

OPINION 6

A NEW CHAPTER
IN JOB CREATION

WORLD 9

PAK CANNOT AFFORD 'ENMITY
WITH US AT ALL': PM SHARIF

MONEY 10

₹60,939 CR SUBSIDY FOR P&K
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KOLKATA EYE
REVENGE
AGAINST DC
12 SPORTPM raps Opp-ruled States
for not slashing fuel VAT

DEEPAK K UPRETI ■ NEW DELHI

Reacting for the first time to the rising fuel prices in the country, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said some States did not reduce Value Added Tax (VAT) on petrol and diesel despite the excise duty cut by the Centre last November.

He said they have been doing "injustice" to the people by not transferring the benefits of the lower taxes.

Modi was addressing a virtual meeting with Chief Ministers about the emerging situation on Covid-19.

The PM flagged seven non-BJP States — Maharashtra, West Bengal, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Jharkhand and Tamil Nadu — for not reducing VAT and thus not lessening the burden on the common man. Excise duty was reduced in November by ₹5 on petrol and ₹10 on diesel. The excise duty is levied by the Centre, the VAT is imposed by the States.

Petrol and diesel prices reached ₹100 for the first time in June last year and have been staying around or more since then. Since March 22, after the recent elections in Uttar Pradesh and four other States, the Government has increased oil prices many times account-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi speaks during his meeting with Chief Ministers regarding the Covid-19 situation across the nation through a video conference in New Delhi on Wednesday

PTI

ing for about ₹10 per litre till April 5.

"I request, do now what should have been done in November. You should pass on the benefit to the citizens by reducing VAT," the Prime Minister said.

The States that reduced VAT have lower fuel prices, he added and in this regard listed the BJP-ruled States. Modi gave the example of Karnataka and Gujarat, both ruled by the BJP, saying they have suffered a revenue loss of nearly ₹5,000 crore and ₹3,500-4,000 crore respectively by reducing VAT, but they did so to help people. Their neighbouring States did not, he said.

"I am not criticising anyone, just discussing," he said and cited Maharashtra, West Bengal, Telangana, Andhra

Pradesh, Kerala, Jharkhand and Tamil Nadu, for some reason or the other not listening to the Central Government and the citizens in those States continued to be burdened.

"Some States reduced taxes but some States did not give any benefit of this to the people. Due to this, the prices of petrol and diesel in these States continue to remain high. In a way, this is not only injustice to the people of these States but it also has an impact on the neighbouring States," he said.

In Chennai, Jaipur, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Mumbai, petrol prices (per litre) are over ₹111, ₹118, ₹119, ₹115 and ₹120, Modi said, noting that they cost much lower at ₹102 in the Union Territory of Daman and Diu, ₹105 in Lucknow, ₹106 in

Jammu, ₹105 in Guwahati and ₹103 in Dehradun.

The Prime Minister also said 42 per cent of the Centre's revenues go to the States. "I request all States that in a time of global crisis, we should follow the spirit of cooperative federalism and work together as a team," he said.

Many observers believe that the Centre and States are not ready to bring petroleum under Goods and Services Tax (GST) which could have brought oil prices under reasonable check.

For some apparent comfort, there has been a softening of international oil prices below 100 dollars a barrel this month and also India has been purchasing cheaper oil from Russia but domestic fuel prices have still been soaring.

Opp accuses Modi of
passing buck, playing
politics over fuel pricePIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

In a sharp riposte to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's attack on the Opposition-ruled States on the fuel prices, the Opposition parties on Wednesday reminded him that the excise duty during the UPA Government was much lower and asked the Prime Minister to roll back the hike. They also accused him of "passing the buck" and playing politics.

"Excise duty during the Congress Government — petrol ₹9.48/litre and diesel ₹3.56/litre. Modi Government — petrol ₹27.90/litre and diesel ₹21.80/litre. Please roll back the excise hike of ₹18.42 on petrol and ₹18.24 per litre on diesel," Congress spokesperson Randeep Surjewala tweeted.

Demanding that Modi give an account of the ₹27 lakh crore collected by the BJP Government from tax on petrol and diesel, he said, "Modi ji, no criticism, no distractions, no jumla! Please give an account of ₹27,00,00,00,00,00 (₹27 lakh crore) collected by BJP Govt from tax on petrol & diesel."

He said on May 26, 2014, when Modi assumed charge, crude oil was USD 108 per barrel, but petrol and diesel were priced at ₹71.41 and ₹55.49 per litre, while today, crude oil is USD 100.20 per barrel, but the

petrol and diesel prices have been increased to ₹105.41/litre and ₹96.67/litre respectively in Delhi.

"We will urge all States to decrease VAT on petrol/diesel to pre-May 2014 level. Please admit BJP Govt earned ₹27 lakh crore from petrol/diesel while all States collectively received about ₹16.5 lakh crore. Central Govt revenue from petrol/diesel has doubled in 8 years," Surjewala said in a series of tweets.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray said the Centre owed ₹26,500 crore to the State, after Modi said some States did not reduce VAT on petrol and diesel despite the excise duty cut by the Union Government in November last year.

Uddhav clarified that Centre's share is 24.38 per cent and the State's share is ₹22.37 behind the price of one litre of diesel in Mumbai today.

Shiv Sena leader Priyanka Chaturvedi slammed the Prime Minister, alleging that he made the "Covid meeting about politics".

"The Central Government has earned 26 lakh crore out of Central Excise on fuel, increased 18 times even when oil prices hit rock bottom. The GST share to States still owed, compensation component to state done away with and now pointing fingers," she tweeted.

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Reply on sedition law
validity by end of
week, SC asks Govt‘List matter for
final disposal on
May 5 with no
adjournment’PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday directed the Centre to file its response by the end of the week on a batch of pleas challenging the constitutional validity of the sedition law — Section 124A — of the Indian Penal Code.

The three-judge bench of Chief Justice NV Ramana and Justices Surya Kant and Hima Kohli said it would commence the final hearing in the matter on May 5 and would not entertain any request for adjournment.

Section 124 of the IPC has been widely used against many political opponents by the Governments in power by charging stringent provisions for sedition.

"We direct the Centre to file a reply by end of this week. Reply to the affidavit by Tuesday. List the matter for final disposal without any adjournment on May 5," the bench said. The top court also noted in its order that senior advocate Kapil Sibal will lead the arguments from the peti-



tioner's side in the matter.

During the hearing, senior advocate Sanjay Parikh said the plea filed by PUCL has not been listed. "Do you want to solve the issue or all petitions to be listed? If you want to delay it, it is on you," asked the Bench.

Concerned over the enormous misuse of the colonial-era penal law on sedition, the top court in July last year had asked the Centre why it was not repealing the provision used by the British to silence people like Mahatma Gandhi to suppress the freedom movement.

Agreeing to examine the pleas filed by the Editors Guild of India and former Major-General SG Vombatkere, challenging the constitutionality of Section 124A (sedition) in the IPC, the apex court had said its main concern was the "misuse of law" leading to rise in the number of cases.

CAPSULE

2 DEAD AFTER ENTERING
SEWER IN OUTER DELHI

New Delhi: 18-year-old ragpicker Abdul Salam died on Wednesday after he entered a sewer in Outer Delhi's Bawana to collect plastic waste. When Salam did not come out, his younger brother Sahil, who was near the spot, raised an alarm. Chitranjan Choudhary, a 26-year-old driver passing through the area, rushed to rescue Salam and entered the sewer but none of them came out.

IMD WARNS OF EXTREME
HEAT IN NATIONAL CAPITAL

New Delhi: Amid a punishing heatwave building up in northwest India, Delhi saw a jump of two to three degrees Celsius in the maximum temperature on Wednesday.

DRIVE TO REMOVE
LOUDSPEAKERS IN UP

Lucknow: Over 6,000 unauthorised loudspeakers were removed from religious places and volume of other 30,000 was set to permissible limits across Uttar Pradesh following a Government order, a police official said on Wednesday.

Covid jab shield for kids
Govt's priority, says PM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As India reports a rise in Covid infection, logging around 2,927 cases on Wednesday, against 2,483 infections on previous day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the challenge of the Covid pandemic is not fully over yet and vaccination remains the biggest protective shield against the virus.

Speaking at an interaction with Chief Ministers on the emerging Covid-19 situation in the country, the Prime Minister also said the Government's priority is to vaccinate all eligible children at the earliest with special campaigns needed in schools.

At the interaction, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan gave a presentation where he discussed the rise of cases across several countries in the world and in some Indian States, a Prime Minister's Office



(PMO) statement said.

Asserting that India has fought a long battle against Covid in the spirit of cooperative federalism enshrined in the Constitution, Modi lauded the Chief Ministers, officers and all corona warriors for their efforts.

Modi asserted it was clear that the coronavirus challenge is not fully over yet. Omicron and its subvariants can create problems as is evident in case of many countries of Europe, he noted, adding that these sublineages are causing a surge in many countries. He said India has been able to deal with the situation better than many

countries. Still, in last two weeks, increasing cases in some of the States show that we need to stay alert, Modi said.

The Omicron wave was handled with determination and without panic, and in the last two years, all aspects of the coronavirus fight whether related to health infrastructure, oxygen supply or vaccination, have been strengthened, he asserted. In the third wave, none of the States saw situation going out of control, Modi asserted. This, the Prime Minister added, should be seen in the context of the massive vaccination drive.

He said vaccination has reached each and every person and it is a matter of pride that 96 per cent of the adult population is vaccinated with at least one dose and about 84 per cent people above 15 years of age having received both the doses.

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Boys jump into the Ganga River to beat the heat during a hot summer day in Kolkata on Wednesday

PTI

11 lives snuffed out in minutes
in Thanjavur chariot procession

PTI ■ THANJAVUR/CHENNAI

It was all over in a matter of minutes and before people could realise what was happening, 11 persons were electrocuted to death and others ran helter-skelter in disbelief while the temple chariot was ablaze. The Appar temple chariot procession in Thanjavur on Wednesday ended in a tragedy that led to an outpouring of grief and anguish from various quarters.

"People were thrown away, they just fell down. I could see a man lying here and another one there and the unfolding scene was freightening as we could not understand what was happening," a woman eyewitness said.

Villagers say the wooden temple chariot, with parts being iron based fitment, was decorated with colourful lights especially on the top, and it came into contact with the overhead electricity line. The chariot's lighting was powered by a mobile generator tied to the rear end of the temple car. Local men said the lights on the top of the chariot and the foldable structure that supported it came in contact with the High Tension overhead powerline, leading to electrocution.

"Organisers could not go near the generator, leave alone turning it off. Obviously no one was sure from where the electricity was originating and how it was passing on and it was mayhem," a villager who witnessed the tragedy said.

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A chariot catches fire after coming into contact with an electric wire during a chariot procession in Kalimedu area of Thanjavur district on Wednesday

PTI

India's foreign policy not a pale
imitation of others: JaishankarWorld must focus on
stopping fighting,
getting them talking,
says Minister on
Ukraine-Russia war

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India follows an independent foreign policy and cannot be a "pale imitation" of others, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said here on Wednesday while urging the world to focus on "stopping the fighting and getting to talking" to deal with the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict.

He made this observation a day after slamming the western nations for ignoring the developments in Asia and also said India's position on the crisis is best placed to advance such an approach.

Reiterating the country's stand, Jaishankar said India cannot please other nations by being a "pale imitation" of

what they are.

"We have to be confident about who we are. I think it's better to engage with the world on the basis of who we are rather than try and please the world by being a pale imitation of what they are," he said at the Raisina Dialogue.

"The idea that others define us, that you know somewhere we need to get approval from other quarters, I think, that's an era we need to put behind," he stressed.

"We spent a lot of time yesterday on Ukraine and I have tried to explain what our views are but also explained that in our minds the best way forward is to focus on stopping the fighting, getting them talking and finding ways of moving forward. We think our choices, our positions are best placed to advance that," he said.

He also elaborated upon India's 75-year-long journey after Independence and highlighted how the country played a key role in promoting democracy in South Asia.

Reflecting on areas where India came up short, Jaishankar opined lack of adequate attention to human resources and manufacturing and mentioned that probably not much attention was given to hard security as part of foreign policy.

Asked about what should be the priority for the country in the next 25 years, Jaishankar said capability development in all possible areas should be the central focus.

He hoped that India will be "deeply more international" in terms of its commitments, responsibilities and roles in the next 25 years. "We should not be looking at the world with a sense of entitlement. We need to earn our place in the world," he said.

On India's expectations from the international community, the Minister said "there is a lot of talk about reliable and resilient supply chains and people speak about transparency and trusted technologies."

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PM to visit Germany,
Denmark, France on
3-day tour from May 2PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will pay an official visit to Germany, Denmark, and France from May 2 to 4. This will be the Prime Minister's first visit abroad this year. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, meanwhile, will visit Bangladesh and Bhutan from April 28 to 30.

Giving details of the Prime Minister's visit, the Ministry of External Affairs said Modi will hold bilateral talks with Chancellor Olaf Scholz in Berlin, and the two leaders will co-chair the sixth edition of the India-Germany Inter-Governmental Consultations (IGC).

The biennial IGC is a unique dialogue format that also sees the participation of several Ministers from both the

sides. This will be the Prime Minister's first IGC with Chancellor Scholz, and also the first such Government-to-Government consultations of the new German Government which assumed office in December 2021.

During his visit, Modi and Scholz will also jointly address a business event. Modi will address and interact with the Indian community in Germany.

In 2021, India and Germany commemorated 70 years of the establishment of diplomatic relations and have been strategic partners since 2000. This visit will be an opportunity to enhance and intensify cooperation in a broad range of areas and for the two Governments to exchange views on regional and global matters of mutual interest.

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Unauthorised loudspeakers being removed from UP religious places

Over 6K loudspeakers removed, volume of 30K set to permissible limits in all religious places, says UP Police

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

Over 6,000 unauthorised loudspeakers were removed from religious places and volume of other 30,000 was set to permissible limits across Uttar Pradesh following a Government order, a senior police official said on Wednesday. A statewide drive is being undertaken to remove unauthorised loudspeakers from religious places and set the volume of others within permissible limits, Additional Director General of Police (Law and Order) Prashant Kumar said.

He added that loudspeakers are being removed from all religious places without any discrimination. Under this exercise, a total of 6,031 loudspeakers were removed and volume of 29,674 loudspeakers was set within permissible limits till Wednesday afternoon, Kumar said. Explaining further about the action, he said, "The loudspeakers which are being removed are unauthorised."

"Those loudspeakers which



have been placed without taking due permission from the district administration or the ones which are placed in excess of the permitted numbers are categorised as unauthorised," he added.

He said, "Orders of the high court regarding loudspeakers are also being considered during the exercise." The action followed after Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, during a review meeting on law and order with senior officials here last week, said people have the freedom to per-

form their religious practices according to their faith.

"Though microphones can be used, it should be ensured that the sound does not come out of any premises. People should not face any problem," he had said.

The home department has also sought a compliance report from the districts over the removal of loudspeakers at religious places by April 30.

As per the information provided by the police department on Wednesday, maximum 1,366

loudspeakers were removed in districts of the Varanasi zone, followed by Meerut (1,215), Bareilly (1,070) and Kanpur (1,056).

In terms of minimising the volume of loudspeakers, the Lucknow zone tops the list with action being taken against 6,400 loudspeakers, followed by Bareilly (6,257) and Meerut (5,976).

The exercise was conducted in the city by a joint team comprising officials of the Lucknow Municipal Corporation and the police.

Several parts of eastern India face power crisis as mercury rises

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

After Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh, several parts of eastern India are grappling with a power crisis, as peak demand in States sees a sharp rise amid a sweltering heat wave. Odisha, Jharkhand and Bihar have reported power outages in the last few days from major cities as well as rural areas. As many as 12 states are facing a power crisis.

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the maximum temperatures in most places in these states are hovering above 40-44 degrees Celsius and there seems to be no respite from the heat wave during the next five days.

Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren admitted that the state is unable to meet the peak demand, but said his government has sanctioned additional funds for buying power from the open market through energy exchanges.

"The heat is beyond imagination... Several states in the country are facing shortage of power. It is also difficult to purchase power from the open market due to high rates and competition among states," Soren said.

Taking to Twitter, Sakshi Singh, wife of cricket icon Mahendra Singh Dhoni, who hails from Jharkhand's capital Ranchi, had also recently complained about power crisis.

"As a tax payer of Jharkhand, just want to know why is there a power crisis in Jharkhand since so many years? We are doing our part by consciously making sure we save energy!" she had said.

As per the Central Electricity Authority, the state has a total installed capacity of 4,556.44 MW as on January. Of this, around 4,250 MW comes from thermal sources. Thermal power plants in Jharkhand are reportedly unable to fulfil the daily peak hour requirement of nearly 2,400 MW in the wake of "lower" supply of coal, the officials said.

Union Minister of Coal Pralhad Joshi on Wednesday said "there is no need to panic", as the government is "monitoring the situation on a day-to-day, hourly basis" amid reports that coal shortage is likely to worsen, exacerbating the power crisis across several states.

Joshi said that as of April 25, 21.55 million tons of coal stock was available with thermal power plants; which is almost 9-9.5 days of stock available with thermal power plants.

Bihar Energy Secretary Sanjeev Hans said the state is facing a power deficit of 200-300 MW per day because of the sudden increase in demand, following the early arrival of peak summer and reduced generation of hydropower.

The state's consumption is close to 6,000 MW per day and availability from different sources is to the tune of 5,000-5,200 MW, he said.

"However, almost every day we are purchasing around 600 MW from the power exchange at higher rates," Hans said.

State-owned National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) has an installed power generation capacity of 8,410 MW across six projects in Bihar. "In terms of meeting power demand, Bihar is in a much better position if you compare figures with other states," said Vishwanath Chandan, spokesperson, NTPC (Eastern Region-1).

In Odisha, residents of a number of districts complained of frequent power cuts amid scorching heat. The state faced acute shortage of electricity in mid-April following the breakdown of an NTPC unit, which generates 800 MW of power, of which Odisha's share is 400 MW.

The energy department has

also called for regulating air-conditioner load, industrial and agricultural load during peak hours from 7 pm to 11 pm for the next one week in order to maintain stable power supply. The coal crisis at certain independent power plants (IPPs) has also added to the electricity woes in the state, an official of the department said.

"The government is dealing with a situation in April, which was expected in May. Never before has Odisha experienced such high temperatures in April," said Energy Secretary N B Dhal. Odisha's current peak power demand is estimated to be 5,200-5,400 MW, while the state generates around 4,800 MW.

"Discussions in a meeting (chaired by Chief Secretary S C Mohapatra) indicated that the power supply situation is quite under control, and it would get better by the first week of May," an official release said.

Meanwhile, officials in West Bengal said the state is a major power producer and capable of managing its electricity demand. The state-run power producer has six thermal plants in West Bengal.

The Mamata Banerjee government has announced summer vacations in schools earlier than scheduled.

Opp accuses PM...

From Page 1

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee also issued statement after Modi's remarks on fuel prices saying the discussion was one-sided and that she doesn't agree with the Prime Minister.

"Today's interaction with Modi was completely one-sided and misleading. Facts shared by him were wrong. We have been providing a subsidy of Re 1 on every litre of petrol and diesel for the last three years. We've spent Rs 1,500 crore on this," Mamata told reporters at the State secretariat. She claimed there was no scope for the Chief Ministers to speak at the meeting and hence, they could not counter the Prime Minister's statement.

"It would have been better had the PM not spoken on fuel price hike in a Covid-19 review meeting, it was his agenda," she said, iterating her demand for a reduction in fuel prices.

Kerala State Finance

Minister K N Balagopal also hit back at the PM saying the increase in petrol and diesel rates was due to the cess and surcharge levied by the Centre.

He said Kerala has not increased taxes on petroleum products in the last six years. When the State Government has not increased taxes on petrol or diesel by even one rupee in the last six years, then how can it be asked to reduce taxes, Balagopal asked.

He further said the reason for rise in fuel prices was not due to increase in State taxes, but the cess and surcharge levied by the Centre on sale of petrol and diesel which amounts to cutting into the state's share of the revenue from petroleum products.

KT Rama Rao, Telangana Minister and working president of ruling Telangana Rashtra Samithi, took to Twitter to allege that fuel prices had shot up because of the Central Government.

Covid...

From Page 1

Noting that schools have opened after long time and some parents are worried over the increased number of cases in some places, Modi expressed satisfaction that more and more children are getting vaccinated.

He pointed out that in March the campaign to vaccinate children in the 12-14 years age-group was started, and on Tuesday, emergency use authorisation has been granted to Covaxin shots for children in the age bracket of 6-12 years.

"Our priority is to vaccinate all eligible children at the earliest. For this, as before, special campaigns will also be needed in schools. Teachers and parents should also remain aware on this front," Modi said. The Prime Minister said during the third wave of Covid, India witnessed up to three lakh cases per day and all States handled the situation while also allowing social and economic activity to continue.

BJP, media making fake charges on Bengal law & order: Didi

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday launched a scathing attack on the BJP, Left and the media for trying to tarnish the image of Bengal by raking up false charges on law and order situation of the State.

"There are some vested interests who for political reasons are out to malign the State Government and giving a bad name to the State for narrow political reasons... often small incidents are blown out of proportions showing our law and order situation in poor light..." Banerjee said adding in Bengal the police register complaints and take action on them whereas in UP, MP and other States they do not even act.

"What happened at Unnao or Hathras... How some journalists were snapped naked in



MP because they were doing political stories not liked by the Government... in Bengal nothing of that sort happens... our police register complaints and act on them... still the BJP and CPI(M) are trying to tarnish the image of our State," she said.

Claiming that a section of the media had teamed up with the opposition parties in their nefarious designs Banerjee said "we are following the television channels how they have been generating stories only on rape

and other crimes as if there is no good news... sometimes these stories are not even true... our police will be told to keep a tab on these stories."

She warned "I will take action against the perpetrators of crimes whenever they appear in the media if they are true... but if the reports are false then those making those false stories will be hauled up because such false news are nothing but hate stories... and the Supreme Court has a clear guideline against hate stories."

Saying that repeated stories on rape only go on to embolden some people to commit such crimes she said "indirectly a section of the media is encouraging these people into committing more of such crimes." The media was doing such false stories to gain TRP points she said warning such "cheap journalism" would not be tolerated in Bengal.

Prashant Kishor responsible for party's loss, says TMC Goa chief says as he resigns

PTI ■ PANAJI

Goa Trinamool Congress Chief Kiran Kandolkar resigned on Wednesday and alleged that political strategist Prashant Kishor was responsible for the "humiliating" defeat of the Mamata Banerjee-led party in the recent State Assembly polls who also tried to "blackmail" the Congress.

Addressing a press conference, Kandolkar claimed that Kishor ended up helping BJP to form the government after the polls. The resignation of Kandolkar and two other leaders, who had contested on the TMC symbol, came as another setback for the Mamata Banerjee-led party which is struggling to retain its flock in Goa since the poll debacle. The TMC drew a blank in its maiden electoral outing in Goa.

"Prashant Kishor was responsible for the TMC's humiliating defeat in Goa polls. He was in Goa to blackmail the Congress and eventually ended up helping the BJP to form the government again," Kandolkar alleged. He, however, didn't elaborate on the "blackmail" charge against Kishor, who recently declined to join Congress.

Kandolkar, along with Tarak Arolkar, and Sandeep Vazarkar have resigned from the primary membership of the Mamata Banerjee-led party.

Days earlier, Kandolkar's wife Kavita Kandolkar had also quit the TMC, owing to "pressure" from her supporters. Soon after Kavita Kandolkar's resignation move, the Goa TMC tweeted that the party was restructuring the entire AITC Goa State Committee with immediate effect.

India's...

From Page 1

If India could do more and show the rest of the world that the world benefits by India being bigger," Jaishankar said.

"So we need to develop stakes in our future whether the rest of the world is concerned. I think some of that is happening for strategic reasons obviously, but we need to make more of it happen especially for economic reasons," he added.

Underlining India's 75-year-long successful democratic journey, Jaishankar said the choices made by India have had a larger influence globally.

Jaishankar said there is a "gut sense" that democracy is the future, and a large part of this is due to the choices made by India in the past. "There was a time when in this part of the world, we were the only democracy. If democracy is global today or we see it global today, in some measure, the credit is due to India," he said.

India contributed to the spreading of democracy in South Asia, Jaishankar said adding "we would like to see more prosperity in South Asia."

PM to visit Germany, Denmark...

From Page 1

The Prime Minister will thereafter travel to Copenhagen on an official visit at the invitation of Prime Minister of Denmark, Mette Frederiksen. He will also participate in the second India-Nordic Summit being hosted by Denmark. The bilateral component of the visit will include talks with Frederiksen as well as an audience with Her Majesty Queen Margrethe II.

The Green Strategic Partnership was the first of its kind arrangement between India and Denmark. The visit would provide both sides an opportunity to review its progress, as well as examine ways to further expand our multifaceted cooperation. During the visit, Modi will attend an India-Denmark Business Forum and also address members of the Indian diaspora.

During the second India-Nordic Summit, the Prime Minister will also interact with other Nordic leaders -- Prime Minister Katrin Jakobsdóttir of Iceland, Prime Minister Jonas

Gahr Store of Norway, Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson of Sweden and Prime Minister Sanna Marin of Finland.

The Summit will focus on subjects like post-pandemic economic recovery, climate change, innovation and technology, renewable energy, the evolving global security scenario and India-Nordic cooperation in the Arctic region. The first India-Nordic Summit took place in 2018 in Stockholm.

On his return journey on May 4, Modi will briefly stop over in Paris and meet French President Emmanuel Macron.

India and France are celebrating 75 years of their diplomatic relations this year and the meeting between the two leaders will set a more ambitious agenda of the strategic partnership.

On Jaishankar's schedule, the Ministry said during his visit to Bangladesh, he will call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. He will also hold discussions with Foreign Minister A K Abdul Momen.

11 lives...

From Page 1

Also, in keeping with the custom, water was poured on the ground on which the chariot was set to arrive on any street and the wet surface too contributed in conducting the electricity.

"When some people poured water to douse fire in a particular spot, it conducted electricity further and added to the chaos injuring people," another man said. The chariot that was by then ablaze was eventually gutted.

At the same time, the injured people, which includes both severely injured and others with relatively less severity, screamed in pain drawing local people in hordes. They could however do nothing much as power conductivity was still live.

It soon became apparent that the persons lying motionless here and there could be dead. When they were rushed to the hospital, the fears of the families of participants in the temple event and local people became true.

'Hanuman Chalisa' row: Sena links Rana to underworld, seeks ED probe

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Adding a new dimension to the ongoing face-off between the Rana couple and the Shiv Sena-led MVA Government over the recitation of "Hanuman Chalisa", Sena MP Sanjay Raut has sought to link Amravati MP Navneet Rana by alleging that she had taken a loan of Rs 80 lakh from Yusuf Lakdawala who had been arrested a couple of years back in a Rs 200 crore money laundering case involving Karachi-based don Dawood Ibrahim.

In a tweet put late on Tuesday, Raut had said: "Navneet Rana recvd a LOAN of Rs 80 lacs frm Yusuf Lakdawala who died in Jail rcntly. The same Lakdawala was arrested by @dir_ed in a money laundering case & his links with D gang. My question is- Has ED investigated the matter? This is a question of national security!"

@PMOIndia".

Along with his tweet, Raut had posted a purported extract of Navneet Kaur-Rana's 2019 election affidavit which mentions the loan amount due to (the late) Lakdawala.

Lakdawala, from whom Navneet had borrowed Rs 80 lakh, died while in custody at the Arthur Road Central Jail in September 2021.

Talking to media persons here on Wednesday, Raut wondered: "Why has the ED not yet investigated this? This is just one matter that has come to light, there may be other such irregularities that will be exposed in the probe..."

Raut also wondered whether there was an "underworld connection" to the ongoing over the recitation of "Hanuman Chalisa, as it (a link) was found during the March 1993 Mumbai serial blasts. In another tweet put out on the alleged Navneet-Lakdawala link, Raut said on

Wednesday: "Underworld connection: Lakdawala was arrested by the ED in a Rs 200 crore money laundering case and he died in the lock-up. Yusuf's illegal money is now in Rana's account. When will ED serve tea to Rana? Why is the D-Gang being saved? Why is the BJP quiet?"

Hinting at a probe into the alleged link between Navneet Rana and late Lakdawala, Minister of State for Home Shambhuraj Desai said that the police would look into the matter and in case a complaint is registered, they would investigate the alleged link further.

The Rana couple were arrested on Sunday evening for offences registered initially against them under sections 153A (causing enmity between different groups), 34 (common intention) and later under section 124A (sedition) of IPC for

for challenging the government machinery and making remarks against Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray in a controversy arising out of their threat to recite "Hanuman Chalisa" in front of Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray's Bandra residence. They were also booked under provisions of the Bombay Police Act for causing a law and order situation in the city.

Navneet and Ravi Rana were remanded by a holiday court in judicial custody for 14 days. The Rana couple subsequently moved the city court seeking bail and the court scheduled the hearing of the case for April 29.

On Tuesday, the Rana couple filed a fresh bail application before the Mumbai City Civil & Sessions Court which asked the Prosecution to file its reply by April 29 and posted Rana's bail plea for hearing on April 29.

Kerala to replicate Gujarat Model of Governance; Opposition cries foul

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The CPI(M)'s hatred for Prime Minister Modi's brand of politics has not come in its way of studying and replicating the Gujarat Model of development. The CPI(M)-led Government in Kerala has

deputed a high level delegation that includes Chief Secretary VP Joy to Gandhi Nagar in Gujarat to study the pattern of development and project monitoring by Chief Minister and his Cabinet colleagues. The Kerala Government is under pressure to rectify its basic services like State Transport

Corporation and Electricity Board which are plagued by issues like workers indiscipline and rudderless management.

While Leader of Opposition VD Satheshan ridiculed the Kerala Government for its new found love for Gujarat, A P Abdullakutty, national vice

president of the BJP said that he had been asking chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan to follow the Gujarat Model for the last ten years. The chief secretary and his staff officer left for Gujarat on Wednesday where they are expected to interact with chief minister

"This is an open admission

about the secret deal between the BJP and the CPI(M)," said Satheshan reacting to the chief secretary's trip to Gujarat. He said that there was nothing to be replicated in Kerala from Gujarat and pointed out that there were many mysteries behind the chief secretary's trip to Gujarat. "Next, Vijayan

may depute a team to New Delhi to study the Narendra Modi model development at the Centre," he said.

Abdullakutty, the BJP leader was a CPI(M) leader and he was expelled from the party for visiting Gujarat and openly complimenting the Narendra Modi style of governance.

विशेष शाखा पुलिस मुख्यालय
मध्यप्रदेश भोपाल

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Ragpicker, his rescuer die in Bawana sewer

The 18-year-old man had entered the sewer to collect plastic waste, while the other man went inside to save him

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

An 18-year-old ragpicker died on Wednesday after he entered a sewer in Outer Delhi's Bawana area to collect plastic waste, while another man who went inside to save him was also killed. The deceased have been identified as Chittaranjan and Abdul Salam. According to the fire department, they received a call around 11.25 a.m. about the incident.

According to police, Abdul Salam, a ragpicker, removed the cover of the sewer on the Ganga Toli Road near Balaji Chowk in Bawana and entered it. When Salam did not come out for a long time, his younger brother Sahil, who was near the spot, raised an alarm, they said.

A passerby, Chittaranjan Choudhary rushed to rescue him and entered the sewer but none of them came out. According to Atul Garg, Director, Delhi Fire Service (DFS), a call was received at 11.25 a.m. about two persons falling into a sewer in Bawana

area. The fire department rushed two fire tenders for the rescue operation.

"The local police, an Emergency Response Vehicle, the fire brigade and ambulance were at the spot and efforts were made to get them out," said Brijendra Kumar Yadav, Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Outer North. "The two men were taken out and shifted to Maharishi Valmiki Hospital where doctors declared them brought dead," he said.

"The bodies have been sent for post-mortem. We have initiated necessary proceedings under relevant Sections of the Code of Criminal Procedure," the DCP said.

Till April 4 this year, three people were injured after entering in sewers. While two people died in 2021, three succumbed in 2020, two in 2019 and six in 2018.

The first death this year was reported on March 20 after a man died while cleaning the sewer of an apartment. In the second incident, three workers had a miraculous escape after being pulled out while working in a MTNL sewer line near Janpath.

On March 29, the bodies of four men were recovered from a sewer. The following day, two died after falling in a pit while repairing a motor in a sewage plant in east Delhi.

Sisodia reviews work on underpass at Benito Juarez Marg

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi's Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Wednesday reviewed the ongoing construction work of the underpass at city's Benito Juarez Marg along with works related to the development of roads in Central and New Delhi.

For works related to the development of roads, Sisodia, who is also Public Works Department (PWD) minister, approved projects worth Rs 23.96 crore.

Meanwhile, Sisodia also approved Rs 2.54 crore to install lifts and escalators, for the convenience of the users of the foot-over bridge and sky-

walk being built along with the underpass at BJ Marg. "The Kejriwal Government is committed to provide safe, smooth and beautiful roads to the people of Delhi. Our focus is to decongest Delhi roads, strengthen them and give people a better commuting experience," said Sisodia.

Sisodia also directed the officials of PWD that this project should be completed in time so that people do not face any problem in movement and they get relief from incessant traffic.

Notably, the underpass at BJ Marg is part of Corridor Improvement Project of PWD which was taken up to improve the Outer Ring Road from IIT to NH-8 and its impact areas.

BJP unilaterally changes name of Mohammadpur village

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi BJP unit on Wednesday said they have changed name of south Delhi's Mohammadpur village in south Delhi to Madhavpuram on their own because the Aam Aadmi Party-led Delhi Government hadn't acted on the South Delhi Municipal Corporation's proposal in this regard since December.

The Delhi BJP president Adesh Gupta also posed with workers and locals in front of a freshly painted board that welcomed visitors to 'Madhavpuram'. The development comes even as the ruling AAP has maintained that Delhi has a State Naming Authority for all such matters, and if it receives any such proposals.

Betting racket during IPL match busted, 3 arrested

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With the arrest of three men, the Delhi Police on Wednesday busted an Indian Premier League (IPL) satta racket in the national Capital. Police said that they have also recovered five mobile phones, one Laptop, one LED television and Rs 1,09,260 cash from the possession of the accused, who were nabbed from Rohini's Vijay Vihar area.

The accused have been identified as Deepak (39), a resident of Budh Vihar area, Tarun (33) and Dinesh Khatri (24), both residents of Rithala area. According to Pranav Tayal, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Rohini district, on April, 26, specific inputs were

Locals face breathing problems as Bhalswa landfill burns



Firefighters try to douse a fire that broke out at Bhalswa landfill site, in New Delhi on Tuesday evening. RANJAN DIMRI/THE PIONEER

Nearby school for underprivileged kids closed for a week as smoke fills the air

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Gyan Sarovar School, a child resource centre for underprivileged children of ragpickers living near the national Capital's Bhalswa landfill site in north Delhi, has been closed for a week due to a massive fire in the area which has been raging for over 24 hours. Residents

of the area have also started complaining of sore throat, itchy eyes and breathing problems. The fire broke out at the landfill site on Tuesday evening and the fire department rushed 10 fire tenders to the spot. Later, three more fire tenders were pressed into service.

According to fire officials, efforts are still on to douse the flames. "The cause of the fire is yet to be ascertained, however, the rising temperature, these days, allows the formation of methane gas at the landfill site which is extremely flammable,"

said an official. According to the System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting And Research (SAFAR), the air quality at the Dhirpur monitoring station, just six km from the landfill site, showed 'severe' category.

The pollutant PM 2.5 was at 316 (severe) and PM 10 at 251 (poor). Several videos showed the blaze engulfing the mountain of garbage, sending a dense plume of smoke into the sky. The Ghazipur landfill has seen three such fires since March 28. The wet waste

dumped in a landfill produces methane when it rots. In hot weather conditions, methane catches fire spontaneously and the blaze spreads as it feeds on combustible material like textiles and plastics.

Asked about how does the school function in case of frequent fires, Father Santhosh of the Gyan Sarovar School said, "Usually, it's on the other side of the landfill and not on the side where the school is situated. We do see smoke up in the air from a distance at times but it is never this unbearable."

Traders take pre-emptive steps to avoid loss of business

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Following the surge in Covid-19 cases in the national Capital, the traders' associations across the city have resumed regular sanitisation of their establishments, put up posters on Covid-appropriate behaviour and are ensuring proper masking in the markets.

According to the representatives of market associations, the bazaars and market complexes are the first ones to be impacted by the Covid-necessitated restrictions, so they are taking pre-emptive action to avoid facing the brunt of it.

With booster doses for the Coronavirus available for all adults, the traders' associations have also been planning holding vaccine camps to ensure the safety of shop owners

and customers. The New Delhi Traders' Association (NDTA) has said it is ensuring that all necessary precautions are followed in the markets and has urged all its members to take booster doses.

Traders at Palika Bazaar have also taken several measures to prevent the spread of the virus and have started the making announcements on loudspeakers reminding people to wear masks. "As cases are increasing, we have started taking measures like reminding people at regular intervals to wear masks. We have asked guards to prevent the entry of customers who are not wearing masks. We are planning to organise a camp to give booster doses to people," said Darshan Lal Kakkar, president, Palika Bazaar Association. Traders at

1,367 fresh Covid cases, 1 death in city

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The national Capital on Wednesday reported 1,367 fresh Coronavirus cases and one fatality, while the positivity rate stood at 4.50 per cent, according to data shared by the health department. It was the sixth-consecutive day that Delhi recorded over 1,000 new cases in a day. The infection

tally in the Capital stands at 18,78,458 while the death toll has reached 26,170. A total of 30,346 tests were conducted in the city on Tuesday. Delhi had reported 1,204 fresh Covid cases and one fatality on Tuesday, while the positivity rate stood at 4.64 per cent. A day before, it saw 1,011 cases with a positivity rate of 6.42 per cent and one death.

Chandni Chowk, the area which is witnessing a surge in footfall due to the wedding season, have brought back Covid protocols and are ensuring that masking is followed. Traders believe that another set of

restrictions will have a bad impact on trade, and may even bankrupt business owners. For most part of the last two years, markets remained shut or were allowed to open with restrictions due to the pandemic.

Baijal reviews progress of work on reviving Yamuna

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Lieutenant-Governor Anil Baijal on Wednesday reviewed the progress of ongoing projects for the restoration and rejuvenation of Yamuna riverfront and stressed on the need for time-bound completion of landscaping and plantation in the area to restore wetlands and riverine ecosystem.

The Lieutenant Governor has also directed the implementing agency that is Delhi Development Authority (DDA) to take steps for adequate surveillance and security of the area to protect the land from encroachments.

The meeting was attended by DDA vice chairman Manish Kumar Gupta and other senior officials. During the meeting, the LG has monitored the projects on Priority basis. "It would

go a long way in not only achieving the much needed rejuvenation of the River, but will also provide the City with citizen friendly green and aesthetic landscape," the official said.

"While appreciating the progress of the rejuvenation works undertaken so far, LG emphasized upon time bound completion of landscaping, greening and plantation in the area to restore wetlands and riverine ecosystem," the official said.

"For the restoration and rejuvenation of the Yamuna floodplains under the jurisdiction of UP Irrigation Department, LG advised VC, DDA to work in close coordination with concerned authorities of UP Govt so as to ensure smooth execution of the project," he said.

MCDs should have used bulldozers to clear garbage mountains: Rai

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Blaming Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) lead Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) for the frequent fires at landfills across the national Capital, the Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai on Wednesday said the BJP-ruled municipal corporations should have used bulldozers to clear the mountains of garbage in Delhi.

On the other hand Delhi BJP MP Manoj Tiwari wrote to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal urging him to hold a meeting of the stakeholders, including civic agencies, to deal with the problem of air pollution including those caused by fires at garbage dumps in the city. "The increasing cases of fire in landfill sites are the result of increasing corruption in the BJP's administered MCD. One thing is clear. The BJP in MCD did nothing about the mountains of garbage for 15 years. They indulged in corruption and these fires are a result of it," said Rai.

"They should have used the bulldozer to clear these mountains of garbage in their 15 years of rule," Rai said.

The minister had on Tuesday night asked the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) to submit a report on the fire at the landfill in north Delhi within 24 hours. On April 21, Rai had said the Delhi government will study a system installed in Mumbai to capture methane from the rotting waste and replicate it in the capital to prevent fires at landfills. Meanwhile, the AAP senior leader and MCD in-charge Durgesh Pathak said that around 14 fires have been reported this year but BJP seems to take no action.

"The AAP demands an FIR for criminal negligence against the BJP and MCD's incompetence actively endangering lives of Delhi residents. People living around the landfill are suffocating as the fire still hasn't been put out," said Pathak.

In his letter to Delhi CM. Tiwari said that this is a matter of life of three crore Delhiites as the pollution level is in a very bad stage and worsening day by day.



Aam Aadmi Party workers during a protest against the BJP in New Delhi on Wednesday. RANJAN DIMRI/THE PIONEER

AAP protests against MCD's anti-encroachment drive

BJP-ruled civic bodies are extorting people by threatening to run bulldozers on their houses, accuses Pathak

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Wednesday held a protest against the BJP-ruled municipal corporation's (MCD) anti-encroachment drives in the national Capital, alleging that the saffron party leaders were extorting people by threatening to run bulldozers on their houses.

The AAP had planned to hold the protest outside the BJP headquarters, located about one kilometer from its head office, but it could not do so because the police had put barricades on the way.

Several AAP leaders and workers, led by Durgesh Pathak, held their protest near their own party's headquarters here, holding placards in their hands and raising slogans like "Stop hooliganism", "Stop extortion" against BJP-ruled civic bodies' anti-encroachment drives in city. "We have gathered here to protest against

BJP's hooliganism and extortion," Pathak told reporters. Pathak alleged that Delhi BJP leaders have been reaching out to people across Delhi and threatening to run bulldozers on "unauthorised" constructions done on their properties if they do not "pay money" to them.

"They (BJP leaders) are extorting people by threatening that bulldozers would be run over their properties if they do not pay money to them. They are visiting homes and pointing out frivolous shortcomings," the senior AAP leader said.

First BJP "allowed and promoted" illegal constructions in city while ruling three MCDs for past 15 years, its leaders are now demanding that people pay "ransom" to avoid razing of such structures, he charged.

"We will not allow this hooliganism and extortion," he said. The BJP-ruled South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) on Tuesday cracked down on encroachers in all its four zones and removed temporary structures and illegal hoardings, and impounded vehicles, freeing a nearly five km road stretch, officials said.

Heatwave to continue for next five days: IMD



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

There will be no respite from the heatwave for the next five days. The national Capital on Wednesday had a maximum temperature of 41.5 degrees Celsius, which was three notches warmer than the normal for this time of the year.

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Northwest India has been recording higher than normal temperatures since March last week, with weather experts attributing it to the absence of active western disturbances over north India and any major system over

south India. The weather base station at Safdarjung Observatory recorded a minimum temperature of 22.2 degrees Celsius, which was two notches colder than the normal temperature for this season.

The mercury at the Safdarjung Observatory is expected to breach the 43-degree mark on Thursday and touch 44 degrees Celsius by Friday, the IMD said. As per the IMD data, Pitampura (43.6 degrees Celsius) and Mungeshpur (44.1 degrees Celsius) reeled under a heatwave.

The weather stations at Najafgarh, Ridge, and Sports Complex recorded their maximum temperature at 43.7 degrees Celsius, 43.6 degrees Celsius, and 44.2 degrees Celsius, respectively. The maximum temperature may even leap to 46 degrees Celsius in

parts of Delhi, a Met department official said. The region had got some respite last week owing to cloudy weather due to the influence of a western disturbance over Afghanistan. A yellow alert warning has been issued for a heatwave spell in the national Capital starting from April 28, for the next five days. The IMD uses four colour codes for weather warnings — green (no action needed), yellow (watch and stay updated), orange (be prepared) and red (take action).

The IMD said the heatwave could lead to "moderate" health concerns for vulnerable people — infants, the elderly, people with chronic diseases -- in affected areas. "Hence people of these regions should avoid heat exposure, wear lightweight, light-coloured, loose, cotton clothes and cover the head by use of cloth, hat or umbrella etc," it said.

Developed nations reneging on climate finance pledges: India

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

India on Wednesday maintained the developed nations are not fulfilling their promises of climate finance and technology transfer. At the same time, it also made it clear that New Delhi is not a part of the greenhouse gas emissions problem but will be a big part of the solution to climate change as there is no 'Planet B'. Participating at the Raisina Dialogue 2022, which entered its third day, Union Environment Minister Bhopendra Yadav asserted that India was determined to achieve economic prosperity and enhance its renewable energy capacity.

"We are determined to achieve economic prosperity as well as fulfil the aspiration of our people. The countries which have already got a major share of their carbon emissions can't ask developing nations to

stop the aspirations of their people.

"We are very clear that there is no phase-out of coal but phase-down. Simultaneously, India is committed to enhancing its renewable energy capacity," the Environment Minister said.

He stressed the need for technology transfer as climate change has gripped the world and developing nations are in dire need of climate finance and technology.

"There is so much technology which must be transferred. India is also working on green technology like the hydrogen mission. But, whatever green technology advancement takes place in the world, must be given to developing nations also," Yadav said.

He listed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Panchamrit' (five elixirs) for India, which were announced at COP 26 in Glasgow, UK, last year, and said these are India's contributions

to solving the global emissions problem.

The 'Panchamrits' are — India's non-fossil fuel energy capacity will reach 500 gigawatts by 2030; meet 50 per cent of its energy requirements from renewable energy by 2030; reduce the total projected carbon emission by 1 billion tonnes till 2030; reduce the carbon intensity of its economy by 45 per cent by 2030 and achieve the net-zero target by 2070.

Yadav, while reiterating the 'Panchamrits', said there is "no planet B". "Developed countries are not fulfilling their own promise of giving us money. Technology transfer is also not coming the way required."

"India is among the few countries of G20 which achieved their nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and targets. However, many countries refuse to raise their NDCs after COP," he said.

The minister said India is a partner in three major forums

also. "For disaster resilience infrastructure, India made a forum with the UK. For green energy, India is a partner of LeadIT with Sweden and of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) with France. A new initiative under ISA, 'One Sun One Grid One World', was announced at COP 26," he said.

Yadav also asserted that India has taken several steps for ease of business in the country and many nations are interested in investing in India.

"Our government has taken several steps for ease of business in the country. We met other countries which are ready to invest in India. Climate change has more impact on vulnerable countries."

"Climate finance and technology transfer must be provided to developing countries. In the final declaration of COP 26, developed countries expressed deep regret about not fulfilling their climate finance promise," he said.

Cabinet nod to upgrade 2G mobile connectivity to 4G in naxal-hit areas



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Cabinet on Wednesday approved upgradation of 2G mobile sites to 4G in naxal-hit areas at a cost of ₹2,426 crore. The project is spread across naxal-affected area in 10 states and the task has been assigned to the state-owned telecom firm BSNL.

"We have 4G here but LWE (left wing extremism) areas have 2G connectivity. To provide 4G in place of 2G facility, the Cabinet under leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved ₹2,426 crore for upgradation of 2,542 mobile towers from 2G to 4G. All

these towers are in naxal affected areas," Union I&B Minister Anurag Thakur told reporters after the cabinet meeting.

He said that indigenously developed core network, radio network and telecom equipment will be used to upgrade the mobile towers to 4G. "All these sites will be upgraded and run by BSNL," Thakur said.

The 2,542 mobile towers are spread across 10 states. This includes 346 sites in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar 16, Chattisgarh 971, Jharkhand 450, Madhya Pradesh 23, Maharashtra 125, Odisha 483, West Bengal 33, Uttar Pradesh 42 and Telangana 53, the Minister said.

Cabinet OK's ₹60,939 cr subsidy for phosphatic and potassic fertilisers

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved a subsidy of ₹60,939.23 crore for phosphatic and potassic fertilisers, including DAP, for the first six months of this fiscal as part of efforts to provide soil nutrients to farmers at an affordable price.

The Cabinet also approved an additional funding of ₹820 crore for India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) that will be utilised for expansion of its services to all post offices in the country. For its part, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved a proposal to invest ₹4,526.12 crore for constructing the 540 MW Kwar hydroelectric project in Jammu & Kashmir.

Briefing the media, Union Minister Anurag Thakur said that out of the little over 1.56 lakh post offices, IPPB, currently operates from 1.3 lakh post offices. He also said the Cabinet has given its in-prin-

ciple approval for future fund infusion worth ₹500 crore into IPPB for meeting regulatory requirements and technological upgradation.

"IPPB is going to expand its banking service to 1,56,434 post offices and for decision has been taken to invest ₹820 crore in it so that the poorest of the poor, mothers and sisters living in rural areas can get access to banking facilities," Thakur said.

He further said the Cabinet has approved a subsidy of Rs 60,939 crore for P&K fertilisers for the first six months of 2022-23 as against the subsidy of around ₹57,150 crore for these nutrients for the entire last fiscal.

He said the subsidy on DAP has been increased to ₹2,501 per bag and the farmers will continue to get the DAP at ₹1,350 per bag. The total cost of a DAP bag is ₹3,851. The subsidy on DAP has been increased five times to ₹2,501 per bag from ₹512 per bag in 2020-21, he added.

ED attaches ₹6.17 cr in accounts of fintech companies under PMLA

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has provisionally attached assets worth Rs 6.17 crore lying in various accounts/merchant IDs held in the name of various fintech companies/associated persons maintained with various banks/payment gateways,

under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act.

The ED probe has revealed that the accused persons along with Chinese nationals opened various companies in the name of various persons for the purpose of illegal transactions, issuing loans and raising investments through mobile Apps like Cash Master, Krazy Rupee, Cashin and Rupee Menu among others, the ED said in a statement. The ED had initiated money laundering investigation on the basis of two sep-

arate FIRs registered by Marathahalli and Mahalakshmiapuram police stations, Bengaluru under various sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

"Notably, these companies were incorporated during Covid time at common addresses by active involvement of some Chinese nationals in connivance with certain Indian Chartered Accountants who helped in incorporation of these companies by using KYC (know your customer) docu-

ED attaches assets of Upendra Nath of MECON, his wife

PNS: In a separate case, the ED has provisionally attached assets worth Rs 1.28 crore belonging to then Senior Manager, Metallurgical Wing, MECON Ltd., Upendra Nath Mandal and his wife Supriti Mandal in a case of criminal misconduct by a public servant. The attached assets include immovable properties in the form of one residential duplex apartment in Kolkata belonging to Mandal and a car in his wife's name.

ments of young Indian nationals in need of money who were made directors/shareholders in these companies," it said. The bank accounts of the companies were being operated/controlled mainly by the Chinese nationals on whose instructions the said companies were incorporated. The account numbers/payment gateways opened on the basis of KYC documents of these Indian nationals were utilised to provide loans to the public and high processing fees and usurious interest rates were charged.

"The fintech companies utilized their own funds received from abroad (mainly from China) for the purpose of giving loans at usurious rate of interest to the unemployed youth and other vulnerable section of the society, through the NBFCs by making arrangement of security deposit of the amount equivalent to the loans granted by the NBFCs to the borrowers," it said.

No alliance sans Congress can stop BJP in 2024: AK Antony

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Senior Congress leader AK Antony on Wednesday said that no alliance, which is not led by the Congress, can stop BJP in 2024. He also said the leadership of Nehru-Gandhi family members is vital to the Congress.

He was answering a volley of questions from the media on the reasons behind the rejection of election strategist Prashant Kishor's report for the revival of the party. Antony was interacting with the media, a day before he permanently leaves Delhi and settles down in his home state Kerala.

"Alliances without Congress can't stop BJP in 2024. Congress is a national party and must have an umbrella role in making

alliances with regional parties. We value all regional parties who wanted to stop this regime, which created a lot of divisions in the society's fabric. Also, I have to tell that people are in an illusive world if they think of a leadership in Congress without the Nehru-Gandhi family.

"The Nehru-Gandhi family is vital for the Congress as it is the powerhouse and the guiding force of the party. Without the family, the Congress would not be acceptable to 99 per cent of its workers across the country," he said, adding that he doesn't want to talk much on the reasons behind the rejections of Prashant Kishor's report.

The former Defence Minister said that he will not be able to attend the Chintan

Shivir in Udaipur as the doctor has prescribed three months of complete rest till July 15.

"I am leaving Delhi permanently tomorrow and going to settle in Thiruvananthapuram. I am leaving active politics in national level and wanted to play only complementary activities in home state. I have a room in Pradesh Congress Committee Office and will be there as long as they permit," said Antony asking media to wait for the outcome of forthcoming Chintan Shivir at Udaipur.

Antony said that he is having medical problems after re-infected with Covid last year. "I discussed with my wife 18 months ago and decided to leave Delhi and informed party leadership," he said.

Hooda loyalist new Haryana Cong chief

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Wednesday rehailed its Haryana unit, appointing Uday Bhan, a former MLA and a loyalist of former Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda, as president of its state unit. He replaced Kumari Selja, a known rival of Hooda.

The Congress also appointed four working presidents in the reorganisation of the state unit that had been on the cards for the past few weeks. The working presidents are namely Shruti Choudhary, Ram Kishan Gujjar, Jitender Kumar Bhardwaj and Suresh Gupta.

"Congress President has accepted the resignation of Kumari Selja from the post of the President, Haryana Pradesh Congress Committee with immediate effect," according to a statement from party senior leader K C Venugopal.

Selja said she had submitted her resignation to the party high command a few days ago and described herself as a "true soldier of the party".

"I am a true soldier of the Congress party. I have full faith in my high command and we will all work together. My congratulations to the new state unit president and the working presidents," she said.

Bhan, who is from the Scheduled Caste community and is a former MLA from Hodal, is considered a close confidant of Hooda, who had had his way in the revamp.

Hooda, who is also Leader of the Opposition in Haryana, termed Bhan a hard working leader who has worked at the grassroots.

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that Neelam Marwaha 'Sellers' claims to be the owner and in possession of Plot Bearing No. F-92, in Rahaia Aranya City, Sector 11 and 14, Sohna, Gurgaon Haryana (hereinafter called the said property) by virtue of law of Inheritance after the death of her Unmarried Son Deep Kamal Marwaha, said Deep Kamal Marwaha Died Intestate on 23.07.2020 leaving behind his mother Neelam Marwaha, Raj Kamal Marwaha (Brother), Ekta Wassan (Sister) and Nain Kamal Marwaha (Brother) and said legal heirs have executed an NOC for Transfer of said property in favour of Neelam Marwaha and accordingly Name of Neelam Marwaha is substituted by the said legal heirs. Dated 11.12.2020 and said Neelam Marwaha has agreed to sell the said property to Ms. Kavita Diwan w/o Vishal Diwan and said Ms. Kavita Diwan has agreed to create mortgage of the said property in favour of the said IREPS First Bank Limited, having its office at TITO. All persons/Institutions having any claim against or in respect of the said property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage (equitable/registered or otherwise), gift, trust, inheritance, lien or otherwise whatsoever, are hereby requested to notify the same in writing to us with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned below within 10 days from the date hereof, failing which the claim or claims, if any, of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned and our client shall proceed with the disbursement of loan against the said property and subsequent creation of mortgage in respect thereof.

Kumar and Associates,
Advocates and Consultants
200, Second Floor, 23, Shivaji Marg,
Moti Nagar, New Delhi -110015
kumarassociates.advocate@gmail.com
Phone No. 0114112527-28

UJJAIN SMART CITY LIMITED

Mela Office, Kotli Road, Ujjain (M.P.) 456001 Ph. 0734 2525855
NIT No.-: USCL/162 Tender ID : 2022_UAD_198906_1 Date 23/04/2022
NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Ujjain Smart City Limited invites proposal for **"Selection Of Agency For Providing Digital Solution To Manage Protocol Darshanarthi"**. Interested and eligible bidders may submit their proposals online at www.mptenders.gov.in.

Earnest Money Deposit	Rs. 1,00,000/-
Cost of Document	Rs. 10,000/-
Pre bid Meeting Date	04/05/2022 15:00 hrs
Last date for submission of Technical and Financial Bid (Online)	13/05/2022 up to 17:00 hrs

For more details please visit [https:// www.mptenders.gov.in](https://www.mptenders.gov.in).
Any Corrigendum or amendments shall be published on this website only.

For, Ujjain Smart City Limited

New Okhla Industrial Development Authority

Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida G.B Nagar, (U.P.)
Website: www.noidaauthorityonline.com

E-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tenders are invited from eligible contractors / firms for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened / downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on Noida Authority's official website : www.noidaauthorityonline.com & <https://etender.up.nic.in>. Please ensure to see these website for any changes / amendments & corrigendum etc.

(1)	08/SPE/ PE/(PH-II) /E-T/2022 -23	Supply of JCB and Hiva machine for cleaning of Main Drain and transportation of garbage from PH-II Area, Noida	Rs. 9675000.00
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The above tenders can be uploaded by dated **28/04/2022 to 11/05/2022 upto 5.00 PM**. Pre-Qualification shall be opened / downloaded on dated **12/05/2022 at 11.00 AM**. (S.C. Mishra)
Sr. Project Engineer (Public Health) Noida.
Office : Sector-39
CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA

NORTHERN RAILWAY

E-TENDER NOTICE

Dy Chief Engineer/Const., Northern Railway, Tilak Bridge, New Delhi for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tender against Tender No.470-C-ACS-HK-TKJ Closing Date/Time 27.05.2022 up to 11.30 Hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Information regarding this tender is available on web site www.ireps.gov.in on internet & can be seen /download. The tenders/bidders will have to make payment towards Earnest Money against this tender through online payment modes like Net Banking, debit / Credit cards etc. available on IREPS portal. Manual / offline mode of payment through Demand Draft, Banker's cheque, Cash Deposit receipts etc. are not permitted.

Name of Work	House Keeping of Officer's Rest Houses at Lohian Bridge, Delhi, Officer's Rest House at Rohatk & up keeping/cleaning of Office complex at Rohatk and Housekeeping of Sr. Subordinate Rest House at TKJ & up keeping/ cleaning of Office complex of Dy. CE/C/TKJ for a period of Two years
Tender type	Open Bidding System Two Packet System
Tender Closing Date & Time	27.05.2022/ 11:30 hrs. 13.05.2022
Pre-Bid Conference (yes/No)	No Pre-Bid Conference Date Time Not Applicable
Advertised Value (Rs.)	1,34,34,537.12 Tendering Section Engineering
Bidding Style	Single Rate for Each Schedule Item Bidding Unit Rs.
Earnest Money (Rs.)	2,17,200/- Validity of Offer (Days) 60 days
Tender Doc. Cost (Rs.)	NIL Period of Completion 24 Months
Bidding Start Date	13.05.2022 Contract Type Service

1. Two packet systems shall be adopted in this tender.
2. In case of any difficulty helpdesk and learning centre available on the website IREPS may be approached.
3. Tenderer(s) are advised to read tender document carefully before participating in the tender.
Tender Notice No. 470-C-ACS-HK-TKJ Dated: 28/04/2022 968/22

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform general public that Mr. Rajesh Kumar and Mr. Ashok Kumar are owners of Eastern northern portion of Property bearing no. G-570 area measuring 25 sq. yds out of 100 sq. yds. out of Rect no. 25 and Killa no. 242 situated in the area of village of Khuraji Khwas at the abadi of Gali no. 1 Aram Park Shastri Nagar Ilaqa Shahdara Delhi-110031 vide Relinquishment deed dated 10.03.2022 Doc No. 1752, executed by Mrs. Madhu Bala and Mrs. Reeta. Now, Mr. Rajesh Kumar and Mr. Ashok Kumar are intending to sell the said property to Rashid Ali who 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. Munesh Dhawan/ Mr. Sudhir Jain (Advocates), Law Veritas, Unit no 907, 9th Floor, GD-JTL Tower, (B-08), Netaji Subhash Place, Delhi-110034 or contact at 9066707172/9818228636 (M).

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is publically notified that the Flat No B-008, Vivek Vihar, Sector 82, Noida, has been allotted in the name of Col Nandan Singh Dhapola S/o Uttam Singh & Mrs. Usha Dhapola W/o Col Nandan Singh Dhapola Both R/o Flat No B-008, Vivek Vihar, Sector-82, Noida. And Whereas the Original Booking Letter dated 15.12.2000 and Original Possession Letter dated 06.01.2008 has been lost at Market Mayur Vihar Phase-III Delhi on dated 13.02.2022, and which are not traceable till date inspite of our best efforts. (copy of FIR is attached), if and when I find the above said documents in future, I will not misuse the same and return to the concerned department.

Col Nandan Singh Dhapola

THE PIONEER'S CLASSIFIEDS

CHANGE OF NAME

I, RAZIA NARAYAN PENDSE, W/o Narayan Pendse, R/o A2/1202, Uniworld City, Sector 30, Gurgaon have changed my name to RAZIA PENDSE for all future purposes.

PD(9189)C

Pendamic is not over yet: WHO

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Notwithstanding a decline in Covid-19 cases and deaths globally in the past few days, largely due to a drop in testing rates, the pandemic is not over, the World Health Organisation (WHO) on Wednesday warned.

Last week, just more than 15,000 coronavirus-related deaths were reported to the WHO, the lowest weekly total since March 2020, WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told a press briefing on Tuesday.

However, the encouraging trend should be interpreted with caution, as many countries have scaled back on testing, and as a result "the WHO is receiving less and less information about transmission and sequencing," he said.

"This makes us increasingly blind to patterns of transmission and evolution. But this virus won't go away just because countries stop looking for it. It's still spreading, it's still changing and it's still killing," Tedros added.

"When it comes to a deadly virus, ignorance is not bliss. The WHO continues to call on all countries to maintain surveillance," he said.

Responding to the European Union's recent decision to enter a new post-emer-



gency phase of the Covid-19 pandemic, Mike Ryan, Executive Director of the WHO Health Emergencies Program, cautioned that this is not the time to lose focus on the virus nor on its potential to continue to evolve.

"The fact is that we're not out of this yet," he said.

Maria van Kerkhove, Technical Lead for the WHO's Health Emergencies Program, said despite the recent positive trends, she had "little confidence in the number of cases being reported around the world" due to the massive changes in testing strategies and the huge reduction in the number of tests being performed around the world, Xinhua news agency reported.

"On the positive side, we do see a change. We are in a different phase of this pandemic, certainly, but we are still very much in the middle of this pandemic, and this is still a global problem," she said.

"Now is not the time to retreat. Now is the time to really strengthen what we have put in place and ensure that we keep people alive, and we get our economies back on track and we save people's livelihoods," she noted.

"On the positive side, we do see a change. We are in a different phase of this pandemic, certainly, but we are still very much in the middle of this pandemic, and this is still a global problem," she said.

We have tools that can save lives but we need to use them strategically. Vaccines remain a key to fight the disease, she added.

Speaking at the press conference hosted by WHO, William Rodriguez, who heads the global diagnostics alliance FIND, pointed out that in the past four months, amid surging Covid cases from the Omicron variant, "testing rates have plummeted by 70 to 90 percent worldwide."

HC notice to Govt over vacant posts in institutions for disabled

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Central Government's failure to fill the top posts of the three statutory institutions — Chief Commissioner of Persons with Disabilities, the Chairperson of the Rehabilitation Council of India, and the Chairperson to the Board of National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities—has come under the scanner of the Delhi High Court.

Taking cognizance in the matter, the Court has issued a notice to the Government asking it to file a specific affidavit relating to the grievance within a week indicating the dates "since when these posts have been lying vacant; steps taken by it to fill up these vacancies, if any; and, in case, the steps have not been taken, the reasons thereof; and what steps are proposed to be taken and in how much time, to fill up these posts".

On behalf of the petitioners, advocate AK Bhardwaj had submitted to the court that the three statutory bodies were being given step-motherly treatment and that they were headless for years, thus affecting the welfare activities enshrined under these bodies for the persons with disabilities. The court was informed

that the Government had failed to fill the posts of the Chief Commissioner of Persons with Disabilities, the Chairperson of the Rehabilitation Council of India, and the Chairperson to the Board of National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation & Multiple Disabilities. These appointments have to be made by the central Government.

The court, in its order issued on April 20, 2022, also expressed shock at the Government's apathy to fill the post. "We fail to appreciate as to why these statutory posts are not been filled up in time to enable the functioning of the statutory bodies and offices, who are expected to discharge their duties under the beneficial legislations," said Justice Vipin Sanghi and Justice Navin Chawla in the order. The matter has been posted for May 11, 2022.

Muralidharan, Secretary, National Platform for the Rights of the Disabled welcomed the development saying, "These three important offices have been without full time heads for a long time. Bureaucrats are being deputed to these posts, striking at the independence and autonomy of these institutions, created under Acts of Parliament."

Madhya Pradesh AUTO SHOW

मध्यप्रदेश ऑटो शो | 28 से 30 अप्रैल 2022 | इंदौर

आयें ! हम बात करें, एक नई शुरुआत करें



नरेन्द्र मोदी
प्रधानमंत्री



शिवराज सिंह चौहान
मुख्यमंत्री, मध्यप्रदेश



एक्सपो



बायर-सेलर मीटिंग्स
(क्रेता-विक्रेता बैठकें)



बीटूबी और
बीटूजी मीटिंग्स



कॉन्फ्रेंसेस



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एयरपोर्ट के पास, इंदौर
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PAPER WITH PASSION

Goodbye PK

The buzz created by the possibility of PK joining the Congress had greatly excited the party supporters

The Congress' refusal to give a free hand to poll strategist Prashant Kishor to revamp the party organization for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, is on the expected line. Over the years, the decision-making space in Congress has been occupied by ageing 'squatters' who have no connection with the masses and have become largely irrelevant to the party. But these 'squatters', who are bereft of idea or energy to take on the mammoth challenge posed by the BJP, would not vacate the space for a new entrant — fresh blood with a new idea. The tag of the Congress general secretary, vice president, or office bearer is enough to massage their egos as they refuse to confront the fast-changing political landscape of the country. The buzz created by the possibility of Kishor joining the grand old party excited the Congress workers, but the squatters of the 'Delhi durbar' made sure that Kishor is offered such a raw deal that he would not accept it. In place of PK, anyone else would have also received the same cold response from the party. These leaders did pretty little to reverse the steady decline of the party's fortune during the last 25 years or so. Kishor wanted to play the role of a "disruptor" and give a shock therapy that Congress needed badly. The decayed and moribund setup could not motivate either the workers or the leaders. It's time Congress came out with a narrative that gave confidence to its sympathizers about its revival. Today, millions of hard-core Congress sympathizers have started voting for other parties because they don't want to end up supporting a candidate who would be competing with NOTA.

Kishor rightly argued for a non-Congress party president to blunt the age of "pariwarvad" hurled by the BJP. This is also important because Rahul Gandhi tends to do the vanishing act every now and then when the party needs him most. Even in the middle of such intense debate within the party over PK, Rahul went on a week-long foreign trip. A week is a long time in politics, and Congress needs a 24x7 president. Under the circumstances, Congress needed someone like Prashant Kishor more than vice versa. Now that the PK chapter is over and the Congress puts the focus back on its proposed Chintan shivir in Rajasthan, those who sabotaged the prospects of Kishor joining the party must take the responsibility for fixing its problems in several states. To start with, Sachin Pilot is still sulking as no effort has been made to sort out the mess in Rajasthan. There is no clarity on Congress-RJD alliance in Bihar or the party's stand on Hardik Patel in Gujarat. These are but a few examples of inaction. The experience of the past has shown that the present leadership was grossly incompetent in dealing with these challenges. In the final analysis, Congress may regret shutting the door on PK.



Dry land in the Yamuna river, seen on a hot summer day, near ITO in New Delhi

PTI

Sportlitics

People with proven sports credentials should run sports bodies

Sports organisations in India are not headed by sportspersons but largely by politicians. The glitter and glamour of sport, and the abundance of money and influence attract politicians. Over time, the organisations turn into personal fiefs and their control remains within the family. Scandals and scams, cases of nepotism and favouritism, sportspersons getting caught in internal politics, genuine contenders excluded from tournaments, and many more disturbing incidents have plagued these bodies. In most cases, the politicians escape both accountability and punitive action. The worst incident relates to the instances of corruption in the Delhi Commonwealth Games of 2010 when Suresh Kalmadi, the then Congress politician and head of the organising committee of the Games, was even arrested on corruption charges. How deep-rooted is political control over sports is evidenced by the fact that in 2016, the Indian Olympic Association named the scam-tainted Kalmadi as honorary lifetime president. Kalmadi was president of the Amateur Athletics Federation of India for nearly two decades. For that matter, BJP leader VK Malhotra also completed two decades as head of the Archery Federation of India. The case of Sharad Pawar's hold over cricketing bodies, not to talk of several others, is well documented.

The Madras High Court is the latest to decree that only sportspersons and not politicians or businessmen should be the office-bearers of sports clubs, associations and federations. Even the Supreme Court in 2013 chastised the government for being unable to control the federations. The court said politicians and businessmen were causing harm by heading sports bodies, adding these officers run the federations at the cost of the game and have nothing to do with the game. The courts can only say so much. The rest is for the politicians to act upon. And that action is not forthcoming at all. What is required is legislation that makes all sports bodies accountable and stipulates that office-bearers must have a minimum of a decade's direct involvement in sports at the national level. Professionals can take up other organisational roles. One recalls former law minister Veerappa Moily admitting that he wanted to bring in such legislation but he was under pressure to desist. He could not even manage to push a proposal to bring all sports bodies under the purview of the RTI Act.

A new chapter in job creation

The credit for this quantum jump in job creation goes to the Prime Minister's push for local manufacturing to achieve self-reliance

It's been a year full of historic feats for Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) in executing the flagship Prime Minister's Employment Generation Program (PMEGP). With setting up of an unprecedented 1.03 lakh new manufacturing and service units and creation of over 8.25 lakh jobs, PMEGP has emerged as the Government's most powerful tool of self-sustainability in the year 2021-22, even as the country was under partial lockdown for the first three months of the year during the second wave of COVID-19 pandemic.

This is for the first time since the launch of the PMEGP scheme in 2008, that KVIC has established over one lakh new units in a financial year. These 1,03,219 units have been set up at a total capital of nearly ₹12,000 crore out of which the KVIC disbursed a margin money subsidy of ₹2978 crore while the bank credit flow was nearly ₹9,000 crore. The margin money subsidy of ₹2978 crore given by KVIC in the year 2021-22 is also the highest since 2008. A whopping 8,25,752 new employment were created across the country, which is also the highest so far under PMEGP.

As compared to the previous year, i.e. 2020-21, the number of units and employment created under PMEGP has gone up by 39% each, while the margin money distribution (subsidy) has also witnessed a jump of 36% in FY 2021-22. In the larger perspective, the number of units set up under PMEGP since 2014-15 has increased by 114%, employment creation has gone up by 131% and the margin money distribution has seen a quantum jump of 165% in the year 2021-22.

The credit for this quantum jump in employment creation goes to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's push for local manufacturing to achieve self-reliance. This big thrust to local manufacturing and self-employment in wake of the Covid-19 pandemic has done wonders. A large number of youths, women and migrants were prompted to take up self-employment activities under PMEGP. Further, a slew of



policy decisions taken by the Ministry of MSME and KVIC to expedite the execution of projects under PMEGP helped KVIC achieve its best ever performance.

KVIC, in recent years, has taken a number of initiatives for effective implementation of PMEGP. In 2016, KVIC introduced an online portal for PMEGP. Before 2016, filing of applications was done manually and on an average only 70,000 applications were received annually. But, with the online portal in place, an average of nearly 4 lakh applications are received every year. The online system has brought in greater transparency. PMEGP portal enables the applicants to track their applications without any human intervention.

In another major step, KVIC started geo-tagging of all PMEGP units so as to verify their actual physical status performance at any point of time. So far, more than 1 lakh PMEGP units have been geo-tagged. This also enables any person to locate the PMEGP units using a mobile app.

Further, the Ministry of MSME, based on the inputs provided by KVIC, removed the role of the District Level Task Force Committee in approving the PMEGP projects and authorized state directors of KVIC for approval



KHADI AND VILLAGE INDUSTRIES COMMISSION HAS BROKEN ALL PREVIOUS RECORDS IN EMPLOYMENT CREATION UNDER THE FLAGSHIP PMEGP SCHEME IN 2021-22

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE BULLDOZERS & LOUDSPEAKERS

Sir —It started with a jibe, became an election campaign, and has now begun spreading its roots across the country. The use of bulldozers to demolish houses and properties of those accused of riots kick-started in Uttar Pradesh, for razing the illegal properties of criminals and promoting it as a stamp of approval of the state government's policy to maintain law and order. The bulldozer rolled into Madhya Pradesh as the BJP looked to beef up the Chief Minister's image. The bulldozer made its way into the national capital after clashes broke out in Jahangirpuri during a Hanuman Jayanti procession. However, the Supreme Court has rightly stayed the demolition drive. As per the Gangster Act, the police investigation is mandatory before any such use of a bulldozer, but in most cases, the rule hasn't been followed. The move seems to have become a quick favourite, with a section of right-wing organizations. If it's the bulldozer rolling from one state to another in north India, in Maharashtra, the loudspeaker has given political parties a new tool to rally around.

The Raj Thackeray-led Maharashtra Navanirman Sena set the cat among the pigeons in Maharashtra as he demanded that loudspeakers at mosques relaying 'Azaan' be removed by May 3 or else his party would play the Hanuman Chalisa at higher volumes to counter them. With this India is witnessing the dirty game of bulldozer and loudspeaker which is creating unrest, and fear and halting the progress and development of the country.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

NEED FOR GREEN ENERGY

Sir — At present, human life is completely dependent on electricity and technology. Industries, households, institutions all run on electricity. The percentage of electricity generation from coal alone is around sixty percent. Small amounts of electricity are being produced from hydro, wind, nuclear power etc. The whole country is troubled by the power crisis due to shortage of coal. In such a

Overzealous reporting is unacceptable



The Government on April 23 advised television channels to refrain from broadcasting "violative" content, "provocative headlines" and videos of violence, as it cited coverage of the Ukraine war and recent violence in northwest Delhi as well as in Khargon demolitions. Some channels played up provocative headlines and videos of violence that could incite communal hatred and disrupt peace and law and order. TV channels should refrain

from publishing and transmitting any content which is violative of the Cable Television Network (Regulation) Act 1995. No programme should be carried on the cable service that offends good taste or decency, contains criticism of friendly countries, attacks religions or communities and contains anything, obscene or defamatory, the advisory said.

The ministry had issued several advisories to the satellite TV channels to adhere to the Programme Code read with The Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995. "Sub-section (2) of Section 20, inter alia, provides that the Central Government may, by order, regulate or prohibit the transmission or retransmission of any channel or programme, if it considers it necessary or expedient to do so in the interest of sovereignty or integrity of India; or security of India; or friendly relations of India with any foreign State; or public order, decency or morality," said the ministry.

Yash Pal Ralhan | Jalandhar

situation, it is necessary that other options for electricity generation like solar energy and other sources should also be studied and be implemented.

Particular attention should be paid to electricity generation from solar energy. Because it takes less equipment and solar energy i.e. sunlight is also available in abundance in India. Along with this, attention also needs to be paid to the search for new options.

T Mahadev Rao | Visakhapatnam

COMPLIANCES MUST TO FIGHT COVID

Sir — With the new sub-variant of Covid-19 has led to anxiety and speculation that whether this strain will lead to a fourth wave of the pandemic, the crucial social vaccine of mask-wearing gains prominence again. In such a scenario, therefore, the decision of state governments to make mask-wearing mandatory and a fine of Rs. 500 for failure to

mask up is most welcome. While it has been sufficiently proven that using face masks greatly reduces the chance of transmitting and getting infected with Coronavirus, there are still challenges in promoting widespread mask-wearing behavior among the public.

The act of wearing a face mask can demonstrate that you have concern for the health of people around you. This simulation provides a good visual explanation of how masks can protect individuals and limit the transmission of the virus to a great extent. Apart from strict adherence to wearing masks, there is a need to institutionalize the process of compliance to the other two social vaccines – physical distancing and constant hand-washing with soap.

Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



VK SAXENA

establishing a whopping 21,640 units and thus exceeding the target by a massive 544%. In J&K, these units have been established with a total capital of ₹2101 crore. Out of this, KVIC disbursed a record margin money subsidy of ₹467 crore while the Bank Credit flow was ₹1634 crore. The margin money subsidy disbursed by KVIC in J&K is also the highest among all states/UTs in the country.

Such large-scale self-employment in J&K is a contribution of KVIC towards making the state self-sustainable and bringing it at par with other states in terms of development. The record number of PMEGP units in J&K is also a testimony of how people of J&K, after abrogation of Article 370 are participating in government schemes to strengthen the local economy and pave the way for overall development of the State.

The development of J&K has been the focus area of the Modi Government. Special thrust has been given on creation of local employment in the state since 2014-15. The efforts have been fortified since 2019 when J&K was made a union territory.

The writer is Chairman, Khadi & Village Industries Commission. The views expressed are personal.)

SOUND BITE

New India's new slogan — 'har ghar berozegaari, ghar ghar berozegaari' (there is unemployment in every household).

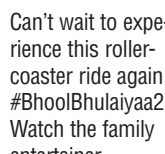


Congress leader — Rahul Gandhi



"We are extremely interested for a cease-fire in Ukraine as soon as possible.

UN General-Secretary — António Guterres



Can't wait to experience this roller-coaster ride again #Bhoobhulaiyaa2. Watch the family entertainer.

Actor — Vidya Balan



Robert Key will need to grow a "thick skin" akin to the Dukes ball just like I grew one to counter the "jealous people".

Former India Cricket coach — Ravi Shastri

Challenges in Asia and India's neighbourhood — in Afghanistan, and China — were a wake-up call for Europe.




External Affairs Minister — S Jaishankar

FIRST COLUMN

BOLLYWOOD INDUSTRY AND TOBACCO

Awareness among people and law enforcement can end menace



S K ARORA

The tobacco industry is strategically roping in every Bollywood super star for advertising its brands in the name of eatables especially ilaichi (cardamom) and Pan Masala. Basically, they know that these stars have a huge fan following and people, especially youth, worship them like gods. And these so-called gods have forgotten their responsibility to this society and are promoting killer products just for the sake of money which they already have in abundance. It's worth mentioning that tobacco/Pan masala products are responsible for 90% of oral cancers, 40% of all body cancers, 30 - 40 % of TB cases, 20 - 30 % of atherosclerotic diseases like Hypertension, Diabetes, Brain stroke, Heart attacks, and many more diseases like Respiratory diseases, Impotence, Infertility and congenital diseases among newborn etc. Tobacco and Pan Masala are killing more than 13 lakh people annually in our country India. Bollywood stars over a period have become significant contributors to Tobacco / Pan Masala-related morbidity and mortality. It is not that these Bollywood stars are not aware of these issues as the undersigned had communicated all these to every Bollywood super star including their wives individually in writing in 2016 and continued to communicate on different occasions later also. But they continue to promote tobacco brands in one or the other way.

Now one particular brand which was earlier being promoted by Ajay Devgan and Shahrukh Khan has recently roped in Akshay Kumar also. Akshay Kumar and Amitabh Bachchan do a lot many health campaigns but after promoting tobacco brands, their convincing power in such campaign will fall drastically and they should decide whether they want to do campaigns to promote or destroy health. Amitabh Bacchan was involved in such tobacco advertisements in September 2021 and there was lot of noise against this in all kinds of media then how can one believe that Akshay Kumar of the same industry was not aware of this news, that too involving the "Shehanshah" of Bollywood? These Bollywood stars are just exploiting the feelings of masses by pretending to be ignorant about facts. Ignorance is no excuse to get away from punishments of violations of law. It is high time that enforcement agencies should wake up and book these stars along with the tobacco brand companies under section 5 of COTPA (Cigarette and Other Tobacco products Act) 2003. Promoting tobacco brands in the name of any product including ilaichi comes under the Surrogate advertisement and such advertisements are banned under section 5 of COTPA. It is worth mentioning that Amitabh Bachchan also apologized to the public and said he has withdrawn from advertisement but the fact is that that advertisement is still going on in different medias. Similarly Akshay Kumar has also apologized but also communicated that "the brand might continue airing the ads till the legal duration of the contract that is binding upon me. " This is again the strategy to befool the innocent fans/public. Akshay Kumar further states that "I have decided to contribute the entire endorsement fee towards a worthy cause." Money earned from endorsement of killer products will not have any benefits to any worthy cause, instead will spread negative vibrations and negative effects. Why cannot Akshay Kumar return the money back to the brand company and break the contract immediately so that ads are stopped immediately? It is high time that public especially youth should not follow these stars blindly and not get be fooled by such advertisements. Awareness and enforcement should go hand in hand if we have to protect our youth/ future generations or even the whole planet from the menace of tobaccos and Pan Masala.

(The writer is additional Director, Health, Government of Delhi. The views expressed are personal.)

Noida Land Scam, a throwback — Part I

C&AG noted rigging in bids by several developers/builders in collusion with officials, irregularities in application processing and allotment to ineligible parties

In the first Performance Audit Report on the functioning of Noida Authority, the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) of India has highlighted the dismal performance of the Authority in the Land Acquisition and Allotment of Properties in NOIDA city submitted to the Government of UP in November 2021. This is the first Audit report of the C&AG since the jurisdiction of audit of Noida and other development authorities was entrusted to the C&AG in July 2017.

In his comprehensive report, the C&AG has invited the attention of the stake-holders to the wide-spread corruption, undue favoritism to private firms, arbitrariness, collusion between officials and builders in the functioning of Authority in allotment of plots during the period 2005-2018 leading to loss of tens of thousands of crores of rupees to the Authority/Government, besides causing untold sufferings, distress and despair among tens of thousands of families of the Homebuyers. The C&AG has pointed out rigging in bids by several developers/builders in collusion with the officials, major irregularities in processing of applications & allotment, allotment to ineligible parties, leveraging net-worth of an entity for multiple allotments, illegal sub-division of plots/transfer of ownership of allottees without ensuring payment of outstanding dues /timely completion of projects, etc.

The period of audit covered 2005-06 to 2017-18 i.e., the regime of four chief Ministers- Mulayam Singh Yadav (2005-2007), Mayawati (2007-2012), Akhilesh Yadav (2012-2017) and Yogi Aditya Nath (2017-2018). There were 24 CEOs of the Noida Authority during this period. Of them, three CEOs - Rama Raman, Mohinder Singh and Sanjeev Sharan had occupied the position of CEO of Noida Authority for more than two years each.

During the period 2005-06 to 2017-18, Noida Authority allotted 2,761 properties measuring 188.34 lakh sqm under Group Housing (GH)- 37.72 per cent, Commercial-8.94 per cent, Sports City-17.07 per cent, Institutional-8.14 per cent, Farm House (FH)- 9.75 per cent and Industrial-18.38 per cent categories at the premium (cost) of ₹39,443.41 crore excluding industrial plots cost. The C&AG has stated that during the audit period, the Authority acquired 80 per cent of land under the Land Acquisition Act, 1894 applicable upto December 2013, providing a standard justification of industrial development for invoking the urgency clause, which enabled the Collector to dispense with the rights of landowners in respect of hearing on objections to proposed land acquisition.

The Authority allotted the plots for GH, Commercial and Sports city on competitive bid basis (63.73% of allotments) to the highest bidders against fixed Reserve Price (RP) while Institutional, FH and Industrial plots were allotted at the fixed administrative prices based on the



THE C&AG HAS INVITED THE ATTENTION OF THE STAKE-HOLDERS TO THE WIDE-SPREAD CORRUPTION, UNDUE FAVORITISM TO PRIVATE FIRMS, ARBITRARINESS, COLLUSION BETWEEN OFFICIALS AND BUILDERS IN THE FUNCTIONING OF AUTHORITY IN ALLOTMENT OF PLOTS DURING THE PERIOD 2005-2018

(The writer is a retired DG of the C&AG of India and a member of RERA, Bihar between April 2018-December, 2021. The views expressed are personal.)



interviews conducted by Plot Allotment Committee (PAC). Further, RP of plots for Sports City and fixed price for FH, Institutional and Industrial purposes was kept significantly lower than the RPs kept for GH or Commercial plots, i.e., after excluding many types of costs which the Authority themselves incur. Thus, the Noida Authority in effect allotted only 46.66% plots through competitive bidding based on market rates whereas 53.34 % plots were allocated on subsidized or administrative rates to private companies/firms.

Noida Authority allotted 67 GH plots measuring 71.03 lakh sqm primarily during 2005-2018 at the cost of ₹14,050.73 crore, which were sub-divided into 113 plots by the allottees with the approval of the Authority. Of these, 71 projects (63 %) were either incomplete or partially completed even after ten years of allotment as on 31.3.2020. The outstanding dues of developers and builders have increased to ₹18,633.21 crore as of 31st March 2020, including ₹7281.89 crores of Unitech Ltd, ₹2276.67 crore from Amrapali group, etc., after ten years of allotment of plots.

During the audit period, Noida Authority made 320 allotments in the commercial properties category admeasuring 48,98,440.47 sqm at the cost of ₹25,264 crore through 41 closed ended schemes. It includes allotment of 4 plots for development of sport cities in prime sectors of 78, 79, 150 & 152 for 33,44,193 sqm (826.34 acre) at the lease premium of ₹5597.92 crores. The C&AG has reported that about 80 per cent of total allotments

in commercial category plots measuring 39,10,376 sqm were made to only three groups viz. Wave group of companies, 3C group of companies and Logix Group of companies during 2008-2015.

Wave (Late Ponty Chadha) group of companies -Wave Infratech Ltd and Flora & Fauna Land Development Pvt Ltd were allotted prime commercial properties/builders plots of 6,63,104 sqm (42 percent Builder plots of all commercial allotments) at the cost of Rs 6570 crores in heart of Noida (Sector 25A/32 sectors) in 2010-2011. However, due to change in Government in March 2012 and death of Ponty Chadha in November 2012, most of these projects were not completed due to one or the other reasons. and they have either surrendered the land (454131.63 sqm) in December 2016 or the Authority has cancelled (108421.13 sqm) the allotment (February 2021) due to non-payment of the dues/installments. Wave Group of Companies had the dues of ₹4425 crore as of 31st March 2020.

Logix group of companies promoted by Shakti Nath and his family members under the holding company of Logix Soft Tel Pvt Ltd (Turnover-12.25 crores in 2009-2010) were allotted 2 GH plots, 3 Commercial builders plots and a Sport city plot (224 acres in sector 150) at the cost ₹3246.50 crore during 2010-2011. Logix group had the outstanding dues of ₹5840 crores as on 31st March 2020.

Three C (3C) group of companies promoted by Vidur Bharadwaj, Nirmal Singh and Surpreet Singh

Suri, were allotted 3 GH plots, 4 Commercial builders plots and 2 Sport city plots (502 acres in Sectors 78, 79 & 150) at the cost Rs 6384.69 crore during 2010-2014.

Forty-nine out of 67 allotments (73 per cent) of GH plots were made during the period 2008-09 to 2010-11. In 42 out of 49 allotments, only two bids were received, of which in 15 pairs of applicants (for 15 plots valuing ₹2611.36 crore), the participating bidders were the same or of the same group. In nine of these cases, one allotment was made to each bidder while in the remaining cases the allotments were made to one bidder. The C&AG has found that the bid prices in all cases were very close to the RP and in 12 cases, the winner had bid less than two percent higher than the RP fixed for the plots. The C&AG stated that collusion between the participating bidders could not be ruled out, more so in those cases where alternate allotments were made to each of the participating bidders. Moreover, these allottees did not pay the premium timely and have the dues of ₹1625 crores after ten years of allotment.

The C&AG has further suspected Rigging of competition through use of group companies as competitors by Assotech Limited and Supertech Limited, for three plots (GH-93/137 of 51000sqm, GH-04/78 of 61430 sqm and GH-01/74 of 249410 sqm and felt that the sanctity of the tender process was vitiated and compromised in these cases and hence liable to be summarily rejected. (To be continued.)

POINT COUNTERPOINT

“CONGRESS PRESIDENT...INVITED HIM TO JOIN THE PARTY AS PART OF (A) GROUP WITH DEFINED RESPONSIBILITY. HE DECLINED.”
— CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY
RANDEEP SURJEWALA



“...THE PARTY NEEDS LEADERSHIP AND...WILL TO FIX...THE STRUCTURAL PROBLEMS THROUGH TRANSFORMATIONAL REFORMS.”
— POLITICAL STRATEGIST
PRASHANT KISHOR

MSME Sector needs major reforms to resolve job crisis

Easing the regulatory environment is a pre-condition to encouraging entrepreneurial instincts of the youth

The share of the MSME sector in the national GDP, GVA and exports is reported as 30.3%, 33.5% & 40-45% respectively. MSMEs provide about 110 million jobs which is 22-23% of the total employment in India. It is next highest to Agriculture. Government has declared several schemes which provide capital subsidies, credit guarantee, etc. to MSMEs. Despite this, barely, 15% of MSME units have registered with UDYAM Platform. They have genuine fear of regulatory and tax hazards and hence, they avoid registration. Probably, the policy makers are not fully aware about the actual problems of MSME.

Currently, overall credit, tax and regulatory environment are not so inspiring and the consequential business failure risks are



RP GUPTA

(The writer is an economist and author. The views expressed are personal.)

too high. There are several thousands of State and Central laws governing business. Among those, there are more than 25000 clauses envisaging the criminal prosecutions. Huge penalties and prosecutions are imposed even for the delay or non-compliance. Many such provisions are also applicable to MSME. Such regulatory environment crafts fear and entry barriers among the educated youth. Therefore, they prefer regular salaried jobs instead of owning MSME.

In a sequel, most micro and small units are operated by persons who failed to get decent employment or whose education does not support regular jobs. Hence, the regulatory easement is the most crucial need for unlocking the vast entrepreneurial capability of Indians



and developing MSME potential. India must essentially build a team of "job providers" and resolve the crisis of "job seekers". That will be the right and productive utilization of human capital in India.

District Industries Centres at each District should be converted as a facilitation centre for all MSMEs. Suitable legislation and directives may be enacted so that; the recommendation of Director of Industries at State

level and Development Commissioner at centre becomes a legal binding on other State and Central Departments. That will resolve several problems of MSME and inspire new promoters.

In September 2021, gross bank credit to MSME Sector was Rs.13.20 lakh crores, which is barely 12.04 % of India's gross bank credit of Rs.109.56 lakh crores. Considering the proposed share of MSME in GDP as 40% in next 2/3 years, as announced by Nitin Gadkari, India must increase the share of MSME credit to 20-22%. For this India should reduce consumer loan portfolio and SLR loan obligations. Besides banks, State Financial Corporations must be fully activated for the Micro and Small units. Adequate share capital may be infused by

states, banks and LIC. Those should also get refinancing facility from the Banks. There should be monthly review for taking corrective action on this front.

Bad loan percentage in MSME is obviously higher comparing to large business due to its small size, marginal experience and poor competitiveness. However, the total volume of such bad loans might be too small comparing to total Bank Credits. Existing Credit guarantee scheme should not be restricted to existing borrowers alone but be extended to new borrowers. Overall guarantee cover amount may be suitably enhanced. However, guarantee cover should be limited to 50% of loan to micro and small units and nil to medium units. NPA norms should be relaxed and loan restructuring may be liber-

ally permitted as per lender's wisdom; that will reduce bad loan.

Due to small size, MSME cannot compete with large business. In addition, MSMEs bear burden of cross subsidy in shape of higher rates of electricity, bank interest and logistics cost. For example, cheaper electricity to residential consumer and farmer is cross-subsidized by MSME. Average interest to MSME is higher comparing to consumer loan, large borrower and SLR loan to Government. MSME can't avail cheaper transportation of Railway due to small consignments. Hence, MSME needs relief on the taxation and export fronts, as under.

The "Products of Micro and Small Enterprises" (Manufacturing & Services) may be separately categorized and the

GST rate on the same may be reduced to about 50% level.

GST exemption limit may be increased to Rs.100 and 50 lakhs for the supplier of goods and services respectively. This will cover about 30-40% of micro units.

GST composition limits may also be increased to Rs.2.5 Crores & 5.0 crores in two slabs and two separatates of GST may be charged on turnover based upon the fair estimate of value addition. This will cover entire micro units.

Micro units (Other than small & medium) may be exempted from paying Income Tax, somewhat similar to Agriculture income. Export incentives may be given on the total exports of entire goods & services produced by MSME for compensating the higher production cost.

Rajapaksa ready to discuss formation of all-party Govt



PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's embattled President Gotabaya Rajapaksa on Wednesday convened a meeting of political parties on April 29 to discuss the possible formation of an all-party Government to end the protracted political impasse in

the country, amidst mounting pressure on Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa to resign to and make way for an interim Government. A letter to all party leaders in ruling coalition said government was in agreement to form an all-party government comprising parties represented in Parliament,

according to a statement. The meeting has been fixed for April 29 to discuss new arrangement after resignation of prime minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, it said. This comes in the background of pressure mounted within ruling coalition on prime minister to resign to make way for an interim government.

However, the statement from president is in contrast to position taken by his elder brother and the country's Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, who has said he will not resign and any interim government can be formed only under his leadership.

Both the President and Prime Minister are under mounting pressure from fierce public protests demanding his resignation for mishandling the country's worst economic crisis. Debt-ridden Sri Lanka is grappling with an unprecedented

economic turmoil since its independence from Britain in 1948. The crisis is caused in part by a lack of foreign currency, which has meant that country cannot afford to pay for imports of staple foods and fuel, leading to acute shortages and very high prices.

Sri Lankan election commission on Tuesday urged all political parties to come together to form an all-party government or a similar body to end political impasse prevailing in the country.

President Rajapaksa is coming under pressure to set up an interim administration as an immediate step to resolve economic and political turmoil in country. Mass anti-government protests demanding resignation of entire Rajapaksa family have been going on for more than two weeks. The public is being made to wait in long lines for fuel and cooking gas amid

power cuts. In recent weeks, prominent businesses and other professional organisations have repeated call for an interim government. A senior Buddhist monk claimed on Monday that President Rajapaksa had agreed to form an interim government to tackle unprecedented economic crisis.

Rajapaksa has said his offer for the opposition parties to join him in a unity government did not yield any results and therefore he was compelled to form a cabinet of his own.

The ongoing street protest opposite presidential secretariat entered its 9th day on Wednesday. The protests are now also being held opposite residence-cum-office of prime minister. The country's trade unions threatened on Wednesday that they will boycott work from Thursday in solidarity with stir that call for resignation of Rajapaksa family.

Court orders arrest of police officers over death of protester in shootout

Colombo: A Sri Lankan court on Wednesday ordered the arrest of police officers involved in the death of a protester after the police opened fire at unarmed anti-government protesters demonstrating against the fuel price hike in southwestern region of Rambukkana.

A 41-year-old father of two was killed and 13 others were injured on April 19 when police opened fire on residents of Rambukkana - some 90 kilometers northeast of Colombo, who were protesting against the fuel price hike. It was the first death during the ongoing protests over the worst-ever economic crisis in the country's history. (PTI)

Sri Lanka exhumes bodies to identify wife of Easter attack suicide bomber

PTI ■ COLOMBO

The exhumation of bodies of those killed in a suicide bomb explosion in a house when Sri Lankan police raided it a week after the 2019 Easter Sunday terror attacks commenced in the eastern town of Ampara to carry out a DNA test to identify the wife of a bomber, whose whereabouts is still not known.

On April 26, 2019, five days after the Easter Sunday terror attacks, the police investigators raided a house in the eastern town of Kalmunai looking for the brother of the main suspect Zahran Hashim, who was accused of carrying

out attacks on Colombo star class hotels and churches that killed 270 people, including foreigners.

During the raid, the occupants of the house blew themselves up and it was reported that 17 persons, including adults and children, were killed in explosion. However, the DNA tests carried out later had revealed presence of only 16 in house.

The police said that the DNA test did not reveal body parts of Sarah alias Pulasthini Mahendran, the wife of one of the suicide bombers who attacked the church in the western coastal town of Negombo, were among the remains found at the scene.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
Office of the Pr. Chief Conservator of Forests & HoFF
Jammu & Kashmir Forest Department

Notification for tender No.01/CAMPA/2022-23 dated 25.04.2022
The Jammu and Kashmir Forest Department (JKFD) invites proposals for hiring of services of reputed and experienced agencies to undertake third party evaluation of activities under different components of Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) executed by the Forest and allied Departments during **2019-20 to 2021-22**, covering all forest divisions of the UT of Jammu & Kashmir.
For details of RFP, please visit the official **website of J&K Forest Department at www.jkforest.gov.in and www.jktenders.gov.in.**
The last date for receipt of tender is 16 May 2022 at 3:00 PM.

Sd/- (Tender Inviting Authority) Chief Executive Officer,
J&K CAMPA Van Bhawan, Below Gumat Jammu-180001
jkcampacell@gmail.com

No. DIPK-1130/22
Date :- 25-04-2022

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR,
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI
(PHE) DIVISION KULGAM
Standard Bidding Document
For
> Laying & Fitting of Delivery and Distribution Pipe network of GMS Tubes and Ductile Iron Pipes of different Nominal Bores along with pipe fittings and control valves
> Construction of Service Reservoirs (SRs), Slow Sand Filtration Plants.
...at various Water Supply schemes of PHE Division Kulgam of Kashmir Province of UT of J&K, under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
e-NIT No. 06 OF 2022-23 Dated: 27-04-2022

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of UT of J&K, Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Division Kulgam invites tenders from reputed and resourceful Bidders/Firms/Companies/ of all classes registered in JK PWID/CPWD/Railway so any other state Government for below mentioned works at various Water Supply schemes of PHE Division Kulgam of Kashmir Province of UT of J&K, under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM). The bidding process shall be completed online on www.jktenders.gov.in in two covers viz **Cover 1st** consisting of General Terms and Conditions and Technical Specifications and Cover **2nd** consisting of Financial Bid on overall percentage rate basis, in the prescribed BOQ.

Sr. No.	Particulars of the work Tender fee (in Rs)	Estimated Cost	Earnest money Deposit	Bid Validity	Time of Completion of work (days)
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Laying & fitting of delivery mains consisting of GMS Tubes ductile iron pipes of different nominal bores along with pipe fitting and control valves in other allied works Execution of ancillary civil works like spring covers boundary walls, SRs Slows and filtration plants, proection works etc at various water supply schemes of special PHE Kal Shakti Division Kulgam	An An per Annexure-I to this bid document-	02% of the estimated cost	90 days	As per ANNEXURE-I to this bid document.

Position of funds: Approved Under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)
The tender inviting authority is Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti (PHE) Division Kulgam
The awarding authority is District Jal Jeevan Mission (DJJM).

Critical Dates:

I	Publish Date	27-04-2022
II	Document Download/salestart Date	27-04-2022
III	Date of Pre-bid meeting	04-05-2022
IV	Bid submission start date	27-04-2022
V	Bid submissionend date	21-05-2022
VI	Date and time of Bid opening	23-05-2022

- Bid documents can be accessed and downloaded from the website www.jktenders.gov.in
- The whole bidding process shall be complete online on tender portal www.jktenders.gov.in. The in tending bidders and own load the bid document from the tender portal and can submit their bids by uploading the month etender portal.
- The valid bids received shall be opened on line in the office of the Executive Engineer PHE Division Kulgam. Bids must be accompanied by bid securityand cost of Tender Document as specified in column 4 & 5 of the table and shall be payable at Srinagar.
- The cost of tender documents should be in form of DD/TR/e challan in favour of Executive Engineer PHE Division Kulgam.
- The hard copies of cost of tender document in shape of TR/e-challan, Earnest money in shape of CDR/FDR/BG and other relevant documents shall be obtained from the bidder who is declared as L1 after opening of financial cover.
- The bid shall remain valid for a period of 90 days from the last date of submission of bids. If any bidder withdraws his bid be fore the said period or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid, the same shall be considered to be in violation of bid security declaration and shall be dealt with accordingly and the bid shall be declared non-responsive.
- Other details can be seen in the bidding documents from the website www.jktenders.gov.in.
- Queries by email if any should be made at phe.division.kulgam@gmail.com

No: PHEK/486-500
Date: 27-04-2022

Executive Engineer
Jal Shakti (PHE) Division Kulgam

ANNEXURE I SCHEME WISE LIST OF WORKS					
S. No.	Name of Water No. Supply Scheme	Description of Work	Jal Shakti (PHE) Division	Estimated cost (in Lacs)	Time of completion (Days)
1.	Korelchandar	L/F of pipes, construction of 0.15 lac gallons cap. SR, 1 No. sluice chamber, chain link fencing WSS Korelchandar	Kulgam	43.86	60
2.	WSS Shurat	L/F of GI pipes for WSS Shurat under JJM	Kulgam	15.50	60
3.	Gopthal Kawaki bazar	L/F of pipes WSS Gopthal Kawaki bazar	Kulgam	10.64	60
4.	WSS Poniwah	L/F of pipes, construction of intake cum PST, construction of 0.15 lac gallons cap. SSFF, sluicechamber, chain link fencing for WSS Okey	Kulgam	104.87	60
5.	Brazloo Tengen	L/F of pipes, construction of intake chamber and other allied works WSS Brazloo tengen under JJM	Kulgam	11.90	60
6.	Laroo khalsa shurat khalsa	L/F of pipes for WSS laroo khalsa shurat khalsa	Kulgam	11.68	60
7.	WSS Okey	L/F of pipes and construction of chain link fencing for WSS Okey	Kulgam	28.71	60
8.	WSS Laisoo GB	L/F of pipes, construction of 0.10 lac gallons cap RCC SR, 1 No sluice chamber and chan link fencing WSS Laisoo GB	Kulgam	22.74	60
9.	WSS Shailpora Tarigam	L/F of GI pipes for WSS Shailpora tarigam under JJM	Kulgam	32.71	60
10.	Drangbalwaripora	L/F of pipes, construction of 0.45 lac gallons and 0.10 lac gallons cap 2 No RCC SRs, 2 No sluice chambers and Anchor blocks for WSS Drangbalwaripora under JJM	Kulgam	162.07	60
DIP No:DIPK-1222/22 Dated : 27.04.2022			Executive Engineer Special PHE Division Kulgam		

Pak cannot afford enmity with US at all: Shehbaz

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan cannot afford to have "enmity with the US at all," Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said, as he vowed to mend fences with all allies and friends of the

country who have been estranged from Islamabad due to the faulty foreign policies of the previous government of Imran Khan.

Sharif, who assumed office on April 11, regretted that the previous government led by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party led by Khan had annoyed all those countries that had always helped Pakistan in difficult times, especially China, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United States.

He said there was a need to end the mistrust between Pakistan and the United States, and both countries needed to see if they had committed any mistakes in the past, the Dawn newspaper reported on Wednesday. "Pakistan cannot afford to have enmi-

ty with the US at all," Sharif, also the President of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) said while responding to a volley of questions from senior journalists during an Iftar reception at the Prime Minister House on Tuesday.

Khan was ousted from power after losing a no-confidence vote in his leadership, which he alleged was part of a US-led conspiracy targeting him because of his independent foreign policy decisions on Russia, China and Afghanistan. The crickete-turned-politician has repeatedly alleged that his political opponents colluded with the US to bring about regime in Pakistan. But he provided no credible evidence of this and Washington has strongly denied any foreign interference.

China demands punishment to perpetrators behind Karachi blast

Beijing: China on Wednesday asked Pakistan to scale-up security for its nationals working in country and demanded a thorough investigation and punishment to perpetrators behind suicide attack at Karachi University which killed three Chinese teachers and injured another.

The blood of the Chinese cannot be shed in vain, and those behind this incident will surely pay price, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson said while strongly condemning the latest attack on Chinese nationals working in Pakistan.

Israeli strike on Syria kills 4 soldiers, wounds 3

AP ■ DAMASCUS

An Israeli missile attack on suburbs of the Syrian capital Damascus killed four soldiers and wounded three others, the Defense Ministry said Wednesday. The ministry said earlier in the day that the missiles were fired from northern Israel shortly after midnight

and that most of them were shot down. The ministry said attack on suburbs of Damascus caused material damage, but gave no further details.

The attacks came hours after the Israeli military said an Israeli drone crashed on the Syrian side of border Tuesday, adding that an investigation was opened into case. The Britain-based Syrian

Observatory for Human Rights, an opposition war monitor, said the strikes on several suburbs of Damascus hit arms depots for Iran-backed groups.

There was no comment from the Israeli military on the attacks near Damascus. It was latest attack on Syria since April 14, when several missiles hit Syrian army positions near Damascus.

6 convicted for wedding video celebrating arson

Jerusalem: An Israeli court convicted six Jewish men on Wednesday of inciting violence and supporting a terrorist organisation for their involvement in a 2015 wedding in which participants celebrated an arson attack that killed a Palestinian toddler and his parents.

The Jerusalem Magistrate's court found six guilty of a raft of offenses for "glorifying with dance and song murder of Dawabseh family" in a deadly West Bank firebombing by Jewish settler extremists in July 2015. The attack on village of Duma in occupied West Bank killed 18-month-old Ali and his parents Riham and Saad and drew condemnation from across Israel's pol spectrum. (AP)

NOTICE OF LOSS OF SHARES OF HINDUSTAN UNILEVER LIMITED (Formerly Hindustan Lever limited)

Regd. Off. Hindustan Unilever Limited, Unilever House, B D Savant Marg, Chakala, Andheri (East), Mumbai-400 099.

Notice is hereby given that the following share certificates have been reported as lost/misplaced and the company intends to issue duplicate certificates in lieu thereof, in due course.

Any person who has a valid claim on the said shares should lodge such claim with the company at its Registered office within 15 days hereof.

Holder Name	Folio no	Share	Certificate No.	No. of shares
Anil Kumar Sehgal	HLL3656971	10, Rs 1/- (F.V)	5397752	2201664345-2201664354

Place: Delhi, Date: 28/4/2022 ANIL KUMAR SEHGAL

PUBLIC NOTICE TO WHOMSOEVER IT MAY CONCERN

This is to inform the General Public that following share certificate of **VIP INDUSTRIES LIMITED** having its registered office at **DGP House, 5th Floor 88c, Old Prabhadevi Road, Mumbai, Maharashtra 400025**, registered in the name of the following shareholder have been lost by them.

Name of shareholder	Folio no	Certificate No.	Distinctive No.	No. of shares
NEERA RANI GOYAL	0007964	579	383231-383730	500

The public are hereby cautioned against purchasing or dealing in any way with the above referred share certificate. Any person who has any claim in respect of the said share certificate should lodge such claim with the Company or its Registrar and Transfer Agents **Link Intime India Private Limited 247 Park, C-101 L.B.S. Marg Vikhroli (West), Mumbai 400083 Tel: 022 49186270**. Within 15 days of publication of this notice after which no claim will be entertained and the Company shall proceed to issue Duplicate share Certificate.

Place: Delhi , Date:28/4/2022 NEERA RANI

उत्तराखण्ड लोक सेवा आयोग
हरिद्वार
फ़ोन कोड:- 249404

पत्रांक: 08/06/डी0आर0/सेवा-2/2018-19 दिनांक : 26 अप्रैल, 2022
विज्ञापित
एतद्वारा सूचित किया जाता है कि उत्तराखण्ड लोक सेवा आयोग द्वारा प्रकाशित **विज्ञापन संख्या: A-3/DR/S-3/2021 दिनांक 11 सितम्बर, 2021** के अन्तर्गत **विज्ञापित** भूतत् एवं खनिकर्मी इकाई, उद्योग निदेशालय, समूह 'ग' परीक्षा-2021 में **मानचित्रकार** के रिक्त 03 पद पर सीधी भर्ती के माध्यम से चयन हेतु प्रकाशित किया गया। उक्त विज्ञापन के सापेक्ष उल्लंघन कराये गये आवेदन पत्र व शैक्षिक अभिलेखों/प्रमाण-पत्रों की सन्निरीक्षा के उपरान्त औपचारिक रूप से अर्ह घोषित अभ्यर्थियों से स्क्रीनिंग परीक्षा/साक्षात्कार से पूर्व कतिपय वांछित अभिलेख उल्लंघन कराने हेतु सूची, अभ्यर्थन निरस्त घोषित अभ्यर्थियों की सूची एवं अनर्ह सूची आयोग की वेबसाइट **www.ukpsc.gov.in** पर अपलोड की गयी है। कृपया उक्त से अवगत होने का कष्ट करें।
(कर्मन्द्र सिंह) सचिव

Debts Recovery Tribunal-I, Delhi
4th Floor, Jeevan Tara Building,
Parliament Street, New Delhi-110001

O.A. No. 425/2020
PUNJAB NATIONAL BANK
(Oriental Bank of Commerce)
Versus
Applicant
Arti Loniya & Anr.
Defendants
To,
1. Mrs. Arti Loniya W/o Mr. Ashok Kumar, House No. 88, Street No. 13, Indira Park, Chander Nagar, Delhi-110051 **Also at: C-447, 1st Floor, Swaran Jayanti Puram, Tehsil & District Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh**
Also at: House No. 61B, Pocket-H, Dilshad Garden, Dilshad Garden, East Delhi - 110095 **Defendant 1**
2. Mr. Ashok Kumar S/o Shri Raghuvver Prasad, House No. 88, Street No. 13, Indira Park, Chander Nagar Delhi-110051 **Also at: C-447, 1st Floor, Swaran Jayanti Puram, Tehsil & District Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh** **Also at: House No. 61B, Pocket-H, Dilshad Garden, Dilshad Garden, East Delhi - 110095** **Defendant 2**
Whereas the above named applicant has instituted a case for recovery of **Rs. 53,10,436.14 (Rs Fifty Three Lakhs Ten Thousand Four Hundred Thirty Six and Paise Fourteen Only)** against you and whereas it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal that it is not possible to serve you in ordinary way. Therefore, this notice is given by advertisement directing you to make appearance before LD. Registrar on **20-05-2022 at 10.30 A.M. (for further details kindly visit DRT website www.drttribunal.gov.in)** Phone No. 011-23748473)
Take notice that in case of your failure to appear on the above mentioned day before this Tribunal, the case will be heard and decided in your absence.
Due to ongoing Pandemic Situation, all the matters will be taken up through Video Conferencing and for that purpose:-
(i) All the Advocates/Litigants shall download the "Cisco Webex" application / Software;
(ii) "Meeting ID" and "Password" for the next date of hearing qua cases to be taken by 'Registrar/Recovery Officer-I/ and Recovery Officer-II shall be available one day prior to the next date at DRT Official Portal i.e. "drt.gov.in" under the Public Notice Head.
(iii) In any exigency qua that, the Advocates/Litigants can contact the concerned official at Ph. No. 011-23748473.
Given under my hand and seal of the Tribunal on this **20th April, 2022**
by order of this Tribunal for Registrar
Respondent may contact under mention phone number for further enquiry.
Amit K. Dar, LD. Registrar, DRT-I, New Delhi, Phone:-011-23748473
E-mail: drt1delhi-dfs@nic.in

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of Fullerton India Credit Company Ltd. that Mrs. Babita is owner of Residential Plt area measuring 100*100= 200 Sq.Yds, at Khet No.33, Situated at Village Luskar, Pargana Dankaur, Tehsil & Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar, UP (the said property) by virtue of two separate sale deeds dated 10.01.2017 & 30.08.2017, having registration No. 517 & 26398. All persons are hereby informed that above mentioned owner want to take a Loan facility from Fullerton India Credit Company Ltd., against the said property. If anybody has any objections upon the ownership above owner of the said property, its sale (Mortgage /Litigation, and any kind of objections, kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.
Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants)
206, 11th Floor, 23, Shivaji Marg, Mori Nagar, N. Delhi-13 Ph. 011-4111257-28 kumarassociatesadvocates@gmail.com

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/ In Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Pramod Kumar Singh Chandel/ Akanksha Singh/ Kowla Singh/ LBDEL00002960809	House No- 448/111, Alopibagh Town, Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh/ April 22, 2022	March 25, 2021 Rs. 82,86,539/-	Delhi/ NCR & Uttar Pradesh

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 28, 2022
Place: Delhi/ NCR
Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

Russian forces intensify shelling of eastern Ukraine

AP ■ POKROVSK (UKRAINE)

As Russian forces intensify their shelling of eastern Ukraine, more people are leaving their homes in search of safety. In Pokrovsk, a town in the Donetsk region, people lined up Tuesday to board a train headed to the far west of the country along the border with Hungary and Slovakia. One person was lifted onto the train in a wheelchair, another on a stretcher.

The passengers took with them cats, dogs, a few bags and boxes, and the memory of those who did not flee in time.

"We were in the basement, but my daughter didn't make it and was hit with shrapnel on the doorstep" during shelling on Monday, said Mykola Kharchenko, 74. "We had to bury her in the garden near the pear tree." He said his village, Vremivka, about 70 kilometers (40 miles) from Pokrovsk, was under heavy fire for four days and everything was destroyed. With tears in his eyes, Kharchenko said he somehow held himself together at home, but once he reached the train station he fell apart.

In another development, the State Department says US Diplomats have begun returning to Ukraine by making day trips to temporary offices in the



western city of Lviv from neighboring Poland.

The department said the first group of diplomats crossed the Polish-Ukrainian border and traveled to Lviv on Tuesday morning before returning to Poland later in the day.

The step came just two days after Secretary of State Antony Blinken informed Ukrainian leaders during a secrecy-shrouded visit to Kyiv that the U.S. Would start restaffing its diplomatic facilities in Ukraine this week.

State Department spokesman Ned Price said the agency has accelerated its review of re-opening the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv, which was closed shortly before Russia invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24. He said operations at the embassy

would resume as soon as possible depending on the security situation in the capital. Meanwhile, the UN says Secretary-General António Guterres is concerned about reports of new security incidents in a Russian-backed separatist region of Moldova "and urges all concerned to refrain from any statements or actions that could escalate tensions."

U.N. Deputy spokesman Farhan Haq said Tuesday that Guterres has called for efforts to lower tensions throughout Trans-Dniester. Explosions rocked the region for the second day in a row, knocking out two powerful radio antennas close to the Ukrainian border. No one claimed responsibility for the attacks, but Ukraine all but blamed Russia.

US: Allies must move ‘at the speed of war’ to help Ukraine



AP ■ POKROVSK (UKRAINE)

The US defence chief urged Ukraine's allies to "move at the speed of war" to get more and heavier weapons to Kyiv as Russian forces rained fire on eastern and southern Ukraine amid new fears the fighting could spill over the country's borders.

For the second day, explosions rocked the separatist region of Trans-Dniester Tuesday in neighboring Moldova, knocking out two powerful radio antennas. And a Russian missile hit a strategic railroad bridge linking Ukraine's Odesa port region to neighbouring Romania, a NATO member, Ukrainian authorities said.

Just across the border in Russia, an ammunition depot in the Belgorod region was burning early Wednesday after several explosions were heard, the governor, Vyacheslav Gladkov, said on the messaging app Telegram. Early this

month, Russia said two Ukrainian helicopter gunships hit an oil reservoir in the same region, causing a fire.

NATO members Poland and Bulgaria said the Kremlin is cutting off natural gas supplies starting Wednesday, the first such actions of the war. Poland has been a major gateway for the delivery of weapons to Ukraine and confirmed this week that it is sending the country tanks.

Poland said it was well-prepared after working for years to reduce its reliance on Russian energy. Poland also has ample natural gas in storage, and it will soon benefit from two pipelines coming online, analyst Emily McClain of Rystad Energy said.

Bulgaria gets over 90% of its gas from Russia, and officials said they were working to find other sources, such as from Azerbaijan.

Both countries had refused Russia's demands that they pay in rubles, as have almost all of Russia's gas customers in Europe.

Russia cuts gas to Poland, Bulgaria



AP ■ POKROVSK (UKRAINE)

Russia's state-controlled natural gas giant Gazprom said it cut supplies to NATO members Poland and Bulgaria on Wednesday after they refused to pay for the shipments in rubles. Poland has been a major gateway for the delivery of weapons to Ukraine and confirmed this week that it is sending the country tanks.

Gazprom in a statement warned that if Poland and Bulgaria siphon gas intended for other European customers, the deliveries to Europe will be reduced to that amount.

European gas prices have spiked by as much as 24 per cent on the news. Benchmark

Dutch futures traded at one point around 125 euros per megawatt hour. Fatih Birol, the executive director of the Paris-based International Energy Agency, tweeted Wednesday morning that his organization "stands firmly with Poland."

"Gazprom's move to completely shut off gas supplies to Poland is yet another sign of Russia's politicisation of existing agreements & will only accelerate European efforts to move away from Russian energy supplies," he wrote. Poland said it was well-prepared after working for years to reduce its reliance on Russian energy. Poland also has ample natural gas in storage, and it will soon benefit from two pipelines coming online, analyst Emily McClain of Rystad Energy said.

Putin vows aims in Ukraine will be achieved

AP ■ MOSCOW

Russian President Vladimir Putin has vowed to Russia's parliament that the goals of the country's military operation in Ukraine will be achieved.

Putin said in an address on Wednesday to both houses of parliament, "I want to emphasise again that all the tasks of the special military operation we are conducting in the Donbas and Ukraine, launched on Feb. 24, will be unconditionally fulfilled." That, he said, will "guarantee the security of the residents" of separatist regions in eastern Ukraine that Russia recognised as independent shortly before launching its military action in Ukraine, as well as Crimea -- which Russia annexed in 2014 -- "and our entire country in the historical perspective."

Meanwhile, the Russian Foreign Ministry has announced sanctions against 287 British lawmakers in response to the UK Sanctioning 368 members of Russia's lower house of parliament.

'Russia's Chernobyl seizure risked accident'

AP ■ CHERNOBYL (UKRAINE)

Thirty-six years after the world's worst nuclear disaster, the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency said Tuesday that Russian troops risked causing an accident with their "very, very dangerous" seizure of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in Ukraine.

Standing under an umbrella during a rain shower outside the damaged plant, agency Director-General Rafael Mariano Grossi said that while radiation levels are normal, the situation is still "not stable." Nuclear authorities have to "keep on alert."

Russian troops moved into the radiation-contaminated Chernobyl exclusion zone in February on their way toward the Ukrainian capital.

DJI halts Russia, Ukraine business to prevent drone misuse

AP ■ BEIJING

Drone company DJI Technology Co has temporarily suspended business activities in Russia and Ukraine to prevent use of its drones in combat, in a rare case of a Chinese company pulling out of Russia because of the war.

"DJI is internally reassessing compliance requirements in various jurisdictions. Pending the current review, DJI will temporarily suspend all business activities in Russia and Ukraine," the company said in a statement released Tuesday. Many Western brands and companies have withdrawn from the

Russian market due to Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, but Chinese firms have kept operating there. Beijing has refrained from publicly criticising Russia over the war. Both Ukraine and Russia are thought to be using DJI drones in combat, even though the company maintains that its products are intended for civilian use.

Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine Mykhailo Fedorov wrote an open letter last month appealing to DJI to block sales of its drones in Russia, contending that Russian troops were using "DJI products in Ukraine in order to navigate their missiles to kill civilians."

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

Office of the Superintending Engineer PMGSY Circle Baramulla

NOTICE INVITING E- TENDERS

NIT NO:-01/SE/PMGSY/Bla/e-TENDERING-OF 2022-23 Dated:- 25-04- 2022

For and on behalf of the Government of Jammu & Kashmir, Superintending Engineer PMGSY Circle Baramulla invite e-tenders on Percentage Basis for the following work with 2 years DLP from the eligible & approved contractors of J&K State Govt. CPWD, Railways and other States.

S. No	Name of Work with Package No.	Tendered Cost (Rs. in Lacs)	Cost of document (Rs in Lacs)	Earnest Money (Bid Security) (Rs. in Lacs)	Time for completion (Days)	Tender Call	Time and Date of opening of Tenders online (Technical Bid)	Class of Contractor
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.	Renewal cost / Macadamization of Road from L02- Sangrinto to Rajpora, Length 14.00 Kms, Package No JK03-123, PMGSY Division Baramulla	199.32	0.10	3.99	180 days	1st	17-05-2022 At 11:00 AM	'A' Class in PWD or equivalent in CPWD/ Railways and other state Governments

1. The Bidding documents can be downloaded from the website www.pmgstyendersjk.gov.in from 26-04-2022 (04:30PM) To 16-05-2022 upto 04:30PM.

2. The Bids shall be deposited in electronic format on the website www.pmgstyendersjk.gov.in from 01-05-2022 (10:00 AM) To 16-05-2022 upto 04:30 PM. The bid uploaded on the Website upto due date and time will be opened online on 17-05-2022 at 11:00 AM in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend. If the office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bid as specified, the bid will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.

3. The complete bidding process will be online.

4. Cost of Bid Form is Rs.10,000/- (Rupees Ten Thousand Only) per package (non-refundable) only in the form of Demand Draft in favour of Accounts Officer PMGSY Kashmir payable at Srinagar.

5. A Pre-bid meeting will be held on 30-04-2022 at 11:00 AM in the Office of Superintending Engineer PMGSY (JKRRDA) Circle Baramulla at PWD (R&B) Complex Baramulla to clarify the issues and to answer questions on any matter that may be raised at that stage as stated in Clause 9 of instruction to bidders of the Bidding documents. The intending Bidders, before attending the Pre-bid meeting, are advised to visit the site of work and acquaint themselves with the site conditions. It has been made mandatory for all the intending bidders to participate in the pre-bid meeting on the scheduled date and time.

6. Availability of Bid Document and mode of submission: The bid document is available online and bid should be submitted online on website www.pmgstyendersjk.gov.in. The bidder would be required to register in the website which is free of cost. For submission of bids, the bidder is required to have valid Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized Certifying Authorities (CA). "Aspiring bidders who have not obtained the user ID and password for Participating in e-tendering in PMGSY may obtain the same from the website: www.pmgstyendersjk.gov.in.

7. Bids must be accompanied by cost of document and bid security in the form as specified in the Bidding Document. The Demand Draft on account of cost of bidding document shall be pledged to Accounts Officer PMGSY Kashmir payable at Srinagar. The bid validity shall remain valid for a period of not less than 90 days after the deadline date of bid submission specified in ITB. The bid security should be in the form of BG/FDR from a scheduled commercial bank and be pledged to the Superintending Engineer PMGSY Circle Baramulla payable at Baramulla and shall be valid for minimum 45 days beyond the validity of the bid.

8. The Hard Copy of original instruments in respect of cost of bidding document, bid security, Bank Credit facility and original copy of affidavits (e-stamp) must be delivered in the office of Superintending Engineer PMGSY Circle Baramulla at PWD (R&B) Complex Baramulla Kashmir on a date not later than three working days after the opening of technical qualification part of the bid either by Registered Post or by hand failing which the bids shall be declared non-responsive.

9. The bidders are advised to upload the required documents/information strictly as per the formats given in Section 3-Qualification Information. The bidder who fails to comply with the said instructions shall be declared as Non-responsive.

10. The bidders are informed that failure to complete the work within the stipulated time shall result into blacklisting of the bidder for two years.

11. The date and time of opening of Financial-Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.pmgstyendersjk.gov.in. This is conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The Financial-bids shall be opened accordingly online on same Web Site at the Office of Superintending Engineer PMGSY Circle Baramulla, Engineering Baramulla Kashmir.


12. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents.

Note:- The intending bidders are advised to study the entire bidding document before preparation and submission of their bids. This includes clause 3 (Eligible Bidders), 4 (Qualification of Bidders) of ITB (Instruction to Bidders), Appendix to ITB, Section 3 (Qualification Information), Contract Data to G.C.C. & Section 7 of Bidding Document.


Sd/-
Superintending Engineer
PMGSY Circle Baramulla

No:-SE/PMGSY/Bla/e-Tendering/173-85
Dated: 25-04-2022

DIP No: DIPK-1259/22
Dated: 27.04.2022



UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR,
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI (PHE) DIVISION AWANTIPORA



Standard Bidding Document

For

Laying, Fitting, Testing and Successful Commissioning of Delivery and Distribution Pipe network of GMS Tubes and Ductile Iron Pipes of different Nominal Bores along with pipe fittings and control valves

Construction, Testing and Successful Commissioning of Ground Service Reservoirs (GSRs), Slow Sand Filtration Plants

Execution of ancillary civil works like Spring Covers, Boundary walls, Protection Works, staff quarters etc.

at various Water Supply schemes of PHE DivisionAwantiporaofKashmirProvince of UT of J&K, underJaJeevanMission(JJM)

NOTICEINVITINGTENDER

e-NITNo. 02OF2022-23Dated:16-04-2022

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of UT of J&K, Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Division Awantipora invites e-tenders from reputed and resourceful Bidders/ Firms/Companies/of all classes registered in JKPWD/CPWD/Railways or any other state Government for below mentioned works at various Water Supply schemes of PHE Division Awantipora of Kashmir Province of UT of J&K, under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM).

The bidding process shall be completed online on www.jktenders.gov.in in two covers viz. Cover1st consisting of General Terms and Conditions and Technical Specifications and Cover 2nd consisting of Financial Bid on overall percentage rate basis, in the prescribed BOQ.

Sr No	Particulars of the work	Estimated Cost (Lacs)	Tender fee (inRs)	Earnest money Deposit	Bid Validity	Time of Completion of work (days).
1.	Laying & Fitting of Delivery and Distribution Mains consisting of GMS Tubes and Ductile Iron Pipes of different Nominal Bores along with pipe fittings and control valves Construction of Ground Service Reservoirs (GSRs), Slow Sand Filtration Plants Execution of ancillary civil works like Spring Covers, Boundary walls, Protection Works etc. at various Water Supply schemes of DivisionAwantipora of Kashmir Province of UT of J&K, under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)	As per ANNEXURE-I to this bid document.	500/-	02% of the estimated cost	90 days	As per ANNEXURE-I to this bid document.

Positionoffunds:ApprovedUnder JalJeevanMission(JJM)

The tenderinvitingauthorityisExecutiveEngineer,JalShakti(PHE)Division Awantipora

The awardingauthorityisDistrictJalJeevanMission(DJJM).

CriticalDates:

i	Publish Date	18-04-2022 at 9:00 A.M
ii	Document Download Start Date	18-04-2022 at9:00 A.M
iii	Clarification Start date	20-04-2022 from 10:00 A.M
iv	Clarification End date	25-04-2022 up to 6:00 P.M
iv	Bid submission Start date	27-04-2022 from 10:00 A.M
v	Bid submission End date	10-05-2022 at 4:00 P.M.
vi	Date of Bid opening	11-05-2022 at 4:00 P.M.

1. Bid documents can be accessed and downloaded from the website www.jktenders.gov.in

2. The whole bidding process shall be completed online on tender portal www.jktenders.gov.in. The intending bidders can download the bid document from the tender portal and can submit their bids by uploading them on the tender portal.

3. The valid bids received shall be opened online in the office of the Executive Engineer PHE Division Awantipora. Bids must be accompanied by bid security and cost of Tender Document as specified in column 4 & 5 of the table and shall be payable at Srinagar.

a. The cost of tender documents should be in form of DD/TR/e challan in favour of Executive Engineer PHE Division Awantipora.

4. Thehardcopiesofcostoftenderdocument in shape of TR/e-challan, Earnest money in shape of CDR/FDR/BG and other relevant documents shall be obtained from the bidder who is declared as L1after opening of financial cover.

5. The bid shall remain valid for aperiod of 90 days from the last date of submission of bids.If any bidder with draws his bid be for e the said period or makes any modification sin the terms and conditions of the bid, the same shall be considered to be in violation of bid security declaration and shall be dealt with accordingly and the bid shall be declared non-responsive.

6. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents from the website www.jktenders.gov.in.

7. Queries by email if any should be made at phedivisionawantipora@gmail.com

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Jal Shakti (PHE) Division Awantipora

No:PHA/AWP/180-91
Date:16.04.2022

DIP No:DIPK-1157/22
Dated: 26.04.2022

ANNEXUREI

SCHEME WISE LIST OFWORKS


S. No.	Name of Water Supply Scheme	Description of work	Jal Shakti (PHE) Division	Estimated cost (inLacs)	Time of completion (Days)	Class of Contractor
1.	Poshtwan Gadkhal	Construction of WSS Poshtwan Gadkhal (New) by way of laying / fitting, Approach Road, Retaining wall, Chain link fencing, Transformer Bed, Sluice chamber, and surface drain under JJM	Awantipora	107.06	5Months	A
2.	Banderpora	Construction of WSS Banderpora (New) by way of laying / fitting , Retaining Wall, Chain Link Fencing, Transformer Bed, Sluice Chamber, and surface drain under JJM	Awantipora	61.088	5 Months	A
3.	Bonibagh Leihar	Construction of WSS BonibaghLeihar (New) by way of laying / fitting , Retaining Wall, Chain Link Fencing, Transformer Bed, Sluice Chamber, and surface drain under JJM	Awantipora	68.94	4 Months	A
4.	K-Koot	Retrofitting of WSS K-Koot by way of laying/ fitting, Service Reservoir, Sluice chamber, chain link fencing under JJM	Awantipora	32.93	3 Months	B
5.	Barsoo Old	Retrofitting of WSS Barsoo Old by way of laying / fitting , and construction of PST/ Sluice Chamber/ Chain link fencing and face lifting under JJM	Awantipora	27.31	3 Months	B
6.	Larkipora	Retrofitting of WSS Larkipora by way of laying / fitting, Sluice chamber , chain link fencing, washroom under JJM	Awantipora	15.22	2 Months	B, C
7.	Chersoo Old	Retrofitting of WSS Chersoo Old by way of laying/ fitting under JJM	Awantipora	13.84	2 Months	B, C, D
8.	Ganshibal Hari	Retrofitting of WSS GanshibalHari by way of laying / fitting, Service Reservoir, Sluice chamber under JJM	Awantipora	11.59	2 Months	B, C, D
9.	Leihar	Retrofitting of WSS Leihar by way of laying / fitting under JJM	Awantipora	11.04	2 Months	B, C, D
10.	Padgampora	Retrofitting of WSS Padgampora by way of laying / fitting, filter media and surface drain under JJM	Awantipora	10.58	2 Months	B, C, D
11.	Sail Nazbal	Retrofitting of WSS Sail Nazbal by way of laying/fitting under JJM	Awantipora	8.10	2 Months	C, D
12.	Zadipora	Retrofitting of WSS Zadipora by way of laying / fitting and face lifting under JJM	Awantipora	7.28	2 Months	C, D
13.	Mohanvi	Retrofitting of WSS Mohanvi by way of laying / fitting, face lifting and DG Shed under JJM	Awantipora	7.15	2 Months	C, D
14.	Udaipora Kanibagh	Retrofitting of WSS Udaipora Kanibagh by way of laying / fitting and face lifting under JJM	Awantipora	4.79	1 Months	D
15.	LarmooWapulwun	Retrofitting of WSS LarmooWapulwun by way of laying / fitting, and face lifting under JJM	Awantipora	4.40	1 Months	D

JAMMU & KASHMIR UNION TERRITORY

HOUSING & URBAN DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

J & K LAKE CONSERVATION & MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY SRINAGAR

Head Office,
Voice Chairman,
J&K LAKE Conservation & Management Authority
Miskeen Bagh Srinagar.



Implementing Agency
Executive Engineer,
Lake Division1st

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Cancellation Notice

Subject: Engagement of Consultant for providing of comprehensive Project Management Service (DPR, Tendering, Project Management Consultancy and Technical Assistance) for Implementation of Lake Conservation, Beautification & Development Works of Dal Nigean Lakes Srinagar (PMC) for a Period of 03 Years.

Reference: This office e- N.I.T No. - 62 of 2021-22 Dated:- 15 .03.2022.

Due to Administrative reasons the tenders invited vide this office NIT No.cited above are hereby cancelled.

No.LD-/422-48
Dated:25.04.2022
DIP No:DIPK-NB-518/22
Dated: 26.04.2022

ADVANTAGE MAN CITY

Pep's men beat Real Madrid 4-3 in 1st leg of Champions League semis

AP ■ MANCHESTER

Manchester City have a slender lead to defend in the second leg of their Champions League semi-final against Real Madrid after winning a thrilling first leg 4-3 at the Etihad on Tuesday.

The English champions could live to regret not killing off the 13-time winners after taking a two-goal lead three times.

Kevin De Bruyne, Gabriel Jesus, Phil Foden and Bernardo Silva were on target for Pep Guardiola's men, who should have scored many more.

But Karim Benzema's double and a brilliant individual effort from Vinicius Junior gave Madrid hope of another famous Champions League fightback at the Santiago Bernabeu on May 4.

Guardiola lamented letting Liverpool escape "alive" in the Premier League title race after a 2-2 draw at the Etihad nine days ago and will have similar regrets after a blistering opening that could have seen City go 4-0 up inside half an hour.

Madrid were playing in their 30th semi-final to City's third, but the English giants lived up to their tag as pre-tie favourites early on.

Only 92 seconds had passed before the Madrid rearguard was breached by Riyad Mahrez's quick feet and perfect cross for De Bruyne to stoop and head past Thibaut Courtois.

Guardiola has often been criticized for overthinking his team selection at the business end of the Champions League.

But his decision to break from the mould of the past two seasons and play Jesus as a central striker was inspired as the Brazilian ran the Real defense ragged.

Jesus pounced to make it 2-0 after just 10 minutes after David Alaba failed to deal with De Bruyne's cross.

The Spanish champions-elect were



without Casemiro and his absence showed as City cut through midfield on the counter-attack at will.

Guardiola was furious with Mahrez after he selfishly smashed into the side-netting with Foden awaiting the cross for a tap in.

Moments later it was Foden who was guilty of wasting a glorious chance when he dragged wide another pinpoint De Bruyne through ball.

BENZEMA ROUSES MADRID

Benzema dragged Madrid back from the dead to see off PSG and Chelsea in the previous two rounds and again rose to his side's rescue before

half-time. The Frenchman cushioned in his 40th goal of the season off the post from Ferland Mendy's cross.

Yet, Madrid's good work in steady-ing the ship towards the end of the first half was undone in another slow start after the break.

Fernandinho was forced to deputize at right-back after replacing the injured John Stones in the first half.

And the City captain had a major role to play in two goals in two minutes at either end. Firstly, he picked out Foden to restore City's two-goal lead.

But the 36-year-old showed his age as Vinicius sprinted clear of his Brazilian compatriot from the halfway line

before slotting past Ederson.

City continued to create chances at an alarming rate for Carlo Ancelotti but it took something special when they did finally get a fourth.

Oleksandr Zinchenko was fouled on the edge of the area, but Romanian referee Istvan Kovacs played advantage and Silva thrashed into the top corner. But there was a final twist eight minutes from time when Aymeric Laporte handled inside the area.

Benzema was the coolest man in the stadium as he chipped the spot-kick down the middle to leave the tie on a knife-edge headed back to the Spanish capital.

NUMBER GAME

3 Manchester City have won each of their last three Champions League meetings with Real Madrid — no other English club has won more than two matches overall against Real in the competition.

7 Man City 4-3 Real Madrid is the joint-highest scoring ever Champions League semi-final, along with Ajax 5-2 Bayern Munich (April 1995) and Liverpool 5-2 Roma (April 2018).

5 After his hat-trick at Chelsea and brace tonight v Man City, Karim Benzema is the first player in Champions League history to score as many as five goals away from home in the knockout stages against clubs from a single nation in a season.

9 No English player has scored more goals in the Champions League while aged 21 or younger than Man City's Phil Foden (9, level with Wayne Rooney).

3 The Real Madrid have scored three goals in two consecutive away matches in Champions League knockouts for the first time in their history.

3 Real Madrid have lost three games in a row against the same opponent for the third time in Champions League history (four against Bayern Munich in April 2002 and three against Juventus in November 2008).

40 Karim Benzema is the first player to score 40+ goals in a single season for Real Madrid since Cristiano Ronaldo left them in 2018, with Ronaldo the last to do so for the club in 2017-18 (44).

93 At 93 seconds, Kevin De Bruyne's opening goal was the earliest Manchester City have ever scored from the start of any Champions League match.



Guardiola rues missed chances in 'fantastic' win

AP ■ MANCHESTER

Pep Guardiola rued Manchester City's missed chances as they beat Real Madrid 4-3, but squandered the opportunity to kill off the Spanish side in a "fantastic" Champions League semi-final on Tuesday.

Guardiola's team should have left Real dead and buried in the first leg at the Etihad Stadium as they held a two-goal lead three times, only to allow the La Liga leaders back into the tie on each occasion.

While Guardiola was happy to praise both sides for producing a classic, the City boss was more concerned with the way his men failed to get full reward for their dynamic display.

"It was a fantastic game for both sides. We did many good things. Unfortunately we conceded goals and we could not score more," Guardiola told BT Sport.

"What we have done with the ball and without the ball, creating chances and chances and chances I can't ask anything else.

"We played a fantastic game against an incredible team. The moments where they rise and come back into the game in the

first half I think we gave them as our build-up was so nervous.

"Normally we are so safe and so good. Also they press really good and strong. The quality of Real Madrid is such they can punish you."

City's failure to deliver the knockout blow could yet prove decisive in the second leg in Madrid on May 4.

Real have already eliminated Paris Saint-Germain and Chelsea in the knockout stages this season, after looking down and out at various stages of both ties.

Although they have only a slender lead to protect at the Bernabeu, Guardiola said City would not use a defensive game-plan and vowed to go for the win.

"Football is a fantastic spectacle. Congratulations to Carlo and his team as they are so good. At the same time, we saw ourselves that we can be there," he said.

"All we can do is perform as we perform. All around the world and for Manchester City, we are so proud.

"But it is about reaching the final and sometimes football happens. We go to Madrid to try to win the game."



Mumbai City end historic ACL campaign with win

PTI ■ RIYADH

Indian Super League side Mumbai City FC ended their historic AFC Champions League (ACL) campaign on a winning note, defeating Air Force Club of Iraq 1-0 in their last group match here.

A first half strike from Diego Mauricio (31st minute) secured Mumbai City all the three points at the King Fahd International Stadium on Tuesday night.

It was their second win in the continent's top-tier club competition in their debut appearance after their 2-1 victory over the same opponents in the first match of the double round-robin group league.

Mumbai City ended sec-

ond in Group B, which itself is a huge achievement, with seven points from six matches. They had also played out a goal-less draw against Al Jazira of UAE.

But the Des Buckingham-coached Mumbai City missed out a Round of 16 berth as his side could not be one of the three best second-placed finishers across all five groups.

All the five group winners and the three best second-placed finishers qualify for the Round of 16 in the West Zone.

Air Force Club came into the tie on the back of their 3-2 win over Al Jazira of UAE, while Mumbai City had fallen to a fourth defeat of their campaign, losing 6-0 to Saudi Arabia's Al Shabab.

L'pool face fixture crunch in PL title bid

AP ■ LIVERPOOL

Title-chasing Liverpool will play two Premier League games in the final week of the campaign after their match against Southampton was rescheduled due to their participation in the FA Cup final.

Jürgen Klopp's men will travel to the south coast for their penultimate fixture of the league season on Tuesday, May 17, three days after their date at Wembley with Chelsea.

Quadruple-chasing Liverpool, who already have the League Cup in their trophy cabinet, are going head to head with reigning champions



Manchester City for the title.

They are one point behind Pep Guardiola's City with five games remaining for both teams.

City's trip to Wolves, which was postponed due to their FA Cup semi-final against Liverpool, has been scheduled for May 11.

Guardiola's men face a tough trip to West Ham on May 15 and conclude their season a week later at home to Aston Villa, while Liverpool host Wolves on the final day.

Liverpool and City could also meet in the final of the Champions League if both win their semi-final ties.

Saina, Sindhu start with win, Sen exits

PTI ■ MANILA

Olympic medallists PV Sindhu and Saina Nehwal fought off strong challenge from their opponents before winning their respective opening matches, but it was curtains for Lakshya Sen and B Sai Praneeth in Badminton Asia Championships here on Wednesday.

Two-time Olympic medallist Sindhu was made to toil hard by Chinese Taipei's Pai Yu Po as the fourth seeded Indian came back from a game down to win 18-21, 27-25, 21-9 in a marathon women's singles opening round match, which lasted



for one hour and 17 minutes.

London Olympics Bronze medallist Saina, who has been on a comeback trail after recovering from some nagging injuries, also had to break her sweat to eke out a 21-15, 17-21, 21-13 win over Sim Yujin of South Korea.

The other remaining Indian in the women's singles, Malvika Bansod too squandered a game lead before going down 9-21, 21-17, 26-24 against Yeo Jia Min of Singapore in another hard-fought tie.

It turned out to be a disappointing outing for world championships Bronze medal winner Sen, who was stunned by the unseeded Li Shi Feng

of China.

The fifth seeded Indian lost 21-12, 10-21, 19-21 in his opening round men's singles tie that lasted 56 minutes.

Sai Praneeth suffered a straight game 17-21, 13-21 defeat against Jonatan Christie of Indonesia.

Seventh seeded Kidambi Srikanth, however, kept India's flag flying in the men's singles competition by progressing to the second round with a straight-game win over Tze Yong Ng of Malaysia.

Srikanth defeated his rival 22-20, 21-15 to set up a clash against Chinese qualifier Weng Hong Yang in the second round.

ECB advertises for separate red & white ball coaching job

PTI ■ LONDON

England are set to return to a split-coaching structure after ECB's new Managing Director Rob Key made his first major decision by advertising for two new head coaches. The split in roles is on expected lines as Key had previous called for it while working as a pundit.

Both coaches will report directly to Key and be "accomplished strategists with clear and ambitious plans for how they will develop and build success for English cricket moving forward," according to the advertisement.

The deadline for applications for the head coach roles is May 6.

Key, the former Test batter who was appointed England's new managing director earlier this month, will begin the first-round interviews from May 9 and 10.

England previously had two separate head coaches between 2012 and 2014 with Andy Flower (Tests) and Ashley Giles (T20s and ODIs) at the helm.

Chris Silverwood, who was sacked after the Ashes defeat in Australia, had missed multiple limited-overs series due to a packed schedule.

Gary Kirsten, Graham Ford and Simon Katich are potential candidates.

All-rounder Ben Stokes is the clear favourite to be named the Test skipper after Joe Root resigned from the post following the series loss in the West Indies.

It is likely that Stokes could be confirmed this week by Key.

Key will be formally unveiled to the media at Lord's on Thursday.

England's next Test is against New Zealand on June 2 while they take on Netherlands in a white-ball series.

World champions Edris and Obiri to headline TCS World 10K

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Reigning 5000m world champions Ethiopia's Muktar Edris and Kenyan Hellen Obiri will be the star attractions at the TCS World 10K, which returns after a three-year hiatus here on May 15.

Edris, the two-time defending world champion, will be using the Bengaluru race as part of his preparations to become just the second man to win three consecutive titles in the event at this summer's world championships.

He is no stranger to India having made his half marathon debut in the 2020 Delhi Half Marathon.

Former holder of the world half marathon record Kibiwott Kandie from Kenya, who has a 10km personal best of 26:51, almost a minute faster than the course record in Bengaluru will also be competing for the top honours.

Ethiopia's 20-year-old Tadese Worku is another man with a 10km best inside 27 minutes, having run 26:56 last September just a few months after he won the world U20 3000m title on the track.

In the women's race, Obiri will be making her racing debut in India.

Like Edris, she has also won the 5000m at the last two editions of the world championships and took Silver medals over the same distance at the previous two Olympics in Rio and Tokyo.

Both Edris and Obiri will have the TCS World 10K



course records as their targets.

Joyce Tele comes to Bengaluru having won the Agnes Tirop Cross Country Classic in February and has produced some outstanding half marathon times since the start of 2021. Tele ran a personal best of 1:05:50 to finish second in the Berlin Half Marathon.

A third Kenyan to watch out for in the women's race will be the 2017 world cross country champion Irene Cheptai, who also triumphed at the 2017 TCS World 10K a few months later.

The TCS World 10K Bengaluru 2022 has a total prize fund of \$210,000, with the men's and women's winners taking home \$26,000.

Alcaraz brings new zest to ATP Tour, says Osaka

AP ■ MADRID

Former women's world number one Naomi Osaka says Spanish teen sensation Carlos Alcaraz has spurred a new wave of excitement for men's tennis and says she is keen to watch him practice this week in Madrid.

Osaka, who is a wildcard at the Madrid Open, has been closely following Alcaraz's meteoric rise to the top-10, at just the tender age of 18, and will be keeping an eye on him in the Spanish capital this fortnight.

"I feel like he's genuinely made everyone excited about the ATP and I haven't seen that in a very long time," Osaka told reporters at the Caja Magica, where she faces a qualifier in the opening round.

Alcaraz has amassed an impressive 23-3 win-loss record so far this season and has risen to a career-high No 9 in the world on the back of



Swiatek withdraws from Madrid Open

AP ■ MADRID

Top-ranked Iga Swiatek withdrew from the Madrid Open on Wednesday because of a sore arm.

Swiatek, who has won four straight titles, was going to be the top-seeded player in the women's draw for this week's clay-court tournament.

"It's time to take care of my arm that has been fatigued since the Miami Open and I haven't had a

chance to handle it properly," the 20-year-old Polish player wrote on Twitter.

"I need a break from playing so intensively in order to treat my arm well."

Swiatek won the Stuttgart Open on Sunday to add to titles in Doha, Indian Wells and Miami. Her winning run is at 23 matches.

"My body needs rest," she said. "I'm going to take some time to prepare for Rome and Paris. Hopefully, I will play in Madrid many times in the future."

capturing three titles in Rio de Janeiro, Miami and Barcelona.

The Spaniard is the youngest player to crack the top 10 since his compatriot Rafael Nadal achieved that feat at the same age 17 years ago.

"I'm not even really

thinking about his age, like every time someone brings up his age, I'm like, 'Oh wow, I forget, that's so cool,'" said 24-year-old Osaka.

"I think just his game style, just how pumped he is, how I feel like I'm watching him learn with every tournament.

Gujarat are the Titans

Rashid Khan hammers 3 sixes in final four balls to help GT beat SRH

PTI ■ WANKHEDE STADIUM (MUMBAI)

Afghanistan star Rashid Khan shines with the bat as he hammered Sunrisers Hyderabad pacer Marco Jansen for three sixes in the final four balls of the match to help Gujarat Titans beat Kane Williamson's side by 5 wickets in Match Number 40 of ongoing Indian Premier League season at Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai on Wednesday.

Chasing the target of 197 runs, Titans needed 23 runs in the final over but Rahul Tewatia and Rashid Khan did the unthinkable once again as the duo helped the Ahmedabad-based side register the seventh win of this tournament in eight matches to regain the number one position in the points table.

For SRH, Umran Malik registered the best figures of this year's IPL but his effort of 5 for 24 in four overs couldn't help his side win the match.

Earlier, batting first after losing the toss for the first time in eight matches, SRH ride on opener Abhishek Sharma and Aiden Markram struck sparkling half-centuries to post 195 for six on the board.

Abhishek blazed away to 65 off 42 deliveries, while Markram made a 40-ball 56 during a third-wicket stand of 96 runs.

Then, Shashank Singh (25 off 6 balls) smashed Lockie Ferguson (0/52 in 4 overs) for three successive sixes to score 25 runs in the innings' final over.

To start with, SRH were helped by



Mohammed Shami's (3/39 in 4 overs) 11-run opening over in which a first-ball beauty was followed by five leg-side wides, not once but twice.

Yash Dayal too conceded 11 runs, thanks to two boundaries by Abhishek Sharma on the off side, as SRH raced to 22 for no loss in two overs.

Kane Williamson clipped Shami over square leg for his first boundary but that's all the SRH skipper could do with the bat as, three balls later, the seasoned India pacer went through the gate with a lovely seaming delivery to dismiss the Kiwi and give his team the match's first breakthrough.

Having got a life at point even before he could open his account, Rahul Tripathi smashed Shami for 6, 4, 4 before a review found that the batter was trapped in front of the wicket in an eventful fifth over, which went for 14 runs.

Unperturbed by the fall of two wickets, Abhishek collected two successive fours off Alzarri Joseph -- first he lofted over the infield and then found the gap through a packed off-side -- to help SRH score 53 runs in the six power play overs at the Wankhede Stadium.

SRH needed a partnership at that stage and the duo of Abhishek and Markram not just provided them that but also kept the scoreboard moving at a very good rate by regularly finding the boundaries.

While Markram dealt with the likes of pacers such as Alzarri, Abhishek went after Rashid Khan, hitting the Afghanistan spin ace for his

► points table

Po.	TEAM	M	W	L	NR	Pts	NRR
1.	GT	8	7	1	0	14	0.371
2.	RR	8	6	2	0	12	0.561
3.	SRH	8	5	3	0	10	0.600
4.	LSG	8	5	3	0	10	0.334
5.	RCB	9	5	4	0	10	-0.572
6.	PBKS	8	4	4	0	8	-0.419
7.	DC	7	3	4	0	6	0.715
8.	KKR	8	3	5	0	6	0.080
9.	CSK	8	2	6	0	4	-0.538
10.	MI	8	0	8	0	0	-1.000

► boundary meter

4s 1116

6s 587

third six to reach his half-century in style.

Against Rashid, Abhishek was particularly strong on the on-side, getting his three sixes over long-on and deep mid-wicket.

However, the 21-year-old's fine innings came to an end when he inside-edged a slower delivery from Alzarri in the first ball of the 16th over.

Shami came back to dismiss the big-hitting Nicholas Pooran (3) cheaply before Markram got to his fifty by pulling the bowler for a six over deep mid-wicket. Stationed in the deep, Rashid's day in the field got worse as he misjudged it.

Kohli will emerge from this run of low scores: Bangar

PTI ■ PUNE

RCB head coach Sanjay Bangar reiterated that star batter Virat Kohli will soon "emerge" out of the lean phase he is experiencing at the moment and help his team win games going forward in the IPL.

Kohli's scores in his last five innings read 9, 0, 0, 12 and 1. The manner of his dismissals also show that he is not in the best of form.

"Regarding Kohli's form, he's a great cricketer. He's experienced these highs and lows many times before. I've observed him from close quarters.

"He has the spirit and he'll emerge from these run of low scores. In the coming crucial games, he'll help us win," Bangar said at the post match press conference after RCB's 29-run loss to Rajasthan Royals.

"We aren't talking about anything different (in practice), to be honest. The way he prepares, he always puts himself out of comfort zone and prepares and that's his specialty.

"This is why he can emerge from tough situations and his attitude his commendable. Yes, he's had a low run of scores but he is so mentally strong, he'll be



able to put in a better performance," he added.

Bangar has also worked closely with Kohli in the national team when he was the batting coach.

The former India international also acknowledged the top-order's form is a concern.

"We've all seen that negotiating the new ball is a challenge for most of the teams. Whenever we lose early wickets, we sort of lose them in clusters and that's what is pulling the team back and [we are] rightly [losing] games that we should have won. That's why we are not able to finish the job."

KKR eye revenge against DC

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Delhi Capitals will look to put the 'no-ball' controversy sby behind and gain much needed momentum against another side seeking course correction, the Kolkata Knight Riders, in the Indian Premier League here on Thursday.

Delhi suffered a 15-run loss against Rajasthan Royals, a game marred by a no ball controversy over a high full toss that resulted in a one match ban for assistant coach Pravin Amre.

Head coach Ricky Ponting watched the tight finish in quarantine and felt helpless. Now he is back with the team and is confident of finding momentum which will allow his players to play to their potential.

Delhi Capitals are currently seventh on the points table with three wins in seven outings. KKR are placed eighth having lost their last four games.

With the Delhi batting line-up comprising David Warner, Prithvi Shaw, Rishabh Pant and Powell, KKR's varied attack has to be on guard to stop the rampage.

Warner, after striking three back to back fifties, faltered against the Royals and would need itching to play another impactful knock. Ditto for Shaw, who needs to convert his starts into big scores.



Delhi's latest option at number three, Sarfaraz Khan, also failed and it remains to be seen whether he is benched or not. Pant will need to take greater responsibility along with the likes of all-rounders Lalit Yadav, Shardul Thakur and Axar Patel.

Pant can single-handedly turn any game, but he hasn't played to his potential and

come Thursday at the Wankhede, where the tracks have helped batters, the skipper would look to come good.

Add to it, Powell's six-hitting prowess, Delhi have all the necessary firepower.

Delhi's bowling has fared well, but will need to forget the hammering at the hands of Jos Buttler. Khaleel Ahmed has been taking wickets upfront

Delhi vs Kolkata
Live from 7:30 pm IST
STAR SPORTS 1

and has been complemented by Mustafizur Rahman, who can also be effective at the death.

While Kuldeep Yadav has redeemed himself, the other spinners Axar and Lalit have also played their parts to perfection. The trio has combined 20 wickets and their 12 overs would be vital.

Meanwhile, KKR need to get their combination right and the batters, including skipper Iyer, will have to put up an improved show.

Shreyas failed in the last game and so did the opening pair of Sam Billings and Sunil Narine. If they continue with the same openers, the two would need to give an aggressive start.

For the likes of Shreyas, Nitish Rana, Rinku Singh and Venkatesh Iyer, it won't be an easy task, especially against inform Delhi spinners. Pushing Venkatesh down in the middle order has also not worked yet.

Shreyas has said it was just a matter of time and once KKR get going, they will be unstoppable as a team.

KKR pacers Umesh Yadav and Tim Southee have been right on the money. The only weak link seems to be Varun Chakravarthy who is having an underwhelming season.

Samson wasting good form & opportunity to press for international recall: Bishop

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Former West Indies speedster Ian Bishop reckons Rajasthan Royals skipper Sanju Samson is wasting good form and opportunity to press for a recall in the Indian T20 set up by not playing impactful innings in the IPL.

The wicketkeeper-batter is still on the fringes of the Indian T20 team and a stellar show in the IPL could be help him stake a claim in the T20 World Cup squad.

"That Sanju is wasting good form and good opportunity to score runs to press for an international recall, to lead his team when Jos Buttler doesn't score," Bishop said on ESPNcricinfo's 'T20 Time Out'.

Although, Samson is a delight to watch when he gets going, the free flowing right hander is yet to consistently play the kind of impactful innings one expects from him.

He last featured for India in the T20 home series against Sri Lanka in February.

With the flamboyant Jos Buttler failing against RCB on Tuesday, it was the perfect opportunity for the RR skipper to rise to the occasion. Samson even looked in good touch, smashing three sixes and a four but could only manage 27 off 21.

He was dismissed by Sri Lanka spinner Wanindu Hasaranga after missing an attempted reverse-sweep.

"It's not that Sanju's out of form. But that's a match-up with Wanindu Hasaranga and him, and he should have known better. He got out of the blocks quite nicely," Bishop said.

"I'm a Sanju Samson fan, been that way for years now, (but) he's wasting good form by shot selection," Bishop added.

Former New Zealand captain Daniel Vettori feels the game comes too "easy" to Samson and



he thus tries to do too many things.

"It feels like the game is too easy for him, so 'I'm going to try something different, I'm going to try and make sure I can play every shot in the book'. He is at his best when he's striking down the ground," Vettori said.

"He's a joy to watch when he's playing that well. But everything looks a little bit easy and sometimes it feels like he isn't in the moment, and then he's out."

Apart from a 55 and an unbeaten 48 against Sunrisers Hyderabad and Delhi Capitals respectively, Samson has endured an underwhelming season.

We're too good a team for our results to not change: Ponting

PTI ■ MUMBAI

All Delhi Capitals need is a little bit of momentum to get their IPL campaign back on track as they are "too good a team for the results not to change", feels head coach Ricky Ponting.

With three wins and four losses in the first seven matches of the season, Delhi Capitals are currently seventh in the points table.

Reflecting on the first half of the season, Ponting said, "I've said it a few times this year where there's 36 or 37 overs of really good stuff, and we just let it slip for two or three overs.

"And, that's the difference in these games. We sort of gear ourselves to not overtrain in the first part of the season, try and build up along the way. But our performances have been win one, lose one, win one. So, we need to start getting that little bit of momentum."

Ponting warned his players against trying "too hard" in the second half of IPL.

"I know we're so close to turning it all around. We've all got to trust, we've got to believe, we've got to stay upbeat and positive. And if we are, things will



definitely change for us.

"The harder we try from here, the harder it's going to get. We're just going to stay nice and relax and keep repeating things we've been doing. And then results will definitely come our way. We are too good a team for the results not to change," he said ahead of Thursday's game against Kolkata Knight Riders.

The Australian re-joined the squad at training after completing his precautionary five-day room isolation after a family member had tested positive for COVID-19.

"I feel pretty relieved to be back outside again, actually after another five days locked in, and obviously missing the game," he said.

Arshdeep could soon play for India: Shastri

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Young left-arm pacer Arshdeep Singh could soon be walking into the national T20 side after consistent performances in the IPL over the last three seasons, feels former India coach Ravi Shastri.

Arshdeep, who made his IPL debut in 2019, is into his fourth season with Punjab Kings. He was among the two players retained by the franchise ahead of the mega auction.

The 23-year-old has improved his game with the new ball and is among the best death bowlers this IPL season.

"For someone so young and then to deliver time and time again when the chips are down and the pressure is on him (it's brilliant to see). Arshdeep is holding on



to his nerves brilliantly, he's doing well in death overs. "This shows he's moving up the ranks very quickly and he could be walking into the Indian

team," Shastri told 'Star Sports'.

Other impressive performances in the IPL have come from pacer Umran Malik, who plays for Sunrisers Hyderabad, and Mumbai Indians batter Tilak Varma.

The great Brian Lara compared Malik to West Indies pacer Fidel Edwards. "Umran Malik reminds me a lot about Fidel Edwards when he first started, a lot of pace and I hope that he understands it as he goes into international cricket, which I think he'll eventually play.

"In the IPL, a lot of batsmen get accustomed to playing sheer pace, so I hope that he adds a little bit more to his armoury later on.

He's a quick learner in the nets, he's willing to learn and it's just awesome to see India has a pacer of that calibre, it's just tremendous," said Lara.

RR to celebrate Warne's life in IPL match against Mumbai

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Rajasthan Royals will celebrate the extraordinary life of legendary Australian spinner Shane Warne, who died recently, during their Indian Premier League match against Mumbai Indians here on Saturday.

Warne had lifted the inaugural IPL trophy after the Royals beat Chennai Super Kings by three wickets in the final in 2008, and his former franchise said it will pay tribute to its first captain to coincide with the team's triumph exactly 14 years back.

The franchise said Warne's brother, Jason will also be part of the celebration as he has accepted an invitation from the Jaipur-based side.

Considered one of the greatest cricketers of all time, Warne died of suspected heart attack at the Thai resort of Koh Samui last month. He was 52. He took 708 wickets from 145 Tests, besides 293 ODI wickets from 194 matches between 1992 and 2007. "It is befitting that the same

stadium where Warne lifted the IPL trophy will see the cricketing world come together to pay their respects and celebrate his life," the franchise said in a release.

"The franchise would like to iterate that it will not be an occasion to mourn, but to commemorate the great man, and salute him for his never-ending contribution to the game of cricket as well as impacting thousands of lives around the world through his words, energy, and actions both on and off the field."

It said the celebrations will be led by the franchise and supported by the BCCI.

The Rajasthan Royals playing squad will sport special initials 'SW23' on leading collars of their official playing kits to pay tribute to the legendary Australian.

A special area at the DY Patil Stadium has also been turned into a Shane Warne Tribute Gallery, which all the ticket-holding fans will be able to visit and experience.