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MONEY 9
INDIA LIKELY TO GROW
AT 7.8%, SAYS CRISIL

NEW DELHI, FRIDAY MARCH 11, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹3

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TO NZ BY
62 RUNS
12 SPORT



Voters endorse Modi's Yogi hai bahut UP-yogi

Historic 2nd term
for Yogi, BJP vote
share rises to 43%

VIRENDRA NATH BHATT/ PNS ■
LUCKNOW

The electorate of Uttar Pradesh endorsed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's claim that "Yogi hai bahut UP-Yogi" and gave a historic second term to Yogi Adityanath as Chief Minister of the most populous State.

However, in a major setback to the BJP, Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya lost to Pallavi Patel of Apna Dal (Kamerawadi)) contesting on the SP symbol.

The BJP's tally of 255 was down 40 seats compared to 312 of 2017, but the return of an incumbent Government was something unprecedented in the recent UP politics and indicated strongly to pro-incumbency.

The BJP also increased its vote share to 42 per cent in 2022 as compared to 39 per cent in the 2017 Assembly elections. The electorate rejected narratives of unrest among farmers, resentment among the Jat community in Western UP and also the projected conflict.

With deft crisis management during the Covid pandemic and a rainbow of welfare programmes and much-improved law and order scenario, the BJP dislodged the caste-based identity politics of the SP and BSP and created a class-based vote bank that



BJP supporters celebrate after landslide victory in the UP Assembly elections, in Varanasi on Thursday

PTI

UTTAR PRADESH (403)	
PARTY	WON
BJP	255
SP	111
BSP	1
CONG	2

included beneficiaries irrespective of caste and religion.

The result also showed that the Akhilesh Yadav's plan to unite backward caste under the Yadava leadership had few takers.

The BJP dominance has been complete, from east to west and south to north. The outcome has shown that the party greatly benefited from the welfare schemes initiated both by the Centre and the Yogi Government.

The result has also established Yogi as a towering leader in the saffron outfit who could one day dream to lead the country.

The outcome is a big blow to BSP chief Mayawati, who has failed to protect her Dalit vote bank. Initial analysis shows that a large section of the BSP voters shifted to the BJP.

This will be the first time since 1985 that a ruling party will return to power in Uttar Pradesh. The UP polls are being seen as an indicator of the national mood ahead of the 2024 general elections.

The BJP won the crucial Ayodhya Assembly seat where its candidate Ved Prakash Gupta polled 1.12 lakh votes defeating the nearest Samajwadi Party rival Tej Naryan Pandey who polled 92,067 votes.

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Yogi breaks Noida jinx

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

After more than three decades, Yogi Adityanath will become the first Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh to break the Noida jinx. As per the established superstition, whichever Chief Minister visits the city during his/her tenure loses the next election or does not complete the term.

However, Yogi visited Noida several times.

Despite being an educated socialist who is expected to have a scientific temper, former Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav never visited Noida during his tenure from March, 2012 to March, 2017.

Jhadoo sweeps board in Punjab, wins 92 of 117

MONIKA MALIK ■ CHANDIGARH

The breeze that was blowing across Punjab in Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) favour before the February 20 Assembly elections turned into a gust as the party took the State by storm after winning 92 out of 117 seats. Its jhadoo not only swept aside the political stalwarts, including four former and sitting Chief Ministers, but also seasoned politicians in an election that would be remembered not just for the winners, but also the losers.

Its unprecedented victory with 42 per cent vote share to form a "Government of the people" also heralded a new era in the country's politics, where neither a national, nor a regional, but a party that believes in work over rhetoric, formed the Government. The comedian-turned-politician Bhagwant Mann, who has been a two-time MP from Sangrur, will be Punjab's 17th Chief Minister.

Virtually rising from the ashes of the 2017 election defeat, the AAP pulled off a historic victory with a record three-fourth majority in the State, without any alliance - for the first time in Punjab's electoral history. It was in 1997, when the SAD and the BJP combine had secured 93 seats together.

AAP pushed the ruling Congress to the distant second spot with just 18 seats while limiting the State's regional outfit Shiromani Akali Dal to just three seats. State's political heavyweights, including five-time Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal, two-time Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh, State's only woman Chief Minister Rajinder Kaur Bhattal, incumbent Charanjit Singh



Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) supporters celebrate their party's lead during counting day of Punjab Assembly elections, in Amritsar on Thursday

PTI

PUNJAB (117)	
PARTY	WON
AAP	92
CONG	18
SAD	3
BJP	2
BSP	1
IND	1

Channi, and several others bigwigs, who were virtually invincible for decades, were trampled under AAP's winning chariot. With the resounding victory, AAP has taken its first step towards expanding its political footprint beyond Delhi — despite being just an eight-year-old in Punjab. In 2014, AAP took everyone by surprise winning four seats in Punjab defying a massive "Modi wave" across the nation.

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New era in Punjab starts, says Kejriwal

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

After a landslide victory in Punjab elections, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) termed it as a new era in Indian politics and said that the people of the border State have opted for the vision of the party's national convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Sardar Bhagwant Mann's 'jodi'.

Following the victory, Kejriwal said that Delhi saw a revolution happen; now Punjab will see one and soon the whole country will cheer for 'Inquilab'.

"The public has proven that Kejriwal is not a terrorist, but all those who are looting the country are the actual ter-

rorists. We must all take a resolve to build a new-age India where there is love, peace and brotherhood among all. We will work towards such an India where there'll be no place for hate, no one will sleep hungry and everyone will be safe," said Kejriwal.

"The people of Punjab have given us a huge mandate and we must not let their trust in us falter. We must not get arrogant, must not indulge in slander and we have to change the politics of India and fill it with seva-bhav, love and harmony," said Kejriwal adding that no one can stop India from becoming a force to reckon with throughout the globe in the coming future. See P3

CAPSULE

NO BREAKTHROUGH IN UKRAINE-RUSSIA TALKS

Aantalay: Ukraine's foreign minister says talks between the top diplomats of Moscow and Kyiv produced no breakthrough on ending the war in Ukraine following Russia's invasion.

3 LET ULTRAS KILLED IN PULWAMA ENCOUNTERS

Jammu: Three Lashkar-e-Tayyeba terrorists, including one Pakistani commander, were gunned down by a joint team of security forces in two separate encounters in Hazratbal area of Srinagar and in the south Kashmir district of Pulwama on Thursday.

ORDER RESERVED ON MALLYA'S PUNISHMENT

New Delhi: Observing that proceedings against Vijay Mallya have hit a "dead wall", the Supreme Court on Thursday proceeded to reserve verdict on the quantum of sentence against the businessman, accused in bank loan default case of over ₹9,000 crore involving his defunct Kingfisher.

BJP bucks 'no second term' trend in U'Khand

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The Bharatiya Janata Party has scripted history in Uttarakhand by becoming the first party to be re-elected to form the Government for a consecutive second term since the creation of the State.

The BJP won 47 seats while the Congress could manage to win only 19. The Bahujan Samaj Party and independent candidates won two seats each.

The BJP got a 44.32 per cent vote share, the Congress got 37.91 per cent vote share.

The appeal of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the impact of his virtual and physical rallies are seen as major factors in the BJP win. The PM's appeal offset the perceived damage caused by changing Chief Ministers twice and infighting in the State

UTTARAKHAND (70)	
PARTY	WON
BJP	47
BSP	2
CONG	19
AAP	0
INDEPENDENTS	2

unit. A close fight between the BJP and the Congress was anticipated in Uttarakhand but the results left many surprised.

However, Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami, who is being credited by the party leaders for neutralising the anti-incumbency factor in his term of about six months, could not win from his constituency of Khatima and was defeated by Congress candidate Bhuwan Kapri. On the other

hand, former Chief Minister and head of the Congress election campaign committee in Uttarakhand, Harish Rawat lost to BJP candidate Mohan Singh Bisht in the Lalkuan constituency.

Experts feel that the works of the Modi Government during the Covid pandemic and infrastructural developments facilitated in Uttarakhand by the double-engine Government played a crucial role in influencing the voters in favour of the BJP.

The PM had addressed Vijay Sankalp Sabhas in Srinagar and Almora apart from holding virtual rallies in Haridwar and Nainital. Before the election schedule was announced, the PM had said that this decade would be that of Uttarakhand.

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BJP's MY-MY routs SP's MY

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In previous Uttar Pradesh State elections, the Muslim-Yadav (MY) combination used to be synonymous with the Samajwadi Party. But this time around, a unique M-Y factor seemed to have worked for the BJP with Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath romping home with a thumping majority.

In 2022 polls, for the BJP, MY-MY stands for Modi-Yogi and Mahila-Yuva (women-youth) - the two combinations that proved potent for the saffron outfit. "The results are a clear indicator that our MY prevailed over Samajwadi Party's MY in this election. Akhilesh Yadav worked with a myopic vision that revolved around caste while we had a holistic approach. Our Modi-Yogi combination is synonymous with the development

that was reflected in the welfare of Mahila and Yuva," State BJP vice-president Vijay Bahadur Pathak said on Thursday.

"On any given day, Modi-Yogi is a winning combination. They are two brands in Indian politics. The Modi brand is accepted across the globe and the evacuation of Indian students from war-torn Ukraine is an example. Yogi also has stamped himself as a brand showing how a Mahant can effectively rule the State and control lawlessness," he added.

The BJP leader went on to say people reposed faith in the double engine of Modi-Yogi by opting for development. Water, roads, electricity, and health are some of the issues which no government ever thought about and for both Modi and Yogi these are very close to their hearts, he said.

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BJP's victory stamp on Govt's pro-poor policies, says Modi

PNS ■ DEEPAK K UPRETI

Stating that the victories in four Assembly elections are proof of people's emphatic stamp of approval to his Government's 'pro-poor' policies, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said the voter's choice has also signaled that the days of "dynasty politics" are numbered.

Addressing party workers here at the BJP headquarters after BJP's win in UP, Uttarakhand, Goa and Manipur, Modi said, "In these times of international uncertainties, people have gone for stable Governments and shown that the democracy runs in their blood..."



Before Modi's speech, BJP president JP Nadra credited the party's "one-sided victory to the programme and policies of the Prime Minister".

Modi said it is the first time that after 37 years a Government returned to power in UP and Uttarakhand and the BJP voted to power in Goa for the third successive time.

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Divided Opp gifts Goa to BJP

PNS ■ PANAJI

A fractured Opposition literally gifted away Goa to the BJP, which is comfortably placed to retain power in the coastal State. The BJP emerged the single largest party winning 20 seats in the 40-member Assembly.

The BJP has said it has received letters of support from the Maharashtra Gomatant Party (2 seats) and three Independent MLAs, enabling the ruling party to cross the simple majority mark of 21.

The Congress won 12 seats, AAP 3 and TMC 2. Both AAP and TMC fielded one candidate who defected from mainstream parties. Trinamool Congress father-daughter duo Churchill

GOA (40)	
PARTY	WON
BJP	20
AAP	2
CONG	11
MGP	2
IND	3

Alemao and Valanka Alemao lost. Churchill lost to AAP's Venzy Viegas in Benaulim, and Valanka lost to the BJP's Ulhas Tuenkar Navelim.

In an important result, former Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar's son Utpal Parrikar lost from Panjim by a thin margin of 716 seats.

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BJP back in Manipur

PTI ■ IMPHAL

The BJP is heading for a victory in Manipur and retain power for the second successive term winning 28 seats and leading in four others so far in the election to the 60-member assembly.

The Janata Dal (United) and the National People's Party (NPP) won six seats each, the Naga People's Front and the Congress bagged five each till 8 pm, according to the Election Commission. The Kuki People's Alliance won two seats. Three seats were won by Independent candidates.

In the 2017 Assembly election, the BJP had won 21 seats and formed the government with some regional parties.

Thanking the people of the State for reposing their faith in the party, Chief Minister N

MANIPUR (60)	
PARTY	WON
BJP	32
CONG	5
JD(U)	6
NPF	6
NPP	7

Biren Singh said it is also the victory of the various steps taken under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Singh did not comment on who will be the next chief minister.

To celebrate the victory, Singh broke into a traditional dance Thabal Chongba with State party unit president A Sharda Devi and other workers.

Drubbing shatters Cong hope to lead Opp Set to increase demand for course correction within party

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■
NEW DELHI

It's yet another jolt for Congress leadership, even a spirited fight under Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi failed to save the party from a humiliating drubbing in the just-concluded Assembly elections in five States, including the Hindi heartland of Uttar Pradesh where it scored worst-ever tally bagging just two seats.

The Congress lost Punjab, yet another State it ruled. Now the party rules in just Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan. The Congress is only an alliance partner in Maharashtra and Jharkhand.

More importantly, the party's credential to lead an Opposition alliance against the

BJP has taken a further beating. Regional parties like the TMC have already questioned its capability while the TRS is already making moves to cobble together a non-BJP, non-Congress front.

The Congress Working Committee (CWC) under the chairmanship of party chief Sonia Gandhi is expected to meet soon to analyse the result, the party announced. But the Congress' dismal showing is set to lead to an increased demand for a course correction from within the party. The March 10, 2022 decimation would embolden the rebels within the party.

The dismal performance comes when the party is also set to "choose" a full-time party president this year in September. In October 2021,

the CWC had finalised the schedule for a membership drive and grassroots-to-top organisational election that will include choosing a new party chief to replace Sonia Gandhi who took over as an "interim" boss in August 2019 after Rahul gave up owning responsibility for the debacle in 2019 Lok Sabha elections.

The knives will soon be out in the party with a section of leaders already saying that the Gandhi siblings are fast-losing credibility even within the party. A member of the CWC, now in Rajya Sabha, said that the Gandhis messed up Punjab and Uttarakhand where they could have come to power. He also criticised the decision to entrust poll responsibility of Goa and Manipur to "drawing

Congress in UP Assembly since 1977

Year	Seats
1977	47
1980	309
1985	269
1991	46
1996	33
2002	25
2007	22
2012	28
2017	07
2022	02

room" politicians like P Chidambaram and Jairam Ramesh.

Continued on Page 2

FALL OF THE TITANS IN PUNJAB

AAP landslide ends political fortunes of many veterans

MONIKA MALIK ■ CHANDIGARH

The historic mandate Punjab gave to the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in the 2022 elections actually resulted in the fall of the titans. In fact, it witnessed the titans falling in their bastion—virtually marking the end of the political careers of many.

When the exit polls predicted AAP's wave in Punjab, its rivals rejected the same. And who would have thought that AAP would sweep Punjab's tallest leaders — five-time Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal, two-time Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh, state's only women Chief Minister Rajinder Kaur Bhattal, incumbent Charanjit Singh Channi, SAD president and former Deputy Chief Minister Sukhbir Singh Badal, Punjab Congress president Navjot Singh Sidhu, and many others — off their feet. The



state's 71.95 percent of the total 2.14 crore voters voted for change on February 20, by showing the door to no less than 40 sitting MLAs, including Chief Minister and his 10 Cabinet Ministers, apart from the who's who of the Punjab politics.

The list of "surprising" losers includes four former Chief Ministers — Badal from Lambi, Capt Amarinder from

Patiala, Bhattal from Lehra Gaga, and Channi who lost from both Chamkaur Sahib and Bhadaur. Thursday's verdict has even brought under uncertainty the career of Punjab's political families.

The five-time Chief Minister Badal, who was contesting his 13th election, lost to AAP's greenhorn Gurmeet Singh Khudian by 11,357 votes. Capt Amarinder lost to AAP

candidate and former Patiala Mayor Ajit Pal Singh Kohli by 19697 votes in Patiala urban. Bhattal, who lost in 2017, faced another defeat in her bastion Lehra Gaga by 39247 votes, finishing at the third spot.

Channi, who was the only candidate to contest from two seats, trounced from both by the hands of the first timers. In his bastion Chamkaur Sahib, Channi lost to AAP's Dr Charanjit Singh by 7942, while he lost from 37,558 votes against AAP's Labh Singh Ugoke in Bhadaur.

Apart from the senior Badal, his son Sukhbir Badal also lost from his bastion Jalalabad by 30930 votes against AAP's Jagdeep Kamboj, Finance Minister and Sukhbir's cousin Manpreet Singh Badal also lost from Bathinda urban by 63581 votes against AAP's Jagroop Singh Gill, and Badal's son-in-law and former Minister Adaisah Partap Singh

Kairon lost from Patti by 10999 votes against AAP's Laljit Singh Bhullar. Sukhbir's brother-in-law and former Minister Bikram Singh Majithia, who is currently lodged in Patiala central jail in a drugs matter, finished at third spot from Amritsar East.

In fact, his arch rival Navjot Singh Sidhu also failed to make it. A first-timer AAP's Jeevan Jyot Kaur defeated three-time MP and former Minister Sidhu by a margin of 6750 votes.

Majithia's wife Ganieve Kaur, a political greenhorn who entered the electoral ring after his husband decided to take on Sidhu in his citadel — Amritsar East, however, won from Majitha — a family bastion Majithia has represented thrice in 2002, 2012, and 2017.

Of the total 18 Ministers, 10 including the Chief Minister, who hogged the lime-light when they were in power,

are now in a bad light.

In fact, five Congress' former ministers, who were removed in the middle of the term after the change of guard in the state in September 2021 — Rana Gurmeet Singh Sodhi, Balbir Singh Sidhu, Sunder Sham Arora, Sadhu Singh Dharamsot, Gurpreet Singh Kangar — also faced resounding defeats.

Congress has fielded 17 of its Ministers, of which only seven — Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa, Rana Gurjeet Singh, Tript Rajinder Singh Bajwa, Sukhbinder Singh Sarkaria, Aruna Chaudhary, Pargat Singh, and Amarinder Singh Raja Warring — have won.

Senior most Cabinet minister Brahm Mohindra had this time passed on the baton to his son, Mohit Mohindra, who lost from the family bastion Patiala rural segment.

Apart from Channi,

Manpreet Singh Badal, Bharat Bhushan Ashu, Razia Sultana, Vijay Inder Singla, Om Parkash Soni, Raj Kumar Verka, Gurkirat Singh Kotli, Randeep Singh Nabha, and Sangat Singh Gilzian were voted out of power. Punjab Vudhan Sabha Speaker Rana Kanwar Pal Singh also lost from Sri Anandpur Sahib.

Among the sitting legislators and prominent leaders, Balbir Singh Sidhu, Parminder Singh Pinki, Kuljit Singh Nagra, Sushil Kumar Rinku, Sukhwinder Singh "Danny", Ramanjeet Singh Sahota Sikki, Parminder Singh Dhindsa, Sanjeev Talwar, Gurpartap Singh Wadala — have been defeated badly.

Other prominent losers tasting defeat in their own constituencies include BJP's Manoranjan Kalia and Congress' Rajinder Beri from Jalandhar Central, BJP's KD

Bhandari from Jalandhar North, SAD's Bibi Jagir Kaur from Bholath, BJP's Surjit Kumar Jyani from Fazilka, SAD's Virsa Singh Valtola from Khemkaran, Congress' Amit Vij from Pathankot, SAD's Harinder Pal Singh Chandumajra, BJP's Dinesh Singh (Babbu), SAD's Pawan Kumar Tinnu, SAD's Anil Joshi, among others.

Among the notable first timers, who failed to make it to the podium, are farmers leader Balbir Singh Rajewal, Punjabi rapper Shubdeep Singh Sidhu, Moose Wala, gangster-turned-politician Lakha Singh Sidhana, Bollywood actor Sonu Sood's wife Malvika Sood, Brahm Mohindra's son Mohit Mohindra, Congress MP Amar Singh's son Kamil Amar Singh, Punjab Youth Congress president Brinder Singh Dhillon, SAD (Amritsar) chief Simranjit Singh Mann, among others.

BJP's victory stamp on Govt's pro-poor policies, says Modi

From Page 1

He also mentioned BJP's win in the North-Eastern State of Manipur saying "people have blessed BJP from all four directions".

The Prime Minister said his Government has improved "governance and delivery system to reach out the last man. I will not sit idle until the poor gets his due and Government welfare schemes and services reach him."

"Election results are evidence that public has put its stamp on our pro-poor policies", he said. Modi greeted women voters "for blessing us... wherever they voted in numbers they ensured our victory".

He said people have given a new identity to UP by "continuously voting in 2014, 2017, 2019 and 2022 on policies of development and taught a lesson to other political parties who saw UP from the prism of caste". Modi said in Punjab too BJP will emerge as a strong force and asked

CM faces of BJP, Cong and AAP bite dust in U'khand battlefield

CM Dhami, head of Congress campaign committee Harish Rawat and CM face of AAP Col Kothiyal suffer defeats

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The voters of Uttarakhand kept their past record of defeating the chief ministers and the chief ministerial faces intact in the assembly elections of 2022 also.

In fact all the three most important leaders of the three political parties, the BJP, Congress and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) who were the faces of their respective parties in the state suffered defeats from the constituencies they were contesting in the elections.

Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami under whom the BJP entered in the elections on the young CM slogan was defeated by the officiating presidents of Uttarakhand Congress Bhuwan Kapri by a margin of 6,759 votes in Khatima assembly seat.

Similarly former chief minister Harish Rawat who was the head of the campaign committee of Uttarakhand Congress and the biggest face of the Congress here suffered a crushing defeat in Lalkuan

assembly constituency. He was defeated by Mohan Singh Bisht of BJP by a margin of 17,527 votes. Colonel (Rtd) Ajay Kothiyal who was the chief ministerial candidate of the AAP suffered the fate akin to all other candidates of the party in Uttarakhand.

In fact Kothiyal could not save his deposit from Gangotri assembly constituency as he secured only 5,998 votes to finish third behind Suresh Singh Chauhan of BJP who got 28,677 votes and Vijay Pal Sajwan of Congress who was second with 21,040 votes.

In the last assembly elections the then CM Harish Rawat lost from both the Kiccha and Haridwar (Rural) assembly seats.

Similarly in the year 2012, the BJP contested the elections under the 'Khanduri Hai Zaroori' slogan but the CM himself was defeated by Surendra Singh Negi of Congress by a margin of 4,623 votes in Kotdwara.

In the first assembly elections of the state which were held in the year 2002, Dinesh Agarwal a newcomer created one of the biggest political upset when he defeated first Chief Minister of Uttarakhand and senior BJP leader Nityananad Swami by a margin of more than 1500 votes from Lakshman Chowk assembly constituency.

Divided Opposition gifts Goa to BJP

From Page 1

In 2017, the Congress emerged as the single largest party with 17 seats but the BJP, which won 13 seats, managed to form the Government with the support of the Goa Forward Party and the MGP which had won three seats each, and two Independents.

The BJP is expected to take a decision on staking claim to form next Government in State after a meeting of its newly-elected MLAs on Friday... BJP's Goa election in-charge Devendra Fadnavis said a decision on staking claim to form Government will be taken on Friday after a meeting of party's legislature wing. He was talking to media persons at a Press conference in presence of Chief Minister Pramod Sawant, Goa BJP president Sadanand Tanavade, Union Minister Shripad Naik, and other party

leaders. Fadnavis said the MGP has formally given a letter to the BJP extending its support to the party in Government formation. "Both the winning candidates of the MGP will support the BJP along with the three Independent MLAs," he said.

He said the party's Central Parliamentary Board will meet in New Delhi late on Thursday to discuss the results of all the states, where polls were held in February-March. "The committee will designate an observer for Goa, who will arrive here tomorrow to participate in the legislature party wing meeting," Fadnavis said. After meeting, the party will decide the date to meet Governor and stake claim for Government formation, former Maharashtra CM said. Fadanavis said the BJP's Central leadership will be participating in swearing in ceremonies of all four States due to which dates would be decided accordingly.

BJP bucks 'no second term' trend in U'Khand

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Meanwhile, addressing the media after the party's victory, CM Dhami stressed that all the major promises made by the party, including its plan to work towards

Uniform Civil Code in the State, will be executed by the BJP Government. With Dhami losing the election from Khatima, the party has not yet finalised its choice for the next CM of Uttarakhand with this process expected to

Jhadoo sweeps board in Punjab, wins 92 of 117

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However, marred with defections and rebellion by its top leaders, AAP, over the period of time, lost what it achieved in 2014, failing to maintain the same momentum later on.

In 2017, AAP was seen as a possible alternative to the State's traditional parties but failed badly. It could win just 20 seats. Post-2017, it disintegrated with little patience with eight of its MLAs jumping from AAP's sinking ship over these five years. In 2019, only Mann could win a seat for AAP across India. But, all through, its State unit chief Mann continued to lead a fight for the party's political survival, giving a call for badlav.

And Punjab's electorate vote for change, shunning the politicians and going in for the common man. AAP's wave for "change" can be gauged from

the fact that the party - which mainly has its footprints in the politically-significant Malwa region of the State having 69 of the total 117 seats - has won seats in Punjab's all three regions - Malwa, Majha, and Doaba. This is for the first time that a third party has won the elections in Punjab.

So far, it was always between SAD and Congress since Punjab's reorganisation in 1966. It was in 1967 and 1977 when the others had won a significant number of seats in Punjab, but that was because the SAD decided against contesting the elections.

The extent of AAP's wave can also be gauged from the fact that in a multi-cornered contest, AAP has bagged 42 per cent vote share - 17 per cent higher than the 2017 election. Congress and Akali Dal could manage to get 22.98 per cent and 18.38 per cent vote share respectively.

Drubbing shatters Cong hope to lead Opposition

From Page 1

"The Gandhis messed up the affairs in Punjab. They don't listen to anyone like us who has given four decades to the party. We were e against giving prominence to turncoat like Navjot Singh Sindhu at the cost of our heavyweights and publicly accepted Captain Amarinder Singh. His humiliation came from the Gandhis. Then the full energy of another heavyweight Harish Singh Rawat was directed to Punjab when he should have spent time in his home State Uttarakhand. At the peak of elections Rawat had to publicly question the party's handling of his own State," the leader told The Pioneer.

The infamous G- 23 leaders which include Ghulam Nabi Azad, Kapil Sibal, Manish Tewari, Shashi Tharoor, Anand Sharma virtually rebelled against the party leadership last year demanding an immediate organizational overhaul, now the Congress workers too seem to lose confidence in the party's first family system.

Commenting on the results another senior party leader said the Gandhi family has to realise that politics is not an individual game but a collective game. He said the congress lost several senior leaders like Himanta Biswa Sarma, Jyotiraditya Scindia, Priyanka Chaturvedi because no one cared to talk to them.

Congress supporter and a one-time spokesman Sanjay Jha on Thursday called for bringing a mass leader and excellent orator like Sachin Pilot to take over the reins of the party.

Senior Congress leader Abhishek Manu Singhvi talked about a "revamp and rewiring" after the latest in a series of election debacles for the party since 2014 when it lost power at the Centre. "If we lose in all five States, then we have to think about a revamp and rewiring for the party," said Singhvi, a Rajya Sabha member.

One of the associates of G- 23, Lok Sabha MP Shashi Tharoor reiterated on Thursday it is time to reaffirm the idea of India that the Congress has stood for and reform the party's organizational leadership in a manner that will reignite those ideas and inspire the people. "One thing is clear -- Change is unavoidable if we need to succeed," Tharoor said. "These are transformative results. One thing is clear. The Gandhi leadership no longer delivers for the Congress. They are no longer a cementing force," said former Union Minister Ashwani Kumar, who quit Congress after 46 years.

said the Gandhi family has to realise that politics is not an individual game but a collective game. He said the congress lost several senior leaders like Himanta Biswa Sarma, Jyotiraditya Scindia, Priyanka Chaturvedi because no one cared to talk to them.

Congress supporter and a one-time spokesman Sanjay Jha on Thursday called for bringing a mass leader and excellent orator like Sachin Pilot to take over the reins of the party.

Senior Congress leader Abhishek Manu Singhvi talked about a "revamp and rewiring" after the latest in a series of election debacles for the party since 2014 when it lost power at the Centre. "If we lose in all five States, then we have to think about a revamp and rewiring for the party," said Singhvi, a Rajya Sabha member.

One of the associates of G- 23, Lok Sabha MP Shashi Tharoor reiterated on Thursday it is time to reaffirm the idea of India that the Congress has stood for and reform the party's organizational leadership in a manner that will reignite those ideas and inspire the people. "One thing is clear -- Change is unavoidable if we need to succeed," Tharoor said. "These are transformative results. One thing is clear. The Gandhi leadership no longer delivers for the Congress. They are no longer a cementing force," said former Union Minister Ashwani Kumar, who quit Congress after 46 years.

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Manshi Miglani, D/O Ashwani Kumar R/O 2435 Sector-66 Mohali W/O Adnaan Moseeb, R/O # C-6 GF Joga Bai Extension, Near Aam Admi Mohala Clinic, Jamia Nagar, Okhla, South Delhi-100025 Have Changed My Name To Manshi Adnaan After Marriage.

PD(9160)C

PUBLIC NOTICE

General public is hereby informed that Mrs. Pratibha Choudhary W/o Late Sh. Brij Lal Choudhary R/o Flat No. 113, Amar Jyoti Kunj, Mayur Vihar Phase-1, Delhi-110091 has applied for transfer of ownership of flat No. WF-145/EE & customer ID No. B000054/00010/13-14 Plot /Floor, Water Side Floors, Sonipat, Haryana in her/his name claiming her/him self the legal heir of deceased Late Sh. Brij Lal Choudhary S/o Late Sh. Sunder Dass Choudhary as per document, dated 22 April 2013 in records of company i.e. TDI INFRACORP (INDIA) LTD. Having its office Vandana Building, 11, Tolstoy Marg, New Delhi-110001. Any person having any objection for transfer of the said flat in favour of Mrs. Pratibha Choudhary W/o Late Sh. Brij Lal Choudhary may send at the above noted office of company with supporting documents or through email customer.care@tdiinfacorp.com within 15 days of the publication of this notice otherwise it shall be assumed that there are no objections to the proposed transfer of the said flat in his/her name. After that company shall not be liable for any claim whatsoever after 15 days. TDI Infacorp India Ltd. Having its office Vandana Building, 11, Tolstoy Marg, New Delhi-110001, Phone No. 011-43311111

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is Publicly notified that the RESIDENTIAL LIG H. NO. 85, BLOCK-W, SECTOR -12, NOIDA, DISTT. GAUTAM BUDDH NAGAR U.P., allottee of MR. BIR SINGH S/O SH. MEGH RAJ SINGH R/O 87A/L-1, DDA FLAT KALKAJI, NEW DELHI had sold on the basis of General Power of Attorney to the following persons. The General Power of Attorney was registered on dated 03.05.1983, in the name of MR. S.C. KAPOOR S/O SH. H.R. KAPOOR R/O S/O 10, BAN ROAD, SHIPRA SUN CITY, INDIRAPURAM, GHAZIABAD, U.P. and agreement to sell same date on 03.05.1983 in the name of MRS. KIRAN KAPOOR W/O MR. S.C. KAPOOR R/O 5/10, BAN ROAD, SHIPRA SUN CITY, INDIRAPURAM, GHAZIABAD, U.P. which is not registered. Because agreement to sell is not registered so it is Publicly notified that the transfer of the property bearing RESIDENTIAL LIG H. NO. 85, BLOCK-W, SECTOR -12, NOIDA, DISTT. GAUTAM BUDDH NAGAR U.P., is going to be transfer through G.P.A. in the name of SH. SUNIL KUMAR S/O LATE SH. RAJ PAL SINGH R/O V-22, SECTOR -12, NOIDA, DISTT. GAUTAM BUDDH NAGAR U.P., if some one has any objection he/she file his/her objection along with the sufficient proof in the Housing Department (H) of the Noida Authority with in 15 days from the date of publication of this notice.

MR. S.C. KAPOOR S/O SH. H.R. KAPOOR R/O 5/10, BAN ROAD, SHIPRA SUN CITY, INDIRAPURAM, GHAZIABAD (U.P.)

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform to all concern that Sh. Prem Singh S/o Shri Gujab Singh R/o H. No.-1, Water Compound, Sec-24, Noida who is the original allottee of Residential Vacant Plot No.- 227, Block-B, Sector-105, Noida, Distt. G. B. Nagar, U.P., Area measuring 112.5 sq.mtrs. had sold the said property of General Power of Attorney basis to the following person(s), General Power of Attorney was executed on in favour of Mr. Sunil Bagai S/o Sh. K.L. Bagai R/o 40/81, C.R. Park, New Delhi-110019, which is registered in Noida on dated 31.05.2011 and Agreement to Sell was not registered, so it is informed to all concern that the said Residential Vacant Plot No.- 227, Block-B, Sector-105, Noida Distt. G.B. Nagar, U.P., Area measuring 112.5 sq.mtrs. is going to be transferred in favour of Sh. Sachin Chauhan S/o Sh. Kharak Singh R/o H.No. 183, Gali No. 1, Village Chhalera, Sector-44, Noida, Distt. G.B. Nagar, U.P. If any one has/have any objection he/she may file his/her objection along with the sufficient proof in the Residential Department of the Noida Authority within 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice.

(Sachin Chauhan)



Delhi CM and AAP Convener Arvind Kejriwal, with party leaders Manish Sisodia and Gopal Rai, celebrates the party's win in Punjab Assembly polls, at the party headquarters, in New Delhi on Thursday,

RANJAN DIMRI/THE PIONEER



AAP supporters celebrate with flowers at the party office in New Delhi on Thursday

RANJAN DIMRI/THE PIONEER

AAP's landslide victory in Punjab elections

Kejriwal: Dawn of a new era in Indian politics



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

After a landslide victory in Punjab elections, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) termed it as a new era in Indian politics and said that the people of the State have opted for the vision of the party's National Convenor and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Sardar Bhagwant Mann's 'jodi'.

Following the victory, Kejriwal said that Delhi saw a revolution happen; now Punjab will see one and soon the whole country will cheer for 'Inquilab'. "The public has proven that Kejriwal is not a terrorist, but all those who are looting the country are the actual terrorists."

We must all take a resolve to build a new-age India where there is love, peace and brotherhood among all. We will work towards such an India where there'll be no place for hate, no one will sleep hungry and everyone will be safe," said Kejriwal. "The people of Punjab have given us a huge mandate and we must not let their trust in us falter."

We must not get arrogant, must not indulge in slander and we have to change the politics of India and fill it with seva-bhav, love and harmony," said Kejriwal adding that no one can stop India from becoming a force to reckon with throughout the globe in the coming future. The Delhi Chief Minister further said: "We have built schools for the poor,

given them excellent healthcare and ample opportunities to stand shoulder to shoulder with the elite class. There are people at work to derail our plans and hinder the growth of the country. We are very weak compared to them. Biggest of the conspiracies unfolded in Punjab, be it vote transfers or nefarious acts, they did all of they could, but they failed miserably."

"In the end they resorted to calling me a terrorist. Through the results we have gotten today, the people of this country have proven that I am not a terrorist but a 'sapoot' of this soil."

Today we must all take a pledge to build an India of the new-era as we stand in face of a new-dawn."

Kejriwal also said, "In our idea of India, no one shall sleep on an empty stomach, no woman would ever have to fear, and no child would have to worry for their education."

Why is it that our children are forced to go to smaller countries to seek medical education? In our India, we'd build so many colleges that no child would need to leave India to seek a good education but instead children from the world over would come here to study."

The senior AAP leader and Delhi's Deputy CM, Manish Sisodia said that the public has proven the mettle of Babasaheb and Bhagat Singh's ideals by supporting the work of Arvind Kejriwal.

It will be 'Uthta Punjab' not 'Udta Punjab' now: Raghav

Punjab Model, drawn from our model of governance in Delhi attracted voters: AAP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

After the AAP registered a massive victory in the border State, the party's Punjab co-in charge and senior leader Raghav Chadha said on Thursday, "Punjab will not be known as 'Udta Punjab' from now on, but 'Uthta Punjab'... all the credit goes to AAP workers."

AAP leaders hailed the party's performance in the State saying that the 10-point 'Punjab Model' unveiled by AAP National Convenor Arvind Kejriwal attracted people and they voted the party to power in anticipation of a new-age, prosperous, and forward-



looking Punjab.

The 'Punjab Model' drawn from the AAP's model of governance in Delhi, has turned out to be the biggest attraction for the voters. Riding high on the landslide victory, Delhi's Deputy Chief Minister and AAP senior leader, Manish Sisodia said the entire country was now looking up to Delhi's model of governance of Kejriwal.

A senior AAP leader said that the Kejriwal Government has ensured better public services, good quality schools and world-class hospitals in the national Capital and the same

model would be ensured in Punjab. "People have voted for us anticipating a good and corruption-free Government," he said. Taking its second State after Delhi, the AAP stacked up a spectacular victory in Punjab, wiping out the Congress.

AAP senior leader and Delhi's Environment Minister, Gopal Rai asserted that people have given their mandate to the AAP in Punjab looking at the work of the party's Government under Kejriwal in Delhi. "Our Delhi model of governance turned out to be the biggest attraction among the voters."

Whoever wants to change system must join AAP: CM

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Following the historic win in Punjab elections, the Delhi Chief Minister and National Convenor of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Thursday called upon every Indian to get behind their movement and stand up for what was right.

"I know you all get deeply hurt when you see politicians misuse their power. Now is the time for a revolution. Delhi has witnessed this revolution, soon Punjab will too and then it'll be the chance of the whole country to witness it. Whoever

wants to change the system must join AAP," said Kejriwal. "As common folk we all feel threatened to take on mighty. But the man who has beaten Charanjit Singh Channi is a great example of the power of a common man. His name is Labh Singh Ughoke, he fought against him from Bhadaur and workers as a staffer at a mobile-repair shop."

His mother is a Safai Karamchari, his father a farm-labourer. This man beat sitting Punjab CM today," said Kejriwal. "We talk of naari shakti (women empowerment), we talk of woman who

beat Navjot Singh Sidhu. Jeevanjyot Kaur is an ordinary volunteer. She worked for the party at a very small scale. Not only Sidhu, she beat a bigwig like Bikram Majithia too. This is why I say, aam aadmi is an inquilab in itself," said Kejriwal.

"When aam aadmi takes upon themselves to fulfil a cause, they shake up toughest and strongest. I call upon every single Indian to get behind our movement. This is time to realise your potential and stand up for right. Let us all get together and bring about revolution like no other."

Such a huge mandate brings a sense of fear too: Delhi CM

Celebrations galore at AAP headquarters

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Celebrations began at the Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP's) headquarters in Delhi soon after the news of its victory in Punjab came. The party's headquarters reverberated with slogans of "Babasaheb aur Bhagat Singh Ka Sapna Adhoora, Kejriwal Karega Poora" and "Inquilab Zindabad" as volunteers danced to the tune of "Ikk Mauka Kejriwal Nu — Ikk Mauka Bhagwant Mann Nu."

The AAP's National Convenor and Delhi's Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal along with senior party leaders including Deputy Chief Minister, Manish Sisodia, Gopal Rai and Gupta were at the headquarters flanked by thousands of party workers and supporters.

Kejriwal addressed the gathering among thunderous chants of "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" and "Vande Matram." He thanked every single volunteer for toiling hard to not just make the AAP cross the finish line, but break all records.

"What the people of Punjab have done is truly miraculous. We all love you. The whole country is in awe of you. This result is no ordinary feat, it is a living example of 'Inquilab'. The heaviest of the seats of Punjab have not only been rattled but left shaken and broken. Sukhbir Badal, Captain Amarinder, Charanjit Channi, Prakash Badal, Navjot Singh Sidhu, Bikram Majithia have all lost from their bastions

today," said Kejriwal.

"The list goes on and on and so does the 'inquilab' of the politics of Punjab. Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh had said that independence didn't merely mean getting freedom from oppressors but to change the system from within. These parties and their leaders riddled India within loot and corruption. Not one focused on changing the system for good," said Kejriwal.

"These parties continued the legacy left by the British and forced the downtrodden into poverty. The AAP decided to demolish this system and the result is here for you to see. For the last seven years, we've been changing the system, introducing honest politics, and ensuring a work-positive Government," said Kejriwal.

Taking the momentum of the crowd's enthusiasm a notch higher, Kejriwal said, "I want to congratulate my younger brother Sardar Bhagwant Mann for taking on a daunting challenge like becoming the CM of Punjab and living up to it today. I have full belief in him and the mandate he has been given only makes our confidence stronger. Such a huge mandate brings a sense of fear too."

"We will not let down the faith the people of Punjab

have put in us. I want to ask all our volunteers to keep their calm because they will now face the worst of the slander. The Opposition will not spare them peace but they must not lose their cool," said Kejriwal.

"These rival parties called me everything from a 'kaala angrez' to a 'terrorist' but I did not lose my cool. If someone abuses you, greet them with a smile and get back to work. We have to bring a mix of love and peace in politics."

We have to bring positivity to work in politics. I paid obeisance to Hanumanji today. I have full faith that he supports us with his blessings. The future belongs to India, and no one can stop India from becoming a world leader now," Kejriwal added.

Meanwhile, Sisodia said that Punjab hasn't given us just their votes, they have given us a chance towards change. "What has happened in Punjab and Goa today is a big sign of change. The Kejriwal Model of Governance is now ready for the national level. With our triumph in Punjab, the people have proven the mettle of the ideologies of Babasaheb and Bhagat Singh. The tremendous result we've received in Goa only shows that the public there too, is waiting for us," said Sisodia.



DSEC seeks legal advice on civic polls

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A day after deferring the dates of municipal elections, the Delhi State Election Commission (DSEC) on Thursday sought the advice of legal experts on if it can still hold elections following a communication from the Centre for unification of all three corporations.

The DSES was to announce poll dates for the South Delhi Municipal Corporation, the North Delhi Municipal Corporation and the East Delhi Municipal Corporation on Wednesday. But it deferred the announcement after receiving a communication from the Centre in this regard.

The Centre will have to make an amendment to the Delhi Municipal Corporation (DMC) Act to unify the three municipalities. The panel's role is to conduct civic elections in a fair manner before the term of the House of the local bodies ends. The new members have to be elected before May

18, officials in civic body said. "But due to emergence of some unprecedented circumstances commission now wants to understand how to go about it (the polls) and whether it should conduct civic polls or not at a time when the Centre will be unifying three municipalities. So we have approached top legal experts on such issues for advice and will act accordingly," a source told PTI.

Sources said that a detailed note has been prepared on Wednesday's development and it will be submitted to legal experts for their advice. "In order to unify the three local bodies in Delhi, the central government will have to pass a bill in Parliament to make the amendment to the DMC Act 1957," they said.

If the commission decides to go ahead with the polls without taking legal opinion on the issue then there are chances that the election exercise may be futile, they said. According to Article 490 of the DMC Act, if corporations are dissolved

then elections have to be conducted within a period of six months and for that period the Centre may appoint an authority for functioning of civic bodies during period of dissolution.

All three corporations in the city are currently ruled by the BJP, which has been controlling the civic bodies since the trifurcation of the erstwhile unified Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) in 2012.

The commission had on Wednesday said the Central plans to bring a bill in the Budget session of Parliament to unify the three municipal corporations of Delhi and since the poll panel is examining the communication from Lt Governor Anil Bajjal, it has decided to defer the announcement of election schedule.

The panel in its statement had also mentioned that it has sufficient time to conduct civic elections before the expiry of the term on May 18 as the election process normally takes only about 30 days.

Licence-related woes to be heard by Delhi Police

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police will hold two-hour public hearings every Friday to address licence-related issues in National Capital. The public hearing will start from March 11. According to police, the issues of a license holder or new applicant will be addressed during interaction. The Delhi Police issues licences for arms, swimming pools, auditoriums, hotels, guest houses among others. Police licensing department's Joint Commissioner of Police Licensing and Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) will hold public hearing. Special Commissioner of Police, Licensing and Legal Division, Sanjay Singh tweeted, "To increase police-public interface & establish a relationship of transparency & accessibility, every #Friday from 11am to 1pm Licensing Unit of @DelhiPolice will be holding #JanSunwai at its Defence Colony office to address any issue with regard to various licenses," Singh tweeted.

Man arrested on charges of raping 20-yr-old woman on pretext of marriage

STAFF REPORTER ■ GURUGRAM

The Gurugram police have arrested an accused on charges of raping a 20-year-old woman on the pretext of marriage and impregnating her, the police said.

The accused was identified as Yogesh, a resident of Uttarakhand, who was working at a hotel in the Bhondsi area of Gurugram. The victim was a resident of Uttar Pradesh. She had met the accused around nine months ago. She stated in her police complaint the duo became friends and he proposed to her for marriage.

"He took me to the room of the hotel where he works and developed relationships with me. When I conceived he abandoned me and refused to marry me," the victim told the police. "The accused has been booked under Section 376 (2) N (repeated rape on the same woman) of IPC. The accused has confessed to the crime."

HC tells SDMC not to break illegal ramps in Vasant Vihar

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) was directed by Delhi High Court to not take further steps in removing unauthorised ramps constructed outside houses in Vasant Vihar area for the time being.

A bench of Justices Suresh Kumar Kait and Anup Jairam Bhambhani was informed that the SDMC has started demolishing ramps since Wednesday in pursuance of a single judge's order which had recently pulled up the municipal corporation for its failure in removing the unauthorised ramps.

The division court was hearing an appeal by Vasant Vihar Residents Welfare Association challenging various orders passed by a single judge in a contempt petition in which it was ordered that concrete ramps built outside houses and guard cabins be demolished without any delay. The counsel for association submitted that he would take instructions

from association and habitants of properties concerned for voluntary removal of unauthorised ramps and will apprise single judge who is scheduled to hear contempt plea on March 23.

"In view of statement made, we dispose of the appeal by directing SDMC not to take further steps till the intervention application (filed by association) is taken up for hearing by single judge," the bench said. It observed, "these ramps are on road and no one has a right to construct ramps on road." SDMC officials told bench that notices were issued to houses, where ramps are constructed, in November 2021, but they did not remove them on their own.

Justice Bhambhani observed that it was a resolvable issue and added "I think brutal manner in which they are going around destroying the road and colonies is not desirable". "The problem is your (corporation) way of going for good deeds. You destroy whole colony," he said.

Make 'Kashmir Files' 100% entertainment tax free: BJP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) spokesperson, Praveen Shankar Kapoor has written a letter to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, urging him to give 100 per cent entertainment tax exemption to the film 'The Kashmir Files'. The film was all set to release worldwide on Republic Day but due to the third wave of Covid-19 pandemic, the movie's release was postponed. The new date of its release is scheduled on March 11. Kapoor in his letter stated that the film is based on lives of Kashmiri pandits who were tormented by terrorism, terrorists and forced to flee from their motherland. "It's a moral duty of government to promote this film as it is exposing the black face of terrorism. Therefore, the Delhi Government should come forward and give 100 per cent entertainment tax exemption to the film," said Kapoor.

Lesser seats in UP may hurt NDA

DEEPAK K UPRETI ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP-led-National Democratic Alliance (NDA) on Thursday winning some 50-odd seats less than what it collected in the 2017 assembly polls in Uttar Pradesh may have some negative impact on the ruling party's prospects in the presidential poll contest, just about four months away. Also, the opposition camp has since swelled.

Nineteen Rajya Sabha MPs will be elected from three of the five states where election results to the assembly polls were announced on Thursday - Uttar Pradesh 11, Punjab seven, and Uttarakhand one.

Though BJP, which like in UP scored a repeat win in Uttarakhand, it has bagged lesser assembly seats in the hill state than in 2017 when it had won 57 assembly seats.

Each UP assembly MLA seat has the highest value -208 of all the state assemblies as it has the largest population. An Uttarakhand MLA has value of 64 only.

A total of 73 out of 75 Rajya Sabha seats (including seven nominated seats which are not to vote) falling vacant this year will be filled up before the President's election mid-July, this year.

The presidential election is conducted by an electoral college constituting of elected MPs of both the Houses and all the MLAs of state assemblies.

As many as 66 elected Rajya Sabha members are retiring in April, June and early July after completing their respec-



tive tenures.

Assembly poll outcome in UP was crucial if there is to be a direct contest between the NDA and the Congress-led-opposition parties.

In 2017, the ruling BJP and its allies won 325 out of 403 assembly seats in UP and 57 out of 70 seats in Uttarakhand and gained an unassailable strength in the electoral college that led to an easy win for NDA candidates.

The incumbent president Ram Nath Kovind, who was elected as President of India, received 7,02,044 votes, while his opponent, the joint Opposition candidate, Meira Kumar, got 3,67,314 out of a total of 10,69,358 votes.

If Kovind, turning 76 this year and is not to be repeated as President, the NDA is look-

ing at the UP assembly election outcome as crucial for its nominee.

The value of each vote of Parliament MP is 708 but each state MLAs has different value depending on state population.

At present, the NDA's number in the Lok Sabha is 334 of the present house strength of 540. Its numbers have improved in both the Houses of Parliament ahead of the 2022 presidential election compared to 2017.

In the Rajya Sabha, out of the present 232 members, the NDA has 115 with the BJP constituting 97 members.

In 2017, the BJP-led NDA had more allies than today. Kovind's win was sweeping as the Akali Dal, Shiv Sena and the TDP were with the BJP.

Also, the BJP then ensured

the support of the YSRCP, the TRS, the BJD, and even the JD-U. In the last election, BJP also ruled in Rajasthan and Maharashtra, which is not the case now and also Tamil Nadu is in the opposition camp, even though it is now ruling in Karnataka.

In the overall scenario, the BJP retaining UP with good majority turns key to its smooth sailing in the presidential election.

The total UP assembly vote value is 83,824. (Incidentally, five of the 11 RS seats which are to go to polls before presidential elections in UP are currently held by the BJP).

In comparison to UP, the NDA-ruled four of the poll-bound Uttarakhand (70 MLAs), Goa (40 MLAs) and Manipur (60 MLAs) - have

nominal value of 64, 20 and 18 respectively.

Hence, an emphatic assembly victory in UP and the support of the regional parties BJD, YSRCP and JDU would be needed by the NDA to ensure a comfortable victory for its presidential nominee, given that TRS too is in the other camp now.

Besides UP (11), Punjab (7) and Uttarakhand (1), seven vacancies are to be filled in Punjab, six in Maharashtra, four each from Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and Bihar, three each from Kerala, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka, two each in Jharkhand, Assam, Telangana and Chhattisgarh among others before the presidential polls.

Many of these states are opposition-ruled. Eom

BJP performs better in Jat land



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP has not done too bad in Jat-dominated Western Uttar Pradesh, the epicenter of farmers' agitation against Central farm laws and where the party was supposed to be wiped out as per some analysts. It has thus also dashed the hopes of ousting the Yogi Adityanath-led BJP from power.

Though the final tally is yet to be announced, the BJP has had a favourable outing in the districts like Mathura, Meerut, Baghpat, Gautam Buddha Nagar and Hapur.

Meerut is home to BJP's firebrand leader Sangeet Som, who is trailing but it has won the other two seats in the district. Similarly, it has registered a win in Baghpat, the traditional bastion of Jat-centric Rashtriya Lok Dal party, and in Muzaffarnagar, the home turf of Tikait brothers who were key figures in the anti-farm laws agitation.

That the anti-farm law agitation did not have any significant impact on the BJP poll outcome in UP is also reflect-

ed in BJP's win in all seats in Lakhimpur district where the son of Minister of State for Home in the Modi-government, Ajay Mishra, allegedly ran over farmers in October 2021.

It has also won all five seats in Mathura district and has been successful in Bijnore, Aligarh, Bulandshahr and Saharanpur.

With issues of farmers agitation and sugarcane dues on the opposition's poll menu, the BJP was expected to fair poorly in the west UP.

Before polls, even the BJP top brass had sought to woo RLD's Jayant Chowdhury apprehending backlash from Jat farmers in alliance with Muslims.

The results, however, show that the BJP has more or less retained its sway among the Jat voters that it first gained in 2014 elections following the 2013 riots in the region that had created a divide between the Jats and Muslims.

It is likely that the SP-RLD alliance has not been successful in transferring the Jat votes to each other in the region.

As the SP is viewed being sympathetic towards the minority community, it could be difficult for Jats to vote for them in a highly polarized poll with '80:20' campaign theme of the Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

The BJP candidates have been winning from Jat dominated seats by forming a rainbow coalition of other castes billed as 'chattis biradari' since the 2014 Lok Sabha elections.

RLD leaders Ajit Singh and Jayant Chaudhary lost the so-called Jat bastions of Muzaffarnagar and Baghpat in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections with the BJP making deep inroads in the Jat vote bank as it gradually moved away from the RLD's first and second generation leadership of late Prime Minister Choudhary Charan Singh.

Accounting for 76 seats in the 403-member UP Assembly, the BJP had bagged 66 seats in the region, while the SP, Bahujan Samaj Party and Congress won four, three and two seats, respectively in the last assembly elections.

Shah thanks people of four States for showing faith in Modi's leadership

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As Union Minister Amit Shah on Thursday thanked the public of four states, including Uttar Pradesh, with showing continuous and unshakable faith on the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the entire party leadership also credited Modi for party's election victory.

"With the party's victory in four states. 2014, 2017, 2019

and today in 2022, showing continuous and unshakable faith @narendramodi's, I bow before people of Uttar Pradesh", tweeted Shah.

With the BJP set to return to power in four states, its leaders attributed the party's performance to Modi's popularity and governance model. "New history" is being created in Uttar Pradesh, they said.

Hours after the poll trends became clear, Modi tweeted

"Together we grow. Together we prosper. Together we will build a strong and inclusive India. India wins yet again! #VijayiBharat7".

Union minister Anurag Thakur, a BJP co-in-charge for the UP polls, said Modi's image and governance coupled with effective implementation of his welfare policies by the party-ruled states have delivered victory.

He also lauded UP Chief

Minister Yogi Adityanath for providing people "suraksha" (security) by ridding the state of criminals and also for effectively delivering on welfare measures like building houses for the poor and boosting power supply.

Another Union minister Giriraj Singh said the BJP victory is a win of 'rashtrawaad, vikaswaad and kaamwaad' (nationalism, development and work). Slamming the opposition, he said it tried to vitiate the atmosphere over the issues like farmers' protest but people have expressed their faith in Modi.

Senior BJP leader and Union Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi said here that despite of "so-called alternative", the landslide victory of the BJP in Assembly polls in Uttar Pradesh and other states proves that the people have accepted the Modi Model of Good Governance.



Naqvi said that the thumping victory of the BJP in Uttar Pradesh and other states is the people's stamp on Prime Minister Modi's commitment to inclusive empowerment of all.

Tweeting about BJP's poll performance, party general secretary BL Santhosh said, "If there is one factor that defines the convincing victory of BJP in four state assembly elections, then it's the way with which PM Narendra Modi has deliv-

ered schemes and implemented policies ably assisted the respective CMs."

Party general secretary Kailash Vijayvargiya and spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi asserted that people have expressed their faith in the

policies ushered in by Modi. Trivedi asserted that "what is clear is that a new history is being created in Uttar Pradesh".

It has never happened in India's largest and politically most important state that a chief minister is set to come back to power with a majority after serving a full term as the head of a government with a full majority, he added.

Several BJP leaders also lauded the UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath for effectively implementing welfare policies and providing efficient and clean governance.

Many party leaders simply tweeted "Jai Shri Ram" to hail the trends projecting a big win for the party which is also ahead in Goa and Manipur. "The silent BJP voter gives the loudest message on poll day," BJP youth wing president Tejasvi Surya tweeted.



Union Minister for Youth Affairs & Sports Anurag Thakur addressed the inaugural session of the National Round of the 3rd edition of the National Youth Parliament Festival (NYPF) 2022 on Thursday in the central hall of Parliament, New Delhi. Minister of State of Youth Affairs and Sports Nisith Pramanik also graced the event

Results contrary to our expectations: Cong

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Following its dismal performance, the Congress said the election results are contrary to its expectations, but it accepts the people's mandate.

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi who led the show said the party humbly accepts the people's verdict in the assembly polls and will learn from it.

Rahul and Priyanka led the party's campaign but failed to reflect electorally. Congress general secretary in-charge Uttar Pradesh Priyanka Gandhi addressed 209 rallies and roadshows, the maximum by any top leader during the UP election campaign, followed closely by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath who spoke at 203 poll events.

Though Priyanka Gandhi was focussed on Uttar Pradesh, she also campaigned for the polls in Uttarakhand, Goa, Manipur and Punjab. Rahul Gandhi also held several rallies in Punjab, Goa, Manipur, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh.

While acknowledging that Priyanka Gandhi did hard work in UP and raised important issues of women, political analysts said it failed to click with the electorate. Her campaign events drew large crowds, but she failed to win their votes.

"Humbly accept the peo-

ple's verdict. Best wishes to those who have won the mandate. My gratitude to all Congress workers and volunteers for their hard work and dedication. We will learn from this and keep working for the interests of the people of India," Rahul Gandhi said on Twitter.

Addressing a Press conference at the party's headquarters, Congress general secretary and chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said the party may have lost elections but not its courage and will continue to fight till it emerges victorious. He also said that the Congress will reinvent and return with a new strategy and will always stand with the people, raising their issues, including inflation, unemployment and the "sinking" economy, with the same responsibility.

"We will introspect on the causes of defeat, work on the organisation and will try to do better in future. We are definitely disappointed but not demoralised. We have only lost the election, not courage. We are not going anywhere - we will keep fighting until we win. We will reinvent and return and will come back with a new strategy," Surjewala told reporters.

Incumbency of 4.5 yrs of Amarinder Singh government and people voted for change.

"The election results of five states have come against the party's expectations. We were expecting good results in Uttarakhand, Goa and Punjab, but we accept that we failed to get the people's blessings," he said. "We accept the verdict of the people and congratulate the Aam Aadmi Party Bhagwant Mann and Arvind Kejriwal for their victory in Punjab," he said.

In Uttar Pradesh, Surjewala said even though the Congress was successful in reviving the party, "we could not convert public opinion into seats". Congress has been successful in reaching every street and locality of Uttar Pradesh, he said, adding that "we fought better elections in Uttarakhand and Goa, but could not emerge victorious". "This is a lesson that we need to work harder on the ground," he said.

"We made every effort to keep this election away from the issues of casteism and religious polarisation. But with the help of BJP's massive campaign, emotional issues dominated the issues of education, health, inflation, unemployment," he said. In a democracy, the decision of the people is paramount and this is also the strength of our democracy, he said.

Ex-Deputy GM of FCI, wife convicted in money laundering case by Chennai court: ED

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Thursday said a former deputy general manager of the Food Corporation of India (FCI) and his wife have been convicted for money laundering and sentenced to three years rigorous imprisonment by a Chennai court.

The Additional Sessions Court, Chennai also slapped a fine of Rs 25,000 each on them, it said. The court convicted Dorai Raj, a former DGM of the FCI, Chennai, and his wife,

Sarumathi, the agency said in a statement.

The court also ordered for "immediate confiscation" of attached property (land and building) worth Rs 81 lakh of Sarumathi, it said.

The husband-wife duo has been convicted under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The ED case was filed on the basis of a CBI charge sheet that alleged Dorai Raj and other FCI officers received "huge amounts of illegal gratification".

SC reserves verdict on fugitive Vijay Mallya

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday reserved verdict on quantum of sentence against fugitive businessman Vijay Mallya, accused in bank loan default case of over Rs 9,000 crore involving his defunct Kingfisher Airlines, in a contempt case where he has been found guilty. The bench comprising Justices UU Lalit, S Ravindra Bhat and PS

Narasimha reserved the judgement after hearing senior advocate and amicus curiae Jaideep Gupta on various aspects related to the contempt law.

The apex court permitted the counsel, who was earlier representing Mallya, to file

written submissions, if any, in the case by Tuesday. Observing that it had waited "sufficiently long", the bench, on February 10, had fixed the contempt case against Mallya for hearing and had given him the last opportunity to appear before it either personally or through his lawyer.

Mallya was held guilty of contempt in 2017, and the matter was thereafter to be listed to hear him on the proposed punishment to be awarded to him. The top court had in 2020 dismissed Mallya's plea seeking a review of its 2017 verdict which held him guilty of contempt for transferring USD 40 million to his children in violation of court orders.

Revised results of pay levels could be out in April: Railways

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Committee formed by the Railway Ministry a month ago to address the massive protest by job aspirants and candidates over the discrepancy in controversial railway board recruitment examinations on Thursday submitted that a revised results of all pay levels could be declared by the first week of April.

The committee was formed to address the concerns of candidates for Non-Technical Popular Categories (NTPC). According to the ministry, "20 times unique candidates will be shortlisted for NTPC and the revised results of all Pay Levels will be declared by the first week of April 2022."

For one category, 20 times unique candidates will be shortlisted by Indian Railways

with Pay Level wise for second stage Computer Based Test and the ones who have been already declared qualified will continue to remain qualified.

The list of additional candidates getting shortlisted will be notified at each Pay Level while RRB wise second stage CBT for each Pay Level with all candidates of RRB accommodated in a single shift which should eliminate normalization. Percentile-based normalization will be done wherever single shift is not possible because of capacity constraints or otherwise, recommended the committee.

The second stage Computer Based Test for Pay Level 6 will be held in May 2022 and the second stage CBT for other Pay Levels will be conducted after giving a reasonable gap. The revised

Railways to start providing linen, bedding again

In a major relief to passengers, the railways on Thursday issued orders to resume providing linen, blankets and curtains inside trains, a provision that was suspended amid the coronavirus pandemic outbreak.

In an order issued to general managers of all railway zones, the Railway Board said the supply of these items would resume with immediate effect. The national transporter, which had suspended the service of providing meals, linen and most of its concessions, has reintroduced most of the facilities.

While the meals and linen service have been restored, concessions for passengers still remain suspended.

PNS



methodology with special conditions will be followed for CBT for level 1 due to the elimination of second stage CBT and this will involve mobilizing of additional infra and logistics to conduct CBT for Level-1 with a significant increase in per shift requirement, the committee reported.

Efforts will be made to have the exam conducting agency on board to conduct the Computer Based Test for Level 1 as early as possible, hence, CBT for level-1 is to be held tentatively from July 2022 onwards, it further mentioned.

BJP’S UP WIN

People buried politics of caste, religion: Yogi



PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Congratulating people for creating history, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that the people of Uttar Pradesh have reposed faith in the welfare policies of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, discarding politics of casteism, religion and dynasty. “This victory with a thumping majority is the blessing of 25 crore people of Uttar Pradesh. We accept this blessing, and we will take forward our principle of ‘sabka saath, sabka vikas, sabka vishwas and sabka prayas’ as per the aspirations of the people,” Yogi said during his address at state BJP headquarters in Lucknow on Thursday. Congratulating the office bearers and workers, Yogi expressed happiness over the historic victory of the BJP in

other States of Goa, Manipur and Uttarakhand. He also congratulated Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Defense Minister Rajnath Singh and BJP president JP Nadda for the massive victory. Yogi stressed that under

Early Holi for BJP, gloom for SP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Holi arrived early at the BJP headquarters while a sense of despondency enveloped the state office of Samajwadi Party in Lucknow. The mood at the SP office on Vikramaditya Marg changed from one of jubilation to despondency in a matter of three-hours on Thursday. As initial trends started flashing on the giant television screens stationed outside the Lucknow party office, SP cadres were elated as the party was seen having a close fight with the BJP. The SP cadres were hopeful of an impending victory and raised slogans. But as the counting progressed, frustration and disbelief crept in rendering the cadres restive.

BSP relegated to margins after 3 decades of influencing UP



Aligning with SP, praising BJP led to erosion of BSP vote bank

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Aligning with the Samajwadi Party (SP) in the last Parliament election, praising the Bharatiya Janta (BJP) from time to time and even forming a Government with the help from the saffron party by Mayawati led to massive erosion of the Bahujan Samaj Party’s vote bank this election. Even traditional hard core Jatav votes slipped away from the party’s palm. As a result, the party came up with its worst ever electoral performance which now faces an existential crisis in the most populous state having maximum seats in both the Assembly and Parliament. With Mayawati making restricted appearance during the entire election campaign, it

was left to party MP Satish Chandra Mishra, a Brahmin, to carry the yoke of campaigning on his shoulders despite BSP being known as a Dalit-centric party. Hoping for a 2007 repeat, Mishra aided by his family members organised ‘Brahmin sammelan’ to wean away community members supposedly irked with the Yogi-led BJP regime. BSP workers felt that when all veteran leaders exited the party joining either the BJP or SP, the handling of the poll campaign by Mishra sent a message amongst the Dalits that the BSP chief was shifting power to Brahmins instead of the core supporters. Earlier in 1984, Kanshi Ram had founded the BSP to represent Bahujan referring to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes (OBC), along with religious minorities. After 2012, Mayawati gradually promoted Mishra as the new party face and expelled or marginalized most Dalit leaders from the outfit.

0.43% votes for Owaisi’s AIMIM in UP elections

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

Most of the candidates of the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen have not been able to cross the 5,000-mark in the Uttar Pradesh assembly elections, according to poll trends on Thursday. The vote share of the Asaddudin Owaisi-led party was just around 0.43 per cent of the total votes polled across the 403 Assembly seats in the State, the Election Commission website showed. AIMIM candidates Qamar Kamal in Azamgarh got 1,368 votes, Umair Madni in Deoband 3,145 votes, Abhayraj in Jaunpur 1,340 votes, Moinuddin in Kanpur Cantt 754 votes, Salman in Lucknow Central 463 votes, Rashid in Moradabad 1,266 votes, Mohid Fargani 1,771 votes from Moradabad Rural, and Imran Ahmed in Meerut got 2,405 votes, the website showed at 4 pm. Among other party candidates, Abdur Rahman Ansari got 2,116 votes in Nazimabad, Mohd Intezar 2,642 votes in Muzaffarnagar, Mohd Rafique 1,363 votes in Sandila, Irfan 4,886 votes in Tanda, Yor Mohammed 571 votes in Sirathu, while Rashid Jameel got 1,747 votes from Bahraich, it showed. The All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) had claimed to have fielded candidates in 100 seats for the UP Assembly elections, with a focus on the constituencies where the Muslim community is in majority.

BJP should learn to digest success: Shiv Sena on result

PTI ■ MUMBAI

With the BJP on course to win big in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand and attain pole position in Manipur and Goa, the Shiv Sena on Thursday said the BJP should learn to digest success and attributed its performance in recent Assembly polls to good election management. On its dismal performance in Goa, Uttar Pradesh and Manipur, Shiv Sena chief spokesperson Sanjay Raut said his party received less votes than NOTA (none of the above) because it fell ‘short of the notes’ the BJP used. The Uddhav Thackeray-led party failed to open its account in states where it fielded its candidates. Raut also took a dig at the BJP, a former ally of the Shiv Sena, over its poor performance in Punjab, where the national party failed to make a mark in the Assembly polls. “What success did the BJP, a national party with Modi-Shah at its face, achieve in Punjab?” the Rajya Sabha MP asked. “It is easy to digest failure, but the BJP should learn to digest success. (Only) some people can digest success,” Raut said, reacting to the BJP’s performance in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Goa and Manipur Assembly polls. The BJP is set to retain power in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand and the party has attained pole position in Goa and Manipur, where it is on course to form the next



government. In Punjab, the AAP secured an impressive win, decimating the ruling Congress. Raut said the Congress party’s election management in Punjab was not right. On the other hand, the Sena MP said, “The BJP’s win is victory of its good election management.” The Shiv Sena contested Assembly polls in Goa, Uttar Pradesh and Manipur and suffered drubbing in all three states. It had deployed a battery of leaders, including Maharashtra Tourism Minister Aaditya Thackeray, for canvassing votes for party candidates. “It is right that the Sena received less votes than NOTA because we could not manage the notes used by the BJP. Still we contested in Goa and Uttar Pradesh. Our fight will continue. Victory or defeat is not the end, it is the start. In the future, we will continue to work,” the Sena leader said. Raut said the Congress and the Samajwadi Party headed by Akhilesh Yadav also did not get desired poll results in Uttar Pradesh.

Punjab results shock for Cong, AAP’s record in Delhi helped it: Pawar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The results of Assembly elections in Punjab are a “shock” for Congress, while the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) benefited because of the performance of its Government in Delhi, NCP chief Sharad Pawar said here on Thursday. He also made a pitch for initiating a “process” to give an alternative to the BJP at the national level by bringing opposition parties together. Talking to reporters here, he said the parties opposed to the BJP need not feel discouraged with the Assembly poll results, but should assess where they lacked and take corrective steps accordingly. Pawar also said that “some people” have complaints about EVMs, but he himself does not see the machines as being the reason behind the defeat of the non-BJP parties (in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Goa and Manipur). “Punjab is a state where the Congress was in power the change in Punjab is not favourable to the BJP (either). The result gives a shock to the

Congress,” Pawar told reporters here. AAP’s governance in Delhi helped it in Punjab as common people living in the national capital have accepted the Kejriwal-led party, the NCP chief noted. “I think the people of Punjab have not accepted the Congress’s internal (party) decision taken in the past six-eight months. There was a government under Amarinder Singh’s leadership. He was removed. New leadership was brought in there. It seems people did not like that decision,” Pawar said. Amarinder Singh had formed his own party after the Congress removed him from the post of Punjab chief minister. The NCP president said that there was an impression in Punjab that Singh tried to establish a rapport with the BJP after his removal from the chief minister’s post. “The people of Punjab did not like that,” Pawar said, contending the farmers of Punjab were already angry with the



BJP over the issue of three agrarian laws. Replying to a query, Pawar said the parties opposing the BJP need not feel discouraged with the outcome of the polls in the five states. He recalled the Congress faced defeat in the 1977 general polls, but bounced back in the 1980 Parliamentary elections. “Hence, there is no need to feel discouraged. But there is a need to think seriously about where we are lacking, whether there is a possibility and need for us to come together,” he added. To a question whether the Congress needs leadership change in view of the results,

Pawar said it was not right for him to speak about it. “It is their own responsibility. I am sure the Congress will think about what needs to be done to strengthen the party,” he added. He also spoke about the need to initiate a process to give an “effective alternative” to the BJP by opposition parties on the basis of a common minimum programme. “I am not saying this will happen tomorrow itself (immediately). Parliament’s session will resume on March 14. We will all be there for a month (for the session). So, we will sit together, discuss and decide the future course of action,” Pawar said. “It will be our duty to help people strengthen democracy by taking steps together,” he added. Pawar further said he does not see EVMs being the reason behind the defeat of the non-BJP parties. The NCP president said parties don’t blame EVMs when they win elections, but raise doubts when they don’t get favourable results. “Some

people have issues (with EVMs), they cited reasons for it, they had also given us presentations on the same. But I don’t accept that is the reason today (behind the defeat),” Pawar said. Pawar praised Samajwadi Party leader Akhilesh Yadav for putting up a fight single-handedly in Uttar Pradesh, where the BJP looks all set to form a majority government again. The former Union minister dismissed the possibility of the poll outcome in five states having a bearing on the future of the Shiv Sena-NCP-Congress government in Maharashtra. To another question about the BJP talking about change of guard in Maharashtra, Pawar said, the J P Nadda-led party will have to wait for another two-and-a-half years (after which the Assembly polls will be held in the state). “But I am certain that after considering today’s results, all the people in the Maha Vikas Aghadi will work hard with more responsibility and improve the condition of the state,” he said.

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

With the worst-ever Congress performance in the UP Assembly elections, and managing a single seat and vote share of just 2 per cent, general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra had to face open intra-party dissent for her experiment to run the organisation with a non-political set-up at Uttar Pradesh party headquarters. Congress veterans took no time to raise their voices directly blaming Priyanka’s personal paid staff working at UPCC, Lucknow for being responsible for the near-annihilation of the grand old party. The vote share of the Congress was 6.25 per cent in the 2017 UP Assembly polls which further slipped to 2.4 per cent in the 2022 polls. The state of affairs in the party can be assessed for the fact that UP Congress chief Ajay Kumar Lallu faced a humiliating defeat from Tamkhuhi Raj seat of Kushinagar where he trailed behind the BJP and SP candidates. “A ‘servant’ of Priyanka Gandhi who distributed tickets and had either forced or got

the party veteran removed, should be taught a lesson”, posted Zeeshan Haider reacting to worst-ever performance. Sources said that Haider was mentioning Priyanka’s personal secretary Sandeep Singh in his tweet. Haider resigned from the UPCC Media Cell on Wednesday and posted another tweet mentioning party veterans, including former minister, MPs, MLAs were removed or were forced to quit due to the personal staff of Priyanka. The list included Late Ram Krishna Dwivedi, Satyadeo Tripathi, Sanjay Singh, RPN Singh, Jitin Prasada, Annu Tandon, Santosh Singh, Praveen Singh Aron, Indo Aron, Vinod Chowdhary, Laliteshpatri Tripathi, Jasmeen Ansari, Rajesh Sachan, Amita Singh, Dinesh Singh, Aditi Singh, Imran Masood, Rajarampal, Masood Akhtar, Nareesh Saini, Pankaj Malik, Harendra Malik, Gajraj Singh, Ammar Rizvi etc. Like Haider, a former UPCC chief too questioned Priyanka’s choice of her core team that left senior UP leaders feeling insulted and uncomfortable. He too held

Vadra’s personal staff responsible for the poor show claiming that not only senior leaders, thousands of Congress loyalists were shunted out or set aside by this ‘paid’ team of Priyanka. The leader said that this paid staff had no political experience and as Priyanka blindly functioned on their ‘advice’ in the name of revamping the state unit with youngsters, the party had to pay heavy price not only in terms of seats but also in vote share. “She needs to get a good team with basic knowledge about UP and its understanding. It is a tough task to revive Congress as the party base has completely eroded and election trends show that our loyal voters have also shifted this time,” the leader added. Many leaders, however, still feel that Priyanka’s high voltage campaign and decision to give 40 per cent tickets to women candidates, failed to make a mark but if she continued focusing on the state and stayed put in order to revive the party, the party’s fortune in Parliaments elections could be changed.

AAP gets fewer votes than NOTA in UP polls

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

The Aam Aadmi Party appeared uncertain to win a single seat in the Uttar Pradesh polls as its vote share was less than NOTA on Thursday evening, with a senior party leader saying the 2022 elections were about taking the party’s idea to the people of the State. Till 5.45 pm, the AAP was leading on none of the 403 seats of the State, according to the Election Commission website. The party had a vote share of 0.34 per cent, even less than NOTA (none of the above) option, which polled 0.69 per cent of the total votes counted till 5.45 pm, the EC data showed. AAP’s Uttar Pradesh in-charge Sanjay Singh said, “The election of UP was about the presence of AAP, taking the idea of AAP to the people, taking the policies of Arvind Kejriwal ji to every village.”

BJP TAKES OUT PROCESSIONS IN BENGAL TO CELEBRATE WIN

Merge with TMC, WB Min suggests Cong

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The Assembly election results in four States indicate that only Trinamool Congress and not the Congress can take on the ‘might and manipulations’ of the BJP, the Bengal ruling outfit on Thursday said advising the grand old party to seek a merger with the TMC to save its existence. Contrasting the last year’s Bengal polls and the Thursday’s election results in four States of Uttar Pradesh, Goa, Punjab and Manipur senior TMC leader and Bengal Minister Firhad Hakim said, “The message is clear that the Congress has lost its relevance it is on the path of extinction ... there is no way you can save the Congress they should seek a merger with the Trinamool Congress because only Mamata Banerjee can lead a credible anti-BJP Opposition in the coming days as she did last year by demolishing the BJP in Bengal.” The TMC’s takeaway from

Thursday’s electoral fallout was more vividly explained by party spokesperson Kunal Ghosh even as he said “if we compare the election results in UP, Punjab, Goa, Manipur with Bengal it becomes clear that only the Trinamool Congress can withstand the might and manipulations of the BJP.” Hailing Samajwadi Party chief and former UP Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav for giving a “tough fight against the combined strength of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Amit Shah, JP Nadda, Yogi Adityanath still he could not read the electoral tricks played by them though they raised voices against EVM tampering and other malpractices the BJP managed to win the elections but the same tricks they tried to play in Bengal last year but Mamata Banerjee singlehandedly repulsed their attack remember how all the national leaders including the Prime Minister poured in their full strength, money and everything but Didi defended all that she created an example.”

Questioning the Congress’ credentials in fighting the BJP at the pan-Indian level Ghosh said “the Congress claims that it is the principal opposition party against the BJP but whenever time comes it fails to prove that otherwise how can it explain the humiliating defeat in Punjab which was a Congress-ruled State and Goa where the Congress had won the highest number of seats last elections.” When the TMC won all the elections including the civic polls, by-elections the Congress failed to retain even its old seats, he said. Advising the Janpath to “look in mirror and introspect,” he said “if the Congress cannot lead the fight then it should join it with others because Mamata Banerjee has proved that she can take on the BJP and in days to come Bengal will show the way to the country.” Meanwhile, in a bid to give a psychological boost to its organization afflicted by repeated losses and desertions, a moribund BJP on Thursday



took out long processions in Kolkata and districts celebrating the party’s victories in UP, Goa and Manipur. Bengal Opposition Leader Suvedu Adhikari on Thursday distributed sweets in the State Assembly saying “in anticipation of grand victories in Bengal we are greeting everyone with vermillion and sweets.” He said “the Baba (Yogi) of UP has shown that only development matters ... in Bengal the BJP will take a lesson from that and go ahead in the path of victory.” Processions were taken out on Thursday evening in various parts of Kolkata in hailing Prime Minister Narendra Modi and UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

3 terrorists gunned down in separate encounters in Kashmir

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Three Lashkar-e- Tayyeba (LeT) terrorists including one Pakistani commander were gunned down by the joint team of security forces in two separate encounters in Hazratbal area of Srinagar and in the South Kashmir district of Pulwama on Thursday. According to police, a group of three LeT terrorists had planned a weapon snatching from near a security post outside famous Hazratbal shrine. On noticing the suspicious movement of the trio near the shrine a local police team neutralised a foreign terrorist identified as Manzoor alias Haider. The Pakistani terrorist had taken out a pistol to target the security guard at the post but swift response of the police led to his killing on the spot. However, two other terrorists, believed to be local recruits, accompanying him managed to gave a slip to the security forces.

Akhilesh’s experiment with pre-election alliance fails again

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav’s experiment of forging an alliance ahead of elections has failed to deliver again. This is the third time in a row when the SP’s strategy to contest elections in alliance has boomeranged. Ahead of 2017 UP Assembly elections when Samajwadi Party was in power entered into an alliance with Congress and shared 100 seats with the grand old party and contested on rest of the seats. But the truck failed to get the electorate’s favour and failed to benefit both partners. While the SP won 224 seats in 2012 polls, its tally nosedived to 47 and Congress managed to win only 7 seats in 2017. In the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, the SP forged a ‘mahagathbandhan’ (grand alliance) with arch rival Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) hoping to counter the BJP, which had won 73 seats with its

allies in 2014. The move did not have the approval of his father and SP patron Mulayam Singh Yadav, who publicly criticised and said that the SP should have gone in the poll arena on its own. Akhilesh was expecting that BSP core voters would get transferred to the SP, which never happened. While the SP managed to win only 5 seats, BSP which did not win even a single seat in 2014 Lok Sabha elections, gained 10 seats. In the 2022 state polls, Akhilesh along with RLD forged an alliance with a number of small caste-based parties, including Om Prakash Rajbhar led Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party (SBSP) and Mahan Dal, with an objective of consolidating the OBCs vote bank. Except RLD and SBSP all other alliance partners failed to perform as expected. In fact, the performance of some partners could not even compete with the Independents at some places.

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PAPER WITH PASSION

The big picture

The Assembly poll results point to the imperatives of new-age politics

The results of the five Assembly elections disappoint those whose politics is no longer in play. It is not about BJP winning or the Opposition trying to defeat it. It is about politicians and the intelligentsia re-tuning themselves to a new-age politics that bears little resemblance to the past. If in four of the five States — BJP is not a serious player in Punjab — BJP rode the wave of anti-incumbency, it can only mean two things. The people overlooked it altogether or they were disappointed with the alternative(s). There could be a third reason: The gradual acclimatisation of the BJP brand of right-wing politics. It is seven years since the party swept to power in Delhi and expanded to States. It is high time to decide what makes it tick. The public sphere has thrown up myriad factors, ranging from communalism to nationalism, downfall of Congress to the lack of united Opposition leadership, social re-engineering to religious chauvinism. For good or for bad, BJP has charted its course. The Opposition parties have to decide which of these factors, or a combination of these, or something else entirely, is giving BJP the edge. And then shape their politics to counter the ruling party. BJP leaders visit temples, people vote for them. AAP leaders do the same, they get votes. Congress leaders do nothing different, yet lose votes. What exactly is the interplay between majoritarianism, communalism and religious chauvinism? And where is welfarism?



For instance, all communities got cash transfers and free rations in Uttar Pradesh. But that did not fully influence the beneficiaries' voting pattern which was also determined by other factors. A deconstruction of this conundrum alone can set the tone for the next stage of national politics. Merely brandishing words like secularism and fundamentalism is not helping

anybody. Congress has to take the initiative first because it is losing the most. Legacy politics is no longer currency in a country where the young are in a majority and already struggling with their aspirations and have no time for, or clue about, what one's ancestors did and achieved. The results caution Congress against playing politics based on past laurels. The hara-kiri in Punjab and Uttarakhand is a classic example of not just the leadership's naivete but the arrogance of its lineage. The party will need a stronger justification for sticking to its leadership in the coming organisational elections. It has also to tackle the "revisionist" group within it has ignored so far and protected the 'first family' from. But how will it be protected from the people? Congress replaced a Chief Minister in Punjab and got decimated by a novice. BJP replaced two in Uttarakhand and still trounced Congress, the pre-poll favourite. On top of it all, Congress is challenged on the national turf by the emerging AAP. Is Arvind Kejriwal's party a softer ideological clone of BJP or a credible copy of what Congress could not be?



A Greenpeace demonstration for Ukraine at Heroes Square in Budapest, Hungary

PTI

Hardly hardy

The Oppn has much catching up to do before making even a pretence of taking on the BJP

The results of the semifinal to the 2024 parliamentary election, which the nation was waiting for with bated breath, are out after a month-long wait. The results are not really surprising: The BJP remains indomitable, the AAP is slowly going from strength to strength and the other Opposition parties in the Hindi heartland are crumbling. Except for Punjab, the BJP is comfortably poised to form the Government in the other four States — Uttar Pradesh, Manipur, Uttarakhand and Goa. To be fair, even during the days of its alliance with the SAD, the BJP had



only limited pockets of influence in the urban segments of Punjab. As for UP, the interesting aspect is that the Opposition there is in a shambles. It's been almost six decades since any party in India's most populous and politically significant State has won two successive terms. The farmers' agitation and their supposed anger against the BJP didn't translate into anti-incumbency on the ground. It has, however, lost a significant percentage of its vote share and seats since the last outing in the State in 2017 and the SP has put up a brave fight though it failed to topple the Government.

As the AAP in Punjab catapulted itself into the top position on the leaderboard early in the day itself, it proved to be a huge flop show for Charanjit Singh Channi, Capt Amarinder Singh and the Badals. The Manipur result was largely a foregone conclusion, thanks especially to Amit Shah's personal forays there right from the start of the campaign and his personal assurances to the local populace on the AFSPA. In Uttarakhand, it was a pleasant surprise of sorts for the BJP as it retained power; the general trend being that the reins of power alternate between the BJP and the Congress. The latter, however, did make a dent in the BJP's prospects in the Himalayan State. Goa was supposed to be another close call as the AAP was vigorously laying claim to it, but the BJP romped home relatively easy in the coastal State. The Congress is steadily, but surely, imploding. It's the perfect recipe for the BJP: The Congress no longer there to challenge it as the main Opposition party, withering across the country as it is, and the new, upcoming outfits usurping its votes but still not strong enough to match the BJP's might.

The Uniform Civil Code novelty in Goa



PRAFULL GORADIA

Though not strictly Uniform Civil Code, the Goa Civil Code is a progressive law that allows equal division of income and property between spouses

Goa is the only State in India that has Uniform Civil Code regardless of religion, gender or caste. It has a common family law, which means people of all religions are bound by the same laws. When it became a Union Territory in 1961, Parliament authorised the Portuguese Civil Code, 1867, to Goa which can be amended and repealed by the competent legislature.

In Goa, a marriage is a contract between two people of different genders with the purpose of living together and constituting a legitimate family, which is registered with a civil registrar. The rules and regulations have to be followed by the parties before they can begin their married life. However, certain categories of people are prohibited from marriage, for example, any spouse convicted of committing or abetting the murder of her/his spouse.

This is an exception as no other State has adopted a common civil code. The Uniform Civil Code in Goa is a progressive law that allows equal division of income and property, regardless of the gender between the husband and wife and also between children. Every birth, death and marriage has to be compulsorily registered. For divorce, there are severe provisions. Muslims that have their marriages registered in Goa cannot take more than one wife or divorce her by pronouncing "talaq" thrice. During the course of marriage, all the property and wealth owned or acquired by each spouse is commonly held by the couple. In case of a divorce, each spouse is entitled to half the share of the property and, if one dies, the ownership over half of the property is retained by the other.

According to the Uniform Civil Code, even if the children (both male and female) have got married and left the house, the other half has to be divided equally among them. Thus, the parents cannot disinherit the children totally as they can dispose of only half of the property in a will and the rest has to be compulsorily and equally shared



amongst the children.

The Goa civil code is largely based on the Portuguese Civil Code (Código Civil Português) of 1867, which was introduced in Goa in 1870. Later, the code saw some modifications, based on the Portuguese Gentile Hindu Usages Decrees of 1880 (Código de usos e costumes dos Hindus gentios de Goa), the Portuguese Decrees on Canonical Marriages of 1946 (Decreto 35.461: regula o casamento nas colónias Portuguesas) and the Portuguese Decrees on Marriage and Divorce of 1910 (Lei do Divórcio: Decreto de 3 de Novembro de 1910). After the establishment of the First Portuguese Republic, the civil code was liberalised to give women more freedom.

The civil code was retained in Goa after its merger with the Indian Union in 1961, although in Portugal the original Code was replaced by the new Portuguese Civil Code of 1966. In 1981, the Government of India appointed a Personal Law Committee to determine if the non-uniform laws of the Union could be extended to Goa. The Goa Muslim Shariah Organisation



DURING THE COURSE OF MARRIAGE, ALL THE PROPERTY AND WEALTH OWNED OR ACQUIRED BY EACH SPOUSE IS COMMONLY HELD BY THE COUPLE. IN CASE OF A DIVORCE, EACH SPOUSE IS ENTITLED TO HALF THE SHARE OF THE PROPERTY

supported the move but it was met with stiff resistance from the Muslim Youth Welfare Association and the Goa Muslim Women's Associations.

There are some significant ways in which the Goa Civil Code is different from other Indian laws. A married couple jointly holds the ownership of all the assets owned (before the marriage) or acquired (after the marriage) by each spouse. In case of a divorce, each spouse is entitled to a half share of the assets. However, the law also allows ante-nuptial agreements, which may state a different division of assets in case of a divorce. These agreements also allow the spouses to hold the assets acquired before marriage separately. Such agreements cannot be changed or revoked. A married person cannot sell their property without the consent of his/her spouse. The parents cannot disinherit their children entirely. At least half of their property has to be passed on to the children compulsorily. This inherited property must be shared equally among the children. Muslim men, who have their marriages registered in Goa,

cannot practice polygamy. Also, there is no provision for a verbal divorce.

The Goa Civil Code is not strictly a Uniform Civil Code as it has specific provisions for certain communities. For example, Hindu men have the right to bigamy under specific circumstances mentioned in Codes of Usages and Customs of Gentile Hindus of Goa (if the wife fails to deliver a child by the age of 25, or if she fails to deliver a male child by the age of 30). For other communities, the law prohibits bigamy.

Roman Catholics can solemnise their marriage in church after obtaining a No-Objection Certificate from the civil registrar. For others, only a civil registration of the marriage is accepted as a proof of marriage. Catholics marrying in the church are excluded from divorce provisions under the civil law. For Hindus, divorce is permitted only on the grounds of adultery by the wife. The law has inequalities in case of adopted and illegitimate children.

(The writer is a well-known columnist, an author and a former member of the Rajya Sabha. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

ANOTHER SUCCESS IN UKRAINE EVACUATIONS

Sir — The crisis preceding the successful evacuations of Indian students from Ukraine proved a blessing in disguise when the Government declared to make available affordable medical education in our country. It's not the first time when the Indian Government successfully evacuated its citizens from risky situations and in this regard India's valiant evacuations are sure to make every Indian proud. From the greatest airlift in human history (the Kuwait story) to the rescuing of stranded nationals from conflict-ravaged Yemen and Libya, India has been working like a boss in extracting civilians out of difficult situations.

New Delhi has been at the forefront of many a relief and rehabilitation operation worldwide and by now has earned quite a name in this risk-ridden field. It is the consistent foreign policy of India, whichever party be in power, to maintain neutrality and have cordial relations with all countries. It is to be noted that when Atal Bihari Vajpayee was the Foreign Minister in the Janata Party Government, the only photograph in his office was of Jawaharlal Nehru because the latter was the founder of our nation's foreign policy and a founder-member of the Non-Aligned Movement along with Tito and Arafat.

Yash Pal Ralhan | Jalandhar

DON'T TAKE THE MUTATED VIRUS LIGHTLY

Sir — The world is facing yet another virus variant of uncertain denomination. It seems similar to the initial days of COVID-19 back in 2019. A pall of fear has dawned upon the world again, wondering if a bigger challenge awaits us. Till now, there have been conflicting judgments about the behaviour of this new variant. Many studies claim that the virus leads to mild symptoms only, especially in the case of vaccinated people. The other side is trying hard to raise an alarm. Then there are people who believe that the fear-mongering is meant for certain sectors to eke out profits.

In the midst of all this is the common man who is lost in the labyrinth of the

More ethical values needed



The editorial, 'Human touch' (March 9), is well written and reflects what is going on in medical services in the country. It is true that while medical science is advancing with techniques and investments, the services are becoming impersonal, commercial and dehumanised. Since the medical profession is looked at as divine, one cannot expect it going solely into the commercial mode without the human element in it. This profession is a noble one, replete with human touch, compassion, love and understanding of the ailing person. Any suffering person approach-

es a doctor with great hope for relief, and is ready to pay any amount even by selling off his belongings.

But are the medical professionals doing justice to their occupation with compassion, love, sympathy and human touch? Many patients speak bitterly against a hospital, doctors and its management after being discharged as they believe that hospitals have become money-spinners. Even corporate hospitals recruiting young specialists force the doctors to achieve income generation targets with more admissions, investigations, cross-consultations, and so on. On the other hand, there are many medical professionals who treat their patients with compassion and understanding and are, therefore, respected and loved by the latter. The need of the hour is to make the medical profession more ethical and inculcate professional values in doctors and other medicare professionals.

Jayaprakash Reddy | Telangana

so-called facts and counter-facts. However, there still remains an easy way to stay safe. It is what we had started off the pandemic with in the first place — following the SOPs. We need to trust science and get ourselves vaccinated. Vaccines work. We can debate the levels of efficacy but they work. Get tested at the first sign of symptoms. Hopefully, the threat won't turn out to be as severe as the Delta variant but, at our end, we must act responsibly.

Jubel D'Cruz | Mumbai

KIDNEY HEALTH FOR ALL

Sir —The 2022 theme of the World Kidney Day, which falls on March 10 (second Thursday of March) this year, is "Kidney Health For All". We must never forget that our kidneys might be just the size of a fist, but these perform a life-sustaining job of filtration. Unfortunately, they remain one of the most ignored organs of our body because we remain unaware of the fact that a person can lose up to 90 per cent

of his/her kidney functions before experiencing any symptoms though there are two (blood and urine) simple tests to monitor kidney diseases.

A blood test can help one monitor the Creatinine levels. Then urine test is done to determine whether ne has a protein called Albumin in your urine. To avoid kidney diseases, a few things need done: a) Monitor blood sugar levels; b) Keep blood pressure under check; c) Drink adequate amount of water; d) Strictly monitor one's protein intake; and, e) Don't consume painkillers and OTC medications like candies. Remember, one of the first things we need to know about kidney diseases is that they are mostly asymptomatic. This is the reason why these are also known as 'silent killers'. Hence, prevention is of utmost importance to tackle chronic kidney diseases.

Bidyut K Chatterjee | Faridabad

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

Thirty of the 36 disputed villages along the Assam border will be retained by Meghalaya.



Meghalaya CM — Conrad K Sangma



I indeed mean 'all the means' if we want to avoid the Third World War.

Lithuania President — Gitanas Nausėda

If a female is the lead, many A-list heroes refuse to do it.



Actor — Isha Koppikar Narang



The spinners will always be crucial as they bowl the maximum overs.

Former India spinner — Nooshin Al Khadeer

The AAP has emerged as the fastest growing party in the country.



Delhi MLA — Raghav Chadha

FIRST COLUMN

INDIAN SEARCH FOR ALLIES IN WORLD ORDER

Indian self-reliance in defence manufacturing is a must



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

As the Ukraine invasion enters its second week with no signs of de-escalation, a certain sense of the future has started to emerge. First, the world has given a call to arms, to begin with, as a deterrence for irritants but later for increasing the economic and muscular clout. Germany, a silent and disarmed European power, has given a firm target of increasing its defense spending year on year. This could potentially provoke many of its European neighbors to review their dependence on US (or NATO) for security purposes. In the far east, Japan has shed its post-nuclear bomb stigmas to openly quote US for hosting their nuclear weapon on its territory. The expanse stretching from the Pacific to the Indian ocean is looking at major shifts in national priorities. The other outcome is a total collapse of the world order. The first decade of the 21st century is almost testing the lim-



its of human progress ranging from advanced technology weaponry, to climate change, pandemics and traditional warfare. The last two years have tested humanity's ability to react to evolving biological threats, mostly a result of manmade climate changes. Many "objective" critics of the current international rules-based world order have questioned the Eurocentricity of the UN. The WHO came under a similar kind of criticism at the height of the Covid pandemic. The lessons for these global bodies lie in completely overhauling the system and allowing for more empowered voices such as India to have a larger say. The defanging of global bodies has also ensured old alliances such as NATO are being increasingly questioned and US leaders will have to face tough questions from their domestic constituency for spending American money on somebody else's wars. This brings us to a question on the future for India and the direction it should be headed in. So far India has stayed away from directly meddling or making any public comments on the ongoing tensions between Ukraine and Russia. India has managed to scoop out most of its medical students from the war zone by engaging with both countries. India's military dependence on Russia is a well-known fact. However, one needs to take a call now to reduce this asymmetric relationship. India's Prime Minister has called for an all-round "self-reliance" goal for India's development in the next 25 years. This includes setting up world class defense manufacturing facilities in India which not only cater to the domestic market but also serve as export houses for strategic allies. The world is witnessing horrors of dependency playing out in Ukraine, where humble glass bottles filled with inflammable chemical cocktails are being used to halt heavy armory and tanks. A "sanctioned Russia" has now become a pariah to a large chunk of countries aspiring to be greater powers. Russia had already started gravitating towards China in the past decade. It almost sealed the deal for a no-holds-barred friendship on February 4 in Beijing, when President Putin met the Chinese premier and issued a joint statement of intent. China is equally aggressive in its economic and military aspirations, especially in the Indo-Pacific context, where its next targets are Taiwan and India. Cushioned by Chinese economic and technological support, Russia would find it extremely hard to keep India's interest in mind on multilateral and plurilateral forums. This is a clear risk for India. India, therefore, has to strategically find a comfortable spot for self-reliance in defense manufacturing or technology assistance along with investments from suitable strategic allies such as the US, France or blocs such as QUAD. The time to act is now. *(The writer is a policy analyst. The views expressed are personal.)*

Russia's devastating attack on Ukraine



PK VASUDEVA

This is not a war that Russia's population was prepared for either, as the invasion was rubber-stamped by a largely unrepresentative Upper House

The attack on Ukraine by Russia is potentially the onset of war in Europe on top of Russia's behest for an end to NATO's eastward expansion. The launch of the major invasion by Russia on Ukraine started with air and missile assaults on Ukrainian military targets before troops and tanks went across the country's northern, eastern, and southern borders. On many fronts, the Ukrainian military fought back but it cannot withstand the Russian might onslaught for the lack of outright support from the NATO.

Since the invasion of Crimea in 2014, Ukraine has been living in fear of war with Russia for nearly eight years. Russia and Ukraine have been at odds for a long time, with Russia claiming Ukraine as a part of its country and opposing Ukraine's developing ties to the West. Russian President Vladimir Putin wants to recapture the former Soviet Union Republic. He requested that the Ukrainian military put down their weapons. Prior to its cessation in 1991, Russia and Ukraine were both members of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), which consisted of 15 republics.

The heat between Russia and Ukraine have existed for a decent amount of time, they began to escalate out of control in early 2021. Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Ukraine's President hinted the US President Joe Biden to allow Ukraine to join the NATO forces in January of last year.

This Russia is highly infuriated, which began sending soldiers near the Ukrainian border for "training exercises" in the spring of last year and boosted the number in the fall. The US began to hype that there is a deployment of Russian troops, and President Joe Biden had threatened Russia with heavy sanctions if Russia attacked Ukraine.

Russia wants a legally enforceable promise from the US that NATO forces will not conduct any military operations in Eastern Europe, especially in Ukraine. According to the Russian President, Vladimir Putin, Ukraine is merely a puppet of the US and was never a real sovereign country in the first place.

This isn't the first time that conflicts between Russia and Ukraine have erupted. Russia had previously invaded Ukraine in 2014, it happened when pro-Putin separatists captured major swaths of eastern Ukraine, and they have been fighting the Ukrainian army since the invasion. Russia also annexed Crimea at that time.

Ukraine has extensive social and cultural ties with Russia, and Russian is widely spoken there, but those ties have deteriorated since Russia invaded Ukraine in 2014.

When Ukraine's pro-Russian president lost in early 2014 elections, Russia came to an offensive. It is estimated that more than 14,000 people had died as a result of the continuous war happening in the east.

The Minsk peace agreement was signed by Russia and Ukraine to end the ongoing violent armed conflict, which was going on



THE INVASION HAS KNOCK-ON EFFECTS FOR MANY OTHER COUNTRIES BORDERING BOTH RUSSIA AND UKRAINE. LATVIA, POLAND AND MOLDOVA SAY THEY ARE PREPARING FOR A BIG INFUX OF REFUGEES. A STATE OF EMERGENCY HAS BEEN DECLARED IN LITHUANIA AND MOLDOVA, WHERE THOUSANDS OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN HAVE ALREADY ENTERED

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



in east Ukraine, including Donbas region. However, as the armed conflict continues, Russia said that it would be sending "peacekeepers" to the affected region.

The rising tension between Russia and Ukraine, which shares a border with the European Union, has ramifications for the European Union. This is why the European Union has joined the US in declaration of the penalties against Russian firms, the majority of which the NATO members.

By air, land, and sea, Russia has launched a devastating attack on Ukraine, a European democracy of 44 million people. For months President Vladimir Putin had denied he would invade his neighbor, but then he tore up a peace deal, sending forces across borders in Ukraine's north, east and south. As the number of dead climbs, he is now accused of shattering peace in Europe and what happens next could jeopardise the continent's entire security structure.

Airports and military headquarters were hit first, near cities across Ukraine, including the main Boryspil international airport in Kyiv. Then tanks and troops rolled into Ukraine in the north-east, near Kharkiv, a city of 1.4 million people; in the east near Luhansk, from neighbouring Belarus in the north and Crimea in the south. Paratroopers seized a key airbase just outside Kyiv and Russian troops landed in Ukraine's big port cities of Odesa and Mariupol too. Within a few days Russia is likely to capture the capital of Ukraine Kyiv after capturing the second largest city

Kharkiv. Putin then is likely to declare the cease-fire after installing a puppet government of his choice.

These are terrifying times for the people of Ukraine and horrifying for the rest of the continent, witnessing a major power invading a European neighbour for the first time since World War Two. It will seriously affect the world economy especially that of Russia including India where fuel prices have already risen by ₹12.

The invasion has knock-on effects for many other countries bordering both Russia and Ukraine. Latvia, Poland and Moldova say they are preparing for a big influx of refugees. A state of emergency has been declared in Lithuania and Moldova, where thousands of women and children have already entered.

This is not a war that Russia's population was prepared for either, as the invasion was rubber-stamped by a largely unrepresentative upper house of parliament.

Nato has put warplanes on alert but the Western alliance has made clear there are no plans to send combat troops to Ukraine itself. Instead, they have offered advisers, weapons and field hospitals. Meanwhile, 5,000 Nato troops have been deployed in the Baltic States and Poland. Another 4,000 could be sent to Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Slovakia.

Instead, the West is targeting Russia's economy, industry and individuals.

The EU has promised to restrict Russian access to capital markets and cut off its industry

from latest technology. It has already imposed sanctions on 351 MPs who backed Russia's recognition of the rebel-held regions

Germany has halted approval on Russia's Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline, a major investment by both Russia and European companies

The US says it will cut off Russia's government from Western financial institutions and target high-ranking "elites".

The UK says all major Russian banks would have their assets frozen, with 100 individuals and entities targeted; and Russia's national airline Aeroflot will also be banned from landing in the UK.

Ukraine has urged its allies to stop buying Russian oil and gas. The three Baltic States have called on the whole international community to disconnect Russia's banking system from the international Swift payment system. That could badly impact the US and European economies. The Russian city of St Petersburg will no longer be able to host this year's Champions League final for security reasons. Europe's football governing body Uefa is also planning further measures.

Putin wants Nato to remove its forces and military infrastructure from member states that joined the alliance from 1997 and not to deploy "strike weapons near Russia's borders". That means Central Europe, Eastern Europe and the Baltics.

In President Putin's eyes, the West promised back in 1990 that Nato would expand "not an inch to the east" but did so anyway.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

THE KIND OF HELP DONE BY PM MODI AND CM YOGI ADITYANATH FOR THE POOR HAS HELPED THE STATE. — UNION MINISTER MAHENDRA NATH PANDEY



EXIT POLLS MAY SHOW A CONTEST (BETWEEN THE PARTIES) BUT, ON THE GROUND, WE HAVE NOT SEEN ANY CONTEST. —SAMAJWADI PARTY SPOKESPERSON GHANSHYAM TIWARI

Arms lobbies rip S Asia with forced weaponry sales

The rising arms race despite a thaw in nuclear contests poses multi-pronged threats in the region

The Ukraine crisis is apparently the creation of arms lobbies, which want to increase post-pandemic sales of arms, weaponry systems and cyber gadgets. In the process, the Indian sub-continent is emerging as the hub for American, Russian Chinese weapons deals.

India is hit by the Ukraine development not only for the rising fuel prices but also import of sunflower and other edible oils, tea exports and possible restrictions on shipping that could impact exports and its production. But the rising arms race despite a thaw in nuclear contest poses multi-pronged threat in the region.

The prolonged unsuccessful Afghanistan and West Asian war has drained the US economy posing problem for the



SHIVAJI SARKAR

(The writer is a senior journalist. The view expressed are personal.)

world's largest weapon industry.

The economic problems and suffering citizens pressurize the US President Joe Biden to remain subdued against blatant Russian invasion of Ukraine. A generation of the US people saw miseries rising; arms lobby profits soaring, economy draining and consequently creating an unstable world costing it \$ 8 trillion in wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and Pakistan. It also caused nine lakh deaths and displaced 21 million across Europe.

The arms lobby is keen that the situation in the sub-continent remains fluid so that they could increase their sales. It keeps Pakistan in a state of flux because of the US policy of not allowing it friendly relations with India and carefully working out the collapse of SAARC.



The perpetual situation of fear helps the US and its allies to sell arms, fighter aircraft and other military arsenal to both India and Pakistan through morphed assessments of security situations and pressurized military build-up.

Interestingly enough the 20 largest US arms producers

and military services companies, including Lockheed and Boeing, report \$5.436 billion profits for several trillion-dollar arms sales since 2001. As sales to other countries dip, they increase in the Indian subcontinent. The region is becoming an arms bazaar.

Pakistan finance ministry says since the 2001 US onslaught on terror, it spent \$5.4 billion on arms purchases from the US. A Jung and Geo TV Group study shows that the US doled out \$33 billion since 2001 for curbing terrorism, 'health and education'. Since 1947, Pakistan received \$70 billion from the US. Pakistan has PKR11.8 trillion debts. The US funding apparently takes care of its revenue.

The US arms sales to India increases to \$3.4 billion in 2020

from \$6.2 million at a time when universal sale of US weapons dip to \$ 50.8 billion from \$ 55.7 billion. The major countries that cut arms purchases include Saudi Arabia, Belgium, Iraq, South Korea and Afghanistan.

But the US sales to strategic regions like Taiwan and Poland rise. Poland gets arms worth \$4.5 billion up from \$ 12.4 million and Taiwan \$ 11.8 billion up from \$ 8.76 million, according to Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA), to keep China and Russia at bay. The UAE surprisingly has increased its arms purchases to \$ 3.6 billion from \$ 1.1 billion

Even Russia since 2014 has been increasing its ties with Pakistan and in 2021 pledges Mi-35 assault helicopters and anti-tank systems. It has also

granted \$1 billion arms loans to Bangladesh and agrees to supply arms to Sri Lanka.

Indian reliance on Russia is declining despite still its large imports. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) states that 49.4 per cent of Indian arms imports between 2016 and 2020 were from Russia, 0.5 per cent from Ukraine. Between 1996 and 2016, Russia supplied 70 percent of arms.

Bangladesh has been buying more arms from the US with purchases touching \$110 million since 2009, including plans to Apaches and missiles. It also buys military equipment, including naval armaments, worth \$2.59 billion from China. The Chinese bid to increase influence in Nepal is concern for India.

Sri Lanka is also emerging as a hub with the US wooing it for a military cooperation deal and privileges for visiting US troops. China in April 2021 vowed to enhance "pragmatic cooperation" in the military and other sectors.

Even as the Ukraine situation intensifies, the concern of the Indian subcontinent over an arms race should raise eyebrows. Though no major conflict has been seen in the region since the Kargil conflict, the larger arms acquisition in the region will hopefully not change the equilibrium.

During the past five years, the arms sellers are wooing all countries in the region to buy more sophisticated weapons and security gadgets. If India gets drawn into this race its resources can get diverted.

No breakthrough in Ukraine-Russia talks

AP ■ AANTALAY

Ukraine's foreign minister says talks between the top diplomats of Moscow and Kyiv produced no breakthrough on ending the war in Ukraine following Russia's invasion.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said he attended the meeting Thursday with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov in Turkey to discuss humanitarian corridors and a cease-fire.

Kuleba said there are "other decision-makers" in Russia who need to be consulted, adding that he agreed with Lavrov to continue to seek a solution to humanitarian issues caused by the war.

He said Moscow is not ready to offer a cease-fire. He said: "They seek Ukraine's surrender."

This is not going to happen," Kuleba said "the last thing" he wanted was to kill hope for Ukrainians seeking safe passage out of cities besieged by Russian bombardments and attacks. (AP) Earlier in the day, the meeting between Russia's Sergey Lavrov and Dmytro Kuleba of Ukraine took place on the sidelines of a diplomacy forum near the city of Antalya on Thursday. Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu was also participating in the meeting.

Cavusoglu has said then the aim of the meeting is to pave the way for a meeting between the Russian and Ukrainian presidents that would be facilitated by Turkey's president. Kuleba has also said that he would propose direct talks between the Ukrainian and Russian presidents when he meets Lavrov.

NATO-member Turkey, which has cultivated close ties with both Russia and Ukraine, is trying to balance relations with both nations. It has positioned itself as a neutral party, seeking to facilitate negotiations between the warring sides.

Turkey has criticized Russia's military actions in Ukraine as "unlawful" and "unacceptable" but it has also said Ankara would not give up on either Russia or Ukraine. The head of the U.N. Nuclear agency says he's en route to Turkey for talks on ensuring the safety of Ukraine's nuclear facilities.

Rafael Grossi, the director-general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, was invited to Antalya, Turkey by Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu. Also in Antalya on Thursday, the Russian and Ukrainian foreign ministers are scheduled to hold talks on the sidelines of a diplomacy forum.



Grossi didn't give details of his own planned meetings in a tweet that showed him sitting on a plane.

The IAEA chief has been pressing for an agreement with Ukraine and Russia on the safety of Ukraine's nuclear power plants.

A growing list of concerns includes a power cut at the decommissioned Chernobyl plant as well as limited communications between Ukraine's nuclear regulator and both Chernobyl and the Zaporizhzhia power plant, which Russian forces seized last week.

In addition, the IAEA says it has lost direct transmission of data from systems installed to monitor nuclear material at both Chernobyl and Zaporizhzhia. It says the reasons for the disruption aren't immediately clear. Ukraine has 15 nuclear reactors, eight of which were operating as of Wednesday.

Amid heavy shelling, Ukraine's Mariupol city uses mass grave

AP ■ MARIUPOLE

With bodies piling up in Russia's nine-day siege of Mariupol, the port city of 430,000 in southeastern Ukraine, local authorities are hurrying to bury the dead in a mass grave.

City workers made quick signs of the cross gestures as they pushed bodies wrapped in carpets or bags into a deep trench some 25 meters (80 feet) long on the outskirts of the city. More than 70 bodies have been interred in the common grave since it was opened Tuesday.

About half of those buried were killed in the intense shelling of the city, estimated an AP journalist who visited the burial ground.

"They were shooting civilians": Ukraine refugees saw abuses

AP ■ PREZEMYSL

As more than 2 million refugees from Ukraine begin to scatter throughout Europe and beyond, some are carrying valuable witness evidence to build a case for war crimes.

More and more, the people who are turning up at border crossings are survivors who have fled some of the cities hardest hit by Russian forces.

"It was very eerie," said Ihor Diekov, one of the many people who crossed the Irpin river bridge after Ukrainians blew up the concrete span to slow the Russian advance.

He heard gunshots as he crossed and saw corpses along the road.

US VP Harris embraces call for war crimes probe of Russia

AP ■ WARSAW

U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris on Thursday embraced calls for an international war crimes investigation of Russia over its invasion of Ukraine and the bombing of civilians, including a maternity hospital.

Speaking in Warsaw, where she is demonstrating U.S. support for NATO's eastern flank allies, Harris expressed outrage over the bombing Wednesday of the maternity hospital and scenes of bloodied pregnant women being evacuated.

"Absolutely there should be an investigation, and we should all be watching," said Harris.

Standing alongside Harris, Polish President Andrzej Duda said "it is obvious to us that in Ukraine Russians are committing war crimes."

Ukraine hospital attack killed 3, wounded 17, say officials

AP ■ MARIUPOLE

An airstrike on a hospital in the port city of Mariupol killed three people, including a child, the city council said Thursday, as Russian forces intensified their siege of Ukrainian cities.

The attack in the southern port city wounded women waiting to give birth and doctors and buried children in the rubble. Bombs also fell on two hospitals in another city west of the capital.

The World Health Organisation said it has confirmed 18 attacks on medical facilities since the Russian invasion began two weeks ago.

Turkey, meanwhile, was hosting the highest-level talks so far between the two sides on Thursday. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said he hoped the meeting between Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and his Ukrainian counterpart Dmytro Kuleba "will open the door to a permanent cease-fire" But Kuleba said he did not have high expectations.

Ahead of those talks, artillery fire was heard on the western edge of Kyiv, Deputy Interior Minister Vadym

Denyenko said.

He told Ukrainian TV channel Rada that residents had a "rather difficult" night on the outskirts of the capital in which Russian forces started by targeting military sites but then hit residential areas.

Ukrainian officials said the attack on Wednesday at a medical complex in Mariupol, where a siege has forced residents to scavenge for food and water, killed three people, including a girl, and wounded at least 17 people.

The ground shook more than a mile away when the series of blasts hit. Explosions blew out windows and ripped away much of the front of one building. Police and soldiers rushed to the scene to evacuate victims, carrying a bleeding woman with a swollen belly on a stretcher past burning and mangled cars.

Another woman wailed as she clutched her child. In the courtyard, a blast crater extended at least two stories deep.

"Today Russia committed a huge crime," said Volodymyr Nikulin, a top regional police official, standing in the ruins. "It is a war crime without any justification."

Trump a pariah? New \$100 million bank loan suggests not

AP ■ NEW YORK

A bank's decision to loan Donald Trump's company USD 100 million is the latest evidence the former president might survive fraud investiga-

tions and a business-world backlash over his efforts to stay in office after losing the 2020 election.

San Diego-based Axos Bank finalized the loan with the Trump Organization on

February 17, according to documents filed with the city Tuesday. That's just three days after public revelations that the Republican's longtime accountants had disavowed a decade's worth of his financial statements amid allegations by New York's attorney general that they had exaggerated his wealth.

The Axos loan is being used to pay back an old loan backed by commercial space at Trump Tower that was coming due in September.

A year ago, it looked possible that Trump might become a pariah after his supporters stormed the US Capitol in an attempt to stop a vote certifying President Joe Biden's election win. Banks, insurers and other business partners all cut ties following the riot. Last year, the Trump Organization was indicted in New York on charges it helped executives evade taxes. And for

two years, the company has been the subject of civil and criminal investigations by New York Attorney General Letitia James and the Manhattan district attorney. But in the fall, Trump struck a deal to sell his Washington hotel for far more than expected. And a partnership he's involved with that owns two office towers recently took out new loans for far more than needed to pay off old ones coming due.

"He bounces back," says Barbara Res, a former Trump Organization executive who is not a fan and even urged people not to vote for him.

"If a guy brings me a property with good cash flow, a good location and good tenants, why do I care what his politics are?" says Mike Offit, a former Deutsche Bank lender to Trump who now consults on real estate finance. "Trump has good buildings and manages them well."

The Trump Organization declined to disclose the interest rate on the new loan and other terms. Axos, citing customer privacy rules, would not comment. Asked for comment for this story, one of Trump's sons lashed out at journalists for depicting the family company as struggling.

"We should have never been underestimated," Eric Trump said in an emailed statement, adding, "We have very low debt, are sitting on tremendous amount of cash and have extremely profitable properties."

Assessing the Trump Organization's overall financial health is challenging, given that it is a private company that releases few figures publicly.

During his presidency, Trump's name was stripped off hotels and residential towers in several cities. His Scottish golf course lost millions, and condos in his apartment buildings have

been selling at deep discounts.

Coronavirus shutdowns added to the trouble. Revenue at the company's biggest golf property, the Doral outside of Miami, plunged USD 33 million in the two years through 2021, down 44%, according to financial records obtained by a government ethics agency.

Then came the Capitol riots and a rush to exits as Trump's longtime commercial office broker, his two biggest lenders, the PGA of America and others cut ties.

The company helping him shop around his Washington hotel severed its relationship, too, after removing it from the market for a lack of demand. New York City announced it was canceling all city contracts with Trump, including the rights to operate a public golf course in the Bronx. Eric Trump branded the city's move a product of "cancel culture" and vowed to fight it.

Singapore warns citizens against joining Ukrainian Foreign Legion

PTI ■ SINGAPORE

Singapore on Thursday cautioned its people not to join the Ukrainian Foreign Legion - a volunteer military unit created by the government of Ukraine to fight against the Russian invasion, saying such an act would be considered "an offence".

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) said it is aware that the Embassy of Ukraine here has received calls from people expressing an interest to join the International Legion for the Territorial Defense of Ukraine.

It is an offence for any person in Singapore to travel or try to travel to Ukraine to take up arms in the conflict there, Singapore has taken a clear stance on Russia's invasion of Ukraine and strongly condemns the invasion, said the ministry in a statement.

It added that the Singapore government has called upon Russia to cease hostilities, and respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

"We would like to highlight that it is an offence for any person, whilst in Singapore, to wage, attempt to wage, or abet the waging of war, against the government of any power with which Singapore is not at war," The Straits Times quoted the ministry as saying.

"For citizens of Singapore, in particular, even if they commit these acts whilst outside Singapore, they will be legally deemed to have committed them as if in Singapore, and hence liable for an offence."

Under the law, those who try to do so can be imprisoned for life, or up to 15 years. They can also be fined.

कार्यालय बसिष्ठ प्रबंधक मेगा फूड पार्क, बहेड़ी उपग्रह औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण, ई-1/4 लखनऊ, कानपुर

अल्पकालीन निविदा सूचना
एतद द्वारा सूचित किया जाता है कि प्राधिकरण के विभिन्न जनपदों में स्थित औद्योगिक क्षेत्रों में विद्युत विकास और अनुरक्षण एवं रख-रखाव कार्य हेतु सरकारी विभागों/सार्वजनिक उपक्रमों/निगमों/प्राधिकरणों/परिषदों/नगर निकायों में पंजीकृत एवं आई एं श्रीणी में विद्युत लाइसेंसों फर्मा / डीलरों/अनुमती निर्माता/ठेकेदारों से अल्पकालीन ई-निविदायें आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। जो दिनांक 11.03.2021 को पूर्वाह्न 11:00 बजे से दिनांक 21.03.2022 को अपराह्न 05:00 बजे तक अपलोड की जा सकती है। जिन्हें दिनांक 22.03.2022 को पूर्वाह्न 11:00 बजे खोलना होगा। निविदादाताओं द्वारा साख्य पत्रों की मूल प्रतियाँ दिनांक 25.03.2022 को सायं 5:00 बजे तक कार्यालय में जमा की जा सकती हैं। ई-निविदा के माध्यम से आमंत्रित की जाने वाली निविदा सम्बन्धी विवरण निम्नवत है:-

क्रमांक	कार्य का नाम	कार्य की अनुमानित लागत रू० (लाख में)
1.	Annual Maintenance Contract of Street lights and High Mast Lighting system at I.A. Firzabad & Etah.	13.15
2.	Annual Maintenance Contract of Street lights and High Mast Lighting system at I.A. Kosi Kalan, Kosi Kotwan & Mathura Site-B Dist. Mathura.	20.21
नोट:- 1. निविदादाता अपनी निविदाओं में समस्त कर एवं जीएसटी सहित दरें अंकित करें। अलग से कोई कर देय नहीं होगा। 2. विद्युत कार्य हेतु निविदादाताओं को निविदा अपलोड करते समय "विद्युत सुरक्षा विभाग" उपग्रह शासन, लखनऊ में श्रीणी 'क', अनुमोदित लाइसेंस अपलोड करना अनिवार्य होगा, अन्यथा निविदा को Consider नहीं किया जाएगा। निविदा सम्बन्धी विस्तृत जानकारी प्राधिकरण की website: www.upsidc.com पर स्थित ई-लिक एवं यूटोएलसी की website: http://etender.upn.ic.in पर देखी जा सकती है। बसिष्ठ प्रबंधक मेगा फूड पार्क, बहेड़ी उपग्रह औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण, कानपुर		

कार्यालय आयुक्त
आदिम जाति तथा अनुसूचित जाति विकास ब्लॉक 4 डी, भूतल, इन्द्रावती भवन, नया रायपुर (90°N)
☎- 2263708 Fax - 2262558
website- tribal.cg.gov.in E-mail :- ctd.cg@nic.in

क्रमांक/120/प्रयास/2022/11090 अटल नगर, नया रायपुर, दिनांक 09/03/2022

-: सशिव निविदा सूचना :-

स्व. राजीव गांधी बाल भविष्य सुरक्षा प्रयास आवासीय विद्यालयों के कक्षा 9वीं एवं 10वीं में अध्यापन एवं कोशिंग कार्य हेतु फेकल्टी की व्यवस्था के लिए पंजीकृत कोशिंग संस्थाओं से ऑनलाईन "रूचि की अभिव्यक्ति" का आमंत्रण (वर्ष 2022-23)

आदिम जाति तथा अनुसूचित जाति विकास विभाग द्वारा स्व. राजीव गांधी बाल भविष्य सुरक्षा प्रयास आवासीय विद्यालय योजना (सशोधित) निगमावली वर्ष 2020 योजनावर्ष प्रयास आवासीय विद्यालयों जिला - रायपुर, दुर्ग, बिलासपुर, बस्तर, सरगुजा, जशपुर, कोरबा, एवं कांकेर (छ.ग.) में अध्यापन एवं कोशिंग हेतु "रूचि की अभिव्यक्ति" का ऑनलाईन प्रस्ताव आमंत्रित है।

(i) रूचि की अभिव्यक्ति के संबंध में PreBid Meeting :- 15/03/22, अपराह्न 2.00 बजे
(ii) निर्धारित प्रश्न में प्रस्ताव ऑनलाईन प्रेषित करने की अंतिम तिथि :- 04/04/2022, सायं 5:30 बजे

(iii) प्रस्ताव प्रस्ताव को समिति के समक्ष खोलना करने की अंतिम तिथि :- 05/04/2022, सायं 03.00 बजे

(iv) अंतिमार्थ अर्द्धता में पात्र पात्र मने कोशिंग संस्थाओं के शिक्षक/फेकल्टी के प्रमाण-पत्रों की जांच (EOI में दर्शित योग्यता के संदर्भ में) :- 06/04/2022, प्रातः 11:00 बजे

(v) शिक्षक डेज (जात्र में योग्य पात्र मने फेकल्टी के अध्यापन कार्य का वैधानिक मूल्यांकन) :- 07 एवं 08/04/2022, प्रातः 11:00 बजे

अन्य कार्यवाही एवं तिथियों में परिवर्तन की सूचना संबंधित प्राधिकारी/व्यपन समिति द्वारा पृथक से विभागीय वेबसाइट पर दी जायेगी। विस्तृत जानकारी तथा निगमावली हेतु विभागीय वेबसाइट www.tribal.cg.gov.in तथा ई-प्रक्रियारेटर वेब पोर्टल <http://eproc.cgstate.gov.in> के निर्दिष्ट क्रमांक 94934 से वांछित जानकारी/प्रश्न का अपलोड/उत्तरावली कर सकते हैं। जो ऑनलाईन प्रस्ताव देगे उन्हें ऑनलाईन प्रस्ताव हाई कोपी में तीन लिफाफा पद्धति में अंतिम तिथि तक स्पेड पोस्ट से भी भेजा जाना है।

हरदा/-
(बीबीसी सम्मि आदिनी)
आयुक्त

R.O. No:- 68599/4
R.O. Date:- 10/03/2022

आदिम जाति तथा अनुसूचित जाति विकास अटल नगर, रायपुर, छत्तीसगढ़

Twitter launches Tor service bypassing Russia's block

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Twitter has launched a privacy-protected version of its site to bypass surveillance and censorship after Russia restricted access to its service in the country.

Russia has blocked access to Facebook and has limited Twitter in an attempt to try to restrict the flow of information

about its war in Ukraine. Both companies have said they are working on restoring access to people inside Russia even as they restrict the country's state media from their services.

Known as an "onion" service, users can access this version of Twitter if they download the Tor browser, which allows people to access sites on

what is also referred to as the "dark web." Instead of .Com, onion sites have a .Onion suffix.

While the term "dark web" connotes illegal sites such as the now-defunct Silk Road drug market, it is also often used by people seeking to remain anonymous for their safety and also to access sites censored by repressive Governments.

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, PWRD, NALBARI DISTRICT TERRITORIAL ROAD DIVISION, NALBARI

No. TC/NDTRD/PMGSV/2490

SHORT NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The Executive Engineer, PWRD, Nalbari District Territorial Road Division, Nalbari, on behalf of Governor of Assam invites the item rate bids in electronic tendering system for construction of roads under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana III, 2020-21, Batch-I, for 2 (Two) numbers of groups & packages, length 9.61 km with estimated cost totaling to Rs. 915.53 Lakhs (Approx.) including their maintenance for five years from approved and eligible contractors registered with Assam Public Works Department (Roads) or contractors registered with other State/Central Government Departments.

Date of release of Invitation for Bids may be seen through e-procurement.

For further details please log on to <https://pmgsytendersasm.gov.in/>

Sd/-
Executive Engineer, PWRD,
Janasanyog/CF/3675/21 Nalbari District Territorial Road Division, Nalbari

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

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

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

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

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Arun Gupta & Smbnu Gupta- LBBRD00002067944	Flat No. A-603, 6th Flr, Darshanam Elite, Nr Sai Sarjan, Opp Pratham Upvan, Sun Pharma Road, Atldara 20511, Vadodra-390012/ March 05, 2022	October 07, 2021/ Rs.11,44,824.66/-	Vadodra

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

Date : March 11, 2022
Place: Delhi/ NCR

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

Peshawar mosque attack 'main handler' among 3 killed in Pak

PTI ■ PESHAWAR,

Pakistani security forces have shot dead the "main handler" of the deadly suicide bombing at a Shia mosque in Peshawar and his two accomplices, who were reportedly also behind the killing of a Sikh medicine practitioner in the northwestern city, according to a media report on Thursday.

At least 64 people were killed and nearly 200 others injured in the suicide bombing inside the mosque in Qissa Khwani bazaar in Peshawar during Friday prayers last week, which was claimed by the Islamic State-Khorasan terror group.

Officials said personnel of the Counter-Terrorism Department, police and intelligence agencies raided a house in the Ghu-reza area of Jamrud

tehsil on Tuesday night. They said a terrorist present inside the house opened fire on law enforcement personnel.

Muhammad Tariq alias Khalid - the 'main handler' of the suicide bombing at the Koocha Risaldar mosque - Abdul Wajid, and Muzaffar Shah were killed in the return fire, Dawn newspaper reported, quoting an official.

In the exchange of fire, the three terrorists were killed while four others, including two handlers, managed to escape," the official said.

The police said the terrorist group was also involved in the killing of Sikh hakeem (medicine practitioner) Sardar Satnam Singh in September last year.

Singh was shot dead in his clinic on Charsadda Road in Peshawar.

US citizens seek to join foreign fighters in Ukraine

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Russia's invasion of Ukraine

has given the smaller nation's embassy in Washington an unexpected role: recruitment center for Americans who want to join the fight.

Diplomats working out of the embassy, in a townhouse in the Georgetown section of the city, are fielding thousands of offers from volunteers seeking to fight for Ukraine, even as they work on the far more pressing matter of securing weapons to defend against an increasingly brutal Russian onslaught.

"They really feel that this war is unfair, unprovoked," said Ukraine's military attaché,

Maj. Gen. Borys Kremenetskyi. "They feel that they have to go and help."

US volunteers represent just a small subset of foreigners seeking to fight for Ukraine, who in turn comprise just a tiny fraction of the international assistance that has flowed into the country.

Still, it is a reflection of the passion, supercharged in an era of social media, that the attack and the mounting civilian casualties have stirred.

"This is not mercenaries who are coming to earn money," Kremenetskyi said.

"This is people of goodwill who are coming to assist Ukraine to fight for freedom."

The US government discourages Americans from

going to fight in Ukraine, which raises legal and national security issues.

Since the February 24 invasion, the embassy in Washington has heard from at least 6,000 people inquiring about volunteering for service, the "vast majority" of them American citizens, said Kremenetskyi, who oversees the screening of potential US recruits.

Half the potential volunteers were quickly rejected and didn't even make it to the Zoom interview, the general said. They lacked the required military experience, had a criminal background or weren't suitable for other reasons such as age, including a 16-year-old boy and a 73-year-old man.

India likely to grow at 7.8%, says Crisil

New Delhi: Indian economy is expected to grow by 7.8 per cent in 2022-23, mainly driven by the government's drive to push infrastructure spending and likely increase in private capital expenditure, rating agency Crisil said on Thursday.

The rating agency, however, cautioned that the ongoing Russia Ukraine war and rising commodity prices do pose a downside risk to the growth.

The country is expected to register a growth rate of 8.9 per cent in the current fiscal ending March 31.

"Any potential upside due to the early end of a mild third wave of COVID-19 infections will be offset by the ongoing geopolitical strife stemming from Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which is creating a dampening effect on global growth and pushing up oil and commodity prices. The risks to growth are also tilted to the downside," it said.

Private consumption remains the weak link, owing to reduced direct fiscal policy support, Crisil Chief Economist Dharmakirti Joshi said while unveiling 'India Outlook, Fiscal 2023'.

As for the average Consumer Price Index (CPI)-based inflation, he said, it will stay firm at 5.4 per cent next fiscal - if the price of crude oil averages USD 85-90/barrel - and takes into account the excise duty cuts announced last year.

However, upside risks will build if the geopolitical strife prolongs, keeping oil and commodity prices higher for longer.

Interestingly, when the price of crude oil averaged USD 110/barrel between fiscals 2012 and 2014, inflation was in double digits. That situation is unlikely to repeat this time due to the relatively benign domestic prices of foodgrains following sumptuous agricultural output, and comparatively lower core inflation.

During that period, he said, food and core inflation, which together have 86 per cent weight in CPI, had averaged 9.8 per cent and 8.6 per cent, respectively.

"We believe the fiscal policy will need to be deployed more aggressively than envisaged in the Union Budget for next fiscal. This can be done by increasing allocation for employment-generating schemes and food subsidy, and cutting duty on petroleum products," Joshi said.

This can be a relief bridge for those most affected by the pandemic till such time the virtuous cycle of investment-led growth plays out in the labour market, and private consumption demand becomes self-sustaining, he noted.

The higher price of crude oil will widen India's current account deficit to 2.2 per cent in fiscal 2023, the report said, adding typically, a USD 10

increase in the price of crude oil raises the current account deficit to GDP ratio by about 40 basis points.

The near-term impact of high oil prices on inflation, assuming a significant passthrough, will be more pronounced than on growth, it said, adding all bets are off if oil stays around or above USD 100/barrel for a prolonged period.

The ripple effects of higher commodity prices have been reflected strongly in the operating profitability of India Inc during past cycles.

This time around, pass-throughs have been good and hence we expect the earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation (Ebitda) margin to sustain above 20 per cent for the second year in a row for the top 700 corporates (excluding oil and banking, financial services and insurance, or BFSI) this fiscal, as per the report.

The recovery next fiscal will be broad-based, supported by normalisation of volumes if geopolitical and other unforeseen events don't pose significant challenges, it said.

"Across consumption segments, recovery curves have been staggered and income sentiment will be the key driver. As things stand, we expect India Inc to see revenue growth of 10-14 per cent next fiscal," the report added. **PTI**

Sensex rallies for 3rd day amid Asian rebound

Mumbai: Equity benchmarks maintained their winning momentum for the third session running on Thursday, buoyed by a bullish trend in Asian markets and state election results being in line with expectations.

A strengthening rupee added to the momentum despite uncertainties related to the Ukraine crisis, traders said.

The 30-share BSE Sensex opened on a firm footing and zoomed over 1,500 points in intra-day trade, before paring some gains to end at 55,464.39, up 817.06 points or 1.50 per cent.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty jumped 249.55 points or 1.53 per cent to close at 16,594.90.

Hindustan Unilever Ltd hogged the limelight in the Sensex pack, surging 5.17 per cent, followed by Tata Steel, SBI, IndusInd Bank, Axis Bank, Bajaj Finserv, Nestle and Maruti Suzuki.

Only three counters ended in the red -- Tech Mahindra, Dr Reddy's Laboratories and TCS, slipping up to 1.28 per cent.

On the political front, the BJP raced towards a second straight win in politically crucial Uttar Pradesh and dominated the score chart in three other states -- Uttarakhand, Manipur and Goa.

The Aam Aadmi Party announced its national pres-

ence with a landslide victory in Punjab, while the Congress came a cropper.

"With hopes of progress in high-level talks between Russia and Ukraine and a surge in the Asian market, the Indian market started with a strong gap-up. The outperformance was supported by positive state election results being in line with expectations.

"However, a weak western market ahead of ECB and US CPI data and rise in crude prices added volatility in between," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

Mohit Nigam, Head - PMS, Hem Securities, said, "The market's optimism has been fuelled by the prospect of a favourable outcome from the Russia-Ukraine talks. The BJP's strong showing in the state elections encouraged the bullish mood even further."

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap and midcap indices jumped as much as 1.18 per cent.All BSE sectoral indices settled in the green, with FMCG, realty, metal and bank climbing up to 2.68 per cent.

A total of 2,433 stocks advanced, while 929 declined and 98 remained unchanged on the BSE.Asian markets followed Wall Street higher as crude oil prices retreated from multi-year highs, while Russian and Ukrainian foreign ministers began talks in Turkey. **PTI**

Rupee gains 20 paise to close at 76.42 against US dollar

Mumbai: The rupee appreciated by 20 paise to close at 76.42 (provisional) against the US dollar on Thursday, supported by positive domestic equities and trends in state election results.

At the interbank forex market, the local unit opened at 76.27 against the greenback and witnessed an intra-day high of 76.07 and a low of 76.46.

The rupee finally finished at 76.42, registering a rise of 20 paise over its previous close.

On Wednesday, the rupee had appreciated 38 paise to close at 76.62 against the US dollar following a retreat in crude oil prices and rebound in domestic equities.

Counting of votes was underway on Thursday in five states where assembly polls were held recently -- Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Goa and Manipur.

The BJP is headed for a second straight win in politically crucial Uttar Pradesh and dominated the trends chart in three other states, while the Aam Aadmi Party readied for a landslide win in Punjab. The rupee gained as risk appetite rebounded, while haven currencies slumped, said Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst, HDFC Securities. **PTI**

Telecom tribunal says TRAI's order on port out facility for users needs no interference

New Delhi: The telecom tribunal on Thursday ruled that TRAI's directive that enabled users to port out of their network via SMS request, regardless of the value of their tariff plans "requires no interference", as it dismissed a petition filed by Vodafone Idea.

The Telecom Disputes Settlement and Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT), however, asked sector regulator TRAI to provide a "reasonable time" to Vodafone Idea Ltd (VIL) to implement the impugned directions for all its subscribers, irrespective of the value of the tariff offers or vouchers.

The tribunal, in its order, said the TRAI directive dated December 7, 2021 "requires no interference" and is found to be within the regulator's powers. The tribunal was hearing VIL's appeal against the TRAI directive.

VIL's argument that by opting for a voucher or pack without SMS facility, the subscriber may choose to surrender right to avail port out facilities, "does not merit consideration", TDSAT said.

The port out or Mobile Number Portability (MNP) norm, independently creates an obligation upon access providers to facilitate all subscribers to request through SMS and avail the facility of port out

on a non-discriminatory basis. "Such obligation flows from careful reading of the MNP Regulations. TRAI cannot be faulted for issuing directions to enforce such obligations," the TDSAT order said.

The petition is, therefore, dismissed, it said.

It is pertinent to mention that in December 2021, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India or TRAI had directed telecom operators to enable port out SMS facility for all mobile users requiring it, irrespective of value of their tariff offer, vouchers, or plans they opted for.

TRAI's stern missive on smooth network portability, assumed significance as Reliance Jio had, at that time, written to the regulator complaining that the new tariff structure of VIL allegedly restricts entry-level customers to port out their mobile number from its network. TRAI had taken a strong note of telecom service companies not providing outgoing SMS facility in certain prepaid vouchers.

TDSAT, in its order on Thursday, said that reading the obligations upon operators under MNP regulations in a restricted manner as pleaded on behalf of appellant would make the norms unworkable for many subscribers. **PTI**

Govt working on fast-tracking drone adoption in farm sector: Official

New Delhi: Three concerned departments of the government are working jointly to fast track drone adoption in the farm sector, according to a senior official of the Directorate of Plant Protection, Quarantine and Storage (DPPQS) Ravi Prakash.

The Central Insecticide Board and Registration Committee (CIB&RC) under the DPPQS has received applications from eight crop protection companies seeking permission for conducting trials of drones, he said.

Discussing the issue virtually at an industry roundtable organised by CropLife India and non-profit body ThinkAg, Prakash said drones are affordable for farmers and help in superior produce.

"The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), the agriculture ministry and CIB&RC are working jointly to fast track applications and adoption of drones in the agriculture sector, including crop health monitoring and spraying of soil nutrients," Prakash having said at the roundtable discussion, according to a statement.

Industry body CropLife India CEO Asitava Sen said the policy framework on drones is in place and it is the perfect time to promote drones in the

farm sector.

"We should look into how all stakeholders can work together to help develop a conducive ecosystem for drone applications in agriculture and specifically agrochemical spraying," he said.

National Institute of Plant Health Management (NIPHM) Joint Director - Plant Health Engineering, Vidhu Kampurath P said, "NIPHM has developed a ten-day integrated training module for both flight and spraying for drone pilots and operators, which is awaiting DGCA clearance."

This will help a drone pilot getting a license for drone flying valid for 10 years. This training is both mandatory and essential to ensure optimal and proper handling of drones, he said, adding the institute is also planning to tie up with other central and state agriculture universities and institutes for a pan-India roll out.

According to Drone Federation of India President Smit Shah, "the ban on import of finished drones is a welcome step as it will help the domestic drone manufacturing industry to grow. The essential components of drones including engines and batteries still can be imported without restrictions for local manufacturing." **PTI**

Sebi comes out with list of untraceable defaulters

New Delhi: Capital markets regulator Sebi has come out with a list of 25 defaulters, who are found to be untraceable. These defaulters failed to return investors' money or failed to pay fines imposed on them by the regulator for various offences related to the securities market.

Publishing the details of the untraceable defaulters on its website on Wednesday, Sebi said the recovery certificates were drawn up against these individuals by the regulator's recovery officer. However, these notices could not be served to the defaulters at their last known addresses.

These notices were served during July 2014 to January 2022, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said. The regulator has asked these defaulters to contact Sebi's recovery officer by sending a letter or an e-mail by March 24, 2022.

"Further, if any person is aware of the whereabouts of the defaulter (s)...Detail of the same may be provided by sending a letter to the recovery officer... Or an e-mail... By March 24, 2022," it added. Sebi has powers to recover money from various entities by way of passing orders for refund of money to investors. **PTI**

Scholarship to help enterprising women engineering students

New Delhi: With an aim to enable enterprising women students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds to prepare for high-growth tech careers with fully-funded tuition scholarship and Rs 100,000 stipend, TalentSprint, an edtech company, with Google's support, announced the fourth edition of its Women Engineers programme.

For tech to truly fulfill the promise of leveling the playing field and creating universally relevant solutions, the representation of women in tech organizations is key, said Shiv Venkataraman, VP, Google. "We feel encouraged to witness the transformational journey of over 500 enthusiastic women engineering students," said Santanu Paul, Co-founder and CEO of TalentSprint.

Govt appoints SBI MD Ashwini Bhatia as Sebi member

New Delhi: The Government has appointed State Bank of India (SBI) managing director Ashwani Bhatia as whole-time member (WTM) of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the appointment of Bhatia as a member initially for a period of three years from the date of assumption of charge, sources said. With Bhatia getting appointed as WTM, there is now only one post of WTM left to be filled in SEBI, sources said.

Bhatia, who is due to retire in May, this year, was elevated as the managing director of SBI in August 2020. Prior to that, he was working as the managing director and chief executive officer of SBI Mutual Fund. He started his career with SBI in 1985 as a probationary officer. Over a 33-years tenure with SBI, he has donned many hats. **PTI**

Stocks jump, oil dips in Wall Street's latest dizzying swing

New York: Stocks are jumping, and oil prices are easing Wednesday as the big swings shaking global markets go in both directions amid uncertainty about the war in Ukraine. The S&P 500 was 2.3% higher in morning trading, following a four-day losing streak that had pulled it 13% below its record set early this year.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average was up 648 points, or 2%, at 32,281, as of 10:40 a.M. Eastern time, and the Nasdaq composite was 3.1% higher.

Such big swings have been jerking markets around in recent weeks as investors grope to guess how much economic damage Russia's invasion of Ukraine will do. The swings have struck not only day-to-day but also hour-to-hour, with some days seeing several big reversals. The chaotic movements are likely only to continue with uncertainty so high about the war in Ukraine and its ultimate economic fallout. **AP**

PUBLIC NOTICE	PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of HDFC Bank Ltd. that Mr. Sahil Gang is the owner of Commercial Shop No. 01, Ground Floor area measuring 17.84 sq. mtrs., in Block C/5-6, specified for 'Alta-Chakki, situated in the layout plan of Lawrence Road, Keshav Puram, Delhi "the said property" by virtue of Conveyance Deed dated 20.01.2017, registration No. 817. Presently he is not having Original Relinquishment deed dated 12.11.2015, Registration No. 13492. All persons are hereby informed that Mr. Sahil Gang want to take a loan facility from HDFC Bank Ltd. against the said property, if anybody has any objection/s upon the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present, Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants) 206, 1st Floor, 23, Shivaji Marg, Mori Nagar, N. Delhi-15 Ph: 011-41112527-28, shivamgupta@adccollegal.com	General public is hereby informed that <u>Sh.Niraj Kumar S/o LateSh. Krishna Chandra owner of Property/Shop Bearing No-34, land area measuring 24.5 Sq. Mtrs., situated in Village Behatwaguth, Situated in Nangli/Jind, under the Municipal Limit of Behatwaguth Municipal Corporation, Tehsil and Distt. Jhajjar, Haryana to be financed Capital Global Capital Ltd. The Original Sale Deed Dt. 25.03.1980 vide doc. No. 1674 pertaining to the aforesaid property has been lost and LAR NO. 202844/2022 has been registered on 09.03.2022 with Delhi Police.</u>
	If any person(s) have any objection(s) or claim in this property, then contact the undersigned within 7 days from date of this notice on below address, failing which, it will be assumed that there are no claims or issues in respect of the aforesaid property.
	Raghav Tiwari (Advocate) Ch. 830, Patolia House Courts, New Delhi – 110001 Mob.: +91-8076188328

NORTHERN RAILWAY			
TENDER NOTICE (Through e-tendering)			
Name of work with its location	Provision of Audio/Video Conference System at 3rd Floor Railway Board, New Delhi.		
App. Cost of the work (₹)	₹ 26,00,334.62/- only		
Earnest Money Deposit (₹)	₹ 52,000/- only		
Address of the office	Senior Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer-C, Northern Railway, 3 rd Floor, Annex-1, DRM Office, New Delhi-110055.		
Date & Time for upload the tender / closing of tender	Tender uploading / closing date & time - 24.03.2022 up to 15.00 hrs.		
Website particular & notice board location where complete details of the tender can be seen etc.	See the Northern Railway website www.ireps.gov.in & Notice board at S&T branch, 3 rd Floor, DRM Office, State Entry Road, New Delhi-110055.		
Tender No. 558-Sig-16-Tele-OT-944		Dated: 10.03.2022.	528/22
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE			

कार्यालय संयुक्त संचालक एवं अधीक्षक	
स्व. श्री लखीराम अग्रवाल स्मृति शासकीय चिकित्सा महाविद्यालय रायगढ़ (झारखण्ड) - 496001	स्व. श्री लखीराम अग्रवाल स्मृति शासकीय चिकित्सा महाविद्यालय रायगढ़ (झारखण्ड) - 496001
ई-मेल : gmcrailgarh@hospital दूरभाष : 77622-22979	
क्रमांक / कि.शा.वि. / क्रम / 2022 / 2220	रायगढ़, दिनांक :- 28.02.2022
// दितीय निविदा सूचना //	
कार्यालय संयुक्त संचालक एवं अधीक्षक, स्व. श्री लखीराम अग्रवाल स्मृति शासकीय चिकित्सा महाविद्यालय संबद्ध कि. शास. चिकित्सालय, रायगढ़ (झणग) की ओर से चिकित्सालय के वार्डों / मरीजों, चिकित्सालय में संचालित विभिन्न स्वास्थ्य योजनाओं, पेशानों के लिए तात्कालिक आधार पर आवश्यक औषधी / सर्जिकल-कन्स्यूमेबल सामग्री दर अनुबंध (Rate Contract) कर क्रय किये जाने हेतु स्थानीय अधिकृत विक्रेताओं से मुखरब्ध निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा प्रपत्र अघोष्टाह्वारकर्ता कार्यालय में आवेदन के साथ वेब जीएसटी प्रमाण पत्र तथा निविदा शुल्क रुपये 3000 (तीन हजार रु) अघोष्टाह्वारकर्ता के नाम डीडी./ बैंकर्स चेक के रूप में मूलतः प्रस्तुत कर निर्धारित तिथि तक कार्यालयीन दिवस एवं समय में प्राप्त किये जा सकेंगे।	
निविदा प्रपत्र की तिथि	दिनांक 04.03.2022 से 01.04.2022 तक
निविदा जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि	दिनांक 05.04.2022 समय दोपहर 12:00 बजे तक
निविदा खोलने की तिथि	दिनांक 05.04.2022 समय दोपहर 01:00 बजे
विस्तृत जानकारी हेतु वेबसाइट www.gmcrailgarh.edu.in में अवलोकन करें	
हस्ता / -	
संयुक्त संचालक एवं अधीक्षक	
स्व. श्री लखीराम अग्रवाल स्मृति शासकीय चिकित्सा महाविद्यालय संबद्ध कि. शास. चिकित्सालय, रायगढ़ (झणग)	
R.O. No:- 68547/3	
R.O. Date:- 09/03/2022	

कार्यालय-कार्यपालन अभियंता			
लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकी खण्ड – जशपुर (झत्तीसगढ़)			
ई-प्रोक्युरमेंट निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना			
एकीकृत पंजीयन प्रणाली अंतर्गत चपकृत श्रेणी में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु ऑनलाइन (Online) निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है :-			
कार्य का नाम :- जशपुर जिले के निम्नलिखित विकासखण्डों में एकल ग्राम नल जन प्रदाय योजना अन्तर्गत 63 से 75 मिमी. व्यास के HDPE पाईप 20 मिमी व्यास के कंपोजिट पाईप एवं 80 मि.मी. व्यास के यू.पी.वी.सी पाईप 6&10 kg/cm ² , स्प्रेशल सॉलिट प्रदाय कर जोड़ने, बिछाने, इन्टरकनेक्शन रेस्टिंग क्लोसीनेटर स्थापना, क्लोसीनेटर रुम, स्वीच रूम, रेनोवेशन, फरेन नल कनेक्शन एवं अन्य संबंधित समस्त कार्य, 6 माह ट्रायल रन सहित स्वीकृत रोडव्युल अनुरा।			
क्र.	निविदा क्र./दिनांक/ सितरण नाम	योजना का नाम	अनुमानित लागत (रु. लाख में)
1.	628 / 04.03.2022 94248	विकासखण्ड कुकुर्ली के ग्राम डोरागानी एवं खासिखिरा के विभिन्न बसाहटों में एकल ग्राम नलजन प्रदाय योजना FHTC 146 नग	33.91 25450 / -
2.	627 / 04.03.2022 94532	विकासखण्ड फरसाहलर के ग्राम उपकरा के विभिन्न बसाहटों में एकल ग्राम नलजन प्रदाय योजना FHTC 405 नग	168.68 126550 / -
3.	628 / 0.03.2022 94533	विकासखण्ड फरसाहलर के ग्राम जामोली एवं अमाकलर के विभिन्न बसाहटों में एकल ग्राम नलजन प्रदाय योजना FHTC 555 नग	175.71 131800 / -
उपरोक्त निर्माण कार्य की ऑनलाइन (Online) निविदा दिनांक 23.03.222 तक आमंत्रित की जाती है। जल जीवन मिशन कार्य की निविदा की सामान्य शर्तें, विस्तृत निविदा विवरण, निविदा दस्तावेज एवं अन्य जानकारी ई-प्रोक्युरमेंट वेब पोर्टल https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in पर देखी जा सकती है।			
		हस्ता / -	कार्यालय अभियंता
		R.O. No:- 68550/4	लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकी खण्ड
		R.O. Date:- 09/03/2022	जशपुर (झत्तीसगढ़)

HDB Financial Services Limited
 **HDB FINANCIAL SERVICES**

Ground Floor, Zenith House, Keshavrao Khadye Marg,
 Mahalaxmi, Mumbai - 400034 Tel No.: +91 22 49116300
FINAL AUCTION CUM SALE NOTICE FOR GOLD ORNAMENTS

The borrower(s) (whose details are provided in the table herein below), in particular, and the public, in general, are hereby informed that the below mentioned accounts are overdue, and the borrowers/account holders have not responded/complied with the communication, and notice send by HDB Financial Services Limited (the "Company") requesting the borrower to clear his/her dues as per the documents in respect of the below mentioned loan signed/accepted by the borrower(s) [such documents, collectively "loan agreement"] and therefore defaulted in terms thereof. The Company has in exercise of its rights as a pledgee, decided to enforce the pledge and therefore hold a public auction of the gold ornaments pledged to the company as security for the loan for the purpose of selling the same and realizing/recovering the dues owned by the borrower(s) to the company. The auction will be conducted on **16-03-2022** at the below mentioned local branch of HDB Financial Services Limited from 11.00 am onwards on the date and branches mentioned in the below table:-

S. No.	Loan No	Customer Name	Date of Loan	Overdue Amount Rs.	Branch Name
1	8673423	Manish Chaurasiya	27-08-2019	9609.63	Delhi NCR-Burari
2	12834453	Dinesh Prasad	17-10-2020	15175	Delhi-Badarpur
3	11441146	Suraj Sukhdevyadav	28-05-2020	14492	Delhi-Bhajangpura
4	13282619	Afzal Ahmed	19-11-2020	39180	Delhi-Chandni Chowk
5	17223432	Noshad Nasruddin	26-08-2021	7104	Delhi-Dilshad Garden
6	17271680	Keshav Bhatti	27-08-2021	7806	Delhi-Dilshad Garden
7	16971669	Jay Singh	24-08-2021	18120	Delhi-Dilshad Garden
8	18443231	Surjeet Singh	13-10-2021	14560	Delhi-Dilshad Garden
9	15762770	Shamshad K	25-06-2021	21495	Delhi-Jagatpuri
10	13381715	Anil Jain	27-11-2020	8466	Delhi-Kailash Nagar
11	17094240	Achin Jain	20-08-2021	12530	Delhi-Kailash Nagar
12	17754593	Nischal Sadh	17-09-2021	5300	Delhi-Kailash Nagar
13	12965943	Nischal Sadh	28-10-2020	19858	Delhi-Kailash Nagar
14	16617578	Aqib Abbas	31-07-2021	22368	Delhi-Kamia Nagar
15	17190717	Saurav Maurya	25-08-2021	28368	Delhi-Kamia Nagar
16	12599885	Manish K	26-09-2020	5656	Delhi-Kamia Nagar
17	12505206	Raju Man	18-09-2020	22504	Delhi-Kashmiri Gate
18	16047747	Shelly S	08-07-2021	21940	Delhi-Kashmiri Gate
19	12898813	Ravinder Singh	22-10-2020	334428	Delhi-Malviya Nagar
20	6240715	Sunil G	30-12-2018	10512.17	Delhi-Nai Sadak
21	18061503	Rahul Gupta	27-09-2021	21592	Delhi-Nangloi
22	13016824	Sudhir Tiwari	07-11-2020	74278	Delhi-Nangloi
23	10562850	Rajesh R	18-01-2020	5281	Delhi-Nangloi
24	16877844	Sonu S S	13-08-2021	15276	Delhi-Nangloi
25	11833674	Sanju K	10-07-2020	46615	Delhi-Patel Nagar
26	11863072	Rakesh Kumar Mandal	14-07-2020	15828	Delhi-Patel Nagar
27	16690932	Muslim Khan	05-08-2021	25960	Delhi-Ramesh Nagar
28	12820605	Ravi Kumar	17-10-2020	89765	Delhi-Sadar
29	13867310	Mukesh Kumar	12-01-2021	89662	Delhi-Sadar
30	16971018	Ramesh Chand	16-08-2021	17862	Delhi-Sadar
31	14613997	Meenu Bharti	15-03-2021	23494	Delhi-Sadar
32	16785251	Anil A	11-08-2021	30418	Delhi-Shahdara
33	14095065	Robin Wadhwa	30-01-2021	11705	Delhi-Shahdara
34	12638059	Suresh Chand Gupta	30-09-2020	17470	Delhi-Tilak Nagar
35	12982111	Jitesh Malhotra	30-10-2020	279770	Delhi-Tilak Nagar
36	12808239	Kamal Rehani	10-08-2020	33700	Delhi-Uttam Nagar
37	16635032	Amrit Kumar	03-08-2021	14244	Delhi-Uttam Nagar
38	17194722	Sharvan Kumar	30-08-2021	7296	Delhi-Uttam Nagar
39	14569205	Ram Shankar Sah	10-03-2021	15855	Delhi-Uttam Nagar

The auction shall be conducted on an "AS IS WHERE" and "AS IS WHAT IT" basis and the Company is not making and shall not make any representation or warranties as regards the quality, purity, caratage, weight or valuation of the said gold ornaments. It shall be the sole responsibility of the potential purchaser to verify, examine and satisfy themselves about the quality, purity, caratage, weight or valuation of the said gold ornaments prior to placing their bid and for such purpose it shall be open to potential purchasers to examine, at their sole cost and expense, and at the address set out herein above, the gold ornaments whether with or without expert advice 45 minutes prior to the time stipulated for the conduct of the auction. All the bid shall be subjected to such minimum reserve price as the company may deem fit to fix in this regards. The auction process and sale (if any) pursuant to such auction shall be subjected to such further terms and condition as the company may at sole discretion deem fit to impose.

If the borrower(s) mentioned above pays the amount due to the Company in terms of the loan agreement in his individual loan account in full before the auction as mentioned above, the pledged ornaments securing the said loan may be withdrawn from the said auction without further notice. Please note the it is the absolute discretionary power of the undersigned authorized officer of the company, either to postpone or to cancel the auction proceeding without prior notice and without assigning any reason thereof and to reject any or all the bids or offer without assigning any reason for the same.

Date : DELHI
Place : 11-03-2022

Authorised Officer
(HDB Financial Services Ltd)

A PUFF OF GASTRONOMY

The flavourful Signature Luncheons by Spicy Duck are best enjoyed with friends on a leisurely afternoon, says SAMEER BAWA



If your definition of a leisurely weekday afternoon is similar to Hong Kong's version of 'Yum Cha' where you enjoy dim sum and hot tea with friends, then I have got news for you. No, I have not discovered a 'Dai Pai Dong' in Delhi. On the contrary, Spicy Duck, the fine dining Asian restaurant at Taj Palace, New Delhi has launched 'Signature Luncheons' where they are celebrating the best of Sichuan and Cantonese flavours with a specially curated four-course menu that commences with an assortment of handcrafted dim sum, followed by 'Soup of the day', a Claypot meal bowl and finally a dessert.

Intrigued by the offer, I went in for lunch with a few friends a couple of days ago. We started with the *Prawn wonton*, *Steamed lamb & celery dumpling*, *Poached chicken & pakchoi dumpling* and the *Seafood corn puff*. All the dumplings were very well-balanced and flavourful but the object of my affection was the *Seafood corn puff*. It had a soft, crusty and flaky exterior with a soulful seafood mix at the core. You can enjoy it as it is, dip it in soy or glaze it with some chilli seed sauce. It is absolutely brilliant. I even tried some veg dumplings courtesy of one of our friends who is a 'pure vegetarian' and I was pleasantly surprised. The steamed edamame, water chestnut and truffle oil dumpling was so flavourful yet comforting. Even the *Barbecue vegetable bun* was top notch although I must confess that nothing beats a *Char siu bao* (Cantonese BBQ pork-filled bun). But yes, I just wanted to make a point that the restaurant has equally good and enjoyable vege-



tarian preparations when we talk about the dim sum selection. The 'Soup of the Day' is next on the roster. If it's a cold and nippy winter afternoon, a soup really comforts your soul. In my case, I was already in the flavour hangover of the dim sum selection and I did not want to get out of it.

The soup did help neutralise the palate and rev it up for Southern China inspired Claypot meal bowls. One can select from an array of aromatic preparations. You have *Kung pao tofu*, *Dry red chilli*, *pepper and black mushroom*, *Broccoli carrot and oyster sauce* in the vegetarian options. In the non-vegetar-

ian selection, you can choose between *Wok tossed prawn in spicy coriander, ginger sauce, fresh red chilli and Yunnan lamb, spring onion and celery*. I chose the lamb preparation which was served in a charming traditional earthenware. The warm and aromatic broth is poured over the succulent chunks of lamb resting on a bed of noodles and veggies. Can't go wrong, can you? While I generally prefer robust preparations, I loved this light, fragrant and delicious concoction. The kitchen is led by Chef Thanglawm Valte under the guidance of legendary executive chef Rajesh Wadhwa and they ensure that they use homemade mixes and infused oils for cooking with minimalistic use of condiments to impart lightness to the preparations. Most of the ingredients including spices and vegetables are sourced from the country of origin to keep the preparations authentic to its roots.

We concluded our meal on a sweet note with the *Darsan, walnut caramel, chilled pomelo and mango sago* dessert and polished off a few cups of *Jasmine tea* while discussing the current geo-political scenario and sports. All in all, it was a lovely afternoon around friends laced with glutinous and harmless banter. I strongly recommend you to try out the 'Signature Luncheons' menu at Spicy Duck. Priced at ₹1,900++ per person (Monday-Friday), I feel it's a steal deal if you look at the quality and variety of preparations. Be it a lazy afternoon out with family or a business meeting over lunch with clients, the curated experience fits the bill perfectly.

(The author is a food critic.)



SAY NO TO SUGAR

Stevia adds the right amount of sweetness without the calories, says PRATHAMESH KRISHANG

Sugar has been the most prominent ingredient in every Indian's daily diet. Its consumption starts right from the beginning of the day as tea, coffee or any other form and continues till the very end of the day. Every Indian meal includes one or more sweet dishes, making sugar a staple food item in every household. However, this has led to increased health concerns and issues. Hence, health-conscious people opt to reduce their sugar intake, as a first step, with the aim to inculcate a healthy lifestyle. People want to reduce it slowly or step by step to reach the goal of 'zero sugar'.

They face a lot of difficulty in curbing sugar craving because, even if it's a very small amount, its consumption is consistent. This is one hurdle that marks every New Year's resolution and health goal i.e they are unable to find the right source to supplement their energy and sweetness needs. This leads to consistent consumption of sugar through other sources such as jaggery or honey. Although raw and refined jaggery has digestive benefits, it is not one of the best substitutes for sugar, in terms of calorie density or its glycemic index.

Among the natural sources to supplement the sweet factor, which could create a balance between sweetness and health, is the lesser-known natural alternative called stevia. It has not been known for long in India as a natural source of sweetness. This lack of awareness has kept people away from using it in their diets.

However, stevia has been in use for 1,500 years by South American communities. However, the Government of India had initially miscategorised it as artificial sugar. This contributed to the confusion and underestimated the usage and importance of stevia in Indian households and, as a result, the usage of sugar, jaggery, honey and even brown sugar remained high in Indian households.

Stevia is the most practical and natural source of sweetness. It is about 150-300 per cent sweeter than conventional sugar and other sources. Additionally, its sweetness contributes to zero-calorie intake making it one of the healthiest alternatives to sugar and promoter of a sugar-free lifestyle.

WHY STEVIA?

The highest quality of stevia is found in the Himalayan ranges. It contains steviol glycosides, a chemical compound responsible for sweetness in the stevia leaves. The high and addictive intake of sugar is generally due to neurological reactions. The mesolimbic dopamine system/the reward system of the brain propels individuals to consume more sugar. Stevia eliminates the addictiveness and

side effects of sugar while providing health benefits for Indians in the best way possible.

As the awareness and information regarding stevia is spread, it is being adopted in the Indian market as health and fitness enthusiasts are turning to it to fulfill their sweet needs. Moreover, it's not just the individuals, but also the industrial players — like Amul, Mother Dairy, PepsiCo, Coca-Cola — among others who are turning to stevia as a zero-calorie sugar alternative for their products. All this has contributed efficiently to making communities consider stevia as a substitute for sugar intake.

In recent times the Indian market has experienced a surge in stevia products. The early issues of inaccessibility of stevia too have been resolved leading to its increased consumption. One of the most apparent and major issues with the less consumption of stevia till now has been its adaptation in the market. Manufacturers were unable to create ready to use, natural and acceptable forms. As consumers are used to crystallised and/or powdered forms of sugar, hence the concept of stevia leaves (available largely in form of drops) as a sweetener was not adopted by the masses.

Nowadays, variants of stevia such as powder and drops in place of powdered sugar can be used in *halwa*, *kheer* and other milk-based desserts, common food items in any Indian household. For snacks, there are many alternatives sweetened with stevia and 100 per cent natural.

Stevia with zero glycemic indexes and zero calories is considered safe for diabetic patients. This property contributes to a reduction in many sugar-related health issues among people.

As a result, its market size has expanded exponentially in recent years and is forecasted to grow at a CAGR of 8.95 per cent between 2021-2028 while claiming a \$1.1 billion market capacity by 2028.

In recent times stevia has been considered for the F&B industry and the Indian Government has also taken steps to promote stevia farming. However, its usage has not been limited to just these domains. It has been expanding in various countries with 40 per cent of the Japanese sweetener market constituting stevia and the increase in its usage in the USA.

Hence, stevia is more than sugar. It is sweeter, it is healthy and eliminates the toxic side effects of sugar without compromising on taste. It promotes India's sweetness culture and good health by reducing sugar-related health issues. That's why stevia has come to be known as the king of all sweeteners.

(The author is the co-founder, Magicleaf.)

RECIPES



CLASSIC CACAO BALLS

WHAT YOU NEED

- Raw almonds soaked and dried: 1/2 cup
- Raw walnuts soaked and dried: 1/2 cup
- Sattu: 1 cup
- Raw cacao powder: 2 tbsp
- Pink Himalayan salt: 1/4 to 1/2 tsp
- Dates chopped: 3/4 cup
- Water: 1-2 tbsp

METHOD

- Pulse the almonds, walnuts, sattu, cacao and salt in a food processor until the nuts break down and combine with the other ingredients.
- Add the dates and a tablespoon of water and run the food processor until the

mixture becomes thick and sticky.

- You should be able to squeeze a bit of the mixture between your fingers. If it's too loose and crumbly, add another tablespoon of water and process until everything comes together.
- Scoop pieces of the mixture and roll it into balls between your palms, slightly smaller than the size of a golf ball.
- Line them up on the baking sheet and place it in the refrigerator to chill for at least an hour, overnight if possible.
- Sprinkle some fresh/dry coconut over the balls. (optional)
- Store the raw cacao energy balls in an airtight container in the refrigerator or freezer.

Courtesy: Luke Coutinho, Co-founder of You Care Lifestyle

KOKUM COOLANT

WHAT YOU NEED

- Dried kokum unsalted: 6-8 pieces
- Pink salt: To taste
- Hing (asafoetida): A pinch
- Green chillies crushed (optional): 1/2 tsp
- Curry leaves: 3-4
- Thin coconut milk: 1 cup
- Cumin seeds: ½ tsp
- Grated ginger: ½ tsp
- Crushed garlic (optional)

METHOD

- Soak kokum in warm water or normal water for a few minutes

and later extract the kokum water (just like extracting tamarind juice).

- Transfer the kokum water to a bowl and add coconut milk, pink salt, hing and mix it well.
- Take freshly crushed green chillies, ginger, and garlic in a strainer and dip it in kokum water so as to extract its flavors.
- Now add little coconut oil to a pan for tempering. When the oil is hot enough, add cumin seeds, curry leaves and mix them in the kokum mixture.
- Kokum coolant is ready to serve!

Courtesy: Luke Coutinho, Co-founder of You Care Lifestyle



HONEY NUT QUINOA BOWL

WHAT YOU NEED

- Honey: 1 tbsp
- Cooked quinoa: 50 gm
- Chia seeds: 1 tbsp
- Almond/coconut milk or milk of choice: 1 cup
- Chopped peach/ kiwi/ or other seasonal fruits
- Small chopped banana: 1
- Toasted almonds, cashews: 1 tbsp
- Cacao nibs: 1 tbsp
- Granola: 1-2 tbsp

METHOD

- In a bowl, stir together the milk and honey.
- Add the cooked quinoa, chia



seeds, cacao nibs refrigerate overnight or for two hours.

- When ready to eat, top with fruits, and granola.
- Drizzle some honey over it before serving.

Courtesy: Organic India

RAINBOW HONEY CHICKPEA SALAD

WHAT YOU NEED

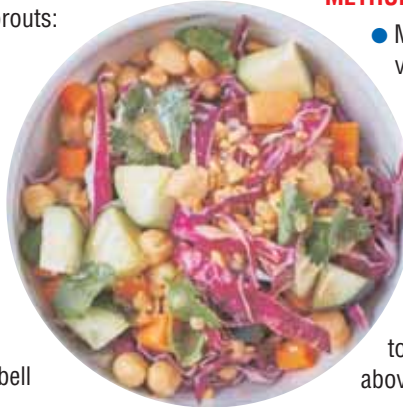
- Honey: 1 tbsp
- Boiled chickpeas: 100 gm
- Whole moong sprouts: 100 gm
- Apple cider vinegar: 2 tbsp
- Rock salt: To taste
- Small cut cottage cheese cubes: 50 gm
- Chopped red bell pepper: 50 gm
- Chopped yellow bell pepper: 50 gm
- Chopped green bell pepper: 50 gm
- Grated carrot, chopped cucumber:

50 gm

- Chopped tomato and onion: 50 gm
- Olive oil: 2 tbsp
- Apple cider vinegar: 2 tsp

METHOD

- Mix apple cider vinegar, honey, oil and salt in a bowl well.
- In a big bowl mix boiled chickpea, moong sprouts, cottage cheese and chopped salads together and add the above mixture well.
- The high protein, fibre and the salad is ready to serve.



Courtesy: Organic India

AP ■ MADRID

Real Madrid pulled off one of the great Champions League comebacks on Wednesday as Karim Benzema scored a breath-taking hat-trick to upstage Kylian Mbappe and dump Paris Saint-Germain out in the last 16.

Madrid were set to be the latest victims of another Mbatppe master-class at the Santiago Bernabeu after the 23-year-old ran them ragged for the best part of an hour and fired in to put PSG 1-0 up on the night, 2-0 ahead on aggregate.

But Madrid came storming back as Benzema capitalised on a mistake by PSG goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma and then scored an incredible double in two minutes, the third coming just eight seconds after PSG had kicked off.

When the full-time whistle confirmed their 3-2 aggregate victory, many of Madrid's players dropped to their knees and looked up to the sky, as much perhaps in disbelief as joy, after completing one of the most memorable turnarounds in the club's recent history.

All eyes were on Mbappe, who was the only player to be cheered by Madrid's fans before the game as they were gifted an up-close preview of the player they hope will be theirs this summer.

Mbatppe delivered, scoring a superb goal, not to mention a spell-binding second that was disallowed

Magical night in Madrid

Benzema scores second half hat-trick to help Los Blancos make a stunning comeback and beat PSG 3-2 on aggregate to reach Champions League quarterfinal

for offside when he bamboozled Thibaut Courtois with a magical dummy-finish.

To think he might not even have been 100 per cent here after a knock in training on Monday temporarily put his involvement in



doubt.

But what looked set to become an exhibition of the world's deadliest player instead became another remarkable European night for Real Madrid, who showed again why they consider this to be their com-petition.

Madrid clearly wanted to hit PSG hard form the start, with Dani Carvajal leaping and waving his hands at the crowd in an attempt to generate a wave of noise.

For a while, it worked, Vinicius Junior tearing down the left and Fede Valverde bulldozing through

Mbatppe, but the surge was brief. PSG killed Madrid's momentum, pushed them back and took com-plete control.

Mbatppe sped clear for the first time in the eighth minute, Neymar curling a ball into the space on the left. The stadium held its breath,

Mbatppe made space but this time hit Courtois.

Madrid dropped off but ceded control. Mbatppe nipped past Eder Militao and Courtois saved. A love-ly interchange between Lionel Messi and Marco Verratti gave Neymar a sight of goal but Courtois was there again.

PSG were comfortable now, dictating the play and sensing the trepidation. Madrid had openings, Benzema curling just wide, but all over the pitch they looked slower, heavier, more cumbersome.

Messi skipped through and scooped wide before Mbatppe had his first of two goals ruled out, driv-ing into the corner only to see the flag raised.

The goal, though, felt inevitable and in the 39th minute, it came. Carvajal lost the ball upfield and with Madrid committed, Neymar arced another brilliant pass over the top.

By the time he reached it, Mbatppe only had David Alaba in front of him and as he shaped to bend into the far corner he instead fired early, whipping a deadly shot past Courtois and inside the near post.

Madrid tried to reset at half-time but Mbatppe carried on where he left off with a brilliant, but dis-allowed, goal.

He fooled Courtois with an astonishing dummy shot, beating the Belgian without even touching

the ball and slammed in. The flag went up but the stadium was astounded.

The game was becoming less a contest, more an Mbatppe exhibition but then Benzema, out of nowhere, dragged Madrid back into the tie.

He chased Nuno Mendes' back-pass to Donnarumma, who skewed under pressure. Vinicius was able to collect and cut back to Benzema, who slotted home.

Suddenly, there was hope again, the crowd on their feet roaring Madrid on. Vinicius shot over when the ball cannoned kindly to him in the box. Luka Modric tracked Messi and slid him into touch.

It was Modric who inspired Madrid's second too, a scintillating run through midfield allowing Vinicius to race clear down the left. He scooped back inside to Modric, whose exquisite reverse pass found Benzema, who finished.

Madrid were level on aggregate, the goal confirmed after a check from VAR. Then eight seconds later, incredibly, they were ahead. PSG squandered possession from kick-off, Rodrygo released Vinicius and Marquinhos' attempted clearance found Benzema, who steered into the corner.

"This is how Madrid win," the fans began to sing. They fell quiet when Messi stood over a free-kick in injury time but the ball curled over and the cheers began again.

Medvedev feels pressure, motivation as No 1

AP ■ LOS ANGELES

Daniil Medvedev, who will contest his first tournament as world number one at the Indian Wells ATP Masters, says he's matured since his loss to Rafael Nadal in the Australian Open final.

In the wake of his crushing loss to the Spanish star in Melbourne -- where Nadal rallied from two sets down to win a record 21st Grand Slam title -- Medvedev complained about "disre-spectful" fans.

But on Wednesday at Indian Wells he said that those comments -- which came after he was fined US\$12,000 for an out-burst at the chair umpire in his semi-final win over Stefanos Tsitsipas -- were made



in the heat of the disappointing moment.

"It made me mature, the Australian Open," the 26-year-old said. "I under-stood I had a lot to work on myself." Medvedev officially ascended to world number one on February 28 -- days after his rise was assured when Novak Djokovic fell in the quarter-finals at Dubai.

Playing in the Mexico Open at Acapulco at the time, Medvedev was unable to celebrate the achievement with a title, stopped once again by Nadal in the championship match.

The two could meet again in the semi-finals at Indian Wells, where Djokovic is absent due to US government Covid-19 travel regulations.

Djokovic, who is not vaccinated, didn't formally withdraw from the tourna-ment until Wednesday, when women's first-round action was underway and the men's draw had already been made.

The five-time Indian Wells champi-on was replaced in the draw by lucky loser Grigor Dimitrov.

Medvedev acknowledged that there was "a lot of pressure" in playing as the world's top-ranked player "but at the same time a lot of motivation," he said.

While he'll have No 1 beside his name, he won't have the Russian flag, after tennis authorities ruled that Russian and Belarusian players can't compete under the names or flags of their coun-tries in the wake of Russia's invasion of

Ukraine.

"I want to play tennis, play in differ-ent countries -- I want to promote my sport," Medvedev said. Right now the sit-uation is that's the only way I can play, so that's what I'm going to do."

He also reiterated his desire for peace as fighting raged for a 15th day in Ukraine.

"My message is always the same - I want peace in all of the world," Medvedev said. "I think every tennis player is going to say the same."

The conflict is certain to cast its shad-ow over Indian Wells, where a dozen players from Russia and four from Belarus are entered along with four from Ukraine.



Chelsea owner Abramovich hit by UK sanctions

AP ■ LONDON

Chelsea Football Club's Russian owner Roman Abramovich was on Thursday hit with a UK assets freeze and travel ban, throwing his plans to sell the European and world club champions into disarray.

The billionaire owner of the English Premier League side was one of seven oligarchs slapped with restrictions over Russia's Ukraine invasion, including his former business partner Oleg Deripaska.

Others sanctioned were Rosneft chief executive Igor Sechin, whom the British government described as Russian President Vladimir Putin's "right-hand man", and the head of Gazprom Alexei Miller.

Also on the list were VTB bank chairman Andrey Kostin, Transneft president Nikolai Tokarev and Bank Rossiya chairman Dmitri Lebedev. London said the seven have a collec-tive net worth of about £15 billion (\$19.7 billion, 17.8 billion euros) and described them all as part of Putin's inner circle.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson has been accused of delaying action against wealthy Russians, and turning a blind eye to Russian money that has coursed through London since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

He called the sanctions "the latest step in the UK's unwavering support for the Ukrainian peo-ple" while Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said they showed that "oligarchs and kleptocrats have no place in our economy and society".

"With their close links to Putin they are com-PLICIT in his aggression. The blood of the Ukrainian people is on their hands.

Jamshedpur FC enjoys edge over Kerala Blasters in 1st leg of ISL semis

PTI ■ MARGAO

A maiden League Shield title already in its grasp, Jamshedpur FC, one of the con-sistent teams in the tourna-ment, will look to take a step closer to their first Indian Super League (ISL) crown when they face Kerala Blasters FC in the first leg of their semifinal at the PJN Stadium here on Friday.

Making their first ap-pearance in the last-four of the ISL, Jamshedpur FC are in stunning form under head coach Owen Coyle, having won seven conse-cutive matches.

In the process, Jamshedpur also sealed the top spot and picked up their first League Winners' Shield after beating ATK Mohun Bagan 1-0 in its final league stage game.

Kerala Blasters, on the other hand, are making a semifinal appearance after six years. The Tuskers come into the tie after



playing a physically draining 4-4 draw against FC Goa in their last clash, which led them to fin-ish fourth in the league table.

The contests between the two sides have been so evenly fought that six out of 10 match-es have ended in draws.

Jamshedpur FC have record-ed three wins while Kerala Blasters FC have managed one. Last time when both these team met, JFC came on top by beat-

ing Kerala 3-0 in the league stage match.

Coyle's men are unbeaten against the Blasters this season.

Having won their last seven games, the Men of Steel are in red-hot form going into the semifinals, knocking out every team they have faced recently.

For Jamshedpur, Greg Stewart and Ritwik Das will be the key players.

Stewart has already proven

why he is one of the best sign-ings in the Hero ISL 2021-22, having scored and assisted 10 times each this season. As far as the stats are concerned, he was involved in almost 50 per cent of the total goals scored by Jamshedpur FC.

Ritwik, the 25-years old Asansol born midfielder, too has been exceptional for JFC in the last few matches. In this season, he has already scored four goals and assisted in one.

On the other hand, Vukomanovic's Blasters have also suffered due to inconsisten-cy.

They have won just two of their last five matches, having also lost once during this peri-od. They ended their league stage campaign on fourth spot with 34 points from 20 match-es.

Adrian Luna and Jorge Diaz are the players to watch out for Kerala Blasters.

Skill India, Khelo India, Fit India schemes laid foundation of strong India: Thakur

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Sports and Youth Affairs Minister Anurag Thakur on Thursday said schemes like Skill India, Khelo India and Fit India have imparted skills to crores of youth in the country and helped in laying the foundation of a strong India. While addressing the inaugural session of National round of third edition of National Youth Parliament Festival (NYPF) 2022 in the central hall of Parliament, Thakur also lauded the youth, who partici-pated in the various rounds of Youth Parliament. "Theme of this year's National Youth Parliament Festival is 'be the voice of New India and find solutions and contribute to Policy'. I urge all of you to focus on champi-oning a cause ranging from solid waste management, eliminating hunger, gen-der equality, affordable and clean energy, clean water and sanitation," Thakur said. "As we mark Azaadi ka Amrit Mahotsav, I also urge you to dis-cuss the progress we have made so far and envisage solutions to transform



India when we mark India @ 100 years of independence. "What can the youth do in the field of health, sports, media, transportation, infrastructure, foreign affairs that will transform lives for a billion people? What can 1 billion people contribute to the future of humanity and 'ease of living'? Thakur said taking forward the ideol-ogy of Swami Vivekananda, the National Youth Parliament has played a key role in building leadership qual-ities among the youth.

Para shuttler Sukant Kadam leapfrogs to world no 2 spot in SL 4 category

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian para shuttler Sukant Kadam has achieved world no 2 ranking in SL 4 category following his exploits in the international cir-cuit in the last three months.

Kadam had claimed gold medals at Uganda Para International tournament, National Para Badminton Tournament and the recently-concluded Spanish Para badminton International II.

"I am really excited on becom-ing world no 2, I have trained real-ly hard to reach here, but this is just the start of my journey. Right now, my focus is performing and giving my best in this tournament. This is an important year and I wish I con-tinue performing at this high level," Kadam said in a release.

The Indian kick started his Spanish Para Badminton International 2022 Grade I tourna-ment on Thursday with an easy 21-13 21-11 win over Germany's Marcel Adam.

He had previously defeated Adam in straight sets in the Spanish Para badminton International II last week to clinch the gold.

In the rankings chart, Kadam is behind French Lucas Mazur, who is currently world no 1 in the SL 4 category.

Srikanth wins in German Open

PTI ■ MUELHEIM AN DER RUHR (GERMANY)

World championships sil-ver winner Kidambi Srikanth progressed to the men's singles quarterfinals but P V Sindhu and Saina Nehwal crashed out of the women's competition follow-ing second-round losses in the German Open Super 300 bad-minton tournament here on Thursday.

Srikanth, a former world no 1 and seeded eighth here, prevailed 21-16 21-23 21-18 over China's Lu Guang Zu in a second round match.

He will next face Olympic champion and top seed Viktor Axelsen of Denmark, who beat France's Toma Junior Popov 21-17 21-10 in anoth-er match.

The seventh seeded Sindhu, a 2019 World Champion, however, suffered a shock 14-21 21-15 14-21 loss against China's Zhang Yi Man in 55 minutes in the women's singles second round.

Saina, who has been struggling with fitness issues, also proved no match against eighth seeded Thai Ratchanok Intanon, going down 10-21 15-21 in a lop-sided contest.

Srikanth, who was forced

In the decider, Srikanth was 10-5 up and though Lu made it 15-14 at one stage, the Indian quickly wrest back control and shut the doors on his rival to extend his head-to-head count to 3-0 over Lu.



to pull out of the India Open after testing positive for COVID-19, dished out a grit-ty performance to outlast his world no 27 opponent in a thrilling match that lasted an hour and seven minutes.

The Indian made a good start, opening up a 8-3 lead early on but Lu made a late charge before Srikanth man-aged to enter the break at 11-10.

The duo were locked at 14-14 after the interval when Srikanth stepped ahead with

a four-point burst to seal the opening game.

After lagging initially, Srikanth managed to eke out a 15-11 lead in the second game but Lu kept fighting for each point and eventually snatched the second game after saving a match point to stay alive in the contest.

In the decider, Srikanth was 10-5 up and though Lu made it 15-14 at one stage, the Indian quickly wrest back control and shut the doors on

his rival to extend his head-to-head count to 3-0 over Lu.

Earlier in the day, it proved to be a disappointing start to the European leg for Sindhu, who will be one of the contenders at next week's All England Championships.

The Indian couldn't get going as Zhang broke off at 5-5 and jumped to a 11-5 lead with six straight points. She kept her nose ahead to pock-et the opening game without much ado.

Krrish, Ravi enter finals of Asian Youth & Junior Boxing Championships

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian boxers Krrish Pal I (46kg) and Ravi Saini (48kg) progressed to the junior boys' finals with contrasting victories at the Asian Youth and Junior Boxing Championships in Amman, Jordan on Thursday.

While Krrish dominated Thailand's Kangpi Bokhunthod, winning com-fortably by unanimous deci-sion, Saini worked hard for a close 3-2 win over Kazakhstan's Bexultan Boranbek.

In the finals, Krrish and Ravi will take on Tajikistan's Anushervon Fazylov and Ilkhomjon Ergashev of Uzbekistan respectively.

Later tonight, seven more Indian junior boxers -- Jayant Dagar (54kg), Chetan (57kg), Yashwardhan Singh (60kg), Jackson Singh Laishram (70kg), Dev Pratap Singh (75kg), Rishabh Singh Shikharwar (80kg), Gaurav Mhaske (+80kg) -- will be in action in the boys semi-finals.

India's junior boxers have secured 21 medals, 12 in girls and nine in boys categories, at the prestigious continental



event. Among girls, 11 have progressed into the final.

In the youth women's semi-final matches, played late on Wednesday night, Shaheen Gill (60kg), Ravina (63kg), Priyanka (66kg), Muskan (75kg) recorded wins, while four including Tanisha Lamba (54kg), Prachi (57kg), Pranjal Yadav (70kg) and Sneha (81kg), exited with bronze medals after defeats.

Seven women will fight for gold in the youth category. The finals will be played on March 13 and 14.

PTI ■ HAMILTON

An inept batting performance by India led to an all-too familiar surrender against New Zealand as the Mithali Raj-led side went down by 62 runs in its second league stage match of the ICC Women's World Cup here on Thursday.

New Zealand, who have dominated the Indians throughout this summer, didn't let anything change in a familiar script by first scoring a healthy 260 for 9. They then choked the 'Women in Blue' before bowling them out for only 198 in 46.4 overs.

India have now slipped to fifth among eight teams after this defeat while New Zealand, with two wins from three games, are now second behind Australia in the overall standings.

Puja Vastrakar's 4 for 34 in 10 overs and Harmanpreet Kaur's 71 off 62 balls were two isolated performances which hardly made any impact on the larger outcome.

While Vastrakar's four-for could still be credited for stopping New Zealand's total from going north of 280, Harmanpreet's runs might just help her regain confidence for the coming games.

Amelia Kerr (50 and 3/56 in 9 overs), one half of the famous Kerr sisters, first laid the platform with a

India surrender to NZ by 62 runs

solid half century and then breached the defences of rival skipper Mithali Raj (31 off 56 balls) with a flighted delivery.

Her fast googly dismissed Richa Ghosh (0) off the successive delivery to make it virtually impossible for India.

Towards the end, she also snapped up Harmanpreet to make it a perfect all-round performance. Seamers Lea Tahuu (3/17 in 10 overs) and Hayley Jensen (3/30 in 6.4 overs) shared the other scalps.

The pursuit of 261 started on a discordant note with Smriti Mandhana (6 off 21 balls), Yastika Bhatia (28 off 59 balls) and Deepti Sharma (5 off 13 balls) unable find ways to rotate the strike.

Mithali's struggles have been well documented and it's not getting any better in her last tournament for India.

Even more baffling was coach Ramesh Powar's strategy of sending three left-handers (out of form Shafali Verma was dropped) with home team skipper Sophie Devine giving the new ball to off-break bowler Frances



Mackay (8-1-25-0), who would take it away from left-handers.

The figures don't seem exceptional but much like what Deepak Patel did for men's team in 1992, Mackay bowled as many as 27 dot balls in those first 15 overs to choke the flow of runs.

India haven't found a way to counter New Zealand and in past one month, have lost five of the six WODIs against the White Ferns.

The game could be divided into two sets of first 20 overs where the two teams battled.

In case of New Zealand, the first 20 overs yielded 117 runs for the loss of just two wickets while India, in their response, painfully reached 50 for 3 in their share of 20.

The difference was 67 and if one looks at the margin of victory for 'White Ferns', it won't be very difficult to gauge why things went downhill for Mithali's team.

New Zealand's batting has four pillars -- Suzie Bates (5), skipper Devine (35), No. 3 Kerr (50) and No. 4 Amy Satterthwaite (75) and three performed on the day.

Holder and Bonner revive West Indies after 1st test wobble

AP ■ ST JOHN'S (ANTIGUA)

England led the West Indies by 109 runs after limiting the home side to 202-4 on day two of the first test at Sir Vivian Richards Stadium.

Jason Holder and Nkrumah Bonner revived West Indies with a dogged unbeaten stand of 75 runs to early stumps after they were wobbling at 127-4.

The pair took no risks and offered no chances, and safely managed a largely toothless England attack.

Holder, 43 not out, and Bonner, 34 not out, ground out 75 together at just over two runs an over until they were interrupted by a fourth shower and stumps were pulled.

Their stand was in contrast to the innings' breezy start.

The openers, captain Kraigg Brathwaite and the recalled John Campbell, coasted after England was bowled out for 311 from 268-6 overnight.

Brathwaite and Campbell cruised past lunch and hit 13 boundaries and a six until Campbell's demise ended



their stand on 83. Campbell was out down the leg side for 35.

Brathwaite reached his fifty in only 62 balls but was prised out for 55 by fast bowler Mark Wood.

Shamarh Brooks edged Ben Stokes to the slips on 18 and Jermaine Blackwood was dropped on 0 off Wood. The damage was minimal, though, as Blackwood was out for 11

to Chris Woakes after umpire Joel Wilson was reviewed and overturned.

From 83 without loss, West Indies lost 44-4 in 16 overs and a great start was at risk of being wasted.

But Holder and Bonner blocked superbly and punished anything loose.

They survived a period of reverse swing, and nine consecutive

maidens by spinner Jack Leach, but the pressure wasn't applied from both ends.

Woakes and Craig Overton led the England attack for the first time in the absence of the dropped James Anderson and Stuart Board and the injured Ollie Robinson, and failed to impress with the new ball and the old ball despite taking a wicket each. They were the most expensive, apart from a couple of overs of spin from part-timer Joe Root.

Wood always menaced, and Stokes was watched carefully.

But Holder and Bonner grew a little bolder as the wind picked up between the showers, and they gave West Indies hope of making the test a lasting contest.

The day started with England batting and adding only 43 runs to its overnight total.

Jonny Bairstow moved from 109 to 140 off 259 balls before he was last man out, slicing high to backward point.

Fast bowlers Jayden Seales and Alzarri Joseph shared the last four wickets, Seales finishing with 4-79.

Warner still believes Mankading is 'spirit of cricket issue'

PTI ■ KARACHI

Run-out at non-striker's end remains a "spirit of cricket issue" for Australian opener David Warner despite the MCC amending its code to remove it from "unfair play" laws even though he believes that batters are the ones solely at 'fault' if such a dismissal is effected. Custodians of cricket laws, the Marylebone Cricket Club on re-classified the controversial runout, from law 41's 'unfair play' and incorporated it within law 38 pertaining to legitimate run outs.

It's one of the nine changes that the MCC made to its code, which is set to come into effect from October this year. "I still think the history of the game suggests it's a spirit of cricket thing... You don't expect players to do that," Warner was quoted as saying by 'news.Com.Au' ahead of the second Test against Pakistan beginning here on Saturday. "I do agree with the fact that if you are backing up, and you're out of your crease by a long way (you are fair game).



"I think it happened more predominantly at the end of a white-ball 50-over games, or obviously in T20 cricket we've seen it but at the end of the day, as a batsman, you've got to stay in your crease," he added. Warner said batters have only themselves to blame if they end up being dismissed in such a manner. "There's no doubt about that, and if you're silly enough to get caught out like that and run out, that's your own fault. You're told not to leave before the bowler lets the ball go, so just don't do it,"

Warner said.

The dismissal first came to be known when the legendary former India allrounder Vinoo Mankad twice ran out Australia opener Bill Brown at the non-striker's end -- once in a tour game against an Australia XI at the SCG in 1947, and then again in the second Test of the ensuing series.

The Australian media dubbed it as 'Mankading', a name which stuck in popular parlance but was vehemently opposed by legends like Sunil Gavaskar for being "disrespectful" towards Mankad.

Warner does not believe the switch from 'unfair' to 'legitimate' will cause bowlers to pursue such a dismissal more often as it would only slow down the game.

"I think what's important for the game of cricket is that bowlers don't be looking for that, because then you're going to slow the game down even more," he said.

"I know from before, being a captain, it can be frustrating and you're taking time out of the game.

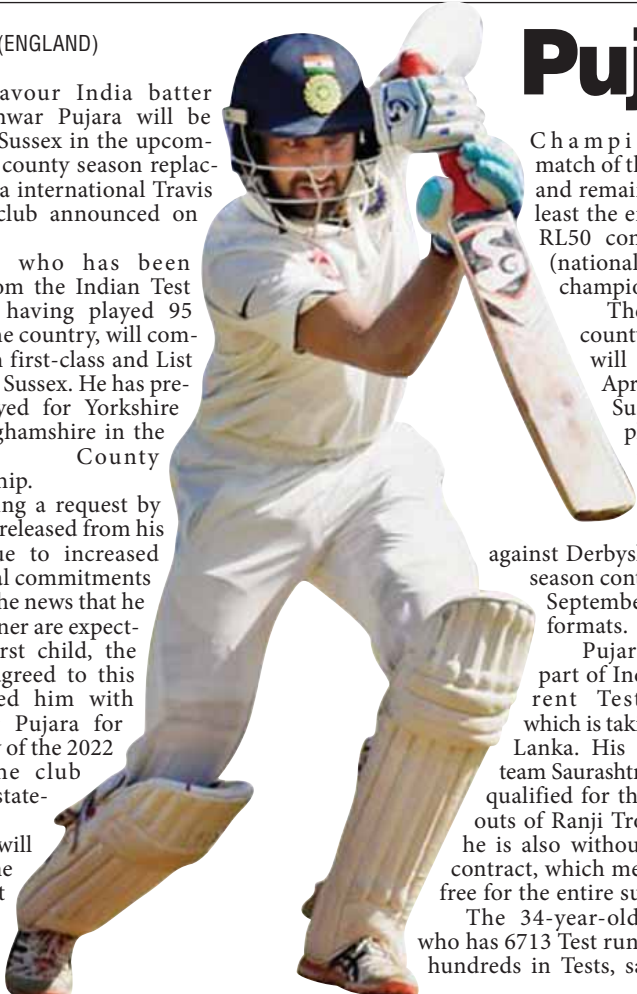
PTI ■ HOVE (ENGLAND)

Out-of-favour India batter Cheteshwar Pujara will be playing for Sussex in the upcoming English county season replacing Australia international Travis Head, the club announced on Thursday.

Pujara, who has been dropped from the Indian Test team after having played 95 games for the country, will compete in both first-class and List A games for Sussex. He has previously played for Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire in the English County Championship.

"Following a request by Travis to be released from his contract due to increased international commitments along with the news that he and his partner are expecting their first child, the club have agreed to this and replaced him with Cheteshwar Pujara for the majority of the 2022 season," the club released a statement.

"Pujara will arrive in time for the first



Pujara to play for Sussex

Championship match of the season and remain until at least the end of the RL50 competition (national one-day championship)."

The English county season will start on April 7 and Sussex will play their first match from April 14 against Derbyshire. The season continues till September across formats.

Pujara is not part of India's current Test squad which is taking on Sri Lanka. His domestic team Saurashtra has not qualified for the knock-outs of Ranji Trophy and he is also without an IPL contract, which means he is free for the entire summer.

The 34-year-old Pujara, who has 6713 Test runs with 18 hundreds in Tests, said, "I am

"OVER THE YEARS I HAVE ALWAYS ENJOYED MY TIME IN THE UK PLAYING COUNTY CRICKET, SO EAGERLY LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEW STINT AND HOPE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE CLUB'S SUCCESS."

excited and honoured to be a part of the historic Sussex County Cricket Club for the upcoming season. I do look forward to joining up with the Sussex family soon and be a part of its rich cricketing history.

"Over the years I have always enjoyed my time in the UK playing county cricket, so eagerly looking forward to the new stint and hope to contribute to the club's success."

The club welcomed Pujara's inclusion and stated: "We are delighted to welcome such an experienced international top order batter to the squad and look forward to his contribution both with the bat and in helping our younger top order batters continue their development in first class cricket."

Explaining his decision to leave, Head said, "I would like to stress that it's important for me to support Jessica over the Australian winter while balancing a busy international schedule.

"It comes with disappointment during a very exciting period for me personally that I won't be returning this season, I've built some great relationships and was very excited for it.

"I'm hopeful I can still have an impact at the club in the future and I will be watching the season very closely. I wish everyone all the best and thank you for the support."

A new captain will be announced in due course, prior to the start of the season.



Will Jayant get another chance in B'lore?

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's head coach Rahul Dravid and skipper Rohit Sharma are firm believers in continuity but it will be interesting to see their plans for the playing XI when the team takes on Sri Lanka in the Day/Night game starting Saturday in Bengaluru.

The weakest link in the playing XI is Haryana off-spinner Jayant Yadav but it didn't matter much as India won in a canter by an innings and 222 runs.

Jayant bowled a total of 17 wicket-less overs across two innings while Ravindra Jadeja and Ravichandran Ashwin shared 15 of the 20 wickets among themselves.

But the dynamics of the team combination change with pink SG Test ball coming into the picture and how it will behave under lights on a Chinnaswamy track that will not have any grass covering.

India cannot afford to lose even one among the next 9 Tests in the World Test Championship cycle and hence they might not go for a pacer-friendly track.

While no team loves tinkering with a winning combination, Axar Patel's inclusion and his record in the Day/Night Test against England in Ahmedabad on a rank turner, where he got 11 for 70 would be of immense significance.

But with Sri Lanka having four left-handers in top six -- Lahiru Thirimanne, Dimuth Karunaratne, Charith Asalanka and Niroshan Dickwella -- of their playing XI the in last game, will Dravid go for two left-arm spinners or not is the big question. Jadeja's match haul of 9/87 and Axar's under-cutters on a track that

INDIA CANNOT AFFORD TO LOSE EVEN ONE AMONG THE NEXT 9 TESTS IN THE WORLD TEST CHAMPIONSHIP CYCLE

promises to have wear and tear can cause a lot of problems.

The counter-view is that Jayant wasn't required enough to prove his mettle in the last game and dropping a player after one bad game never ever inspires confidence. Dravid isn't from that school of thought also.

However, conditions do dictate the approach to a game. If there is underlying moisture first up, being at higher altitude might aid the new ball bowlers.

Therein comes Mohammed Siraj, currently India's fastest at the international level and someone whose skiddy deliveries can cause real problems.

Siraj had shown against New Zealand in Mumbai that he can hurry the batters for pace and one sharp opening spell can completely dismantle the opposition. The batting order, if everyone is fit and available, picks itself unless the team management decides on trying out Shubman Gill in place of Shreyas Iyer.

PTI ■ DHAKA

Bangladesh premier all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan has been granted a break from all forms of cricket till April 30 to deal with "mental stress" and "fatigue", ruling him out of the upcoming South Africa series that runs till April 8.

The nearly two-month break would mean that Shakib will also miss the Dhaka Premier League, where he was expected to play for Mohammedan Sporting.

Following Bangladesh Cricket Board's decision, the local club is now mulling to appeal to the BCB.

The 34-year-old, who was not picked by any of the IPL franchises, was initially named in the ODI and Test squads for the South Africa tour.

But following his comment that he felt like a "passenger" in the team after Bangladesh's recent series against Afghanistan, where he made 74 runs and took seven wickets in three ODIs and two T20Is, the

country's cricket board has decided to give him a much-needed break.

"He's mentally stressed and fatigued. He told me at this point of time, he is not enjoying any form of cricket," BCB cricket operation chairman Jalal Yunus told reporters on Wednesday. "He always said one thing that he is not enjoying, unfit and not ready. Since he's mentally fatigued and physically stressed, after discussion with the CEO and the president, we have decided to give him rest from all forms of cricket till April 30." "Shakib is an all-rounder, an important player for us. We have the World Cup coming up. We want him for one more big series and if a player wants to skip and not enjoying, we want to give him complete rest and spend time with his family." Upset with the develop-



ment, his local franchise Mohammedan Sporting will appeal for a relaxation on Shakib's break as he is a vital cog in their attack in the DPL. "The decision that the board gave is very disappointing for us since Shakib did not once mention

(regarding Shakib). We don't know what will happen but we will try. If we do make an appeal, it has to be tomorrow," he added.

On Sunday, Shakib cooked up a storm saying he is feeling stressed and not physically and mentally fit to play the South Africa series as BCB president Nazmul Hassan questioned his commitment.

"I think it is logical to think that if he was in a poor physical and mental state, he wouldn't have given his name in the IPL... But he went ahead with it. So, does it mean that if he got his IPL contract, he would have said the same thing?" Hassan questioned.

Shakib had last month pulled out of the Test series in New Zealand and since 2017 the premier all-rounder has featured in 15 of the 33 Tests played by Bangladesh