end of the year.

Shortages of fuel and fertilizer in many countries and accelerating spikes in food prices threaten to destabilize fragile societies, increase hunger and malnutrition, drive migration, and cause severe economic dislocation. Conflict has greatly exacerbated food security issues globally.

Yellen arrived in Germany for a meeting of finance ministers for the Group of Seven leading economies in Bonn, Germany later this week. She met Tuesday with EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen in Brussels. Yellen said they discussed "critical issues related to energy security, Ukraine's economic needs, and continued coordination to impose sanctions on Russia."

While European nations plan to phase out of Russian oil and gas, the U.S. is pressing EU leaders to consider possible oil tariffs and other methods of preventing Russia from benefiting from increased energy prices.

Yellen's visit to Europe, which included time in Poland, is meant to address the effects of the war in Ukraine, an international tax plan she negotiated with more than 130 countries last year and an energy crisis contributing to high inflation worldwide.

Along with being tasked to impose financial sanctions on Russia, distribute pandemic programs still in effect and other duties, now Yellen will be responsible for ensuring the world's most vulnerable populations don't starve as the war in Ukraine rages on and threatens wheat and grain supplies world wide.

SC appoints Committee of Administrators headed by ex-judge to manage affairs of AIFF

NEW DELHI(KCN): The Supreme Court on Wednesday appointed a three-member Committee of Administrators (CoA) headed by former top court judge AR Dave to manage the affairs of the All India Football Federation (AIFF) and adoption of its constitution in line with the National Sports Code and model guidelines. A bench of Justices DY Chandrachud, Surya Kant and PS Narasimha said the COA will comprise two earlier members - Dr SY Qureshi, former Chief Election Commissioner and Bhaskar Ganguly, former captain of the Indian Football Team

besides Justice (ret) Dave. The top court said the current state of affairs is not in the interest of proper governance of the federation. It directed the CoA to forthwith take charge of the AIFF and assist the court by providing inputs to the court in facilitating the adoption of the constitution by the AIFF in accordance with the National Sports Code and model guidelines. The bench said the COA will prepare electoral rolls for the purpose of conducting elections to the executive committee of AIFF as per the constitution to be submitted by the two-member committee

(ombudsman) of Qureshi and Ganguly. "The committee of administrators shall carry out day-to-day governance of the All India Football Federation," the bench said, adding the COA will be at liberty to take the assistance of the erstwhile committee of the federation in holding of tournaments and selection of players and other affairs. The bench said the newly constituted committee of administrators shall sit in Football House at Dwarka or any other place of convenience. The top court clarified that this is a pro-tem arrangement in order to facilitate the holding of elections

and handing over the affairs to the democratically elected body in accordance with the constitution. It added that it is anticipated the elections are held at an expeditious date. On May 12, the top court had agreed to hear a plea of the Delhi Football Club alleging the illegal continuation of a

committee and Praful Patel as president of election commissioner and sports secretary Qureshi to prepare a Constitution for AIFF in accordance with the sports code. Even that has been done long ago," Bhushan had said. Earlier, the Sports Ministry filed an affidavit in the Supreme Court saying that Patel has no mandate to continue as AIFF president as he has already served three terms and the national body should hold elections without further delay. The affidavit was filed concerning a

Special Leave Petition (SLP) filed by the AIFF, and the sports ministry. "The term of the existing committee (of AIFF) is already over, and the existing president (Praful Patel) has completed more than 12 years as president, the petitioner (AIFF) should hold elections without further delay as per extant instructions contained under Sports Code and the instructions issued by the answering respondent (sports ministry) from time to time," the ministry's affidavit said. Patel completed his three terms and 12 years as AIFF president in December 2020, the maximum permitted to a national sports federation (NSF) chief under the Sports Code. The AIFF, however, did not hold the elections, citing a pending petition in the Supreme Court regarding its constitu-

tion. The AIFF had moved an application in the Supreme Court only a month before its elections were due, seeking certain clarifications on the status of its constitution, which was under scrutiny in the apex court since 2017. In 2017, the Delhi High Court had set aside the election of Patel as AIFF president (in the 2016 AGM) on a petition by senior advocate Rahul Mehra. But the Supreme Court had stayed the High Court decision, allowing Patel to continue in his role, while also appointing Qureshi and Ganguly as administrators and to formulate the AIFF constitution. In February, at the AIFF AGM in Mumbai, Patel had finally agreed to constitute a committee to look into the matter. The three-member committee was asked to submit its report in three months.

The AIFF had moved an application in the Supreme Court only a month before its elections were due, seeking certain clarifications on the status of its constitution, which was under scrutiny in the apex court since 2017. In 2017, the Delhi High Court had set aside the election of Patel as AIFF president (in the 2016 AGM) on a petition by senior advocate Rahul Mehra. But the Supreme Court had stayed the High Court decision, allowing Patel to continue in his role, while also appointing Qureshi and Ganguly as administrators and to formulate the AIFF constitution. In February, at the AIFF AGM in Mumbai, Patel had finally agreed to constitute a committee to look into the matter. The three-member committee was asked to submit its report in three months.



India will produce champions the day parents give more emphasis on sports: Kapil

NEW YORK(KCN): Cricket legend Kapil Dev feels the day Indian parents start giving more emphasis on sports, the country will produce more champions across disciplines. Kapil said the mentality of Indian parents to-

Cup victory. "But it's changing. That's why I said parents are more important than the kids in our society, the way we are." Recalling his time as a young kid, Kapil noted



wards sports has changed drastically over the years, but more needs to be done. Kapil made the remarks close on the heels of the Indian men badminton team's historic Thomas Cup triumph on Sunday. "I feel (it's) the parents, not the kids. We produce more doctors, scientists, engineers in our country because our parents want them to. The day parents want their kid to become a sportsperson, we will produce all champions," Kapil said here on Tuesday. He was responding to a question by PTI on what changes he has witnessed in Indian sports over the years that is propelling the country's sportspersons to excel in the international arena. Kapil was the guest of honour at a special event hosted by the Consulate General of India in New York as part of the 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebrations to commemorate India's 75 years of independence. The event was attended by members of the Indian diaspora and cricketing fans. Kapil, considered one of the greatest all-rounders of all time, cited an example in this regard, saying if his daughter had to appear for 10th-grade examination and simultaneously play for junior India, he would tell her to "go and study". "But in America or Europe or Australia, they will say drop this year, play for junior for your country and next year you give exam. That thought process in our country hasn't changed yet," said Kapil, who guided the Indian cricket team to its historic 1983 World

that he used to hide his sports kit in his school bag and quietly go out and play, a scenario which has changed drastically with parents encouraging their children to take up sports. "Today I feel so proud to see the parents taking their kids to come and play." In his remarks, Kapil said that at 75, India is a "young country" which has achieved what not many in the world have managed to do. Consul General Randhir Jaiswal said the event celebrates the success of the legendary cricketer and "through his achievements, celebrates the contribution of cricket and sports in nation-building". He said Kapil's contribution to the game of cricket and the 1983 World Cup title under his leadership is "ever etched in our minds." "In December last year, New York State Governor Kathy Hochul signed a legislation that recognises the sport of cricket as an important part of the social and cultural fabric of New York State, and expands the State's capacity to officially promote the sport. The legislation was sponsored by Senator Kevin Thomas, the first Indian-American to serve in the New York State Legislature and Assembly member Nily Rozic. On the occasion, Thomas presented Kapil with a copy of the certificate signed by the Governor "proclaiming cricket as a sport that is worthy here in the state of New York." Indiaspora, a non-profit community of global Indian leaders, hosted the events in honour of Kapil and also organised a private screening of the movie '83' during his visit to the US.

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