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India rushes flights to Ukraine for nationals

20,000 students among stranded Indians to be brought back home

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With tension mounting in Ukraine, India may increase flights to bring back home its stranded citizens, including nearly 20,000 students. At present, very few flights connect India with Ukraine.

The ongoing tension between Ukraine and Russia and fear of military confrontation has led to a sharp increase in airfare and unavailability of seats. The Indian Embassy in Ukraine on Tuesday advised its students to leave the country due to "uncertainties." Also, Indian citizens were urged to refrain from travelling to Ukraine for the time being.

Given the concerns of the parents, sources said here on Wednesday discussions were on with the civil aviation authorities and various airlines on ways to increase the number of flights between India and Ukraine.

They also said the Indian Embassy in Kyiv was monitoring the developments on a regular basis. "We are aware that many Indian students are presently in Ukraine and their families are anxious about their



wards, particularly about getting flights to India," sources said. Parents are demanding that their children should be airlifted and brought home as soon as possible.

"The control rooms in the Embassy as well as in the Ministry of External Affairs are being set up to respond to queries of Indian nationals in Ukraine and their families in India," sources said.

Not just India, but several other nations have asked their citizens in Ukraine to return at the earliest. Some countries fear that a war in Eastern Europe could result in a massive refugee crisis.

Rajya Sabha member Priyanka Chaturvedi (Shiv Sena) called on the Government to facilitate the evacuation of Indians, especially students, from Ukraine.

"Indian students are facing difficulties in leaving the country following the Indian Government's advisory to return to India temporarily. Flights booked are being can-

celled while many others are unable to afford tickets back home as the air tickets prices are soaring," she tweeted.

The advisory by the Indian Embassy on Tuesday said, "In view of the uncertainties of the current situation in Ukraine, Indian nationals in Ukraine, particularly students whose stay is not essential, may consider leaving temporarily."

The advisory also urged Indians to keep the Embassy informed about the "status of their presence in Ukraine to enable the embassy to reach them when required".

India has so far refrained from commenting on the ongoing crisis and pushed for a peaceful resolution of the situation in Ukraine through sustained diplomatic efforts.

Rendering help to Indians in Ukraine wanting information and help can get in touch with the Ministry of External Affairs. It has set up a dedicated 24X7 control room in India's Embassy in Ukraine.

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BJP Govt in UP means control over dangaraj, mafia raaj, gundaraj: PM

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Exhorting people to vote for the BJP in a large number, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said the BJP in Uttar Pradesh means control over dangaraj, mafia raaj, gundaraj, and freedom to celebrate all the festivals with religious fervour.

Addressing an election rally in Sitapur, Modi said having the BJP in UP means protection of daughters and women from eve-teasers. "The BJP in UP means progress and it also means implementation of Centre's schemes at a double speed because it would be a double engine Government," he said. The PM added that due to the double engine Government, the State is moving ahead on the path of development at a fast pace.

Elaborating on the work being done by the Yogi Government, Modi said every grain of the poor's ration, which the mafia used to loot earlier, is reaching the poor's house today.

"During this entire corona period, I remained focused on one thing that such a day should not come in the house of a poor, when the family had to sleep empty stomach. We were alive to this situation. The Government has spent ₹2.60 lakh crore to ensure that food reaches every house," Modi



said. Realising it was Sant Ravidas's birthday on Wednesday, he invoked the philanthropic spirit of Sant Ravidas when he said Sant Ravidas wanted that there should be such a rule in which everyone gets food. Let everyone live in equal harmony. "With this thinking, crores of people of UP are being given free ration for almost two years and people in Sitapur too got the same," he said.

Taking a jibe at Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi who paid an obeisance at the temple of Sant Ravidas in Varanasi, where he was born, the PM said when elections come some leader go to Ravidas Temple, organise langar and take photographs and get that published. But, what actually they or their party had done for Sant Ravidas, he asked.

"The BJP Government is working fast on the Sant Ravidas Janam Sthali Vikas Project so the devotees should visit this place and the young generation should take inspiration from them," he said.

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Poll battle moves to Yadav belt, real test for Akhilesh

VIRENDRA NATH BHATT ■ LUCKNOW

As the Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections enter the third phase, the battle of the ballot has moved to "the Yadav-belt". A total of 59 Assembly constituencies in 16 districts, spreading from Bundelkhand to the Avadh region will go to the polls on February 20. The hottest contest is at Karhal from where former Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav is in the fray.

The third phase covers five districts from western UP: Firozabad, Mainpuri, Etah Kasganj Hathras; six districts of Avadh region: Kanpur, Kanpur Dehat Auraiya Kannauj, Etawa, Farrukhabad; and five districts from Bundelkhand region: Jhansi Jalaun Lalitpur Hamirpur Mahoba.

Akhilesh has entered the fray to act as a force multiplier in the third phase. Interestingly, in 2017, the BJP not only swept all the 19 seats of the Bundelkhand region but also managed to make a big dent in the Yadav stronghold which the Samajwadi Party swept in 2012.

From Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath to his deputy Keshav Prasad Maurya to Union Home Minister Amit Shah, top BJP leaders have been campaigning in the Yadav bastion from where Mulayam

Singh Yadav and two other members of the family have been MPs. SP chief Akhilesh will campaign in this region on Thursday and address election meetings at several places in the Karhal Assembly constituency, Mainpuri, Ferozabad, Tundla, Mainpuri and Etawah.

The SP won 37 out of the 59 seats in this region in the 2012 Assembly Elections. However, politics in this region took a new turn when the Yadav-dominated regions voted heavily for the BJP in 2017 elections. The BJP won 49 out of 59 seats while the SP only had to settle with 9. The Congress got one while the BSP drew a blank from here.

The real test of Akhilesh, however, will be in the Yadav belt. It would be a litmus test for the BJP, too, whether it can hold on to most of what it had secured in 2017. Constituencies of both Akhilesh (Karhal) and his uncle Shivpal Yadav (Jaswantnagar) will go to the polls in this phase.

The Yadav stronghold, which includes Firozabad, Kasganj, Etah, Mainpuri, Farrukhabad, Kannauj, and Auraiya didn't vote for Akhilesh in 2017.

The SP got only 6 out of 30 seats from this region while BJP won 23. In 2012, the SP had won 25 seats from here while BJP won just one seat.

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Wives take on husbands in Punjab election ring

MONIKA MALIK ■ CHANDIGARH

It's the battle of spouses in Punjab. At least two women candidates, who apparently filed nomination papers as covering candidates, are now in fray against their husbands for February 20 elections.

Little did Surinder Kaur Bains and Dhanwant Kaur had realised that while supporting their husbands in their ballot battle, they would virtually end up being their rivals.

Surinder Kaur Bains, wife of two-time MLA from Atam Nagar constituency and Lok Insaaf Party's chief Simarjit Singh Bains is in fray from Atam Nagar as an independent candidate; while Dhanwant Kaur, wife of SAD(A) candidate from Kotkapura Jaskaran Singh Kahan Singh Wala, will also be contesting her first election against her husband.

Both Surinder and Dhanwant had filed nomina-

tion papers as covering or substitute candidates from their better halves, but failed to withdraw the same. Now as per rules, both are in fray against their husbands as independent candidates. In fact, the Election Commission has also allotted them election symbols.

"It could be possible because there are different rules for recognised parties, and the registered but unrecognised parties regarding their covering candidates, the candidates of the recognised parties, made a proposal with their nomination papers stating that in case my candidature is accepted, the nomination of my covering candidate be rejected, and the same happened... but there are different rules for registered but unrecognised parties. They have to apply for withdrawal of nomination," an election official told *The Pioneer*.

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Helmet, safety vest must for kids below 4 yrs riding pillion

Max speed of 2-wheelers carrying children capped at 40 kmph

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Crash helmets and safety vests have now been made mandatory for children below the age of four years on motorcycles. The speed of such two-wheelers should not exceed more than 40 kmph. The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways on Wednesday notified new rules to make the use of safety harnesses for children.

For children below four years, a safety harness has to be used for attaching the child to the driver of the motorcycle, the MoRTH said in a statement.

"Safety harness is a vest to be worn by the child, which shall be adjustable, with a pair



of straps attached to the vest and forming shoulder loops to be worn by the driver. This way, the upper torso of the child is securely attached to the driver. A feature by which this is achieved is by attaching the straps to the back of the vest and crossing the straps over the vest so that two large crossing-over loops are formed that pass between the legs of the passenger and child sits on the seat of the two-wheeler," explained a senior MoRTH official.

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Disco king strums goodbye

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Renowned music composer and singer Bappi Lahiri — who had revolutionised Indian film music through his peppy disco numbers like "I Am A Disco Dancer," "Jimmy Jimmy Aaja," "Auva Auva Koi Yahan Nache," "Ramba Ho," "Yaar Bina Chain Kahaan Re," "Hari Om Hari" and "Zoobi Zoobi" and won the hearts of countless popular and soulful songs like "Chalte Chalte, Mere Ye Geet Yaad Rakha Kabhi Alvida Na Kahna Kabhi Alvida Na Kahna," "Inteha Ho Gayee," "Pag Ghungroo Bandh" and "Thodi Si Jo Pee Li," — is no more.

A cult figure of sorts known for his gold chains (he wore at least seven gold chains), golden embellishments, velvet cardigans and sunglasses, Alokesh Lahiri — popularly known as Bappi Lahiri — died at Criticare Hospital at Juhu in north-west Mumbai late on Tuesday night following Obstructive Sleep Apnoea (OSA), a sleep-related breathing disorder.

The iconic music composer, who had been in out of the



Criticare Hospital for the past one year for treatment of OSA and was admitted to the hospital a month ago after he was detected with "mild Covid symptoms", was in the hospital for 29-long days before he was discharged on February 15.

"A day later he was readmitted to the hospital after his health deteriorated. He died 11.45 pm on Tuesday," Criticare Hospital's Director Dr Deepak Namjoshi said.

Bappi Lahiri was 69 and is survived by his wife Chitrani, two children — daughter Reema, who is also a singer, and music composer-son Bappa Lahiri.

Bappi Lahiri's last rites will be performed on Thursday

after the return of his musician-son Bappa Lahiri from Los Angeles in the United States.

Though he had cut down his music work after the year 2000, Bappi rendered the popular number "Ooh La La" with Shreya Ghoshal under Vishal-Shekhar's music in "The Dirty Picture" His last song, as singer, was "Bhankas" from Baaghi 3 in 2020.

Bappi was last seen on Bigg Boss 15, where he had come to promote the launch of his grandson Swastik's new song "Baccha Party".

Bappi entered the Guinness Book of World Records for recording over 180 songs for 33 films in 1986.

Mourning the death of Bappi's death, Prime Minister Narendra Modi described his music as "all-encompassing, beautifully expressing diverse emotions" and said that "people across generations could relate to his works". "His lively nature will be missed by everyone. Saddened by his demise. Condolences to his family and admirers. Om Shanti," Modi tweeted.

Continued on Page 2

If bindis, turbans all right, why not hijab?, questions petitioner in HC



Bengaluru: Contending that Indians flaunt diverse religious symbols, from the pendant to the Hijab to the bindi and turban, the Muslim girls fighting the Hijab ban in Karnataka on Wednesday asked why the Government was 'picking' on the headscarf alone and making "this hostile discrimination."

Prescribing uniforms in the pre-university colleges is illegal, they said, adding, the College Development Committee (CDC) headed by the MLA concerned has no powers to decide on the issue.

Citing a survey, petitioner girls' counsel Ravi Varma Kumar said people of the country sport various religious symbols such as pendant, crucifixion, hijab, burqa, bangles, bindi on the forehead and the turban.

Continued on Page 2



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In Salem, DMK youth wing secretary Udhayanidhi Stalin said though the previous AIADMK regime had emptied the government's coffers leading to Rs 5 lakh crore debt burden, all the poll assurances were being fulfilled. Udhayanidhi said his party chief has promised that the Rs 1,000 assistance for women plan would also be fulfilled soon.

N.I.T. No. 877/2021 -22/E-in-C/e-tendering Bhopal, Dated 08.02.2022

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From Page 1

Modi has visited Sitapur twice before. In the Lok Sabha elections he had come to Sidhauli on April 27, 2014 and after this, in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections on April 27, he addressed the public meeting in the city. This is the PM's third visit.

The Ministry in a separate statement said it has been brought to its notice that vehicles, which are not under the ambit of the national permit, carrying various gases, viz., argon, nitrogen, oxygen etc., and goods of dangerous or hazardous nature are not fitted with vehicle tracking system devices.

Born musician parents Aparesh Lahiri and mother Bansuri sang Bengali and classical music on November 27th, 1952 at Jalpaiguri in West Bengal, took to music at an early age of three when he started playing tabla. As he grew up, he also learnt playing piano,

From Page 1

The Samajwadi Party won four out of these five seats in 2017 while the BJP managed to win just the Bhongaon segment. Now, with the presence of both Akhilesh as well as Shivpal on two different seats of the district, the SP would be looking to not just sweep Mainpuri, but the adjacent districts -- Kannauj, Etawah, Firozabad -- too.

Bappi, who introduced disco-electronic music to the Hindi film industry, created memorable disco numbers like "I am A Disco Dancer Zindagi Mera Gaana" from film "Disco Dancer" with Vijay Benedict, "Tu Mujhe Jaan Se Bhi Pyara Hai" in *Wardat* with Uthup, "Hari Om Hari" in *Pyara Dushman*, Uthup's "Rambhadr Ho" and Sharon Prabhakar's "Mere Jaise Haseena" in *Armaan* and Asha Bhosle's "Disco Station" in *Haathkadi*. Bappi went onto compose

However, after 2000, Bappi cut down on his music work. He later took to politics and contested the 2014 Lok Sabha polls on a BJP ticket from the Serampore constituency in West Bengal, but was defeated.

Stating that the legislators represent a political party and a political ideology, Kumar sought to know how can students' welfare be entrusted to a political party and a political ideology.

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Govt to provide free NEET, JEE coaching

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With an aim to provide special support to students studying in schools run by the Delhi government, the AAP Government has decided to provide free coaching to science students for preparation of NEET, JEE entrance exams and paramedical courses.

The government has partnered with the expert organization 'Avanti Fellows' to prepare the students for these entrance exams. An estimated 6,000 students who are willing to make their career in the field of engineering, medical and other technical fields, will get free coaching in the first year.

Talking about the initiative, Deputy Chief Minister and Education Minister Manish

Sisodia said that free coaching for entrance exams will fulfill every child's dream of becoming a doctor, engineer and researcher. Expensive coaching fees will no longer be the reason to give up their dreams, he said.

"The government is committed to give flight to the dreams of children studying in Delhi's government schools, by providing world-class quality education to them. The Delhi government has initiated several ambitious projects to increase the access of government school children to technical and medical education," the government said in a statement. Speaking about the new endeavor of Delhi Government to prepare students for the future, Sisodia said that many

children dream of getting higher education from the best medical or engineering institutions to become doctors-engineers.

Sisodia added that with this step of government, thousands of future doctors-engineers, scientists, STEM experts etc will now be prepared in the government schools of Delhi, who will make India proud globally. Delhi government is committed to promote equitable access to higher education opportunities in science and technology and this free coaching program will prove to be a milestone in this direction, he said.

In this direction, the Directorate of Education, Government of NCT of Delhi has signed a Memorandum of

Understanding (MoU) with 'Avanti Fellows', an expert organization in this field, to prepare students for the entrance examination for technical education courses like JEE, NEET, paramedical etc, it said.

In the first year of the program, selected 6,000 children of class 11th-12th from all the Delhi government schools will be provided free coaching for the preparation of various entrance examinations, through test series, necessary academic support for these examinations and regular mentoring during preparation.

Earlier, this free coaching program was introduced in a few schools, on a pilot basis and results were excellent. More than 160 girls from ST/SC category are getting free coaching

for NEET by experts, under this program.

Currently, more than 30,000 students are enrolled in science stream across all Delhi government schools. The free test preparation program will help these students to get admission in top graduate programs and diploma courses in STEM based fields, engineering, MBBS/BDS, pharmacy, nursing, paramedical courses, and research programs.

In the first year of the program, 6,000 children of class 11th-12th from all the Delhi government schools will be selected and provided free coaching for the preparation of various entrance examinations, through test series, necessary academic support for these examinations and regular mentoring during preparation.

Uphaar tragedy: HC refuses to nix 7-year term awarded to Ansals

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday refused to suspend the seven-year jail term awarded to real estate barons Sushil and Gopal Ansal in the Uphaar fire tragedy evidence tampering case, saying that allowing their plea would "amount to eroding the faith of the public in the judicial system". Justice Subramonium Prasad stated that the Ansals have been convicted for the offence of tampering with the court records which is extremely serious and post-conviction there is no presumption of innocence in their favour and their medical con-

The HC observed that allowing their plea would "amount to eroding the faith of the public in the judicial system"

dition "is not that serious that it should justify" the suspension of sentence.

"In any event, there are jail hospitals and, in case of any emergency, there are referral hospitals as well. This court does not deem it appropriate to allow the petitioners herein to take advantage of their own wrongs," the court said in its

53-page order.

"This court is of the opinion that suspending the sentence of the petitioners would, therefore, amount to eroding the faith of the public in the judicial system as it would entail allowing convicts, whose finding of guilt has already been established, to take advantage of the passage of time as well as the judiciary as an institution," the judge said.

The court added that cases, such as the present one, have to be heard at the earliest and thus requested the concerned appellate court to expeditiously decide the appeals filed by the petitioners within one month.

Shah lauds Delhi Police on 75th Raising Day



Union Home Minister Amit Shah with Delhi Police Commissioner, Rakesh Asthana at the 75th Raising Day Parade 2022, in New Delhi on Wednesday

Safety of women top priority so need to raise number of female cops: Asthana



Women police personnel march during the 75th Raising Day Parade of the Delhi Police, at the New Police Lines, in New Delhi on Wednesday

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah, on the occasion of the 75th Raising Day parade of the Delhi Police, lauded the police for its strict and fair investigation in the northeast Delhi riots and said the force should lay out a road map for the next five years and also for 25 years.

Marking its Platinum Jubilee alongside the nationwide festivities of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, the Delhi Police on Wednesday celebrated its 75th Raising Day at New Police Line in Kingsway Camp Ground.

The Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who was also the chief guest, took the salute and inspected the parade. During the occasion, Shah also released 'Delhi Police Commemorative Stamp' along with Devusinh J Chauhan, Minister of State (Communication) and Rakesh Asthana, Delhi Police Commissioner, in recognition of 75 years of glorious services rendered by Delhi Police to its citizenry.

Shah also presented medals to 62 police personnel for gallantry, distinguished service, meritorious service and Jeevan

Raksha Padak. Poonam Parik, the widow of late head constable Rattan Lal who lost his life during northeast Delhi riots, received the gallantry medal conferred posthumously upon him.

Three trophies for the best police stations were also given. The trophy of best police station was bagged by Kanjhawla police station, while Krishna Nagar police station and Kashmir Gate police station took the first and second runners-up trophies respectively.

While addressing the gathering, the Home Minister said that the Delhi Police has worked hard during the northeast Delhi riots and the coronavirus pandemic.

"For the way the Delhi Police investigated the riot cases in a strict and fair manner and presented the rioters in court, I congratulate them," Shah said.

The minister said the Delhi Police faces several difficulties and being the police force of the national capital, it has several duties that include providing security to dignitaries, ensuring that various programmes happen without glitches and other law and order related matters.

"Whenever any event happens at an international level, its repercussions are also felt in Delhi. The police also has the job of monitoring the situation here," he said.

Shah said the 75th birthday of the Delhi Police coincides with the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations and stressed that the force should prepare a road map for the next five years.

"The Delhi Police has changed with the times. I urge the Delhi Police commissioner and the Union home secretary to prepare a road map for the next five years and 25 years with well-defined goals," he said. Paying tribute to the 79 police personnel who lost their lives during the pandemic, he praised the efforts of the force by battling the pandemic by standing in front row.

Recalling the Delhi police's contribution during the pandemic, Shah said, "the police personnel attended people whose families weren't here, took them for testing, got them hospitalised and provided oxygen cylinders to those who were in need. They even helped in performing last rites during the difficult times"

"The kind of work Delhi

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

On the occasion of the Delhi Police 75th Raising Day, the Delhi Police Commissioner Rakesh Asthana on Wednesday said that safety of women and vulnerable sections is top priority for the Delhi Police and their target is to raise the participation of women police personnel to one-fourth of total strength by 2025.

He said the Delhi Police has also taken up several community outreach initiatives, particularly skill training for the youth.

Addressing the gathering, Asthana said, "The safety of women and vulnerable sections is a top priority for the Delhi Police. With the blessings of the home ministry, our target is to raise the participation of women police personnel to one-fourth of the total strength by 2025"

Police did will be an inspiration for the police forces across the country and will be a pathway for other state polices to follow. During the period, the force also thwarted several terror attempts," he added.

Shah said the newly created perception management cell would help in improving the image of the city police. He stat-

The Delhi Police has always risen to the occasion and proved itself in every field. A total of 79 police personnel lost their lives during COVID-19...the Delhi Police remained on the frontline with doctors and health workers and provided all possible assistance to citizenry going beyond the call of duty, he said.

Asthana said the Delhi Police is providing 30 digital services to the residents of the national capital, including, e-beat book and complaint monitoring system among others.

The Delhi Police chief said the department is committed to the welfare of its personnel and has given more than 5,000 promotions in the current year, 48 of which were out-of-turn promotions.

"Besides, 45 police personnel were awarded Asadharan Karya Puraskar and 164 kin of deceased police personnel were

granted jobs on compassionate grounds. A special medal has been dedicated in the memory of late HC Rattan Lal, who attained martyrdom in the Northeast riots. Efforts are also being made to fix the duty hours of the personnel," he said.

On community outreach initiatives, Asthana said skill centres have been set up to train the youth who have deviated from the mainstream of society. More than 50,000 such youth have been trained in various skills. They have been provided job opportunities and assistance has been given in setting up businesses.

Asthana said the structural changes brought about in the force have led to a reduction in response time in the police control room calls from eight minutes to four minutes after merging it with the local police.

and sacrifices of their family members, the chief guest commended that when everybody else is rejoicing, our jawans have to be extra vigilant and have to toil harder than routine days. The Minister wished that the Delhi Police becomes the best cosmopolitan force by the time the nation celebrates centenary of independence.

DU outstation students want hybrid classes

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A section of outstation students of Delhi University have demanded the varsity administration to conduct classes in hybrid format. DU colleges are set to reopen and resume offline classes from February 17. Some colleges will be holding classes for the first-year students in hybrid format, while second and third year students will have to attend classes in person.

The move has caused distress among outstation students who are scrambling to make travelling and accommodation arrangements. Some of them said exams are approaching and there is no point in making accommodation arrangements for just a couple of months.

Outstation final-year under-graduate and post-graduate students of the Delhi University have started a petition stating they should not be called back for just two months.

Addressed to the vice-chancellor, registrar, proctor and the dean of students welfare, the petition has been started on change.org, and over 40,000 people have already signed it.

College principals, however, said there are no plans to hold online classes for the final-year students. The examinations will be held in



Classes being fumigated and disinfected at Ramjas College in Delhi University on Wednesday

offline mode as well.

Miranda House has said that it will be holding classes for the first-year students in hybrid format, while second and third year students will have to attend in person.

Similarly, Rajdhani College will be holding only online classes for first-year students.

Aryabhata College principal Manoj Sinha said there

will not be any pressure on students to attend classes, and that they are trying to ensure that students can be provided recorded lectures online.

Even Hansraj College has plans to offer a hybrid mode of studies to first-year students.

Delhi University colleges were closed in March 2020 in the wake of the COVID-19

pandemic.

The university had given a go-ahead to the resumption of practical sessions in February last year, but after the emergence of the second wave, classes were suspended in March.

In September, the university allowed final-year undergraduate and post-graduate students to return to the campus but attendance was thin.

NDMC to give 250 kiosks an upgrade

The approximate cost of the redevelopment of each kiosk is about ₹11 lakh under the Smart City Project.

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) has decided to revamp the kiosks situated in its area with display panels for advertisements.

In the first phase, the NDMC will redevelop 30 kiosks in a size of 6x6 feet to get a new aesthetic look and thereafter 200-250 kiosks will be redeveloped to get a new aesthetic version.

These kiosks will be developed by complete reinforced cement concrete (RCC) structure with terrazzo flooring and terrazzo wall with use of granite and tiles.

The NDMC built the first sample kiosk at Constitution Club at Rafi Marg and now redeveloped all the kiosks in this financial year.

The approximate cost of redevelopment of each kiosk is about ₹11 lakh under the Smart City Project.

DMRC submits FY20-21 balance sheet and bank accounts details on HC's directive

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) has filed a fresh affidavit comprising its balance sheet (FY 20-21) and details of all bank accounts and fixed deposits as directed by the Delhi High Court in its last hearing on 14 February.

The court had issued directions while hearing Reliance Infrastructure-promoted Delhi Airport Metro Express Pvt Ltd's petition for execution of the 2017 arbitral award, which pertains to the Delhi Airport Metro Express Line. The award pertained to a concession agreement between the two entities, which was signed on August 25, 2008.

As per the filing, DMRC has Rs 5694 crores in its various bank accounts, as against DAMEPL's claim of Rs 6330 crores. The matter is scheduled to be heard on Thursday in Delhi High Court.

An arbitral tribunal in its May 2017 award had ruled in favour of DAMEPL, which had pulled out from running the Airport Express metro line over safety issues, and accepted its claim that the running of operations on the line was not viable due to structural defects in the viaduct through which the train would run.

AAP will end Inspector Raj from Punjab: Kejriwal

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI ■ MOHALI

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) National convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said that the party will exterminate Inspector Raj from Punjab and ensure a peaceful pro-business environment in the state after coming to power.

Addressing the traders, Kejriwal on Wednesday assured the traders of delivering a thriving environment for them unlike the rest of the parties. "The AAP will completely eliminate Parcha Raj and take back all false notices sent to harass the businesspersons of Punjab. Businessmen are terrified of the government and running out of the state. Traders are extorted in the name of Gunda Tax. We will end this regime and protect the people. Only the AAP can ensure peace and brotherhood in Punjab," he said.

AAP National Convener said "The traders in Punjab are afraid of conducting their business here and are leaving the

state. There has been a public demand to make Amritsar a 'World Icon City' for a long time now. All the required steps to attain this status of 'World Icon City' for Amritsar will be taken by the AAP government"

Terming the current environment in the state as 'hostile', he said "All false notices that have been issued in the past against traders and every other person in Punjab will be nullified once the AAP forms the government. We will eradicate this fear from the minds of the public and help them flourish while conducting their businesses and running their households. This 'Parcha Raj' will hence be completely eliminated"

"I would especially like to address the grievances of the trader community in Punjab. They are also oppressed due to this Parcha Raj, baseless notices and extortions, unnecessary raid threats and so on. 'Gunda tax', 'Jojo' tax, and all such methods are kept in place to extort money from their community and threaten them.

Review Covid curbs as cases declining: Centre

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Stating that the coronavirus pandemic in India is showing a sustained declining trend since January 21, the Centre has asked States and Union Territories to review, amend or do away with additional restrictions after considering the trend of new cases and positivity rate in their regions.

In a letter to the Chief Secretaries and Chief Administrators of all States and UTs recently, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said the coronavirus pandemic in India is showing a sustained declining trend since January 21.

The letter, however, stated that States/UTs must continue monitoring the trajectory of cases and the spread of infection on a daily basis. The health secretary also asked states to follow the five-fold strategy of test, track, treat, vaccination and adherence to Covid-appropriate behavior.

The average daily cases during last week were 50,476, and 27,409 new cases were reported in the last 24 hours. The daily case positivity rate declined to 3.63 per cent on



Tuesday.

In earlier months, in view of the high case trajectory, certain states had imposed additional restrictions at their borders and at airports, he said.

While effectively managing the public health challenge of COVID-19, it is equally important that movement of people and economic activities should not be hampered by additional restrictions imposed at state-level points of entries, Bhushan said in the letter.

"Presently, as the case trajectory across the nation is showing a sustained downward trend, it will be useful if states/UTs review and amend/do away with the addi-

tional restrictions so imposed after considering the trend of new cases, active cases and positivity within the state and UT," he said.

With the changing epidemiology of the pandemic globally and in India, existing guidelines aimed at minimising the transmission and circulation of the virus have been reviewed and updated. The Union Ministry of Health accordingly revised its guidelines for international arrivals on February 10, he stated.

Bhushan underlined that states and UTs may also follow the broad five-fold strategy of Test Track-Treat-Vaccination and adherence to Covid-appropriate behaviour.

Vistara resuming certain services to pre-Covid levels

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Vistara on Wednesday said it is gradually resuming certain services that were suspended temporarily due to the pandemic. The airline has gradually been resuming services that were halted temporarily due to the pandemic, it said adding that on the domestic network, the choice of non-vegetarian meals in economy class on all eligible flights is also made available from January 1 this year. The airline said it has also resumed serving tea and coffee on select routes and will progressively restart this service on all flights of 90 minutes duration and above.

The airline also re-introduced menu cards in business class, starting February 15, and will increase the choice of meals for its premium economy and business-class customers soon, it said. Also, hot beverages services including a range of teas and freshly brewed coffee have also resumed on the international routes, and from February 1, the airline has enhanced the choice of alcoholic beverages in all three cabin classes.

On short to medium haul routes, menu cards are back in the business class and the airline has already made the full bar available to all customers, the airline said, adding, Vistara will be resuming these on the long-haul routes along with increasing the meal options for customers. "While we are restoring our services progressively and systematically, we will also be introducing new enhancements at various customer touchpoints," said Deepak Rajawat, Chief Commercial Officer, Vistara.

Channi says don't let UP, Bihar ke bhaiya enter Punjab; BJP hits back

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Ahead of Punjab polls on Sunday, the remarks of Chief Minister "don't let UP, Bihar ke bhaiya enter Punjab" at a rally in Rupnagar has provoked BJP leaders to strike back at Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra who was seen clapping and laughing at the venue. Priyanka is also leading the Congress charge in UP and is apparently the party's CM face too.

As the four-cornered campaign and contest among Congress, AAP, BSP-SAD, and BJP-Punjab Lok Congress of ex-Chief Minister Amarinder Singh is peaking-up, rival parties have upped their ante to woo voters in the state that would vote for 117 assembly seats on February 20 in a single-phase election.

BJP's IT chief Amit Malviya shared a clip from the rally where the Punjab CM could be seen speaking in derogatory terms against people of UP, Bihar and Delhi. Malviya launched an attack on Congress and alleged that their leaders were dividing people instead of developing the country.

Malviya took to his Twitter handle to share a video of Punjab CM Channi and Congress' general secretary and Uttar Pradesh-in-charge Priyanka Gandhi. In the video, Channi could be seen taking the microphone from Priyanka to state that she is a



daughter-in-law of Punjab. Continuing his words, CM Channi praised the people of Punjab and asked them to use their wisdom and then commented against the people of UP and Bihar. Meanwhile, Priyanka was seen laughing and clapping to the slogans being shouted by the Congress workers.

"From the stage, the Chief Minister of Punjab humiliates the people of UP, Bihar and Priyanka Vadra is laughing, clapping while standing beside..." Malviya said.

He further slammed the Congress for the event and questioned their intentions in UP.

"This is how Congress will develop UP and the country? Making people fight among themselves?" Malviya asked.

The incident took place at a rally in Rupnagar in Punjab on February

15. "I can't believe that a Congress Chief Minister can speak like this and also Priyanka Vadra loudly cheering it!", union minister Kiren Rijju said. Another BJP leader, union minister Anurag Thakur who is also co-in-charge of UP election, commented saying, "This shows the mind-set of the Congress that divides the nation".

Interestingly, Priyanka is not only in charge of the Congress of Uttar Pradesh but apparently is also the Chief Ministerial face for the party too.

AAP leader and Delhi chief Arvind Kejriwal also slammed Channi's remark saying "It is very shameful. We strongly condemn comments aimed at any individual or any particular community. Priyanka Gandhi also belongs to UP, so she is also a bhaiya."

SC asks Centre on one rank one pension

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday sought clarifications from the Centre on the One Rank One Pension (OROP) scheme. The apex court was hearing a petition filed by ex-service men associations on the disparities in implementation of OROP and Modified Assured Career Progression (MACP).

Seeing the tables of salary and differences produced by the petitioners, the Bench observed displeasure.

"There is no statutory definition of OROP. It is a matter of art. The fact of the matter is there is no statute of OROP. When you have framed policy, you have given a particular definition. The fact you have not gone further, is it violative of Article? Your hyperbole on the policy presented a much rosier picture that what is actually given," observed Justice DY Chandrachud, when Government counsel could not give convincing answers posed by the Bench, comprising Justices Surya Kant and Vikram Nath.

The Bench also observed that "what appears is that MACP has become a barrier for the grant of OROP."

Justice Kant also said that, "what they say is that by connecting OROP and MACP you have substantially reduced the beneficiaries. There is a classification created by MACP. For eg: one is getting 800 and other is getting 1200 because of MACP and after they retire, the person will get more pension. The principle of OROP gets defeated."

ED arrests president of B'luru-based co-operative bank

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday arrested K Ramakrishna, president of Sri Guru Raghavendra Sahakara Bank Niyamitha, on money laundering charges in connection with misappropriation of public deposits to the tune of over Rs 1,000 crore.

The PMLA probe revealed that officers and employees of the bank siphoned off the money deposited by the public with the bank. The Bank promised to give higher interest rates to the depositors which were not in line with the prevailing market rate, the ED said in a statement.

"The money deposited by the depositors was advanced/siphoned off to various persons including employees of the bank without obtaining proper security of the loans. The bank officers created fictitious loan accounts and transferred the money to these accounts which in turn was transferred to overdue loan accounts for evergreening purposes to show strong financial health of the Bank," it said.

Earlier, the ED had attached movable and immovable properties worth Rs 45 crore. The Principal City Civil and Sessions Judge, Bangalore has granted four-day custody of Ramakrishna to the ED.

In a separate case of money laundering, the PMLA Special Court, Mumbai ordered confiscation of properties worth Rs 300 crore held in Singapore in

a Ponzi scheme fraud case.

These assets were beneficially owned by Sayed Masood, Chairman and promoter of City Limouzines (I) Ltd and his family members.

After extensive overseas investigations, the ED had attached the bank accounts of foreign companies of Masood located at Singapore having a balance of approx Rs 300 crore. In addition to overseas assets, ED had also attached domestic assets of Rs 129 crore in this case. The ED is investigating a case of money recorded against City Limouzines (I) Ltd., Masood, City group companies and others. Masood, key conspirator and beneficiary, in connivance with other directors of the City Group of companies, laundered the investors' money by routing it through various countries and investing in movable and immovable properties in India and abroad.

Masood has opened many entities/ companies/trusts/bank accounts abroad without any requisite statutory permission in violations of Indian laws which served as special purpose vehicles to launder the proceeds of his criminal activity of cheating more than 70000 investors of Rs 700 crore.

In yet another case, the ED has filed a Supplementary Prosecution Complaint (chargesheet) against Sanjay Agarwal and three others in a case of smuggling of gold, to the tune of 2,717 Kg of gold worth Rs 650 crore for money laundering.

Vacancies in tribunals: SC rues 'knee jerk' actions, says bureaucracy taking it lightly

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday ruled the "knee jerk" actions in filling up vacant posts in Tribunals, saying the bureaucracy has been taking up the issue "lightly". The bench headed by Chief Justice N V Ramana, which has been proactively dealing with the issue of huge vacancies in various tribunals across the country, said that after a few appointments made initially, nothing substantial happened.

"We are getting (pleas for) extension of time for the members of the NCLT (National Company Law Tribunal) ...Some knee-jerk appointments took place and nothing happened after that. We do not know the fate of members and many are retiring. Bureaucracy is taking it (the issue) lightly," observed the bench which also comprised justices A S Bopanna and Hima Kohli.

Attorney General K K Venugopal, who has been assisting the bench in dealing with the vacancies-related matters, attempted to show the list of vacancies and the steps taken to fill them up. The bench said that it would hear the issue after two weeks.

The top court has been asking the Centre to make appointments in tribunals that are facing a severe crunch of presiding officers as well as judicial and technical members. As per data made available in a hearing in August last year, around 250 posts are lying vacant in various key tribunals and Appellate Tribunals across the country.

BJP leader's convoy attacked in Karhal, BJP raises questions on SP, Anurag complains to EC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A BJP delegation, led by Union Minister Anurag Thakur, filed a complaint with Election Commission (EC) over an alleged attack against Union Minister SP Singh Baghel, who is contesting against Samajwadi party president Akhilesh Yadav from Karhal.

Calling the attackers "SP goons", Thakur claimed that the incident was a result of Akhilesh fearing his defeat in Karhal from where he will be contesting the ongoing Uttar Pradesh assembly polls for the first time.

"I had to come to the EC as after the first and second phases of Uttar Pradesh elections, Akhilesh started sweating. His workers and goons are instigating violence," he said after

meeting with the Commission. Meanwhile, two persons have been arrested and a case has been registered in connection with the incident, following the complaint lodged by Baghel in Mainpuri.

Baghel's convoy was attacked with stones and sticks near Attikullapur village in Manipuri district of Uttar Pradesh on Tuesday evening. As per reports, the BJP leader escaped unhurt during the attack. However, the window of a vehicle in Baghel's convoy was hit by stones and shattered. The BJP has strongly condemned the attack on Baghel. Meanwhile, Baghel has been provided 'Z' category security by the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) sources said on Wednesday.

EC notice to BJP's MLA Singh for threatening voters in UP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Election Commission (EC) on Wednesday issued a notice to BJP leader from Telangana, T Raja Singh for allegedly threatening people to vote for his party in Uttar Pradesh. The Commission has given him 24 hours to respond to the notice. Singh triggered a controversy with his comments that those "traitors" who did not vote in support of the Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh will have repercussions post elections. The EC notice said the BJP MLA from Telangana has prima facie violated provisions of the poll code, the Indian Penal Code and the Representation of the People Act. "Take notice that in the event of no response from your side within the time," said EC's secretary.

Climate change could boost dengue cases

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Rising temperatures and untimely rains linked to climate change are likely to push dengue cases and fatalities in the country, health experts have warned. They have attributed this spurt to increased survival, reproduction and biting rate of the mosquitoes causing vector borne disease.

Data speaks. Last year, mortalities due to dengue were significantly high at 247 cases till November, when compared to 66 deaths in 2020, according to the government statistics tabled in Parliament last week.

In fact, last year in September, in a high-level meeting chaired by Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba and attended by representatives of 11 affected states/UTs, the government had flagged the emerging challenge of serotype-II dengue which is associated with more cases and more complications than other. The States reporting serotype-II dengue cases were Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka,

Kerala, MP, UP, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, and Telangana.

To develop a safe, affordable and effective treatment for the vector-borne disease within five years, the Transitional Health Science and Technology Institute (THSTI), an autonomous institute of the Department of Biotechnology on Wednesday joined hands with, DNDi Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative India Foundation engaged in developing new treatments for neglected patients.

As per the partnership, preclinical studies of potential dengue treatments will be carried out besides testing the efficacy of several repurposed drug candidates and implement clinical trials of the most promising compounds to deliver an affordable and accessible treatment solution.

"There are no specific antiviral drugs to treat dengue infection, and limited use of vaccines. Despite research and development to identify treatment for dengue fever, we have



not yet achieved sufficient results. It is important that we join our efforts to tackle the disease which affect millions of people," said Dr Pramod Kumar Garg, Executive Director of THSTI.

"It is critical to find therapeutic solutions to this climate-sensitive disease that spreads at a rapid pace," added Dr Kavita Singh, Director, DNDi South Asia.

An analysis of data available from 400 stations of the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) across the country indicates that in the last 50 years, the number of hot days has increased manifold. Scientists say that heat waves incidents are projected to increase eight times in the near future and will spike to alarmingly 30 times in 2071-2100.

Foodgrain output hit record 316 m tonnes

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India has registered a record food grain production of 316.06 million tonnes during 2021-22 crop year which is higher by 5.32 million tonnes as compared to last year. The Ministry of Agriculture, in its second advance estimates, pegged a record production of rice, wheat, maize, pulse, gram, sugarcane, rapeseed and mustard.

According to the ministry, the production during 2021-22 is higher by 25.35 million tonnes than the previous five years' (2016-17 to 2020-21) average production of foodgrains. While soaring production of foodgrain that also helped the government provide free additional rations for COVID-hit poor families for many months together came as a relief despite farmers' protest at Delhi borders against the three laws and subsequent repeal of the legislations.

Production of rice during 2021-22 is estimated at record 127.93 million tonnes which is higher by 11.49 million tonnes than the last five years' average production of 116.44 million



tonnes. Production of Wheat is also estimated at record 111.32 million tonnes which is higher by 7.44million tonnes than the average wheat production of 103.88 million tonnes.

Production of Nutri / Coarse Cereals is estimated at 49.86 million tonnes, which is higher by 3.28 million tonnes than the average production. Pulses production is estimated at 26.96 million tonnes which is higher by 3.14million tonnes

than the last five years' average production of 23.82 million tonnes.

The Oilseeds production is estimated at record37.15 million tonnes which is higherby 1.20 million tonnes than the production of 35.95 million tonnes. Further, the production of oilseeds during 2021-22 is higher by 4.46 million tonnes than the averageoilseeds production.

Sugarcane production is

estimated at 414.04 million tonnes which is higher by 40.59million tonnes than the average sugarcane production of 373.46 milliontonnes.

Production of Cotton is estimated at 34.06 million bales (each of 170 kg) is higherby 1.12 millionbales than the average cotton production of 32.95 million bales. Production of Jute & Mesta is estimated at 9.57 million bales (each of 180 kg).

NIA raids multiple locations in Kashmir in separate cases

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Wednesday conducted searches at multiple locations in Kashmir Valley in a case of radicalising, motivating and recruiting youth of J&K by Lashkar-e-Tayabba (LeT).

The NIA said the searches were conducted in coordination with Jammu and Kashmir Police and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) carried out searches at three locations across Kashmir Valley.

"This case pertains to radicalising, motivating and recruiting of youth of J&K to effect violent activities in J&K and rest of India by Sajjad Gul, Salim Rehmani alias Abu Saad and Saifullah Sajid Jutt, Commanders of LeT/TRF (The Resistance Front). Four persons have been arrested in the instant case so far," the NIA said in a statement. During the searches, incriminating materials and digital devices have been seized, it said.

FIRST COLUMN

HIJAB ROW: MORE THAN WHAT MEETS THE EYE


Active involvement of CFI clearly points to this being a manufactured controversy



VIVEK GUMASTE

To view the Hijab brouhaha merely as a spontaneous, isolated altercation between a clutch of Muslim girls and the college authorities of a government run institution is to miss the wood for the trees. When carefully parsed, this confrontation appears to be an orchestrated controversy that is a part of a bigger gameplan with fundamentalist and political undertones. It is a subtle attempt by one community to hijack secularism of the nation by exploiting its fault lines.

On October 29 2021, some Muslim girl students who had participated in an ABVP organized protest against a sexual assault on a student came to the notice of the Campus Front of India (CFI), a student wing of the radical Popular Front of India. These particular students were counselled not to join ABVP-organized protests and advised to join the CFI instead; today some of these same students are at the forefront of this agitation.



In November, a small group of Muslim students began alleging discrimination in the college. The issue of wearing a hijab was also raised at this time. The college development committee met with the students and their parents in December to amicably resolve the issue. Six of 12 students relented but the remaining remained adamant and were refused entry into the classroom in late December when they came wearing hijabs.

Subsequently, a petition was filed in the Karnataka HC on behalf of these students. The CFI and the agitating students openly admit to be working together. There are reports that 4 twitter handles were created in October-November 2021 for posting updates on the issue as well as other CFI content. Also, parents of three of the protesting girls are active members of the SDPI -- the political wing of PFI.

The time line of the above noted events and the active involvement of the CFI in this matter clearly point to the possibility of this being a manufactured controversy with an all too well-known modus operandi-- first provoke and when the other side responds blame the other party and feign victimhood.

Over the last couple of years there has been a tendency to blow up issues, some genuine and some not, out of proportion by exploiting fault lines to stoke discontent in specific communities like students, religious minorities and farmers- all with the malicious intent of creating chaos and confusion to rock the stability of the nation and put the government on the defensive.

The Hijab controversy has all the crafty trappings of the same previous 'create anarchy' projects. Visuals on social media like the one depicting a lone Muslim girl confronting a swarm of saffron clad male students chanting 'Jai Shri Ram' are meant to evoke sympathy by playing up the gender card as was the Shaheen Bagh movement during the CAA protests. Reports are now emerging that the video maybe doctored and that the Muslim girl allegedly actually taunted the male students to provoke a response that could be filmed.

The instant organization of solidarity marches across the country supported by the Muslim clergy (in Ludhiana Imams of 80 mosques organized a Hijab march on Jan 12) are further evidence of a systematic coordinated effort to disrupt normalcy in the country. The Karnataka government did well to close down educational institutions and ban protests in their vicinity to prevent anti-social elements from exploiting the situation.

One needs to be careful in extending support to a cause whose motives are suspect. Agreed, protest is an inherent right in a democracy. But to resort to protest at the drop of a hat makes a mockery of this democratic principle.

(The author, a US-based academic and political commentator, frequently writes on current affairs in India. The views expressed are personal.)

Train 18/Vande Bharat must excel its ancestor

ICF did build a great train but was it world class? Not quite because it was sought to be completed in 18 months against the international 36-42 months

It is euphoric that Train 18, on the day of its unveiling and launch by the Prime Minister at Integral Coach factory, Chennai (ICF) safely breached the 180 km/h speed barrier. Team ICF had delivered the first modern train entirely of Indian origin from concept to delivery at much less than half the cost of import. The way the country loved and celebrated this Make in India project was beyond imagination, considering it was just a train.

The first pair of the train are in successful service without any break in its service, a feat not paralleled by even any imported rolling stock so far.

That the team was later hounded through the poisonous instrument of scoundrels, "give a dog a bad name and hang him", is a thing of the past with a change in the leadership of Indian Railways. The pride of shining success of the train has been restored to the team which built it, after it suffered crooked machinations, vilification of the train and witch-hunt of the team members. Although not everyone of the team has been revived but be that as it may, it is time to look at the future dispassionately.

The PM has been fashioning it as a symbol of aspirational India, announcing on August 15th 2021 that 75 such trains would criss-cross the country in 75 weeks. IR has already unfolded a plan for 104 such trains, with equipment ordered for 44 trains and procurement underway for 58 more.

ICF did build a great train but was it a world-class? Not quite. It wanted to, but there was a race against time as ICF was trying to do something in 18 months against the international norm of 36 to 42 months. Now is the time to look at it very closely to turn out the new avatar of the train which must be necessarily be an improvement over the first two.

What would be the recipe for the new trains?

Let us first get the bizarre creation of a new specification as it was nothing but an exercise driven by jealousy, venality and insipidity. It attempts to enhance the acceleration of a train which was at the optimum already or improve the ride of a train which has a ride-comfort superior to existing coaches. These 'boil the ocean' modifications would neither cut down travel time nor improve travel experience but the die is cast; One can only hope that these modifications do not lead to unnecessary complications, given that these changes have already set back the project by three years.

Otherwise, there are not many technical issues to be addressed but, even those there are, should be addressed strongly, like the improper ventilation of traction motors, unfriendly cable layout, disuse of Stepper in the Plug door etc. It is learnt that the Stepper in the Plug Door is being eliminated; that would be a defeatist way to solve a problem.

Based on the feedback from the ini-



TRAIN RAKES SHOULD BE BASED INITIALLY IN TWO OR THREE DEPOTS ONLY AND ASSIGNING ONE OR TWO RAKES TO A DEPOT SHOULD BE ESCHEWED. THERE HAVE BEEN A LOT OF LEARNINGS IN RUNNING AND MAINTAINING THE TRAINS ON NORTHERN RAILWAY AND IT SHOULD BE CONSOLIDATED

(The writer is a retired General Manager, Indian Railways and independent consultant. The views expressed are personal.)



tial runs and subsequent passenger observations, the following need to be addressed:

The European-type slide-forward seats were not appreciated by our travellers and back-rest reclining type seats should be employed, taking care that the integrity of the snack table be maintained.

Inadequate holding space for catering needs to be augmented.

The so-called improved specification has eliminated the Passenger Information System (PIS). This unique facet should be restored; its aesthetics need improvement with the LCD screens to make them flush with the panel.

An ugly emergency widow like LHB coaches has been added; never mind that no one has ever used this monstrosity on our coaches so far. ICF should be able to evolve of a more organized evacuation system without spoiling the continuous window look.

The touch type reading lights need improvement.

Uneven gaps in the panelling should be reduced; this may need tightening the tolerances. The fire sampling points should be fitted in a pleasing manner.

The rubber flooring used did not suit the heavy luggage that travellers bring. A more pleasing and durable flooring should be employed.

The toughened window glass used in earlier rakes shatter when miscreants throw stones on the train; a shatter-proof laminated

glass should be used.

There is no easy solution of the frequent damage to the nose of the train due to cattle run over cases as no nose, however strong, can withstand the impact of a large animal hit at high speed; the Hobson's choice, therefore, is to replace cone sections to sustain this USP of the train unlike the ugly patch repair that we do today. A Cattle Guard in front would spoil the looks of the train front. In the long run, all higher speed train set routes will have to be fenced or freed of cattle menace through other means.

Train rakes should be based initially in two or three depots only and assigning one or two rakes to a depot should be eschewed. There has been a lot of learnings in running and maintaining the trains on Northern Railway and it should be consolidated.

As for the future, two new versions of Train 18 must be pursued; I christen them as cousins of Train 18 because this name, Train 18, had the magic which propelled the ICF team into unprecedented action back in 2017.

Train 23: Assuming we would have 104 rakes in five years from now, where would we deploy them? Shatabdis are clear candidates but that would mean only about 25 to 30 rakes. So, development of a Sleeper version is a must to replace conventional Rajdhani rakes. It was planned in 2018 as Train 19 project but later consigned to limbo

in 2019, ICF must start work on this train to be turned out by early 2023.

Train 25: Train 20 was planned as a future-ready train for speed range 160-200 km/h operation; such speeds may become a reality on IR although the prospects today appear bleak with the works for 160 km/h fitness of infrastructure moving slowly. In any case, migration from 160 km/h to 200 km/h is not a complicated exercise. Train 20 project called for an Aluminium-bodied train set. To minimise expenditure on track and allied infrastructure, it should be provided with Pendolino type tilting mechanism too. It should be possible to move a project for, say, 500 coaches or 30 train sets, on the model made by ICF in 2018, which envisaged true partnership in design and manufacture, unlike IR's conventional ToT regime, with shed space being made available to the manufacturing partner at ICF. This model would equip ICF to be ready for design and manufacture of medium-high-speed trains on their own in future. But for this, IR must act now.

In the bard's The Merchant of Venice, Portia says, "If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches and poor men's cottages princes' palaces". At the same time, team ICF has shown in the past that with a determined leadership and a motivated team, "Wishes can indeed be horses". We hope that happens.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

ALL PARTIES AND THEIR LEADERS ARE ONLY ABUSING ME AND BHAGWANT MANN. THEY DON'T WANT THE AAP TO COME TO POWER. —AAP NATIONAL CONVENER ARVIND KEJRIWAL



PUNJAB'S PEACE IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING. IT IS NOT A LABORATORY..THIS IS NOT THE TIME TO EXPERIMENT. —CONGRESS LEADER RAHUL GANDHI

Workplace harassment reflects gendered power dynamics

Not just law alone but the core issue of innately gendered power relations at workplaces must be urgently addressed

Delhi-based university's circular advised the girl students to 'draw a tangible line between them and their male counterparts to avoid incidents of sexual harassment', and it drew flak for its overt 'misogynist tones', 'victim-centred outlook' and 'blatant exercise of patriarchal and hierarchical power in the workplace'. The para in question reconfirmed the existence of gender bias.

Social theorist Simone de Beauvoir claims that 'one is not born, but rather becomes a woman through a gender socialisation, whereby, feminine traits and behaviours are acquired'. American philosopher Sally Haslanger said that 'they are causally constructed by social forces'.

Breaking an era of silence,



ARCHANA DATTA

(The writer is former Director-General, Doordarshan & All India Radio and former Press Secretary to the President of India. The views expressed are personal.)

the term 'sexual harassment', was coined in mid-70s by Lin Farley, the American feminist, while, another American feminist scholar, Catharine MacKinnon, asserted that 'it is not just a private sex-based wrong, but, the outcome of a systematic dominance of male-oriented power and suppression'. Sexual exploitation at workplaces is nothing but a reflection of 'the asymmetrical power relations in which women's entry into labour market is considered as a threat to men's traditional superior role as a provider in the family', a US survey reported.

Nevertheless, sexual harassment is a reality for both men and women but 'women have more than twice the risk of becoming a victim of harassment'. The Australian Human



Rights Commission found that one in four women and one in six men have been subjected to workplace sexual harassment. In European Union countries, between 40 and 50 per cent of women experience unwanted sexual advances, physical contact or other forms of sexual harassment at work. In the United States, 38 per cent of women have been victims of different forms of harassment, 77 per cent being verbally abused while 51 per cent are

touched without permission, and 55 per cent of victims experienced retaliation after making a complaint. A survey by ABC and Washington Post said that '95 per cent of harassers go unpunished, and the perpetrators are often protected'. Across Asia, studies in Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines and South Korea accounted that about 30 to 40 per cent working women face offensive overtures.

Now, the latest report of the World Policy Centre, UCLA, said that more than one-third of the world's countries do not have any laws prohibiting sexual harassment at work, and nearly 235 million working women still remain unprotected. While, the ILO's report observed that 'even where laws exist, they are always compliant

with international standards'. China is still mulling over a such a legislation with no clear-cut timeline for implementation.

India does have the PoSH act, 2013, as a legal antidote but its efficacy has been questioned with many women activists dubbing it 'weak in content, and is hardly an empowering instrument, which used only the broad framework of the SC laid down Visakha guidelines and judgement, and, departed in many ways, like by diluting the due process rights, reducing the employer's liability, and there by, allowing to manipulate or bypass the process altogether'. Further, the provision for punishing a woman, if her complaint and evidence found to be false or malicious, 'completely nullifies the objective of the law'

commented many lawyers.

In case of women workers in the informal sector, who are 'more often forced to prioritise their income over their well-being', the 'act so far proved to be only a piece of paper'. The local committees (LCs), the redressal fora, exist only in 29 per cent of districts. In the organised sector, 'the employers, by and large, do not play any role in ensuring that the internal complaint committees (ICC) are equipped to deal with the procedures as per law, or have proper co-ordination with the personnel/disciplinary authorities and don't treat the issue as a policy matter and integrate it in service rules', said a Mumbai-based lawyer.

No wonder that a 2016 survey found that 'women victims generally shy away from

reporting to the management due to embarrassment, lack of confidence in the complaints mechanism, unawareness and stigma attached with sexual harassment'. An advisory firm which helps listed companies in PoSH act compliance, disclosed that the cases reported to the ICCs of 44 NIFTY companies reduced by 2.6 per cent in 2019-20. In 2019, a reply to a Parliament question revealed that 'there is no centralised data regarding compliance of the act'.

Now, the recent acquittal of a rape-accused former Bishop by a Kerala trial court, which preferred to undermine the undercurrents of unfair power play within the sacred precincts of the church will surely suppress the voice of many such victims.

Russia: Pulled back more troops amid Ukraine standoff

AP ■ MOSCOW

Russia said on Wednesday it was returning more troops and weapons to bases, yet another gesture apparently aimed at easing fears it is planning to invade Ukraine, even as the US said the threat of an attack remained.

Russia has massed about 150,000 troops east, north and south of Ukraine, sparking Western concerns it was planning an assault. There

have been no indications of a significant withdrawal of those forces, but this week has seen a handful of gestures from Moscow that offered hope that Europe might avoid war following weeks of escalating East-West tensions.

On Wednesday, the Russian Defence Ministry released a video showing a trainload of armoured vehicles moving across a bridge away from Crimea, the Black Sea peninsula that Russia annexed from Ukraine in 2014.

It said the movement was part of a return of forces to their permanent bases.

A day earlier, the ministry reported the start of a pullback of troops following military exercises near Ukraine. And Russian President Vladimir Putin signalled he wanted a diplomatic path out of the crisis, emphasising that he did not want war and would rely on

negotiations to achieve his key goal of keeping Ukraine from joining NATO. While the US and its allies continued to express skepticism about Russia's intentions, the moves nonetheless changed the tenor amid the worst East-West security crisis since the Cold War.

Still, Putin did not commit to a full withdrawal, saying Russia's next moves in the standoff will depend on how the situation evolves. The Russian military hasn't given the number of troops or weapons being withdrawn and offered few other details.

President Joe Biden noted Tuesday that American officials had not verified Russia's claim. "Indeed, our analysts indicate that they remain very much in a threatening position," Biden said in remarks at the White House. Still, he promised that the US would give diplomacy "every chance."

British Defense Secretary Ben Wallace also said "it's too soon to tell" whether the pullback is genuine, noting that the Russians "haven't taken the foot of the gas."

"I think what we haven't seen is evidence of withdrawal that has been claimed by the Kremlin," he told Sky News. "In fact we've seen continued buildup of things like field hospitals and strategic weapons systems. Until we see a proper

de-escalation, I think we should all be cautious about the direction of travel from the Kremlin." On Wednesday, Russian fighter jets flew training missions over Belarus that neighbours Ukraine to the north and paratroopers held shooting drills at firing ranges there as part of massive war games that the West feared could be used as cover for an invasion of Ukraine.

Belarusian Foreign Minister Vladimir Makei reaffirmed that all Russian troops will leave the country after the maneuvers wrap up Sunday. Russia has denied having any invasion plans and has mocked Western warnings about an imminent invasion as "hysteria" and "madness."

Asked by German daily Welt if Russia was going to attack Wednesday - named by Western officials as a possible invasion date - Russia's ambassador to the European Union Vladimir Chizhov quipped: "Wars in Europe rarely start on a Wednesday."

"There won't be an escalation next week either, on in the week after, or in the coming month," he said. Russia wants the West to keep Ukraine and other former Soviet nations out of NATO, halt weapons deployments near Russian borders and roll back forces from Eastern Europe.

Biden: US has not verified claim of Russia troop withdrawal

AP ■ WASHINGTON

President Joe Biden on Tuesday said US has "not yet verified" Russia's claim that some of its forces have withdrawn from Ukraine border and said an invasion of Ukraine remains a distinct possibility. Biden made remarks at White House hours after Russia announced that some units participating in military exercises near Ukraine's borders would begin returning to their bases. Russian President Vladimir Putin earlier Tuesday said Russia was ready for talks with United States and NATO on military transparency, missile deployment limits and other security issues. But Biden continued to express skepticism about Russia's intentions. Biden warned again that if Russia invades Ukraine US "will rally world to oppose its aggression." Putin had said Tuesday he welcomed a security dialogue with West as his military reported pulling back some of its troops near Ukraine - signals that may indicate Kremlin has opted for a diplomatic path for now despite Western fears of an imminent Russian invasion of its neighbor.

US Ukrainian clergy, flocks show support amid Russia crisis

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Yuriy Opoka prays his wife and young daughter will be safe in Ukraine as he closely follows massive buildup of Russian troops on country's borders and dire warnings that they could invade at any time. The 33-year-old journalist often calls his family from Philadelphia, where he's attending an English course, and recently joined others in city's Ukrainian community at a rally calling for peace back home. "My 5-year-old daughter asks my wife why Russians want to kill Ukrainians," Opoka said about his loved ones, who live in the western city of Lviv. "I'm frustrated and also worried about them." Religious leaders and members of Ukrainian diaspora in United States are growing increasingly concerned over threat of a dramatic escalation of nearly decade-old conflict and have stepped up efforts to show support for family members and their Eastern European homeland. That support ranges from offering spiritual succour during special prayer services and maintaining charitable donations to organizing demonstrations.

NATO sees no sign Russia is pulling back troops near Ukraine

AP ■ MOSCOW

Russia said Wednesday it was returning more troops and weapons to bases, but NATO declared it saw no sign of a drawdown as fears that Moscow could invade Ukraine soon persisted. Russia has massed about 150,000 troops east, north and south of Ukraine, sparking Western concerns it was planning an attack. Moscow denies it has any such plans and this week said it was pulling back some forces and weapons, though it gave few details. Those claims have been met with skepticism from the US and its allies - even as they seemed to lower temperature following weeks of escalating East-West tensions. On Wednesday, the Russian Defence Ministry released a video showing a trainload of armoured vehicles moving across a bridge away from Crimea, the Black Sea peninsula that Russia annexed from Ukraine in 2014. A day earlier, the ministry reported start of a pullback of troops following military exercises near Ukraine.

Quad advancing positive vision for future of Indo-Pacific region

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Some prominent American Congressmen have welcomed recent meeting of foreign ministers from US, India, Australia and Japan, saying "critical partnership" of Quad grouping was advancing a positive vision for future of strategic Indo-Pacific region rooted in shared values.

The foreign ministers of Quad or Quadrilateral Security Dialogue last week met in Melbourne where they vowed to expand cooperation to keep Indo-Pacific free from "coercion", denounced use of terrorist proxies for cross-border terrorism, assessed Ukraine crisis and asserted that Afghan territory should not be used to threaten or attack any country.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar were part of Quad meeting on February 11. "As Democratic and Republican co-chairs of Congressional Caucuses for the Japan, Australia, and India, we take note of Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting that took place in Melbourne, Australia," said a Joint Statement issued by Co-Chairs of Congressional Japan, Australia, and India Caucuses, and HFAC Asia Subcommittee on Monday. "As

staunch supporters of closer relations between United States and Japan, Australia, and India, we are pleased to see further development of this critical partnership through last week's ministerial meeting. We will continue to work in a bipartisan manner to assist in that development from Congress," it said.

By advancing cooperation on COVID-19 vaccination delivery, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, the environment, maritime security, counterterrorism, cybersecurity, combating foreign disinformation campaigns and economic coercion, as well as standards for critical and emerging technologies, the Quad is advancing a positive vision for future of Indo-Pacific rooted in shared values and supported by unique capabilities of member countries, the statement said.

It noted that last week's Quad meeting builds upon outcomes of in-person leaders' summit in September 2021. The lawmakers hoped that United States and Quad will continue to engage other countries and multilateral organisations throughout Indo-Pacific-including Association of Southeast Asian Nations which will continue to play a central role in American engagement with region.

Protesters against US grant clash with riot police in Nepal

AP ■ KATHMANDU

Protesters opposing a proposed US half-billion dollar grant for Nepal clashed with police outside Parliament on Wednesday, leaving injuries on both sides. The proposal was scheduled to be presented in Parliament for approval, but the debate was postponed because of disagreements among political parties. There has been growing opposition to the grant, mainly led by Communist parties. The money is meant to be used for the construction of power transmission lines and improvement of roads in the Himalayan nation, but the par-

ties allege it comes with conditions that are not acceptable. Two of the Communist parties are part of the coalition government. They claim the conditions in the grant agreement will prevail over Nepal's laws and strike at the country's sovereignty. They say it's part of Washington's Indo-Pacific strategy, which has military components that could bring American soldiers to Nepal. US officials have spoken to Nepalese leaders recently to assure that grant concerns only Nepal's development. A few hundred protesters managed to push through thick lines of riot police, who used bamboo batons and fired tear gas.

Pelosi in Jerusalem: US support for Israel is 'ironclad'

AP ■ JERUSALEM

American support for Israel remains "ironclad," US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi told members of Israel's parliament Wednesday, despite deep differences between the nations on Iran, peace with the Palestinians and other issues. Pelosi stuck to what the US and Israel have in common, particularly on their desires to rein in Iran's nuclear capabilities and find a path toward peace with the Palestinians. "The US remains ironclad, I keep using that word, in our support of Israel's security and its regional stability," Pelosi said with her

counterpart, Knesset Speaker Mickey Levy, standing nearby. The face-to-face diplomacy came at a tense time in the nations' relationship as talks about a deal to rein in Iran's nuclear capabilities drag on in Vienna. US President Joe Biden campaigned on renewing and expanding the Iran nuclear deal after former President Donald Trump, with strong encouragement from then-Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, withdrew the United States in 2018. Since then, the US has reimposed sanctions and Iran has stepped up its nuclear activities, amassing a stockpile of highly

enriched uranium that goes well beyond the bounds of the accord. Israel has said it will not be bound by any international agreement concerning Iran's nuclear program, and says it is prepared to take military action if needed to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear arms. Iran insists its nuclear program is solely for peaceful purposes. Standing before a vibrant mural in the Knesset's Chagall Hall, Pelosi said Israel and US remain concerned about same threat from Iran and its proxies. We are together in fight against terrorism posed by Iran, both in region and also its nuclear development," she said.

EU summit aims to counter China, Russia influence in Africa

AP ■ BRUSSELS

European Union leaders want to re-engage with African nations and counter the growing influence from China and Russia across the continent during a two-day summit in Brussels. The EU-African Union gathering starting Thursday was initially planned for 2020 but was postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic and agenda issues. It will be the first time EU and African Union leaders meet in that format since 2017. The aim for the EU is clear: to remain Africa's partner of choice. European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen

travelled to Senegal last week to meet with President Macky Sall, who also chairs the African Union. She announced a 150-billion euro (\$170 billion) investment plan in Africa as part of the EU's so-called Global Gateway project, which is widely seen as an alternative to China's Belt and Road Initiative. China's programme aims to develop markets and new trade routes connecting China with the rest of the world by weaving a network of ports, bridges and power plants that will yield diplomatic clout and global power. The EU's project is expected to mobilise, in total, up to 300 billion euros (\$341 billion) in public and

private funds by 2027. "We will demonstrate that the European Union is Africa's most trusted partner," said Josep Borrell, the EU's top diplomat, ahead of the summit. "We will thereby also counter negative narratives and disinformation about what Europeans are and what Europeans are doing for, and with, the African people." In 2020, the EU was Africa's largest single trade partner, and China was its second largest. The EU said that its investment package for Africa is meant to bolster a green and digital transition, accelerate sustainable growth and job creation, and strengthen education and health systems.

C. G. Rajya Sahakari Matsya Mahasangh Maryadit

Head Office : Department of Fisheries Campus, Beside Telibandha Police Station, Telibandha, Raipur (C.G.) Pin Code. 492006, Telephone. 0771-6267693, Email : -cgmatsyamahasangh@gmail.com

No.1406 /MMS/Engg/2021-22 Raipur, Dtd.: 15 /02/2022

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Chhattisgarh Rajya Sahakari Matsya Mahasangh Maryadit, Raipur (C.G.) invites sealed tenders from reputed & experienced parties for the work of Supply and Installation of 240cum capacity RECIRCULATORY AQUA CULTURE SYSTEM with ONE year performance guarantee at GOVT. FISH FARM, BHORING, Distt. - MAHASAMUND (C.G.)

Interested Parties can obtain prescribed Tender Form from the office of the undersigned on or before **3rd March 2022** during office hours in working days on payment of **Rs. 1,000/-** (Rs. One thousand) Only.

The last date of submission of tender is **04th March 2022** upto 3.00 P. M., thereafter the tenders will be opened in presence of tenderers or their representatives who may be present at that time.

Managing Director

TRIPURA POWER GENERATION LIMITED
(A Government of Tripura Enterprise)

Appointment

Tripura Power Generation Limited (TPGL) invites applications for the posts of **General Manager (Technical), General Manager (Human Resource) and Chief Financial Officer (CFO) - cum - Company Secretary (CS)** in its headquarters at Agartala. For detailed advertisement containing Classification of the post, Vacancy details, Scale of Pay, Age limits, Job Descriptions, Job Specifications, Nature of Service, Other Service Conditions, General Instructions to the Candidates, and Format for submission of Bio-Data, interested candidates may visit the website <https://tripurainfo.com/>

Sd/-
Managing Director,TPGL

ICA/D/1799/22

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

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

Whereas
The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Manish Gulati/ Anju Gulati/ LBDEL0002313808/ LBDEL0002995516	C-4F/35, First Floor, Flat No.35, Block C-4F, Situated at Pankha Road, Janakpuri Delhi/ February 15, 2022	June 19, 2021 Rs. 42,41,386/-	Delhi/ NCR
2.	Vishal Chawla/ Pooja Chawla/ LBDEL0003943312/ LBDEL00005048478/ LBDEL00005307528	Flat No-149, First Floor, Block C, Vikash Puri, Delhi 110058/ February 15, 2022	August 17, 2021 Rs. 2,62,40,093/-	Delhi/ NCR

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

Date : February 17, 2022
Place: Delhi/ NCR

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

PUBLIC NOTICE

Be it known to all public that my client Sh. Suraj Bhan S/o Sh. Bhartu Ram R/o Flat No- 310, Qutab Green Apartment, 106/5 Ward no-7, Mehrauli, New Delhi -110030, had entered into an Agreement to Sell on dated 14.07.2017 and as per the terms of agreement my client executed the certain documents i.e. Registered GPA wide registration No. 1550, in book No. 4, Vol. No. 297, Page No. 76 to 82 dated 06.10.2017 registered in the office of Sub Registrar - VA and notarized Agreement To Sell, WILL, Receipt, Possession Letter in favour of Sh. Krishan Rana S/o Sh. Ramesh Rana R/o Hullaheri, Sonipat Haryana-131001, in respect of Agricultural land measuring 8 Bighas 8 Biswas, comprised in Kharsa No. 1093 (4-14), 1094 (5-14) situated in the revenue estate of village Satbari, Tehsil Hauj khas, New Delhi-110074 but due to not receiving the said consideration amount from the above said Krishan Rana. My client already cancelled above said Registered GPA on dated 10/02/2022 through Sub Registrar - VA and now my client have cancelled all the notarized documents i.e. Agreement To Sell, WILL, Receipt, Possession which were executed in favour of Krishan Rana.

Kuldeep Singh Grewal (Advocate)
Ch. No. 873, District Court, Saket, ND.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to bring to the notice of the general public that one ID Card of Mr. Satish Grover issued by ICICI Bank Ltd. having ID card no. 2145043 has been found missing and/or lost on 01/02/2022. Anyone, who finds the said ID card, is requested to return the said ID card to the Manager Debt Services & Management Group, ICICI Bank Limited, Plot No. 7, Community Centre, S.D. Tower, Sec8, Rohini, New Delhi 110085.

Therefore, all the customers of ICICI Bank limited are hereby notified not to make any payment to any unauthorised person holding the said ID card no 2145043.

Please take further notice that anybody making payment to any person holding the said ID card shall do so at his/her own costs, risk and peril and ICICI Bank shall not be bound and/or responsible for any payment.

Date: 17.02.2022
Place: New Delhi

Sd/-
For ICICI Bank Limited

N Korea celebrates late leader's birthday, pushes for unity

AP ■ SEOUL

North Korea celebrated the 80th birthday of late leader Kim Jong Il with a concert, fireworks and a rare outdoor ceremony near its border with China, state media reported Wednesday, as the country pushes for greater internal unity amid pandemic-related hardships. Kim's son and current leader Kim Jong Un attended a state ceremony at Samjiyon city on Tuesday, on the eve of his father's birthday, the official Korean Central News Agency reported. When Kim Jong Un appeared, all the participants "burst into stormy cheers hurrah' upon him" before he paid tribute to the statue of his father, KCNA said. The event showed participants' firm resolves to rally behind Kim Jong Un and achieve a prosperity with self-reliance, KCNA said, and similar ceremonies were held across North Korea to mark the birth anniversary. K C N A said senior officials visiting Samjiyon city observed fireworks and a music concert.

Austria to drop most Covid-19 restrictions on March 5th

Berlin, Feb 16 (AP) The Austrian government said on Wednesday that it plans to end the country's main COVID-19 restrictions on March 5, though wearing masks will remain obligatory in some places. Chancellor Karl Nehammer announced the decision at a news conference in Vienna, stressing that the pandemic is not yet over but the situation allows Austria to open up step by step. In a first step starting Saturday, proof of vaccination or recent recovery will no longer be required to attend events, go to restaurants, bars or hairdressers and various other activities. Proof of a negative test will suffice for those things. From March 5, most restrictions will be dropped, with night clubs reopening and restrictions on opening hours for restaurants and bars ending. Nehammer said that a requirement to wear protective FFP2 masks will remain in place where it is necessary to protect the most vulnerable, including in public transport, essential shops and pharmacies.

Biden orders release of Trump White House logs to Congress

AP ■ WASHINGTON

President Joe Biden is ordering the release of Trump White House visitor logs to the House committee investigating the riot of January 6, 2021, once more rejecting former President Donald Trump's claims of executive privilege. The committee has sought a trove of data from the National Archives, including presidential records that Trump had fought to keep private. The records being released to Congress are visitor logs showing appointment information for individuals who were allowed to enter the White House on the the day of the

insurrection. In a letter sent Monday to the National Archives, White House counsel Dana Remus said Biden had considered Trump's claim that because he was president at the time of the attack on the US Capitol, the records should remain private, but decided that it was "not in the best interest of the United States" to do so. She also noted that as a matter of policy, the Biden administration "voluntarily discloses such visitor logs on a monthly basis," as did the Obama administration, and that the majority of the entries over which Trump asserted the claim would be publicly released under current policy.

2 on death row in Singapore lose appeal, renew legal bid

AP ■ KUALA LUMPUR

Two death row inmates in Singapore lost another appeal on Wednesday against their pending execution on the grounds they were mentally disabled, but their family filed a fresh legal bid to save them. Lawyer M. Ravi said Singapore's High Court rejected an application to review the executions that had been scheduled for Wednesday but stayed the order pending an appeal hearing.

The cases were immediately heard by the Court of Appeal, which then dismissed the plea, he said. "We have filed another application on the manner the death penalty has been administered in (Singapore) and the various breaches on right to life and unequal treatment," Ravi wrote on Facebook. He said the new hearing was due on Thursday morning. The two men, who were arrested for smuggling drugs into the country, will be the first to be executed since November 2019 if their sentences are upheld.

Malaysian Pausi Jefridin and Singaporean Roslan Bakar were sentenced to death in 2010, two years after being arrested. Lawyers and rights activists say Pausi has an IQ of only 67 - a level that is internationally recognised as an intellectual disability - while Roslan has a borderline range of intellectual functioning.

In 2017, a lower court judge found that two "displayed competence and comprehension" while carrying out the act they were sentenced for, according to Transformative Justice Collective, an anti-death penalty movement in Singapore.

The case resembles that of Malaysian Nagaenthran K Dharmalingam, whose scheduled hanging last November sparked widespread anger because he is believed to be mentally disabled with an IQ of 69.

Myanmar fighter jet crashes into lake, killing pilot

AP ■ BANGKOK

A Myanmar fighter jet on Wednesday crashed into a lake in country's northwest, state-run media reported, blaming the incident on a technical malfunction. The crash took place in a region where there is active combat between Myanmar's army and forces opposed to army rule. The military later said in a statement pilot had died.

State-run MRTV said the plane crashed into a lake 16 km (10 miles) north of town of Sagaing. The jet lost contact with a military air base at Tada-U in neighbouring Mandalay Region at 10:43 am as it was beginning its training maneuvers, the report said.

A local rescue worker said body parts found at the crash site were taken away by a military helicopter. He said crashed plane was a Chinese-made model, painted in standard blue colour favoured by the air force.

The rescue worker, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorised to speak to media, said there were no reports of casualties on the ground.

A local resident, who also asked that his name not be used to avoid recriminations from the government, said villagers heard a "very loud" sound of the plane crashing near south-eastern shore of lake.

Sagaing Region - one of seven administrative regions in Myanmar, plus its capital city - is a stronghold of armed resistance to ruling military, which seized power in February last year from elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi.

Opposition to takeover was initially peaceful, but use of lethal force by authorities escalated conflict to what some UN experts have described as a civil war. Major offences by military, including air strikes, have driven many thousands of people from their homes and caused an unknown number of civilian casualties.

Doubting Russian exit, NATO looks to bolster its defences

AP ■ BRUSSELS

Non Wednesday examined new ways to bolster defenses of nations on organization's eastern flank as Russia's military buildup around Ukraine fuels one of Europe's biggest security crises in decades.

Over two days at NATO headquarters in Brussels, defense ministers were to discuss how and when to rapidly dispatch troops and equipment to countries closest to Russia and Black Sea region should Moscow order an invasion of Ukraine.

U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin and his counterparts also plan to weigh possibility of stationing troops longer-term in southeast Europe, possibly starting later this year. The troops would mirror presence of some 5,000 servicemembers that have been stationed in allies Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland on a rotating basis in recent years. The U.S. Has started to deploy 5,000 troops to Poland and Romania.

Britain is sending hundreds of soldiers to Poland and offering more warships and planes. Germany, the Netherlands and Norway are sending additional troops to Lithuania. Denmark and Spain are providing jets for air policing.

"The fact that we have deployed more NATO troops on ground, more naval assets, more aircraft, all of that sends a very clear message," NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said. "I think there is no room for any miscalculation in Moscow about our commitment to defending allies."

"The deployment has come in response to a formidable challenge. Over last four months, Russia is estimated to have amassed around 60% of its entire land forces and a significant portion of its air force to north and east of Ukraine, as well as in neighboring Belarus.

India economy to grow at quickest pace: FM report

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian economy is poised to grow at the quickest pace among the league of large nations on the back of various initiatives taken by the government in Budget 2022-23, said the Finance Ministry's Monthly Economic Review.

"The current year may as well end with an economic reset manifesting a post-C O V I D - 1 9 world...Manufacturing and Construction will be the 'growth drivers', triggered by the PLI schemes and public capex in infrastructure," the review report said.

Agriculture, which continues to see a constant increase in net sown area and crop diversification, will strengthen food buffers while benefiting farmers through generous volumes of procurement at remunerative minimum support prices and income transfers through PM KISAN scheme, it added.

Observing that the IMF in

its January 2022 update has lowered its global growth estimate for 2022, it said India is yet the only large and major country listed by the IMF whose growth projection has been revised upwards in 2022-23.

"In a testimony to the resilience of its people and the farsightedness of its policy-making, the Indian economy that contracted by (-)6.6 per cent in 2020-21 is now projected in 2022-23 to grow the quickest among the league of large nations," it said.

The report said the Budget 2022-23 has strengthened the direction set for India's economy by the previous year's budget. The capex budget, higher by 35.4 per cent over current year's budget estimates and rising to 4.1 per cent of GDP after inclusion of grants-in-aid to states for capital works, will power the seven engines of Gatishakti to reduce the infrastructure gap and facilitate private investment in the country, it said.

Sensex, Nifty end lower in see-saw session

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The BSE gauge Sensex closed below the key 58,000-level after a highly volatile session on Wednesday, dragged lower mainly by banking, metal and auto shares.

The 30-share benchmark swung nearly 800 points during the session before closing at 57,996.68 -- marking a loss of 145.37 points or 0.25 per cent.

Likewise, the NSE Nifty swung between gains and losses before settling 30.25 points or 0.17 per cent lower at 17,322.20. On the Sensex chart, NTPC, SBI, UltraTech Cement, ICICI Bank, Tata Steel, Bajaj Finserv and Bjaaj Finance were among the major laggards. Of the index constituents, 22 shares closed with losses. Elsewhere in Asia, bourses closed with significant gains as fears of a Russian invasion of Ukraine dissipated.

Global crude oil benchmark Brent Futures fell 0.19 per cent to USD 93.06 per barrel. Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) were net sellers in the capital market on Tuesday.

Rupee surges 25 paise to close at 75.07 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee appreciated by 25 paise to close at 75.07 (provisional) against the US dollar on Wednesday, amid signs of de-escalation in the conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

At the interbank forex market, the local unit opened at 75.24 against the greenback and witnessed an intra-day high of 74.96 and a low of 75.24. It finally settled at 75.07, a rise of 25 paise over its previous close. On Tuesday, the rupee had snapped its five-session losing streak and surged 28 paise to close at 75.32. US President Joe Biden has said that the US is ready to respond "decisively" to a Russian attack on Ukraine which is still very much a possibility, urging Moscow to step back from the brink of war.

Firms reverting to pre-pandemic levels of incentives; average increment to be 9% this year: Survey

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

After a brief dip in 2020, organisations are reverting to pre-pandemic levels of investment in incentives and the industry average for increment this year is expected to be 9 per cent, a survey said on Wednesday.

According to Mercer's Total Remuneration Survey, which was conducted with 988 companies, around 5,700 job functions and over 14 lakh cumulative employee strength, sectors such as consumer, life sciences and technology have all forecasted increments to be higher than the industry average in 2022."A key positive is that organisations across the board

are reverting to pre-pandemic levels of investment in rewards, expected to be at about 9 per cent for all industries in 2022, compared to 7.7 per cent in 2020, signalling positive economic and business sentiment," said Mansee Singhal, Sr Principal, Rewards Consulting Leader India.

Across all employee categories, increments in tech were back to 2019 levels of 9 per cent and higher than all industries average of 8 per cent for 2021.

Key specializations which command a premium are Software Development, R&D, pre-sales product consulting and Data Sciences to a tune of 12 per cent within the Internet job family, the survey added..

GAIL to connect Srinagar to gas grid; Mumbai-Nagpur line by May 2023

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned GAIL India Ltd plans to lay a pipeline to Srinagar to take the environmentally friendly natural gas to the Kashmir Valley as it doubles down on efforts to expand infrastructure to helm the government vision of a gas-based economy, its chairman and managing director Manoj Jain said. GAIL will by May 2023 complete a 700-km pipeline from Mumbai to Nagpur, enabling the flow of gas to central India and is on track to meeting the target of mid-2022 for completing major

portions of the ambitious Urja Ganga project, bringing eastern India on the energy map, he said. Gas pipelines are planned to take the fuel to the east and northeast regions as well as to consumers in the south as part of the government push to raise the share of natural gas in India's energy basket to 15 per cent by 2030 from the current 6.7 per cent.

"We are in the process of getting an authorisation from the regulator (PNGRB) for the 425-km Gurudaspur (in Punjab) to Srinagar pipeline via Jammu," he told PTI in an interview.

NZ-based Avanti enters Indian market; launches 'Avanti Giro FM1'

PTI ■ MUMBAI

New Zealand bicycle brand Avanti has entered the Indian market in association with Scott Sports India with the launch of 'Avanti Giro FM1' in the domestic market, at a price of Rs 40,990, according to a statement released on Wednesday.

Rolled out for both men and women in the country, the company is looking to come up with 12 bike models, including for kids, in the next six months along with 100 dealerships, it said. After the brands' success in New Zealand and Australia, it is now set to make its land-fall in India, said the statement, adding that Scott Sports India will mark the journey for Avanti in the Indian

Infosys may hire more than 55k freshers in FY23: CEO Parekh

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Second-largest IT exporter Infosys may hire more than 55,000 fresh graduates from campuses in FY23 as it sees a very good runway for growth going forward, a top executive said on Wednesday.

The Bengaluru-headquartered company's chief executive Salil Parekh said there are tremendous opportunities awaiting engineering and science graduates in the tech sector, but urged them to internalise that it will be a career where they will have to learn new skills at shorter durations.

"We will recruit 55k college grads in FY22. We think we will recruit that or a higher number in next year (FY23)," Parekh said while addressing IT industry lobby Nasscom's annual NTLF event.

He said Infosys is targeting a 20 per cent jump in annual revenues in FY22 and this presents a great opportunity for a fresher to join the company and grow.

Parekh says the company focuses a lot on skilling, wherein it trains a fresher for six to 12 weeks before one gets deployed on the floor.

Additionally, it has a programme on reskilling all its existing employees, unlike peers, to make sure that existing staffers keep reskilling and stay relevant.

Mingout, an Indian startup, just hosted the first Metaverse date in the world

PRNEWswire ■ NEW DELHI ■ GURGAON

On the back of a metaverse wedding, Mingout, a dating app building a uniquely Indian solution to romance, took two of its loyal users to a date in outer space. (Watch here: <https://mingout.Page.Link/mingout-metavers>) "We thought about the most romantic date possible - and in an instant, the answer was clear," Navdeep Kamboj, Co-Founder and Chief Wingperson, Mingout, said. "The moon represents the two tenets of Mingout - romance and revolution. What's more romantic than moonlight, and what's more revolutionary than humanity's first step on the moon?" Out to 'disrupt dating', Mingout has built a niche in the world of romance by bringing the date back in dating. Standing out as the only app in the world where you can date, not just match, Mingout has, over the last year, conducted 1000+ dates on the app.

Sensex, Nifty end lower in see-saw session; HDFC bucks trend

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Market benchmarks closed in the red after a highly volatile session on Wednesday despite a positive trend in global equities amid signs of cooling of Russia-Ukraine tensions.

The 30-share BSE Sensex swung nearly 800 points during the session before closing at 57,996.68 -- marking a loss of 145.37 points or 0.25 per cent.

Likewise, the NSE Nifty saw-sawed between gains and losses before settling 30.25 points or 0.17 per cent lower at 17,322.20. On the Sensex chart, NTPC, SBI, UltraTech Cement, ICICI Bank, Tata Steel, Bajaj Finserv and Bjaaj Finance were among the major laggards, shedding as much as 1.63 per cent. In contrast, Bharti Airtel was the top performer, spurring 1.41 per cent, followed by HDFC, M&M, Dr Reddy's, Kotak Bank and Nestle India.

Of the index constituents, 22 shares closed with losses.

"Indian equities staged a rebound to recoup most of its losses in the mid-moon session on the back of de-escalating tensions along

Gold trades almost flat; silver gains Rs 332

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold in the national capital on Wednesday traded almost flat at Rs 49,254 per 10 grams, capping gains with rupee appreciation, according to HDFC Securities.

In the previous trade, the precious metal settled at Rs 49,253 per 10 grams.

Silver gained Rs 332 to Rs 63,157 per kg, from Rs 62,825 per kg in the previous trade.

The Indian rupee closed 25 paise higher at 75.07 (provisional) against the US dollar on Wednesday. In the international market, gold was trading 0.24 per cent up at USD 1,857 per ounce. Silver was trading marginally up at USD 23.52 per ounce. "Spot gold prices for 24 carat gold at Delhi were up by Re 1 capping gains with rupee appreciation," Tapan Patel, senior analyst (commodities) of HDFC Securities, said.

Automation start-up Uniphore raises US\$400 million in its Series-E funding round

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Uniphore, the start-up which is into conversational automation, has raised USD 400 million in its Series-E funding round, led by foreign fund NEA, March Capital and other existing investors along with new entities, at a valuation of USD 2.5 billion.

With this round, the Chennai-headquartered Uniphore's total funding has touched USD 610 million at a valuation of USD 2.5 billion.

The company, co-founded by Umesh Sachdev, who is also the chief executive, said this is its largest to date and will be used to extend its technology and market leadership with advancements in voice AI, computer vision and tonal emotion, apart from expanding its operations to North America, Europe and Asia-Pacific.

The market for automating enterprise conversations has rapidly accelerated in the past few years as companies recognise the impact of pos-

With the new capital raise the start-up has reached a market capitalization of US\$2.5 billion.

itive customer interactions on their brand image and customer loyalty.

As a result, many businesses have turned to artificial intelligence and automation to create smooth and frictionless customer experiences.

Uniphore's conversational automation engine delivers powerful and innovative solutions to help enterprises not just survive but thrive amidst all the demands placed on them by customers.

He said that with this investment, Hilarie Koplow-McAdams of NEA will be on the board of Uniphore.

Bank of India invites applications for post of Chief Economist

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Bank of India has invited applications for the post of Chief Economist, on a contractual basis for three years.

Listing eligibility criteria, the public sector lender said the candidate should be a first class MA in Economics or first class in MA in Econometrics, as an essential qualification.

The desirable qualification is Ph.D. In Economics or Econometrics, the bank said in an advertisement.

The candidate should have seven years of experience as an officer in financial institutions/banks/rating agencies/media houses, research organisations such as NSSO, CSO, among others.

Out of this, five years of experience should be in forecasting, analysing business indicators, environmental scanning, building up of data bank, econometric models and industrial profiles.

Cyient launches private 5G Networks CoE

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

Cyient, an engineering, manufacturing and digital technology solutions company, on Wednesday announced the launch of its Private 5G Networks Center of Excellence (CoE) and said it signed an MoU with the Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad, as a research partner for the CoE.

A press release from Cyient said it will leverage a 5G core developed by IIT Hyderabad for testing various digital use cases and interoperability with best-of-breed components from industry leaders.

Located in Cyient's facility here, the CoE will combine the company's enterprise and network experience with IIT Hyderabad's research and technology expertise it said.

Broader tech-led consumer services

New Delhi: Hiranandani Group is ready to focus on broader technology-led consumer services with its new venture Tez Platforms to focus on large opportunities in the arena of social media, entertainment, gaming and e-sports, e-commerce, personal mobility, artificial intelligence and blockchain linked solutions. "In keeping with the Digital India vision, we are widening our focus on technology-led, new-age services," said Darshan Hiranandani, CEO-Hiranandani Group.

Special 3-in-1 online account

New Delhi: LKP Securities Ltd has entered into an arrangement with HDFC Bank Ltd to offer a special 3-in-1 online account. Under this facility, customers of LKP Securities Ltd can complete his bank account opening formalities and gain added benefits of broking and demat account. "3-in-1 online account with multiple utility features and benefits brings in a superior investing experience," stated Pratik Doshi, Managing Director at LKP Securities.

SEARCH FOR MISSING FEMALE



General public is hereby informed that one Female **Name: Pooja, D/o Sh Maan Singh, R/o B-66, gali No.1 Mandir Wali Gali Shubhas Mohalla, North Ghonda, Delhi, New Delhi. Age: 27 years, Height: 5'3", Complexion: Sallow, Built: Thin, Face: Round Wearing: Yellow Colour Suit, Pink colour Salwar and Sleeper in feet. Has been missing since 29.01.2022 At 07 PM From Near About His House**

New Delhi.

In this regard a DD No. 59A dated 30.01.2022 has been registered at P.S. Bhajanpura, New Delhi.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about this Female but no clue has come to light so far.

Any person having any information or clue about this Female kindly inform to the following.

E-Mail: cic@cbi.gov.in
Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>
Fax: 011-24368639
Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641

SHO
P.S. Bhajanpura, Delhi
Ph: 011- 22561071, 875080730
DP/1353/NE/2022

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform to all concerns that Late Sh. Ramvir S/o Shri Ram Saran R/o Village -Sultanpur Pargana and Tehsil Dadri, Distt. G.B Nagar U.P. has a property in Noida. Plot No-S-59, Sector-128, Noida G.B. Nagar (U.P) Registered Will at Sub Registrar office 3rd G.B Nagar in Bahi No. 3, Jld No. 142, at page No. from 359-370 on 25.02.2009 at serial No. 143. So above property is being transferred to the name of Smt. Dharanvati Sharma W/o Shri Yogendra Prasad Sharma R/o RC-835, Vandana Enclave, Khora Colony Distt. Ghaziabad U.P. on the basis of registered will. So all the related people are informed that if someone has any objection about the transfer of above property, then they can submit their objection in Noida Authority Residential department with all document proof within 30 days from the publishing date of this information.

Smt. Dharanvati Sharma

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the General public that Mr. Karan Chawla S/o Mr. Bhupinder Singh is the owner of The Residential built up Third Floor, Built on House No. O-12A, Area measuring 50 Sq. Yds., Part of Khassan No. 45, Situated in the Area of Village Nangal Jalab, Colony known as New Mahabir Nagar, Gali No. 21, New Delhi, vide notarised general power of attorney dated 19.03.2004. All persons are hereby informed that Mr. Sandeep Arora & Mrs. Reena Arora are purchasing this property from Mr. Karan Chawla S/o Mr. Bhupinder Singh vide a registered Sale Deed & has approached Fullerton India Home Finance Company Ltd to take a Loan for the same. If anybody has any charge/interest/lien in the said property or any kind of dispute kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.

Mrs. Prasoon Lata, Advocate, SG Associates (Law Firm) Unit No 7, Basement, Plot No C 78, Sector 2, Noida, UP 201301. E-MAIL: sgassociatespl@gmail.com, Ph: 7011172764, 8130200837



उत्तराखण्ड लोक सेवा आयोग

हरिद्वार
फ़ोन कोड :- 249404

संख्या :: 282/07/E-02/DR/AG(RO/ARO)/2017-18 दिनांक :: 16 फरवरी, 2022

विज्ञापित

महाविद्यया कार्यालय के अन्तर्गत समीक्षा अधिकारी/सहायक समीक्षा अधिकारी परीक्षा-2021

एतद्वारा सूचित किया जाता है कि विज्ञापन संख्या-A-3/E-2/DR/AG(RO/ARO)/2021, दिनांक 15 अगस्त, 2021 द्वारा विज्ञापित महाविद्यया कार्यालय के अन्तर्गत समीक्षा अधिकारी/सहायक समीक्षा अधिकारी परीक्षा-2021 के सापेक्ष प्रारम्भिक परीक्षा का आयोजन दिनांक 27 मार्च, 2022 (रविवार) को उत्तराखण्ड राज्य के विभिन्न नगरों में किया जायेगा। उक्त परीक्षा के लिए औपचारिक रुप से अर्ह अयर्थी अपना प्रवेश-पत्र (Admit-Card) दिनांक 13 मार्च, 2022 से आयोग की वेबसाईट www.ukpsc.gov.in से डाउनलोड कर सकते हैं। अयर्थियों को डाक द्वारा पृथक प्रवेश-पत्र (Admit-Card) प्रेषित नहीं किये जायेंगे।

-Sd-
(कर्मचारी सहित) सचिव।



PUBLIC NOTICE

Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd. 4/10, Mythree Tower, Bommanhalli Hosur Main Road Bangalore-560068

The following borrower/s have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from the Bank and the loans have been classified as Non-Performing Assets (NPA). A notice was issued to them under Section 13 (2) of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act-2002 on their last known addresses, however it was not served and hence they are hereby notified by way of this public notice.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ (Loan Account Number) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset / Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice	NPA Date
1.	Suresh Babu S/ Latha N- Thanchankara Veedu, Marunumkuzhy Kanjiram Para Po Kerala Travandrum/ LBTVM00001008492	As Described in The Loan Document/ Property Document Covering Sy No 1056/11-1-2 Sasthamangalam Village Trivandrum Trivandrum 695030	15-Nov-2021 Rs. 4,67,181/-	07-Jul-2021

The steps are taken taken for substituted service of notice. The above borrower/s and/or their guarantors (as applicable) are advised to make the payments of outstanding within period of 60 days from the date of publication of this notice else further steps will be taken as per the provisions of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.

Date : February 17, 2022
Place: Delhi/ NCR

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited



PUBLIC NOTICE - TENDER CUM AUCTION FOR SALE OF SECURED ASSET

Branch Office: ICICI Bank Limited, 3rd Floor Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi-110005

[See proviso to rule 8(6)]
Notice for sale of immovable assets

This E-auction Sale notice for sale of Immovable assets is being issued by ICICI Bank Ltd. (an underlying pool assigned to ICICI Bank by Dewan Housing Finance Ltd.) in relation to the enforcement of security interest in respect of a housing loan facility granted pursuant to a loan agreement entered into between DHFL and the following borrower(s) under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ICICI Bank Ltd. will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" as per the brief particulars given hereunder;

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrowers/ Guarantors/ Loan Account No.	Details of the Secured asset(s) with known encumbrances, if any	Amount Outstanding	Reserve Price/ Earnest Money Deposit	Date and Time of Property Inspection	Date & Time of Auction
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)
1.	Mrs. Anuradha Sharma (Borrower) Mr. Ravi Kumar Sharma (Co-Borrower)	Property No-J-11/A 1st Floor Gali No-36 Killa No-24 New Govindpura Extn. Village Khureji Khas Shahdara Delhi, Plot Area 648 Sq. Ft.	Rs. 29,95,334/- (As on February 7, 2022)	Rs. 28,50,000/- (Rs. 2,85,000/-)	March 11, 2022 from 1 PM to 2 PM	March 28, 2022 from 12 Noon onwards

The online auction will be conducted on website (URL Link- <https://disposalhub.com>) of our auction agency M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited. The Mortgagees/ noticee are given a last chance to pay the total dues with further interest till March 25, 2022 before 5 PM else these secured assets will be sold as per schedule.

The Prospective Bidder(s) must submit their offer along with the earnest money deposit (refer column E) in a sealed envelope that mentions "Offer for purchase of property" to ICICI Bank Limited, 3rd Floor Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005 or to our marketing agent M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited at 203, 2nd Floor, Shree Shyam Palace, Railway Road, Sector 4 & 5 Crossing, Gurugram, Haryana 122006 on or before March 25, 2022 before 5 PM. The marketing agency has also been engaged as auctioneer for proper conduct of auction. Earnest Money Deposit DD/PO should be from a Nationalised/Scheduled Bank in favour of "ICICI Bank Limited" payable at Delhi.

For any further clarifications with regards to inspection, terms and conditions of the auction or submission of tenders, kindly contact ICICI Bank Limited on 8126013708 or M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited on 9710029933/ 9810029926/ 01244233933. Tenders which are acknowledged by the Bank/e-auction vendor official and registered before the cut-off time with complete details shall only be considered for auction.

The Authorised Officer reserves the right to reject any or all the bids without furnishing any further reasons. For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please visit www.icicibank.com/n4p4s

Date: February 17, 2022
Place: Delhi/ NCR

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

FORMAT C-1 DECLARATION ABOUT CRIMINAL CASES				
Name and address of Candidate : S. Manpreet Singh Ayali R/O V.P.O Gorsian Kadar Baksh, Tehsil Jagraon, Distt. Ludhiana-142033.				
Name of Political Party: SHIROMANI AKALI DAL				
Name of Election: General Legislative Assembly Election Punjab -2022				
*Name of Constituency: 068-DAKHA.				
I, Manpreet Singh Ayali , a candidate for the above mentioned election, declare for public information the following details about my criminal actecedents:				
A. Pending Criminal Cases				
No.	Name of Court	Case No. and Date	Status of Cases	Section(s) of Acts concerned and brief description of offence(s)
1.	Sh. Sukrit Makkar CJM, Ludhiana	CHI/40693/ 2021	Appearance	U/S 188/283/341/431 of IPC 1860 & 8B of National Highway Act. Fir was Registered when Highways was blocked during protest (Dharna)
2.	Fir No. 0026 PS North, Chandigarh (Matter under investigation)	Challan has not been presented before the court	Not Applicable	U/S 186, 323, 341, 511 IPC. Fir was registered for protesting against CM Haryana.
(B) Detail about cases of conviction for criminal offences.				
No.	Name of Court & Date(s) of order(s)			Description of offence(s) & Punishment imposed
1.	Nil			Not Applicable
2.	Nil			Not Applicable

Foundation stone for 500-bed hospital at Manesar

Shri Bhupender Yadav, Minister of Labour & Employment and Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of India laid the foundation stone of 500 Bedded ESIC Hospital, Manesar, Haryana on February 13. Shri Manohar Lal, Chief Minister, Haryana was the chief guest.

The other dignitaries present on the occasion included Shri Rameswar Teli, Minister of State for Labour & Employment and Petroleum & Natural Gas, Govt. of India, Shri Dushyant Chautala, Deputy Chief Minister, Haryana, Shri Anup Dhanak, Minister for Labour & Employment (Independent Charge), Govt. of Haryana, Shri Satyaprakash Jarawta, MLA, Pataudi and Shri Sanjay Kumar, MLA, Sohna.

ESIC COVID-19 Relief Scheme

Sanction Certificates to the dependants of Insured Persons who unfortunately expired due to COVID-19, e-Shram Cards & sanctions of EDLI (EPFO) were also distributed by the dignitaries during the event.

Shri Yadav shared the work being done by the Ministry of Labour & Employment, ESIC, EPFO to extend social security benefits to not only IPs but also to the workforce of unorganised sectors. He also emphasised imparting proper skills to create an able paramedical and nursing staff. For this, he also announced the opening of a new Para-Medical/Nursing College at Manesar, if State Govt. provides the land for the same. Extending the pilot project of preventive health check-ups and identifying the problems and dangers of occupational dis-



eases faced by the workers, ESIC will set up health check-up camps in factories where preventive health check-up camps of workers above 40 will be done by ESIC. He lauded the work done by frontline workers, para-medical staff and doctors of ESIC during the pandemic.

Shri Manohar Lal, Hon'ble Chief Minister said that the workforce holds a place of existential necessity in the development of a nation. Hence, catering to the needs of the workforce is the prime duty of every govt. Policies aiming to minimise the problems of labourers' needs to be brought into force. With proper collaboration between Central and State Governments, the life of the workforce can be improved.

Shri Teli informed about various schemes run by the Central Govt. Shri

Chautala lauded the help provided by Union Government to Haryana.

500 Bedded ESIC Hospital, Manesar, Haryana

The hospital will meet the health care needs of approximately 6.10 lakh beneficiaries of Manesar and many more from adjoining districts viz. Mahendargarh, Rewari & Nooh Districts. For this hospital, 8.08 acres of land has been acquired by ESIC in ₹113 crores. This hospital will be built at an estimated cost of ₹500 crores. The hospital will have in-house state-of-the-art and modern facilities like General Medicine & Surgery, Obstetrics & Gynaecology, Pediatrics & Neonatology, Dermatology, Emergency/CCU/ICU, Radiology/X-Ray/CT-Scan/MRI, Biochemistry & Microbiology, Blood Bank and many other medical facilities.

State Government's decisions for farmer welfare: Gehlot

Chief Minister Shri Ashok Gehlot said that agriculture plays vital role in the economy of the country and the State. The State Government is committed for the welfare of the farmers. In the last three years our government has taken many decisions and implemented many important schemes for the prosperity of the farmers, he said.

Shri Gehlot was addressing the gathering on the occasion of taking over the charge by Rajasthan Kisan Aayog chairman Shri Mahadev Singh Khandela and vice-chairman Shri Deep Chand Khairiya at Pant Krishi Bhawan. He congratulated them and said that the State Government would be able to make better decisions for the reforms in the agriculture sector on the advice given by the Commission. He said that the State Government's Agriculture Budget will increase the income of the farmers and to strengthen them. The work is also on to make a separate Power Company for the farmers. He said that various concessions are being given through a new policy to the farmers to get a fair price for produce and to promote food processing. Mukhyamantri Dugdh Utpadak Sambal Yojana (Chief Minister Milk Producer Support Scheme) was implemented to provide relief to cattle rearers.

Shri Gehlot said that the Rights based era started in the country at the time of the UPA Government. People got the Right to Information, the Right to Education and the Right to Employment through MGNREGA. The employment concerns of people have been removed through MGNREGA.

Agriculture Minister Shri Lalchand Kataria welcoming the Chief Minister and other guests expressed gratitude to Shri Gehlot for appointing chairman and vice-chairman in Kisan Aayog. Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Shri Tikaram Jolly, MLAs and other public representatives and agriculture department officers were present on this occasion.



New Wellness Centre inaugurated at SRMIST

SRM Wellness Center for students and staff was inaugurated at SRM Institute of Science and Technology (SRMIST), Kattankulathur. This is the second centre which was evolved from a wellness clinic at SRM Medical College Hospital and Research Centre. This centre is managed by Mr Joseph Julian, who will be monitoring, guiding and helping students with their mental and physical health. The centre was inaugurated by SRMIST's vice-chancellor, Dr C. Muthamizhchelvan. pro-vice-chancellor (Medical & Health Sciences) Dr Lt. Col. Arunachalam Ravikumar, presided and Registrar Dr S. Ponnusamy felicitated.

Julian said that the programs will be implemented to help students, collect data on

students mental and physical health to determine if they would need help or not. "This data would be collected using modern techniques and by preparing a questionnaire with the help of the Psychology Department. Based on the data collected, students would be categorised based on their need for help (red areas)," he said.

Dr C. Muthamizhchelvan, in his speech, said "Years back, success was measured on two points - salary and job title. Now success has been redefined and it also includes other parameters like physical health, mental health, and job interest." Dr Lt Col Arunachalam Ravikumar said, "The Wellness Center will help students battle depression and prevent any suicide."

VIT-AP hosts IEEE International Conference on AI and Signal Processing

International Conference on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Signal Processing (AISP'22) was organised by VIT-AP in association with IEEE Guntur Subsection and IEEE Hyderabad Section virtually

AISP'22-Second International Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Signal Processing, VIT-AP university in coordination with IEEE Guntur Subsection and Technical co-sponsored by IEEE Hyderabad section inaugurated by chief guest Srinivas Lingam, vice president, Data Center and AI Group, Intel Corporation in presence of guest of honour professor Tokunbo Ogunfunmi, Santa Clara University, USA held virtually on February 12. Srinivas Lingam, vice president, Data Center and AI Group, Intel Corporation said that the focus is to present the latest developments in the area.

Ogunfunmi said that visionary papers with unique, and novel contributions will accelerate innovations. Dr S V Kota Reddy, vice-chancellor, VIT-AP said that that more than 500 research papers were submitted. The researchers including academicians and industry persons from India and 12 different countries.

Dr Umakanta Nanda, convener, AISP'2022 and dean SENSE, VIT-AP said that the conference will see innovative research papers being presented during 15 technical sessions. Keynote



addresses will be delivered by professor S P Mohanty, North Texas University, USA, professor Ganapati Panda, IIT, Bhubaneswar, Dr Shankar Prakriya, professor Electrical Engineering, IIT, Delhi, professor António José Nunes Navarro Rodrigues, Department of Electronics, University of Aveiro, professor Luciano Volcan Agostini, Universidade Federal de Pelotas, Dr Milan Biswal, assistant professor, Dept. of Computer Science, New Mexico State University, USA, Dr Nithin V. George, Associate Professor, Electrical Engineering, IIT Gandhinagar.

Dr Deepak Kumar Panda, general chair of AISP'2022 delivered his special address, Dr C L V Sivakumar, registrar, VIT-AP, faculty, scholars and staff were also present.



School: A centre of all round development of the students

Under the chairmanship of Housing Commissioner Shri Pawan Aroda, a meeting of the School Management Committee of Kendriya Vidyalaya No. 6 Pratap Nagar was held in the Board Room of the Board on Monday.

Housing commissioner Pawan Aroda said that our effort should be on the all-around development of the students. Along with linguistic proficiency, the level of morality should also remain highest. He said that the future of the country is built at schools.

The commissioner said that according to the interest of the children, they should be encouraged and the environment should be provided to them by the school. Work should be done on polishing their inherent talents. He said that the school premises should be neat and clean. Facilities like drinking water, sports, library, the classroom should be arranged in it.

The principal and member secretary Shri G D Meena, eminent educationist Shri Chandra Prakash Sharma, Shri D K Varnia, musician Smt Rita Roy, eminent physician Dr R K Meena, SC/ST representative Mr Indermal Danodiya, teacher representative Mr Nathu Singh, parent representative Mrs Seema Pareek, Mr Mukut Bihari Meena, co-opted member commandant Y P Singh President, CGEWCC, Shri D K Shukla and Technical Member Shri R C Budania were present.

BHEL secures order for Heat Exchangers for Light Combat Aircraft – Tejas

Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) has received an order for the supply of Compact Heat Exchanger sets for 83 LCA Tejas MK1A aircraft, from Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL). The order envisages manufacturing, assembly, testing and supply of Compact Heat Exchangers to be fitted in the LCA Tejas aircraft being manufactured by HAL.

BHEL's Heavy Plates and Vessels Plant (HPVP), Visakhapatnam is the sole supplier of Heat Exchangers for LCA Tejas to HAL since 1996. BHEL-HPVP and Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA), Bangalore have jointly designed and developed 13 different types of Compact Heat Exchangers for Environmental Control System (ECS) and Secondary Power System (SPS) of the LCA MK-1 programme.

BHEL is also currently working with DRDO for the development of an Air Cycle Machine based Liquid Cooling System (LCS) for Aircraft POD application for LCA Mk-2.

BHEL-HPVP has dedicated, intricate manufacturing and inspection facilities for the manufacturing of state-of-the-art Compact Heat Exchangers for different types of aircraft manufactured by HAL. The same is progressively being augmented to meet International Aero Standards (AS9100) and BHEL is ready to meet the requirements of future programs of LCA, ALH, Sukhoi and AMCA.

Muthoot Finance launches a new marketing campaign

Muthoot Finance, India's Most Trusted Financial Services Brand as per Brand Trust Report launched its newest marketing campaign on February 1. The integrated campaign will be seen across television, print, outdoor, internet and point of sale, besides other mediums.

The new campaign titled "Haathi Pe Bharosa Karogey Toh Pakka Jeetogey!" is all about having belief and trust in the brand, which has two elephants in its logo. The campaign is anchored by the brand's ambassador, Shri. Amitabh Bachchan.

Deepak Gupta appointed as Director (Projects), GAIL

Shri Deepak Gupta has assumed charge as Director (Projects) of GAIL (India) Limited. Shri Gupta is a mechanical engineer, a Delhi College of Engineering alumnus, with more than 31 years of rich and diverse experience in the Oil and Gas Sector encompassing Project Management, Construction Management and Business Development functions.

GAIL is implementing the expansion of its pipeline network by over 5,600 km at an investment of over ₹25,000 crore in the next few years. GAIL owns a cross-country network of natural gas pipeline operations for nearly 14,000 km. GAIL owns and operates over a 2,000 km network of LPG



transmission pipelines and has five Gas Processing Units producing LPG and Liquid Hydrocarbons.

Shri Gupta was working as Executive Director (Projects), Engineers India Limited (EIL), before assuming his new post on February 12, 2022.

He is a certified Project Management Professional (PMP) by the PMI, USA and has comprehensive and extensive experience in Project Management of Refinery, Petrochemical and Pipeline Projects from concept to commissioning and has led the execution of several successful projects in India in all modes of project implementation.



IP University releases MBA Admission Brochure for the Academic Session 2022-23

IP University has released its Admission Brochure for the MBA programme (Code - 101) for the Academic Session 2022-23. The brochure was released virtually by the vice-chancellor, Prof (Dr) Mahesh Verma and the Registrar Shri Shailendra Singh Parihar in the presence of all University officials, deans and directors of University Schools of Studies and affiliated institutions.

The University is offering an MBA programme in various specialities like International Business, Financial Management, Financial Analysis, and Analytics. The admission will be given based on the merit of CAT 2021, CMAT 2022 and the University's Common Entrance Test 2022.

PFC bestowed 'ICAI Award for Excellence in Financial Reporting'

Power Finance Corporation Ltd. (PFC) a Maharatna CPSE has won the ICAI (Institute of Chartered Accountants of India) Silver award for excellence in financial reporting in 'Public Sector Entities' category.

PFC was bestowed with this award for its highest degree of compliance with accounting standards, commendable accounting practices adopted while preparing financial statements, the policies adopted for disclosure & presentation of financial statements amongst other information contained in the annual report.

The award was received by Shri R S Dhillon, CMD, Smt. Parminder Chopra, Director (Finance) and Shri R K



Malhotra, ED (Finance) from Dr Jitender Singh, Hon'ble MoS (IC) for Science and Technology, Earth Sciences, MoS for PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Deptt of Atomic Energy and Space, at an award distribution ceremony held on February 9. Shri Mohd Salim, GM (Finance) and Shri Anurag Gupta, CM (Finance) were also present on the occasion.

RITES wins ICAI Award for excellence in financial reporting

RITES wins ICAI Award for excellence in financial reporting Gurugram, February 11, 2022: RITES Ltd., a Miniratna (Category - I) Schedule 'A' Public Sector Enterprise, has been awarded 'Plaque for Commended Annual Report' at the ICAI Awards for Excellence in Financial Reporting 2020-21 and conferred 'Certificate of Merit' from the South Asian Federation of Accountants (SAFA) for Best Presented Annual Report Awards, Integrated Reporting Award & SAARC Anniversary Award for Corporate Governance Disclosures 2020.

RITES has received the award under the category of Public Sector Entities for its Annual Report and Financial Statement for the year ended March 31, 2021. RITES' Director (Finance) & Chief Financial Officer Shri Bibhu Prasad Nayak received the award from Hon'ble



Union Minister Shri Jitendra Singh at a ceremony on February 9. The award recognises accounting practices, policies adopted by RITES Ltd. for disclosure and presentation of financial statement(s) and the company's highest degree of compliance with accounting standards, statutory guidelines, regulations etc. The award was presented by The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India.



POWERGRID, NR-I MOU with deputy commissioner, Gurugram

As a CSR initiative, Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID) has signed an MoU with Deputy Commissioner, Gurugram on 15th February 2022 for providing financial assistance towards procurement of medical equipment viz. Neonatal Ventilators and ABG Machines for District Hospitals in Gurugram, Faridabad and Mewat districts of Haryana.

As a responsible corporate citizen, POWERGRID has been embarking upon several initiatives in the health sector under its CSR initiatives.

The agreement was signed by Shri Nishant Kumar Yadav, Deputy Commissioner, Gurugram and Shri Vinayak Chauhan, Sr. GM (CSR), POWERGRID. Shri Vinod Prakash Baxla, Sr. DGM (HR), POWERGRID and Shri Gaurav Singh, Additional CEO, Haryana State CSR Trust and other senior officials were also present at the event.

POWERGRID, NR-I Signed MoU with ESIC Medical College & Hospital, Faridabad

Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID) signed an MoU with ESIC Medical College & Hospital, Faridabad (ESICMC&H) on February 9 for providing financial assistance towards procurement of medical equipment. The estimated project cost is approx. ₹two crores to be executed through POWERGRID, Northern Region-I.



The agreement was signed by Sh R P Sinha, Sr GM (HR), POWERGRID and Shri Asim Das, dean, ESIC Medical College & Hospital in the august presence of Shri A.K Mishra, executive

director, POWERGRID (NR-I). Dr Anil Kumar Pandey, Registrar (Academics) Dr Parveen Ghuliani Chaudhary, medical superintendent from ESIC Medical College & Hospital and Shri Vinayak Chauhan, Sr GM (CSR), Shri Vinod Prakash Baxla, Sr DGM (HR), Shri U C Trivedi, chief manager from POWERGRID were also present at the event.

Longest transportation tunnel by Northern Railway

General manager, Northern Railway, Shri Ashutosh Gangal informed that Northern Railway has achieved a major milestone in USBRL project on February 15 by executing a break-through of Tunnel T49 between Sumer and Arpinchala Station on the ongoing Katra-Banihal Section. T49 is a tunnel of length 12.758 km long and it is going to be the longest tunnel of the Indian Railway surpassing the Peer Panjal Tunnel of 11.2 km



length constructed by USBRL on the Banihal-Qazigund section. The south portal (SP) of Tunnel T-49 is located in picturesque Sumer

Village at a distance of 45 km from District H.Q. Ramban of (Jammu & Kashmir) at an altitude of 1400 meters, while the North Portal (NP) of the tunnel is located near Arpinchala village Tehsil Khari, District Ramban, in Mahu-Mangat Valley at an altitude of 1,600 metres.

The work of construction was entrusted by NR to M/s IRCON International Ltd. which has assigned works in two packages to M/s HCC and M/s AFCONS.

MBAPPE WINS FOR PSG

AP ■ PARIS

After teammate Lionel Messi missed a penalty, Kylian Mbappe saved his team again by scoring a brilliant solo goal deep into stoppage time as Paris Saint-Germain beat Real Madrid 1-0 in their Champions League last-16 match.

Mbappe has rescued PSG many times with late goals in the French league this season — as recently as last Friday — and he did so again on the biggest stage.

After taking a back-heeled pass from substitute Neymar in the fourth and final minute of stoppage time of the first leg, Mbappe cut inside two players down the left and shot the ball between the legs of goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois.

"I got free and then it's a one on one. The forward is always the master of the penalty area when the defenders start backing off," Mbappe said.

"I decided where I wanted to go."

Mbappe does not expect his team to sit back and defend in the return leg, as Madrid mostly did in Paris and got punished.

"You have to keep playing," he said.

"We'll have to do the same in the return leg. We'll go there to win."

Although it was a great finish, the sudden attack happened because Madrid somehow gave the ball away under no pressure in midfield instead of clearing it easily wide or long.

"We lost a stupid ball, Mbappe skips by two and



manages to get the ball under me," Courtois said. "It's tough to take but we didn't play well."

He certainly did, however.

Courtois had played the starring role, denying Mbappe early in each half and then stopping record seventh-minute Golden Ball winner Messi's penalty in the 61st minute. It was awarded after Mbappe was fouled by right back Dani Carvajal.

Courtois guessed correctly and dived to his left for a fine stop.

"I'd studied Messi's penalties a lot and I tried to play with him when I was on the line," Courtois said.

"You've also got to have

7 - Kylian Mbappé has been involved in at least 1 goal in each of his last 7 games in the Champions League (5 goals, 4 assists), equalling the record for a French player in the competition since Opta collects this data (2003/04) set by... himself in May-December 2017.

93 - Kylian Mbappé has scored the latest goal for Paris in Champions League (93 minutes and 14 seconds) since the one scored by Blaise Matuidi (93 minutes and 44 seconds) against Barcelona in April 2013

that little bit of luck."

Messi scored 26 goals and delivered 14 assists in 45 games against Madrid during his glory era with Barcelona, but did not find the net in several games before joining PSG last summer.

PSG threw on Neymar for the last 20 minutes as the Brazil standout made his return from a sprained ankle, while Madrid's star forward Karim Benzema shook off a hamstring injury and faced ex-club rival Messi and France teammate Mbappe.

Mbappe is out of contract at the end of the season and remains heavily linked with a move to Madrid, which had an offer of 180 million euros (\$204 million) rejected by

PSG last summer.

Now the Spanish giant might get arguably the world's most dangerous striker for free, although Mbappe pushed back on talk of a move.

"First of all I wanted to think about my game, many things are said but the truth is that I'm focused," Mbappe said.

"I give everything and it shows through my actions."

The subplots were in place but the first half did not live up to the hype, save for a few flashes of skill from Mbappe.

The second started better as Courtois produced a superb one-handed save low to his right to deny Mbappe, who was set up by right back Achraf Hakimi's astute quick pass.

PSG has never won the competition while record 13-time champion Madrid has-n't reached the final since completing a straight hat trick of European Cups in 2018.

"We are confident and we'll be at home," Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti said of the second leg.

"The crowd will get behind us." He accepted that Mauricio Pochettino's hard-working PSG TEAM closed down space well.

"We couldn't get out with the ball and we misplaced a lot of passes because of their high press," he said.

"We need to be better on the ball."

Ancelotti faced the side he once coached, hired near the start of the club's Qatari-backed takeover as the big name to achieve Champions League glory.

Man City on brink of CL QFs after 5-0 win

AP ■ LISBON

Manchester City was so good in the Champions League that even the fans of its opponents couldn't help but applaud.

When Phil Foden side-footed home the third of City's four first-half goals in a 5-0 win over Sporting in the last 16, it wasn't just the vocal away fans showing their appreciation inside the Estádio José Alvalade on Tuesday.

Some of the home supporters were also seen clapping in recognition of one of the most dominant performances ever seen at this stage of Europe's top club competition.

Helping inflict the humiliation were four players who once played for Sporting's fierce Lisbon rival, Benfica. One of them was Bernardo Silva, who scored two of the goals — his first an outrageous half-volley that flew in off the underside of the crossbar.

Riyad Mahrez began the demolition in the seventh minute with a close-range volley that was only given after a long video review. Silva then scored in the 17th and 44th minutes — either side of Foden's well-worked team goal in the 32nd — as City went into half time leading 4-0.

Raheem Sterling curled in a sublime fifth in the 58th and Pep Guardiola's team can start planning for the quarterfinals, even with the second leg still to come in three weeks.

Not that City manager Pep Guardiola, as close to a perfectionist as there is in world soccer, was getting too carried away.

"The players know me — they know the way we work. They can do better," Guardiola said.

"I am incredibly happy, don't



200 - Man City have become the 14th team to score 200 goals in the UEFA Champions League - it's taken them just 97 games to reach the milestone, fewer than any of the other 13 teams in the competition

4 - ManCity are the first team in UCL history to lead an away game by 4+ goals at half-time in the knockout stages of the competition.

misunderstand me, but we can do better." What did please Guardiola was City's efficiency in front of goal, which is something he often criticizes his players for.

"Today we were so clinical," he said.

"Every time we arrived in the first 30 minutes, we scored. The difference between the teams is not 0-5, but we finished so well."

For Sporting and its fans, it was that sinking feeling again in the last 16 — where the club has-n't been since the 2008-09 season.

On that occasion the Portuguese team was embarrassed 12-1 on aggregate by Bayern Munich after losing 5-0 at home and 7-1 away.

The thrashing by City must have felt similar. As for the English club, tougher tests are coming in the Champions League but these kinds of performances are why many make it the favorite to win the competition for the first time. It was City's ninth straight appearance in the knockout stage and the team arrived on the back of a stunning run of form that had seen it lose just one of its last 20 games in all competitions.

The mismatch was obvious from the moment Mahrez guided in a volley with his right foot after Foden had a shot tipped aside by Antonio Adán.

Australia's Victoria in talks to host 2026 Commonwealth Games

AP ■ MELBOURNE

Australian state Victoria said Wednesday it was in exclusive talks to host the 2026 Commonwealth Games. It is planned to hold events across Victoria, whose capital city is Melbourne, if it secures the multi-sports games, said the state's premier Daniel Andrews.

"Victoria is Australia's sporting state, and, if awarded, the 2026

Commonwealth Games would demonstrate to the world a new way to deliver the competition," Andrews said.

"We would hope to have the majority of events in our regional cities to display the best of Victoria, create jobs and housing and infrastructure that will deliver for the long term." Victoria last hosted the Commonwealth Games in 2006 when events were focused on the state capital Melbourne.

The state said it had signed a "heads of agreement" for exclusive negotiations on hosting the competition again in 2026. The agreement was signed with the Commonwealth Games Federation and Commonwealth Games Australia. "Victoria is one of the world's greatest sporting states and there is no doubt it has the venues, infrastructure and people to stage a world class edition of the Games," said Commonwealth Games



Federation president Louise Martin.

Australia's Gold Coast in Queensland was home in 2018 to the last edition of the "Friendly Games", as the Commonwealth Games are called, attracting more than 4,000 athletes from its 54-nation members, almost all of whom are former territories of the British Empire. The 2022 Commonwealth Games are due to be held in Birmingham, England, from July 28 to August 8.



Pepe suspended for role in brawl

AP ■ PORTO

Porto defender Pepe was suspended for two matches after being accused of kicking an official from another team during a brawl in the Portuguese league last week.

The veteran Portugal international was red carded for allegedly kicking a Sporting Lisbon club director during the altercation at the end of the 2-2 draw between the teams on Friday.

Sporting midfielder Bruno Tabata also was suspended for two matches after being accused of pushing a Porto club official during the brawl.

The suspensions for both players could be extended to up to two years after their cases are fully analyzed.

They were among four players — two from each team — who were sent off.

Porto sits six points ahead of second-place Sporting at the top of the Portuguese league standings. Sporting is the current champion.



India's Keshavan included in Olympians For Life hall of fame

IAN S ■ BEIJING

Indian Winter Olympics pioneer Shiva Keshavan has been inducted into the Olympians For Life hall of fame for his role in promoting the Winter Olympics, winter sports, luge and the spirit of Olympianism.

Keshavan is the first Indian winter-sport participant and second overall after boxer MC Mary Kom to be named Olympian For Life. Mary Kom was inducted in 2016 during the Rio Olympics. Keshavan, the first Indian to represent the country in Winter Olympics and in luge in 1994, has participated in six Olympics, has won gold in the Asian Luge Cup and also held the Asian speed record.

He was on Tuesday among five Olympians who were inducted into the World Olympians Association's Olympians For Life hall of fame for the Beijing Winter Olympic Games in an online function.

The Olympians For Life programme was launched by the World Olympians Association in 2016 during the Rio de Janeiro Olympics. As per this programme, five persons that have participated in the Olympics have declared Olympians For Live

during every Summer or Winter Olympics since 2016. Apart from Keshavan, others that were named Olympians For Life for the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics are Simidele Adeagbo of Nigeria who participated in the skeleton; Alain Calmat of France who participated in figure skating; Clara Hughes, a speed skater from Canada and Ben Sandford of New Zealand, who participated in skeleton.

Keshavan is the first and only five-time Olympian to be included on the occasion of the Beijing 2022 Games.

Keshavan was inducted for his trailblazing achievements and initiatives in grassroots development programmes to grow winter sports within India.

"My experience as an Olympian gave me a great platform to help provide more opportunities for younger generations to get involved with sport. There is a lot of value that Olympians can add to a country's sporting success post their competitive career. The next ambition of mine is to continue to promote the Winter Games and the Olympian movement in India and the wider Himalayan region," Keshavan was quoted as saying on the occasion.

Barca vs Napoli headlines UEL play-offs

AP ■ BARCELONA

Barcelona's new reality will hit home on Thursday when they play in Europe's second-tier club competition for the first time in 18 years as Napoli visit the Camp Nou in the Europa League.

The Catalans crashed out of the Champions League in the group stage with just two goals scored in six matches, the arrival of Xavi Hernandez not enough to revive their fortunes in a competition they have won five times.

A meeting with a Napoli side currently fighting for the Serie A title would be worthy of the continent's elite club competition, and indeed the sides met in the last 16 of the Champions League just two years ago.

Yet Barca instead face a real challenge in this play-off tie just to make it through to the last 16 as they try to salvage some pride in Europe and go all the way to the final in Seville in May. "It is not a favourable draw.



SEVILLA ALSO DROPPED OUT OF THE CHAMPIONS LEAGUE BUT THAT MIGHT SUIT A CLUB WHO HAVE WON THE EUROPA LEAGUE OR ITS PREDECESSOR

They are one of the toughest sides we could have faced, a Champions League-level team," Xavi said when the draw was made.

The Catalans, who lie fourth in La Liga a huge 15 points behind leaders Real Madrid, had appeared in the knockout rounds of the Champions League in each of the last 17 seasons, last missing out in 2003-04 when they played in the UEFA Cup.

Barcelona were not the only high-profile name to be knocked out of the Champions League prematurely, with Borussia Dortmund also dropping down into the Europa League.

The Germans will face Scottish

Murray sets up second-round clash against Bautista Agut

IAN S ■ DOHA

Andy Murray of Great Britain produced a strong first-round performance to brush past Taro Daniel of Japan 6-2, 6-2 to cruise into the second round of the Qatar ExxonMobil Open as a wild card here. Daniel had defeated the 34-year-old multiple Grand Slam winner in the second round of the Australian Open last month and the Scot had looked quite upset after the defeat. Late on Tuesday, former world No. 1 Murray was happy with how he dealt with Daniel's threat this time around. "He played very well in Australia, he had a very good run there and was too good for me there. I tried to be the one dictating from the first point, and I thought I did that well. It was one of the better matches I've played in recent months," Murray was quoted as saying by aptour.com after the match.

Murray, who is a two-time champion and four-time finalist in



Doha, looked happy to be back as he hit 11 winners and broke Daniel twice to win the first set. World No. 110 Daniel broke in the first game of the second set to momentarily halt Murray's charge. But a trademark backhand winner sealed an immediate break back as Murray went on to seal victory in one hour, 20 minutes. Murray now faces sec-

ond seed Roberto Bautista Agut of Spain in the second round. The Brit will seek to increase his 3-1 ATP head-to-head series lead over the world No. 16, but will not be taking anything for granted despite his excellent record in Doha. "Obviously the results from 12 years ago aren't going to affect the results this week," said Murray.

National boxing camps for youth and juniors resume

IAN S ■ NEW DELHI

The national boxing camps for youth and juniors have resumed in Rohtak and Bhopal, respectively with 98 pugilists reporting at the two centres ahead of the ASBC Asian Youth and Junior Championships, scheduled to take place in Amman, Jordan from February 27 to March 15.

The national camps for all four categories -- youth men and women as well as junior boys and girls -- are being conducted for a period of three weeks, from February 8 to 28, and the boxers will be accompanied by the members of coaching and support staff. After resumption of training of elite boxers, the Boxing Federation of India (BFI) ensured its junior and youth boxers also get much-needed practice before the prestigious continental event.

The national camp for junior girls and boys as well as for youth women is taking place at the Sports Authority of India's (SAI) National Centre of Excellence in Rohtak. The junior camp has 25 and 24 boxers, respectively in the



girls and boys categories. In the youth women's camp, 24 boxers have been participating.

For the youth men's camp, 25 selected boxers are training at the SAI National Centre of Excellence in Bhopal.

During the last edition of the ASBC Asian Youth and Junior Boxing championships held in 2021, the Indian contingent concluded their campaign with 39 medals including 14 gold.

India cruise to six-wicket win over WI

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Suryakumar Yadav played the finisher's role to perfection after skipper Rohit Sharma blazed away at the top as India secured a clinical six-wicket win over the West Indies in the first T20 International here on Wednesday.

At his favourite Eden Gardens, Rohit smashed a 19-ball 40 (6x3, 4x4) to give India the perfect foundation after his bowlers restricted the visitors to 157 for seven.

In the company of Venkatesh Iyer (24 off 13), Suryakumar then hit a brisk 34 in just 18 deliveries to help India chase down the target of 158 with seven balls to spare and take a 1-0 lead in the three-match series.

Roston Chase (2/14) bowled brilliantly in the middle overs and dismissed the two Indian openers - Rohit and Ishan Kishan -- before the hosts also lost Virat Kohli and Rishabh Pant to leave them at 114/4 inside 15 overs.

The most expensive IPL buy, Ishan Kishan, who was bought back by the Mumbai Indians for a staggering Rs 15.25 crore, made 35 in 42 balls before becoming Chase's second victim.

Kishan, who opened the batting with the skipper, struggled to get

going even as Rohit looked in full flow.

Former India skipper Virat Kohli also continued his lean patch and fell cheaply for a 13-ball 17, hitting straight to Kieron Pollard at long-off boundary.

But Rohit's flying start meant that India remained on course before Suryakumar and Iyer produced the finishing act with an unbroken 48-run partnership from 26 balls.

Suryakumar was brilliant all around the wicket and smashed one six and five fours in his unbeaten knock while Iyer, playing with an injured hand, too looked in great touch.

Rohit went into the attacking mode from the second over when he smashed Romario Shepherd over deep square leg.

Odean Smith bore the brunt of Rohit's excellent batting as the captain took him to the cleaners with a 6, 4, 6 off successive balls to collect 22 runs from the over.

The 50-partnership was up for India in just 4.3 overs but Rohit could not convert his start and was dismissed by Chase while trying to clear the deep midwicket fence.

For the Windies, Chase was impressive and also took the wicket of Ishan Kishan to finish with fantastic figures of 4-0-14-2.



Earlier, on a high after his hefty IPL buyout, wicketkeeper-batter Nicholas Pooran returned to form a with a brisk 61 as West Indies recovered from a mid-innings slump to post a fighting total.

The left-hander, who clinched a fat paycheck of Rs 10.75 crore from Sunrisers Hyderabad in the IPL mega auction, got back to rhythm in style, scoring his runs in 43 balls with five sixes and four boundaries.

The Windies No. 3, who endured an abysmal last IPL with 85 runs at a poor average of 7.72 and had scores of 18, 9 and 34 in the preceding three ODIs, made his intention clear by smashing Bhuvneshwar

Kumar for a big six early on.

The Indian spin duo of Yuzvendra Chahal and debutant legs-pinner Ravi Bishnoi derailed the Windies in the middle overs by taking three wickets in between them,

but Pooran held on as the visitors unleashed their fury in the death by scoring 61 runs in the the last five overs.

A fit-again Kieron Pollard, who missed the last two matches in the ODI series, played a cameo (24 not out from 19 balls) with two fours and one six.

Jodhpur's googly man Bishnoi made his debut memorable as he returned tidy figures of 4-0-17-2, including the wickets of Roston Chase (4) and Rovman Powell (2) in a space of four balls to derail the Windies in the middle overs.

Bhuvneshwar got his swing going up front and dismissed Brandon King (4) in the first over after the batter had failed to negotiate his outswingers.

Kyle Mayers and Pooran steadied the innings before the wicketkeeper broke the shackles with a big six against Bhuvneshwar.

Mayers also stepped it up against the likes of Chahar and Harshal Patel as the Windies enjoyed a decent powerplay, reaching 44/1 in six overs.

Rohit was quick to bring in his most experienced spinner in the lineup, Chahal, immediately after the powerplay and almost had the dangerous-looking Pooran first ball.

Shreyas Iyer to lead KKR in IPL

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Kolkata Knight Riders on Wednesday appointed India batter Shreyas Iyer as their new captain for the upcoming Indian Premier League after having bought him for a whopping Rs 12.25 crore at the recently-concluded mega auction.

Iyer, who had captained Delhi Capitals to their only IPL final back in 2020, was released after the 2021 season and it was an open secret that KKR, who were supposed to replace Eoin Morgan, were in need of a new captain. "He (Iyer) has impressed one & all as a quality batsman at the highest level & we are confident that he will excel as a leader of Team KKR," KKR CEO Venky Mysore said in a statement.



Iyer said he is looking forward to fulfilling the role. "I am extremely honoured to have gotten the

opportunity to lead a prestigious team like KKR. The IPL as a tournament brings the best players from differ-

ent countries and cultures together and I look forward to leading this great group of very talented individuals," Iyer said. "I would like to thank the owners, management and support staff of KKR for giving me the opportunity to lead this team and I am confident that we will find the right synergies to achieve the team's goals."

Head Coach Brendon McCullum said he is excited to have Iyer in the fold.

"I am very excited to have one of India's brightest future leaders in Shreyas Iyer, take the reins at KKR."

"I have enjoyed Shreyas' game and his captaincy skills from afar and now will look forward to working closely with him to drive forward the success and style of play we want at KKR," McCullum said.

Maxell set to miss Pakistan tour, start of IPL

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Australian all-rounder Glenn Maxwell is set to miss the tour of Pakistan and the initial few games of Indian Premier League due to his wedding next month.

Maxwell told 'Fox Sports' that the clash was unavoidable due to changes in the schedule. He is one of the retained players by Royal Challengers Bangalore alongside Virat Kohli and Mohammad Siraj.

"Originally when I organised the dates with CA there was a two-week gap where I could potentially have it," Maxwell said after the third T20 against Sri Lanka in Canberra. "So when I sorted that out I was pretty happy that I wasn't going to be missing in any series. And then I came to the [CA] contract meeting midway through last year and they said well this is [when] the Pakistan series [is on] and I thought well obviously that's changed since the last conversation we had." The IPL is expected to start in last week of March and Pakistan

limited overs tour is scheduled from March 29. Richardson feels leaving IPL early last season contributed to him and Zampa being unsold at the auction. The Australian duo of pacer Kane Richardson and spinner Adam Zampa had left India due to the devastating COVID-19 wave before the IPL was eventually suspended last year.

Both bowlers had no takers in the IPL mega auctions held last week.

Richardson was more surprised about Zampa going unsold.

"I was definitely more shocked for him. To be brutally honest, when we left last year, in the circumstances early, I remember having a conversation with him."

"I said to him, look, this may come back and bite us, and at that time it wasn't a priority for us to be there. We wanted to get back to Australia." "So I think there'd be some kind of buyers that'd be pretty wary of picking us up thinking that we wouldn't come again. I definitely think that's a factor," Richardson said.



Indo-Pak WC match will inspire girls across the border to take up cricket: Bismah

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Pakistan captain Bismah Maroof sees their Women's World Cup opener against India as an opportunity to inspire "millions of girls" in both countries to take up the sport.

India are set to face Pakistan in their opener of the World Cup on March 6 at Tauranga, New Zealand. The quadrennial event will be held from March 4 to April 3 across six cities in New Zealand.

"Pakistan vs India is indeed a great stage for any player to establish her credentials, but at the end of the day, it is a cricket match that has to be won by executing the basics right and keeping things simple," Maroof, who is making a comeback after motherhood, told PTI Bhasha from Queenstown, New Zealand.

"This match is a great opportunity to inspire millions of girls in Pakistan and India to take up this sport as a profession. It is the biggest rivalry, and attracts innumerable eyeballs. "I hope girls in the two countries will watch this match and will be inspired to take up the game," said the 30 year old who has played over 200 international matches for Pakistan.

She praised the Mithali Raj led Indian team but she is very optimistic about Pakistan's chances against them.

"The Indian team is a good unit and has done well recently. They also have had some very good youngsters coming in of late," she said.

"Our aim is to make it to the semi-finals, something which we have never done before. I strongly believe that this side has all the ingredients to achieve that. Being the senior most player and the captain of the team, she feels that it is her duty to lead from from example.

Green wicket holds key to NZ-SA 1st Test

AP ■ CHRISTCHURCH

New Zealand and South Africa are focusing on the notoriously green Hagley Oval wicket as they draw up battle plans for the first Test starting in Christchurch on Thursday.

New Zealand are desperate for a first series win against South Africa and to prove they can still muster a winning combination despite missing 273 Tests-worth of experience with the absence of Ross Taylor (retired), Kane Williamson (injured) and Trent Boult (paternity leave).

South Africa are thirsting to lift both their world ranking (fifth) and to boost their World Test Championship standing, with the chance to move up to second if they sweep the two-Test series.

But the main talking point for New Zealand captains Tom Latham and South African counterpart Dean Elgar on Wednesday was the bowl-first reputation of the lush Hagley Oval surface.

It will be South Africa's first outing on the Christchurch strip where both Tests of the series will be played.

New Zealand boast an enviable record of seven wins, one defeat and one draw on a wicket that always seems to suit their swing and seam attack. "It presents opportunities to score runs but also presents opportunities for bowlers with a bit of pace and bounce and a



bit of assistance off the wicket," New Zealand skipper Latham said.

"We've played some really good cricket at home now for a long period and I know if we can adapt to the wicket, adapt to the surface, then hopefully we'll give ourselves a good chance of being on the right side.

Get goosebumps imagining what retaining WC trophy would mean: Knight

It's pretty surreal to feel so near to a World Cup and yet so far away!

Throwing rolled up socks into your bed to keep ticking over wasn't how I imagined our build-up for this tournament back in 2017 but an awful lot has happened in the world since then. As I write this, we're on day five of our quarantine and we're not far away from being let out, thanks to the New Zealand Government's change of isolation rules!

We're obviously looking forward to being allowed back out to train. Some of us cope better than others in quarantine but we've been trying to keep busy.

We've been up to our eyebrows in crosswords, Sophie Ecclestone has been running HIIT classes on Zoom, Freya Davies organised a brilliant quiz (including 'Guess the baby picture', which was brilliant) and I've



taken some inspiration from watching a documentary on the first all-female crew to take part in the Whitbread Round the World Race. It's called Maiden and it features some amazing women – a documentary that I would very much recommend. As a group, we need to reset and refocus after an Ashes series that didn't go our way.

I was really pleased with how we started the series. We went toe to toe with Australia and heading into the ODI leg of the series the scoreline could easily have been different to the 6-4 deficit we found ourselves facing.

As it was, there just wasn't enough mental energy to go back to the well and fight back in the ODI

series.

A multi-format Ashes series is incredibly demanding and when you throw in COVID it becomes tougher again. That's no excuse – we didn't deserve to win the series – but I think it goes some way to explaining our performances across the last two ODIs which I don't think were befitting of the team that we are.

I want us to use that in the World Cup – there's lots we need to take out of the Ashes to come back tougher and more united in order to try and retain our trophy.

World Cups are truly special events.

There's nothing that quite compares, and you always feel privileged to be a part of it.

We've got a few faces who've been there and done it before, but we've also got a number of players who are taking part in a World Cup for the first time.

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

Indian cricket's 'backbone', the Ranji Trophy, will make a much-anticipated return after two years amid the easing COVID-19 situation in the country, providing host of domestic cricketers an opportunity to make their name in red-ball cricket while giving veterans like Ajinkya Rahane and Cheteshwar Pujara a final shot at resurrecting their Test careers.

A third wave of COVID-19 had threatened the premier domestic event for the second year in a row but the drop in infections has allowed the BCCI to conduct the 38-team event, a massive logistical task in the new normal of bio-secure environments.

All eyes will be on the opening fixture between defending champions Saurashtra and record 41-time champions Mumbai here with Rahane and Pujara on either side, aiming to make the big scores that have deserted them at the Test level for a while.

Both veterans have been working hard in the nets and their coaches feel a big knock is around the corner. Rahane and Pujara will need to make instant impact with the Test

squad of Sri Lanka series expected to be announced soon.

Nine bio-bubbles have been created across nine venues in the country and the players had to quarantine for five days, leaving them only two days of training for the first round beginning on Thursday.

The players, however, are in no mood to complain. They are just happy that they are finally getting to test themselves in the toughest form of the game after two seasons of white-ball cricket.

The batters had almost forgotten the art of leaving the ball and bowlers the relentlessness of long spells. Both the departments are up for the challenge but their bodies might take longer to get used to the hard grind of red-ball cricket.

"It is great that red ball cricket is starting. Players have suffered and lost a lot in the last two years both financially and skill-wise.

They all are looking forward to the challenge," said Delhi coach Raj



Kumar Sharma after the team's first training session on Monday, echoing the views of all teams.

It is also set to be the shortest first-class season for most teams with sides only getting three league games, impacting their match fees and leaving them with little room for error.

Eight groups of four teams each have been formed at the elite level while six teams will fight it out in the plate group. The knockouts, barring the sole pre-quarterfinal, will be held in the post IPL phase starting May 30.

It will also be a high pressure game as it will potentially decide the only quarterfinalist from the group.

The national selectors will also finally get to see the upcoming talent in action.

Only one India A tour has taken place over the past 24 months, the selectors have had to refer to past performances with no first-class cricket played in the country.

Focus will also be on fringe India players including Priyank Panchal, Abhimanyu Easwaran and Hanuma Vihari, who had been controversially dropped for the home series against New Zealand before making the team for the away series in South Africa.

Among the India U-19 stars, skipper Yash Dhull and Raj Angad Bawa are expected to make their first-class debut soon after landing IPL contracts. Dhull will be in Guwahati playing for Delhi against Tamil Nadu.

Teams have been advised to keep two COVID-19 reserves in the squad.

There is a good chance of a COVID outbreak midway into the game but the match will go on provided a team has a minimum of nine fit players.

Both teams will be awarded a point each if first innings is not completed.

The games will be played across Rajkot, Cuttack, Ahmedabad, Chennai, Thiruvananthapuram, Delhi, Haryana, Guwahati and Kolkata