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India abstains from UNSC vote on Russia

New Delhi 'deeply disturbed' by Ukraine development, calls for cessation of hostilities

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India abstained from voting on a resolution against Russia in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and said it was deeply disturbed by the events in Ukraine. Calling for an immediate cessation of hostilities, India has now given itself the flexibility to engage with other countries to find a diplomatic solution to end the conflict. The resolution could not be passed as a permanent member Russia vetoed.

In the 15-member UNSC, the resolution received 11 votes in favour and three abstentions, including by India, China, and the United Arab Emirates.

While abstaining from voting on Friday night, India said dialogue is the only answer to settling differences and disputes and voiced "regret" that the path of diplomacy was given up.

In the Explanation of Vote that called for a return to the path of diplomacy, India's



A woman holds a placard as people, including Ukrainians, protest against Russia's invasion of Ukraine, in Turkey

AP

Permanent Representative to the UN TS Tirumurti said, "India is deeply disturbed by the recent turn of developments in Ukraine."

Explaining the reason for abstention, he said, "All member States should honour principles of international law and UN Charter, as these provide a constructive way forward." He also said India had maintained its "consistent, steadfast and balanced position".

The statement called for respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and immediate cessation of violence and hostilities — words conveyed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Russian President Vladimir Putin in a phone call on Thursday.

An earlier draft of the resolution had proposed moving the resolution under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which provides the framework with-

in which the Security Council may take enforcement action. However, this was dropped in the final version that was put to vote, said sources.

By abstaining from the resolution, India retained the option of reaching out to all relevant parties to find a middle ground and foster dialogue and diplomacy to defuse the crisis, official sources said on Saturday.

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Russia pushes in, Kyiv residents scurry for cover

Ukraine President vows to fight back as Russian military just 30km from Kyiv

AP ■ KYIV

Kyiv residents braced on Saturday for another night sheltering underground as Russian troops closed in on Ukraine's capital and skirmishes were reported on the outskirts. Ukraine's leader, meanwhile, claimed the country's forces had repulsed the Russian assault and vowed to keep up the struggle as he appealed for more outside help.

"The real fighting for Kyiv is ongoing," President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in a video message in which he accused Russia of hitting infrastructure and civilian targets. "We will win," he said.

Central Kyiv appeared quiet on Saturday, though sporadic gunfire could be heard. And fighting on the city's outskirts suggested that small Russian units were trying to clear a path for the main forces. Britain and the US said the bulk of Russian forces were 19 miles (30 kilometres) from the centre of the city.

Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko extended an



A Ukrainian soldier walks past debris of a burning military truck, on a street in Kyiv on Saturday. Russian troops stormed toward Ukraine's capital on Saturday, and street fighting broke out as city officials urged residents to take shelter

AP/PTI

overnight curfew from 5 pm until 8 am. He said, "All civilians on the street during the curfew will be considered members of the enemy's sabotage and reconnaissance groups."

Russia claims its assault on Ukraine is aimed only at military targets, but bridges, schools and residential neighbourhoods have been hit since the invasion began on Thursday with air and missile strikes and Russian troops entering Ukraine from the north, east and south.

Ukraine's health minister reported on Saturday that 198 people, including three children, had been killed and more than 1,000 others had been wounded during Europe's largest land war since World War II. It was unclear whether those figures included both military and civilian casualties.

In Kyiv, a missile struck a high-rise apartment on outskirts near one of the city's two passenger airports, leaving a jagged hole of ravaged apartments over several floors. A rescue worker said six civilians

were injured.

The conflict has driven thousands of Ukrainians from their homes in search of safety. UN officials said more than 1,20,000 Ukrainians had left the country for Poland, Moldova and other neighbouring nations.

Russian President Vladimir Putin sent troops into Ukraine after he spent weeks denying that's what he intended, all the while building up a force of almost 200,000 troops along the countries' borders.

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After Russia praises India, Zelenskyy calls up Modi, seeks political support

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After Russia praised India's decision to abstain from a vote at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy spoke to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and sought "political support".

In a tweet, Zelenskyy said, "Spoke with Indian Prime Minister @narendramodi. Informed of the course of repulsing Russian aggression. More than 100,000 invaders are on our land. They insidiously fire on residential buildings. Urged India to give us political support in the UN Security Council. Stop the aggressor together!"

The Ministry of External Affairs said here that the PM spoke with Zelenskyy earlier on Saturday.

"Zelenskyy briefed the Prime Minister in detail about the ongoing conflict situation in Ukraine. The Prime Minister



expressed his deep anguish about the loss of life and property due to the ongoing conflict. He reiterated his call for an immediate cessation of violence and a return to dialogue, and expressed India's willingness to contribute in any way towards peace efforts," the Ministry's statement said.

Modi also conveyed India's deep concern for the safety and security of Indian citizens, including students, present in Ukraine. He sought facilitation by Ukrainian authorities to expeditiously and safely evacuate Indian citizens, the Ministry said.

UK puts off Cobra Warrior multilateral air exercise

India's Tejas was scheduled to take part in show along with US, Belgium

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Given the present tense situation in Ukraine, the United Kingdom has canceled a prestigious multi-nation air exercise where India was also scheduled to take part in the first week of March.

Five indigenously-designed and manufactured Tejas aircraft were to showcase their capabilities alongside the front-line fighter jets of the air forces of other countries. Air Forces of the UK, Belgium, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, and the US are part of the exercise.

The exercise "Cobra Warrior" in Waddington was earlier scheduled to commence on March 6 and end on 27. On



Wednesday, the IAF had announced that it will take part in the "Cobra Warrior" exercise with a fleet of five Tejas light combat aircraft (LCA).

The IAF said the exercise "Cobra Warrior 22" is aimed at providing operational exposure and sharing best practices amongst the participating air forces. It said the exercise will be a platform for the Tejas aircraft to demonstrate its maneuverability and operational capability. "The exercise is aimed at providing operational exposure and sharing best practices

among the participating air forces, thereby enhancing combat capability and forging bonds of friendship," the IAF had said.

Recently, Tejas took part in the Singapore air show. India is showcasing Tejas as a potential export item. Tejas, indigenously designed by the Aircraft Development Agency of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), is expected to be the backbone of the IAF in the future.

BJP pins hopes on new Ayodhya for polls today

VIRENDRANATH BHATT ■ LUCKNOW

The BJP and the Samajwadi Party have much at stake in the fifth phase of the Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls on Sunday. The all-important constituency of Ayodhya figures in this phase.

The saffron party won 48 out of the 61 seats which would go to poll in this phase. More than 2 crore voters will decide the fate of 692 candidates in 61 Assembly constituencies across 12 districts.

UP's Chief Election Officer Ajay Kumar Shukla said voting will take place from 7 am to 6 pm. The EC has set up 14,030 polling stations and 25,995 polling booths and arranged for the live webcasting at 50 per cent polling booths.

Since 2017, with Yogi Adityanath as the Chief Minister, "Ayodhya" has also seen geographical expansion, with the district formerly



known as Faizabad renamed as Ayodhya. The other districts that go to polls are Amethi, Raebareli, Sultanpur, Pratapgarh, Kaushambi, Prayagraj, Barabanki, Bahraich, Shravasti, Gonda and Chitrakoot in Bundelkhand.

In the erstwhile Faizabad, the BJP had won all the five Assembly segments of Rudauli, Milkipur (SC), Bikapur, Gosaiganj and Ayodhya in 2017. Five years down the line as UP votes again, the ongoing construction of the Ram Mandir is the new identity of the temple town. The BJP is hoping that the unprecedented

attention put on Ayodhya during five years of its rule in the state will also help pull votes, as 'new Ayodhya' gets in sync with the Hindutva expression.

Though fervour around Ayodhya's considerably diminished after the BJP's decision not to field Yogi from Ayodhya, the party will still hope that the construction of the Ram temple will be the glue needed for the voters not just in the district but the nearby region as well to stick with it, especially in the Devipatan belt comprising 16 seats across three districts of Gonda, Bahraich and Shravasti.

CAPSULE

LIST 'KAURAVAS' IN CONG: RAHUL IN GUJ

Dwarka: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday asked his party leaders in Gujarat to prepare a list of "Kauravas" in the party, who just "sit in their AC offices, do nothing but talk and disturb others", adding that such people eventually cross over to the BJP.

18 OUT OF 61 CONVICTS ON PAROLE RETURNED TO JAIL ON THEIR OWN

Panaji: Of the 61 convicts who were released on parole from Goa's prison in May last year to prevent overcrowding in view of the coronavirus pandemic, 18 have returned to the jail on their own although they had freedom to be with their families, while 43 others are still at home, a senior official said.

NO PENALTY FOR 'NO MASK' IN PVT VEHICLE

New Delhi: In a relief to people travelling together in private vehicles in Delhi, the DDMa in an order on Saturday said no penalty will be imposed on them if found without masks.

Cabinet OK's up to 20% FDI in IPO-bound LIC

New Delhi: The Union Cabinet on Saturday permitted up to 20 per cent foreign direct investment (FDI) under automatic route in IPO-bound LIC with an aim to facilitate disinvestment of the country's largest insurer, sources said.

The decision in this regard was taken by the Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The Government has approved listing of shares of LIC on the stock market through an IPO by part-sale of its stake in the insurer and raising fresh equity capital.

Foreign investors may be desirous of taking part in the mega IPO. However, the existing FDI policy did not prescribe any specific provision for foreign investment in LIC, which is a statutory body established under the LIC Act, 1956.

Since as per the present FDI policy, the foreign inflows ceiling for public sector banks is 20 per cent under govern-

ment approval route, it has been decided to allow foreign investment of up to 20 per cent for LIC and such other corporate bodies.

Further, in order to expedite the capital raising process, such FDI has been kept under the automatic route, as in the case of the rest of the insurance sector, one of the sources said.

Increased FDI inflows will supplement domestic capital, technology transfer, skill development for accelerated economic growth and development across sectors.

Setting the stage for the country's biggest-ever public offering, Life Insurance Corporation on February 13 filed draft papers with capital market regulator Sebi for the sale of 5 per cent stake by the Government for an estimated ₹63,000 crore. The IPO of over 31.6 crore shares or 5 per cent Government stake is likely to hit D-street in March.

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Waft of 'Aroma' draws farmers' attention

ARCHANAJYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Central Government's "Aroma" Mission is going places. From picturesque mountainous Himachal Pradesh to Rajasthan, from Uttarakhand to Uttar Pradesh to central parts of Madhya Pradesh, and down South Tamil Nadu, farmers are taking up the cultivation of high revenue-generating aromatic crops.

Ditto is the case in Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Odisha, Sikkim, Manipur, Mizoram, Gujarat, Leh and Ladakh and Jammu and Kashmir Union Territories where farmers are hoping to reap profits by cultivating such climate change resilient crops, unlike the conventional ones which are vulnerable to animal menace too.

Sanjay Kumar, Director of the Palampur-based Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology (IHBT), a CSIR lab, said an ambitious target of covering 3,000 hectares area under aromatic crops across pan India has been kept to



achieve by March 31, 2023, under the CSIR Aroma mission project phase II. "So far we have covered over 1,113 hectares of area under the Mission across the country."

"Time to time we supply quality planting material of these crops conduct training-cum-awareness programmes, skill development programmes on cultivation and value addi-

tion of aromatic crops. The crops included under the Mission by the institute are wild marigold, chamomile, damask rose, lemongrass, scented geranium, palmarosa, lavender, rosemary, citronella, mushkbala, dracocephalum, artemisia, mint species among a few others."

Farmers are encouraged to take up these profitable ven-

tures generating essential oils which have a huge domestic and international market, added Rakesh Kumar, Senior Principal Scientist-cum-Co Nodal Aroma Mission, CSIR-IHBT.

He cited studies claiming that monkey menace has grown over the years in hilly regions like Himachal Pradesh. For instance, the cultivated area affected by monkeys and other animals in Himachal Pradesh alone is more than one lakh hectares with crop loss up to 55 per cent and monetary loss of more than 324 crores to agriculture and horticulture crops collectively, he pointed out.

To help farmers take up the project the IHBT scientists have been conducting a string of workshops with recent being in the Bhattiyat region in Chamba district, Himachal Pradesh. SDM of the region Bachhan Singh pointed out that these crops have huge demand in perfumery, fragrance, food industries among others. He also emphasised on

promotion of Subhash Palekar Natural Farming as it will reduce the input cost and will improve the quality of produce through chemical-free farming.

The global essential oils market demand was 226.9 thousand tons in 2018 and is projected to expand at a CAGR (Compound Annual Growth Rate) of 9.3 per cent from 2019 to 2025. Depending upon the quality and quantity of essential oils, farmers of hills can earn a net profit of 0.8 to 1.5 lakh per hectare annually, said Rakesh Kumar.

The income of the farmers through such cultivation is expected to increase by ₹30,000 to 60,000/ha/year. About 45,000 skilled human resources capable of multiplying quality planting material, distillation, fractionation, and value addition will be developed.

More than 25,000 farming families would be directly benefited and employment of more than 10-15 lakhs mandays will be generated in rural areas, said an official from the CSIR.

Students from Aligarh in bunkers as Russia attack on Ukraine intensifies

Aligarh Parents Association organised a prayer meeting for safe return of the students to home trapped in Ukraine

PNS ■ ALIGARH

The students stuck in Ukraine are now worried as all shops are closed since the attack and ration is left for one day. Students are living in bunker hoping to return to their homeland soon. A student named Urvashi told her father that they are falling short of food. Urvashi's concern has blown the senses of her father Bhanu Pratap Singh of Pratibha Colony. The family is praying for the safe return of their daughter who went to study medicine in Ukraine.

This is the condition of 40 families of the district. When and how will their children trapped in Ukraine return? They do not know this, but the hope remains that the government will do something good. The worsening situation in Ukraine is increasing their restlessness. The horror of talking to the children and the challenge of living life is

unimaginable. Right now no one is in sight of relief. Sushila Singh Rajput spoke to her daughter Urvashi on video calling. She told that the daughter is studying online in her flat amidst the fear of attack, but the food items were at five times higher rate. Only one to one and half day's ration is left. She is studying at Ivano University. Mukut Yadav, a resident of Kaveri Vatika, told that his son Sumit Yadav is also studying in Ivano only. They told that When we talked in the afternoon, I was told that the market is closed, there is no possibility of going anywhere. There is a fear of attack, online education is going on but the problem of food is arising. Even before the attack, food items were being available at five times higher rates. Now one day's ration is left. Then there is nothing to eat. Swarna Jayanti resident Amod Upadhyay's son Sarthak is trapped in Kiwi, the capital of Ukraine. Dr. Vishwamitra Arya's son Ritwik Varshney spent the night in the bunker. Couldn't even make complete arrangements for food in the morning that the siren went off. There is also a problem of food and drink in front of the students. Money has also started running out in ATMs.

Aligarh Parents Association organized a prayer meeting in connection with the return of the students of the district trapped in Ukraine. The



officials demanded from the administration and the government that the students should be brought back home after getting an air lift. Association in-charge Anurag Gupta said that a letter is also being sent to the PMO office regarding the demand.

Administration issued helpline number

To help the students and citizens of the district trapped

in Ukraine, a control room has been started at the local level. For all possible help to the students, the district administration has appointed Deputy Collector Mohd. Zafar who has been made the nodal officer. Their mobile and WhatsApp number 9899372535 has been issued. Along with this, the control room has been operated for 24 hours. Their numbers are 05712420100, 7906856081, 9837606908, 9315097762.

Email id is ddmaaligarh@gmail.com. ADM Finance and Revenue Vidyan Jaiswal told that if someone's child or any member of the family is trapped in Ukraine, then they should inform in writing and also tell on the given numbers. Assuring all possible help, he has said that the district administration stands with them in this difficult time.

Aligarh's business and exporters suffered a setback of crores due to Russia-Ukraine war.

Aligarh's business has suffered a setback of crores due to Russia's attack on Ukraine. For the last two days, traders from any country of America and Europe have not placed orders to the exporters here. Old orders are also not being delivered. In such a situation, there is a big impact on business.

More than 80 percent of hardware exports from Aligarh are done in America and European countries only. At the same time, due to increase in the price of metal and crude oil, exporters are worried. They believe that if this situation continues, then they may have to face a double whammy. Aligarh, famous for the lock and hardware business, consumes more than 80 percent of the hardware items in

Europe and America. All the exporters are in direct contact with the buyers there, but since the attack on Ukraine started, none of the buyers from there contacted the exporters here. Goods are not being sold even on old orders. New orders are not coming in either. In such a situation, now the business of Aligarh is facing a lot of setback. If this situation continues in the future as well, then it may become more disturbing in the coming days. Aligarh supplies most of the hardware from exporters to the US. About 45 percent of the goods are consumed there. Window hardware, door hardware and furniture hardware go from here, but orders are not being received now. At the same time, 40 percent of the goods go to Europe, orders are not being received from there too.

The dispute between Russia and Ukraine has increased the price of crude oil. In such a situation, its effect can also be seen in the future. The same is the case with metals. Its prices have also increased in the last two to three days.

Navneet Varshney, Exporter told that more than 80 percent of hardware exports from Aligarh are in Europe and America, but due to the war, there is no dialogue with the buyers there. Its effect is also visible. This will have an impact on business in the coming days.

Quarrel over WhatsApp comment leads to firing in air during wedding procession

PTI ■ NAGPUR

Seven persons have been arrested here for allegedly stabbing a minor and firing in the air during a wedding procession over a quarrel on WhatsApp, police said on Saturday. The arrested men were identified as Sameer Khan (22), Altamas Ansari (24), Anwar Ansari (22), Sohel Ansari (23), Ariff Ansari (23), Mohd Kaif (24) and a juvenile, all residents of Mominpura area of the city. Sameer Khan is a notorious criminal with three cases including an attempt to murder case registered against him, said an official of Yashodhara police station.

"One Rijwan added a picture of Sameer Khan as his WhatsApp status. Shahbaj Khan made an abusive remark about it which led to heated

arguments between him and Sameer over phone on Friday," the official said. When Sameer asked for his location, Shahbaj replied that he was in a wedding procession passing by Khana Khajana Hotel.

Sameer called his accomplices and they went to the spot on motorbikes and fired shot in the air, the official added. Interestingly, Shahbaz was not present at the spot. When some participants of the procession tried to nab them, the assailants stabbed a minor during the ensuing scuffle before fleeing.

But Altamas was caught and handed over to the police, the official said. Soon the other six were also rounded up. All the accused were booked under IPC sections 324 (assault), 307 (attempt to murder) and also under the Arms Act. Further probe is on.

Paris' gift to Delhi: A 'French garden' grows on metro wall

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

With a vibrant spray of colours and thematic artwork depicting a French garden and its curious co-habitants, an artist from France has transformed a drab wall in India's capital into a dazzling canvas, marking the "enduring friendship" between the two countries. The mural, executed on a wall of metro station premises in Mandi House — Delhi's cultural hub — as part of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebrations, was inaugurated on Saturday evening by Minister of State for External Affairs Meenakshi Lekhi and Chargée d'Affaires ai, Embassy of France in India, Dana Purcarescu.

The artwork has been created in the last two weeks by French artist Fabien Poes.

"We thank Mr Poes for bring-

ing a 'French garden' to Delhi, through his fresco on the wall. I think, it's a desi French garden, with so much of colours and elements of Delhi embedded into it. It's a French present to India," Purcarescu said.

She said the mural represents the Indo-French friendship, and will especially appeal to the youths here.

"Many times, we do serious stuff in diplomacy, but this artwork will take the message right into the streets, of the ties between the two countries," she added. The mural has been done in a 'narrative style' and also borrows artistic design elements from classic comic book 'Tintin', Poes said.

So, a metro train has been represented as a quirky bug, giant egg plants, colourful flowers, big bees, to capture the essence of a French garden with an Indian twist.

Cabinet OK's up to 20% FDI in LIC

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Employees and policyholders of the insurance behemoth would get a discount over the floor price.

According to the draft red herring prospectus (DRHP), LIC's embedded value, which is a measure of the consolidated shareholders value in an insurance company, has been pegged at about Rs 5.4 lakh crore as of September 30, 2021, by international actuarial firm Milliman Advisors.

Although the DRHP does not disclose the market valuation of LIC, as per industry standards it would be about three times the embedded value or around Rs 16 lakh crore.

The LIC public issue would be the biggest IPO in the history of the Indian stock market. Once listed, LIC's market valuation would be comparable to top companies like RIL and TCS.

So far, the amount mobilised from IPO of Paytm in 2021 was the largest ever at Rs 18,300 crore, followed by Coal India (2010) at nearly Rs 15,500 crore and Reliance Power (2008) at Rs 11,700 crore. **PTI**

Centre to distribute daily living aids to senior citizens

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Nearly 900 senior citizens will receive assistive devices such as wheelchairs, walking sticks, hearing aids from Social Justice Minister Virendra Kumar at a special camp in Ahmednagar in Maharashtra on Monday.

Kumar will distribute 4,800 daily living aids and assistive devices among 895 senior citizen beneficiaries under the Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana.

Last year, the government had identified 37,401 senior citizen beneficiaries in Ahmednagar district. The government plans to distribute 3,20,833 daily living aids and assistive devices of different categories valued Rs 37.59 crore in the district.

Minister of State for Social Justice Ramdas Athawale, Lok Sabha member from Ahmednagar Sujay Vikhe Patil

along with other local representatives and senior officials from the district will be present during the function.

Wheelchairs, walking sticks, spectacles, dentures, hearing aids, walking stick with seat, walker foldable, tetrapod, tripod, wheelchair with commode, spinal support will be distributed at the camps that will be conducted at block and panchayat levels across Ahmednagar District subsequently.

The Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY) is a scheme for providing physical aids and assisted-living devices for senior citizens belonging to BPL category. This is a central sector scheme, implemented through the sole implementing agency — Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation (ALIMCO), a PSU under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

Juvenile gets 20 years jail for raping 5-year-old in Mathura

PTI ■ MATHURA

A local court sentenced a minor to 20 years imprisonment with a fine of Rs 1 lakh convicting him for raping a child in Prem Nagar area of the district, a court official said on Saturday. As per the judgement, the convict was awarded a 20 years' sentence under the POCSO Act, and another 10 years under the section 376 of the IPC, both of which will run concurrently.

"The period for which the convict was in jail during the trial would be adjusted in the final sentence," additional district counsel Subhash Chandra Chaturvedi said. The incident happened on February 5, 2018,

when Suraj, the convict, raped a five-year-old girl in his neighbourhood when her mother was away, said the counsel.

The girl's mother and her grandmother had left the child under the care of Suraj and his Bhabhi, he said. Upon their return, when she was brought back home by Suraj, the girl's grandmother found her vomiting. Thinking she was sick, the family gave her medicine and the child recovered after some time, ADGC said.

The following day, she told her family about how she was forced into sex by the accused.

Hemlata, the girl's mother, then filed a complaint with the police, which booked Suraj under section 376 of the Indian

Penal Code and 3 and 6 of the Prevention of Sexual Offences against Children (POCSO) Act.

According to Chaturvedi, the defence counsel had pleaded for a lenient sentence suspecting the veracity of the incident and the age of the convict, who also is a minor.

The prosecution in its turn argued that the crime was "heinous" and asked the Judge to consider the accused as a major in line with the recommendation of Juvenile Justice Board, he said. Additional Special Judge Amar Singh in his verdict also said if the convict fails to pay the fine, he will have to serve two additional sentences of 6 months each, the counsel said.

PAGD appeals to Govt to restore special status of J&K

PTI ■ SRINAGAR

The People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) on Saturday asked the Centre to go for a dispassionate appraisal of its decision to revoke the special status of Jammu and Kashmir, claiming that such an exercise will lead to the realisation of gross violation of the Constitution and betrayal of the people.

The PAGD released a white paper — titled 'Betrayal' — on Jammu and Kashmir post-abrogation of its special status, after a meeting of the alliance at the residence of National Conference president Farooq Abdullah here.

"The Government of India must without losing any time go for a dispassionate appraisal of the August 2019 assault on

the special status and territorial integrity of State of Jammu and Kashmir. On such introspection, the Government of India will undoubtedly realise that it has not been only a misadventure but gross violation of the Constitution and a huge betrayal," the PAGD said in its 38-page white paper. The alliance said that it will be sufficiently clear that the unilateral and unethical decisions pushed the entire region to uncertainty and widened the gulf between the people of Jammu and Kashmir and the rest of the country and above all resulted in an avoidable drain on the scarce and precious resources to maintain calm on the streets.

Calling upon the Centre to undo its decisions of 2019, the PAGD said the autonomous status of Jammu and Kashmir

should be restored.

"The Government of India should urgently undertake an exercise of introspection and course correction, revoke all the decisions taken in August 2019 and restore the autonomous status of Jammu and Kashmir.

"The least, the Government of India could do, is to grant real autonomy to the J&K state as envisioned by the Constituent Assembly of India and ratified by the Constituent Assembly of Jammu & Kashmir. And work out legal mechanism in consultation with the J&K legislature of real political and administrative devolutions to the respective regions and sub-regions within the framework of that autonomy," it added. The alliance said any attempt or

any plan of proposals for divisions, bifurcations and trifurcations must be rejected.

"This is bound to communalise the regions and communities permanently. A careful and elaborate mechanism for the process of reconciliation and sustainable peace has to be worked out.

"At the same time, we appeal to the people of all the regions, sub regions, ethnic groups and communities of the state that we must uphold and strengthen our age-old relationship and resolve to move forward to shape our future together. Our people have passed through tragedies and our recent past has been quite painful. Tragedies cannot and should not divide us further. Grievances, if any, can be addressed and removed; but in

no case should these weaken the historic bonds of our relationship. Any division on any pretext would be detrimental to this cherished goal," it added.

The PAGD appealed to Parliament, all secular democratic parties and the civil society at large to realise the serious consequences of the abrogation of Article 370.

"We also call upon them to analyse whether the projected objectives and the narrative built up in favour of the regressive decision of doing away with the special position of the erstwhile state, are justified or are the result of divisive and highly authoritarian policies of the government. This should not be seen as an isolated instance or aberration but a serious attack on federalism and democracy," it said.

Vidisha man dupes woman with promise of getting her daughter back from Ukraine

PTI ■ VIDISHA

A 35-year-old unemployed man was arrested for allegedly duping a woman with the promise that he would get her daughter stranded in war-torn Ukraine back, police in Madhya Pradesh's Vidisha said on Saturday.

Prince Gawa, hailing from Gurugram in Haryana, called up Vaishali Wilson, whose daughter is studying medicine in Ukraine, on Wednesday claiming to be from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), and

official said. He asked for Rs 42,000 to arrange for flight tickets and stopped all communication with Wilson once she transferred the money through mobile banking later that night, the official said.

"Gawa was held from Gurugram in Haryana on Friday and brought to Vidisha this morning. He was charged with cheating under IPC and Information Act provisions. He has committed fraud in Haryana as well," Kotwali police station in charge inspector Ashutosh Singh told PTI.

Wagah-Attari' style beating retreat ceremony restarted by BSF along IB in Jammu

PTI ■ JAMMU

The beating retreat ceremony restarted by Border Security Force Saturday at Border Outpost Suchetgarh on the International Border here, about seven weeks after it was suspended owing to the surge in the Coronavirus cases, officials said.

The 'Wagah-Attari'-style ceremony, comprising a structured parade by BSF men on every Saturday and Sunday, was launched in October last year as part of border tourism

promotion programme of the government and had attracted visitors in large numbers.

With the third wave of COVID-19 on ebb over the past few weeks, the administration and the BSF authorities decided to resume the beating retreat ceremony that was suspended on January 9, the officials said.

The officials said over 1300 people watched the beating retreat ceremony on the first day after resumption and the number is likely to be several hundred more on Sunday.

India abstains from....

From page 1

Though India abstained from voting on the resolution, it called for respecting "sovereignty and territorial integrity" of States and sought immediate cessation of "violence and hostilities", in comments that the sources said reflected a "sharper tone" and criticism of the Russian offensive.

India also told the UNSC it was in touch with all concerned parties and urged them to return to the negotiating table. Sources said India's call for respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states and seeking an end to the ongoing "violence" is reflective

of its criticism of the Russian action and a subtle change in its overall approach.

Tirumurti also said dialogue is the only answer to settle the differences and disputes and that no solution can ever arrive at cost of human lives.

India also conveyed that the welfare and security of the Indian community, in particular stranded students and their evacuation from Ukraine, has been its immediate priority.

Sources said India called on all member States to honor principles of international law and the United Nations Charter as these provide a constructive way forward.

Russia pushes in...

From page 1

He claims the West has failed to take seriously Russia's security concerns about NATO, the Western military alliance that Ukraine aspires to join. But he has also expressed scorn about Ukraine's right to exist as an independent state.

Putin has has not disclosed his ultimate plans for Ukraine or said how long the Russian military operation could last. Western officials believe he is determined to overthrow Ukraine's government and replace it with a regime of his own, redrawing the map of Europe and reviving Moscow's Cold War-era i

nfluence.

It was unclear in the fog of war how much territory Russian forces have seized. Britain's Ministry of Defense said "the speed of the Russian advance has temporarily slowed likely as a result of acute logistical difficulties and strong Ukrainian resistance."

A senior US Defense official said on Saturday that more than half of the Russian combat power that was massed along Ukraine's borders had entered Ukraine, and that Russia has had to commit more fuel supply and other support units inside Ukraine than originally anticipated.

Capital traders hope to recoup losses after DDMA lifts curbs

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Several market associations in the national Capital are hopeful that their business will be back on track, which was affected due to the Covid-19 restrictions, after the city government decided to withdraw all curbs, including night curfew. On Friday, the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), chaired by Lieutenant Governor Anil Baijal and attended by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, decided to withdraw all restrictions from Monday, reduce the fine for not wearing masks from Rs 2,000 to Rs 500 and resume physical classes in Delhi schools from April 1. Ashok Randhawa, president of the Sarojini Nagar mini-market traders' association, said that the lifting of the

night curfew comes as the "biggest" relief. "We welcome this move by the Delhi government, the lieutenant governor and the DDMA. With the lifting of the night curfew, we will get more time to do business. During weekdays, most of the customers come to the market for shopping after their office hours. As the restrictions were in place and the market used to close by 8 pm, many of them returned home without shopping. "The wedding season is in place and many customers are visiting the market. There is Holi next month and the cases are also reducing. We are hoping that no other variant of the coronavirus comes in the future..." Randhawa said. Tony Chawla, Janpath market traders' association secretary, said it is a

tourist-oriented market and an increase in their footfall means a growth in business. "The Janpath market is a tourist-oriented market and the movement of national and international flights will help us get our businesses back on track. Lifting of the night curfew will not affect us as the market opens at 11 am and closes by 7.30 pm or 8 pm. "However, we welcome this move as removing restrictions will add more local customers. We follow Covid appropriate behaviour and it will be continued," Chawla said. Kamla Nagar market traders' association president Nitin Gupta, too, also welcomed government's move. The Kamla Nagar market, located near the north campus of Delhi University, is a major attraction for students for

pocket-friendly shopping. "We are happy and hopeful that the business will be back on track after two years. The market is a big attraction for college students. The paying guest facilities are again getting filled and movement of students has increased in market area, which is a good sign for traders. "The city budget will also be introduced in coming days and we are hoping that government will do something for traders as they have gone through a difficult time..." Gupta said. "After detailed discussions with experts, in view of decline in Covid positive cases and hospitalisation, it was decided to remove all Covid-19 related restrictions in Delhi from February 28, 2022 (Monday) while adhering to guidelines issued by Government.

New Delhi Municipal Council sets up special unit for safety of sewer cleaner

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The New Delhi Municipal Council has constituted a sanitation response unit (SRU) for technical and managerial interventions for the safety of personnel during sewer cleaning, an official statement said on Saturday. It said the body under the name of emergency response sanitation unit (ERSU or SRU) is a professional, well-trained, motivated and appropriately equipped establishment for the maintenance and management of sewers, thereby eliminating accidents and fatalities caused by the entry of workers into sewers without proper PPEs and training and non-adherence to security protocols. This response unit will be headed by the NDMC secretary, while Ajay Gupta will be the officer-in-charge of this unit.

Overnight rain, hailstorm bring down mercury in city

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Overnight rain and hailstorm in parts of Delhi brought down the mercury on Saturday, the India Meteorological Department said. The national Capital recorded 10 mm rainfall in the 24 hours till Saturday morning along with hailstorm in several parts. The maximum temperature was recorded at 23.8 degrees Celsius, two notches below the season's average, the IMD said. The maximum temperature on Friday had settled at 27.9 degrees Celsius. The minimum temperature was recorded at 13.4 degrees Celsius, one notch above the season's average, it said. The city experienced a windy day. The relative humidity oscillated between 78 per cent to 57 per cent. The maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to settle around 25 and 12 degrees Celsius on Sunday, the IMD said.

Centre's guidelines on regulation of ground water extraction only new cover to old scheme: NGT

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The guidelines issued by the Ministry of Jal Shakti to regulate and control ground water extraction in the country is only a new cover provided to the old scheme with minor variations, alterations and modifications, the National Green Tribunal has said. A bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice A K Goel said the 2020 guidelines broadly do not satisfy directions given by it repeatedly and persistently. "We do not find much improvement in Guidelines 2020. Virtually, it is only a new cover provided to the old scheme with minor variations, alterations and modifications, here and there, but having no substantial consequences to the root cause and central issue, i.e. Protection and preservation of ground water,

prevention of, not only further depletion, but a serious and effective attempt for recharge and restoration," the bench said. The NGT said there is a twist when the guidelines says that NOC shall not be granted to new packaged water industries in over-exploited areas even if they belong to MSME category. In Guidelines 2015, no NOC was to be given to any water intensive industry, even if it is MSME, in over-exploited assessment areas. Now it is restricted to packaged water industries. Apparently, a drastic relaxation has been given in respect of water intensive industries, for no reason, and that too in flagrant defiance of order of Tribunal," it said. The critical and semi-critical areas have been left untouched and there is no such restriction at all, the tribunal said.

No order issued barring students from wearing 'religious attire' in SDMC schools: Officials

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Officials of SDMC's Education Department on Saturday said they have not issued any order prohibiting students from wearing "religious attire" in schools. The remarks came a day after the chairperson of the SDMC education panel asked officials to ensure that students do not come to school in "religious attire". A senior official of the South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) said on the condition of anonymity that the education department of the civic body has not issued any such order. He said the instructions issued in the letter are the opinions of an individual and not of the department. "We have not issued any order about not allowing students to wear religious attire in schools. We have not yet received any let-

ter written by the Education Committee chairperson about not allowing students in religious attires," the official told PTI. SDMC's Education Committee Chairperson Nitika Sharma wrote to the director education (SDMC) to ensure that no student comes to schools in "religious attires". In the letter, Sharma wrote, "Lately, it has been seen that some parents are sending their wards to school in religious attires which is not right. This may develop the mentality of inequality among students, which is not good at all for their future." "Keeping in view all these factors, all zonal officials should be directed to ensure that students can wear dress other than their uniforms only during school competitions and festivals. On normal days, students should be present in school in their school uniforms," the letter said.

Juvenile apprehended for killing woman in Capital's Rohini

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A juvenile was apprehended for allegedly killing a woman and robbing her of her valuables in northwest Delhi's Rohini area, police said on Saturday. On February 7, the body of a woman with stab wounds was found inside a park in Shahbad Dairy area, a senior police officer said. During investigation, police apprehended a juvenile from Rohini Sector-28 near Nahar Road, the officer said. It emerged that minor was a resident of Shahbad Dairy and he and his friends had gone to Jaipur where they started working in a factory, they said. In Jaipur, his friend Deepu befriended a woman on pretext of marrying her and brought her to Delhi on February 6, police said.

Armed assailants open fire, former Sarpanch injured

PNS ■ GURUGRAM

Four armed assailants opened fire on a 40-year-old former village head (Sarpanch) and critically injured him in his house in Gurugram's Babupur village on Saturday afternoon, police said. Police said six rounds were fired of which two hit the victim identified as Yogesh Yadav, who was admitted to a hospital. The condition of Yadav was reported to be serious. Police suspect that the incident was fallout over a rivalry between two groups over groundwater exploitation which was running illegally in the area. While investigations are ongoing in the case and police said they are trying to identify the suspects, there have been no arrests till the time of filing

of this report. The victim had also filed a life-threatening case earlier in a month at the Rajendra Park police station. According to the police, the incident took place around 3.00 pm when Yogesh Yadav, barged into his house and the four-armed assailants in the car who were following and shot him from very close range and fled the spot. The victim received two gunshot wounds in his chest and leg. Police suspect it could be possible the injured knew the assailants. "A case of attempt to murder and common intention along with the arms act has been registered at the Rajendra Park police station. We are scanning CCTV footage. The suspects will be caught soon," the station house officer said.

300 buses plying without proper permit face music

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has prosecuted over 300 'daggamar buses' plying without proper permit in a four-day drive in the National Capital. According to police, they received information regarding plying of buses without proper permit, following which a four-day long drive from Tuesday to Friday was conducted in Delhi in all ranges. "During this drive, a total of 323 buses were prosecuted, out of which 152 were prosecuted in eastern range, 95 in central range, 29 in outer range, 30 in southern range, seven in western range and 10 in New Delhi range respectively," said Vivek Kishore, the Joint Commissioner of Police, Traffic. "Moreover, 19 buses

were impounded. Most of these buses are having contract permit or all India tourist permit. As per contract carriage permit, it can pick passengers from one particular spot and drop them at a particular destination," said the DCP. These buses are not allowed to pick and drop passengers between originating point and their destination, police said. However, time to time, it is reported and noticed that these buses start picking up passengers for different destinations by offering single seat, thereby violate contract carriage permit conditions and cause different road safety issues, police said. Delhi Traffic Police will continue the action against such violations in future also, police added.

40-year-old woman arrested for allegedly supplying drugs

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has arrested a 40-year-old woman for allegedly supplying drugs in the national capital. The accused has been identified as Sunita, a resident of Om Vihar, Uttam Nagar. A total of 60.87 grams of high-quality heroin worth around Rs 60 lakh and cash Rs 31,167 were recovered from her possession, police said. According to a Shankar Choudhary, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Dwarka district, on Wednesday around 9 am, police received a tip-off that one Sunita was indulged in supply of contrabands. "A trap was laid near Om Vihar Phase-5, Uttam Nagar and the accused was nabbed along with 60.87 grams fine quality heroin," said the DCP.

Train thief held near Red Fort with stolen money

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A 37-year-old man was arrested for allegedly stealing a bag from a train at New Delhi Railway Station, police said on Saturday. The accused has been identified as Phool Singh alias FM, a resident of Etah district in Uttar Pradesh, they said. On Thursday, police received information that Phool Singh, who commits snatching and theft in New Delhi and Old Delhi railway station areas and in trains coaches, was seen roaming in Chandani Chowk, a senior police officer said. Police laid a trap near gate number 2, Red Fort metro station and nabbed Singh when he was going from Red Fort side towards the metro station, Deputy Commissioner of Police (north) Sagar Singh Kalsi said.

People travelling in pvt vehicles will no longer be penalised for not wearing masks

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

In a relief to people travelling together in private vehicles in Delhi, the DDMA in an order on Saturday said no penalty will be imposed on them if found without masks. The penalty for not wearing face masks in public places was reduced from Rs 2,000 to Rs 500 at a meeting of the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) on Friday. "In relation to clause 3(h) (c) whereby not wearing of face mask/cover in all public places has been made an



offence, penalty under this provision will not be applicable to persons travelling together in private four wheeler vehicles from February 28," the order

said. The Delhi High Court had on February 2 directed DDMA to take a look into several orders issued by it in relation to COVID-19 protocols.

Stranded students in Ukraine share ordeal

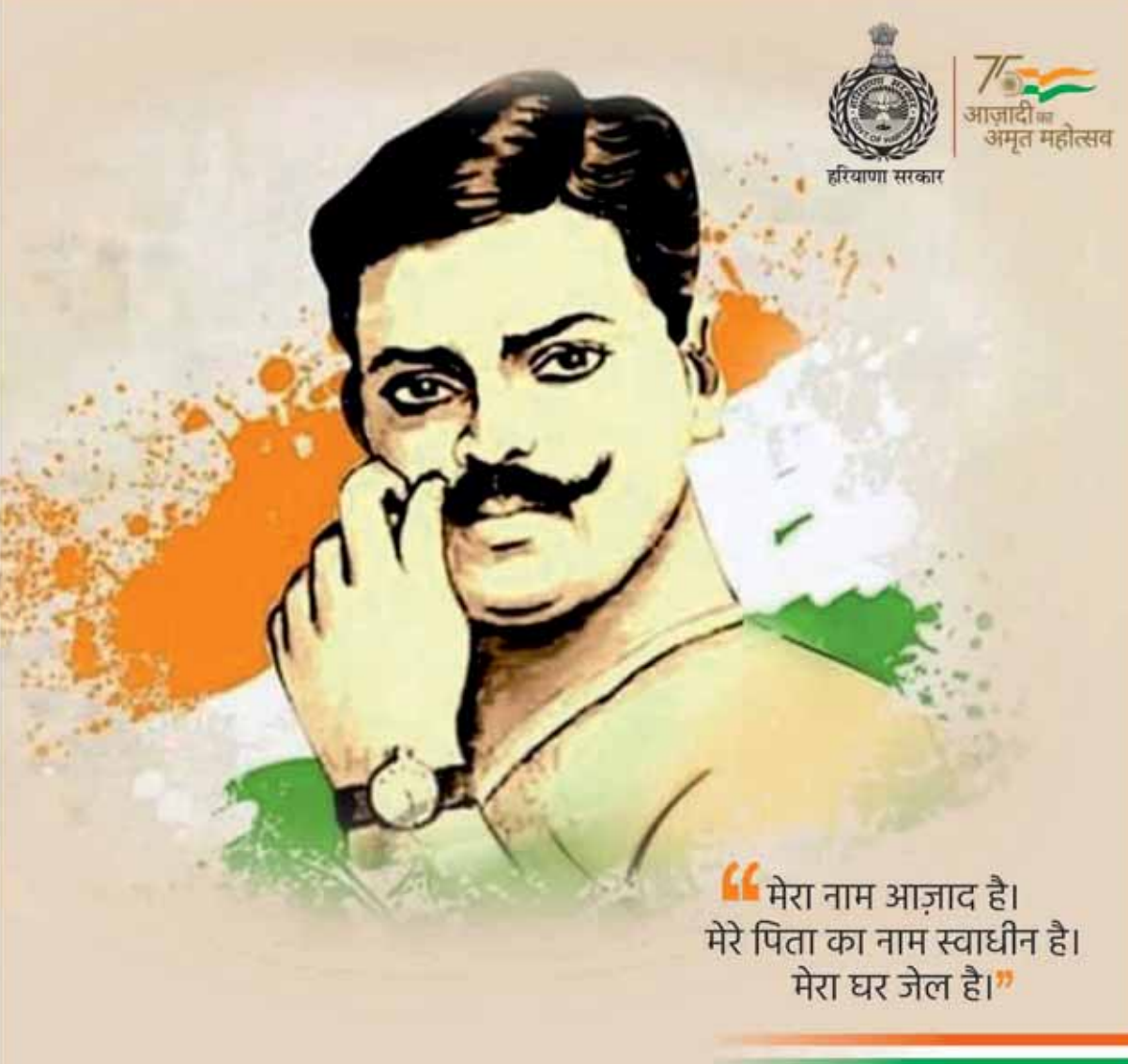
PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM

Amid the worsening situation in Ukraine during the ongoing Russian offensive, around 1,000 Indian students of the Odessa National Medical University are stuck in the middle of the conflict and are appealing to the government to ensure their safe return. Two Indian students from Gurugram's Bhondsi village narrated their ordeal to The Pioneer over the phone from the Odessa region of Ukraine and appealed for help. Ankit Raghav, a 22-year-old student of MBBS fourth year and 24-year-old Prateek Chauhan, a fifth-year student of Odessa National Medical University on Saturday said they were present at their flat located near the university. They informed that the situation is very alarming as they could hear the sound of bomb blasts and shelling throughout the day. "Currently I am in the Odessa region of Ukraine and the situation is pretty bad. As we can not move out as I hear the sound of bomb blasts over the night. Also, we have received messages from the Indian embassy that if we move out for the safest place it will be our responsibility," Ankit said. "We received messages from the Indian embassy to reach the



Romanian border for our safe evacuation but it is not possible for us to travel 500 to 600 kilometres through the four affective regions of Ukraine to reach Romania or Hungary," he added. "So, we have written emails to the Ministry of External Affairs (India) to develop communication with Moldova which is just 80 kilometres from Odessa and we can reach there easily in groups via cabs and buses. The government should send aircraft to Moldova which is the safest evacuation point for around 1,000 Indian students, he informed. The Indian students alleged that they wanted to return to India when the Indian government warned about the worsening situation but the Ukrainian university threatened them with expulsion and forced them to stay. "The students wanted to leave Ukraine but the University threatened them and warned that if they left they will be expelled and assured the students that nothing will happen over here and we all are safe," Ankit said. "Odessa is an impor-

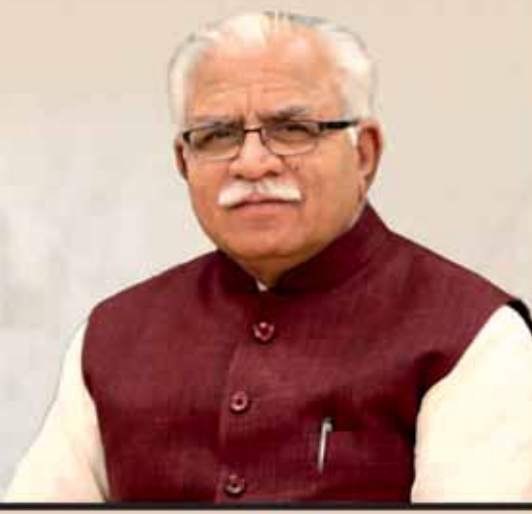
tant port of Ukraine and we all are staying very close to the port, so it can be possible the Russian army will soon attack Odessa," he added. A lot of people are here. Not just Indians, people from countries like Israel and Nigeria are also trapped, he asserted. Prateek Chauhan informed, that the Indian students are not just worried about the Russian attacks, they are also forced to fend off armed burglaries amid a severe food shortage. "This was my fifth year of MBBS, next year I will complete my MBBS and become a doctor but the ongoing tussle emerges tension among the students. Now, nights are a nightmare for us we are not sleeping properly since this situation emerges. However, we are in our flats and have food for next few days but we are in a state of shock and are sleeping in turns," Prateek Chauhan, said. "The another problem which we are facing is that the Ukrainian government has provided arms to its citizens, who are robbing people's money and food items on gun points," Chauhan added. He informed that the Indian embassy told the students to do not to move in bunkers and if anyhow move they just see arrangements over their like food and ventilation.



मेरा नाम आज़ाद है।
मेरे पिता का नाम स्वाधीन है।
मेरा घर जेल है।

माँ भारती के वीर सपूत
चंद्रशेखर आज़ाद जी
की पुण्यतिथि पर
भावभीनी श्रद्धांजलि

27 फरवरी, 2022



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India fights polio in mission mode

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With neighbouring countries like Afghanistan and Pakistan still reporting Polio cases, India — which got rid of the deadly virus almost a decade ago — continues to be on its toes.

On Saturday, it kicked off the Polio national immunization programme to cover over 15 crore children across all 36 States and UTs in 735 districts. During the drive, polio drops will be provided to children through 7 lakh booths across the country. Approximately 23.6 crore houses will be visited by nearly 24 lakh volunteers and 1.5 lakh supervisors, said Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Saturday, highlighting that door-to-door inoculation cam-

paigns will be conducted to ensure that no one is left behind.

The Minister, who launched the National Polio Immunisation Drive for 2022 by administering polio drops to children below five years of age in the Ministry of Health, said, "India's strategic fight against polio is a success story of the country's public health policy against vaccine-preventable diseases. We need to continue to be vigilant and ensure that every child under five years of age must get polio drops."

"While we are making efforts to protect our children from more and more diseases, it is important that all vaccines under the programme reach every child of our country," the minister said.

Stressing the importance of

observing the National Immunisation Day, he said, "Since our neighbouring countries are still not polio-free, we should remain vigilant and continue the vaccination programme."

Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said, "Transit teams have been deployed in all the states to ensure immunisation and continuous pulse polio implementation at borders is happening as our neighbouring countries are still reporting polio cases."

The Polio National Immunisation Day 2022 (NID) will be organised across the country on Sunday (February 27). India has been free of polio for more than a decade, with the last case of wild poliovirus reported on January 13, 2011.

J&K Delimitation Commission shares revised draft

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The Jammu and Kashmir Delimitation Commission has shared a revised draft report to its five associate members incorporating some of their suggestions/objections to further take their viewpoints before putting it on public domain. The Commission has asked them to submit their reply by March 4. In their objections and suggestions, the five associate members had urged the panel to "redraw" some assembly seats.

Top sources said that the Commission gave a fresh draft to five Associate Members including Union Minister of State in Prime Minister's Office (PMO) Dr Jitendra Singh and Jugal Kishore Sharma, both BJP Lok Sabha members from Jammu and Dr Farooq Abdullah, Mohammad Akbar Lone and Hasnain Masoodi, all three NC MPs from Kashmir. The associate members have been asked to respond to the latest draft by March 4. After

receiving fresh suggestions, the Panel is likely to put the report in public domain.

Reacting on the revised draft report, Jammu Kashmir National Conference chief Farooq Abdullah accused that the Commission has worked in favour of the BJP. "I think the Delimitation Commission has worked in favour of the BJP, thinking that they will get majority of seats in the assembly & they will be able to pass resolution in favour of what they did on August 05, 2019 has been accepted by J&K assembly," he said.

The government has recently extended the term of the Delimitation Commission by two months and it has up to May 6 to submit its recommendations for delimitation of 90 Assembly constituencies in the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir.



As per the fresh draft report, the Commission has acceded to the suggestion of both National Conference and BJP to restore Habbakadal Assembly constituency in Srinagar district which has sizeable electorates of Kashmiri Pandits and rename Mughal Maidaan seat in Kishtwar district as Inderwal. The constituency was earlier also known as Inderwal and had

been named as Mughal Maidaan in the draft report.

The fresh draft report has rejected the BJP suggestion for inclusion of Shopian in Anantnag-Poonch Parliamentary constituency. It has also overruled the National Conference objection to inclusion of Poonch district and parts of Rajouri district in South Kashmir Parliamentary segment.

The Commission has, however, accepted the BJP suggestion for de-reservation of at least one Assembly seat in Poonch district as all three constituencies there were reserved for Scheduled Tribes. Accordingly, the Commission has de-reserved Poonch-Mandi constituency and declared it as a general seat.

In place of Poonch, Rajouri Main Assembly constituency has been reserved for the Scheduled Tribes (STs). Now, five seats reserved for STs in Jammu region are Surankote and Mendhar in Poonch district and Rajouri, Darhal and Thanna Mandi in Rajouri district. Four seats are reserved for STs in Kashmir division, totalling nine. Suchetgarh seat has been restored, it was reserved for Scheduled Castes (SCs) in place of RS Pura. Parts of RS Pura have been merged with the Jammu South Assembly seat (earlier known as Gandhi Nagar or Cantonment) and the segment now has been renamed as RS Pura-Jammu South (RS Pura-JS).

CRPF CoBRA Assistant Commandant loses both legs in Naxal IED blast

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A braveheart Assistant Commandant of the CoBRA Battalion of the CRPF lost legs below the knee after being amputated post-pressure IED blast by Naxals in Gaya district of Bihar.

Timely evacuation of the injured official could have minimised or averted the damage to his limbs, officials said.

The injured officer Bibhor Kumar Singh and Head Constable Surendra Kumar Yadav were rushed to Anugrah Narayan Medical College Hospital (ANMCH), Gaya where the treating doctors advised their immediate airlifting to the national capital for better treatment. However, the late arrival of the chopper from Jharkhand and fog reportedly resulted in the amputation of both the limbs of the officer, officials said.

An IED blast incident occurred about 1 km west of Kariba Dohba in Chakrabandha forest area of Gaya at around PM in which



IED blast followed by firing opened by the Naxals resulted in grievous injuries to Singh and Yadav.

Both the limbs of Singh had to be amputated below the knees due to the severe injuries suffered by the CRPF officer in the pressure IED blast.

Veterans said lack of timely and proper evacuation of injured personnel is highly demoralizing for the personnel.

The Naxal threat being a long-term threat, elaborate evacuation plans should be in place and helicopters should be on standby at the nearest airfield around major Naxal theatres, they said.

The CRPF being the largest Paramilitary Force in the world with operational strength of 3.25 lakh is the lead Armed force of Union of India under MHA designated for anti-

Naxal, counter-terrorist and anti-insurgency operations.

"Ad hoc policies of the CRPF have been taking a toll on the lives and limbs of the personnel injured in action. A long term prospective plan and dedicated air wing is the need of the hour to both strengthen operations through quick mobilization of personnel and timely evacuation of

injured men," a veteran said.

A coordinated operation was launched earlier this month by CRPF and it was ongoing in the Chakrabandha forest and the CPI (Maoist) is observing Bhumkal Divas and TCOC (Tactical Counter Offensive Campaign).

The TCOC of the CPI (Maoist) has commenced with intention to avenge their recent losses. According to the input received from agencies, the armed CPI (Maoists) are presently camping in jungles of Gaya district in Bihar.

Bibhor Kumar Singh is a 49th batch of Directly Appointed Gazetted Officer in CRPF. After passing out from the CRPF Academy in 2019-20 the young and dynamic officer Singh himself opted for hard area posting in CRPF special force called the Jungle Warrior CoBRA. His bravery and gallant action led to the safe evacuation of his troops from the operation zone. As per the CRPF input naxals have also reportedly suffered the losses.

Union Cabinet approves rollout of ₹1,600 cr ABDM

National Health Authority (NHA) will be the implementing agency of the Central sector scheme, says a statement from the Union Health Ministry

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Saturday approved the nationwide roll-out of the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) with a budget of Rs 1,600 crore for five years wherein citizens will be able to create their Ayushman Bharat Health Account numbers, to which their digital health records can be linked.

The National Health Authority (NHA) will be the implementing agency of the central sector scheme, said a statement from the Union Health Ministry here.

This will enable creation of longitudinal health records for individuals and improve clinical

decision making by healthcare providers besides improving equitable access to quality healthcare by encouraging use of technologies such as telemedicine and enabling national portability of health services.

Digital health solutions across the healthcare ecosystem have proven to be of immense benefit over the years, with CoWIN, Arogya Setu and eSanjeevani further demonstrating the role technology can play in enabling access to healthcare. However, there is a need to integrate such solutions for continuum of care, and effective utilisation of resources, the statement said.

Based on the foundations laid down in the form of Jan Dhan, Aadhaar and Mobile (JAM) trinity and other digital initiatives of the government, Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) is creating a seamless online platform through the provision of a wide-range of data, information and infrastructure services, duly leveraging open, interoperable, standards-based

digital systems while ensuring the security, confidentiality and privacy of health-related personal information.

The pilot of ABDM was completed in the six Union Territories of Ladakh, Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, Puducherry, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep with successful demonstration of technology platform developed by the NHA, the statement said.

During the pilot, a digital sandbox was created in which more than 774 partner solutions are undergoing integration. As on February 24 this year, 17,33,69,087 Ayushman Bharat Health Accounts have been created and 10,114 doctors and 17,319 health facilities have been registered in ABDM.

Not only will ABDM facilitate evidence-based decision making for effective public health interventions, but it will also catalyse innovation and generate employment across the healthcare ecosystem, the statement added.

Indian Embassy in Slovakia issues advisory for stranded Indians

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Embassy of India in Slovakia, in its advisory for Indians, has said Indian nationals who are stuck in Ukraine and wish to cross the border through Vysne Nemcke can fill out the Google Form. In its latest advisory, the Indian Embassy in Hungary, instructed for a smooth evacuation of Indian students, stranded in Ukraine, to Hungary through the Zahony-Uzhhorod border crossing while the Embassy in Ukraine issued advisory asking Indian nationals to not move to any border posts as the situation at various border checkpoints remains highly sensitive.

In its advisory, the Indian Embassy in Slovakia has said that Indian nationals who are stuck in Ukraine and wish to cross the border through Vysne Nemcke can fill out the Google Form. However, those not in

close proximity to this border crossing point should not fill out the form, the embassy added.

The Indian Embassy in Ukraine said on Twitter on Saturday morning that Indian citizens in Ukraine should not move to any of the border posts without prior coordination with the Indian government officials at the border posts using the helpline numbers.

"The situation at various border checkpoints is sensitive and the Embassy is working continuously with our Embassies in our neighbouring countries for coordinated evacuation of our citizens," it mentioned.

The Indian Embassy in Ukraine said it is finding it increasingly difficult to help the crossing of those Indian nationals who reach border checkpoints without prior intimation.

It said that staying in western cities of Ukraine with access to water, food, accommodation and basic amenities is relatively safer and advisable compared to reaching border check points without being fully abreast of the situation.

"All those currently in the eastern sector are requested to continue to remain in their current places of residence until further instructions, maintain calm, and stay indoors or in shelters as much as possible, with whatever food, water and amenities available and remain patient," it stated.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Twitter that India is making progress regarding evacuation of Indian nationals from Ukraine. "Our teams are working on the ground round the clock. I am personally monitoring," he added.

Al special flight carrying Indians from Ukraine lands in Mumbai

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid much chaos and confusion on the evacuation of Indians from Ukraine, the first Air India special chartered flight (AIC 1944) carrying 219 passengers from Romanian capital Bucharest, landed at Mumbai airport at 7.50 pm on Saturday. This is the first flight from Ukraine back home after the Russian invasion. It was earlier scheduled to land in Mumbai at 4 pm.

The second evacuation flight AIC 1942 with 250 passengers and third evacuation flight AIC 1940 are expected to return from Bucharest and Budapest, respectively, to the Delhi airport on Sunday morning.

According to Air Traffic Control of the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA), Boeing 787 aircraft, the Air India chartered flight landed at the Mumbai air-

port at 7.50 pm. Union minister Piyush Goyal was at the airport to receive the passengers returning from Ukraine. Soon after, the flight landed, Union External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar took to Twitter to welcome back the evacuated citizens tagging a tweet of Goyal who was seen speaking to the passengers aboard the Air India flight.

"Welcome back to the motherland! Glad to see the smiles on the faces of Indians safely evacuated from Ukraine at the Mumbai airport. Govt. led by PM Narendra Modi ji is working relentlessly to ensure safety of every Indian," wrote Goyal along with the tweet.

He also spoke to the students and asked them to pass on the message to their friends who are still stuck that the Indian government is on the job.

"I had trust that the Indian government would definitely

bring us back to our country. There was some fear and panic, but we are very happy to be back to India," said an MBBS student who returned from Ukraine.

The evacuation flight had left from Mumbai for Bucharest at 3.38 am and landed there around 10.45 am IST. From Bucharest's Henri Coanda International Airport, it departed for the Mumbai airport at around 1.55 pm (IST).

"The flight got delayed as the buses carrying Indian students from Kyiv were far away from Bucharest airport, that's why the departures from Mumbai and Delhi were delayed," said an airline source.

The airline also posted a short video wherein the first batch of evacuees can be seen clapping in joy of returning to India. The government is not charging the rescued passengers for the evacuation flights. All three flights were sent from

India on Saturday only.

Earlier, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said on Twitter that AI1944 flight with "219 Indian nationals has taken off from Romania". "Regarding evacuation of Indian nationals from Ukraine, we are making progress. Our teams are working on the ground round the clock. I am personally monitoring," he added.

In light of the current crisis in Ukraine, Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation has provided free services including free COVID testing, vaccines, food and all other facilities to all the students returning from Ukraine.

The airport operators has exempted to those coming from Ukraine from uploading documents on Air Suvidha before departure on humanitarian grounds and can enter the airport. The airport has blocked a special corridor for the arriving passengers, the Chhatrapati

Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) said, adding as per the guidelines laid down by the government, the Airport Health Organization (APHO) team at the facility have conducted mandatory temperature checks. According to CSMIA, it has fenced in a special area at the facility for the arriving passengers to sit and also provided them with free Wi-Fi codes, distributed food and water bottles.

According to officials, those who reached the Ukraine-Romania border and Ukraine-Hungary border by road have been taken to Bucharest and Budapest, respectively, by Indian government officials so that they can be evacuated in these Air India flights.

Before the first flight from Romania took off on Saturday, India's ambassador to Romania Rahul Shrivastava addressed the students inside the aircraft.

Act against Kuki National Organisation for supporting BJP, Cong urges EC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Saturday appealed to the Election Commission to immediately intervene and take urgent action after the banned Kuki National Organisation issued a statement supporting the BJP and for threatening voters.

In a letter to the EC, the Congress said this "diabolic" statement is a clear violation of the model code and strict action must be taken to ensure free and fair elections.

The statement issued by the president of the banned Kuki National Organisation on February 25, 2022, is a direct and clear threat to the conduct of free and fair elections in the state of Manipur, the Congress memorandum to EC said.

"It blatantly intimidates people to vote for the BJP

holding out dire consequences to those who will not follow its instructions. This statement has been issued with the full knowledge and connivance of the Union home minister and the chief minister of Manipur," the Congress alleged in its memorandum.

"The Indian National Congress calls upon the Chief Election Commissioner and the chief electoral officer to take the most serious and urgent note of this deliberate, dangerous and diabolic statement that violates in unmistakable language the Election Commission's Model Code of Conduct and take urgent action to ensure that fear spread by the statement of the President of the KNO is completely removed," former chief minister of Manipur Okram Ibobi Singh and two other senior congress

leaders Jairam Ramesh and Salman Khurshid said in the memorandum.

Ramesh, who is also the party's senior observer for the Manipur Assembly polls, demanded urgent EC action as he held the banned outfit's move to be a clear violation of the model code. "Aap Chronology Samjihye. 22.02.22: PM comes to Manipur. 23.02.22: Union Home Minister comes to Manipur. 25.02.22: Banned outfit Kuki National Organisation issues a statement supporting BJP and threatening voters. It's a blatant violation of Model Code of Conduct. ECI must intervene!" Ramesh said on Twitter.

Assembly elections in Manipur are slated to be held in two phases on February 28 and March 5. The Kuki National Organisation in its let-

ter had stated that in line with its ongoing political dialogue with the Government of India, the central government and ruling BJP leadership have promised swift settlement of its political aspirations.

Home Minister Amit Shah had announced the same in his public address on February 23 at Churachandpur public Ground, it said. "Therefore, KNO has resolved to extend support to all BJP candidates for the 12th Manipur Assembly elections. Accordingly, KNO appeals to all chiefs, CSO leaders and all voters to support BJP candidates in all KNO operational areas. Any person or organization acting contrary to this appeal will be deemed acting against Kuki interest," the letter by PS Haokip, president of the Kuki National Organisation said.

Candidate can't approach for redressal of grievance during recruitment process: SC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A candidate cannot be permitted to approach for the redressal of his grievance at any stage of time during a recruitment process, the Supreme Court has said.

A bench of justices S K Kaul and M M Sundresh said there has to be a closure to the process of recruitment and that it cannot go on indefinitely. "In our view, in a recruitment process, a candidate cannot be permitted to approach for redressal, howsoever may be the genuineness of the grievance, at any stage of time as there has to be a closure to the process of recruitment," the bench said. The top court's observation came while hearing an appeal

filed by a man who had applied for the post of sub-assistant engineer (civil) in 1999.

The appellant cleared the medical fitness test but his appointment could not take place as the police verification report was not received.

The petitioner claimed that he waited for about seven years for getting the appointment letter and only thereafter, approached the State Administrative Tribunal (SAT).

His application was directed to be considered and in 2006, it is stated that the Public Works Department (PWD) put only one aspect against the appellant — non-receipt of the police verification report.

ED files chargesheet under PMLA against three from Kolkata

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Saturday said it has filed a Prosecution Complaint (chargesheet) under Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) before the Special Judge (PMLA), Kolkata against Wasim Rahaman, Wajid Ali and Md Gulam Gaus for money laundering. The ED said the court has taken cognizance of the matter.

The ED had initiated money laundering investigation on the basis of a case registered by the Wild Life Crime Control Cell and Data Management Unit, West Bengal under Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

"Wasim Rahaman along with his accomplices was arrested by the officials of Wild Life Crime Control Cell June 1, 2019 for their involvement in illicit trafficking of protected wild life," it said in a statement.

The ED carried out a search operation at Rahaman's residential premises in Howrah on March 16, 2021. During the investigation by ED, it was revealed that Rahaman was actively involved in smuggling of wildlife animals, which were protected species under WildLife (Protection) Act And the proceeds of crime worth Rs 2.21 crore in the form of land, residential flats and bank balance were provisionally attached, it added.

Russian official shrugs off Western sanctions

AP ■ MOSCOW

A senior Russian official has warned that Moscow could react to Western sanctions over its attack on Ukraine by opting out of the last remaining nuclear arms pact and freezing Western assets.

Dmitry Medvedev, the deputy head of Russia's Security Council chaired by President Vladimir Putin, shrugged off a set of crippling sanctions that the U.S., the European Union and other allies slapped on Russia as a reflection of Western "political impotence." In comments posted on his page on Russian social media VKontakte,

Medvedev said the sanctions could offer Moscow a pretext for a complete review of its ties with the West, suggesting that Russia could opt out of the New START nuclear arms control treaty that limits the U.S. And Russian nuclear arsenals.

Medvedev also raised the prospect of cutting diplomatic ties with Western countries, saying "there is no particular need in maintaining diplomatic relations" and adding that "we may look at each other in binoculars and sunspots." He pointed at the possibility of freezing Western assets in the country if the West proceeds with threats to freeze Russian assets.

PRAGUE The Czech Republic's government has approved a plan to send more arms to Ukraine. The Defense Ministry said it is immediately sending machine guns, sub-machine guns, assault rifles and pistols together with ammunition worth 188 million Czech crowns (\$8.6 million).

The ministry said the Czechs will transport the weapons and deliver them to a place determined by the Ukrainian side. The Czech Republic has already agreed to donate some 4,000 pieces of artillery shells worth 36.6 million Czech crowns (\$1.7 million) to Ukraine.

WARSAW, Poland The Polish Football Association says it will not play its World Cup qualifying match against Russia

due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. "No more words, time to act!" said association president Cezary Kulesza on Twitter, saying the move was prompted by the "escalation of the aggression." The match had been scheduled for March 24.

KYIV, Ukraine A rescue worker says at least six civilians were injured by a rocket that hit a high-rise apartment building on the outskirts of the Ukrainian capital. Petro Prokopov, a firefighter who was taking part in rescue efforts, said the building on the southwestern edge of Kyiv near Zhuliany airport was hit between 16 and 21 floors on Saturday.

He said at least six people were injured and apartments on two floors were gutted by fire. Emergency responders have evacuated 80 people. Kyiv's Mayor Vitali Klitschko posted an image showing a gaping hole on one side of the apartment building.

Separately, Ukraine's Infrastructure Ministry said a Russian missile was shot down before dawn Saturday as it headed for the dam of the sprawling water reservoir that serves Kyiv. "If the dam is destroyed, the flooding will cause catastrophic casualties and losses - including flooding of residential areas of Kyiv and its suburbs," the ministry said. Russian troops were pressing their attack on the Ukrainian capital, trying to advance on the city from several directions. Russia has repeatedly claimed its assault on Ukraine is aimed only at military targets.

"Let me stress once again that only infrastructure sites of the Ukrainian Armed Forces are being targeted, ruling out damage to residential and social infrastructure," Defense Ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov told a briefing Saturday.

KYIV, Ukraine The Ukrainian health minister says that 198 people have been killed and more than 1,000 others have been wounded in the Russian offensive. Health Minister Viktor Lyashko said Saturday that there were three

children among those killed. His statement made it unclear whether the casualties included both military and civilians.

He said another 1,115 people, including 33 children, were wounded in the Russian invasion that began Thursday with massive air and missile strikes and troops forging into Ukraine from the north, east and south.

WARSAW, Poland The UN refugee agency says that over 120,000 Ukrainian refugees have left the country since Russia began its attack on its neighboring country this week.

Speaking as Russian troops were engaging in battle with Ukrainian forces in the capital Kyiv on Saturday, the UN Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees, Kelly Clements, said in an interview on CNN the situation was expected to get worse. "We now see over 120,000 people that have gone to all of the neighboring countries," she said.

"The reception that they are receiving from local communities, from local authorities, is tremendous. But it's a dynamic situation. We are really quite devastated, obviously, with what's to come." Most are heading to Poland and Moldova, but also to Romania, Slovakia and Hungary.

PARIS French President Emmanuel Macron says he is convinced that "this war will last" and warned that Russia's invasion of Ukraine will have tough consequences for Europeans.

Macron told farmers at France's Agricultural Fair in Paris on Saturday that sectors from wine to cereals to exports and energy prices will be affected by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. "War has returned to Europe."

This war was unilaterally chosen by Putin," he said of the Russian leader, Vladimir Putin. "This war will last and all the crises that go with it will have durable consequences," Macron said. "We must prepare ourselves with lots of determination and also lots of solidarity." He said a "plan of resilience" was being put in place, but did not

elaborate. The European Union, along with the U.S. And numerous other countries, has announced sanctions against Russia.

THE HAGUE, Netherlands The Dutch government has shifted its embassy staff out of Ukraine amid Russia's military onslaught on its neighbor. The foreign ministry announced early Saturday that ambassador Jenne

de Mol and his staff, who had already moved from Kyiv to Lviv before Russia's invasion, will relocate to Jaroslaw, Poland. The ministry said the diplomatic post that is helping Dutch citizens who want to leave Ukraine has been moved out of the country because of the deteriorating security situation in Lviv.

ISTANBUL About a hundred protesters have gathered in Turkey's capital Ankara to demonstrate against Russian invasion. Ukrainians living in Turkey, including children, as well as Turks joined protest, holding up Ukrainian flags and banners that read "Putin get out of Ukraine."

Ukraine min: 198 killed, 1K wounded

AP ■ KYIV

The Ukrainian health minister says that 198 people have been killed and more than 1,000 others have been wounded in the Russian offensive. Health Minister Viktor Lyashko said Saturday that there were three children among those killed. His statement made it unclear whether the casualties included both military and civilians. He said another 1,115 people, including 33 children, were wounded in the Russian invasion that began Thursday with massive air and missile strikes and troops forging into Ukraine from the north, east and south.

Ukraine invasion: What to know as Russian forces target Kyiv

AP ■ VIENNA

After a barrage of airstrikes around the country, Russian forces were closing in on Ukraine's capital on Saturday. The city warned of street fighting and urged residents to stay inside and take cover.

With growing signs that Russia aims to overthrow him, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy called on Ukrainians to "stand firm," saying the "fate of Ukraine is being decided right now."

He refused American help to leave, according to a senior U.S. Intelligence

official. Zelenskyy said in a video released Saturday that Russian attempts to forge into Kyiv have been repelled and Moscow's plan to quickly seize the capital and install a puppet government has been thwarted.

Ukrainian officials reported some success in fending off assaults, but fighting persisted near the capital. Skirmishes reported on the edge of the city suggested that small Russian units were trying to clear a path for the main forces.

However, U.S. Defense officials said they believe the Russian offensive has encountered considerable resistance and is proceeding more slowly than Moscow had envisioned, though that could change quickly.

Here are the things to know about the conflict and the security crisis in former Soviet-dominated Eastern Europe:

RUSSIAN TROOPS MARCH ON

Kyiv officials are warning residents that street fighting is underway against Russian forces. They advised residents to remain in shelters or if home to avoid going near windows or onto balconies, and to take precautions against being hit by debris or bullets. The Ukrainian military said a battle was under-

way near a military unit to the west of the city center. Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko said new explosions shook the area near a major power plant that the Russians were trying to attack.

A missile slammed into a high-rise building on the southwestern outskirts of Kyiv, Klitschko said Saturday. He said rescue workers were heading there and posted an image on a messaging app, showing a gaping hole on one side of the building.

Russian troops were trying to advance on the city from several directions. Russian Defense Ministry spokesman Maj. Gen. Igor Konashenkov claimed Saturday that since the start of Russia's attack, its military had hit 821 Ukrainian military facilities, 87 tanks and other targets. Konashenkov didn't say how many Ukrainian troops were killed and didn't mention any casualties on the Russian side.

Neither his claims nor Ukraine's allegations that its forces killed thousands of Russian troops could be independently verified. Konashenkov claimed that the Russian military has taken full control of the southern city of Melitopol, about 35 kilometers inland from the Azov Sea coast, and said Russia-backed separatists have made significant gains in the eastern region of Donbas.

CIVILIANS IN HARM'S WAY

Russia claims its assault on Ukraine is aimed only at military targets, but civilians have been killed and injured during Europe's largest ground war since World War II. Ukrainian Health Minister Viktor Lyashko said Saturday that 198 people have been killed and more than 1,000 others have been wounded in the Russian offensive.

War via TikTok: Russia's new tool for propaganda machine

AP ■ MOSCOW

The Russian TikTok video has it all: a cat, puppies and a pulsing background beat. It's cute, watchable and hardly seems the stuff of state propaganda. In 2014, Russia flooded the internet with fake accounts pushing disinformation about its takeover of Crimea. Eight years later, experts say Russia is mounting a far more sophisticated effort as it invades Ukraine. Armies of trolls and bots stir up anti-Ukrainian sentiment. State-controlled media outlets look to divide Western audiences. Clever TikTok videos serve up Russian nationalism with a side of humour. The effort amounts to an emerging part of Russia's war arsenal with the shaping of opinion through orchestrated disinformation fighting alongside actual troops and weapons. In the cat video, a husky puppy identified by a digitally inserted US flag swipes at the tail of a tabby

identified by a Russian flag. The cat responds with a ferocious jab that sends the hapless dog scurrying.



CHANGE OF NAME

I, Kanti Devi and Kanti Singh, w/o Sh. Krishna Kumar Singh, r/o 195, Sector-3A, Rachna, Vaishali, Ghaziabad, are one and the same person. Henceforth, I shall be known as Kanti Devi only.
PD(9151)C

Public Notice
My Client **Meera** W/o Late Dharampal Bokaliya R/o D-387, Madipur Colony, Paschim Puri, ND-63 has debarred, disowned their 3 sons **Nareesh Bokaliya, Dharmender Bokaliya & Bhagat Ram Bokaliya** & their wife **Tara, Sonu & Reena** & Grandchildren **Jassica, Divyansh, Tushar, Bhumi, Vivaan** from her movable & immovable properties due to their misbehavior to my client. My Client has also severed all her relation with them. If anybody deals with them in any manner they do so at their own risk.
Ramesh Chander Anand (Adv), Ch-88, Western Wing, The Hazrat

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is inform to all concern that Mr. Om Prakash Khokhar S/o Sh. Y. Khokhar R/o H. No. 89, Bharti Nagar, New Delhi who is the original allottee of property No. LIG Flat No. 363A, Block-C, Sector-19, Noida (U.P.) had sold the said property of General Power of Attorney basis to the following person(s).
1. General Power of Attorney was executed on the favour of Mr. Om Singh S/o Sh. Devi Sahai R/o Vill. & Post Badha Wazirpur, Distt. Bulandshahr (U.P.) which is registered and the Agreement of Sell was not registered or not executed. Because the Agreement to Sell is not registered or no Agreement to sell executed, so it is informed to all concern that the said Property No. LIG Flat No. 363A, Block-C, Sector-19, Noida (U.P.) is going to be transferred in favour of Smt. Sheela W/o Sh. Jagdishwar R/o Flat No. 363A, Block-C, Sector-19, Noida (U.P.) If any one has/ have any objection he/she may file his/her objection alongwith the sufficient proof in the Housing Department of the Noida Authority within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice.

Name of the transferee
Smt. Sheela W/o Sh. Jagdishwar R/o Flat No. 363A, Block-C, Sector-19, Noida (U.P.)

US sanctions on Russian oligarchs miss richest of rich

AP ■ WASHINGTON

The term Russian oligarch conjures images of posh London mansions, gold-plated Bentleys and sleek superyachts in the Mediterranean, their decks draped with partiers dripping in jewels.

But raft of sanctions on oligarchs announced by President Joe Biden this week in response to the invasion of Ukraine may do little to dim the jet-setting lifestyles of Russia's ultra-rich and infamous - much less force a withdrawal of tanks and troops. U.S. Sanctions target Russian President Vladimir Putin and a handful of individuals believed to be among his closest security advisers, including Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

But the list is just as notable for who isn't on it - most of the top names from Forbes' list of the richest Russians whose multi-billion-dollar fortunes are now largely intertwined with the West, from investments in Silicon Valley start-ups to British Premier League soccer teams.

Citing concerns of European allies, the U.S. Also didn't impose what was seen as harshest punishment at its disposal, banning Russia from SWIFT, the international financial system that banks use to move money around world.

Biden said Thursday new U.S. Sanctions would nonetheless cripple Russia's financial system and stymie its economic growth by targeting Russia's biggest banks, which Treasury Department said holds nearly 80% of all the country's banking assets.

"Putin is aggressor. Putin chose this war. And now he and his country will bear consequences," Biden said, laying out measures that will "impose severe cost on Russian economy, both immediately and over time."

Missile hits apartment in Kyiv, says mayor

AP ■ KYIV

The mayor of the Ukrainian capital says a missile hit an apartment building but no casualties were immediately reported.

Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko said the missile slammed into a high-rise building on the southwestern outskirts of Kyiv near Zhuliany airport on Saturday.

He said rescue workers were heading there. He posted an image on a messaging app, showing a gaping hole on one side of the building that ravaged apartment units and several stores.

Russian troops were pressing their attack on the Ukrainian capital, trying to advance on the city from several directions.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine began Thursday with massive air and missile strikes and ground troops moving in from the north, east and south.

Kyiv: The mayor of a city south of the Ukrainian capital says that the country's military has fended off a Russian attempt to take control of a military air base.

Natalia Balansynovych, the mayor of Vasylykiv, about 25 miles (40 kilometers) south of Kyiv, said Saturday that Russian airborne forces landed near the city overnight and tried to seize the base. She said fierce fighting also raged on Vasylykiv's central street.

She said that Ukrainian forces repelled the Russian attacks, and that the situation is now calm. Balansynovych said there were heavy casualties, but didn't give any numbers.

China is Russia's best hope to blunt sanctions, but wary

AP ■ BEIJING

China is the only friend that might help Russia blunt the impact of economic sanctions over its invasion of Ukraine, but President Xi Jinping's government is giving no sign it might be willing to risk its own access to US and European markets by doing too much.

Even if Beijing wanted to, its ability to support President Vladimir Putin by importing more Russian gas and other goods is limited. Relations with Moscow have warmed since Xi took power in 2012, motivated by shared resentment of Washington, but their interests can conflict.

While their militaries hold joint exercises, Putin is uneasy about the growing Chinese economic presence in Central Asia and Russia's Far East. "China-Russia relations are at highest level in history, but two countries are not an alliance," said Li Xin, an international relations expert at Shanghai University of Political Science and Law.

Iranian activist disappears after criticising internet bill

AP ■ DUBAI

An Iranian activist went missing after criticising a proposed bill by hard-liners to implement highly restrictive internet policies, his family said Saturday. Hossein Ronaghi, a blogger and free-speech activist, disappeared Wednesday after he criticised a bill in parliament to limit internet access in country, known as "Users Protection Bill." The proposal has been criticised by many Iranians on social media. There was no information on Ronaghi's location or condition. Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who has final say on all state matters, said in March last year that social media in Iran is "unbridled" and it should not be "surrendered to the enemy." In a recent tweet, Ronaghi said: "The Protection Plan is a decision made by the entire system based on the demand from the Islamic Republic's leader who had stated: Virtual space must be controlled."

Zelenskyy declines US offer to evacuate Kyiv

AP ■ KYIV

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was asked to evacuate Kyiv at the behest of the US government but turned down the offer. Zelenskyy said in response: "The fight is here; I need ammunition, not a ride," according to a senior American intelligence official with direct knowledge of the conversation, who described Zelenskyy as upbeat.

Invading Russian forces closed in on Ukraine's capital on Saturday, in an apparent encircling movement after a barrage of airstrikes on cities and military bases around the country. Kyiv: A second Russian Ilyushin Il-76 military transport plane was shot down near Bila Tserkva, 50 miles (85 km) south of Kyiv, according to two American officials with direct knowledge of conditions on the ground in Ukraine. On Friday, Ukraine's military said it had shot down a Russian military transport plane with paratroopers on board.

Russia may keep US out of joint space project due to sanctions; plans to rope in China instead: space chief

PTI ■ MOSCOW

The US may not be a part of the joint space project Vanera-D with Russia to explore planet Venus following American sanctions on country and Moscow will carry out mission alone or with China's participation, the head of Russian space agency said on Saturday. Venera-D is a planned joint space exploration project between Russia's Roscosmos and US space agency NASA to explore Venus. The US and its allies have decided to block assets of four large Russian banks, impose export controls and sanction oligarchs close to Russian President Vladimir Putin after he ordered a "special military operation" against Ukraine on Thursday. The sanctions "will degrade" Russia's "aerospace industry, including their space programme". "The United States' participation in project is impossible due to sanctions," Director General of Russian State Space Agency Roscosmos Dmitry Rogozin was quoted as saying by the state-run TASS news agency.

GOP tests midterm message not focused on Trump grievances

AP ■ ORLANDO

The Republican Party's leading conservatives have spent several days in Florida focused on issues they believe will help GOP retake control of Congress this fall - and perhaps White House soon thereafter. Largely unmentioned? Former President Donald Trump and his chief grievances. Lies about election fraud, focus of last year's Conservative Political Action Conference, have been an afterthought for opening days of this year's four-day affair. Some high-profile speakers distanced themselves from Trump's approving rhetoric toward Russian President, who launched an invasion of Ukraine shortly before gathering.

Searchers dig in Indonesia earthquake rubble for victims

AP ■ PASAMAN

Searchers in Indonesia continued to dig in the rubble of collapsed buildings and mud from landslides for more victims Saturday, a day after a strong earthquake shook Sumatra island, killing eight people, injuring 86 and leaving thousands displaced.

At least five people were killed in Pasaman district and three people died in the neighboring district of West Pasaman, the National Disaster Mitigation Agency said. Rescuers were still searching for six villagers believed to be buried under tons of mud that tumbled down from the surrounding hills triggered by the quake.

43 injured as tourist bus veers off road in Bavaria

AP ■ BAVARIA

A tourist bus headed for Austrian Alps crashed on a local highway in Upper Bavaria on Saturday, injuring 43 of 61 people on board. Around 7:30 a.M. On Saturday morning, the double-decker bus veered off road and crashed near town of Inzell, in the Traunstein district of Bavaria, according to Bavarian police. No other vehicles were involved in crash. Police said seven people sustained serious injuries, while 36 others, including driver, were more lightly injured. The bus was travelling from German state of North Rhine-Westphalia to Austrian ski resort of Kaprun, police said.

Crime watch: ICC prosecutor is monitoring Ukraine invasion

AP ■ THE HAGUE

The International Criminal Court's prosecutor has put combatants and their commanders on notice that he is monitoring Russia's invasion of Ukraine and has jurisdiction to prosecute war crimes and crimes against humanity. But Prosecutor Karim Khan acknowledged that he cannot investigate the issue that is being most talked-about at this stage of the invasion - the crime of aggression. Western leaders have widely condemned Russian President Vladimir Putin's order to invade Ukraine. US President Joe Biden on Thursday said the

invasion "was always about naked aggression, about Putin's desire for empire by any means necessary," while British Prime Minister Boris Johnson called it "Vladimir Putin's war of aggression". While the global treaty that established the Hague-based court in 2002 has been updated to include the crime of aggression since 2018, Khan said he does not have jurisdiction over that because neither Ukraine nor Russia is among the court's 123 member states. The only way the court could get jurisdiction over the crime of aggression in the conflict in Ukraine is if the United Nations Security Council were to call on the ICC to investigate.

कार्यालय, नगर पालिक निगम, रायगढ़ (छत्तीसगढ़)
क्र.क्यू./लोक.वि./न.पा.नि./ 2022 रायगढ़ दिनांक :-26/02/2022
॥ ई-प्रोक्वोरमेंट द्वितीय निविदा आमंत्रण संशोधन सूचना ॥
नगर पालिक निगम, रायगढ़ द्वारा **CONSTRUCTION OF PROPOSED SANJAY MARKET COMMERCIAL COMPLEX AT RAIGARH (C.G.)** कार्य हेतु सिस्टम निविदा क्र. 92245 दिनांक 07.02.2022 द्वारा ऑनलाईन **(online)** निविदा आमंत्रित किया गया था जिसमें अपरिहार्य कारणों से निम्नानुसार निविदा तिथि में संशोधन किया जाता है:-
1. प्री-बीड मीटिंग तिथि - 02.03.2022
2. निविदा डाउनलोड करने की अंतिम तिथि - 04.03.2022
3. निविदा संबंधी दस्तावेज कार्यालय में जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि -08.03.2022
4. निविदा खोलने की तिथि - 09.03.2022
उपरोक्त निर्माण कार्य की अन्य नियम एवं शर्तें पूर्ववत् रहेगी।
हस्ता / - कार्यपालन अभियंता नगर पालिक निगम, रायगढ़ (छ.ग.)

Public-Notice Mata Roop Rani Maggo Hospital C8/C9, Om Vihar, Phase-1, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi-110059 We are hereby to inform all concerned that we are going to destroy all medical records from Jan 2014 to December 2016 as Government's Documents Retention Policy. In Case Any Person thereof wants to see the Treatment records or to have a copy of the same, may please contact Medical Record Department of the Hospital by 15th March 2022. Dr. Aman Maggo (Medical Director)	Public-Notice It is notified to general public that BM Gupta Hospital Pvt. Ltd., H-9 to H-15, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi-110059 will be destroying the patients records for the period from 01-01-2018 to 31-12-2018 as per admissible rules. If anyone want patient record of the above noted period, contact the Medical Director on Ph: 011-47157777 or at BM Gupta Hospital before 05-03-2022.
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UJVN Limited
H.O.: "UJJWAL", Maharani Bagh, G.M.S. Road, Dehradun-248006
Telephones: 0135-2763808, Fax: 0135-2763508
CIN No.U40101UR2001SGC025866, Website:www.ujvnlim.com

Letter No: 74 **Time Extension Notice -III** Date: 26/02/2022

Due to unavoidable circumstances, the invited "e"-Tender Notice No: 25e/EE(G)/CPH/2021-22 for SITC of Multisifier System with all accessories including dismantling at Chibro Power House by the office of Executive Engineer (G) Chibro Power House is hereby extended as follows.

Last date of submission of bid in the portal : 07-03-2022 upto to 15:00
Last date of submission of hard copy : 07-03-2022 from 17:00 hrs
Date of opening of the bid Part-I on website : 08-03-2022 from 10:00

All other condition shall be same as previous. Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal "<http://uktenders.gov.in>" **EE(G),Chibro**

"AVOID WASTEFUL USE OF ELECTRICITY"

RAIPUR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Bhakti Mata Karma Complex, New Rajendra Nagar, RAIPUR (Chhattisgarh) 492006
Website : www.rda.cgstate.gov.in, Email : ceordaryp@gmail.com, Tele Fax : 0771-2638188

NIT No. 04, Dated: 25.02.2022, System Tender No-93785 Date 25.02.2022
NIT for Construction of Commercial Complex / 11 Nos. Shops at Indraprastha Phase - II, Raipura, RAIPUR (C.G.). (2nd Call)

Raipur Development Authority (RDA) invites **tenders** for Construction of Commercial Complex / 11 Nos. Shops at Indraprastha Phase-II, Raipura, RAIPUR (C.G.). (2nd Call), qualifying Criteria is detailed in the tender Document. The tender documents and submission of bid starts from **25.02.2022 @5:30 PM to 16.03.2022** upto 5:30 PM on <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>. Technical Bid Opening will be on **22.03.2022** at 04:00 PM, Probable Amount of Contract - **Rs. 58.45 Lacs, EMD Rs. 58,000/-** & Cost of Tender Document **Rs. 10,000/-** + **Rs. 311/-** at office of the Chief Executive Officer, Raipur Development Authority, RAIPUR (Chhattisgarh). Any amendment(s)/ Corrigendum(s) shall be posted only on the website <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>.
Superintending Engineer

Reliance takes control of around 200 Future Retail stores, offers jobs to employees

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries Ltd has taken over the operations of at least 200 stores of Future Retail and has offered jobs to its employees after the Kishore Biyani-led group failed to make lease payments to landlords, sources said on Saturday.

Reliance Retail, the retail arm of the oil-to-telecom conglomerate, had in August 2020 agreed to take over the retail and logistics business of the Future Group for ₹ 24,713 crore but the deal couldn't be closed as Future's warring partner Amazon went to courts citing violation of some contracts. Future denies any wrongdoing.

Sources said several landlords had approached Reliance as Future Retail Ltd (FRL), which is neck deep in losses, was unable to pay rent.

Future has more than 1,700 outlets, including the popular Big Bazaar stores, and has not made lease payments for some of its outlets. Facing closure, Reliance transferred the leases of some stores to its step-down subsidiary, RRVL and sublet them to Future to operate the stores, the sources said.

It has since started rebranding the stores and offered to take all employees employed there on its payroll, they added.

In addition, a majority of inventory at these stores was being supplied by Reliance Jiomart as a cash-strapped FRL could not clear dues to existing suppliers. Reliance will likely replace Big Bazaar signages and branding from these stores with its own brand.

Amazon has argued that Future violated the terms of a 2019 deal the companies signed when the US e-commerce giant invested USD 200 million in a Future Group unit. Amazon's position has been backed by a Singapore arbitrator.



Without confirming or denying the takeover of its stores, Future Retail Ltd in a stock exchange filing said, "The shareholders are aware that FRL is going through an acute financial crisis. The company has defaulted on its loan servicing and as already informed, the account of the company has been classified as NPA by the banks."

FRL said it is finding it difficult to finance the working capital needs and "termination notices have been received for a significant number of stores due to huge outstanding, and we would no longer have access to such store premises."

"The ongoing litigation initiated by Amazon in October 2020, and which is continuing for the last one and a half years, has created serious impediments in the implementation of the Scheme (Reliance takeover), resulting in severe adverse impact on the working of the company," it said, adding the firm is scaling down its operations to reduce losses.

FRL is proposing to expand its online and home

delivery business to increase its reach to the customers.

"The company has been finding it difficult to finance the working capital needs. Increasing losses at store level is a grave concern and is a vicious cycle where larger operations are leading to higher losses," the filing said. "The company has made a loss of Rs 4,445 crore in the last four quarters."

FRL said it is hopeful that the Reliance deal will be implemented as it will be beneficial for all the stakeholders.

When contacted, Amazon declined to comment on the development.

FRL had in January challenged its lenders in the Supreme Court to avoid facing insolvency proceedings over missing bank payments, citing its dispute with Amazon.

The Delhi High Court on February 28, 2022 will hear arguments in the dispute between Amazon and Future Group.

In August 2020, the loss-making retail giant proposed to sell its retail, wholesale and logistics arms that included businesses including Fashion at Big Bazaar, Koryo, Foodhall and Easyday to Reliance for Rs 24,713 crore.

FRL missed the due date of repayment of Rs 3,494.56 crore to its lenders on December 31, 2021. The retail enterprise blamed the delay on the ongoing dispute with Amazon. But it had sought to repay the debt in the next 30 days, that is by January 2022 -- which it also missed.

It thereafter sought to sell its small-format stores to pay the first installment of the debt, but Amazon contested that move too. The latter volunteered to help FRL with a loan of Rs 7,000 crore via Samara Capital which was refused by FRL's independent directors.

India watching global energy markets, supports release of oil from strategic storage

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India, the world's third largest energy importing and consuming nation, on Saturday said it is closely monitoring the global energy markets to track any supply disruptions following the Russia-Ukraine conflict, and will support release of oil from strategic storages to cool prices.

International oil prices climbed to an over seven-year high of USD 105.58 on February 24 over concerns of supplies being disrupted as a result of Russia attacking Ukraine. The rates have cooled to below USD 100 as western sanctions against Russia kept out energy supplies.

"The Government of India is closely monitoring global energy markets as well as potential energy supply disruptions as a fall out of the evolving geopolitical situation," an oil ministry statement said.

While supply routes remain open, prices are likely to pinch. Petrol, diesel and cooking gas (LPG) rates continue to be on the election-related freeze for nearly four months now but PSU oil firms are expected to pass on the elevated global oil prices to consumers soon after elections in



Uttar Pradesh end next month.

"With a view to ensuring energy justice for its citizens and for just energy transition towards a net zero future, India stands ready to take appropriate action for ensuring ongoing supplies at stable prices," the statement said without elaborating.

It did not make any direct reference to consumer prices following the spike in international rates.

"India is also committed to supporting initiatives for releases from Strategic Petroleum Reserves, for mitigating market volatility and calming the rise in crude oil prices," it added.

Asia's third largest economy had in November last year agreed to release about 5 million barrels of crude oil from its emergency stockpile in tandem with the US, Japan and other major economies to cool international oil prices.

This was the first time ever that India, which stores 5.33 million tonnes or about 39 million barrels of crude oil in underground caverns at three locations on the east and west coasts, had agreed to release stocks for such purpose. That was when crude was at USD 82-84 per barrel. Now, it is much higher than that.

The US is trying to do a coordinated release with other consuming nations to cool rates again. The statement did not say how much oil India will release.

Industry sources said the gap between the retail selling price of petrol and diesel and the cost is well over Rs 10 per litre, which when passed on after completion of the elections next month would result in a spike in the inflation rate that is already above the RBI's tolerance level of 6 per cent.

VIL realigns consumer digital function to drive operational scale, pace of delivery

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Telecom operator Vodafone Idea is re-aligning and streamlining its consumer digital resources to sharpen focus on driving operational scale and pace of delivery.

VIL is proposing to bring all digital resources from different functions under a more holistic and integrated consumer digital product curation and delivery organisation, according to an internal communication by the telco to its employees.

The realigned digital set up will comprise three verticals of Consumer Digital Products and Partnerships, Consumer Digital Marketing and Digital Delivery. These functions will report into CMO and CTO, according to the mailer.

An e-mail sent to Vodafone Idea did not elicit a response.

VIL believes that the time is right for re-aligning and streamlining Consumer Digital resources so as to be able to achieve greater operational scale and deliver with speed, sources said. This will help accelerate the scope including build, launch, monetise cycle of VIL's new digital offerings in the pipeline.

Sources said that Reema Jain, Chief Digital Transformation Officer of VIL has stepped down. Jain, had played a key role in setting up the digital function in the company and led it to a certain level of functional maturity, as per VIL's internal mail-



er.

The digital function, under her leadership, delivered notable progress on various parameters and objectives.

The function has evolved to a point where VIL is now looking to build upon the progress and create a more integrated digital organisation for accelerated scale and speed of execution for forthcoming initiatives.

The telco, over a year ago, had created the digital function in order to enhance partnership and synergy between functional digital agendas and drive greater efficacy of solution delivery for customers, it observed. VIL made "significant progress" since then to making digital interfaces more user-friendly, that has resulted in monthly active users steadily increasing, the latest music offering seeing rapid expansion and adoption, and more than 50 per cent of daily tertiary recharges now on digital platforms.

There is a comprehensive digital strategy in place and a product pipeline that will be launched over the coming months.

Aspire to double spices exports to \$10 bn in 5 yrs; focus on quality: Goyal

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Saturday appealed to the spices industry to focus on the quality of products and aspire to double exports to USD 10 billion in the next five years.

In the last fiscal, the country exported spices and spices products worth about USD 5 billion.

He also called for focus on packaging and branding of Indian spices as it would help in further pushing the exports.

The minister said that instead of targeting USD 10 billion of exports by 2030, "let us aspire to double our exports to USD 10 billion in the next five years by 2027 and then further double our exports" by 2032, he said while interacting with farmers and exporters at an event organised for marking the foundation day of the Spices Board.

Goyal said that though India is a global leader in spices, it is facing certain challenges when it comes to exports in the whole raw form.

"We do not currently enjoy a cost advantage against many countries of Asia and Africa, which means we should focus on increasing the exports of value-added spices products," he said.

He added that India is also facing a challenge in preparing its production and manufacturing system to meet the stringent quality and food safety standards prescribed by countries across the world.

"Therefore our aim should be to



sustain the competitive edge of the Indian spice industry and give added thrust to meet stringent quality and food safety standards," the minister said, adding all trade barriers that are recently imposed against domestic products are around the quality.

Unless the industry ensures that it maintains high quality, it will end up losing market share, he said. "We are working to address these issues ... But we will need your support to maintain high quality," Goyal said.

"I would like to urge that we all work together as a team to maintain high-quality standards so that all those who are adulterating ... Harmful synthetic spices should be exposed," he said.

People engaged in wrong practices are harming India's image and the credibility of spices trade and business.

The credibility can be enhanced only when genuine and honest farmers and exporters expose all those who are indulging in bad practices, he said.

"We are willing to set up laboratories anywhere and everywhere across the country in partnership

with BIS (Bureau of Indian Standards) or FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India)," the minister said.

India exports spices to about 180 destinations and exports have increased from USD 230 million in 1987 tpp about USD 5 billion. Demand is increasing for spices such as turmeric, ginger, coriander and cumin.

So far 26 Indian spices have received GI (Geographical Indication) tag like Coorg's green cardamom, Mizo ginger, and Kanniyakumari cloves.

"We must also look at Unicorns in the spices sector. We want to see many young startups work in this sector, and create new jobs especially in remote areas," the minister said.

Goyal said that he was unable to attend this event at Kochi physically as he has been deputed to Mumbai to receive Indian people coming from Ukraine in the first batch on Saturday evening. The government is "extremely and most concerned about the safety, security and safe return of all Indian nationals in Ukraine", he said.

Russia-Ukraine conflict hits sunflower oil imports; industry weighs options in other countries

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

With imports of sunflower oil getting affected due to the conflict between Ukraine and Russia, industry body SEA on Saturday said it is weighing options to source cooking oils from other countries to maintain domestic supply and keep retail prices under check.

Industry players expect prices of cooking oils to remain stable as the supply of domestic mustard oil will improve from next month. Harvesting of mustard seeds crop is about to start.

India's total imports of edible oils surged to a record ₹ 1.17 lakh crore in 2020-21 marketing year (November to October) from nearly Rs 72,000 crore in the previous year due to a sharp rise in global prices.

In terms of volume, the imports were stable at 130 lakh tonne.

"Supply of sunflower oil has got disrupted because of conflict between Russia and Ukraine. India imports 25 lakh tonne of sunflower oil annually, of which 70 per cent comes from Ukraine, 20 per cent from Russia and 10 per cent from Argentina," Solvent Extractors' Association (SEA) Executive Director B V Mehta told PTI.

Around 2 lakh tonne of sunflower oil gets imported on monthly basis, he added.

There is an upward pressure on rates of palm oil and soyabean oil in international markets, Mehta pointed out.

"Since our dependence on edible oil imports is to the tune of 65 per cent, we are exploring all possibilities to get edible oils from other countries to maintain our domestic supply chain and keep local retail prices stable," he added.

Mehta said that Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal held a meeting with edible oil industry players on Friday evening to take stock of the situation and explore ways to boost domestic availability.

"We gave many suggestions to boost domestic supply," he added.



increase our import of palm oil from Indonesia, which is diverting a large quantity of palm oil for fuel. We can also source canola oil from Dubai. Rice bran oil and olive oil can also be imported," Mehta said.

Moreover, he said sunflower oil can be imported from Russia through rupee-ruble agreement to avoid sanctions.

When contacted, Adani Wilmar CEO and MD Angshu Mallick said the situation will improve in the next 15 days and ruled out any increase in retail prices.

"The arrival of mustard seeds crop will start in few days. This will improve our domestic availability," he said.

Mallick said sunflower oil accounts for 10-12 per cent of India's total 220-230 lakh tonne of annual domestic demand of cooking oils.

"65-70 per cent consumption of sunflower oil is in southern states. We need to promote use of groundnut and rice bran oils in South India," he said.

In western and eastern part of India, Mallick said people interchange use of sunflower and soyabean oil depending on the price.

India imports palm oil from Indonesia and Malaysia, while soyabean oil comes from Brazil and Argentina.

The government has reduced import duties on edible oils significantly over the last one year to control retail prices.

Sebi comes out with terms of usage of market data

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

With an aim to enhance the ease of accessibility and usability of data disseminated in public by various data sources in securities market, Sebi has asked market intermediaries to make available such data to users, 'free of charge' both for 'viewing' and for download.

Financial markets are traditionally data-rich and data-driven and with ever growing financial markets, the volume and variety of data have also increased manifold over the years and will continue to do so.

"With increasing size and complexity of financial markets, addressing information asymmetry and having adequately informed investors and multiple stakeholders in the market cannot be overemphasised," Sebi said in a circular on Friday.

Further, given the large variety and volume of information in the markets, the value-added service providers also have a crucial role to play in making such information available to the stakeholders in a more comprehensible form.

Therefore, in order to further enhance the quantum as well as the ease of accessibility and usability of data disseminated in public by various data sources in Indian securities market, including market infrastructure institutions (MIIs), Sebi, through its Market Data Advisory Committee,

reviewed the extent of free access and usage of data being provided in the public domain.

In this regard, the regulatory intent behind public dissemination of data in a disclosure based regulatory regime was deliberated in detail by Market Data Advisory Committee (MDAC).

Accordingly, the regulator has come out with a framework for market intermediaries including the other data sources in securities markets with regard to terms of usage of data provided by data sources in Indian securities markets.

"As far as the data provided by various data sources in Indian securities markets pursuant to regulatory mandates for reporting and disclosure in public domain are concerned, such data should be made available to users, free of charge both for 'viewing' the data as well as for download in the format as specified by regulatory mandate for reporting, as well as their usage for the value addition purposes," Sebi said.

Further, apart from the data made available free of cost, data which is chargeable should be appropriately identified as such in public domain, it added.

The decision has been taken keeping in view the deliberations and recommendations of MDAC on this issue.



UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI DEPARTMENT (PHE) KASHMIR

NEW ENGINEERING COMPLEX, SILK FACTORY ROAD RAJ BAGH, SRINAGAR

TELE: 0194-2311832, TELE FAX: 0194-2311835, E-Mail: kmrphed@gmail.com

GIST OF NOTICE INVITING TENDER

e-NIT No. 129 of 2021-22 Dated: - 21-02-2022

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of UT of J&K, Chief Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Department, Kashmir invites e-tenders from reputed and resourceful Bidders/ Firms/Companies/Joint Ventures/ Consortiums between bidder/firm and Financier of all classes registered in JKPWD/CPWD/Railways or any other state Government for "Construction, Testing and Commissioning of various OHTs along with allied works (depending on safe bearing capacity, staging height and storage capacity) in different Divisions/Districts of Kashmir Province under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)". The bidding process shall be completed online on www.jktenders.gov.in in two covers viz. Cover 1st consisting of Pre-Qualification Criteria, General Terms and Conditions and Technical Specifications and Cover 2nd consisting of Financial Bid on percentage rate basis, in the prescribed BOQ.

Sr No 1 Particular of the work :- Construction Testing and Commissioning of various OHTs along with allied works depending on safe bearing capacity staging height and storage capacity in different Divisions/Districts of Kashmir Province under Jal Jeevan Mission JJM.
Estimate Cost (Lacs) :- Work/scheme wise details given in Section II of tender document, **Tender fee (In Rs) :-** 1000/-, **Earnest money Deposit :-** 50000/-, **Bid Validity :-** 90 days, **Time of Completion of work (days) :-** 150 days
Position of funds: Approved Under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)
The tender inviting authority is Chief Engineer, Kashmir Jal Shakti (PHE) Department.
The awarding authority is District Jal Jeevan Mission (DJJM).

Critical Dates:
1. Publish Date :- 22-02-2022 at 9:00 A.M
2. Document Download/sale start Date :- 22-02-2022 at 9:00 A.M
3. Date of Pre-bid meeting for District Budgam & Pulwama :- 28-02-2022 from 2:00 PM to 6PM
4. Date of Pre-bid meeting for District Baramulla, Bandipora & Kupwara :- 02-03-2022 from 2:00 PM to 6PM
5. Date of Pre-bid meeting for District Shopian, Anantnag & Kulgam :- 03-03-2022 from 2:00 PM to 6PM
6. Bid submission start date :- 05-03-2022
7. Document Download/sale end Date :- 16-03-2022 at 4:00 P.M
8. Bid submission end date :- 16-03-2022 at 4:00 P.M
9. Date and time of Bid opening :- 17-03-2022 at 1:00 P.M
1. Bid documents can be accessed and downloaded from the website www.jktenders.gov.in
2. The pre-bid meeting will be held in the office chamber of the Chief Engineer, Kashmir, PHE Department, through virtual/online mode.
3. The whole bidding process shall be completed online on tender portal www.jktenders.gov.in. The intending bidders can download the bid document from the tender portal and can submit their bids by uploading them on the tender portal.
4. The valid bids received shall be opened online in the office of the Chief Engineer, Kashmir, Jal Shakti (PHE) Department Srinagar.
5. Bids must be accompanied by bid security/EMD and cost of Tender Document as specified in column 4 & 5 of the table and shall be payable at Srinagar.
a. Bid Security for an amount of Rs 50000/- in the shape of FDR/CDR/BG pledged to Chief Accounts Officer, Kashmir, PHE Department Srinagar will have to be uploaded on the tender portal i.e. www.jktenders.gov.in
b. The cost of tender documents should be in form of DD/TR/e challan in favour of FA/CAO, Kashmir, Jal Shakti (PHE) Department.
6. The hard copies of cost of tender document in shape of DD/TR/e-challan, Earnest money in shape of CDR/FDR/BG and other relevant documents shall be obtained from the bidder who is declared as successful after opening of financial cover.
7. The bid shall remain valid for a period of 90 days from the last date of submission of bids. If any bidder withdraws his bid before the said period or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid, the said earnest money shall stand forfeited and the bid shall be declared non-responsive.
8. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents from the website www.jktenders.gov.in.
9. Queries by email if any should be made at kmrphed@gmail.com.
No. DIPPK-18656/21 Dated: 25-02-2022
Sd/- Chief Engineer

IYER SEALS SERIES FOR INDIA

PTI ■ DHARAMSALA

The in-form Shreyas Iyer continued to impress with his dazzling strokeplay as his unbeaten 44-ball 74 powered India to a series-clinching seven-wicket victory over Sri Lanka in the second T20 International on a chilly Saturday evening here.

Ravindra Jadeja blasted 45 off 18 balls as India chased down the target of 184 with 17 deliveries to register their 11th straight win in the format.

Sanju Samson contributed 39 off 25 balls.

India were dealt a massive blow early on as they lost their captain Rohit Sharma for one in the final ball of the first over, the successful bowler being Dushmantha Chameera.

Rohit was out bowled after Chameera delivered a short-of-a-good length ball that was angling back into the right-hander.

It was the ideal start for the visitors who enjoyed the cushion of defending a big total. They were rejoicing soon as Ishan Kishan (16) got out to Lahiru Kumara, the soft

dismissal meaning India were reduced to 44 for two in the sixth over.

At the same time, the early departure of the openers provided a perfect opportunity for the likes of Iyer to make a big score, and he did make it count by playing a fine knock that was laced with four sixes and six fours.

The talented Samson, too, made use of the chance but got out after making a brisk 39 off 25 balls while adding 84 vital runs for the third wicket with Iyer, a partnership that not only steadied India's innings but also brought them right back into the contest.

Samson struck three sixes and two fours during his entertaining stay in the middle.

Jadeja then smashed seven fours and a six.

Earlier, skipper Dasun Shanaka blazed away to an unbeaten 47 off a mere 19 balls after opener Pathum Nissanka top-scored with a 53-ball 75 as Sri Lanka set the hosts a stiff target.

Having got himself in after his opening partner Danushka Gunathilaka (38 off 29 balls) laid the



ROHIT WAS OUT BOWLED AFTER CHAMEERA DELIVERED A SHORT-OF-A-GOOD LENGTH BALL THAT WAS ANGLING BACK INTO THE RIGHT-HANDER

foundation, Nissanka cut loose and struck his runs at over 140. He found the fence 11 times until Bhuvneshwar Kumar got him on the final ball of the penultimate over.

However, Sri Lanka wouldn't have got to what they eventually managed had it not been for Shanaka's five massive sixes and two fours.

India's new ball operators, Bhuvneshwar and Jasprit Bumrah got the white ball to swing in the first few overs, beat the bat and hit the pads with the latter losing one review after a huge shout for an lbw in the second over.

The Sri Lankan openers got

their acts together as the innings progressed with Gunathilaka, especially taking on the Indian bowling attack.

Gunathilaka's, as well as Sri Lanka's, first authoritative shot of the match came when he played Bumrah though the covers in the third over.

The attacking left-handed opener pulled Harshal Patel for his second boundary, even as the Indians managed to keep things fairly quiet in the middle.

Nissanka welcomed Yuzvendra Chahal with a boundary, rocking back to cut the leg-spinner's loosener through the cover point region, but the visitors were still not able to get the run rate they were looking for.

However, from a poor 32 for no loss after the six power play overs, Sri Lanka got a move-on with Gunathilaka clobbering Jadeja for 18 runs in an eventful ninth over, which also saw the dismissal of the man in form.

The first ball was full outside off and Gunathilaka went down the wicket to smoke it over deep mid-wicket for the evening's first six.

A length ball outside off was played over the cover-point fielder for a four and having forced Jadeja to come around the stumps after the left-arm spinner had started from over the wicket, Gunathilaka got his second maximum when he smashed one over the deep midwicket boundary.

But Jadeja had the last laugh when, trying to go for one too many, Gunathilaka played one high up in the air towards long-on and Venkatesh Iyer managed to hold on to the skier after seeming to have misjudged it at the picturesque, floodlit Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association Stadium where a sizeable (50 percent full) crowd was making plenty of noises.

Using his resources well, skipper Rohit got another breakthrough, Charith Asalanka (2), who was trapped in front of the wicket by Chahal.

Kamil Mishara (1) too got out cheaply, falling to Bumrah's slow off-cutter.

But Nissanka found an able ally in Shanaka, adding 58 quick runs for the fifth wicket to prop up their team.

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Rohit Sharma's trusted lieutenant Jasprit Bumrah says the India skipper has always had unflinching faith in his ability, backing him to bowl the most important overs even when he was new at Mumbai Indians, and now gives him the freedom to do things his way.

If Bumrah is to be believed, then Rohit has played a crucial role in his development as one of the world's premier fast bowlers.

"When I came into the side Ricky (Ponting) was the captain and I was not playing regularly. I started playing a lot under Rohit, he had a lot of confidence in me. He instilled a lot of confidence," Bumrah said during a conversation with India team-mate Ravichandran Ashwin on the senior off-spinner's

Rohit trusts me lot: Bumrah

'DRS With Ash' episode on his YouTube channel.

"He (Rohit) saw me bowling at nets, he saw what kind of skills that I have so he always backed me and always told me to believe in myself and in the initial stages as well he had a lot of trust in me, so he will give me the important overs.

"That tells me that okay I can do the job, sometimes you are still trying to convince that okay maybe it is the right call that I am doing the tough job, but they have put you into the tough zone so then you will find a way how to come out of it. The relation has been same."

Since bursting into the scene



with the IPL in 2013 and the international arena in 2016, Bumrah has grown into a fine pacer, his unorthodox action only adding to the package.

Both Rohit and Bumrah have been synonymous with five-time winners Mumbai Indians unprecedented success in the IPL.

On Rohit, Bumrah continued, He "has a lot of trust in me till date and so now we have reached a point where he doesn't even tell me what do you want to do. He says 'you set the field on your own and if there are any changes you tell me and I will do that'".

"That amount of trust has hap-

pened. He has had that trust because he has followed whatever I have said, asked for a field and that has worked so the relationship has really developed.

Rohit is known for his calm demeanour and leads the team by example, something that has impressed Bumrah.

"It's always very chill, some days things might not go well but he always has kept the atmosphere in our team very simple, and he has always tried to keep it very calm. All these things have really helped me as a cricketer, maybe not get overawed. He has a lot of trust and that is always the best place for me as a bowler because, then, I have got the freedom to do whatever I want to. That is really beneficial for me as a bowler and it's very important for me going further."

India plans to host Chess Olympiad

PTI ■ CHENNAI

The All India Chess Federation (AICF) on Saturday said it will be bidding to host the 44th Chess Olympiad later this year after the prestigious event was moved out of Russia following its invasion of Ukraine.

The Chess Olympiad is a biennial event in which teams from some 190 countries compete over a two-week period. The 2022 edition was supposed to take place in Moscow from July 26 July to August 8. "Yeah, we are bidding for the chess Olympiad this year. The budget for the event would be USD 10 million (about Rs 75 crore)," AICF secretary Bharat Singh Chauhan told PTI.

On Friday, FIDE (the International Chess Federation) decided to move the Chess Olympiad and all other official competitions planned in Russia in the wake of the country's invasion of neighbouring Ukraine.

The other events that were moved away from Russia are the first chess Olympiad for people with disabilities and the 93rd FIDE Congress.

FIDE is said to be already working on finding alternative dates and locations for these events.

"...The rapidly deteriorating geopolitical situation has forced the FIDE Council to make this difficult move. During its extraordinary meeting, held today, Friday, February 25, it was decided that all official competitions planned would be moved from Russia," FIDE had stated.

If India gets the nod to host the Olympiad, it would be the second major world event to be held in the country after the World Championship match in 2013 between Viswanathan Anand and Magnus Carlsen, the current world No.1.

Virat Kohli's 100th Test match will be behind closed doors

PTI ■ MOHALI

The BCCI won't be allowing any spectators for the upcoming first Test between India and Sri Lanka starting here March 4, which is incidentally legendary Virat Kohli's landmark 100th Test, a Punjab Cricket Association official stated.

The decision has been taken in the wake of the COVID-19 cases in and around Mohali while also taking into account that most of the Indian players will be linking up with their respective IPL squads just after the end of the second Test in a bubble-to bubble transfer.

"Yes, apart from the people, who are on duty for the Test match, we are not allowing any general spectators as per the directive of BCCI," senior PCA treasurer RP Singla told PTI on Saturday.

"Still there are fresh COVID cases emerging in and around Mohali, so it's better we take all safety protocols. Obviously,, the fans miss out because an international match at Mohali is happening after



almost three years," Singla said.

However, PCA is putting up billboards across the stadium to celebrate the momentous occasion in Kohli's glittering cricket career.

"We will be putting up big billboards and our PCA Apex Council has also decided to felicitate Virat. We will either do it at the start of the game or at the end depending on BCCI directive."

RANJI TROPHY UPDATES Karnataka reduces J&K to 190 for 4 to eye outright win

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Karnataka reduced Jammu & Kashmir to 190 for 4 in the second innings having set them a mammoth 508-run target on the third day of the Ranji Trophy Elite Group C match here on Saturday.

Skipper Ian Dev Singh Chauhan (batting on 65) and Abdul Samad (21 batting) were at the crease with J & K needing a further 318 runs for an unlikely win.

Prasidh Krishna, who had taken six wickets in J & K's first innings, got the first breakthrough for Karnataka with the scalp of Qamran Iqbal (4).

Shreyas Gopal picked up two wickets - Jatin Wadhwan (15) and Shubham Singh Pundir (9) to reduce the opposition to 57 for 3 before Fazil Rashid (65)



and Ian Singh fought back with a 79-run stand for the fourth wicket. After the exit of Rashid, the J & K captain and the highly rated Abdul Samad put on 63 runs and ensured that there were no further setbacks for the team.

Earlier, resuming at 128 for 2, Karnataka went on the offensive and added 170 runs in 29 overs with Karun Nair adding 71 (not out) to his brilliant knock of 175 in the first innings and K V Siddharth hitting 72.

In the other match in the group, Railways secured the crucial first innings lead by replying with 525 for 9 at stumps against Pondicherry, which had scored 342.

Ishant bowls only nine overs, Delhi all but out of quarter-finals race Ishant Sharma got a wicket in his first spell but never looked incisive in his nine overs as Jharkhand, riding twin centuries from Nazim Siddiqui and Kumar Suraj, put Delhi on the brink of elimination in their group H Ranji Trophy match.

Jharkhand ended the third

and penultimate day at 288 for five in 76 overs and, with an overall lead of 315, is all but sure of three points. They would probably bat another hour on the final day to nullify any remote chance of Delhi chasing the target in just five hours.

If Delhi end with another one point, they would only survive in theory as even a seven point game (bonus) against Chattisgarh won't allow them to surpass Tamil Nadu.

In the morning, Jonty Sidhu (79) was the fifth victim of left-arm spinner Shahbaz Nadeem when he tried to give him the charge as Delhi were all out for 224, giving Jharkhand an important 27-run lead. They did come back strongly during the first session, reducing Jharkhand to 67 for four as both Navdeep Saini (13-2-45-10.

Klopp urges Liverpool to seize their chance in League Cup final

AP ■ LONDON

Jurgen Klopp wants Liverpool to take a step towards immortality when they target the first trophy in their historic quadruple bid in Sunday's League Cup final against Chelsea.

Klopp's side are chasing silverware in all four major competitions after closing the gap on Premier League leaders Manchester City to three points.

The Reds have made it to their first domestic cup final since 2016, are on course for the Champions League quarter-finals after a last 16 first leg win at Inter Milan and host Norwich in the FA Cup fifth round on Wednesday. Klopp has already delivered Champions League glory in 2019 and a long-awaited Premier League title in 2020, but the German knows only sustained success will see his group ranked alongside the club's 1970s and 1980s legends.

"We all know that in the moment the people are really happy," Klopp said.

"But in 20 years if you want to talk about this team, I would not be surprised if people would then say if we don't win anything any more, 'Yeah they were good, but they should have won more.' That's why we should try now to win a few things. And the next chance, the best chance we have this weekend, is against



Chelsea when it's really tricky."

Liverpool captain Jordan Henderson believes victory at Wembley would be the perfect springboard for even greater success in the final weeks of the season. No English club has ever won the top four trophies available in a single campaign and Henderson said: "It is a big moment. To get a trophy so early on in the season can give the squad a big boost."

Henderson is the only survivor from Liverpool's last domestic final victory in 2012 when he helped his team beat Cardiff on penalties to clinch the League Cup.

"We want to use it as a platform to give us a big confidence

boost going towards the business end of the season," he added. Liverpool forward Roberto Firmino has been ruled out after missing the last two games with a groin injury, but Diogo Jota could feature following ankle ligament damage.

Chelsea boss Thomas Tuchel's biggest decision once again involves Romelu Lukaku after he dropped the troubled Belgian striker for the mid-week Champions League win against Lille. Lukaku has scored just 10 goals since his club record £97 million (\$131 million) move from Inter Milan last year and expressed unhappiness with the way he was being used by Tuchel earlier this season.

NZ 157-5 in reply to South Africa's 364

AP ■ CHRISTCHURCH

The tail wagged, then Kagiso Rabada knocked the top off New Zealand's order as South Africa asserted itself on the second day of the second test Saturday in a reversal of form after its crushing first-test defeat.

New Zealand was 157-5 at stumps in reply to the Proteas' solid first innings of 364 which was inflated by a 62-run ninth wicket partnership between Keshan Maharaj and Marco Jansen. Colin de Grandhomme struck an unbeaten half century from 36 balls, then blocked out several overs to be 54 not out when play ended in gathering gloom at nearly 7 p.M. Daryl Mitchell was 29 not out in an unbroken partnership of 66 for New Zealand's sixth wicket.

The second day belonged to South



Africa, though the first session and the last hour of the day didn't. South Africa resumed its first innings at 238-3 after gaining the upper hand on the

first day but New Zealand took 4-60 before lunch to re-balance the match. South Africa regained the upper hand when Jansen made 37 and

Maharaj 36 in a partnership which lifted it to 364, better than par after it had chosen to bat on winning the toss. The Proteas were bowled out for 95 and 111 at the same venue, Hagley Oval, in the first test. Their decision to bat was a declaration of confidence in themselves and their first innings effort was a good one, led by Sarel Erwee's maiden test century. Rabada put South Africa well on top when he dismissed captain Tom Latham in the first over of New Zealand's first innings and Will Young in the fifth over to leave New Zealand 9-2. South Africa-born Devon Conway fell to Jansen when New Zealand was 51 and first test century-maker Henry Nicholls was out to the same bowler when he was 39 and New Zealand was 83-4. It was 91-5 when Tim Blundell was bowled by Rabada without offering a shot.

Nadal defeats Medvedev in 2 sets

AP ■ ACAPULCO (MEXICO)

This time around, there was no drama.

In a rematch of an epic five-set Australian Open final, Rafael Nadal defeated Daniil Medvedev 6-3, 6-3 early on Saturday and qualified for the Mexican Open final, where he will play Cameron Norrie.

A month ago in Australia, the 35-year-old Nadal came from two sets down to beat Medvedev and win his record 21st Grand Slam singles title.



Nadal is now 14-0 in the season and will try to capture his fourth title in Acapulco.

The Spaniard started off strong in the match with a break in the fourth game of the first set that lasted 47 minutes.

But Medvedev, who will be the world's No. 1-ranked player on Monday, played better in the second set, but missed converting 11 break points, seven of them in a fifth game that lasted 19 minutes.

Earlier, Norrie extended his hot streak in February by upsetting Stefanos Tsitsipas 6-4, 6-4.

After losing all four of his

matches in January, Norrie is 10-1 in February and arrived in Mexico after winning the third ATP Tour title of his career at Delray Beach.

Norrie, the sixth-seeded player in Acapulco, matched the biggest win of his career by beating No. 4-ranked Tsitsipas.

"I served very well today, I really enjoyed the match, it's one of my best wins, I hope we can keep the run alive tomorrow", said Norrie.

Norrie had service breaks

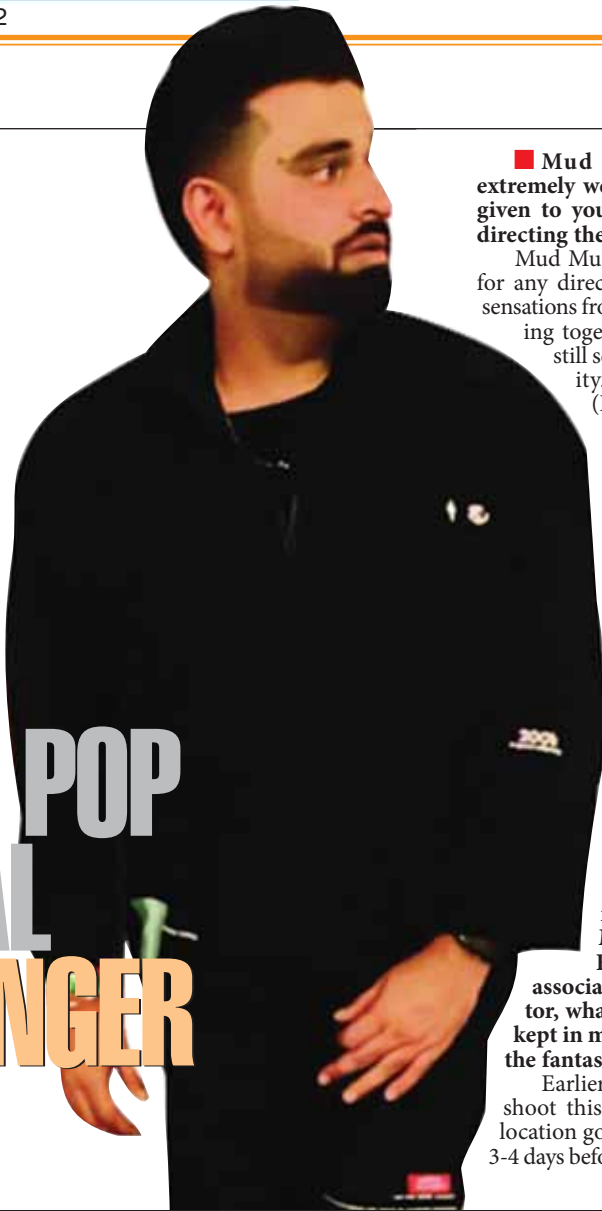
in the ninth game of the first and second set to defeat Tsitsipas.

Norrie's previous biggest career win was he defeated Dominic Thiem, who was fourth in the ATP rankings, in the 2021 Lyon semifinal. The British player now has a 4-20 record against top 10 opponents.

"It's going to be a great match regardless of whom I'm going to play against, it's going to be hard," Norrie said.

MIHIR GULATI

'90'S INDIE POP WAS A REAL GAME-CHANGER FOR ME'



Earlier, we were supposed to shoot this song in Delhi but the location got shifted to Dubai just a 3-4 days before the shoot due to some

Talking about Fernandez, it never felt like I was directing a Bollywood superstar, she was very down to earth and completely believed me. She nailed her role in the song. During the shoot, she agreed to drive Ferrari for

I did my post graduation in advertising and marketing. I tried my luck as a copywriter, but there were not many opportunities during that time

Many more music videos as I feel India still lack that edgy visual. I always wanted to put India on the international map when it comes to music videos. I feel the Indian music scene should be global now and we should have more international collaborations. I am also looking forward to directing a web series and working on a script already.

KATHAK DANCE WORKSHOP



What: Art & Craft
Where: Online
When: February 27, 2022
Time: 5 pm

Srivalli (Javed Ali)
Jugnu (Badshah, Nikhita Gandhi)
Shukar (Andra)
Pardesi (Arko, Asees Kaur)
Joganiya (Shivi)

English Vinglish

Oh My God (Adele)
Life (Ree)
It'll Be Okay (Shawn Mendes)
Whole Life (Slick Naim)
LOUD (Sofia Carson)

Masterstroke

The brand's philosophy of *something for everyone* makes it a perfect stop for online consumers between the age group of 25-55, who want to dress fashionably without compromising on quality, ethics, and design.



Those who keep lamenting that they have yet to experience fine dining need to head to The Chambers at Taj Mahal in the Capital for a never to forget affair with food

Taste: When so much care and effort has gone to presen-



The Zodiac Grill has, over the years, been a mirror to the people's memories. Be it the exclusivity or the menu without a price or a dish that is out of this world, it is nothing but short of magic that is treated to



Music: Usually, when it comes to fine dining, it is all about food and taste and the whole experience that centres around it. It is rare that one even gives an ear to the music that plays. But the soft saxophone playing live is a treat to the ears. The lady playing the instrument had each note perfect. The songs that she had chosen will take to the good old

TELLYTALE

BRINGING FAMILIES TOGETHER

SEEING DREAMS COME TRUE

Naveet Malik has made his big-time Bollywood debut with his power pack performance in his latest released web film *Love Hostel*. Malik plays a prominent character which is a parallel lead role of Vikrant Massey. He believes the times are highly promising for anyone skilled and flexible after OTT releases, *Love Hostel* is a romantic thriller. Malik on making his debut, shares, "I am immensely grateful to be a part of such an outstanding project. It was indeed a wonderful experience to be directed by Shanker Raman, to share screen space with, Sanya Malhotra, Bobby Deol, Vikrant Massey, the entire team was filled with talented artist. I play the parallel lead in the film who also fights for his love going against all. I am grateful to be launched under the Red Chillies and seeing dreams come true."

MAHASHIVRATRI KI SHUBH KAMANYEIN

Mouli Ganguly shares, "It is a night to self-realise introspect to overcome hurdles that hinder our success and achieve spiritual growth. It is an opportunity to disperse limitedness. I wish that Lord Shiva fills into everyone his divine blessings."



the pioneer agenda



FROM THE INSIDE

From a critic's desk

The Descent: Essay and Critiques 2010-2021 is a perceptual collection of 18 essays and 12 critiques of books

10



12

God favours the hardworking

If you address your habit tendencies, the potential within will play out unhindered and success will follow

Learning is the most important thing, no matter how you do it, or where you do it, or who you do it with
— Saoirse Ronan



THE NEW AGE OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN INDIA



The quality of books published in India is beginning to rival internationally produced ones; not only in terms of form, but content as well. And, while being educational, such books stimulate and ignite the imagination, writes CHITWAN MITTAL

More children in India are reading books for fun, than ever before. It is heartening to see this steady increase given that excessive screen time has become a grave concern for most parents, more so ever since the pandemic began. But what is young India reading and how has children's literature in English changed over the last few years to foster this habit.

OF FAIRY TALES, MYTHS AND FABLES

Over the course of many generations, thanks in part to convent education, Indian children, especially in their formative years, have been exposed to a staple reading diet that has primarily comprised of translated Western classics, such as English, German, Russian, and Greek fairy tales, myths and fables. These are coupled with Indian folk tales, epics and myths in regional languages, translated into English, such as the *Panchatantras* and the *Jataka* tales.

However, the format, language, tone and presentation style of these books was rather simplistic and dated. The production quality, inexpensive and basic. The illustrations were vivid and colourful but straight forward and unimaginative. And the language was stilted: the tone was instructional and direct. It left no room for interpretation. Quite unremarkably, even today, such books continue to be produced, bought and read to very young children. They mainly cater to parents looking for a tried and tested way to inculcate basic values; impart moral and religious education to their children.

However, more recently, there have emerged a niche crop of parents, who are avid readers themselves. Increasingly parents, with disposable incomes, primarily in urban centres are viewing reading as less to do with the school's curriculum and more to do with a child's cognitive development. The moral didacticism seen earlier, has today given way to a brave new voice in children's writing; one which is experimenting with genre, form and language.

BRAVE NEW WORD

Slowly but surely, the quality of books published in India is beginning to rival internationally produced ones; not only in terms of form, but content as well. The paper and print quality is improving to give the books a premium feel. The font and illustrations and pictures are getting more vividly hued and

aesthetically pleasing. The language employed is pedagogically sound and less didactic. It's descriptive without being intellectually undemanding. More importantly, while being educational such books stimulate and ignite the imagination, especially for little children who aren't reading independently just yet. For instance, in a bid to produce books that are engaging and more culturally rooted, a clutch of authors, illustrators and publishers are drawing on our collective Indian-ness. They do this by creating characters with names and physical features set in a milieu that is relatable. The creatives feature and showcase indigenous folk art styles. Likewise, the stories incorporate regionalisms despite being narrated mainly in the English language. All this lends the artwork and stories a distinctly Indian flavour.

LACKING COMIC SENSE

Apart from story books, another form of storytelling and presentation that continues to be rather popular amongst children, who are independent readers, are comic books. However, aside from the *Amar Chitra Katha* series that sought to package Indian mythology, and later history, in the comic format to make these themes accessible to a younger audience, there's scant little India can boast of. Similarly, while there are others, such as *Tinkle*, through evergreen characters such as *Suppandi* and *Shikharu Shambu*, and *Chacha Chaudhary*, that entertained and educated in equal measure, little noteworthy has happened in this space ever since their creation.

Likewise, a large vacuum remains to be filled in the superhero adventure fiction genre. While Indian graphic artists have in the past by way of characters, such as *Nagraj*, *Commando Dhruva*, *Doga* and *Parmanu* tried to create an alternative, indigenously developed superhero franchise to match the likes of *Marvel* and *DC*, they haven't made the kind of sustained impact their foreign counterparts continue to make in India. Same is the case with graphic novels.

RECLAIMING THE MOTHER TONGUE

But there is some good news. We are beginning to realise the value of stories written in the mother tongue. And slowly but surely, children's literature in regional languages, by way of translations, is beginning to make its presence felt at the national level. However, much remains to be done in this segment and publishers need to focus on cre-

ESTABLISHED PUBLISHING HOUSES IN INDIA, INCLUDING PENGUIN AND HARPER COLLINS, HAVE BEGUN CONCENTRATING THEIR EFFORTS ON CHILDREN'S LITERATURE. HOWEVER, THE BIGGEST GAME CHANGER HAS BEEN THE RISE OF SMALL INDEPENDENT PUBLISHERS SUCH AS TULIKA, TARA, PICKLE YOLK BOOKS AND ADIDEV PRESS ARE ENTERING THE MARKET WITH HIGH QUALITY CONTENT



ating more children's literature in regional languages as well as bi-lingual books.

WAY BEHIND, WAY FORWARD

Despite having the largest English-language readership in the world, children's literature in English from India has a meagre presence on the international stage. Most agree that the flow of children's books has always been from west to east. For instance, my 8-year-old used to be more familiar with *Doctor Seuss* (a book last published in 1998!) and Julia Donaldson's books, over some of the books published in India today. The lyrical quality of the texts, lend themselves to repetition and retention; imaginative illustrations and subtle colouring make them children's favourites.

Is this because most publishers, editors, educationists and parents view children's books as essential for acquiring mere reading and writing skills? Is reading for leisure still an alien concept in a country that boasts a vibrant and ancient oral tradition of storytelling? Or is this possibly connected to the status of children's literature: That nothing really incentivises stakeholders to provide children with books that challenge them?

SLOW CHURN

However, headwinds in the children's publishing industry are moving in a favourable direction, one that warrants our attention. A

host of multinational firms have shifted their focus to the South Asian market. They are not only looking to market their international titles, and competitively pricing them, but are also actively looking at publishing books specifically for South Asia. This, one can hope, will force local players to step up and improve both production and content.

Established publishing houses in India, including Penguin and Harper Collins, have begun concentrating their efforts on children's literature. However, the biggest game changer has been the rise of small independent publications in the last decade. Indie publishers such as Tulika, Tara, Pickle Yolk Books and AdiDev Press are entering the market with high quality content.

There's some solace to be sought. I believe India and other South Asian countries have so much to offer to the world of children's literature. And owing to these small but meaningful changes, going forward, English writing for children, I feel, will see more content from South Asia to the rest of the world.

The writer is the Founder of AdiDev Press, an independent publishing company based in India. She has recently authored and published 6 children's picture books, and is committed to creating high-quality books, encouraging engagement and diversity, value-oriented education and bi-lingual learning with a focus on South Asian culture

Ukraine a scapegoat in Russia-West war

With shock and awe, the world is witnessing the worst ever war crisis in Europe since the end of the Second World War as Russian President Vladimir Putin is hell-bent on punishing Ukraine for refusing to dance to his tune. On Saturday, the invading Russian Army moved toward Ukraine's capital. Also, Russia vetoed a UN Security Council resolution demanding that Moscow immediately stop its attack on Ukraine and withdraw all troops.

Earlier in the week, Putin ordered the movement of Special Forces to eastern Ukraine. According to him, these forces are sent to this region as "peacekeeping forces". After concluding a talk with French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, Putin simply declared the recognition of the independence of the Luhansk People's Republic and Donetsk People's Republic in eastern Ukraine. Interestingly these areas, together known as the Donbass region, have been under the control of the Moscow-backed separatists since early 2014.

However, the entire Donbass is not occupied by the rebel forces. Thus, the constant skirmishes have been a regular affair between the Ukrainian military and the separatists for the last eight long years.

Today, eastern Ukraine is at the centre of the controversy. The majority of the people of Ukraine have centuries old cultural and historical ties with the people of the old Russian Empire. And today, many in eastern Ukraine are ethnic Russians and they speak the Russian language. Interestingly, Donbass region has the largest cold reserves in Ukraine.

Almost all the former Russian republics and Warsaw Pact nations have either joined the NATO or the European Union after the dissolution of the USSR. So, Ukraine slipping away from the Russian orbit and moving into any of these alliances is detrimental to the interest of Moscow under the Putin regime.

For the US and the EU,

Ukraine though is not a formal member of the NATO, yet it is like a buffer zone between the NATO alliance partners and an aggressive Russia under Putin. Hence, both Russia and the US-led West have left no stone unturned to hold back Ukraine under their influence.

Why Nord Stream-2 is so vital to Putin and Europe? Russian economy is primarily dependent on massive exports of oil and gas in which Europe is the biggest buyer. And of all the European nations, Germany has remained as the largest consumer.

In this regard, Germany's permission to pass through the Nord Stream-2 pipeline is very crucial both for Russia and for the rest of Europe, including Germany. This war could spoil business worth billions of dollar for Russia as Scholz has suspended the certification process for the Nord Stream-2. If this happens for the rest of Europe, then Putin will have to rethink his Ukraine strategy.

Since the end of the Cold War, the US-led NATO is on an expansionist move. The primary reason for such a move is to quickly fill the security vacuum created by breakdown of the USSR in eastern Europe. Also, the Western allies thought that it could be really good to welcome these states into their security network as fast as possible because Russia may reassert its military power over them once its economic and political restructuring comes back to normalcy.

The West also sincerely wants to clip the influence of newly emerged Russian Federation under Boris Yeltsin.

Can sanctions stop Putin from further invasions? Truly the kind of sanctions imposed by the US, the EU, and Britain for now will have strong impact on the Russian elite, particularly the members of the Duma who approved the independence of the People's Republic of Luhansk and the People's Republic of Donetsk this week.

Last few days, we have also seen Japan, Canada and Australia joining the US-led western sanctions against Russia. What surprises the international



Ukrainian soldiers take positions outside a military facility as two cars burn, in a street in Kyiv on February 26

AP

community is that no single measure of sanctions is directly aimed at Putin. When we look back, we can rightly say that such sanctions will not be able to deter Putin from any further invasions in Europe.

The fact is that after the occupation of the Crimean Peninsula in 2014, sanctions were imposed on Russia, but it could hardly prevent the current devastating attack on eastern Ukraine. Of course, sanctions and freezing of assets of the Russian elite and inner circles of Putin are a strong step from the West, but those are not sufficient to avert war.

Now the question is whether the Ukrainian military can fight the Russian forces or not. Precisely, Ukraine will find it difficult to face the mighty Russian forces. But for now, the Ukrainian President Zelensky is defiant.

On February 26, he sought to dispel rumours that he had called upon the army to lay down arms. "This is our land, our country, our children. And we will defend all of that," he said in a short video.

But it is to be noted that military power is relative, not absolute in any case. Frankly speaking what Ukrainian forces and Russian forces used to be

during the Crimean War of 2014 is not the same today.

Both the armies have undergone significant changes. Over the past seven years, Putin has invested relentlessly in a slew of advanced military capabilities to strengthen his military to face any Western threat. These include a sophisticated air and missile defence network, some of the latest fighter jets and a number of ultra-modern infantry fighting vehicles and main battle tanks.

On the other hand, the military in Ukraine too has evolved into a modern fighting force in Europe as of today. In a recent speech delivered at Ukraine's Combat Training Centre in Yavoriv, US Charge de Affairs in Ukraine Kristine Kvien said, "Against the backdrop of Russia's provocations, it is important to remember that the Ukraine of 2021 and the Ukrainian forces of 2021 are vastly different than those of 2014. To better address external threats, the Ukrainian armed forces have become more capable, more professional fighting force, one of the most capable battle-ready in Europe today, and the United States is proud that our cooperative security efforts have supported this impressive

development."

It is clear how for years the American security agents and advisers built up the Ukrainian military to face any onslaught from the Russian military.

At the moment war is on. Still, it is not clear whether it could turn into a full-scale military conflict involving Ukrainian forces, backed by the NATO and the Russian military. The direct participation of the NATO military against the Russian Federation will turn the war into the Third World War within days. It is widely believed that the Minsk Protocol is still relevant to halt the Ukraine war. It was initially signed between the members of the Trilateral Group, including Russia, Ukraine and the organisation for security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Minsk in February 2015 to stop the hostilities in the Donbass region.

And today, France and Germany are trying to initiate new tools with Russia to bring down the crisis which is known as 'Normandy Format'. So even at this moment diplomatic talks are on, so Minsk Protocol has not become fully irrelevant.

The most pertinent question at this eleventh hour is what the UNSC could do? At

the moment, Russia is the chairperson of the UNSC on a rotational role and it has the pre-eminent role of setting the agenda of the body. Beyond this, Russia being a permanent member of the UNSC wields the precious veto power. China is lambasting at the West for declaring sanctions against Russia. Beijing clearly says sanctions were unlikely to solve the crisis.

Also, Beijing feels that these severe sanctions have all the potentials to harm the interests of average Ukrainians. This brings home the fact that China is in support of Russia. This is an opportune moment for Beijing's communists to lash out at Washington. Now the new generation Chinese policy makers have made it a point to give sermons to Americans whenever they get the opportunity. And this is what once America and the rest of the West used to do to the whole world.

Thus, in a way, the UNSC is fully divided. The Big-5 will not be able to solve the imbroglia in eastern Ukraine. The UK urges Russia to step back as Putin violates the principles of international law.

Meanwhile, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres

urged Putin to stop the war in the name of humanity. He also said earlier that Russia's decisions are a violation of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine and inconsistent with the principles of the UN Charter. Again, the beligerence of Putin is a complete mockery of Russian commitment to the Budapest Memorandum of 1994 and Minsk Agreement of 2015. Finally, Putin is forcefully trying to redraw the boundaries of Ukraine at his own convenience.

India is walking a diplomatic tightrope at the moment though Prime Minister Narendra Modi has already spoken to President Putin. India is concerned with the rise of hostilities in eastern Ukraine and urged Russia to bring back peace to the region. Today, India could neither side with the US-led West to save Ukraine nor fully support Russian actions over Ukraine. Its better Delhi maintains a cautious move as opposing Putin may jeopardise a decades old ties with Moscow.

The way out today seems an urgent dialogue between Russia and the West. Today, it looks like as if the war is between the US and Russia, not between Ukraine and Russia. Ukraine has become a scapegoat in the big fight for dominance in eastern Europe between Russia and the US-led West. But it would be purely a misguided narrative in the Western capitals if it is perceived that Putin's Ukraine invasion is a pell-mell one. He has been planning it for a long time. Hence, Biden and his counterparts in the West must be careful about any future misadventures of Putin.

(Dr Makhan Saikia has taught political science and international relations for over a decade in institutions of national and international repute after specialisation in globalisation and governance from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. He is the chief editor of the Journal of Global Studies, an international research journal)

Though the invading Russian Army seems to be capturing Ukraine, the real war is between the US-led West and Russia, not between Ukraine and Russia. Also as Russia has vetoed a UNSC resolution that demanded that Moscow immediately stop its attack on Ukraine and withdraw all troops, the only possible way out now is an urgent dialogue between Russia and the West



MAKHAN SAIKIA

PERSPECTIVE

Reform babus' selection & rope in pensioners

At 75th year of Independence, we are still following age-old practice of selecting bureaucrats. It needs to be overhauled



SUSHIL KUMAR SINGLA



ADITYA SINGLA

Going by the definition inscribed in the Indian Penal Code 1860, a "public servant" is defined as a government employee, an officer in the military, navy, air force, police, court of law or any local authority established by a Central or State Act, whereas politicians are public representatives.

The idea behind spelling out the definition of a "public servant" is to talk about the much-needed reforms in the bureaucracy and switching over to the system being followed in armed forces, reflected in the correspondence between India's first Prime Minister and the first Home Minister.

As the literal meaning of "reform" is to change the existing system for the betterment of society, the need for the reform in bureaucracy was felt soon after India became an independent country. Catch them young was the thrust in letter so that the selected bureaucrats can be moulded by way of training to inculcate in them the right and meaningful ethos of serving the general public following the philosophy of Antyodaya in true sense.

It's a general practice that aspirants start preparing for the "glamorous" civil services after completing their graduation or post-graduation at the age of 21 years to 23 years. The median age of clearing the exam is about 26.5 years. So ideally 3 to 5 years are spent on preparations for civil services. Basically,

one wastes these precious years of life in most unproductive way that turns out to be a kind of burden on the parents, the society and the nation at large. So there is an urgent need to explore the ways and means to reduce this drudgery.

Prestigious educational institutions like Indian Institute of Management, which have earned name across the globe, give due weightage to the work experience gathered after attaining the requisite educational qualifications. So there is a case for consideration that people aiming to join the civil services gain professional experience after attaining the educational qualifications for at least 3 years rather than simply preparing for this innocuous exam where success rate is less than one per cent. The unsuccessful candidates are never satisfied in their later years and always have unfathomable grudge towards the system and society at large about their non-selection. However, Department of Personnel and Training's noble initiative of sharing the list of interviewed candidates is an affirmative step to assuage those feelings.

Less than 1/3rd of selected candidates get service of their choice and the rest of them keep appearing in the subsequent examinations till the exhaustion of chance or allotted service of choice, whichever is earlier. So it is not only difficult but impossible to come out of this vicious cycle.

If one doesn't get the service allocation of one's choice, s/he takes the test again in the subsequent years — defeating and nullifying the whole year-long procedure and recruitment process followed by the UPSC. Is there a need to reduce the recruitment age or reduce the number of attempts so that millions of cumulative years wasted by the unsuccessful candidates are saved and utilised in the service of the nation? Is joining the civil services is the only option left with the aspirants to serve the nation and masses? If yes, then what happens to those who unsuccessfully make attempts for four to seven years?

Judiciary selection at mid-level: The alternative system could be that the government can adopt the judges' selection process followed by judiciary in the direct recruitment at the level of Additional District and Sessions Judges. The biggest advantage is that the selected candidates would have attained at least the workable domain expertise and sectoral knowledge in the relevant area.

Lateral Entry: The historic decision of the Central Government to hire officials at the level of joint secretary, director, etc, needs to be replicated and adopted in States.

Use of technology: Day is not far off when posting of officers manning the technical ministries in the Central or State governments would be done by following unscrupulously a nameless and faceless

methodology. The country runs from the collection of direct and indirect taxes. The first one is where assessment has been made faceless and the second one is soon to follow the suit. Can we think of making use of artificial intelligence in facilitating selection body in selecting right kind of bureaucrats who are really interested in public service and consider public as their master?

Member of Parliament or Member of Legislative Assembly, who is placed above the secretary in the order of precedence, can be of 25 years of age and legislate Acts and policies then why a secretary has necessarily to be in the range of 55- 60 years of age or near retirement? Why secretary can't be in the lower age bracket. Should we strive for an ideal mix of experience and youth?

Has the time come that the public representatives need to have major say in selecting the public servants? This has been successfully executed in the Public Sector Enterprises Board which now is headed by a person of stature from outside the set system.

Randomness: After successfully passing the exam, the candidate joins the foundation course for 3.5 months. There is an abrupt transition from an aspirant and a student to officer. After completion of professional training, the officers are posted in the State at headquarters or district or subdivision level or block level or in the secretariat. In next two

years, they are supposed to learn all intricacies of field, block, subdivision, district and state working. After the completion of 4 years of service, including training period or sometimes earlier, they are made in-charge of a district. For SP or DM/DC, the duties are mainly supervisory in nature. Since, the real action happens at the level of subdivision or block, it would be worthwhile to make officers undergo adequate grinding field experience at that level at least for 4-5 years to understand the nuances before being assigned district duties.

Does it make a case to overhaul the training pattern and the whole system so that we have a product called "public servant" and not an officer when he steps out of the precincts of the academy. Is there a need to bring back the old age Gurukul culture in the academy for the training period since they are entering new/second phase of life as philosophised in our scriptures? So that the "public servants" are habituated and step out with the sole motto to serve the public for whom they have been selected.

Another major reform that can be initiated is doing away with archaic system of providing the domestic helps in the disguise of dak runners, telephone attendants, helpers, buddy, etc, to the officers. Even the officers retiring from various positions do not send back these helpers. The recent

commendable action of the Delhi Police in this regard must be imitated by different agencies and departments at the national and State levels. There ought to be an immediate serious review as the trained human resources are used for dog walking, house cleaning and washing of utensils, etc. This practice of English Raj needs to be abrogated.

The officers need to know the problems that common people are facing in meeting their day to day needs. It is hard to find "public servants" from elite services standing in the queue for ticket, buying vegetables, ration or milk. So this creates a big disconnect with the public.

The biggest and most arduous task with our legislative machinery is to develop a mechanism where the officers with real intent of serving the nation and common people are selected. Should service allocation be made on the basis of rank that one gets in the overall merit or the interests and capability of the candidate for that particular service?

Civil employees of Central government and state governments are entitled for pension after their superannuation, who had joined government service prior to January 1, 2004. There are more than 6.8 million pensioners at national level and manifold at the provincial level. Can we make use of expertise of these pensioners?

The pensioners can be

effectively engaged in areas of their choice and expertise in the localities of their residence without paying any remuneration because otherwise also they are getting pension which is 50 per cent of their last drawn salary. This will help the retirees in keeping them physically fit, socially acceptable and mentally agile.

At a time when the country is commemorating its 75th year of Independence, we are still following age-old practice of selecting bureaucrats, which needs to be overhauled.

Every organisation ought to bring in efficiency in its operations, efficacy in its approach, understanding people's means to evaluate and find out their aspirations and using them to achieve organisation goals and objectives.

The prestigious three letter word assigned to premier services gives each service a unique and distinct identity that in turn creates vanity and makes the members of the service egoistic to the core. Has the time come to rechristen the existing service by calling each service as Indian Public Service followed by subject area and each member of service as Indian Public Servant to make the bureaucracy realise and internalize of their position in the system?

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