

OPINION 6

REMEMBER, ACTIONS
HAVE CONSEQUENCES

WORLD 8

RUSSIAN STRIKES KILL OVER 7
IN LVIV: UKRAINIAN MAYOR

MONEY 9

SENSEX SINKS 1,172 PTS AS INFOSYS,
HDFC BANK TUMBLE POST Q4 SHOW

NEW DELHI, TUESDAY APRIL 19, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹3

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PSG CLOSE
TO LIGUE 1
TITLE
11 SPORTIndia sees 90% jump
in daily Covid casesUP makes masks
must in NCRPIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

As the country braces up for the fourth wave of Covid-19, India on Monday, led by Delhi, recorded a massive 90 per cent jump in its daily Covid counts. The total number of cases stood at 2,183 cases against 1,050 on Sunday. This is the first time in nearly a month that the country has registered more than 2,000 cases in a day.

Amid fear of another Covid wave lurking around the corner, Uttar Pradesh made masks mandatory in the NCR region, including Noida and Ghaziabad. Lucknow, Hapur, Meerut, Bulandshahr, and Baghpat are among other districts where the Uttar Pradesh Government has made mask in public places mandatory.

Delhi, which reported 517 Covid cases on Sunday, 56 more than the previous day, saw its positivity rate breaching the five per cent mark to touch



Healthcare workers administer a dose of the Covid-19 preventive vaccine to beneficiaries, at a vaccination centre in Jammu on Monday

PTI

5.33 on Monday from 0.5 two weeks ago. With these new cases, the city's infection tally has risen to 18,68,550, while the death toll stood at 26,160.

Meanwhile, Delhi Capitals' Australian all-rounder Mitchell Marsh will be out of action for at least 10 days as a day of intense drama saw him return positive for Covid-19 in a second RTPCR test along with two support staff, taking the total number of cases to four. The other two who have tested positive are team doctor Abhijit

Salvi and the team masseur.

The RTPCR reports of all other players have returned negative. A few days back, team physio Patrick Farhart had tested positive for the virus.

"Marsh's RTPCR first report has come negative. However, the second RT-PCR report turned out to be positive. All other playing members have negative in RT-PCR tests. There is no threat to Wednesday's match between DC and PBKS," a senior BCCI

official told PTI on Monday.

It is understood that the Australian all-rounder showed some symptoms and a Rapid Antigen Test was performed which came positive. It could have been due to the fact that he was undergoing rehab under Farhart and picked up mild symptoms which didn't turn out to be alarming. Salvi also seemed to have tested positive because of his proximity to Farhart and Marsh.

"The DC was supposed to travel to Pune today but the entire squad members have been told to retire to their respective rooms and as per protocol RTPCR is being done to ascertain whether there is an outbreak in the camp or it is an isolated case like Farhart," a BCCI source had earlier said.

Nationwide, the daily positivity rate, an indicator of the spread of the infection in the population, increased from 0.31 per cent on Sunday to 0.83 per cent on Monday.

The total number of Covid-infected patients in Delhi, according to Sunday's bulletin, is 1,518 — the highest since March 3 this year.

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Mehbooba, PK
call on Sonia;
UPA rebuilding
set in motionPIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Monday met former Jammu & Kashmir Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti and poll strategist Prashant Kishor as part of the party's exercise to rebuild the UPA as a combative force in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. Kishor is expected to join the Congress in the coming days.

Sources said Kishor played a key role in arranging the meeting between Sonia Gandhi and Mehbooba Mufti, who drove to 10 Janpath after years for a meeting with the Congress president. After the meeting Mehbooba said it is the Congress that has kept the country safe so far, alleging that the BJP wants to create more Pakistanis.

Sources said in the days ahead, Kishor could act as a bridge between the Congress and its estranged allies. At the same time, he is expected to go all out to revive the party in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar where the Samajwadi Party and the RJD are not ready to enter into any alliance with the Congress.

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14 teams formed to probe
Jahangirpuri riots, 24 held

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Crime Branch of Delhi Police has formed 14 teams to investigate the clashes that took place in Jahangirpuri on Saturday, said Delhi Police Commissioner Rakesh Asthana on Monday.

The police said 24 people from both communities have been arrested so far in connection with the violence.

Home Minister Amit Shah directed Delhi Police officials to take strict action against culprits in the Jahangirpuri violence case and "set an example so that such incidents are not repeated".

A 36-year-old scrap dealer, Sheikh Hameed, a resident of Jahangirpuri, was on Monday arrested for allegedly supplying bottles that were pelted during the clashes. A 28-year-old man, Sonu alias Imam alias Yunus, a resident of C Block in Jahangirpuri, who allegedly fired shots during the communal clashes, was also arrested. The Delhi Police northwest district investigation team came under a minor attack after it went to Sonu's house.

Meanwhile, senior police officials also held a meeting at the Jahangirpuri police station on Monday in order to maintain peace and tranqui-



Forensic team members on Monday leave after collecting evidence from Jahangirpuri, the area that saw communal clashes during a Hanuman Janmotsav procession on Saturday

PTI

ty in the violence-hit area in the northwestern parts of the city.

The police have also registered a First Information Report (FIR) against the members of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and Bajrang Dal for taking out a religious procession without permission in Jahangirpuri area where violent clashes broke out on April 16.

The police said they have arrested Prem Sharma, VHP's district sewa pramukh, in connection with the violence.

Meanwhile, on Monday, the C block area in Jahangirpuri saw few locals occasionally on the roads with the majority of the shops closed, amid heavy deployment of the police in the area.

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SC cancels bail to Min's son
in Kheri case, raps HC orderSurrender in a
week, orders SCPIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday cancelled the bail granted to Ashish Mishra, son of Union Minister Ajay Mishra, in the Lakhimpur Kheri violence case and asked him to surrender in a week.

The SC came down heavily on Allahabad High Court for granting bail to Mishra and said, "The victims were denied a fair and effective hearing" in the Allahabad High Court which adopted a myopic view of the evidence."

The apex court bench headed by Chief Justice of India NV Ramana held that the High Court took into account irrelevant considerations and gave extra weightage to the contents of the FIR.

The bench also comprising Justices Surya Kant and Hima Kohli rejected the bail application for fresh adjudication "in a fair, impartial and dispa-



sionate manner, and keeping in view the settled parameters" within three months after taking note of relevant facts and the fact that the victims were not granted a complete opportunity of being heard.

The SC dealt in detail with the rights of victims in criminal cases and said they are "totally independent, incomparable, and are not accessory or auxiliary to those of the state" under the Code of

Criminal Procedure.

"We are, thus, of the view that this court on account of the factors like (i) irrelevant considerations having impacted the impugned order granting bail; (ii) the High Court exceeding its jurisdiction by touching upon the merits of the case; (iii) denial of victims' right to participate in the proceedings; and (iv) the tearing hurry shown by the High Court in entertaining or granting bail to the respondent/accused; can rightfully cancel the bail, without depriving the Respondent-Accused (Mishra) of his legitimate right to seek enlargement on bail on relevant considerations," said the bench.

Writing the 24-page order for the bench, Justice Surya Kant took note of submissions of victims that they were not heard in the high court as the video connection of their lawyer was lost and said, "We are constrained to express our disappointment with the manner in which the high court failed to acknowledge the right of the victims."

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ED attaches Amway India's ₹758cr
assets for running 'pyramid' fraud'PMLA probe reveals
scam by company'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has provisionally attached assets worth ₹757.77 crore of Amway India Enterprises Private Limited, a subsidiary of an American multinational company. Amway is accused of running a multi-level marketing scam in the country.

The attached properties include land and factory building of Amway at Dindigul in Tamil Nadu, plant and machinery, vehicles, bank accounts, and fixed deposits. The ED has provisionally attached immovable and movable properties worth ₹411.83 crore and bank balances of ₹345.94 crore from 36 different accounts belonging to Amway.

"A money laundering investigation by the ED revealed that Amway is running a 'pyramid' fraud in the guise of direct selling multi-level marketing networks. It is



observed that the prices of most of the products offered by the company are exorbitant as compared to the alternative popular products of reputed manufacturers available in the open market. Without knowing the real facts, the gullible public is induced to join as members of the company and purchase products at exorbitant prices. They are thus losing their hard earned money," the ED said in a statement.

The new members are not buying the products to use them, but to become rich by

becoming members as showcased by the upline members. Reality is that the commissions received by the upline members contribute enormously in the hike of prices of the products, it said.

"The company has collected an amount of ₹27,562 crore from its business operations from 2002-03 to 2021-22 and out of the multi-level marketing, the company has paid commission of ₹7,588 crore to its distributors and members in India and in the USA during financial year 2002-03 to 2020-

21," the agency further said.

The entire focus of the company is about propagating how members can become rich by becoming members. There is no focus on the products. Products are used as a masquerade for this MLM Pyramid fraud as a direct selling firm.

Amway has brought ₹21.39 crore as share capital in India in 1996-97 and till 2020-21 the company has remitted huge amounts of ₹2,859.10 crore in the name of dividend, royalty and other payments to their investors and parent entities.

Two firms — Britt Worldwide India Private Limited and M/s. Network Twenty One Private Limited — also played a major role in promoting the pyramid scheme of Amway by conducting seminars for joining members under the guise of sale of goods by enrollment of members in the chain system. The promoters are conducting mega conventions and flaunt their lavish lifestyle and use social media to lure gullible investors, it added.

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CAPSULE

RPF JAWAN MARTYRED
IN TERROR ATTACK

Srinagar: A head constable of the Railway Protection Force (RPF) was killed on Monday and an assistant sub-inspector (ASI) injured as militants opened fire at them in Pulwama district of Jammu & Kashmir, officials said. The ultras shot Head Constable Surinder Singh and ASI Devraj near a tea stall in Kakapora in Pulwama, they said.

MAN KILLS FAMILY,
SELF IN GHAZIPUR

Ghazipur: A 35-year-old man allegedly committed suicide after killing his wife and two children in Sadat Bazar area under the Jakhania police station limits here following a suspected family dispute, police said on Monday.

1ST DEATH IN KHARGONE
RIOTS CONFIRMED

Khargone: A 30-year-old man who went missing during communal clashes in Madhya Pradesh's Khargone city on Ram Navami has become the first fatality of the violence but his death has raised allegations of a cover-up with his kin on Monday accusing the police of keeping his death under wraps for eight days.

Omicron causes heart
attack risk among kidsUS researchers say
it may cause other
complications tooPIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Omicron is more likely than other coronavirus variants to cause upper airway infection (UAI) among children, putting them at risk of heart attack and other severe complications, according to a study.

The researchers from the University of Colorado, Northwestern University and Stony Brook University in the US analysed data from the National Covid Cohort Collaborative pertaining to 18,849 children under age 19 who were hospitalised with Covid-19.

The study, published last week in the journal JAMA Pediatrics, also found that Omicron causes UAI in younger children with the mean age of hospitalised chil-

dren falling from about four years and five months during the pre-Omicron period to about two years and one month during the Omicron period.

The proportion of children with a pediatric complex chronic condition was not significantly different in the pre-Omicron period compared with the Omicron period, they said.

The researchers conducted the study to determine if cases of UAI among children increased when Omicron became the dominant SARS-CoV-2 variant in the US.

The proportion of children with a pediatric complex chronic condition was not significantly different in the pre-Omicron period compared with the Omicron period, they said. Overall, 21.1 per cent of children hospitalised with both Covid-19 and UAI developed severe diseases requiring measures like inserting a tube into the lungs to assist with breathing, known as intubation.

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Manoj Pande first
from non-combat
streams to be
named Army ChiefPIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

The Government has appointed Lt General Manoj C Pande as the next Army Chief. At present, he is the Vice Chief of the Army and will assume the new charge on April 30 after incumbent General MM Naravane retires.

Pande will be the first officer from the engineer stream of the Army to become the Chief. Prior to him, most Army Chiefs were from the infantry, artillery or the armoured corps, generally referred to as the fighting or the combat arms.

Born on May 6, 1962, Pande was commissioned on December 24, 1982 in the Corps of Engineers (The Bombay Sappers). During his long and distinguished service spanning over 39 years, he served in a variety of command, staff and instructional appointments.

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PM to address nation
from Red Fort on
400th Parkash PurabPIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address the nation from the Red Fort on the 400th "Parkash Purab" of Sikh guru Tegh Bahadur on April 21.

Modi will also release a commemorative coin and postage stamp on the occasion, according to the Ministry of Culture. Teg Bahadur was the ninth of ten gurus who founded the Sikh religion.

Aurangzeb beheaded Guru Tegh Bahadur on November 24, 1675 in front of a massive crowd. Gurdwara Sis Ganj Sahib in Chandni Chowk marks the place of his execution.

Guru Teg Bahadur was also the father of the 10th and the last Guru of Sikh Guru Gobind Singh.

Four hundred "ragis" (Sikh musicians) will perform in a "Shabad Kirtan" to mark the auspicious occasion, the ministry said.

The Union Ministry of Culture will organise the events in collaboration with the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee.

Chief Ministers of many States and several prominent personalities from across the length and breadth of the sub-continent and foreign countries will be part of the celebrations, it said.

This programme on the 400th Parkash Purab (birth anniversary) of Sikh guru Tegh Bahadur is being organised as part of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.

Last year Modi had visited Sis Ganj Sahib Gurudwara in the national Capital and offered prayers.

Builders bleed homebuyers
with high maintenance fees

SAURAV GUPTA ■ NEW DELHI

Amid the hue and cry over inflated maintenance charges in highrise apartments, real estate experts and leaders of various resident associations have accused the builders of extorting money from homebuyers even after selling the apartments.

Residents are forced to pay ₹2,500 to ₹10,000 as maintenance charges for various services, they said, adding that however, builders never deliver on their promises and condition of many buildings is deteriorating for want of care and repair.

"The wall of my apartment has developed cracks. I requested the builder many times to get it fixed but nothing has been done. What most hurt is that they charge us ₹6,100 per month in the name of maintenance," a resident of Supertech Eco Village 1 said. Indrith Gupta, a member of Noida Estate Flat Owner



Welfare Association (NEFOWA), said, "The maintenance charges are very high in the skyscrapers in the Noida Extension area. The Noida Authority should categorise the society and set the maintenance charges accordingly."

He said for category A the charges should be ₹2.25 per square metre, for category B ₹2 per square metre, and for category C ₹1.75 per square metre. "Regarding this issue, we also wrote a letter to the Noida

Authority but no action was taken by them," he said.

"The maintenance charges are skyrocketing as the builder, after making a fortune from selling the flats, still doesn't want to leave the buyers. Instead, they are collecting these charges on a monthly basis and still earning a huge amount of profit from the flat owners," said Annu Khan, president of Noida Estate Flat Owner's Main Association.

Continued on Page 2

Sisodia highlights poor state of Gujarat schools

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Monday sought to draw Prime Minister Narendra Modi's attention to the condition of some schools in Gujarat, saying during a visit, he found that toilets were broken and students did not have any desks. The senior Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader also shared on Twitter pictures from his visit to these schools that showed children sitting on the floor of classrooms. Sisodia had visited two state-run schools in Bhavnagar, the Assembly constituency and hometown of Gujarat Education Minister Jitu Vaghani, last week.

The deputy chief minister's tweet came in response to one by Modi in which he stated that he will be visiting the Vidya Samiksha Kendra in Gujarat

aging them on a salary that is renewed every month.

Seeking to highlight the Delhi model of education during his visit ahead of the Gujarat Assembly polls, he had said the ruling BJP had done little to improve the condition of government-run schools despite being at the helm for the last 27 years.

Two days after returning from Gujarat, Sisodia wrote to Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendrabhai Patel and Vaghani asking them to keep political differences aside and visit Delhi's government schools to witness the AAP's model of governance.

After its stupendous victory in the Punjab polls, the AAP is gearing up to contest all 182 seats in the Gujarat Assembly elections by presenting itself as a viable alternative to both BJP and Congress.

Temperature reaches 41.6 degrees C in Delhi

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The national capital experienced a hot 'Monday' as the maximum temperature settled at 41.6 degree Celsius, which is five notches warmer than the normal temperature for this time of year. The power demand in the city also crossed 5574 megawatt on Monday, that is highest this season.

The minimum temperature in Delhi was recorded at 22.5 degrees Celsius which is one notch above than the normal temperature, stated the IMD data.

The highest humidity was 52 per cent at 8.30 A.M and the lowest humidity in the weather was 18 per cent at 5:30 P.M.

"Heatwave conditions in isolated pockets very likely to prevail over Delhi and adjacent states on 18th and 19th. It is likely to abate thereafter due to approaching Western

Disturbance, wind conditions and cloudiness over some parts of these areas," the IMD said in a bulletin.

The IMD predicted that light isolated rainfall is likely to happen in the national capital between April 19 to April 22 and strong dust and raising winds (speed reaching between 25-35 kmph) very likely on April 19 and April 20.

The Air Quality Index (AQI) around 6.45 pm was 261, according to data recorded by the System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting And Research.

An AQI between zero and 50 is considered 'good', 51 and 100 "satisfactory", 101 and 200 "moderate", 201 and 300 "poor", 301 and 400 "very poor", and 401 and 500 "severe".

"The Delhi witnessed the



power demand of 5574 MW on Monday. This was the season's highest power demand in the national capital. Last year, the city witnessed the peak demand of 4372 MW in the month of April," BSES said.

"After clocking 7323 MW in 2021, Delhi's peak power demand during the summers of 2022 may cross the 8000 MW for the first time. This is more than the all-time peak power demand of 7409 MW recorded in 2019. During the summers of 2020, it had clocked 6314 MW," BSES officials predicted.

₹1 crore looted from van of cash collection company

PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM

In a broad daylight robbery, around ₹1 crore was looted from a van of a cash collection company by three armed men on Monday. The accused threw chili powder into the eyes of the guard and the van driver, holding them hostage at gunpoint before fleeing with the money.

According to police, the incident took place around 2.45 pm when employees of S&B Company went to collect cash from a Maruti showroom on Sohna Road near Subhash Chowk. The van was parked outside the showroom when a company employee, Akhilesh, went into the showroom to collect cash. Van driver Ranjit and guard Vipin were in the van. In the meantime, three armed robbers came there.

They threw red chili powder into the eyes of the driver and the guard. They then held them hostage at gunpoint and fled with a bag of cash containing around ₹1 crore, said police.

Preliminary investigation suggests that the accused used a black car to execute the crime. At the time of the incident security guard was not present in the victim's car and the vehicle's windowpane was also open and a locker was available in the car. The entire cash was in a single bag, police said. "4-5 armed assailants escape with a huge amount of cash collection employees. We have launched a search for the criminals. We will also question these employees for further investigation," said Virender Kumar, Deputy Commissioner of Police (East) adding that they are examining the CCTV footage obtained from the crime spot.

UP's economy in fast lane, says Khanna

'GDP has grown the fastest in last 5 years'

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh's Finance Minister Suresh Kumar Khanna, on Monday, claimed that the state gross domestic product (GSDP) had grown by 40 per cent in last five years.

Khanna said despite the difficult situation during the COVID-19 pandemic, the state's gross state domestic product increased by 40 per cent in the last five years and Uttar Pradesh achieved a much better financial management.

In the financial year 2016-17, when the Bharatiya Janata Party government was formed in the state, the GSDP of the state was Rs 12.47 lakh crore and at present, it has reached the level of Rs 17.49 lakh crore, he added.

Along with this, the credit deposit ratio of the state has also increased. When the BJP government assumed office five years ago, this ratio was 46 per cent and now it has increased by six per cent.

The minister said that the 100 days' programme

announced by his department included a loan disbursement of Rs 21,000 crore to the eligible people under various heads and this work had already started.

He said in the next six months, loans amounting to Rs 51,000 crore, and in the next five years, Rs 2 lakh crore, would be disbursed.

More than 90,000 banking outlets had been opened in the state during the last five years, which include Bank Mitras and Bank Sakhis, he said.

Bank Mitras and Bank Sakhis help the general public in the banking system, the minister pointed out, adding that at present there are 19,056 bank branches in Uttar Pradesh and in this year there are 1,33,938 banking outlets in the state.

"To increase the banking facility in the state, the public sector and private banks will open 700 new branches and 700 ATMs in the coming days," the minister said.

Khanna said that the number of digital transactions had also increased in Uttar Pradesh. In 2021-22, digital transactions of Rs 268 crore were done till December, while in the year 2017-18 this figure stood at Rs 122.84 crore.

Masks made compulsory in NCR dists, Lucknow as Covid cases rise

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

With the rise in COVID-19 cases in the National Capital Region area of Uttar Pradesh, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has instructed officials to monitor the situation closely and has ordered that masks should be made compulsory in all the NCR districts and Lucknow as the Omicron variant of novel coronavirus has been found during genome sequencing.

A Government spokesman claimed that 115 fresh cases of novel coronavirus infection were reported in UP in the last 24 hours and with this the tally of active cases in the state has gone up to 695.

During the routine Team 9 meeting here on Monday, the chief minister said in some states bordering UP there was an increase in the cases of COVID-19.

"It is also having effect in the NCR districts. Cases are increasing here for the last few days. In the last 24 hours, 65 new positive COVID-19 patients have been reported from Gautam Buddha Nagar, 20 in Ghaziabad and 10 in Lucknow. The situation in these areas should be closely monitored," he said.

The chief minister said masks should be made mandatory in public places in NCR districts like Gautam Buddha Nagar, Ghaziabad, Hapur, Meerut, Bulandshahr and Baghpat, and also in Lucknow.

"In these districts, people who have not been vaccinated should be identified and vaccinated. Public address systems should be used effectively. People with symptoms should be tested," he said.

In the meeting, the chief minister was informed that during genome sequencing only the Omicron variant of novel coronavirus had been confirmed.

According to experts, it is possible that the number of COVID-19 cases might increase but chances of their hospitalisation or of the patient becoming very serious are rare.

In the last 24 hours, 83,864 Covid tests were done, out of which 115 samples tested positive for novel coronavirus infection. In the same period, 29 COVID-19 patients recovered in the state.

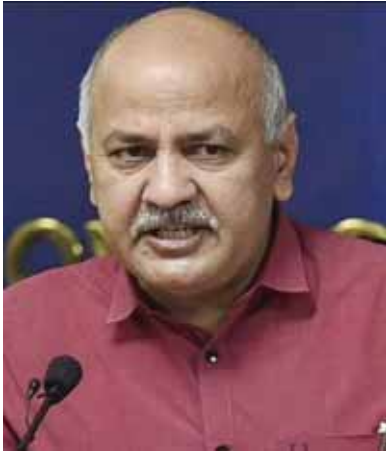
The chief minister said the progress of the Covid vaccination campaign was satisfactory but there was a need to accelerate the vaccination of children.

Sisodia reviews progress of Rozgar Budget schemes

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Monday chaired a meeting to review the progress of the announced schemes and policy, announced in the Rozgar Budget, with the officials of the finance department and Dialogue and Development Commission (DDC), in the national capital. Following up on the review conducted by the Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal earlier this month, the Deputy CM has suggested that the respective departments take immediate action to start implementing the various projects and has taken a project wise update across all sectors.

"The Government has initiated the planning for the Dilli shopping festival which includes conducting a stakeholder consultation with key members of retail market associations planned on 21st April.



The AAP government intends to make this a completely collaborative process and seek suggestions and opinions from the retail market associations at every stage of the development of retail markets and for planning the Dilli shopping festival," Sisodia said. "For Grade A retail and food hubs, with a focus on developing them on bus depots and terminals, discussions are to be scheduled with the Transport Department to prepare an action plan to take the project forward," Sisodia added.

PM, CM condole death of 6 in Amethi road mishap

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a shocking incident, six people returning from a wedding ceremony were killed while four others were seriously injured after their jeep collided head-on with a truck in Babuganj Sagra locality of Gauriganj in Amethi district, police said on Monday.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday expressed their grief over these deaths in Amethi late on Sunday night.

"The road accident in Gauriganj, Amethi in Uttar Pradesh is very sad. My deepest condolences to the families of those who lost their lives in this (accident). Along with this, I wish the injured people

a speedy recovery," tweeted the PMO on Monday.

Meanwhile, a spokesperson said in Lucknow that Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath also expressed grief at the loss of lives in the accident, and directed officials to provide adequate treatment to the injured persons. Superintendent of Police of Amethi, Dinesh Singh, said the accident took place near Babuganj Sagra ashram late Sunday night (around 12:15 am). He said the Bolero jeep was returning from Nasirabad area of Rae Bareilly with people from different villages in Amethi after they attended a marriage ceremony. He claimed that the jeep collided with a truck in which five, including a kid, were killed on the spot.

Global oncology experts attend RGCON

New Delhi: The 20th edition of the annual international conference of Rajiv Gandhi Cancer Institute and Research Centre (RGCIRC) was held on the theme of "Frontiers in Uro Oncology". As one-of-its-kind conclave of the medical fraternity, RGCON had faculty from all leading hospitals in India

besides the sterling presence of faculties from major cancer care centres around the world.

Chief guest Dr Randeep Guleria, Director of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), congratulated RGCIRC for the "excellent work" in the field of oncology.

BJP MLA's vehicle runs over two cousins

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Even as the Apex Court on Monday cancelled the bail of Union Minister of State for Home Ajay Mishra Teni's son Ashish Mishra, Lakhimpur Kheri once again hogged the headline, this time when a speeding SUV with 'MLA' sticker, said to be of Bharatiya Janata Party MLA from Sadar, ran over two cousins riding a motorcycle, killing them on the spot. The accident took place on Bahraich highway.

"Two motorcycle-borne men were killed after their motorcycle collided with a car on Bahraich highway. The vehicle is said to be of Sadar MLA

(Yogesh Verma). We have taken both the driver and vehicle in our custody. Further probe is underway," Superintendent of Police of Lakhimpur Kheri, Sanjiv Suman, disclosed to the media persons.

The deceased were identified as Ravi Verma (26) and his cousin Vikram Verma (22), the police said, adding that Ravi was survived by his wife and a minor child. Both the deceased were residents of Kiratpur village that comes under Kheri police station.

According to the police, BJP MLA Yogesh Verma was returning home in the vehicle after attending a marriage function when the accident occurred.

Manoj Pande first...

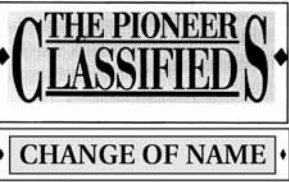
From Page 1

Before becoming the Vice Chief, he headed the Eastern Command which faces China in Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim.

Before that he headed the first tri-service Adaman and Nicobar Command which guards the crucial sea lanes in the Indian Ocean and the Bay of Bengal.

Besides this, his command appointments include command of an Engineer Brigade in the Western Theatre, as part of Strike Corps and an Infantry Brigade along with Line-of-Control (LOC) in Jammu & Kashmir.

Other important command appointments include a Mountain Division in the high-altitude area of the Western Ladakh and Command of a Corps, deployed along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) facing China and in counter-insurgency operations area of Eastern Command.



I, hitherto known as VIJENDRA SINGH S/o Shri Balwan Singh Rawat R/o A-551-52, J J Colony, Pandav Nagar, New Delhi - 110008, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as *VIJENDRA SINGH RAWAT* for all future purpose.

PD(9181)A

India sees 90%....

From Page 1

As many as 2,183 new Covid cases have been recorded over the past 24 hours. Amid the increase in infections, the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) will take stock of the situation and meet on April 20.

In view of the improving Covid-19 situation, the Uttar Pradesh Government had given relaxation in wearing face masks earlier this month.

The rise in Covid cases in the national Capital is also a cause of concern for Uttar Pradesh.

A total of 214 deaths have been recorded over the past 24

hours. This, however, includes a backlog of 212 deaths from Kerala — a backlog of 62 deaths has been cleared following court appeals and the state reported 150 deaths between April 13 and April 16.

The number of active cases, however, has seen a minor dip from 11, 558 to 11,542. The country has recorded a total of over 4.30 crore cases since the pandemic struck.

Several students in Delhi and adjoining cities of Ghaziabad and Noida have tested positive over the past couple of weeks, sparking panic leading to the closure of schools.

Omicron causes....

From Page 1

"Children with severe UAI are at risk of cardiac arrest from rapid-onset upper airway obstruction. They may require therapies typically provided in intensive care units, including frequent administration of nebulized racemic epinephrine, helium-oxygen mixtures, and intubation," the authors of the study noted.

Nebulised racemic epinephrine is typically reserved for patients in the hospital setting with moderate-to-severe respiratory distress.

"While the rate of SARS-CoV-2 pediatric UAI is not overwhelmingly high, understanding this new clinical phenotype and the potential for acute upper airway obstruction may help guide therapeutic decision-making," they said.

SC cancels....

From Page 1

The verdict considered questions including whether a "victim", as defined by CrPC, is entitled to be heard at the stage of adjudication of the bail plea of an accused. The apex court passed the judgment on the victims' petition filed by noted lawyer Prashant Bhushan.

The apex court also dealt with the issue of whether the high court overlooked relevant considerations while granting bail and if so, should the apex court interfere. The bench said until recently, criminal law had been viewed on a dimensional plane in which courts were required to adjudicate between the accused and the State, and the "victim" had no participation in the adjudicatory process and "was made to sit outside the court as a mute spectator".

14 teams formed....

From Page 1

However, a few shops were seen open in G block which is around 200 meters away from a mosque. The police have pitched tents near the barricades. The officials from the Crime Branch were seen collecting footage of CCTV cameras from shops regarding the incident.

Addressing the press conference on Monday, Asthana also asserted that those involved in the violent clashes will not be spared irrespective of class, creed or religion.

The CP said as per investigation so far, there was no attempt to hoist any saffron flag at the mosque during the procession.

cession.

According to Asthana, on Saturday, around 4.15 pm, a procession had started on the occasion of Hanuman Jayanti. The routes taken were traditional and around 6:15 pm, those in front of the procession moved ahead.

"However, those who were following them stopped after getting into a heated argument following which stones were pelted," said the CP.

"Police have registered a case and 23 people from both communities have been held so far. Eight of them have previous criminal records. Three firearms and five swords have also been seized from the accused so far," said the CP.

builders bleed....

From Page 1

There is no transparency in the utilisation of such funds and the builder is earning crores every year in the name of maintenance. After the formation of the Apartment Owner Association (AOA), the maintenance charges came down in several societies," said he. The founder and president of Noida Village Resident Association (NOVRA) Ranjan Tomar said there are several facilities for which the builder charges from the residents which are not justified. "For example, a resident is paying club charges and still, has to pay the gym fees additionally. There are many hidden charges and the residents don't even know for what they are paying," Tomar said.

Mehbooba, PK call....

From Page 1

Later, Sonia convened a meeting of top leaders of the party to deliberate on bringing Kishor within the party fold and to discuss the latter's proposal for the revival of the Congress. Sonia has been holding regular meetings with senior leaders for the last one month after the massive defeats of the party in assembly polls last month. The meeting at Sonia Gandhi's residence was attended by her daughter and party General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi and senior leaders P Chidambaram, Mukul Wasnik, Randeep Singh Surjewala, KC Venugopal, and Ambika Soni. The party which formed a committee of prominent leaders to examine Kishor's big plan has sought time till May 2 to revert on the proposal.

Two more held for Jahangirpuri clashes

Till now police have arrested a total of 24 accused for violence

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Police on Monday arrested two people for their alleged involvement in communal clashes that took place in Jahangirpuri area on April 16. The arrested persons have been identified as Sheikh Hameed (36) a scrap dealer and Sonu Chikna (28).

Sheikh Hameed was reportedly involved in supplying bottles which were used for pelting during the clash, while Sonu was nabbed for allegedly firing shots during the violence. According to Usha Rangnani, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Northwest, during investigation, one more

detained one person from the spot," said a police officer. "Media reports about fresh stone-pelting on Monday are an exaggeration. It was a minor, one-off incident. Legal action is being taken," said the DCP.

Till now police have arrested a total of 24 accused in connection with violence and total number of arrests also includes that of Mohammad Aslam, who had fired a bullet that hit a Sub-Inspector of Delhi Police. The pistol used by the accused during the commission of the crime was seized from his possession. Besides him, Ansar (35), alleged to be "main conspirator" behind violence, was also arrested, police said. The case is transferred to Crime Branch, while the northwest district police and Intelligence Fusion and Strategic Operations (IFSCO) of the Special Cell will also help them in probing case, police said.



accused Hameed was arrested in connection with the case and during interrogation he told the police that he had supplied bottles which were used for pelting. Police also arrested Sonu alias Imam, alias Yunus, a resident of C Block in Jahangirpuri for allegedly firing shots during the communal clashes.

A video had been in circulation on social media since April 17, showing Sonu (in a blue *kurti*) firing during the riots. The DCP said that Sonu was apprehended by the Special Staff of northwest district police. Meanwhile, earlier in day, Sonu's family resorted to stone pelting when the policemen went to their house for investigation. "To investigate the matter, a police team of northwest district had gone to the alleged shooter's house on CD Park Road. They were looking for him and wanted to question his family members. However, when police reached there, the family members of Sonu pelted two stones on them, following which police

Shops shut, life comes to a standstill



A forensic team investigates, after clashes broke out between two communities during a Hanuman Jayanti procession on Saturday, at Jahangirpuri in New Delhi on Monday.

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Two days after the violent clashes during a Hanuman Jayanti procession in northwest Delhi's Jahangirpuri area left nine policemen and a civilian injured, the majority of shops were closed and just a few people were seen on the roads, amid heavy police deployment in the area.

The busy Kaushal Chowk, which is usually dotted with carts of vegetable and fruit

sellers, was filled with police personnel and media persons, even as shops downed their shutters and frightened residents rarely ventured out. Parents, too, did not send their wards to schools as they were worried about their safety.

The entire area has been barricaded with police asking people to take another route. Roshan bibi's small shop that she runs with the help of her two sons has remained closed since the day of the incident.

Her husband is a rickshaw puller and he, too, cannot go out. "This shop is our major source of earning. We pay a monthly rent of ₹ 10,000 for it. Now for the last two days, it is closed. What can we do? We can only cooperate with the police," she said.

Many families like Roshan's have been impacted by the violence. Many people in the area are daily wagers who earn their livelihood by working in local businesses. "We

have no work now. The tension is everywhere. Earlier there was no discrimination during work. But I feel now they will not hire us. And our people will not hire the people of that community," said 20-year-old Ali Iqbal.

As one moves towards the G block from Kaushal Chowk, signs of the violent clashes can still be seen as a burnt scooter lies at a corner of the road. Here too, the majority of shops remained closed, barring two establishments -- a pet shop and a grocery store.

Rajesh Mishra (40), who owns the pet shop, said people have closed their shops because they are scared that another bout of violence might break out. "Mine is a pet shop, we can't keep it closed. I had to open it up," he said.

Muhammed (55) said their day-to-day life has been badly hit due to the incident. "The whole market is closed. We are unable to buy vegetables for Ramadan," he said, adding that he was also worried about his children's studies.

Inside the lanes of G Block, although life appeared to be normal, there was an atmosphere of fear and anxiety, with tuition centres closed and few people coming out of their homes.

Shah must improve Delhi's law and order, says AAP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Monday said those involved in the violence during a Hanuman Jayanti procession in the national Capital should be given the "strictest punishment" and Union Home Minister Amit Shah should take steps to improve the law and order situation in the city.

Replying to a question at a press conference, Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain said the law and order situation in the national Capital is not good.

The Delhi Police functions under the Union Home Ministry. In the backdrop of recent incidents of communal violence in other parts of the country, the senior AAP leader also said the BJP should ensure that the law and order situation improves in all the States under its rule.

Asked about the BJP's allegation that one of the accused in the Jahangirpuri violence was associated with

the AAP, Jain said, "I think he must be linked to the BJP since the BJP knows what's the inside story." In the same vein, the AAP leader, "What I am saying is that no matter which party he is associated with, he should be given the strictest punishment, double punishment."

Delhi BJP president Adesh Gupta had on Sunday alleged that the violence in Jahangirpuri was the result of the AAP Government aiding illegal stay of Rohingya and Bangladeshi immigrants. The BJP leader had also alleged that one of the arrested accused in the violence was an AAP activist. "The law and order situation is not good in Delhi," Jain said. "Ask the Home Minister, under whom the (Delhi) Police comes why he is not improving the law and order situation," the AAP leader added.

"Not just in Delhi, the BJP should improve the law and order situation in all the States it is ruling," he said. The AAP had on Sunday alleged that the BJP was behind the violence.

Police Commissioner visits injured Sub-Inspector; promises all help to him

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Police Commissioner (CP) Rakesh Asthana on Monday morning visited Sub-Inspector Meda Lal, who was injured during the communal violence in Jahangirpuri. The CP also assured him that the department would provide him all support.

According to a statement issued by the police, Asthana enquired about Lal's well-being and told him that the entire force was proud of his courage and sense of duty which helped in quickly controlling the unruly mob. "He assured him of all possible support and assistance from the department during these testing



times," it said. Lal received a gunshot injury during clashes that broke out between two communities when a Hanuman Jayanti procession was passing through localities in northwest Delhi's Jahangirpuri on Saturday.

FIR registered against VHP, Bajrang Dal men

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Police has registered a First Information Report (FIR) against the members of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and Bajrang Dal for taking out a religious procession without permission in northwest Delhi's Jahangirpuri area where violent clashes broke out on April 16.

Police said that they have also arrested Prem Sharma, the VHP's district sewa pramukh, in connection with the violence during the Hanuman Jayanti procession in Jahangirpuri. According to Usha Rangnani, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Northwest district, the FIR has been registered under

Section 188 (Disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). The DCP said that the procession was taken out on Saturday evening without any permission and one person named Prem Sharma, jila sewa pramukh, VHP has been arrested.

The other two processions which were taken out in the morning and afternoon of April 16 in the Jahangirpuri police station area had due permission, the DCP added.

On Sunday the VHP had said that they had organised a yatra on the occasion of Hanuman Jayanti and claimed that both Jahangirpuri and Mahendra police stations were given information on April 15 about the procession to be held on Saturday.

The men in Hanuman Jayanti procession were armed: CPM

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI-M) Politburo member Brinda Karat and the party's Delhi State Committee secretary KM Tewari on Monday wrote a letter to Delhi Police Commissioner Rakesh Asthana over the Jahangirpuri violence and alleged that the Hanuman Jayanti procession which was taken out in the city was armed, with several men carrying "swords, lathis and firearms."

The CPI(M) has also raised questions over the role of the police force in the incident, stated the letter. "Video evidence aired on several television channels, along with eyewitness reports to our fact-



finding team, is conclusive evidence that procession taken out by members of the youth wing of the Bajrang Dal was armed, with several men carrying naked swords, lathis and also, shockingly, firearms. These weapons were openly flaunted and brandished during procession. The police have stated that procession had police permission. Did police

give permission to carry arms? In fact, processionists who carried arms clearly violated Arms Act, which has stringent provisions of imprisonment for such violations," the letter read. It also said that from Police Commissioner's statements to media, it is unclear whether those carrying arms during procession were identified or not.

DDA successfully conducts draw for 9,790 flats

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Development Authority (DDA) on Monday successfully conducted draw for 9,790 flats under the 'DDA Special Housing Scheme 2021' out of which 5,227 flats have been allotted to the applicants.

The draw for allotment of flats, which was live streamed for general public, was done based on "Random Number Generation System" and held under supervision of three independent observers headed by a retired judge of high court and senior officers of DDA. "The DDA initially placed 18335 flats located in 28 localities under scheme. In response to it, only 12387 applicants have deposited requisite regis-

tration fee, although approximately 22100 got themselves registered," he said. "The applicants were allowed to give maximum seven preferences in terms of localities, but no preference in terms of block or floor is allowed.

Out of applicants paid registration money, preference for certain localities like Vasant Kunj, Jasola, Dwarka are overwhelming, but preferences for Narela sub-city have not been as expected," he stated.

"Cumulative preferences of applicants for Low-Income Group (LIG) flats at Sector G7 and Economically Weaker Section (EWS) flats at sector A1 to A4, Narela have been 687 and 2234 respectively against offered flats 6546 and 5033 in above localities.

501 new Covid cases in city: Health Dept

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi reported 501 Covid-19 cases in the last 24 hours. As per the Delhi Government's Health Department data, no casualty has been reported. The data showed that 6492 tests have been conducted in 24 hours.

Amid rise in the Covid-19 cases, Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain on Monday said though the number of cases is rising in the national Capital, it is not an alarming situation as the rate of hospitalisation is low.

A crucial meeting of the Delhi Disaster Management Authority on Wednesday is expected to consider the re-imposition of fine for not wearing face masks. He said the Government is keeping a

watch on the situation. He also underlined that it is necessary to wear face masks, even though the fine for not doing so had been withdrawn.

"The number of positive cases has been rising in Delhi. But we have carried out 100 per cent vaccination and a large number of residents have already been infected with the Coronavirus. Also, there are not a lot of hospitalisations.

"So, it is not an alarming situation. We are keeping a watch on the situation," Jain said in a briefing.

When asked about the increasing number of Covid-19 cases among children, the minister said the Delhi government has already issued advisory asking schools to close specific classes for a few days if any student or teacher tests positive for the coron-



A health official takes a swab sample of a woman amid concerns over rising Omicron cases, in New Delhi on Monday.

RANJAN DIMRI/THE PIONEER

trend in daily Covid-19 cases and the positivity rate over the last few days. However, the positivity rate on Sunday came down to 4.21 per cent from 5.33 per cent on Saturday.

Delhi had on Sunday recorded 517 Covid-19 cases, 56 more than the previous day, with a positivity rate of 4.21 per cent, while no death was reported.

The city had on Saturday recorded 461 Covid-19 cases and two deaths with a positivity rate of 5.33 per cent. On Friday, 366 cases were recorded with a positivity rate of 3.95 per cent, while no death was reported. On Thursday, Delhi recorded 325 cases and the positivity rate was 2.39 per cent. There are 9,735 beds for Covid-19 patients in Delhi hospitals and 66 (0.68 per cent) of them are occupied.

Auto/taxi unions' strike for fare revision demands successful



Passengers stranded at the New Delhi Railway Station due to the strike by auto and taxi unions clamber aboard a goods carrier in desperation to reach their destination, in New Delhi on Monday.

SAURAV GUPTA ■ NEW DELHI

Commuters faced hardship on Monday to get to their offices or desired locations on time, due to autorickshaw and cab unions' strike. The unions are demanding a subsidy on the Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) and a fare revision in the wake of rising fuel prices.

The impact of the strike was visible as autos, cabs, feeder buses were hardly available at transport hubs like railway stations, Inter State Bus Terminals (ISBTs) and Metro stations across the city in the morning and during peak hours.

Many passengers complained that they had to wait a long time for Ola and Uber cabs, and added that those were available at inflated rates. People who were most affect-

ed by the strike were those who arrived in Delhi-NCR from other States through rail, bus or other modes. Nalini Mitra, a software employee in Gurugram said, "The Government must listen to the demand of the union and solve the issue as fast as it is possible because there are thousands of people depending on public transport. How many of us have their personal vehicles? I travel from Greater Noida 1 to Sector 52 Metro to reach Gurugram by Metro.

"Today, I had to pay ₹200 for auto to reach at the metro while usually it cost me ₹20 in sharing. Why is the transport sector taking people to ransom? There is no proper management from one end to another and for that reason, citizens are suffering," she said.

The call of the taxi drivers

has got many people irritated as they were not able to reach office on time. Mohammed Azad, another commuter and an employee in a multinational company, resident of New Ashok Nagar, said that the strike of the drivers is unwarranted. "We are already suffering salary cut and inflation.

And now this strike is killing us. It is already 11 am and I am still here trying to get an auto to reach metro. I have been trying for an hour almost but they are demanding 5 times more than that of the actual fare due to less number of autos on road.

The daily expenses of travel have jumped to four times for a salaried person. The government must first resolve the strike and also deal with the other transport unions so that there are no hardships for the

common man."

"I usually take shared auto from Qutab Minar Metro Station to reach my office near Mehrauli Bus Depot but today I could not find any vehicle outside the station premises. I waited for DTC buses but they all were in full capacity.

Lastly, after waiting for nearly 45 minutes for public transport, I decided to reach office on my own feet. Since my office is located far away from the metro station, it took another 45 minutes to reach office.

Sordid state of affair was that there was no arrangement of transport by agencies for daily commuter like me who comes all along from neighbouring Gurgaon to Delhi to attend office," said Shubham Sharma, employee in a private organization. Small protests

were also witnessed at number of places, including Kashmere Gate ISBT, Rani Bagh, Civil Lines, New Delhi Railway Station auto stand. In Delhi there are over 90,000 autos and more than 80,000 registered taxis complementing the public transport system.

According to the Delhi Auto Rickshaw Sangh General Secretary Rajendra Soni, "Our strike has started and it will continue throughout the day. CNG has become costlier and we cannot keep running our business on losses. We should either be provided a subsidy of Rs 35 per kg on CNG or fares should be hiked."

The auto, taxi and cab drivers also sat on a dharna near Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's residence at Civil Lines later in the day to press their demands.

Nadda slams Opp over communal harmony letter

‘A group of parties’ have waged a direct onslaught on the ‘spirit of our nation’: BJP chief

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Countering the letter of the Opposition parties expressing concern over the communal harmony in the country, BJP president J P Nadda on Monday hit back saying as against NDA's constructive work "a group of parties" have waged a direct onslaught on the "spirit of our nation" and asked them to introspect as to why the parties that ruled the nation for so many decades have been "confined to the margins of history now".

In an open letter to fellow Indians, the BJP president said, "India is seeing two distinctive styles of politics - the NDA's efforts which are seen in their work and the petty politics of a group of parties, which is seen in their acerbic words. In the last few days, we have seen these parties come together yet again in letter (whether in spirit too, time will tell) in which they have waged a direct onslaught on the spirit of our



nation and cast aspersions on our hardworking citizens." "I want to remind the rejected and dejected political parties - since you talk about vote bank politics, why have you forgotten the shameful happenings in Karaulli in Rajasthan? What are the compulsions that are driving your haunting silence on the issue," he asked referring to the communal violence in the Congress-ruled state and the "silence" of the party on the issue.

Nadda said the Opposition parties "tried, tested, or I should say dusted and rusted approach of vote bank politics, divisive politics, and selective politics is no longer working" as Prime Minister Narendra Modi's emphasis on 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas

and Sabka Prayas' has seen Indians being empowered and getting the wings to rise further. The youth of India want opportunities not obstacles, they want development not divisions, he said. "I would urge the opposition to change track and embrace the politics of development. We owe this to our coming generations," he said. He said the results of the recently held assembly elections, in which the BJP won power in four of the five states, should be an eye opener for those who thrive on vote bank politics.

India's largest State on the electoral map (Uttar Pradesh), a coastal state (Goa), a state in the Northeast (Manipur) and a hill state (Uttarakhand) have given a resounding mandate to the BJP, he said, asserting India

is seeing a pro-incumbency sentiment where developmental politics is being resoundingly rewarded.

The BJP also became the first party in many years to cross the 100 figure in the Rajya Sabha and got an absolute majority in the Uttar Pradesh legislative council, he added.

Nadda drew attention to the firing on 'sadhus' demanding ban on cow slaughter in a protest outside Parliament in 1966 when Indira Gandhi was the Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi's justification of anti-Sikh pogrom with "when a big tree falls, the earth shakes" remarks and communal riots in Gujarat in 1969, Moradabad in 1980, Bhiwandi in 1984 and Bhagalpur in 1989 among others to target the opposition.

"Let me remind everyone that it was the UPA, controlled by an extra constitutional NAC (National Advisory Council) that brought in the most horrific Communal Violence Bill, which stooped to new lows of vote bank politics by even UPA standards.

Similarly, the most horrific massacres against Dalits and tribals have taken place under Congress regimes," Nadda said.

Leaders of 13 Opposition parties on Saturday voiced deep concern over recent incidents of hate speech and communal violence in the country, and urged people to maintain peace and harmony.

BRICS' heads of States likely to hold virtual summit in June

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Heads of States of India, Brazil, Russia, China and South Africa (BRICS) combine are likely to hold a virtual summit in June this year. The high-profile event to be hosted by China will take place in the backdrop of ongoing Ukraine conflict and persisting stand-offs at the border in Ladakh between the armies of India and China.

Incidentally, China will host the BRICS summit New Delhi for the first time since trouble erupted at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) nearly two years ago.

Amidst the tension there, India hosted the 13th BRICS summit in the virtual format last year and all the five leaders took part in it. Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired the meet held in September. It was the third time India hosted the event. China assumed chairmanship of the BRICS in January this year and will host the 14th BRICS conclave.

Notwithstanding more than 50,000 troops from both the sides facing each other for the last two years at the LAC in Ladakh, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi's visit last month to New Delhi signaled



a possible thaw in ties. It was the first visit by a Chinese minister to India since face-offs started two years back leading to tension in the border areas.

The proposed upcoming summit to be held in the last week of June will see Prime Minister Modi, President Vladimir Putin and President Xi Jinping coming together for the first time since Russian military action started in Ukraine on February 24, sources said here on Monday.

India has all along favoured dialogue and diplomacy to end violence in

Ukraine with Modi holding telephonic talks with Putin and Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. The Prime Minister called for one on one talks between the two leaders to restore peace.

Moreover, India has abstained at least 11 times from voting against Russia in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). It also called for immediate cessation of hostilities. In another international high-profile event, heads of states of G-7 group

will meet in Germany in June and sources said this meet will take place days after the BRICS summit. Modi is scheduled to visit Germany in May and hold bilateral meetings with Chancellor Olaf Scholz as part of the 6th Indo German Inter-Governmental Consultations. Modi may travel to Germany again in late June to attend the G-7 as a special invitee. It will be the third time India will attend the event as a special invitee. The G-7 includes the US, UK, Italy, France, Germany, Japan and Canada.

JeM ultra Nengroo designated as terrorist

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Monday designated Ashiq Ahmed Nengroo, a commander of banned outfit Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), as a terrorist for his involvement in various terror incidents in Jammu and Kashmir.

Nengroo is the fifth individual to have been designated as a terrorist by the Centre in the last fortnight.

In a notification, the Union Home Ministry said Nengroo has been involved in the infiltration of terrorists into Jammu and Kashmir and has also been responsible for perpetrating various terror incidents in the Union Territory.

Nengroo (34) is running a



terror syndicate in Kashmir and is now "engaged in a perilous campaign to orchestrate terror in Jammu and Kashmir", remote controlled from Pakistan, the Ministry said.

In view of the danger that Nengroo poses to the security of India and in order to deter him from perpetrating terror acts, he has been designated as

a terrorist under the provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (37 of 1967), it said.

Nengroo was born on November 20, 1987 and hails from Pulwama in Jammu and Kashmir.

His brother Abbass Ahmed Nengroo was an active terrorist of the JeM and was killed in 2013. In February 2020, after the National Investigation Agency (NIA) summoned Nengroo, he along with his family went missing.

Nengroo was involved in cases related to the killing of a police personnel in Pulwama in 2013 and a civilian in 2020. He has allegedly been funding terror acts and illegal supplies of weapons to terrorists.

Congress hits out at Centre after SC cancels bail of Union Min's son

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Monday slammed the Central Government after the Supreme Court cancelled the bail granted to Union Minister Ajay Mishra's son Ashish in the Lakhimpur Kheri violence case, and questioned when will Prime Minister Narendra Modi sack his cabinet colleague.

Congress general secretary and chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said that finally the Supreme Court cancelled the bail of the minister's son who "trampled" upon the farmers in Lakhimpur. "When will Modi ji sack Ajay Mishra Teni from his cabinet? When will the BJP stop betraying the farmers and strengthening the killer?" Surjewala said in a tweet.



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Letter No.-203 /E-Tender notice/2022-23Date 18-04-2022

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING
e-Tender Notice

On behalf of the Chief General Manager, UttarakhandJalSansthan, Dehradun online tenders in Two Bid System, on item rate contract basis (inclusive of all materials& GST extra) are invited for the following works in District Dehradun (Uttarakhand) under JalJeevanMissionfrom technically and financially capable bidders, registered with UttarakhandJalSansthan/UttarakhandPeayal Nigam in appropriate class & category up to prescribed date & time on the portal as mentioned in terms and conditions.

Bid No.	Block	Name of Work	Bid Security (Earnest Money)	Cost of Bid Document (in Rs)	Period of completion of works
01	Vikas Nagar	Construction of Katapathar Water Supply:including Supply, Installation, testing & commissioning of Rising Main & Distribution System, Construction of Pump House & Clear Water Reservoir, Development of Tube well & all appurtenance civil and E&M works etc. complete.	230300.00	₹4000.00 + GST	12 months
02	Vikas Nagar	Construction of Dhalani Water Supply Scheme , Supply, Fixing, Laying, Testing & Commissioning of Rising Main, Distribution System & providing of House hold Connection etc. complete.	113150.00	₹4000.00 + GST	06 months
03	Vikas Nagar	Construction of Baluwala Water Supply:including Supply, Installation, testing & commissioning of Rising Main & Distribution System, Construction of Pump House &Over Head Tank, Development of Tube well & all appurtenance civil and E&M works etc. complete.	308650.00	₹4000.00 + GST	12 months
04	Vikas Nagar	Construction of Prateetpur Water Supply:including Supply, Installation, testing & commissioning of Rising Main & Distribution System, Construction of Pump House &Over Head Tank, Development of Tube well & all appurtenance civil and E&M works etc. complete.	190350.00	₹4000.00 + GST	12 months
05	Vikas Nagar	Construction of Dak Pathar Water Supply:including Supply, Installation, testing & commissioning of Rising Main & Distribution System, Construction of Pump House &Over Head Tank, Development of Tube well & all appurtenance civil and E&M works etc. complete.	359300.00	₹4000.00 + GST	12 months
06	Vikas Nagar	Construction of Aduwala Water Supply:including Supply, Installation, testing & commissioning of Rising Main & Distribution System, Construction of Pump House &Over Head Tank, Development of Tube well & all appurtenance civil and E&M works etc. complete.	269400.00	₹4000.00 + GST	12 months
07	Vikas Nagar	Construction of Kulhal Matak MajriWater Supply: including Supply, Installation, testing & commissioning of Rising Main & Distribution System, Construction of Pump House &Over Head Tank, Development of Tube well & all appurtenance civil and E&M works etc. complete.	224300.00	₹4000.00 + GST	12 months
08	Vikas Nagar	Construction of Jampur Water Supply:including Supply, Installation, testing & commissioning of Rising Main & Distribution System, Construction of Pump House &Over Head Tank, Development of Tube well & all appurtenance civil and E&M works etc. complete.	586460.00	₹4000.00 + GST	12 months
09	Vikas Nagar	Construction of Jassowala Water Supply:including Supply, Installation, testing & commissioning of Distribution System, Construction of Pump House & Development of Tube well & all appurtenance civil and E&M works etc. complete.	451000.00	₹4000.00 + GST	12 months
10	Vikas Nagar	Construction of Timli Water Supply:including Supply, Installation, testing & commissioning of Rising Main & Distribution System, Construction of Pump House &Over Head Tank, Development of Tube well & all appurtenance civil and E&M works etc. complete.	262310.00	₹4000.00 + GST	12 months
11	Kalsi	Construction of Kakadi Water Supply:including Supply, Installation, testing & commissioning of Rising Main & Distribution System, Construction of Pump House,CWR& all appurtenance works etc. complete.	76050.00	₹4000.00 + GST	06 months
12	Kalsi	Construction of Vyas Bhodd Vyas Nehri Water Supply:including Supply, Installation, testing & commissioning of Rising Main & Distribution System, Construction of Pump House ,CWR& all appurtenance civil and E&M works etc. complete.	158300.00	₹4000.00 + GST	06 months
13	Chakrata	Construction of Chutau Water Supply:including Supply, Installation, testing & commissioning of Rising Main & Distribution System, Construction of Pump House ,CWR& all appurtenance civil and E&M works etc. complete.	60150.00	₹4000.00 + GST	06 months

The tender time schedule (Key Dates) is as follows: -

S. No.	Description	Time Schedule (Key Dates)
1	Date of Online Publication	23.04.2022 at 11:00 Hrs
2	Document download : Start Date	26.04.2022 at 11:00 Hrs
3	Pre- Bid Meeting : Date	04.05.2022 at 11:00 Hrs
4	Bid Submission : Start Date	10.05.2022 at 11:00 Hrs
5	Bid Submission : End Date	17.05.2022upto17:00 Hrs
6	Offline Submission of Documents (Cost of bidding document, Bid Security, Original affidavits and all the supporting Documents in support of qualification).	17.05.2022upto17:00 Hrs
7	Date of Bid Opening	18.05.2022 at 11:00 Hrs.
8	Date of Financial Bid Opening	To be intimated later

Executive Engineer

INSHORT

SC STAYS TAKEOVER OF UP'S JAUHAR UNIV LAND

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday stayed the takeover of the land of Mohammad Ali Jauhar University in Rampur initiated by the Uttar Pradesh Government for nonadherence to certain conditions on which the land for the institution was granted to a trust run by Samajwadi Party leader Azam Khan in 2005.

CBI JOINS CHILD ABUSE DATABASE OF INTERPOL

New Delhi: The CBI has joined the international child sexual exploitation database of Interpol, a move which will bolster its fight against sex abuse of minors and help in identification of victims and abusers using sophisticated analytics software.

RAHUL ATTACKS GOVT OVER UPSC CHIEF PICK

New Delhi: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday attacked the Government over the appointment of the UPSC chairman."Union Pracharak Sangh Commission. India's Constitution is being demolished, one Institution at a time," he tweeted.

KOVIND: YOUTH KEEN TO JOIN SAMVAAD HERITAGE

New Delhi: India has a prevalent tradition of "vaad-vivaad" and "samvaad" (debates and discussions) and today's youth is keen to reconnect with that heritage, President Ram Nath Kovind said on Monday speaking at the diamond jubilee celebrations of the India International Centre here.



Punjab State Power Corporation Limited
(Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall, Patiala-147001)
Corporate Identity Number U40109PB2010SGC033813
Website: www.pspcl.in Mobile No. 96461-07205


E-Tender Enq. No. 375/P-1/EMP-W-11901Dated 13-04-2022

By: Chief Engineer/ Headquarter (Procurement Cell-1) GGSSTP, Roopnagar invites E-tender ID No. 2022_POWER_84241_1 for ash handling chargers for lifting of 12 LMTPA Twelve Lacs Metric tones per annum of Wet Ash Pond ash only at GGSSTP Roopar Quantity 12 LMTPA as per Scope of work.

For detailed NIT & Tender Specification please refer to <https://leproc.punjab.gov.in> from 14-04-2022 / 01.00 PM onwards.

Note: Corrigendum and addendum, if any will be published online at <https://leproc.punjab.gov.in>

76155/12/796/201/13580RTP-28/22



ICICI Bank

Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005

Whereas
The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.
As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Jasjit Singh/ Sangita Singh Spell Binders Production Pvt Ltd/ LBDEL00001049917	Plot No. 4621, Dlf Qutab Enclave, Phase- IV, Gurgaon Haryana/ April 16, 2022	August 30, 2021 Rs. 11,51,100/-	Delhi/ NCR

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/ guarantors(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Date : April 19, 2022
Place: Delhi/ NCR

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

Fissures surface in Bengal BJP

Many leaders quit posts

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Daggers are out in Bengal BJP after the humiliating loss it suffered in the by-elections to the Asansol Lok Sabha and Ballygunge Assembly seats last Saturday.

At least 13 State and district committee members from Nadia, Murshidabad and Jalpaiguri districts have resigned their posts and many others have expressed their desire to follow suit holding an "inexperienced and arbitrary" functioning of the State leadership.

While BJP's Murshidabad MLA Gouri Shankar Ghosh has resigned from the post of party district committee secretary, his other two colleagues Bani Ganguli and Dipankar Chowdhury too have quit their

district working council posts. Another leader Kanchan too is known to have expressed his displeasure.

Their resignation came hours after party Bunkura MP Soumitra Khan alleged that the "inexperienced" leaders were responsible for the loss the party had to suffer in the elections.

"Some inexperienced leaders who are not even capable to run the Mandal unit are responsible for the defeat," said Khan a former TMC leader who had joined the BJP before 2019 parliamentary elections. Khan was apparently blaming State party secretary Amitabha Chakrabarty for his "arbitrary" ways.

A number of leaders from



Nadia district have also left their respective organisational posts alleging lack of sincerity of the State leaders. One of these leaders said quoting the grassroots workers that "the State leadership does not stand by the ground level workers who have been working hard for the party ... they have fled their homes after attacks from the TMC goons but the leaders have not stood by their side."

A district leader from

Jalpaiguri also attacked the State leadership for ignoring the workers who had campaigned for the party ahead of the 2019 parliamentary elections. "All those leaders who had worked hard in the Lok Sabha elections have been sidelines ... some new sycophants are given more importance ... there is little scope for the party ... so it is better to leave my post," a district committee member from Jalpaiguri said.

Questioning the intention of the state leadership in repairing the organizational issues another senior BJP leader and former MP Anupam Hazra questioned "the real mystery behind the resignations."

He said that the time had come when the leadership "should think about the problem with utmost importance. Those who were given importance till now have left the party. Those who actually worked for the party are resign-

ing from their posts."

The BJP lost the Asansol parliamentary seat by a record margin of more than 3 lakh votes. The party had won the seat in 2014 and 2019 when Babul Supriyo the then saffron MP won the seat by around 2 lakh votes.

Subsequently after being removed from union ministry he left the party to join the Trinamool Congress and contested the Assembly elections from Ballygunge seat where he won by 20,000 votes on a TMC ticket. BJP's Agnimitra Paul lost the Asansol seat to TMC candidate and cine star Shatrughna Sinha. Soon after her defeat she too blamed the "organisational drawbacks" of the party. Another issue for the BJP leaders' frustration in the State that the party that had come up to occupy the second position was again relegated to third position in Ballygunge where it forfeited its deposit.

RPF jawan martyred, one hurt in terror attack

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

A jawan of the Railway Protection Force (RPF) succumbed to his injuries while another critically injured was still undergoing treatment after they were targeted from behind by 'unidentified' terrorists in Kakapora area of South Kashmir's Pulwama district on Monday.

According to local reports the RPF personnel, which included an officer, were targeted near a tea shop from behind outside Kakapora railway station. The duo were rushed to the nearby hospital where one of them succumbed to his injuries while another one was still undergoing treatment till the time of filing the report.

In a tweet Kashmir zone police said, "Terrorists fired upon RPF personnel at Kakapora, Pulwama. In this

terror incident, 02 RPF personnel sustained bullet injuries & were evacuated to hospital, where 01 RPF personnel succumbed & attained martyrdom. Area cordoned off. Further details shall follow".

According to a spokesman of Jammu and Kashmir police, the deceased RPF jawan has been identified as Head constable Surinder Kumar while ASI Devraj Kumar was undergoing treatment in the local hospital.

A CCTV footage also surfaced where an unidentified terrorist is seen targeting RPF personnel from behind while they were sipping tea at a tea shop outside Kakapora station around 6.05 p.m.

In the last over two weeks at least eight attacks have been reported from central, North and south Kashmir districts of Kashmir valley. In all these ter-

ror incidents non local labourers, security personnel, members of the minority community living in the valley have come on the radar of the terrorists.

'Hybrid' terrorists were deployed by their handlers to confuse security personnel on the ground. In most of the cases, these hybrid terrorists resort to killings using a pistol from a close range. After hitting the targets these 'hybrid' terrorists vanish from the scene of crime making it difficult for the security forces to track down their footprints.

Security experts claimed sudden decline in the fresh recruitment and near zero infiltration from across the line of control have prompted terrorist handlers to adopt a new strategy of using 'hybrid' terrorists to execute their terror plans.

J&K schoolchildren waiting to welcome PM

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ PALLI/SAMBA

Schoolchildren of Government High School Palli in Samba district, which is set to become the first carbon-free solar panchayat in the union territory, are eagerly waiting to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his visit to Jammu on the occasion of Panchayati divas on April 24.

On the same day the Prime Minister is going to dedicate a 500 KWp solar plant which is being installed in a record time of 20 days to provide clean electricity to 340 houses in the model panchayat under the central government's 'Gram Urja Swaraj' programme. The project is being executed by the Central Electronics Limited, a public sector undertaking under the central government's department of scientific and industrial research.

The Prime Minister is also scheduled to address a gathering of members of the Panchayati Raj Institutions across the country after kick-starting various developmental/power projects in the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

To welcome him in the area the model Panchayat is receiving a major facelift for the last couple of days. The school children are equally busy decorating different walls with different themes under the guidance of their school principal and drawing teacher.

"To welcome our Prime Minister we are completely renovating our school premises. The students are equally excited to meet the Prime Minister. We are preparing them so that they can perform, if desired by the senior authorities at the last minute" Headmistress Kamaljeet told The Pioneer.

In the school corridor several students were busy painting different walls under the guidance of drawing teacher Ravinder Singh Jammwal. "We are showcasing different themes and central government schemes to spread awareness among the common people of the area so that they can be benefitted".

"We are working here as a team. There are other teachers and a group of students who are working hard to decorate their classrooms and boundary walls of the school", Ravinder

Singh told The Pioneer, claiming it was a rich experience for all of us.

The mood in the village is equally upbeat. Village Sarpanch Ravinder Sharma is leading from the front and working hard. Last week he launched an electric bus service connecting the village with Jammu district directly. Several households were educated and provided with Solar chullhas by the Deputy Commissioner Samba, Anuradha Gupta.

Other departments have also stationed their teams in the area to spread awareness about different schemes including Ayushman health cards, domicile certificates etc. A health camp was organised in the Govt High School where children were screened by the team of doctors for common ailments. Several other buildings in the village which included Panchayat bhawan, public toilets, and water bodies have been renovated. Ravinder Sharma said, "to prevent wastage of water soak pits are being constructed in the village. "A segregation shed for dry and wet waste is also being built under the Swachh Bharat Mission", he added.

Accused in PFI leader's murder taken into custody

Sangh leaders walk out of peace meet at Palakkadu

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Ramesh, Saravanan and Arumugham, who were believed to be involved in Friday's murder of Zubair, the local Popular Front of India leader at Elappulli in Palakkadu, was taken into custody on Monday by the investigating team.

The three are being interrogated in an unknown place in the district by the investigating officers. The police could arrest the three based on CCTV camera visuals collected from various places in the district. Though the police is yet to disclose the political leanings of the three who have been arrested, a top BJP leader told The Pioneer that they were close friends of the deceased Srinivasan.

The all-party meeting con-

vened by the district administration ended in failure as the BJP and Sangh Parivar leaders staged a walk-out.

"What is the purpose of holding a meeting like this? Our workers and leaders are being targeted and victimized by the police under the pretext of questioning. Even women are being harassed deliberately," said C Krishna Kumar, secretary, BJP, Kerala. He said the police are yet to arrest those behind the conspiracy and murder of Senjith, a district level leader of the RSS in November 2021.

But K Krishnankutty, the Kerala Minister for Power, blamed the BJP and Sangh Parivar for the all the murders happening in the State. "The Sangh Parivar leaders came for the all-party meeting with the intention of creating a scene and they walked out. They have a clear agenda," said Krishnankutty. The minister asked those participated in the meeting to isolate the Sangh



Parivar elements.

M V Govindan, Kerala Minister for Revenue who is the CPI(M) ideologist too blamed the Sangh Parivar for all political murders in the State. "It is the majoritarian communalism of the Sangh Parivar which is the biggest danger faced by Kerala," said Govindan while speaking to journalists at the capital city.

Vijay Sakhare, ADGP (law and order), disclosed that those who were involved in the murders of Zubair and Srinivasan were from SDPI/PFI and the Sangh Parivar. "More details would be revealed once we make the announcements. The persons who were associated with the murders would be nabbed soon," said Sakhare.

Yechury used smuggler's car during his Kannur stay, alleges BJP

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Jayarajan.

But BJP leaders said that they got the details of the vehicle from the CPI(M) itself indicating that it was an insider's job. The Toyota Fortuner SUV belongs to SDPI leader Siddique who figures as accused in some criminal and economic offenses cases filed by various investigation agencies.

Siddique himself agreed that the said vehicle was owned by him. "But I was not aware that the car was hired for Yechury," Siddique told media persons. Haridas said that Siddique who worked as a Muslim League leader during daytime dons the role of SDPI leader during night hours.

The nexus between CPI(M) leaders and smugglers is nothing new as Kodyeri Balakrishnan, the Secretary of the Kerala CPI(M) had used the Mini Cooper car owned by another smuggler during the Save Kerala Yatra in 2016. This had earned him the nick name "Cooper Balakrishnan".

Yogi: World has hailed India's effective Covid management

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Monday, said that amidst the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine, the eyes of the entire world were on India because under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India had emerged as the most peaceful country with better foreign policies and friendly international relations.

Speaking at a programme organised by a news agency, Yogi Adityanath said keeping faith in the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's management, the world leaders were trying to develop communication with him for an atmosphere of peace and harmony.

Yogi also said that the world had hailed India for its effective Covid management.

Mentioning the hardships

faced by the media during the Emergency period, the chief minister said, "When democracy was throttled in Emergency, the entire media fraternity had to face the brunt. But with their dedication towards the truth and the country, they were able to re-establish themselves without any distractions."

He also urged the fourth pillar of democracy to get inspired for facing new challenges that had come up in the sector.

"On one side is the print media and on the other side is the visual media. Social media has come out in its new form as the third side and we cannot deny the importance of digital media which is the fourth one. The attitude of the people has also changed therefore each platform has its own importance," Yogi said.

Maharashtra CM gives nod for refurbishment of 8 temples

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In an apparent effort to reaffirm his Hinduva credentials, Maharashtra Chief Minister and Shiv Sena Uddhav Thackeray on gave a go-ahead for the refurbishment and restoration of eight ancient temples in the state.

The eight ancient temples which will be refurbished in the state are: Dhutpapeshwar Temple in Ratnagiri, Kopeswar Temple of Kolhapur, Ekviradevi Temple in Pune, Gondeshwar Temple of Nashik, Khandoba Temple in Aurangabad, Purushottam Bhagwan Temple of Beed, Anandeshwar Temple in Amravati and Markanda Mahadev Temple of Gadchiroli.

The chief minister, who presided over a meeting of the State Cultural Affairs

Department, accorded administrative approval for giving a facelift to eight ancient temples.

Monday's development comes in the midst of a war of one-upmanship in pursuit of Hindutva cause being witnessed in the state among the ruling Shiv Sena, the Opposition BJP and Raj Thackeray-led MNS.

The refurbishment of temples is being undertaken as part of the first phase of a project to restore the ancient temples, forts and heritage memorials across the state.

Of the temples chosen for face-lift, Purushottam Bhagwan Temple is some 15 centuries' old and the only one of its kind in the state, while Dhutpapeshwar Temple in Ratnagiri district is the second oldest as it was constructed more than 1,000 years ago.

Kopeshwar Temple is 800 years' old, Ekvira Devi Temple — which is also the family deity of the Thackerays who regularly go to pray there — was also built several hundred years ago. The Gondeshwar Temple is 900 years' old.

Khandoba Temple, visited equally by Hindus and Muslims, is centuries' old, while the Anandeshwar Temple was constructed eight centuries ago, while the origin of the Markanda Mahadev Temple dates back to many centuries.

Under the temple refurbishment and restoration project, the original form and structure of each ancient temple will be retained, while new infrastructure, aesthetics and amenities will be added to attract more pilgrims and tourists from all over the state and other parts of the country.

HC allows petitioner to place papers of attached 'benami' flat of MahaRera chief

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Monday allowed the RTI activist and lawyer Pravin Wategaonkar to file an additional affidavit and place on record more documents and an Income Tax department's order attaching a flat owned by Maharashtra's former chief secretary Ajoy Mehta who is alleged to have bought a "benami" flat from a "shell company" linked to Pune-based businessman Aviash Bhosale.

While hearing a public interest litigation filed by Advocate Wategaonkar, who is a Petitioner-in-person in the case, a HC bench of Justices A.A. Sayed & Justice Abhay Ahuja passed an order to this effect. The HC bench adjourned the matter for hearing after the summer vacation

in June.

Mehta, who is the current chairman of the Maharashtra Real Estate Regulatory Authority (MahaRERA) bought the flat no 5-B in Samata Co-operative Housing Society Ltd at Nariman Point in south Mumbai. Samata Co-operative Housing society has been constructed on a Government originally meant for serving/retired Judges.

The IT department provisionally attached the flat in November last year under the Benami Transactions Prohibition Act, 1988, as it inferred that the flat earlier belonged to Avinash Bhosale, who has been under the scanner of Enforcement Directorate (ED) in various cases. As part of the investigations, the IT department found M/s Anamitra Properties Pvt Ltd

was a shell company floated by Avinash Bhosale to 'hold' the 'benami asset' (the flat) which he subsequently sold to 'old acquaintance' Ajoy Mehta, who retired as Chief Secretary of Maharashtra and is currently the Chairman of MahaRERA.

Wategaonkar has moved the high court after the Cuffe Parade Police Station — where he lodged a complaint — failed to take cognisance of the transactions involving use of dubious funds, the source of which is required to be investigated.

The media reports had said that Bhosale-controlled M/s Anamitra Properties Pvt Ltd had bought the flat from the son of a late Judge for Rs 4 crore in 2009, after reportedly taking a loan from Indiabulls Financial Services Ltd, transaction of which is being looked into by the IT department.

Bride's cousin thrown in boiling oil for delay in serving snacks

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Delay in serving snacks to guests of a groom's side took a violent turn when they threw the bride's cousin in boiling oil. This led to a clash between the two sides in which over half a dozen persons were injured.

The incident took place in Meherban Kheda village under Asiwani police station of Unnao on Sunday night. The injured cousin along with his brother, also seriously injured, were taken by relatives to Miyaganj community health centre from where they were referred to the KGMU Trauma Centre in Lucknow because of their 'critical' condition.

The cops from Asiwani police station also rushed to the spot after getting information.

According to reports, the marriage of the daughter of Jagroop, a resident of Meherban Kheda village under

Asiwani police station, was fixed with Satyam, son of Rajjan Lal, a resident of Godiya Bagh village under Safipur Kotwali. The wedding took place on Sunday.

Rajjan Lal reached Meherban Kheda village at around 10:30 pm on Sunday night with his son's marriage procession. The girl's side had arranged for the welcome snacks for the guests at the 'janwasa'. However, due to some delay in serving snacks, the guests started protesting and also hurled abuses. The situation turned violent when some of the groom's relatives threw the girl's cousin, 25-year-old Amit Kumar of Palta Kheda Asivan, in a pan of boiling oil.

Amit's 30-year-old cousin Kuldeep of Amankheda tried to rescue him in which both were critically injured.

Later, agitated over the incident, some of the bride's

relatives clashed with the groom's side in which several persons were injured. The situation was resolved after some senior members from both sides intervened.

The injured were immediately taken to Miyaganj community health centre from where Amit and Kuldeep were referred to the Trauma Centre in Lucknow.

The police also reached the spot and returned after investigation as both the parties refused to lodge any report.

Later both the parties started the marriage rituals after making a reconciliation agreement and after the completion of all ceremonies of marriage by Monday morning, the procession left with the bride.

Asiwani SHO Anurag Singh said that the matter was under cognisance. He said if a complaint was received, action would be taken against the people involved in the clash.

Total zaid crops increase to 60.12 lakh hectare

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The total area sown to zaid (summer) crops has increased marginally to 60.12 lakh hectare so far this year, with maximum coverage under paddy.

Zaid, also called grishmkal crops, are sown between February and June -- the intervening period between rabi (winter) harvest and kharif (monsoon) sowing. The agriculture ministry data showed that about 58.32 lakh hectare was sown under zaid crops in the year-ago period.

"Area under zaid crops has increased substantially to over 60 lakh hectare now from 30 lakh hectare in the first year 2018-19 of introduction," former Agriculture Commissioner SK Malhotra said. Rice is sown during this season mainly in West Bengal, Telangana, Karnataka and Odisha, while short-duration pulses, especially moong and urad, and some oilseeds are also grown in states like Madhya Pradesh,

Rajasthan and others, he said.

The Government has decided to promote zaid crops to encourage farmers to utilise the 90 days window between winter and rainy season, he added. A special programme to promote zaid crops in 2018-19 was introduced by Malhotra, who is currently holding charge as Director at the Directorate of Knowledge Management in Agriculture, ICAR (Indian Council of Agricultural Research).

As per the ministry data, rice has been sown in 28.51 lakh hectare till April 18 this year against 30.38 lakh tonne in the year-ago period. Area sown to pulses increased to 12.21 lakh hectare compared to 8.90 lakh tonne, while oilseeds acreage rose to 10.18 lakh tonne from 9.85 lakh tonne in the said period.

Area sown to coarse cereals remained flat at 9.22 lakh tonne till April 18 this year. Experts said there is a possibility of bringing more area under zaid crops if irrigation is

expanded and the problem of stray animals in some states is addressed. Agriculture crops are grown in three seasons — rabi, kharif and zaid.

Agri Min launches two new portals for registration of pesticides

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar on Monday launched two new portals, including one for registration of pesticides. Another portal is for documentation related to imports and exports of agri-products and plants. The minister launched the two portals — CROP (Comprehensive Registration of Pesticides) and PQMS (Plant Quarantine Management System) — in an event held at the Pusa complex.

Ulama-i-Hind moves SC, seeks direction to Centre, State Govts against razing buildings

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Muslim body Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind has moved the Supreme Court seeking a direction to the Centre and some states including Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh that "precipitative actions" like razing buildings in criminal proceedings be not taken. The plea assumes significance because of recent actions taken by authorities in Madhya Pradesh to use bulldozers to raze properties of those accused of rioting during the Ram Navami celebrations.

Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind, in its petition, said the action like razing the house in a criminal proceeding as a punishment is unknown to criminal law. "Petitioners also seek a declaration that residential accommodations or any commercial property cannot be demolished as a punitive measure...

Also pray that police personnel to be provided specialised training in handling communal riots and situations where populations become restive," said the petition.

"It is further prayed that directions be issued for Ministers, Legislators, and anybody unconnected with the criminal investigation to be restrained from apportioning criminal responsibility regarding criminal action publicly or through any official communication until a determination by a criminal court," it said. The plea alleged that several Ministers and Legislators have made statements about the guilt of a certain section of the society. The petition has been filed by Gulzar Ahmed Noor Mohammed Azmi, the Secretary of the Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind, said Fazlur Rahman Qasmi, the press secretary of the Muslim body.

FIRST COLUMN

GLOBAL CALL TO ENSURE FOOD SECURITY

Leading world bodies have lauded the Indian food programme



PK VASUDEVA

The heads of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) issued a joint statement on April 13, urging coordinated action to help vulnerable countries address growing threats to food security. The proposed actions include providing emergency food supplies and deploying financial support to households and countries, facilitating unhindered trade, and investing in sustainable food production and nutrition security. World Bank Group President David Malpass, IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva, WFP Executive Director David Beasley and WTO Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala issued the following joint statement ahead of the Spring Meetings of the IMF and World Bank Group next in the end of April: “The world is shaken by compound-



ing crises. The fallout of the war in Ukraine is adding to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic that now enters its third year, while climate change and increased fragility and conflict pose persistent harm to people around the globe. Sharply higher prices for staples and supply shortages are increasing pressure on households worldwide and pushing millions more into poverty. The threat is highest for the poorest countries with a large share of consumption from food imports, but vulnerability is increasing rapidly in middle-income countries, which host the majority of the world’s poor. World Bank estimates warn that for each one percentage point increase in food prices, 10 million people are thrown into extreme poverty worldwide.” “The rise in food prices is exacerbated by a dramatic increase in the cost of natural gas, a key ingredient of nitrogenous fertilizer. Surging fertilizer prices along with significant cuts in global supplies have important implications for food production in most countries, including major producers and exporters, who rely heavily on fertilizer imports. The increase in food prices and supply shocks can fuel social tensions in many of the affected countries, especially those that are already fragile or affected by conflict.” A study by the International Monetary fund has found that Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s food security project - the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) - has been critical in preventing any increase in extreme poverty levels in India during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The new IMF paper - Pandemic, Poverty, and Inequality: Evidence from India - found that extreme poverty (with purchasing power parity of less than USD 1.9 per person per day) in India was less than 1 per cent in 2019 and it remained constant even during the pandemic in 2020. “PMGKAY was critical in preventing any increase in extreme poverty levels in India and the doubling of food entitlements worked substantially in terms of absorbing the Covid-induced income shocks on the poor,” the report stated. Last month, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the extension of PMGKAY till September 2022. Under the PMGKAY, free food grain is provided to those in need.” A low level of extreme poverty for two consecutive years, including one marked by the pandemic, can be considered as elimination of extreme poverty,” it read. PM Modi says India is ready to supply food stock to world if WTO agrees. Stating that he has discussed the issue of the global food shortage with US President Joe Biden, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on April 12 said that India is ready to supply food stock to the world. It is already supplying to Afghanistan and Sri Lanka on moral grounds. India has unveiled a \$22 billion package to provide food rations and cash transfers to about 800 million people hit by the coronavirus lockdown. Although India had a record harvest and has enough reserves, there are concerns about the food supply chain disruptions, especially for the poor.

(The writer is former Senior Professor, International Trade and Member, Vivekananda International Foundation. The views expressed are personal.)

Poll freebies: Road to economic disaster



UTTAM GUPTA

Assured of financial help to meet most of their basic needs ‘perpetually’, the freebies cult is changing the mindset of people and making them complacent

A few days back, Prime Minister Narendra Modi asked senior bureaucrats to point out deficiencies in government policies. In response, some officials have zeroed in on ‘the freebies promised by winning party in state elections.’

In the past, freebie - an acronym for “something given free of charge” - found a place in a corner of the manifesto of parties. In recent years, this has occupied the centre-stage and holds the key to winning elections. For instance, in February 2020, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) led by Arvind Kejriwal mesmerised Delhi voters by promising freebies. They returned AAP to the seat of power with a thumping majority giving it 62 out of a total of 70 assembly seats.

Then, the freebies included free or heavily subsidised electricity and free water, free bus ride for women, free Wi-Fi, full reimbursement of hospitalisation expenses in case of accident, free testing and diagnostic services etc.

In the just-concluded Punjab elections, AAP was voted to power getting 92 out of a total of 117 assembly seats. Here again, the freebies promised by Kejriwal especially free electricity to each and every household for consumption upto 300 units per month, waiving off all outstanding power bills, depositing ₹1000 per month in the account of every woman aged 18 or above, guaranteed treatment for every Punjabi regardless of the cost of the treatment or operation and so on have played a dominant role in AAP’s victory.

In Uttar Pradesh too, the winning party, i.e., BJP had promised a host of freebies such as 20 million smartphones and tablets for poor students, two free LPG cylinders under ‘Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana’ every Holi and Diwali, free commute for women passengers above 60 years in public transport, financial assistance of up to ₹100,000 for the marriage of girls belonging to poor families, free power to farmers for irrigation and so on.

A flood of negatives came to the fore the moment one starts introspecting on the subject. An overarching negative is abetment to corruption and erosion in governance ethics.

The Union Government’s standards of financial propriety clearly lays down inter alia that “no authority shall exercise its powers of sanctioning expenditure to pass an order which will be directly or indirectly, to its advantage; and the expenditure from public moneys should not be incurred for the benefit of a particular person or a section of the people unless a claim for the amount could be enforced in a court of law or the expenditure is in pursuance of a recognised policy or custom”.

The reckless spending of the tax payer’s money on freebies is neither a recognised policy/custom nor it is sanctioned in a court of law. It is blatant financial irregularity that amounts to bribing voters using public money solely for

“

WE WILL HAVE A DEADLY COCKTAIL OF PERPETUAL DRAIN ON THE STATE EXCHEQUER LEADING TO UNSUSTAINABLE DEBT, UNFAIR AND INEQUITABLE TREATMENT LEADING TO TENSION IN THE SOCIETY, A NEGATIVE ORIENTATION AND UNWILLINGNESS TO WORK, NON-COMPLIANCE AMONG TAX PAYERS, BUREAUCRATIC RED TAPE AND ABETMENT TO CORRUPTION

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(The writer is a policy analyst. The views expressed are personal.)



gaining advantage in electoral politics. An individual candidate distributing cash or giving liquor bottles (using his own pocket money) to garner votes is treated as corrupt practice, and rightly so, whereas a party bribing voters that too using public money gets legitimacy (albeit de facto).

Second, unlike ‘normal’ budget expenses which are planned and backed by well-orchestrated efforts to garner revenue, additional financial liabilities imposed by the freebies promised in election manifesto affect the budgetary position of the State in a totally ‘uncontrolled’ and ‘unplanned’ manner. For instance, free power (consumption upto 300 units a month) and giving ₹1000 per month to an adult woman will dent Punjab’s budget by about ₹20,000 crore annually.

There being no corresponding revenue generation against this liability (as the same is unplanned), this will be at the cost of slashing other essential expenditure including on development. Alternatively, this will result in additional borrowings and resultant increase in debt to unsustainable level. At the end of five years, the afore-mentioned freebies alone will increase State’s debt by ₹100,000 crore (this doesn’t include interest; including it, the impact will be even higher) on top of existing around ₹300,000 crore.

Third, any welfare measure is intended to help the poor as with meagre income, she can’t afford to pay for basic facilities. But, the freebies given by contemporary breed of political parties defies this cardinal principle; for instance, free bus ride given by AAP in Delhi to ‘all’ women. This means, even a rich person is eligible if that person happens to be woman. Likewise, an adult woman in Punjab is entitled to ₹1000 a month even if she is a millionaire. By contrast, a man won’t be eligible even if he is poor.

Fourth, unlike a normal welfare scheme which has a sunset date and has a chance of getting terminated after the underlying purpose is achieved, the freebies offered by winning parties have none. This is because such doles are not backed by any well-defined objective; here in the sole consideration is to influence voters. Freebies being at the foundation on which victory is secured, the concerned parties are prone to promising them election-after-election.

Fifth, look at things from the perspective of tax payers. When, the tax revenue is used for giving subsidies to the poor sections of the society - for instance, beneficiaries under Ayushman Bharat which covers 100 million poor households - it passes muster as welfare measure. But, when it is used to give freebies to all including the rich, it may even trigger non-compliance amongst tax payers.

Finally, assured of financial help to meet most of their basic needs ‘perpetually’, the freebies cult is changing the mindset of people in a way that makes them complacent towards work. This can lead to a scenario whereby India’s demographic dividend would be converted into a demographic liability.

In short, we will have a deadly cocktail of perpetual drain on the State exchequer leading to unsustainable debt, unfair and inequitable treatment leading to tension in the society, a negative orientation and unwillingness to work, non-compliance among tax payers, bureaucratic red tape and abetment to corruption.

State exchequer leading to unsustainable debt, unfair and inequitable treatment leading to tension in the society, a negative orientation and unwillingness to work, non-compliance among tax payers, bureaucratic red tape and abetment to corruption. The only way to avoid it is to prohibit parties from promising doles.



In a judgment in *S. Subramaniam Balaji vs Government of Tamil Nadu* & Ors in July, 2013, the Supreme Court had said that distribution of freebies of any kind influences all people; that “It shakes the roof of free and fair elections to a large degree”. Yet, it had held that promises in the election manifesto cannot be construed as “corrupt practice” under the Representation of People Act (RPA), or under any other prevailing law and, hence, distribution of freebies can’t be stopped when the ruling party uses public funds for this purpose through the passage of Appropriation Acts in the state assembly.

After almost a decade, the matter has again come up before the SC - this time through a public interest litigation (PIL), filed by advocate Ashwani Dubey. On January 25, 2022 it observed “This is no doubt a serious issue. Budget for freebies is going above the regular budget. As the SC said before, this disturbs the level playing field.”

The top court recognizes that the problem is serious. Yet, thus far it has expressed helplessness. Whether, anything concrete will come out of the pending PIL, only time will tell.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

INDIA DESIRES PEACE AND STABILITY IN A REGION FREE OF TERROR, SO THAT WE CAN FOCUS ON DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES.
— PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI



OUR SACRIFICES AND CONTRIBUTION IN FIGHTING AND ELIMINATING TERRORISM ARE WELL KNOWN AND GLOBALLY ACKNOWLEDGED.
— PAKISTAN PM SHEHBAZ SHARIF

Ukraine: The second Russian offensive

Concern about what Ukraine would do if it wins is already a major factor in deciding what kind of weapons the West gives to Ukraine

Ukraine wants more offensive weapons including modern tanks, self-propelled artillery and combat aircraft from NATO countries for its war with the Russian invaders, but it won’t be getting them from the United States in the latest tranche of American military aid. There is a good reason for that.

Germany and Slovakia are considering sending Leopard tanks and SP artillery to Kyiv in a few weeks’ time, but Joe Biden’s administration is still playing ‘Mother May I?’ ‘Grandmother’s Footsteps’ with Moscow. He moves one cautious step up on the list of weapons he gives Ukraine, watches for the Russian response, then takes another step.

It doesn’t matter at the moment, because this is the



GWYNNE DYER

(Gwynne Dyer’s new book is ‘The Shortest History of War’. The views expressed are personal.)

‘rasputitsa’, the season of rain and mud in eastern Ukraine when off-road travel for heavy vehicles varies from difficult to impossible. The Ukrainian forces won’t be attempting any grand offensives, and the Russians (who are planning exactly that) are very likely to get bogged down.

The mud season will probably last for another six weeks. Strict military logic would argue for postponing the Russian offensive in eastern Ukraine until then, but Putin probably can’t wait that long. The defeats and losses he suffered in his first attacks in northern Ukraine will gradually but inevitably leak out to the Russian public, so he needs a quick victory now.

He might get lucky, but there is unlikely to be a decisive Russian victory for two reasons. First, the Russians in the east will



be attacking the best-trained, most experienced part of the Ukrainian army, well dug into defences that have grown every year since 2014.

That would not save the main Ukrainian army if other Russian forces can make a ‘pincer movement’ behind it and cut it off, which is precisely what they will now try to do.

The Russian troops now besieging Mariupol on the south coast will advance to the north as soon as it finally falls. Other Russian troops are already attacking south from around Kharkiv, probably aiming to join up with them between Barvinkove and Pokrovsk and trap the main Ukrainian army.

If they succeed, Ukraine will have to seek a ceasefire in place, ceding all the lost territory to Russia, and Putin will have his victory. But first the Russians will have to advance about 150 km. on a single two-lane road that passes through villages ideal for ambushes every five or ten km. And it’s the rasputitsa, so you can’t go around the villages.

This is precisely the task that the Russian army spectacularly bungled in its attempt to seize Kyiv last month. What are the odds that it will do better this time? And if it bogs down once again, what happens then?

Assume that it’s late June, the ground is drying out, and the Russian troops are exhausted, over-extended and demoralised. In Kyiv they will be thinking about taking back their lost territory - at least the territory they have lost since February, but some will also be thinking about recapturing the territories that Russia conquered in 2014.

The latter territories - Crimea and the eastern parts of Donetsk and Luhansk provinces - have little economic value, and most of the people who live there have been taught to hate Ukrainians. If Russia loses again in the coming battles, there will be strong pressure in Kyiv to exploit the situation and take them back.

That’s when the extra tanks and self-propelled artillery that the United States is not giving Ukraine now would come in very useful. But it would also be the moment of utmost humiliation for Vladimir Putin (assuming that he is still in power), and it is always wiser to leave your defeated enemy an avenue of retreat.

Perhaps this entire article is an exercise in counting one’s chickens before they hatch, but you may be sure that they are also being counted in Washington and in NATO right now. Concern about what Ukraine would do if it wins is already a major factor in deciding what kinds of weapons, and how many of them, the West gives to Ukraine.

Nobody will admit out loud that Ukraine is being kept on a leash, but of course it is. Six weeks ago it had not occurred to anybody that doing that would be necessary, because they all expected Ukraine to lose. You can sympathise with its desire to take revenge if it wins, but for the sake of peace in the future it cannot be allowed to do that.

Russian strikes kill at least 7 in Lviv: Ukrainian Mayor

AP ■ LVIV

Russian missiles hit the western Ukrainian city of Lviv on Monday, killing at least seven people, Ukrainian officials said, as Moscow's troops stepped up strikes on infrastructure in preparation for an all-out assault on the east. Plumes of thick, black smoke rose over the city after a series of explosions shattered windows and started fires. Lviv and the rest of western Ukraine have seen only sporadic strikes during almost two months of war and have become a relative safe haven for people from parts of the country where fighting has been more intense.

Ukrainian Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal, meanwhile, vowed to "fight absolutely to the end" in strategically vital Mariupol, where the last known pocket of resistance in a seven-week siege was holed up in a sprawling steel plant laced with tunnels. Russia has repeatedly urged forces there to lay down



their arms, but those remaining ignored a surrender-or-die ultimatum on Sunday.

Lviv Mayor Andriy Sadovyi said seven people were killed and 12 wounded in overnight missile strikes. Lviv's regional governor, Maksym Kozzytsky, said the Russian strikes hit three military infrastructure facilities and a tire shop. He said the wounded included a child, and emergency teams were battling fires caused by the strikes. A hotel sheltering Ukrainians who had fled fighting farther east was among the buildings badly dam-

aged in the attack, the mayor said. "The nightmare of war has caught up with us even in Lviv," said Lyudmila Turchak, 47, who fled with two children from the eastern city Kharkiv. "There is no longer anywhere in Ukraine where we can feel safe."

A powerful explosion also rocked Vasykiv, a town south of the capital of Kyiv that is home to a military airbase, according to residents. Video posted on social media sites showed smoke in the area after the blast. It was not immediately clear what was hit, and there was no official

confirmation from authorities.

Military analysts say Russia is increasing its strikes on weapons factories, railways and other infrastructure targets across Ukraine to wear down the country's ability to resist a major ground offensive in the Donbas, Ukraine's mostly Russian-speaking eastern industrial heartland.

The Russian military said its missiles struck more than 20 military targets in eastern and central Ukraine in the past day - including ammunition depots, command headquarters and groups of troops and vehicles. Meanwhile, it said artillery hit another 315 Ukrainian targets, and warplanes conducted 108 strikes on Ukrainian troops and military equipment. The claims couldn't be independently verified. Gen. Richard Dannatt, a former head of the British Army, told Sky News the strikes were part of a "softening-up" campaign by Russia ahead of a planned ground offensive in the Donbas.

Defenders in Mariupol defy surrender-or-die demand

AP ■ KYIV (UKRAINE)

Ukrainian fighters holed up in a steel plant in the last known pocket of resistance inside the shattered city of Mariupol ignored a surrender-or-die ultimatum from the Russians on Sunday and held out against the capture of the strategically vital port.

The fall of Mariupol, the site of a merciless, 7-week-old siege that has reduced much of the city to a smoking ruin, would be Moscow's biggest victory of the war yet and free up troops to take part in a potentially climactic battle for control of Ukraine's industrial east.

As its missiles and rockets slammed into other parts of the country, Russia estimated 2,500 Ukrainian troops and about 400 foreign mercenaries were dug in at the hulking Azovstal steel mill, which covers more than 11 square kilometers (4 square miles) and is laced with tunnels.

Troops inflict 'deliberate terror', says Zelenskyy

AP ■ LVIV

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Russian troops in southern Ukraine have been carrying out torture and kidnappings, and he called on the world Sunday to respond.

"Torture chambers are built there," Zelenskyy said in an evening address to the nation. "They abduct representatives of local governments and anyone deemed visible to local communities."

Zelenskyy said humanitarian aid has been stolen, creating famine. In occupied parts of the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions, he said, the Russians are creating separatist states and introducing Russian currency, the ruble.

Intensified Russian shelling of Ukraine's second-largest city, Kharkiv, has killed 18 people and wounded 106 in the last four days alone, Zelenskyy said. "This is nothing but delib-



erate terror. Mortars, artillery against ordinary residential neighborhoods, against ordinary civilians," he said.

He said a planned Russian offensive in eastern Ukraine "will begin in the near future."

Zelenskyy again called for increased sanctions against Russia, including its entire banking sector and oil industry. "Everyone in Europe and America already sees Russia openly using energy to destabilize Western societies," Zelenskyy said. "All of this requires greater speed from Western countries in preparing a new, powerful package of sanctions."

Ukraine: Shelling halts civilian evacuation

AP ■ KYIV

Ukraine's government has halted humanitarian evacuations for the second day, saying Russian forces were targeting civilian evacuation corridors. Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk said Monday that Russia was shelling and blocking the humanitarian evacuation routes. The humanitarian evacuations have been repeatedly paused since the war began after civilian convoys came under shelling.

According to Vereshchuk, the government had been negotiating passage from Mariupol and Berdyansk, among other towns, as well as from the Luhansk region. The Luhansk government said four civilians trying to flee the region were shot to death by Russian forces.

Separately, shelling in a residential area in the eastern city of Kharkiv on Monday killed at least three people and injured three others, according to AP journalists on the scene.

One of the dead was a woman who appeared to have been going to collect water in the rain. She was found lying bloodied with a water canister and umbrella near her body.

PM Rajapaksa retains berth in new Cabinet

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa became the only member of the family to retain a Cabinet position in his younger brother Gotabaya Rajapaksa's new Cabinet of 17 ministers appointed on Monday, as the island nation was facing the worst economic crisis.

Earlier this month, Sri Lanka's entire Cabinet -- aside from President Gotabaya and his elder brother, Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa -- resigned from their posts after thousands of people defied a countrywide state of emergency and curfew and

joined street protests denouncing the government.

The previous Cabinet had to make way for the president to form a unity cabinet with the Opposition members. The Opposition, however, declined the offer.

Rajapaksa swore in a 17-member Cabinet on Monday in addition to the three ministers he had earlier appointed.

That meant no place for the oldest member of the family Chamal Rajapaksa, Mahinda's son Namal Rajapaksa, both of whom were Cabinet ministers and the nephew Shasheendra who was a state minister.



The Cabinet appointment came as the island-wide protests continued to force the resignation of the president and his family for mishandling

the economy. Sri Lanka is facing its worst economic crisis since gaining independence from the UK in 1948. The economic crisis also triggered a

political turmoil in the island nation with citizens holding nationwide street protests for weeks over lengthy power cuts and shortage of fuel, food and other daily essentials and demanding the ouster of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa.

People continued to be in fuel and gas queues while the power cuts which were not imposed during the weekend on account of the traditional Sinhala and Tamil new year returned on Monday.

The state power entity said there will be four and a half-hour power cuts on Monday.

Adding to public woes is the Lanka Indian oil company

(LIOC) announcement of further price hikes for petrol and diesel with effect from Sunday midnight.

The LIOC raised fuel prices for the fourth time since February.

A spokesman for the LIOC said the price hike was necessary due to the depreciation of the Sri Lankan rupee.

Sri Lanka rupees had fallen by over 60 per cent till March 7 when the flexible exchange rate was announced.

The price of Octane 92 has been raised by over 10 per cent to a record high of 338 rupees per litre while diesel at 289 rupees per litre has seen a 3 per cent increase.

US, S Korea urge North's return to talks after missile tests

AP ■ SEOUL

The US special envoy for North Korea said Monday that Washington and Seoul agreed on the need for a strong response to Pyongyang's recent spate of missile tests, though they remain open to dialogue with the country.

Sung Kim flew to South Korea on for talks two days after North Korea conducted a new type of missile test in its 13th round of weapons firing this year. Experts say North Korea wants to advance its weapons arsenal and wrest concessions like sanctions relief from its rivals. Weapons tested include nuclear-capable missiles targeting both the US mainland and its allies such as South Korea and Japan. There are concerns that North Korea may conduct a nuclear test soon to intensify its pressure campaign.

"We agreed on the need for a strong response to the destabilizing behavior we have seen from" North Korea, Kim told reporters after a meeting with his South Korean counterpart. "(We) also agreed on the need to maintain the strongest possible joint deterrent capability on the peninsula."

South Korean nuclear envoy Noh Kyu-duk said he and Kim shared concerns that North



Korea will likely continue to engage in acts that raise regional tensions. He urged North Korea to return to talks.

Kim said the allies "have not closed the door on diplomacy" with North Korea and have "no hostile intents toward" the country. He repeated his earlier statement that the United States is ready to meet North Korea "anywhere, without any conditions."

North Korea has so far rejected Kim's outreach, saying the United States must first drop its hostile policy before talks can resume. Some experts say North Korea wants the U.S. to relax sanctions or suspend its regular military drills with South Korea, which it views as an invasion rehearsal.

Shehbaz to take CPEC forward with new vigour, says PML-N leader



PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will take USD 60 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) forward with new vigour, vitality and in a rejuvenated manner, ensuring multifaceted development of the flagship project of China's ambitious Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), a top leader of the ruling PML-N has said.

Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, a leader of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), made the remarks on Sunday while discussing the future of the Pakistan-China relations and future cross border

collaboration in China's CGTN programme "The Hub" with Wang Guan.

"In the first day in office as Prime Minister, Shehbaz Sharif met the Chinese Acting Ambassador and told her that Pakistan considers China as Pakistan's closest friend and strongest partner and we will take the CPEC forward with new vigour, with new vitality and in a rejuvenated manner," he was quoted as saying by the Express Tribune newspaper.

Mushahid said that China has a very old and long standing relationship with Shehbaz Sharif.

When the BRI was launched, the CPEC was its centrepiece, and that was taken forward by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and his brother Shehbaz Sharif was then the chief minister of Punjab.

Mushahid said that under the new government, there would be a broad based acceleration in the Pakistan-China relations in all domains.

US rocked by 3 mass shootings during Easter weekend, 2 dead

AP ■ HAMPTON (US)

Authorities in South Carolina are investigating a shooting at a nightclub early Sunday that wounded at least nine people. It was the second mass shooting in the state and the third in the nation during the Easter holiday weekend.

The shootings in South Carolina and one in Pittsburgh, in which two minors were killed early Sunday, also left at least 31 people wounded.

No one was reported killed in the violence at Cara's Lounge in Hampton County,



roughly 80 miles (130 kilometers) west of Charleston, according to an email from South Carolina's State Law Enforcement Division, which is investigating the shooting. A phone call to the

nightclub was not answered.

In Pittsburgh, two male youths were killed and at least eight people wounded when shots were fired during a party at a short-term rental property. The "vast majority" of the hundreds of people at the party were underage, the city's Police Chief Scott Schubert told reporters.

Investigators believe there were multiple shooters, and Schubert said police were processing evidence at as many as eight separate crime scenes spanning a few blocks around the rental home.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is publically notified that the Flat no B-456 (2nd floor) Block 31 Sec-51 Kendriya vihar, phase II Noida, has been allotted in the name of Shri Suresh Kumar Dhameja S/o, R.C Dhameja R/o House No. 499, Sec-16, Panchkula-134113 General Attorney of Suresh Kumar Dhameja S/o, R.C Dhameja R/o House No. 499, Sec-16, Panchkula-134113, had sold the said flat, on the basis of GPA to the following persons: A GPA was executed in favour of Mrs. Usha Dogra W/o, Shri Arun Kumar Dogra R/o A-20, Sec-22, MIG Flat, Noida, Distt. GB Nagar (U.P.) at Sub Registrar Noida vide Book No 1 Volume no 3873 on page 308-382 serial no. 11194 dated 15.12.2011 and the Agreement to Sell was not registered. So with help of the notice it is informed the transfer of the above flat goes in favour of Arun Kumar Dogra S/o, Sudarshan Dogra R/o Flat No. B-456, Kendriya vihar, Sec-51, Noida, GB Nagar, (UP) if anyone has/have any objection he/she may submit his/her, objection in the Housing Department of Noida Authority, Sec-6, Noida along-with sufficient proofs within 15 days of the publication this notice.

उत्तराखण्ड पावर कारपोरेशन लि०
कार्यालय अधिशासी अभियन्ता, विद्युत जानपद खण्ड, 33/11 के०बी० उपस्थान, श्रीनगर (गढ़वाल)
निविदा निरस्तीकरण सूचना
इस कार्यालय के पत्र संख्या 433/वि०जा०ख०(श्री०)/टी-1/निविदा दिनांक 15.03.2022, के द्वारा आमंत्रित निविदा संख्या 17,18,19 एवं 20/वि०जा०ख०(श्री०)/2021-22 जोकि दिनांक 18.04.2022 तक बेची एवं खोली जानी थी, अपरिहार्य कारणों से निरस्त की जाती है।
अधिशासी अभियन्ता
दिनांक : 18.04.2022
“राष्ट्र हित में बिजली बचाएं” विद्युत जानपद खण्ड, श्रीनगर (गढ़वाल)

Aro granite industries Ltd.
CIN : L74699DL1989PL0031510
Regd. Office : 1001, 10th Floor, DLF Tower A, Jaspola, New Delhi - 110025
Ph. : 011-41686169, Fax : 011-26941984, Email : investor@arogranite.com, Website : www.arogranite.com
NOTICE
Notice is hereby given that pursuant to Regulations 29 & 47 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations 2015, a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Company is scheduled to be held on Friday, the 29th April, 2022 *inter-alia* to approve the Audited Financial Results for the quarter and year ending 31.03.2022 and to consider recommendation of Dividend, if any, on the Equity Shares of the Company for the year 2021-22. The above details of the said meeting are also available on the website of the Company www.arogranite.com and also at the website of the Stock Exchanges www.bseindia.com and www.nseindia.com.
For **Aro granite industries Ltd.**
Place : New Delhi Sabyasachi Panigrahi
Date : 19.04.2022 Company Secretary & Compliance Officer.

KISHAU CORPORATION LIMITED
(A JV OF GoU & GoHP)
H.O.: LAKHWAR BHAWAN, TONS COLONY, DAKPATHAR, DEHRADUN-248125
(Telephones: 01360-222799 Fax-01360-222799) CIN No U7999UR2017SG007521
Ref. No.: 141 Dated : 18.04.2022
e-Tender Notice
Office of Deputy General Manager, Kishau Project, Dakpathar, invites online bids from interested parties. Brief summary of tender is given below:
Tender No: 01/DGM/(Kishau)/KCL/2022-23
Name of Work: Topographical Survey work of Kishau MPP in the Dehradun district of Uttarakhand & Sirmour district of Himachal Pradesh.
Estimated cost: Rs. 47,93,400.00 excluding GST
Date of availability of bid document on Portal: 20.04.2022
Last date for submission of bids on Portal: Upto 10.05.2022 at 17:00 Hrs.
Last Date & time of Offline Submission of document (in original): Upto 12.05.2022 at 17:00 Hrs.
For fuller & further details, kindly visit e-procurement portal "http://uktenders.gov.in" **Dy. General Manager, Kishau Project**
"Avoid Wasteful use of Electricity"

कार्यालय कार्यपालन अभियंता, लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकी खण्ड, धमतरी (छगंग)
पृ. क्रमांक/2112/व.ते.लि./का.अ./ज.जी.मि./लो.स्वा.मा.वि./2022-23/धमतरी.
दिनांक- 13/04/2022
संशोधित निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना
जी-क्रमांक- 67860
इस कार्यालय द्वारा आमंत्रित निविदा सूचना क्रमांक-258, धमतरी दिनांक-11.02.2022 सिस्टर नम्बर 92688 का निविदा आमंत्रित की गई है। जिसका जी.क्रमांक-67860 है, की विधि में आर्थिक संशोधन किया जाता है:-
समय सारिणी :-

क्र.	विवरण	पूर्व तिथि	संशोधित तिथि
01	ई-प्रोक्वोरमेंट वेब पोर्टल (https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in) में देखा जा सकता है।	10.03.2022 अपरान्ह 10.30 से	13.04.2022 अपरान्ह 10.30 तक
02	निविदा डाउनलोड करने की अंतिम तिथि	21.03.2022 अपरान्ह 5.30 तक	22-04-2022 अपरान्ह 5:30 पश्चात
03	अक द्वारा दस्तावेज प्रस्तुत करने की अंतिम तिथि	23.03.2022 अपरान्ह 5.30 तक	25.04.2022 अपरान्ह 5:30 पश्चात

अन्य नियम एवं शर्तें यथावत रहेगा।
हस्ता /—
कार्यपालन अभियंता,
लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकी खण्ड
धमतरी (छगंग)
R.O. No- 90339/4
R.O. Date- 18/04/2022

कार्यालय कलेक्टर, बेमेतरा (छ.ग.) आदिवासी विकास शाखा
फ़ैक्स सं. 07824-222105, ई-मेल-actwd.bemetara@gmail.com
क्रमांक/53/आ.जा.क./निर्माण/61/2022 बेमेतरा, दिनांक 12-04-2022
ई-प्रोक्वोरमेंट निविदा सूचना
निम्नलिखित कार्य के लिए ऑनलाईन निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं, निविदा डाउनलोड करने की अंतिम तिथि 13.05.2022 सायं 05.30 बजे तक है :-

क्र	निविदा क्रमांक	कार्य का नाम	निविदा की राशि लाख में
1	2	3	4
1	97282	श्री.ई.अनु.जाति कच्चा छात्रावास भवन निर्माण साजा	152.47

टीप- ठेकेदार की श्रेणी "A", "B", "C" होना अनिवार्य है।
उक्त निर्माण कार्य की निविदा की सामान्य शर्तें, धरोहर राशि, विस्तृत निविदा विज्ञापित निविदा दस्तावेज व अन्य जानकारी ई-प्रोक्वोरमेंट वेब पोर्टल <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in> से डाउनलोड की जा सकती है।
(कलेक्टर महोदय द्वारा आदेशित)
हस्ता /—
(श्रीमति मेनका चन्द्राकर)
सहायक आयुक्त,
आदिवासी विकास जिला बेमेतरा
R.O.No- 90309/8
R.O.Date- 18/04/2022

WPI inflation hits 4-month high of 14.55% in Mar as crude, commodity prices spike

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The wholesale price-based inflation rose to a four-month high of 14.55 per cent in March, mainly due to hardening of crude oil and commodity prices, even though vegetables witnessed easing of price pressures. As per the government data released on Monday, WPI inflation has remained in double digits for the 12th consecutive month beginning April 2021.

The last time such a level of WPI was recorded was in November 2021, when inflation was 14.87 %. WPI Inflation in February was at 13.11 per cent, while in March last year, it was 7.89 %.

During the month, inflation in food articles eased to 8.06 per cent, from 8.19 per

cent in February. Vegetable inflation was 19.88%, against 26.93 per cent in February. "The high rate of inflation in March, 2022 is primarily due to rise in prices of crude petroleum and natural gas, mineral oils, basic metals, etc owing to disruption in global supply chain caused by Russia-Ukraine conflict." the Commerce and Industry Ministry said in a statement. Inflation in manufactured items was 10.71% in March, against 9.84% in February. In the fuel and power basket, the rate of price rise was 34.52% during the month. Inflation in crude petroleum spiked to 83.56 % in March, from 55.17 % during February.

Retail inflation spiked to 6.95% in March -- the third consecutive month that the



consumer price index has breached RBI's tolerance limit of 6%, data released last week

showed. The Reserve Bank earlier this month kept its key repo rate -- at which it lends

short-term money to banks -- unchanged for 11th time in a row at 4%, to support growth.

Sensex sinks 1,172 pts as Infosys, HDFC Bank tumble post Q4 show

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Sensex plunged 1,172 points while the Nifty crashed below the 17,200-level on Monday, hammered by robust selling in market heavyweights Infosys and HDFC Bank following their below-estimate results.

A weakening rupee and lacklustre macroeconomic data added to the woes, traders said.

Resuming trade after a two-day holiday last week, the BSE Sensex tumbled 1,172.19 points or 2.01% to settle at 57,166.74 -- marking its fourth straight session of loss.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty plunged 302 points or 1.73% to 17,173.65.

Infosys was the top loser in the Sensex pack, plummeting 7.27%, after the country's second-largest software services company posted a 12% rise in its March quarter net profit, missing market estimates.

HDFC Bank lost 4.74 per cent after the largest private sector lender on Saturday reported a 23% jump in Q4 standalone net profit, led by lower provisions, even as other metrics like net interest income came in below expectations.

HDFC, Tech Mahindra, Wipro, TCS and HCL Tech were the other major laggards. In contrast, NTPC, Tata Steel, Maruti, Titan, HUL, M&M and Nestle India were among the gainers, surging as much as 6.11%.

The market breadth was negative, with 20 of the 30 Sensex constituents closing in the red. "After a long weekend,



we witnessed huge fall of 2 per cent in the benchmark index. The fall was mainly on account of below estimate results of Infosys and HDFC Bank and the rising tension between Russia and Ukraine. "We expect further fall in markets in coming days considering the recent rise of COVID cases in India and rising inflation concerns across the globe," said Rahul Sharma, Research Head, Equity 99.

India's wholesale price-based inflation spiked to a four-month high of 14.55 % in March on rising prices of crude oil and other commodities due to disruption in global supply chain in the wake of the Russia-Ukraine war, a development that may prompt the RBI to raise interest rates to contain price rise.

"Unfavourable start to earnings season in heavyweight stocks of IT and banking sector led to heavy sell-off. Lower-than-expected results prompted the market to worry about the headwinds faced by IT sector like attrition, wage inflation, lower utilization, and cut in IT spending by industries due to geopolitical and macro

issues. "The degree of downfall is high because the sector was trading at high valuation and risk of a downgrade in outlook has increased," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

The BSE smallcap gauge fell 1.01 per cent, while the midcap index lost 0.95 per cent. As many as 2,062 stocks declined, while 1,462 advanced and 146 remained unchanged. Among BSE sectoral indices, IT declined the most by 4.76 per cent, followed by teck (4.60 %), finance (2.12%) and telecom (1.77%).

Asian markets closed lower as investors fretted about rising COVID-19 cases and lockdowns in China. Bourses in Europe were shut for Easter holidays. International oil benchmark Brent crude slipped 0.18% to \$111.5 per barrel.

The rupee declined 6 paise to close at 76.25 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, tracking the strength of the greenback overseas. Foreign institutional investors offloaded shares worth a net ₹2,061.04 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data.

Tomar launches 2 new portals for agri sector



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar on

Monday launched two new portals, including one for registration of pesticides.

Another portal is for documentation related to imports and exports of agri-products and plants. The minister launched the two portals -- CROP (Comprehensive Registration of Pesticides) and PQMS (Plant Quarantine Management System) -- in an event held at the Pusa complex, with an aim to improve ease of doing business. Addressing the event, Tomar said the two new

portals have been launched to make the process of pesticides registration and documentation process for export-import simple and transparent.

The government is committed to make improvements in systems, if required, he added. Highlighting the importance of agriculture sector in Indian economy, Tomar stressed on the need to strengthen the farm sector. The country is not only self-sufficient in the foodgrains production but also has sur-

plus stocks which is attributed to the efforts of farmers community, research done by farm scientists and the farmer-friendly policies of the government, he added.

The minister said the country's foodgrains production and the government's procurement operation remained unaffected despite the COVID-19 pandemic. He further emphasised on the need to strengthen the agriculture sector through government policies, research activities, focus

on quality, transparency and ease of doing business to make India even more stronger.

The Centre and the State governments have taken various steps to bring reforms, attract investments in agriculture sector and improve farmers income through better agri-marketing system, he added. The two new portals have been developed to bring ease of doing business and make systems simple, fair and transparent, Agriculture Secretary Manoj Ahuja said.

Rupee slips 6 paise to 76.25 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee declined 6 paise to close at 76.25 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, tracking the strength of the greenback overseas and elevated crude oil prices.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened lower at 76.41 against the American currency, and finally settled for the day at 76.25, down 6 paise over its previous close. During the trading session, the rupee witnessed an intra-day high of 76.20 and a low of 76.43. On Wednesday, the rupee had dipped 4 paise to close at 76.19 against the US dollar.

Zaid crops sowing marginally up at 60.12L hectare so far this year: Govt

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The total area sown to zaid (summer) crops has increased marginally to 60.12 lakh hectare so far this year, with maximum coverage under paddy, according to the agriculture ministry data.

Zaid, also called grishmkal crops, are sown between February-June -- the intervening period between rabi (winter) harvest and kharif (monsoon) sowing. About 58.32 lakh hectare was sown under zaid crops in year-go period. "Area under zaid crops has increased substantially to over 60 lakh hectare now from 30 lakh hectare in first year 2018-19 of introduction," former Agriculture Commissioner SK

Malhotra told PTI. Rice is sown during this season mainly in West Bengal, Telangana, Karnataka and Odisha, while short-duration pulses, especially moong and urad, and some oilseeds are also grown in states like Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and others, he said.

The government has decided to promote zaid crops to encourage farmers to utilise the 90 days window between winter and rainy season, he added. A special programme to promote zaid crops in 2018-19 was introduced by Malhotra, who is currently holding charge as Director at Directorate of Knowledge Management in Agriculture, ICAR (Indian Council of Agricultural Research).

Myre Capital to raise ₹500 cr to invest in commercial realty

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Myre Capital, which facilitates real estate investment through fractional ownership, on Monday announced that it will raise Rs 500 crore fund to invest in commercial realty assets across the country after July this year.

The Rs 500-crore Alternate Investment Fund (AIF) will be the first of its neo-real estate investment fund, and will raise money from high net-worth individuals, family offices, retail investors and institutional investors, according to an official statement.

The company, a venture by Morphogenesis which claims to provide easy access, transparency, and liquidity to a

curated selection of rent-yielding commercial real estate assets, also announced that in 12 months, it has registered over 30,000 investors and has assets under management of over Rs 175 crore.

The proposed AIF will invest in top grade completed commercial real estate rented out by blue-chip tenants for long leases and also some under-construction properties, the statement said, adding that investors can expect monthly rental income from the fund's assets of 8-10 per cent and also capital appreciation.

The fund will be targeting an overall internal rate of return of over 20 per cent. "Our target for the upcoming year is to achieve a 5X growth.

Investor wealth tumbles over ₹2.58 lakh cr as markets plunge

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Investors' wealth tumbled over ₹2.58 lakh crore on Monday as equity markets suffered a heavy sell-off, with the Sensex plunging 2%.

The BSE benchmark tanked 1,172.19 points or 2.01 % to settle at 57,166.74 after a weak opening. During the day, it plummeted 1,496.54 points or 2.56% to 56,842.39.

Tracking the weak trend in equities, the market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms tumbled by ₹ 2,58,855.59 crore to stand at ₹2,69,44,207.98 crore.

"Sentiments in domestic markets continued to be negative on account of weak global

cues, acceleration in WPI inflation and below expectation results from heavyweight Infosys and HDFC Bank," said Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Retail Research, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd. From the 30-share pack, Infosys, HDFC, HDFC Bank, Tech Mahindra, Wipro and TCS were the major laggards.

In contrast, NTPC, Tata Steel, Maruti and Titan were among the gainers. Infosys plummeted over 7 per cent after its Q4 results failed to enthuse investors.

HDFC Bank declined 4.53 % to ₹1,398.50 even as the largest domestic private sector lender on Saturday posted a

22.8% jump in its standalone net profit at ₹10,055.2 crore for the quarter ended March 2022. In Asia, markets in Seoul, Shanghai and Tokyo settled lower.

Hong Kong was closed for a holiday. International oil benchmark Brent crude dipped 0.07 per cent to USD 111.6 per barrel.

Foreign institutional investors remained in selling mode, offloading shares worth a net Rs 2,061.04 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data. Stock markets were closed on Thursday for Mahavir Jayanti and Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Jayanti, as well as on Friday on account of Good Friday.

Wipro appoints Satya Easwaran as India head

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The IT major Wipro Limited has appointed Satya Easwaran, a former senior executive at consultancy KPMG, as its India head.

Easwaran will be in charge of strengthening Wipro's business in India across key industry sectors through strategic consulting, transformation and modernisation engagements, it said in a statement on Monday.

"India is a strategic market for Wipro and I am excited to welcome Satya to champion our bold ambition for growth and leadership here. Satya's rich international experience in delivering high value consult-

ing services, and his track record of building successful sales and leadership teams will help strengthen Wipro's positioning as a trusted partner for Indian clients," Anis Chenchah, CEO of APMEA (Asia Pacific, India, Middle East and Africa) and member of the Wipro Executive Board, said.

Easwaran will help clients leverage Wipro's capabilities and investments in cloud, digital, engineering R&D, data, analytics and cybersecurity for their business and digital transformation initiatives.

Prior to joining Wipro, he was the head of business consulting and the telecom, media and technology sector leader at KPMG India.

CCI approves deal to acquire minority stake in BDR Pharmaceuticals

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Competition Commission has cleared the proposed acquisition of a minority stake in BDR Pharmaceuticals International Pvt Ltd by Multiples Private Equity Fund III and other investors.

Under the transaction, the minority stake would be purchased by Multiples Private Equity Fund III, SRF Transnational Holdings Ltd, Balkrishna Industries Ltd, Dharmayug Investments Ltd, QRG Investments and Holdings Ltd, Nishant K Agarwal and Mallika Srinivasan, according to a notice filed with watchdog.

PUBLIC NOTICE
General Public is hereby informed that my clients Sh. Vikram Dhir (S/o Vijay Kumar Dhir) and his wife Smt. Monica Dhir, both R/o A-137 Ganesh Nagar, 2nd Floor, New Delhi - 110018 have ceased all their relations with their brother Vikas Dhir and his wife Sonu (Sakshi) Dhir R/o A-137, Ganesh Nagar, Ground floor, New Delhi- 110018 due to their bad habits and violent behaviour. Anybody dealing with Sh Vikas Dhir and his wife will do so at his/her/their own risk and responsibilities and my clients will not be responsible for any act, deed or dealing done by them. My clients hereby, do not have any associations with the mentioned persons
Sd/-
RAKESH BHARUA
ADVOCATE

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is informed to the general public that the original document i.e. allotment letter, possession certificate, Mutation Letter in respect to flat number L-72 Jalvayu Vihar Sector 25 Noida has been lost somewhere, whose complaint has been filed on 08/04/2022 in the P.S. Crime Branch Delhi. Therefore, if the above documents are found by any person or if have any right or claim in this regard, then he/she should be lodged its claim within 15 days from the date of publication, either to group housing department of Noida Authority or AFNHB New Delhi. Failing which the claim, right on the said documents will be considered completely free and abandoned.
Chandra Sethi
L-72, Jalvayu Vihar Sector 25 Noida

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE
Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005
Whereas
The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notices.
As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Diwan Overseas/ Vinod Kumar/ Varun Deewan/ Rashmi Dewan/ Rohit Deewan/ LBKKNL00004919302/ LBKKNL00005330659	1. Plot comprised in Khewat No. 28, Khatoni No.28, Khasra No. 18//11(8-0), Village Gudha, Tehsil Indri & Distt. Karnal Haryana. 2. As Described In The Loan Document / Property Document Covering: Banquet Hall & Building upon land comprised in Khewat No.78, Khatoni No.18//12/11/13 (0-17), Khewat No.43, Khatoni No.43, Khasra No.18//12/11/11/2 (0-9), Village Gudha, Tehsil Indri & Distt. Karnal Haryana. 3. As Described In The Loan Document / Property Document Covering: Plot comprised in Khewat No. 35, Khatoni No. 18//12/11/1/2, Village Gudha, Tehsil Indri & Distt. Karnal Haryana./ April 12, 2022	June 24, 2021/ Rs. 1,74,17,821/-	Karnal/ Gurgaon
2.	Karan Arora/ Raj Ranil/ LBJAL00005057889/ LBJAL00005063389	Portion Of Property No.234, Sodal Nagar Near Tuwel Wail Park Jalandhar Punjab/ April 12, 2022	July 06, 2021/ Rs. 25,78,388/-	Jalandhar/ Gurgaon

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/ guarantors(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.
Date : April 19, 2022
Place: Delhi/INCR
Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

Loan assets securitised by NBFCs jump 43% to ₹1.25L crore last fiscal: Report

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Total value of loan assets securitised by non-banking financial companies, including housing finance firms, grew by around 43 per cent in the last fiscal year to ₹1,25,000 crore, driven by quick economic recovery and lower base effect, a report said on Monday.

The amount of loans securitised by NBFCs (Non-Banking Financial Companies) and HFCs (Housing Finance Companies) in FY21 stood at ₹87,300 crore, Icra Ratings said in a report.

The agency expects the securitisation volume to touch the pre-Covid level of ₹2 lakh crore in fiscal 2023-24. "The growth (in securitisation volumes) in FY22 was on account of the lower base of FY21 and quick recovery in economic

activities following the second pandemic wave in the first quarter and limited disruptions seen during third wave," the agency said. Securitisation refers to the pooling of cash-flow-producing assets such as mortgages, loans, bonds and subsequent issuance of securities in capital markets backed by these collateral pools.

The securitisation of retail assets too was in line with earlier estimate of ₹1.1 lakh crore, while additional securitisation of wholesale loans of close to ₹15,000 crore was observed in the fourth quarter of last fiscal. Abhishek Daffria, vice president and group head (structured finance ratings), Icra Ratings, said last quarter of FY22 commenced with uncertainty arising from high COVID-19 infection rates in country.

Public Notice
This is to inform general public that Mrs. Kavita Devi W/o Mr. Sudhir Sharma is owner of Built up property no. 10/236, land area measuring 100 sq. yds., out of Khasra no. 1/13, situated at village Jaundimpur, in the abadi of Wazirabad Road, Brijpuri, Illaga Shahdara, Delhi-110094 vide Requisitionment deed dated 16.03.2022 Docno. 711, executed by Mr. Shakhsham Choudhary S/o Mr. Sudhir Sharma, Miss Ekta Choudhary D/o Mr. Sudhir Sharma & Miss Abhika Choudhary D/o Mr. Sudhir Sharma. Further, Mrs. Kavita Devi W/o Mr. Sudhir Sharma is mortgaging the above said property/floor with Fullerton India Home Finance Co. Ltd., & in case anyone has any objection, the same may be raised within 07 days of this publication to Mr. Muneesh Dhawan/ Mr. Sudhir Jain (Advocates), Law Veritas, Unit no 907, 9th Floor, GD-ITL Tower, (B-08), Netaji Subhash Place, Delhi-110034 or contact at 9068707172/9818228636 (M).

Public Notice
This is to inform general public that Mr. Bhagwat Prasad has acquired the Plot area measuring 8 Bheva, i.e. 400 Sq. yds. Out of Khasra no. 702 Khayya & Khatuni no. 41/39 situated at village saboli in the colony known as Nathu Nagar, Delhi on POA basis vide GPA, ATS & Will dated 11.02.1974, executed by Mrs. Vipri Mr. Ram Saroop, and Now, Mr. Bhagwat Prasad is intending to sell the above said property to Mr. Hari Om Kumar Saini vide Sale Deed. Further Mr. Hari Om Kumar Saini is mortgaging the above said property with Fullerton India Home Finance Co. Ltd., & in case anyone has any objection, the same may be raised within 07 days of this publication to Mr. Muneesh Dhawan/ Mr. Sudhir Jain (Advocates), Law Veritas, Unit no 907, 9th Floor, GD-ITL Tower, (B-08), Netaji Subhash Place, Delhi-110034 or contact at 9068707172/9818228636 (M).

कार्यालय मुहूर्थ चिकित्सा एवं स्वास्थ्य अधिकारी, रायगढ़ (छ.ग.)
Phone - 0772232668, E-mail - raigarhcmho@gmail.com
क्रमांक / गंदा / 2022-23 / 3413 / रायगढ़, दिनांक / 12 / 04 / 2022
खुली निविदा सूचना
वर्ष 2022-23 के लिए जिले में संचालित विमागीय चिकित्सालयों में उपयोग हेतु चिकित्सकीय उपकरण, सामग्री, औषधियां एवं लेबसामग्री क्रय हेतु निर्माता अथवा उनके अधिकृत विक्रेताओं से सील बंद लिफाफे में खुली निविदा पृथक-पृथक आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा बंद लिफाफे में अधोहस्ताक्षरकर्ता के कार्यालय में दिनांक 17.05.2022 को समय 3 बजे अपरान्ह तक प्राप्त हो जाना चाहिए। समयावधि के पश्चात प्राप्त होने वाले निविदाओं को मान्य नहीं किया जावेगा। निविदा की शर्त व नियम तथा उपकरणों, औषधियां, लेबसामग्री व सामग्रियों की सूची कार्यालयीन समय में (अवकाश के दिनों को छोड़कर) 2000-00 (दो हजार) रुपये नगद पृथक-पृथक कैशशाखा में जमा कर अधिकृत पत्र प्रस्तुत कर प्राप्त की जा सकेगी।
निविदा फार्म प्राप्त करने की तिथि 10.05.2022।
अंतिम तिथि 17.05.2022
निविदा जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि अपरान्ह 3 बजे।
निविदा खोलने की तिथि 17.05.2022
सायं 4 बजे
हस्ता / -
R.o. No -90332/5 मुख्य चिकित्सा एवं स्वास्थ्य अधिकारी
R.o.Date - 18/04/2022 रायगढ़ (छ.ग.)

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agranté
KAVYAM
“KAVYAM” - AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECT
Advertisement is invited to inform general public at large regarding cancellation of units of already allotted customers through the 1st draw of lots dated 24.06.2019, 2nd draw of lots dated 01.08.2020 and 3rd draw of lots dated 22.01.2021 due to non-payment despite several reminders, in the Residential Apartments in the Affordable Group Housing Project Kavyam is being developed by Agrante Realty Ltd Sector-108, Gurugram, Haryana, as per terms and conditions of the policy prescribed by the Town & Country Planning Department, Government of Haryana vide notification no PF-27/48921 dated 19.08.2013 & amendments thereof (details available at the Department website, i.e. www.tcpharyana.gov.in).

S. No.	Application No.	Unit/Tower	Type	Applicant Name	Co-Applicant Name
1	10538	TA4-902	Type-1	Chetan Bhargava	N/A
2	10607	TA5-1102	Type-1	Rajender Kumar	N/A
3	10620	TD-2203	Type-3	Somveer Singh	N/A
4	2208	TA2-504	Type-1	Santosh	NA
5	3653	TC-806	Type-1	Pawan Kumar	NA
6	4063	TD-415	Type-3	Sonu	NA
7	2332	TA2-703	Type-1	Sohan Singh	N/A

It is to inform to all above allottees that it is last & final opportunity to restore the allotment after making the all dues till date within seven working days, otherwise it shall be considered as cancelled and the same shall be allotted to the aspiring applicants under the applicable provisions of policy prescribed by the Town & Country Planning Department, Government of Haryana vide notification no PF-27/48921 dated 19.08.2013 & amendments thereof.

Office address: Agrante Realty Ltd Unit No. 122 Suncity Trade Tower, Sector-21, Gurgaon-122016
CIN: U70101DL2013PLC248731
Contact at : - website: www.kavyamhomes.com; 0124-4769500-599, 8800499383, 8800499674

Dedicated DBS centre at AIIMS, Delhi



SDas Gupta, a service professional, was diagnosed with early Onset Parkinson's Disease (PD) in 2017 and is under medication since then. Recently, her condition has deteriorated and more than one doctor had suggested her that she should start thinking about Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS), a surgery to implant a device that sends electrical signals to brain areas responsible for body movement.

Electrodes are placed deep in the brain and are connected to a stimulator device. Similar to a heart pacemaker, a neurostimulator uses electric pulses to regulate brain activity in patients having movement disorders like PD.

"I have been told that surgery costs at private hospitals may run upto Rs 20-25 Lakh and so, if a DBS clinic is being set up at All Indian Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Delhi it is a good news for people like me as the operation may cost much less in AIIMS. Moreover, it will have the best AIIMS expertise known worldwide."

This is how Dasgupta, in her 40s expressed sentiments of many others like her when she came to know that the country's premier hospital started a dedicated Clinic for such conditions last week.

Though, the hospital already has a movement disorder clinic, the new centre will exclusively focus on those who have reached the advanced stages of the movement disorders. Major area of focus will be on helping such patients with DBS, a surgical procedure that help improve the quality of life of the patient, said Dr Achal Kumar Srivastava, professor of Clinical Neurophysiology in the Department of Neurology, AIIMS. He will be heading the clinic which will open on Saturdays from 9am to 12pm.

This will be a referral clinic, which will primarily have patients from AIIMS' movement disorder clinic, but patients referred from other hospitals can also seek advanced care here informed Dr

Electrodes are placed deep in the brain and are connected to a stimulator device. Similar to a heart pacemaker, a neurostimulator uses electric pulses to regulate brain activity in patients having movement disorders like PD

in the long-term, the cost is less as advantages are much more. "For instance, quality life of the patient is improved, dependence on assistive devices is also reduced. As patient opting for DBS has to take comparatively less number of medicine, medical bill as well as side-effects of the drug gets reduced." He said that the US based FDA has approved the DBS for Parkinson's Disease.

Those who fail to respond to medical drugs, DBS is highly safe and well-tolerated surgical procedure that has established itself as a highly effective therapy for advanced Parkinson's Disease over the last decade, added Dr Debasis Chaudhary, Head of the Neurology Department of the GB Pant Hospital, Delhi.

He said that they are also planning such a centre in the near future. "Given the increasing aging population, we need to have more such centres in the Government hospitals to make the treatment within the reach of the poor patients.

"Such procedures have changed the lives of thousands of patients by allowing them to reduce their medications. Just like a heart pacemaker," he said.

SUMMERCOOLER

ORANGES: They're high in fibre and contain a lot of vitamin C and folate, as well as a lot of other nutrients. Oranges contain a variety of plant compounds that are thought to be responsible for many of its health advantages. They may improve heart health, lower the risk of some chronic diseases, improve

iron absorption, and promote a healthy immunological response. Fruit juices are higher in sugar and lower in fibre than whole fruit, making them far less satisfying. Oranges can cause allergic reactions in certain people, and their acidity can aggravate heartburn symptoms. Oranges, on the other hand, pose negligible health hazards in general.



India is home to nearly two lakh patients with Haemophilia, a bleeding disorder which can be debilitating and painful if not managed properly. THE PIONEER HEALTH speaks with experts about new developments in disease management

Switching from standard to extended half-life (EHL) replacement therapy is helping many patients afflicted with moderate or severe haemophilia to lead a quality life because of comparatively less frequent need for injections, hospital rounds and fewer repeated joint bleeds, say doctors.

Haemophilia is a genetic disorder marked by the blood's inability to clot properly, resulting in spontaneous bleeding internally and excessive bleeding after injury or surgery. Caused by defective or missing clotting factors that promote blood clotting, the condition can lead to poor quality-of-life, including psychological and social issues.

The two most common types of genetically inherited Hemophilia are Hemophilia A, associated with an affected blood clotting factor 8, and Hemophilia B, which leads to an affected blood clotting factor 9.

The recommended treatment regimen for patients with severe Haemophilia to prevent bleeding episodes is to replace the deficient clotting factor. Standard replacement clotting factors which have been so far the part of the treatment line are limited by their relatively short half-lives and require intravenous injections up to three times a week to maintain protective levels. This can have a negative impact on patient compliance and at times also results into inhibitors.

Recently, so-called extended half-life products have been developed in an attempt to overcome this limitation. In these products, the structure of the delivered clotting factor is changed so that the body takes

longer to clear it from circulation. This means that these products work for longer periods of time after being infused into the bloodstream.

These factor products or EHL have been approved in the Government programme National Health Mission with some government hospitals in States like Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Haryana already providing them to the patients.

"The clotting factors with EHL have several advantages, including reduced injection frequency, increased treatment adherence, and improved clinical outcomes. Long-acting clotting factors also provide an opportunity for improved individualized treatment for haemophilia," says Dr Nita Radhakrishnan, Associate Professor and Head Department of Pediatric Hematology-Oncology Post Graduate Institute of Child Health, Noida, UP.

Calling the new drugs having EHL as a boon for the haemophilia community, she said, they are long-acting, the need for repeated doses comes down significantly. They have also been found to be helpful in surgeries, where the need for additional doses of regular factors is often required.

The biggest challenge in managing haemophilia currently is the development of antibodies to clotting factors – called inhibitors – neutralizing antibodies that may render conventional replacement therapies ineffective.

Inhibitors develop in around 20-25 per cent of Hemophilia A and 8-10 per cent of Hemophilia B

DAILY REGIMEN FOR HEALTHY LIVING

- ❖ EXERCISE REGULARLY
- ❖ ACTIVITIES SUCH AS SWIMMING, BICYCLE RIDING AND WALKING CAN BUILD MUSCLES WHILE PROTECTING JOINTS
- ❖ CONTACT SPORTS — SUCH AS FOOTBALL, HOCKEY OR WRESTLING — ARE NOT SAFE FOR PEOPLE WITH HAEMOPHILIA
- ❖ AVOID CERTAIN PAIN AND BLOOD-THINNING MEDICATIONS
- ❖ PRACTICE GOOD DENTAL HYGIENE
- ❖ PROTECT YOUR CHILD FROM INJURIES THAT COULD CAUSE BLEEDING
- ❖ KNEEPADS, ELBOW PADS, HELMETS AND SAFETY BELTS ALL HELP PREVENT INJURIES FROM FALLS AND OTHER ACCIDENTS
- ❖ KEEP YOUR HOME FREE OF FURNITURE WITH SHARP CORNERS

patients. Once they develop, these patients cannot be given the regular clotting factor concentrates.

In this setting, EHL factors have emerged that can be given in both patients with and without inhibitors. The other advantage is that they can be given at 2-4 weekly intervals and given subcutaneously (like insulin). They help in preventing bleeds and have been found to have good treatment response also in centres that have been using it, said a senior official from the Union Health Ministry.

"Haemophilia treatment has developed gradually- from using blood-derived products to purer and safer recombinant clotting factors, and from on-demand use to regular replacement therapy (akin to insulin in Diabetes).

"Another welcome leap is the development of long-acting (EHL) clotting factors, which reduce the number of painful infusions. This makes possible its infusion only once weekly, thereby improving convenience and compliance, while reducing the total quantity of drug required," said Dr Prof. Naresh Gupta- consultant & advisor in Haemophilia, MAMC and Lok Nayak Hospital, New Delhi.

Regarding cost, the doctors said that once the EHL is ingrained in the government system, the cost will automatically come down. Moreover, The recent development of new factor products with extended half-life was able to stretch the time between infusions to once every week or two, with equal effectiveness. EHL clotting factors have also been linked to increased treatment adherence and improved clinical outcomes.



Those grains can be harmful

Spring is in full bloom. For many it might not be a lovely sight to cherish but a battle with pollen-related allergic diseases. Scientists say fine bioaerosol particles are released by trees, grasses, and weeds to fertilize other similar plants. Pollen entering the nasal pathways could cause pollen allergy—with symptoms somewhat similar to common flu and cold.

What's worse is that as the climatic variability is increasing, it is expected that the urban environment will significantly add to the burden of pollen-related respiratory and skin diseases.

In fact, as pollen allergy now being considered a major public health problem that causes morbidity and subsequently affects a patient's quality of life, Indian scientists have called for a large scale measures like developing pollen forecast systems and training of health care professionals and personal measures like following pollen forecasts besides use of face masks.

They have also suggested wearing spectacles, and air filters, regularly taking prescribed medications, limiting outdoor exposure, and avoiding gardening or grass-cutting during peak pollen seasons could help minimize the onset and exacerbation of pollen-related allergic diseases.

Being a part of biogenic pollutants, pollen allergens are not expected to diminish in the foreseeable future.

Considering this, Prof. Ravindra Khaiwal from Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER), Chandigarh, Akshi Goyal, research scholar, and Dr. Suman Mor, Chairperson, Department of Environment Studies, systematically examined the implementation gaps to minimize the pollen allergy disease and suffering.

Their study, supported by the Department of Science and Technology (DST), has been published in the International Journal of Hygiene and Environmental Health (IJHEH), an international journal by Elsevier.

"These submicron-pollen particles could act as respirable particles reaching deeper into the upper airways leading to exacerbation of asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and other allergic reactions," Prof. Ravindra Khaiwal pointed out.

Dr. Mor highlighted the four levels of strategies suggested by them-- individual level, health care communities and organizations, local governments, national/international governments levels, to decrease the risk of illnesses associated with pollen allergy.

Prof. Khaiwal added that attention needs to be given to the most vulnerable sub-populations with allergic asthma, rhinitis, and eczema during the peak pollen season..

But a noticeable negative impact of pollen has been seen in the sensitive population, said the scientists.

INBRIEF

Prompt diagnosis and apt treatment can improve cosmetic appeal in scoliosis patients

Attributing to manifold reasons, India is a home to the largest number of cases of spinal deformities. The major causes include accidents, social violence, nutrition deficiency, post-polio complications and congenital problems. Of all the deformities, scoliosis (S shaped side to side bending of the spine) is the most common and readily treatable form. Timely detection and treatment can help in treating this condition, therefore creating awareness among the masses is very important.

Advanced technological modalities like Neuro-monitoring, Neuro-navigation and ultrasonic scalpels, has not only made the procedure accurate and precise but also ensures minimal collateral damage and sustains the functional value. "Scoliosis is a deformity when the spine becomes abnormally curved sideways. In most of the cases the cause is not known and it develops and seems noticeable around the teen age. A person is said to have scoliosis when the curve measures more than 10 degrees. Severe scoliosis reduces the amount of space within the chest making it difficult for the lungs to function," says Dr SK Rajan, Head, Spine Surgery, Agrim institute of Neurosciences, Artemis Hospital, Gurugram.

Social determinants: Critical to TB elimination

TB elimination strategy in India needs to be patient-centric. SUPRIYA RAMESH speaks with DR DALBIR SINGH to bring you a report

Since the discovery of microbial causes of Tuberculosis in 1882, the world has witnessed this devastating disease claiming nearly 1.4 million lives annually in its wake across the globe despite the availability of effective treatment for the past 6 decades. Over the last 30 months, the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted health services globally and has adversely impacted on gains being made in the global endeavour to eliminate TB.

It is imperative to understand the linkage of social and environmental factors with both TB and COVID-19. The WHO defines social determinants of health as all those material, psychological and behavioural circumstances linked to health and generally indicated as a risk factor.

"Global anti TB strategy has long been driven by a biomedical approach rather than a socio-economic response to the epidemic. A deeper assessment suggests that a more holistic approach is required to eliminate TB. Besides appropriate biomedical responses, determinants like stigma, poverty, food insecurity, environmental conditions, malnutrition, hygiene and sanitation, proximal dwelling spaces,

poor housing, migration, alcohol consumption, drug consumption, smoking and co-morbidities like HIV and mental disease also need to be addressed on a war footing," says Dr Dalbir Singh, President, Global Coalition Against TB.

He adds that in India, poverty certainly has been a key driver of this disease besides being a barrier of lack of access to healthcare.

Poverty creates an ecology where TB becomes more prevalent, more lateral and more complicated to treat. We may have modern molecular tests for diagnosis but inequities in access produce months of delays in investigation in people living with TB in low-income countries and impoverished communities.

"The social factors are fundamental to the prevention, care and control of TB. A survey reveals that while a quarter of the world's population is infected with Mycobacterium TB but the disease occurs only in a minority of around 10.4 million as of 2020 in largely the poor and low and middle income countries," Dr Singh tells us.

"Overcrowding and slums are associated with a high prevalence of

TB in cities. Presence of windows reduces the incidence by 50 per cent. Biomass fuel commonly used for cooking adds to the burden of respiratory diseases. We really need to step up penetration of LPG in rural settings. Similarly, malnutrition impairs immunity and improved nutrition reduces the frequency and severity of many infections including TB," he adds.

According to WHO, the situation is serious if the Body Mass Index (BMI) is 20-39 per cent and critical if it is more than 40 per cent. India ranked 102 among 117 qualifying economies in the Global Hunger Index in 2019. The National Food Security Act provides food at incremental costs besides existing subsidies, but it is cereal centric and does not ensure adequate qualities of pulses, a source of good quality protein, so vital for combating TB.

"Globally, while income, education, occupation, gender, social class and health care access create stratification in society, there are some additional features in India which introduce additional complexity and merit discussion. While social class is a fluid entity, caste system in India is

a rigid social stratification based on birth and descent leading to discrimination, indignity, untouchability, denial to education and resources," Dr Singh tells us.

"Patients with tuberculosis also face stigmatising and discriminatory attitudes at home, in the neighbourhood, in healthcare facilities and at work, which can affect adherence. A large survey in 20 districts of India revealed very high prevalence of stigma, discrimination and societal ostracization in general population which can manifest as social isolation, neglect and abandonment besides difficulty in re-employment," says Dr Singh.

The National Strategic Plan is aiming to achieve elimination of TB in India by 2025. It will require an optimal mix of enhanced biomedical and social intervention.

TB elimination strategy in India needs to be patient centric, inclusive of nutritional, psycho-social and financial support with universal health coverage and social protection, convergence of multi prolonged and multi sectoral efforts to address deprivation, under-nutrition, uninhabitable, dwelling facilities, indoor pollution and environmental degradation.

PSG on brink of French title

AP ■ PARIS

Kylian Mbappe penalty proved decisive as Paris Saint-Germain beat bitter rivals Marseille 2-1 on Sunday, meaning they could clinch the Ligue 1 title this week.

Mbappe converted from the spot in first-half stoppage time after the referee awarded a penalty for handball on a VAR review, restoring PSG's lead following Neymar's early opener and a Duje Caleta-Car equaliser.

PSG are 15 points clear of second-placed Marseille with six games remaining and Mauricio Pochettino's side -- who also have a far superior goal difference -- stand poised to reclaim the trophy they relinquished to Lille last season. If Marseille fail to beat Nantes on Wednesday then PSG will officially secure their eighth Ligue 1 title in 10 seasons if they can better their nearest rivals' result when they face Angers.

Despite the apparently high stakes for the biggest fixture in French football, there was a distinctly flat atmosphere at the Parc des Princes.

Authorities banned Marseille fans from the game over concerns of possible violence, a recurring theme in France in recent months.

Meanwhile PSG 'ultras', the most vocal members of their support, have decided to stay silent until the end of the season in protest at the club's management and at results in a campaign



marked by the Champions League last-16 exit to Real Madrid. In any case, a record-equalling 10th French championship in their history has never really been in doubt for PSG, even before their current run of three straight wins in which Neymar and Mbappe have each scored six times.

MEANWHILE PSG 'ULTRAS', THE MOST VOCAL MEMBERS OF THEIR SUPPORT, HAVE DECIDED TO STAY SILENT UNTIL THE END OF THE SEASON IN PROTEST

The Brazilian gave PSG a 12th-minute lead, meeting a flighted ball forward by Marco Verratti and lobbing stranded goalkeeper Pau Lopez.

Marseille drew level just after the half-hour as Gianluigi Donnarumma made a mess of dealing with a corner, allowing Caleta-Car to prod home on the line.

Lopez saved a Neymar free-kick and Messi had two goals disallowed for offside before PSG were awarded the penalty deep in stoppage time at the end of the half.

Valentin Rongier blocked a shot with his thigh, the ball ricocheting up and striking his elbow, an infringement spotted by the referee after he was invited over to the pitchside monitor.

Mbappe's successful penalty was his 21st Ligue 1 goal of the season and 32nd in all competitions.

The France star had another effort disallowed for offside in the second half.

Marseille then thought they had snatched a point when William Saliba turned in Dimitri Payet's late free-kick.

Yet that effort was also disallowed, and PSG held on.

Despite seeing their eight-game winning run come to an end, Marseille remain on course to qualify automatically for the Champions League as they sit three points clear of third-placed Rennes.

Szoboszlai goal puts Leipzig third

AP ■ LEIPZIG

A solitary strike from Dominik Szoboszlai helped RB Leipzig round off a memorable week, with Domenico Tedesco's men rising above their vanquished opponents Bayer Leverkusen and into third spot in the Bundesliga standings.

Such is Leipzig's success under Tedesco since the tactician took charge last December, the visitors were competing in this top-four battle with Leverkusen wedged in between two other competitions. The Saxony-based side are through to a UEFA Europa League semi-final following Thursday's impressive win in Atalanta while this coming Wednesday, a DFB Cup semi-final against Union Berlin awaits.

Unsurprising then, that the away side rang the changes, with Christopher Nkunku, Dani Olmo, Angelino and Konrad Laimer benched.

For their part, the third-placed hosts were keen to at least maintain a one-point advantage over their busy opponents.

Tedesco introduced his 17-goal top scorer Nkunku after the restart and the French forward's presence was almost immediately felt.

The 24-year-old's nimble movement in the Leverkusen area led to Willi Orban sending a shot at the target which smacked the inside of the post.

At the other end, the lively Diaby



muscled through before finding the side netting with an angled drive. The game opening up more and more, two of the division's most entertaining teams this season appeared to revel in producing an end-to-end spectacle.

A goal seemed certain and if Nordi Mukiele fluffed one of the game's best chances, skewing wide when brilliantly played in by substitute Laimer, Szoboszlai would make amends soon afterwards.

Taking advantage of a lapse in Leverkusen possession, Leipzig broke, with Nkunku feeding Szoboszlai whose outside-of-the-boot shot took the slightest of nicks before thumping the back of the net.

It would prove to be the winner for the visitors, who jump above their opponents into third with just four games to play.

Comeback kings Real stun Sevilla

AP ■ SEVILLE

Karim Benzema completed another incredible Real Madrid comeback on Sunday as they fought from two goals down to defeat Sevilla 3-2 in La Liga.

After trailing Chelsea 3-0 on Tuesday only to secure their place in the Champions League semi-finals, Madrid stunned Sevilla to seal the victory that has surely won them La Liga.

Defeat would have given fresh hope to the chasing pack, with Sevilla and Barcelona both beginning the day 12 points behind, Barca with two games in hand.

Instead, goals in the second half from Rodrygo, Nacho Fernandez and Benzema in the 92nd minute mean Madrid extend their advantage to 15 points with six games left to play.

An Ivan Rakitic free-kick and Erik Lamela's smart finish had put Sevilla two up at the Ramon Sanchez Pizjuan.

Benzema's goal finished Chelsea off on Tuesday after Rodrygo had forced extra-time at the Santiago Bernabeu and those two, along with Vinicius Junior, were crucial again. Benzema now has 44 goals in 46 appearances this season. Rakitic gave Sevilla the lead in the 25th minute, curling a free-kick into the corner after Luka



Modric had brought down Papu Gomez. Lamela doubled the advantage four minutes later, slotting after Tecatito drew out Thibaut Courtois and left the net open.

But a superb Vinicius backheel

for Dani Carvajal allowed Rodrygo to pull a goal back in the 50th minute. Vinicius thought he had made it 2-2 in the 74th minute, only for the goal to be ruled out, the referee deciding the Brazilian had controlled with his arm and not his chest. Madrid though were undeterred as Rakitic headed away a corner, only for Carvajal to drive to the line and pull back for Nacho to finish.

Quadruple quest piles pressure on Liverpool: Van Dijk

AP ■ LIVERPOOL

Virgil van Dijk says talk of a historic quadruple for Liverpool belongs to the "outside world" and risks putting extra pressure on the Dutchman and his teammates.

Liverpool are now 11 games away from becoming the first side to ever win the Champions League, Premier League, FA Cup and League Cup in the same season.

Jurgen Klopp's men saw off Manchester City 3-2 in a FA Cup semi-final thriller on Saturday to set up a final with Chelsea next month, who they beat on penalties to lift the League Cup in February.

City stand in their way for the Premier League title with the English champions holding a one-point lead at the top of the table with seven games to go. And the top two in England could also meet in the Champions League final as Liverpool take on Villarreal and City face Real Madrid in the last four.

"Nobody did the quadruple and there is a reason for it -- because it is almost impossible to do," said Van Dijk.

Liverpool on paper face the tougher run-in for the Premier League title with old rivals



Manchester United and Everton visiting Anfield this week desperate for points in their own battles to reach next season's Champions League and avoid relegation respectively.

"All this talk about quadruple or treble is from the outside world and could put extra pressure on us," said Van Dijk.

"It is something that everyone would dream about, to win every competition you participate in, but we will see what it brings.

"Anything can happen, with other teams as well."

Van Dijk's return to fitness has been pivotal to Liverpool's stunning season so far.

The Dutch captain missed 10 months due to cruciate ligament damage last season and the chance to lead his country at Euro 2020.

With the World Cup in Qatar also just seven months away, he is relishing just being back on the field.

"I was not a great player back in the days, I was quite a late bloomer -- that's why I enjoy my career even more," he added.

"I just want to keep it going, stay fit, win games and see what it brings and get ready for the World Cup as well."

Man United star Fernandes involved in car crash, nobody hurt

AP ■ MANCHESTER

Manchester United midfielder Bruno Fernandes was involved in a car crash on the way to the club's training ground but was unhurt and should be available to play against Liverpool in the Premier League, manager Ralf Rangnick said Monday.

Nobody involved in the incident sustained serious injuries, Britain's PA news agency reported. The 27-year-old Fernandes took part in training and "was OK," said Rangnick, who was speaking ahead of the game against Liverpool at Anfield on Tuesday.

"That's why I think he will also be OK for tomorrow," Rangnick



added. United would be tied for points with fourth-place Tottenham in the race for Champions League qualification.

Sajan working to improve from personal best

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Peaking at the right time twice over will be a massive challenge in the Commonwealth Games and Asiad, feels leading Indian swimmer Sajan Prakash, who is trying to shave off a second from his personal best timing. Sajan began his international season with a gold medal finish in the 200m butterfly event at the Danish Open last week.

The Kerala swimmer, whose personal best in the event is 1:56.48, is gearing up for a hectic year which includes big-ticket events

like the CWG, Asian Games and the World Championships.

"I'm picking the important meets this year. I will try to peak for the big events which are the CWG and Asian Games. I'll be tapering for those two events. I'll take all other meets also seriously. However, main target is CWG Asian," Sajan told PTI.

The 28-year-old wrote a new chapter in Indian swimming by becoming the first swimmer from the country to qualify for the Olympics by breaching the 'A' standard in June last year. A day later, Srihari Nataraj replicated the



feat to seal his berth at the Tokyo Games.

However, the duo was unable to peak at the Tokyo Games a month later. With the Commonwealth Games scheduled from July 28 to August 8 and Asian Games from September 10 to 25, it will be a tall order for the swimmers to peak twice at such short notice. "We have some competitions coming up this month. They are preparation meets. The aim is to slowly try and peak towards the Commonwealth Games and Asian Games."

In order to peak twice within a month, Sajan and

his coach Pradeep Kumar are meticulously planning the Kerala swimmer's workload.

"I am going to train so that I'm able to peak in both the events. We will consistently train and will try not to peak in the other moments. "In a year we peak 2-3 times depending on the periodisation and how you plan it. Since both events are close to each other we are trying to load in as much as possible right now.

"You never know how the body works but we are planning to peak in those two weeks, let's hope for the best."

100-day countdown for Chess Olympiad begins

PTI ■ CHENNAI

The 100-day countdown for the 44th Chess Olympiad, to be held here later this year, began on Monday with the legendary Viswanathan Anand terming the tournament a lifetime opportunity for youngsters to catch a glimpse of their idols.

"It is a lifetime opportunity for youngsters to get a glimpse of their idols, watch them play and possibly interact with them," said India's first-ever Grandmaster Anand in a press release.

The Olympiad will be held from July 28 to August 10.

"The Countdown to the #ChessOlympiad2022 begins! 100daysago and to mark the occasion find me on livestream looking at some games of the

past Chess Olympiads," Anand said in a tweet.

Several other players including women's star D Harika and noted coach R B Ramesh tweeted about the countdown.

"And the countdown begins. Just 100 more days to go for the grand #FIDECHES-SOLYMPIAD2022 to take place in India," Harika said.

Meanwhile, All India Chess Federation (AICF) secretary Bharat Singh Chauhan said, "We are sparing no effort to ensure that this Olympiad will be the best ever and hope that people will be talking about it for the next 100 years."

Several Grandmasters and national champions from more than 150 countries will be participating in the Chess

Olympiad.

Hundreds of district-level players from Tamil Nadu have already put in their requests to witness the games live and soon the fever will catch up in the whole country, the release said.

The Olympiad was originally scheduled to be hosted by Russia between July 26 and August 8 in Moscow but was moved out following the invasion of Ukraine by Russia in February.

Subsequently, FIDE (world chess body) allotted the championship to Chennai.

The last chess event of such stature to come to India was the 2013 World Championship clash between Anand and Magnus Carlsen, the current world No. 1.

ATK Mohun Bagan face stern Abahani test

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Local heavyweights ATK Mohun Bagan will have their task cut out when they face six-time Bangladesh Premier League champions Abahani Limited in the AFC Cup playoff here on Tuesday.

The winners of the knockout match will join Gokulam Kerala, Bashundhara Kings (Bangladesh) and Maziya Sports and Recreation (Maldives) in the group D of the AFC Cup main round beginning May 18.

The Mariners, who made an inter-zone semifinal exit in last season's AFC Cup, had it easy in the preliminary stage and secured a resounding 5-0 win over a weak Blue Star SC of Sri Lanka to make the playoffs.



The Bangladeshi outfit on the other hand made the cut after Club Valencia of Maldives gave a walkover in their preliminary round-two match, in Sylhet on April 12, citing financial crisis. That they're playing at home and coming off after a big win will give the local team a slight edge.

They will also be bolstered by the return of their regular goalkeeper Amrindar Singh, who had to sit out against Blue Star because of a niggles, and midfielder Liston Colaco.

The biggest advantage for ATKMB is that their big signing, Finnish midfielder Joni Kauko, was in his elements scoring a brace against BSC, while Moroccan midfielder Hugo Boumous was sensational with his raids.

Forward Manvir Singh was also among goals and scored a double and the Juan Ferrando-coached side would count on the positives while treating the match like a final. "It's time to enjoy for the players until tomorrow and for the fans, this will be a good moment but to be honest, this is football and the next match is the next Tuesday. "It will be like a final and it's very important for us that we don't forget to focus on the next game," Ferrando said.

Talking about their opponents, he said: "They are a compact team, they don't play three-four players in the attack... We need to pay attention in pressing as we need to keep the ball and move forward. It's not so easy but we need to work hard to win the

next match."

Euro 2020 recruit Kauko said he's excited to get back his rhythm and was looking forward to the match.

"Before coming to India, I was in two minds whether I could cope with the weather and would be successful in India or not. I may not be at my best at the moment, but slowly getting back my rhythm.

"The first target would be to finish in regulation time, we don't know much about our opponents which is always tricky. I heard they have very good foreigners, it would be a tough contest," he added.

According to a team official, ATKMB will continue to miss their Fijian star striker Roy Krishna, who has flown back home for personal reasons.



the pioneer

INDIAN PREMIER LEAGUE

2022

12

CHAHAL IS SOMEONE WHO CAN BE GIVEN THE BALL ANYTIME FROM OVERS 1-20. HE'S THE GREATEST LEG-SPINNER, IF I CAN SAY, THAT INDIA'S SEEN IN THE PRESENT.

— SANJU SAMSON

Jos 103 takes RR to 217

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Jos Buttler's dream season just got a bit better after he knocked the stuffing out of a quality Kolkata Knight Riders attack with a magnificent second IPL hundred to power Rajasthan Royals to an imposing 217 for five here on Monday.

Buttler's 61-ball-103 had nine fours and five sixes, some of which were out of the ordinary, including one off Umesh Yadav (0/44 in 4 overs) which landed into the adjacent tennis courts of Cricket Club of India.

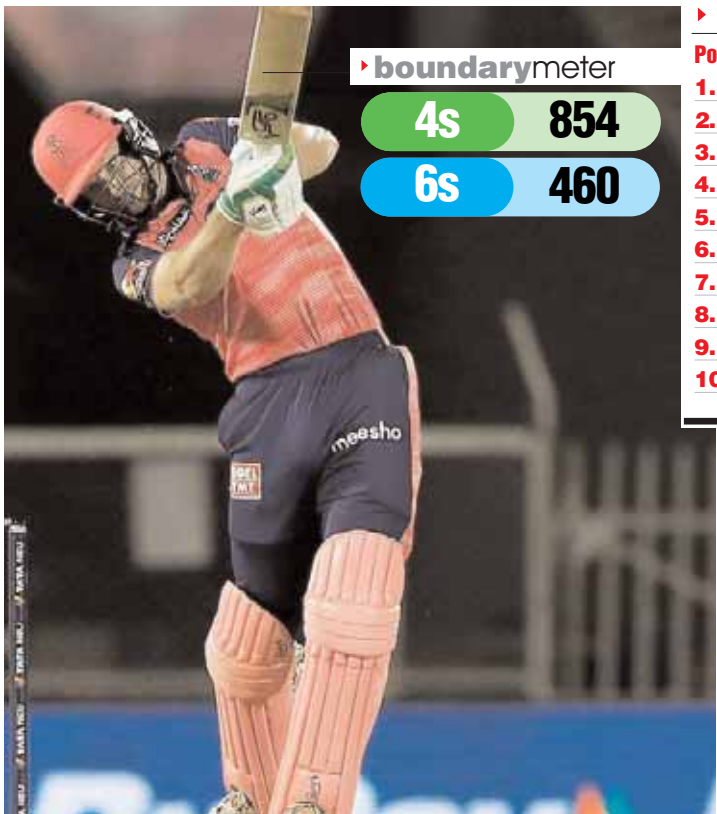
When he finally got out trying to hook Pat Cummins (1/50 in 4 overs), Royals had crossed 180-run mark and by then the Australian Test captain was hammered for as many as seven fours and a six, bulk of them by the dashing England keeper-batter.

Buttler added 97 runs for the opening wicket stand with Devdutt Padikkal (24 off 18 balls), who only faced deliveries worth three overs in the first 10 overs.

He was then joined by skipper Sanju Samson (38 off 19 balls), who was equally destructive in their 67-run second wicket stand in just 5.4 overs.

None of the KKR bowlers save Sunil Narine (2/21 in 4 overs) looked like posing any threat to Buttler, who seems to be walking away with the Orange Cap with an aggregate of 375 runs in six games so far.

Varun Chakravarthy (0/30 in 2 overs) is getting from bad to worse during the season as neither there is



► pointstable

► boundarymeter	
4s	854
6s	460
► pointstable	
PO. TEAM M W L NR Pts NRR	
1. GT 6 5 1 0 10 0.395	
2. LSG 6 4 2 0 8 0.296	
3. RCB 6 4 2 0 8 0.142	
4. SRH 6 4 2 0 8 -0.077	
5. RR 5 3 2 0 6 0.389	
6. KKR 6 3 3 0 6 0.223	
7. PBKS 6 3 3 0 6 0.109	
8. DC 5 2 3 0 4 0.219	
9. CSK 6 1 5 0 2 -0.638	
10. MI 6 0 6 0 0 -1.048	

first two overs primarily because Padikkal is out of sorts.

However, showing cricketing smarts, Padikkal gave Buttler bulk of the strike and that changed the course from the third over of the match.

Umesh, who had started the tournament on a bright note, got back to his old self of being erratic as Buttler lofted him for a four and a six off successive deliveries.

The floodgates opened after that as he literally toyed with Chakravarthy, whom he hit for a six by rocking back and having enough time to send him into the orbit.

If there was a wide yorker, he would steer past third-man, short deliveries were pulled and those on the legs were tucked behind square.

bite nor any mystery in his deliveries and it was like cannon fodder on a Brabourne batting beauty.

The fifth bowling option turned out to be a nightmare as Andre

Russell (0/29 in 2 overs) completed Chakravarthy's quota as they cumulatively gave away 59 runs in 4 overs.

Shivam Mavi (1/34 in 4 overs) and Umesh started off well during the

LSG, RCB battle for supremacy

PTI ■ NAVI MUMBAI

KL Rahul's elegance and Quinton de Kock's flamboyance will be pitted against the finishing skills of Dinesh Karthik and Glenn Maxwell when Lucknow Super Giants and Royal Challengers Bangalore clash in the IPL here on Tuesday.

LSG and RCB head into the match after wins over Mumbai Indians and Delhi Capitals, respectively and both teams, who have eight points from six outings, would be keen to continue their winning streak.

Up against the second-placed Super Giants, RCB will need to address their top-order woes. While skipper Faf du Plessis has failed to fire since the opening game, opener Anuj Rawat has looked scratchy.

Virat Kohli continues to have a frustrating season. Despite looking in good form, the former RCB captain has failed to get the big runs.

However, the arrival of Maxwell has strengthened the side. The Australian all-rounder blasted 55 of 34 balls to get the momentum going in the chase against DC. Meanwhile, Karthik is revelling in his role as a finisher, single-handedly winning matches for his new side. The seasoned wicketkeeper batter has not put a foot wrong in the ongoing season, playing some of the finest knocks as he bids to make a comeback for the national team. He has been instrumental in RCB's rise into the top four of the league table.

Engineer-turned cricketer Shahbaz Ahmed too has impressed with his batting so far.

On the bowling front, Josh Hazlewood bowled an exceptional spell against DC that swayed the match in RCB's favour and the Australian pacer would be eager to continue in the same vein.

Alongside Hazlewood, Sri Lankan leg-spinner Wanindu Hasaranga will be key in stopping Rahul and Co while death overs specialist Harshal Patel will also have to play his role to perfection if RCB aim to contain a powerful LSG batting unit.

On the other hand, Rahul (235 runs) has led the new entrants admirably. The skipper himself is in sub-



lime form. He registered his maiden century of the season against Mumbai and sits only behind Rajasthan Royals' Jos Buttler (272 runs) in the leading run-scorer chart.

LSG also have enough fire power in de Kock, who has displayed imperious form in recent games, young Ayush Badoni, the big-hitting Deepak Hooda and Krunal Pandya to name a few.

The new-entrants have further been bolstered by the addition of the multi-talented duo of Jason Holder and Marcus Stoinis. The two adding more depth in both bowling and batting.

The pace-spin duo of Avesh Khan and Ravi Bishnoi have managed to hold their own against some of the most established names in T20 cricket.

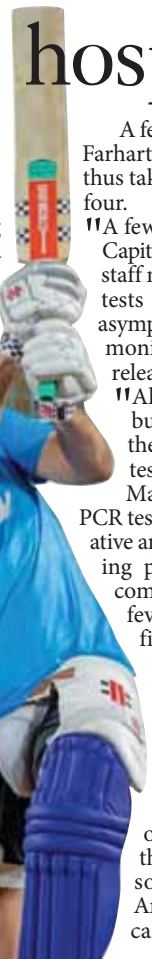
DC's Marsh tests Covid +ve, hospitalised

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Australian all-rounder Mitchell Marsh was hospitalised after testing positive for COVID-19 in a second RTPCR test along with two support staff, causing fear and panic among rest of the Delhi Capitals squad here on Monday.

Delhi Capitals all-rounder Mitchell Marsh has tested positive for COVID-19, following which he has been admitted to a hospital. The Delhi Capitals medical team is closely monitoring Marsh's condition," the IPL franchise said in a release issued late in the evening. It is still not clear if Delhi Capitals' next game against Punjab Kings in Pune on Wednesday will be called off or not as the entire squad was put in room isolation for the day.

The other two who have tested positive are team doctor Abhijit Salvi and the team masseur. The RTPCR reports of all other players have returned negative.



A few days back, team physio Patrick Farhart had tested positive for the virus, thus taking the total number of cases to four.

"A few more members from the Delhi Capitals bio-bubble, including support staff members, have returned positive tests as well. Though they are all asymptomatic, their condition is being monitored closely by the franchise," release further stated.

"All remaining members of the bubble are currently in isolation in their respective rooms, and will be tested regularly." During the day, Marsh had undergone two RTPCR tests with the first one coming negative and the subsequent testing returning positive. This was after Marsh complained of sore throat and mild fever. "Mitchell Marsh's RTPCR first report has come negative.

However the second RTPCR report turned out to be positive. All other playing members have negative in RT-PCR tests. There is no threat to Wednesday's match between DC and PBKS," a senior BCCI official told PTI on Monday. It is understood that the Australian all-rounder showed some symptoms and a Rapid Antigen Test was performed which came positive.

Shafali eclipses Harmanpreet as Haryana beat Punjab in Senior Women's T20

PTI ■ RANCHI

Skipper Shafali Verma smashed 50 off 23 balls to lead Haryana to a three-wicket win over Harmanpreet Kaur-led Punjab in the Senior Women's T20 Trophy here on Monday.

Harmanpreet hammered an unbeaten 64 off 38 balls to take Punjab to 155 for three in 20 overs. Haryana overcame the target with four balls to spare.

After Shafali's blazing innings that comprised seven fours and three sixes, Suman Guila (31 off 25) and Mansi Joshi (25 not out off 16) took the team home on the opening day of the competition.

In Rajkot, defending champions Railways made a winning start with a 64-run victory over Himachal Pradesh.

S Meghana (47 off 40) and Swagatika Rath (69 off 44) fired Railways to 181 for four with a 103-run stand.

Regular skipper Mithali Raj did not play the opening game and Sneha Rana captained in her absence.

In response, Himachal were bundled out for 117 in 19.2 overs.

DK making a strong case for selection in World T20 team

DRITI ATRI ■ NEW DELHI

In the ongoing 15th edition of the Indian Premier League, senior wicket-keeper batter Dinesh Karthik is on a roll. The 36-year-old is part of the Royal Challengers Bangalore set up and has lit up the tournament with his sensational display in a new role as a finisher for the Virat Kohli-starrer side, which has a new leader in Faf du Plessis this year.

RCB have won four out of the six matches played in the tournament so far and are currently placed in third place in the points table. In the six matches, DK has scored 197 runs at an astonishing strike rate of 209.57. He is the team's leading run scorer and has been dismissed only once so far.

Karthik, who was the captain of Kolkata Knight Riders previously, was signed for Rs 5.50 crore in the mega auction that took place in February this year. And he has not just lived up to the billing but has also given a lifeline to his Team India career.

With his consistent, power-packed performances down the order for RCB, he has put forward his case for selection in the Indian team for the ICC Men's T20 World Cup, which is scheduled to take place in October-November later this year in Australia.



Well, it may be too early to comment if he's going to make it to the final 15, but if Karthik continues to deliver in a similar fashion for RCB this year, then it will be very difficult to ignore his case.

On Saturday, after RCB's 16-run win over Delhi Capitals, former Indian skipper

Virat Kohli hailed Karthik and said that this is the best he has seen him (Karthik) since IPL 2013. He even called him 'Man of the IPL' so far.

During the conversation with the modern-day great, Karthik expressed his desire to play for India in the upcoming multi-nation event.

"The bigger vision is that I want to play for the country. I know there is a World Cup around the corner. I want to be part of that World Cup desperately and help India cross that line. It's been a long time since India last won a multi-nation tournament. I want to be that person who is helping India do that. For that, you need to be aware of so many things. Try and be that player who people think, 'hey, this guy is doing something special,'" he said.

Reacting to Karthik's World Cup intentions, Kohli responded by saying that he has definitely made a strong case for himself and admitted that the BCCI selectors are taking note of his performances.

"I am so happy that DK is clear with his goals and I can surely tell you that if you have presented a very strong case for moving forward for yourself and playing T20 cricket, not just for RCB, but I am sure a lot of people are taking notice at the highest level as well," Kohli said.

It is nice to play every game: David Miller

PTI ■ PUNE

David Miller, who was not a sure starter in the playing eleven for his previous two IPL teams, is loving being "100 percent backed" by Gujarat Titans.

Miller smashed a 51-ball 94 to help Gujarat Titans pull off an incredible come-from-behind three-wicket win over Chennai Super Kings on Sunday night. The South African played a game-changing knock in the IPL after a long time. The last two-three-four years I have been playing really nice cricket, feeling positive and I have been scoring nice personally, back at home, overseas, and so on, unfortunately the last four-five years, I haven't really played as much IPL cricket as I would have liked to," he said at the post-match media interaction.

"... The nature of the game, tournament (is such that) there are only four overseas (players) and other overseas players are always going to miss out and I sort of found myself in between a place where I have been in and out of Kings XI (Punjab Kings) and then Rajasthan.

"I played some decent games there but I felt like I couldn't get going and it has been encouraging to be part of Gujarat Titans and just know I am 100 per cent backed, and have a really nice environment, enjoy each other's success, that goes a long way in doing well, but more importantly it is nice to play every game." He started the innings pretty well and did not want to stop after that. "Yes, I mean we were obvi-



ously in a little bit of trouble, but I still thought, if we batted 20 overs, we still had some sort of chance and you never know if you were sitting on the sideline. "So, I just wanted to try and play my game, the way I started my innings, I thought I started pretty well and I didn't want to stop, I wanted to keep going," Miller said.

Gujarat were reeling at 87/5 in pursuit of 170, but then Miller and stand-in-captain Rashid Khan joined forces as they added match-winning 70 runs for the sixth wicket.

Miller said that the plan to attack CSK spinners worked and they were forced to bowl the pacers.

They had three spinners and I thought if they bowl well, they are definitely bowl all the overs towards me," he added.

Captaincy comes naturally to Shreyas Iyer: Ravi Shastri

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Former India head coach Ravi Shastri feels captaincy comes naturally to Shreyas Iyer, who has impressed in his first season as Kolkata Knight Riders captain. Shreyas was given the responsibility of leading KKR ahead of the IPL 2022 and the Mumbaiaikaar has done a decent job so far, with his team winning three and losing as many matches from six outings.

Shastri claims Shreyas will only get better and better as the tournament progresses.

Speaking on Star Sports, Shastri said, "Captaincy comes naturally to



Shreyas. Look at his aggressive captaincy, you don't feel like he's leading KKR for the first time. Looks like he's been captaining them for the last 3 to 4 seasons and it is visible through his clarity of thoughts. "His mindset is clear about what brand of cricket he needs to play as a batter.

At the same time, he's aware of what he as a captain needs to do to take his team to the playoffs and win the title. "I've liked the way he's spoken during the pre and post-match conferences and that shows he's clear with his plans. I am convinced he'll go a long way." Former West Indies cricketer Ian Bishop has backed

Shreyas to come back stronger after back-to-back defeats in the last two games because he possesses a good brain and also has the support of some seasoned campaigners.

"I think despite suffering back-to-back defeats, it is possible for Shreyas to regroup his troops and bounce back. When he became captain of the Delhi Capitals, he just got them better and better with every season," Bishop said. "It will take him a little settling period here (at KKR) but he's got some seasoned campaigners around him. Andre Russell and Sunil Narine are experienced players. Coach Brendon McCullum is also very experienced.



Umaran Malik could soon play for India

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Pace bowling sensation Umaran Malik could be fast-tracked into the Indian team as early as June when it will play seven T20 Internationals against South Africa and Ireland respectively.

India will play South Africa in a five-match T20 International series at home (June 9, 12, 14, 17, 20) and two matches in Ireland's Malahide (June 26, 28) where a second-string team comprising white-ball specialists will be playing their trade as the big guns prepare for the series-deciding fifth Test against England, starting early July.

Umaran was a net bowler during India's last World T20

Sunrisers Hyderabad bowling coach and fast bowling legend Dale Steyn has termed the Jammu man Umaran Malik a "genius".

campaign in the UAE.

The BCCI is keen on having a bigger pool of fast bowlers going into the upcoming World T20 in Australia and Umaran, with his scorching pace, has a high probability of making it to the squad if all goes well and he remains fit over the next two months.

The pool of premier bowlers whose workload management will be paramount are Jasprit Bumrah, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Avesh Khan, Harshal Patel, Mohammed Siraj, Deepak Chahar (if fit), Mohammed Shami and Umesh Yadav.

The three bowlers from the fringe pack, who might get a go in some of the 20 plus T20I matches in the run-up to the

World Cup are Umaran and left-armers T Natarajan and Arshdeep Singh, all of whom have been impressive in the IPL.

Sunrisers Hyderabad bowling coach and fast bowling legend Dale Steyn has termed the Jammu man a 'genius'.

"My job with Umaran is to ensure he runs fast and make players play differently. My job is to try and make him forward-thinking as to what the batters are planning on doing.

"It's exciting for us to sit back and watch what a genius he is. I don't want to turn him into what I was, all I want is his geniuses to come out," Steyn said on 'Star Sports' 'Cricket Live' programme.