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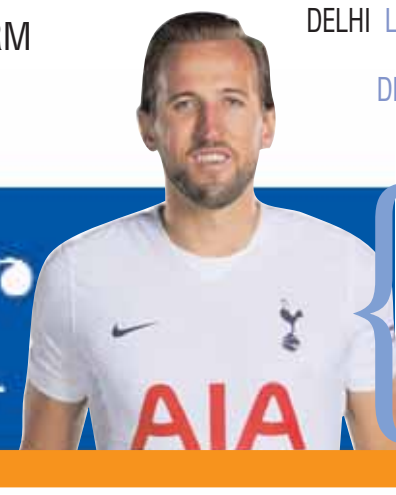

SPURS BEAT ARSENAL 3-0 IN DERBY
12 SPORT

Sonia calls for urgent, big ticket reforms in Cong

Says, situation demands extraordinary steps, slams PM for polarisation

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ UDAIPUR/NEW DELHI

Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Friday called for urgent reforms in the party as "extraordinary situations demand extraordinary action" and also launched a blistering attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi accusing him of keeping the country in a state of permanent polarisation, "brutalising" minorities and "threatening" political opponents.

The party, which is holding a three-day Chintan Shivir in Udaipur also held discussions on enforcing the 'One family, one ticket' formula, granting exemption to only another family member who has been doing "exemplary work" for the party for a period of at least five years. This will leave scope for members of the Gandhi family to contest polls and allow other senior leaders to get their sons and daughters accommodated in the ticket list.

Sending out a clear message to Congress ranks while launching the brainstorming conclave, Sonia said the party will have to change its style of functioning and urged them to keep the organisation above their personal ambitions and pay back their debt to the party as it had given a lot to everyone.

She urged around 450 delegates to deliberate with an open mind but send out a single message of a strong organisation, resolve and unity. "In one way this (Congress transformation) is the most fundamental issue. Our revival is only possible through collective efforts. Such collective efforts will not be deferred. This Shivir is the start of the journey," Sonia said.

The three-day 'Nav Sankalp Chintan Shivir' is being held in the backdrop of a string of electoral defeats and dissent in the party for the past many years.

Congress interim President Sonia Gandhi greets Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and senior Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad during the party's 'Nav Sankalp Chintan Shivir', in Udaipur PTI

Protests erupt in Kashmir over Rahul Bhat's killing

Three terrorists killed, hundreds of Kashmiri Pandit employees offer to resign

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

A day after the killing of a Kashmiri Pandit man Rahul Bhat by terrorists, Kashmiri Pandit Government employees held protests on Friday, demanding relocation to safer places outside the Valley. At the same time, security forces gunned down three terrorists in an encounter that broke out in Brar Aragam area of Bandipora on Friday. Sources said two of the three ultras were involved in the attack on Bhat.

Protests erupted at the Sheikhpora camp, located in Budgam district of central Kashmir, where Kashmiri Pandit employees have been given makeshift accommodations. The police used batons and tear gas shells to disperse the protestors who were marching towards the airport road, seeking an audience with Lieutenant-Governor Manoj Sinha. The migrant employees were moving peacefully in the area when local police requested them to disperse. When they refused to budge and kept marching on, police used force and lobbed tear gas shells. A sit-in protest also continued in Vessu, Qazigund area of Anantnag district on Friday where migrant employees offered mass resignations to register their protest against the failure of the Union Territory administration to protect them.

Seething with anger the aggrieved employees also demanded speedy justice and the "severest" punishment for killers of Bhat.

Meanwhile, in Jammu, the mortal remains of Rahul Bhat were consigned to flames after the body arrived from Kashmir in the wee hours. The entire neighbourhood in Durga Nagar area of Jammu had converged outside the residence of Rahul to pay their homage and perform the last darshan.

Meenakshi, who brought back the mortal remains of her husband after traveling during the night, wept inconsolably on reaching their Durga Nagar home in Jammu.

"My husband used to say everyone behaves nicely with him and nobody can harm him. Yet nobody protected him, they (terrorists) must have asked someone about him, otherwise, how would they've known. I am left alone. He was everything for me," she said.

Rahul leaves behind a seven-year-old daughter and aging parents. Rahul's father Bitta Jee Bhat retired from active police service years ago. Bitta Jee Bhat has also demanded a high-level inquiry to ascertain how the killers entered a Government office.

Members of the Rashtriya Bajrang Dal burn an effigy during their protest over the killing of Rahul Bhat, in Jammu on Friday PTI

CAPSULE

16 KILLED IN MASSIVE FIRE IN MUNDKA
New Delhi: At least 16 people died in a fire that broke out at a building near west Delhi's Mundka metro station on Friday. The number could go up, the fire dapartment officials said.

4 KILLED, 20 INJURED AS BUS CATCHES FIRE
Jammu: Four people were killed and 20 others injured when a passenger bus caught fire in Katra area of Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district on Friday, officials said.

IAS OFFICER CHIBBER APPOINTED CBSE CHIEF
New Delhi: Senior IAS officer Nidhi Chibber has been appointedas the chairperson of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)in a top-level bureaucratic reshuffle effected by the Centre on Friday.

GOVT FIXES LIC ISSUE PRICE AT ₹949 A SHARE
New Delhi: The government has fixed the issue price of LIC sharesat ₹ 949 apiece, the upper end of the IPO price band, ahead of the listing of the country's largest insurer on May 17.

SC STAYS HC ORDER TO PRODUCE SAHARA CHIEF
New Delhi: The Supreme Court Friday stayed the Patna High Court order directing the Director General of Police (DGP),Bihar, to produce Sahara Group chief Subrata Roy before it on May16 in a matter that some companies of the Groupwere not returning money to the investors.

ISI hand in RPG attack in Punjab; 6 arrested

Manhunt to nab Charat Singh the key attacker on Punjab Police Intelligence Office and two unknown aides

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Punjab Police on Friday claimed to have cracked Mohali's Rocket-Propelled Grenade (RPG) attack case with the arrest of six people, including a woman.

The State police chief VK Bhawra claimed that Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) was involved in the attack and the key conspirator is gangster Lakhbir Singh Landa from Tarn Taran, a close associate of Pakistan-based wanted terrorist Harvinder Singh Rinda.

"Canada-based gangster Lakhbir Singh alias Landa has emerged as the key handler, who provided the RPG, AK-47, and the local network of criminals for logistic support to carry out the terror attack at Punjab Police Intelligence Headquarters in Mohali on Monday evening," said the Director-General of Police (DGP) while addressing the media at Punjab Police headquarters at Chandigarh.

Thirty three-year-old Landa, who had fled to Canada in 2017, is a close aide of Harvinder Singh alias Rinda and had joined hands with Babbar Khalsa International (BKI). Rinda is close to BKI chief Wadhawa Singh and the ISI.

Punjab DGP VK Bhawra, along with ADGP Internal Security RN Dhoke and Mohali SSP Vivek Sheel Soni, addressing the media at Punjab Police headquarters at Chandigarh on Friday Pioneer photo

India denies stopping issuance of visas for Lankans

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE\AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI\COLOMBO

India on Friday brushed aside reports that it had stopped issuing visas in Sri Lanka and said there were some problems as the staff in the High Commission, mostly locals, were not able to attend office.

Operations will resume soon and New Delhi is committed to ease of travel for the Sri Lankans, it assured.

In another development, Indian High Commissioner to Colombo Gopal Baglay called on newly-appointed Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe and conveyed greetings and good wishes.

They discussed continued co-operation for economic recovery and stability in Sri Lanka through democratic processes.

As regards the visa issue, the Indian High Commission said the disruption was caused by operational difficulties.

SC: Will not postpone NEET-PG-2022 as it will hit patient care

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday refused to postpone the NEET-PG-2022 examination on a plea of doctors, saying the delay would cause an unavailability of doctors and seriously affect patient care. A Bench of Justices DY Chandrachud and Surya Kant said postponement of the examination would create "chaos and uncertainty" and would affect the larger section of students, who have registered for the test.

"There are two categories of students -- one which is seeking postponement and the larger category of over two lakh six thousand candidates -- who would be affected by the postponement after having prepared for the examination", the Bench said.

The Judges noted that the Government was trying to bring the schedule of examination back on time as it was affected due to the pandemic.

"As the country gets back on the rails, which was derailed due to the pandemic, the time schedule laid down by this court must be adhered to", said the Bench.

On May 10, the top court had agreed to hear the plea of doctors seeking postponement of the NEET-PG 2022 which is scheduled to be held on May 21 on grounds that it will clash with the ongoing counselling for NEET-PG 2021.

Tesla puts brakes on India entry due to tariff deadlock

New Delhi: Tesla Inc has put on hold plans to sell electric cars in India, abandoned a search for showroom space and reassigned some of its domestic team after failing to secure lower import taxes, three people familiar with the matter told agencies.

The decision caps more than a year of deadlocked talks with Government representatives as Tesla sought to first test demand by selling electric vehicles (EVs) imported from production hubs in the United States and China, at lower tariffs.

But the Indian Government is pushing Tesla to commit to manufacturing locally before it will lower tariffs, as high as 100 per cent on imported vehicles.

Tesla had set itself a deadline of February 1, the day India unveils its budget and announces tax changes, to see if its lobbying brought results, the sources with knowledge of the company's plan told Reuters. When Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Government did not offer a concession, Tesla put on hold the plans to import cars into India, added the sources.

Twitter deal on hold for now: Musk

Detroit: Elon Musk said Friday that his plan to buy Twitter is "temporarily on hold" as he tries to pinpoint the exact number of spam and fake accounts on the social media platform, another twist amid signs of turmoil over the proposed $44 billion acquisition. Musk has been vocal about his desire to clean up Twitter's problem with "spam bots" that mimic real people and appeared to question whether the company was underreporting them.

Detailed Report P10

Bhopal crosses 45 degree, Nowgong records 48

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Firmly gripped under extremely hot weather conditions temperatures are soaring high to reach 50 degree celsius, Nowgong was hottest day recording 48 degree celsius temperature in the day while Bhopal recorded cross the mark of 45 degree celsius on Friday.

As intense hot weather conditions are prevailing, the early arrival of monsoon has provided something to cheer people facing scorching heat from the start of the month of May. In the next 3-4 days no relief is on the cards and most of the regions would witness heat wave conditions which could intensify in the next 24 hours.

Bhopal recorded a new season high at 45.1 degree celsius while night was recorded at 26.4 degree celsius and a heat wave was witnessed on Friday. Severe heatwave was witnessed in Nowgong, Rajgarh and Khajuraho districts.

Heat waves were witnessed at Rajgarh, Shajapur, Guna, Sagar, Damoh, Satna, Gwalior, Khargone and Khandwa.

The soaring day temperatures have created very uncomforting nights as weather conditions are providing no respite and new high's of the season are recorded in the past 3-4 days, still highest of all time is yet to be broken in the state and state capital.

In the past 24 hours Mandla and Balaghat districts recorded light rainfall while 1 cm of rainfall was witnessed in Nainpur. Bhopal, Raisen, Ashok Nagar, Ujjain, Rewa, Panna, Satna, Sidhi, Shivpuri, Datia, Guna, Gwalior, Sagar, Niwari, Tikamgarh, Shajapur, Damoh, Chhatarpur, Agar, Ratlam, Rajgarh, Khandwa, Khargone, Barwani, Neemuch, Madam Saur, Sheopur Kalan, Morena, Bhind districts are prone to heat waves as per the warning issued by the Met department.

No light at end of tunnel for winged guests

Light pollution kills one million migratory birds every year

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Light pollution is creating havoc with life of migratory birds as at least one million of them are dying every year by running into lampposts and electric billboards on high rise buildings.

The rise in artificial light globally by at least 2 per cent per year is also impacting birds in the breeding and winter seasons, disrupting feeding and other vital behaviours, experts said on the eve of the World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD).

This year WMBD will focus on one such man-made threat: Light pollution.

In India a number of foreign birds find shelter every year. At least, 229 species of birds arrive in the country every year, including AsiaticSparrow-Hawk, Harriers, Peregrine Falcon, Osprey, Pacific Golden Plover, Graylag Goose, Bar-headed Goose, Northern Shoveller, Tufted Duck, and more.

Pointing out that light pollution also risks seriously altering migratory birds' behaviours, from migration and foraging to vocal communication, and disturbing their precise internal clocks, experts have called upon policy makers to take steps to reduce the impact of light pollution on birds across the globe.

Attracted by artificial light at night, particularly when there is low cloud, fog, rain or when flying at lower altitudes, migrating birds become disorientated and may end up circling in illuminated areas. Depleted energy reserves put them at risk of exhaustion, predation, and fatal collision with buildings.

Flock of flamingos stand in a pond on the eve of World Migratory Bird Day, in Navi Mumbai on Friday PTI

Efforts to uplift all sections of society

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that speedy work will be done in the direction of providing employment to tribal youth by honing their skills. On the one hand, where tribal youth need employment, in rural areas there is a need for technical proficiency electricians, plumbers, masons, vehicle mechanics etc.

In such a situation, Rural Tribal Technical Training Programme in Parliamentary Complex Project for tribal youth in collaboration with National Skill Development Corporation will prove to be worthwhile. Chouhan was inaugurating the Rural Tribal Technical Training Program at Kushabhau Thackeray Auditorium here today. The districts of Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Orissa including Madhya Pradesh have been selected for the pilot project in the first phase.

The Chief Minister said that Prime Minister Modi is a 'man of ideas'. Efforts are being made to bring the most backward sections of the society at par as per his vision and policy of Sabka Saath-Sabka Vikas,. Special attention is being given in this direction in Madhya Pradesh.

A campaign to change the lives of the tribal class is being run. Steps have been taken to implement PESA Act, convert Vangrams into revenue village, provide educational facilities to tribal children and give importance to them in the plan to prepare rural engineers.

Lakh of people are needed for work in the villages. Young tribals are being benefited for the implementation of schemes like Jal Jeevan Mission and maintenance of the machines. They are getting employment through skill training. Benefit of Mukhya Mantri Udyami Yojana is also being provided. Skills will help them get work, it will also help curb migration from rural areas.

The Chief Minister said that there are limited employment opportunities in tribal areas. Because of this the youth are compelled to move out of their areas. Finding employment in one's own area also strengthens the local socio-economic structure.

It was from this point of view that Prime Minister Modi had in-depth discussions with 40 MPs at the Mumbai Symposium. This was followed by discussions with experts and scheduled tribe organizations. Selected MPs from Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha selected 49 groups from 15 states. Training of two months duration will provide opportunities to the youth to start their own business and employment in other sectors.

Chouhan said that our welfare programmes will be more successful only when the society stands with the government. This has happened in the field of cleanliness in the state. Along with this, this thing was also proved in the fight with Corona. Chouhan said that in Madhya Pradesh, villages and cities are getting good results by celebrating Pride Day.

The cooperation being given by the farmers in keeping the village clean, preventing wastage of electricity, running anganwadi centers is also worth noticing. Common citizens have also been active in the work of saving children from malnutrition by providing food grains in Anganwadis. Initiatives to make the village drug-free have been taken at many places. Citizens are planting trees. Improvements are being made in the environment on a large scale through tree plantation. The work of preparing rural engineers and training of youth has been done through Global Skill Park of Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh. Today such an innovative scheme is being started. Chouhan also informed about the assistance being given to the youth through the Mukhya Mantri Udyami Yojana.

The special guest of the programme, National General Secretary BL Santosh said that the local people in tribal areas will avoid migration if they get financial security. Today people working as teachers, doctors and other positions have started making up their mind to work in tribal areas.

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan with BJP National Organisational General Secretary BL Santhosh during launch of Country's first 'Rural Tribal Technical Training' programme in Bhopal on Friday. Pioneer photo

Depressed BPharma student commits suicide by hanging at Kalpana Nagar

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Unable to bear depression a 19-year-old B.Pharma student committed suicide by hanging with the ceiling at Kalpana Nagar in the evening on Thursday.

Reason behind suicide of Abhinav Singh of Katni remained unclear as his suicide note mentions that nothing and no one is responsible for his extreme step.

In the suicide note he had mentioned that he remained depressed and is not able to bear depression. He suffers a lot from headache and was feeling lonely here.

Abhinav was a student of B Pharma second year in Chandrabhan Singh Bansal College. He lived with his friend Saurabh in Kalpana Nagar, Piplani, Bhopal. He shifted here two months ago. Saurabh had gone to college on Thursday morning, while Abhinav remained at home. When Saurabh reached the room at around 4.30 pm, he found the door locked from inside and failed to get response

He immediately called dial-100. The police reached the spot and inside Abhinav was found hanging. Police sent the body for post-mortem.

Meanwhile a woman died while her husband and one other escaped with injuries after their motorbike was hit by a speeding car at Sukhisewania area on Thursday.

Police said that the car which was speeding heavily after hitting the bike stopped and took the injured to Hamidia hospital where the woman was declared dead and two others escaped with injuries.

The deceased was identified as Shanti Bai who was on her way with husband Prem Singh Lodhi to Bhopal on his bike along with one other person. He was a resident of Biora in Rajgarh district.

After the preliminary investigation the body was sent for the post mortem. The police have registered a case under section 304 A of the IPC and started further investigation.

500 gram gold ornaments stolen

PNS ■ DATIA

A bag carrying 500 gms of gold ornaments was stolen from Bhagwati marriage garden of Datia on Thursday night. The police have found CCTV footages of the incident and further investigating the case.

A marriage party of Lokendra Gurjar had come to Datia from Gwalior. The incident came to fore late in the night and the family members sounded alert and later, police were informed.

The incident was reported somewhere around 10 pm. The police have registered a case under section 379 of the IPC and started investigation. The CCTV footages of the marriage garden have been recovered.

Threat to blow up more than 40 CBSE schools, turned out to be fake

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The threat to blow up more than 40 CBSE board schools in Bhopal turned out to be fake as nothing suspicious was found in the school's investigation.

The Police Commissioner Bhopal Makrand Deuskar issued a statement saying that till now nothing has come out in the investigation. Action will be taken against whoever has created ruckus while cyber police is probing the matter.

Earlier these schools were threatened with bombs through emails.

The ID from which the email came is made in the name of a Russian girl. The email threatened to blow up schools with two powerful bombs. At CBSE Schools 10th final exams of Term-2 are going on.

Earlier, as soon as the information about the bomb threat was received, the police started investigation in all the schools.

The Bomb Disposal Unit also conducted a search. By 2.30 pm, the police had checked more than 10 schools, but found nothing suspicious.

Apart from 7 missionary schools of CBSE in Bhopal, Sagar Public School, Sage International School, St Joseph's School, DPS School, Anand Vihar School and IES Public School have also received threatening e-mails.

District Education Officer Nitin Saxena said that Sagar Public School, DPS and St Joseph's School have received threats.

So far no such e-mail has been received by any government or MP board school.

We are in touch with the school management and the police. are investigating. Schools have been e-mailed from the e-mail address alexandtrebuna@gmail.com.

Anand Vihar School Management has complained to TT Nagar Police stating that more than 50 e-mails continuously were received. In these mails it has been said that 2 powerful bombs have been kept in your school.

Police solve robbery case in five days

PNS ■ PANNA

The Panna police arrested three accused involved in the robbery at the house of female doctor. The female doctor had five days ago reported in Kotwali police station that when she was sleeping in her house she woke up at 2 o'clock in the night and saw three people standing in front of her. They were wearing white towel and mask on their faces due to which their faces were not visible. When she attempted to shout, the accused pressed her face and threatened her to kill.

They took the keys of the two cupboards in her house and fled away with Rs 5 lakh cash, a gold chain and mobile phone.

While talking to media perosns, SP Panna Dharamraj Meena formed different teams under ASPPanna Arti Singh and SDOP BS Bariba and TI Kotwali Arun Kumar Soni.

Police cyber team was also engaged with different police teams to unearth the robbery and arrest the accused.

SP Dharamraj Meena and police team studied minutely the pattern of this crime and different criminals were tracked and with the help of cctv footage their appearance and motor cycle used three accused were arrested from orchatiraha Jhansi road.

The three accused on interrogationadmitted that one more partner involved in different crimes by them is absconding. A total of Rs 24.37 lakh and 145 grams gold 4.1 kg of silver ornaments, mobile phones and a cutter were seized from the possession of the accused. In addition to robbing the female doctor the accused are involved in a total of 21 crimes including 20 thefts robbery incidence in different police station areas of Panna district.

Brahmakumari BK Reena addressing the Media Conference organised by Prajapita Brahmakumari Ishwariya Vishwavidyalaya, Rajyog Bhawan, in Bhopal on Friday. Pioneer photo

SATI and PTRI come together for road safety and zero accident vision in MP

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

In view of road safety, these two institutions have planned to work together so that the vision of Safe Road and Vision Zero Accident enshrined in Madhya Pradesh Road Safety Policy, 2015 can be realized.

The MoU was signed between the two institutes on Friday. The objective of this MoU is to research and share mutual knowledge in the field of road safety.

PTRI Bhopal is the lead agency for road safety under the Supreme Court Committee on Road Safety in Madhya Pradesh and nodal agency for implementation of iRAD in Madhya Pradesh.

Under this MoU, by providing quality training to road construction agencies, to remove errors in road construction, to develop teaching modules with case studies on issues of road safety and social security, Samrat Ashok Technological Institute (SATI) and Police Training and Organizing workshop jointly by Research Institute (PTRI), conducting research and social audits and solutions, research on accident prone roads (urban and rural). They will be testing of major road accidents, time management of signals on roads, intersections on the basis of Organizing and facilitating traffic, publication of road safety research papers, information, education and communication (IEC), public participation and dissemination, creating road safety awareness among youth and children and organizing capacity building programs for road safety stakeholder agencies is included.

The MoU was signed between the two institutes on Friday. The objective of this MoU is to research and share mutual knowledge in road safety

Director SATI Vidisha R.K. Pandit, HOD Civil Engineer Pramod Sharma, Assistant Professor Rakesh Meher, Additional Director General of Police PTRI G. Janardan, Assistant Inspector General of Police PTRI Manoj Kumar Rai, Manjulata Khatri, Pratipal Singh Mahobia were present.

Truecaller App helps increase the reach

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The Delhi Commission for Women's Helpline - '181' received 200% more calls by integrating the 181 Women's Helpline Quick Dial Feature within the Truecaller App. Since March this year, Truecaller started displaying the women's safety helpline number -181 - on its dialler, as part of its campaign on crimes against women and girls- #ItsNotOk.

With the Women's Helpline 181 being prominently visible within the Truecaller dialler, the Delhi Commission of Women witnessed a huge spike in the calls that were landing on the Helpline in Delhi. Prior to Truecaller's integration, the Commission's helpline 181 received around 2000 calls per day, which has now grown to more than 4,000 calls per day resulting in almost a 200% increase in total calls received per day. A significant portion of the 65.5k calls received in March were to enquire about the role of the 181 Women Helpline and understand its role in the safety of womenandgirls.

The women and girls of Delhi continue to seek help from the 181 women helpline in cases related to domestic violence, sexual assault and other crimes against women.

German Bank delegation meets PS, Urban Development & Housing

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

A delegation of German Bank KfW met Manish Singh, Principal Secretary, Department of Urban Development and Housing.

The delegation included Lucas Mess, Technical Expert Rainer Krauss, Social Expert Khumuzam Khabilongtshup, Financial Expert Juliana and Rahul Mankotia.

Principal Secretary Manish Singh assured the team that all the projects assisted by KfW will be completed on time.

On this occasion Managing Director cum Commissioner Nikunj Srivastava, Additional Managing Director Ruchika Chauhan, Chief Engineer Deepak Ratnawat, Deputy Project Director Technical PC Jain, Technical Officer Kamlesh Bhatnagar, Project Manager Rajendra Solanki and Assistant Project Officer Sanjay Pandey and representatives of Project Manager Consultancy firm G-Tech were also present.

It is worth mentioning that KfW is working on sewerage projects in Mandla, Narsinghpur, Narmadapuram, Sendhwa and Barwani. These projects are being implemented by Madhya Pradesh Urban Development Company. The delegation of KfW Bank is on a visit to Madhya Pradesh from May 3.

The team has also inspected all the components including STP, sewerage network of all the projects. Various aspects related to the project were also reviewed in detail by the delegation.

Manna iStrong clinically proven to Tackle Anemia

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Manna iStrong, a specially formulated Iron fortified women's health drink from Southern Health Foods Pvt Ltd popularly known as 'Manna' has now announced the results of a clinical study which proves iStrong helps to fight Anemia in women.

The specially formulated Iron fortified women's health drink was specifically conceptualized to fight Anaemia. This Multigrain based drink is made with 8 Grains including 3 Super Grains-Amaranth, Quinoa and Black Rice and delivers 100% RDA of Iron, Vitamin C, Vitamin B9 and B12 in 2 serves. It is also rich in Protein, Dietary fibre along with goodness of milk protein.

Manna iStrong went through a registered (CTRI/ 2021 /07/ 034881) randomized controlled clinical trial (90 Days) at one of country's most renowned medical institute and the study was published in Fortune Journals. The institute studied the impact of Manna iStrong in the clinical management of anaemia in women, and observed a significant increase in Haemoglobin by 20%, Serum Iron by 35%, Serum Ferritin levels by 16%, 2x Stamina and significant reduction in anaemia related symptoms.

Saransh Trophy: DGP11 and Samarth Duratec also reach in semi-finals

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

In the quarter final matches of the Saransh Trophy Inter Corporate Cricket Tournament, DGP XI won over Sports Edge and Samarth Duratak defeated Dr. Raza Club. With this, DGP XI and Samarth Duratec have reached the semi-finals. BSNL was the first team to reach the semi-finals of this tournament.

In the third quarter final match played on Friday, Dr Raza Cricket Club won the toss and elected to field first. Abhishek Singh scored 55 runs for Samarth Duratec Tech, which included 1 six and 10 fours, Rahul Pillai scored 40 and Nikhil 25. For Raza Academy, G Waqar Alam took three wickets for 44 runs and Azhar Khan took one wicket for 21 runs. Samarth Duratek Tech scored 176 for four in the allotted 18 overs.

Raza Cricket Club had to score 177 runs to win but his team could only manage 120 runs for eight wickets. Akash Rajput scored the highest 43 runs for Raza Cricket Club while Anupam Gupta (4/34) and Sanket Dubey (3/8) were declared Man of the Match by Anupam Gupta for Samarth.

Earlier, in the second quarter-final match played under lights on Thursday night, Sports Edge team won the toss and elected to bat and were all out after scoring 94 runs in 16.1 overs.

Shailesh Patel 19 runs, Deepak 18 and Anand Rajak 13 for Sports Edge could only make individual scores of 2 points. For DGP XI, Vipin Suste, Mustaq Ali, Shubham Chauhan took two wickets each while Adarsh Singh, Shiv and Riyaz Iqbal took one wicket each.

Set a target of 94 runs to win, Vinay Verma played a brilliant innings of 40 runs in 34 balls, which included 2 sixes and 5 fours. Riyaz Iqbal scored 23 runs in 21 balls with the help of 4 fours.

DGP XI's team won 97 runs for 3 wickets in just 12 overs and entered the semi-finals. Vipin Suste was declared man of the match.

'Our Navy' screened at Shaurya Smarak

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

A movie 'Our Navy' depicting the struggles and sacrifices of Indian Navy officers and how the navy works was screened at Shaurya Smarak here on Friday.

The Indian Navy is a well balanced and cohesive three-dimensional force, capable of operating above, on and under the surface of the oceans efficiently safeguarding the national interests.

The film was screened under the regular film screenings held at Shaurya Smarak every day. The movies screened here are based on Indian Army, Navy and other armed forces. Produced by Films Division, this film is directed by M Bhavnani.

It is to be noted that the film featured about the brave hearts who protects the country from seas and oceans. The film features about the advanced technologies used by the Navy even in submarines.

The same water surface is equipped with veneer, fatal warheads equipped with deadly weapons. Modern missiles to combat the problem of air in the air above the surface surface, the combatants. There are also the capabilities of the aircrafts to be there on the ships.

Although every possible care and caution has been taken to avoid errors or omissions, this publication is being sold on the condition and understanding that information given in this publication is merely for reference and must not be taken as having authority of or binding in any way on the writers, editors, publishers, and printers and sellers who do not owe any responsibility for any damage or loss to any person, a purchaser of this publication or not for the result of any action taken on the basis of this work. All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent court and forums in Bhopal only. Readers are advised and requested to verify and seek appropriate advice to satisfy themselves about the veracity of any kind of advertisement before responding to any contents published in this newspaper. The printer, publisher, editor and any employee of the Pioneer Group's will not be held responsible for any kind of claim made by the advertisers of the products & services and shall not be made responsible for any kind of loss, consequences and further product-related damages on such advertisements.

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PM congratulates MP for new Startup Policy

PNS ■ INDORE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that Madhya Pradesh has done commendable work in formulating a new startup policy under the leadership of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and preparing the above-mentioned startup eco-system. For this the Madhya Pradesh government and the public deserve to be congratulated.

Young startups are bringing revolution on the soil of Indore, which is an inspiration for all. Modi said that India's startup revolution will become an important hallmark of Azadi ka Amrit Kaal. Today the country has a pro-active startup policy and adequate startup leadership. India's startup ecosystem is being praised all over the world. Startups in India are turning out to be a powerful vehicle to fulfill the dreams of the common Indian youth. In the year 2014, there were only 300 to 400 startups in India, whereas today this number has reached to 70,000. India has the third largest startup ecosystem in the world.

Modi on Friday launched the new Startup Policy of Madhya Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh Startup Portal virtually from Delhi. He also interacted with the youth of Madhya Pradesh, Shri Tanu Tejas Saraswat of Indore, Umang Sridhar of Bhopal and Tausif Khan of Indore. The three startups shared their work with the Prime Minister. Prime Minister Shri Modi also provided online financial assistance to 2 startups.Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that today startups are being started in small towns of the country.

More than 50,000 startups are associated with industries in more than 650 districts of India. It is very important that many of our startups become unicorns within 8-10 days. It is a big achievement for a new startup to reach a capital of Rs 7 crore.

The Prime Minister said that the reason for the success of our startups is to create a new ecosystem in the country by creating infrastructure, simplification of government processes and changing the mindset of the people. Hackathons have become a strong foundation for startups. Our schools are functioning as a nursery of startups. Atal tinkering labs have been made here. More than 700 incubation centers have been set up in the country. Along with the incubation of startups, their funding is also arranged.The Prime Minister said that the government is giving tax exemption and other incentives to promote startups.

At the same time, the government is also becoming a buyer. Through the GeM portal, on which more than 13 thousand startups are registered, business worth more than 6 and a half thousand crores was done in the last days. Modi said that cheap mobile phones and cheap data play an important role in the success of startups in India. Startups and Unicorns are giving employment to lakhs of people in the country today. Startups are doing remarkable work in the fields of clean energy, health, tourism, agriculture, retail business. Today India is in the top 10 country of the world in the field of mobile gaming. India's share is currently less than one percent in the global market of toys, youths should come forward in this area.

Modi said that sports culture is developing in India. There are more than 800 startups connected with sports activities in India. India is number one in the world in smart phone data usage, while it is number two in internet usage and global retail trade.

Special attention is being given to Ease of Living and Ease of Doing Business in India. India's growth and success story will be remarkable in the coming decade.

In the Startup Conclave- 2022, Chief Minister met departmental officials and businessmen of Madhya Pradesh after Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Startup Policy of Madhya Pradesh, in Indore on Friday. Pioneer photo

Madhya Pradesh Governor Mangubhai Patel with BJP MP Sadhvi Pragya Singh Thakur during the 400th birth anniversary celebration programme of Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib, at Ravindra Bhawan in Bhopal on Friday. Pioneer photo

Workshop on research priorities

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

National Workshop was organized by the Education Department at Rabindranath Tagore University on Friday.

The theme of this workshop was Research Priorities and Identification of Research Areas. The purpose of this workshop was to provide basic information related to research to the researchers and to select the research area. In the workshop, Kaushal Sharma, Associate Professor in Special Needs Education, Shakuntala Mishra National Rehabilitation University, Lucknow as a keynote speaker. While discussing various aspects of research by Kaushal Sharma, the choice of research area was highlighted. He told in his speech that we should use such areas for research which are socially useful. He answered all the queries of the researchers.

Sharma gave detailed information regarding the priorities of the research. He said that while deciding the priorities, the researcher should pay attention to the population group, area, type of research, problems etc.

Also, while discussing other aspects of research, he said that it is necessary to be familiar with the areas of research problems and understand their merits.

Stage operation programme coordinator Brajesh Kumar Sharma, Professor and HOD, Education Department.

NSDC and CRISP to jointly train tribal youth

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The MoU (Letter of Agreement) between CRISP and NSDC was signed today in the presence of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and National Organizing General Secretary BL Santosh.

Under this MoU, technical training will be provided to rural tribal youth. The institutes will work together in the field of research. In this contract, rural tribal technical training will be provided under Parliamentary Complex Project in collaboration with CRISP, Yuva Vikas Society and NSDC. The MoU was signed by Vedmani Tiwari, Chief Executive Officer, NSDC (National Skill Development Corporation), Government of India and Srikant Patil, MD, CRISP. Michael Thomas Wolff, German representative of CRISP Institute was present. The MoU was also signed with CRISP and Nation First Policy Research Center, New Delhi. The MoU was signed by Dr. Patil, MD CRISP and Uday Bhaskar, Director, Nation First Policy Research Centre.

CRISP and NSDC will have a strategic partnership in the contract. With this, the sustainable objectives of Atmanirbhar Madhya Pradesh will be fulfilled. Rural entrepreneur project will be implemented in Madhya Pradesh with the cooperation of NSDC, in which training will be given by selecting beneficiaries from 22,811 panchayats. These will be linked to self-employment. Getting employment in their own area will stop the tendency of migration of rural youth.

Youth will be given technical and futuristic training in collaboration with NSDC, which will be useful in future for work in the areas of skill. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and senior leader B.L. Santosh congratulated both the organizations on the occasion of signing of the contract. Chief Minister Chouhan Shri Santosh also sought information about the activities of CRISP.

India is being established as Electronic Nation

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Union Minister of State for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Rajiv Chandrashekhar addressed the trainees virtually from New Delhi in the second session of Rural Tribal Technical Training. The Minister of State Chandrashekhar praised the functioning of CRISP and congratulated them.

He said that after Covid there has been a profound impact on the electronic value and production in the world. India is strengthing its position strongly in the world as an electronic nation. In the year 2014, electronic items worth one lakh crore rupees were being produced in India, which has increased to 6 lakh crore today.

Atul Tiwari, Special Secretary, Union Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, today inaugurated the Rural Tribal Technician Training Laboratory at CRISP. Tiwari and Chief Executive Officer of National Skill Development Corporation Vedmani Tiwari also released the training course.

Both officers also interacted with the students who came for training from states like Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan etc. They also inspected the hydraulics training of DRDO scientists going on at CRISP.

Tiwari said that after the training, the students will not have to go far from their village. They can go to their village and earn income by this skill. Tiwari also took stock of the training equipment related to electronic equipments like air conditioner, fridge, washing machine etc. Managing Director of Crisp Shrikant Patil and Director Amol Vaidya were present.

UNDP will install solar panels in 75 health centers in the State

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Environment Minister Hardeep Singh Dang was informed by UNDP representative Srinivas that UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) has decided to undertake solar energy and environment-protection works in 10 states of India including Madhya Pradesh.

In Madhya Pradesh, the institution will help 75 primary health centres to use solar power and also install digitized monitoring system. UNDP will also set up 15 electric vehicle charging stations in the state, most of which will be in Indore. Energy audit will be done in 15 solar cold storages and 50 micro and small scale industries in the rural areas.

Appreciating the work being done by UNDP in the field of green energy in Madhya Pradesh, Minister Dang said that they should also bring such other projects in Madhya Pradesh, which will be quite effective in the direction of global warming and climate balance.

Srinivas informed that out of the target set for India, about 12 crore rupees have been earmarked for the works of Madhya Pradesh. As many as 500 to 1000 youths will be benefitted in electronic vehicle training.

Chouhan plants saplings in Kushabhau Thakre Auditorium

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted Neem and Peepal saplings along with National General Secretary B.L. Santosh in Kushabhau Thakre Auditorium Complex.

Tribal artists, who came to participate in the country's first rural tribal technical training, also participated in plantation. Peepal planted today is a shady tree. It purifies the environment.

It has religious and Ayurvedic significance.

Children book collection at SVL

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Summer Mega Children's Books Collection will be put up in Swami Vivekananda Library this Sunday.

The members can read the latest books from the Jarnimo Stilton and Dork Diaries series at Junior Books. Members can also issue on the spot this new collection of 50 books.

Swami Vivekananda Library Manager Yatish Bhatele told that at present the number of members has increased, at present the number of members of the Children's Library is around 500 children's members. The number of members of the total library is around 1675.

All these books will be put on the display of the library at 11 am and they can also issue new children's books to the library members on the spot. A huge children's collection on display in the library, which can be issued by the children's members on the same day.

The collection of Mega Children's Books in Swami Vivekananda Library has many such titles. which are included in this collection. This collection is being launched by Swami Vivekananda Library keeping in mind the summer vacation of children. This type of mega collection has been launched from time to time with the aim of increasing the interest of reading in children. Junior members of the library are also encouraged to sit and study.

This is why it has been included in the collection. The total number of books in this collection is 50. The collection includes the Mervyn Redpost series and the Austrix series and other new books by Karadi Tales.

Yatish Bhatele told that Holiday Stories Author Ruskin Bond, Comics, Roald Dahl, The Ghost Road Author Cheris Kotter and other books are being included in this collection. Similarly, children should also be encouraged to read books from childhood. This time a very attractive series is being launched in the library.

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ

Important Information

On behalf of the President of India, Divisional Railway Manager (Commercial), North Central Railway, Jhansi is informed that the policy of awarding contracts of parking, parcel leasing, Publicity, Catering, Pay & Use toilets etc. is going to be changed from e-bidding to e-auction module which is hassle free, user friendly and easy to operate interface. In the first phase of the e-auction contracts of publicity, parking and parcel leasing is being started, after that it will be implemented for other contracts also, for which all the firms will have to register on the e-auction module so that they can participate in upcoming contracts of any Zonal Railways or any divisions of Indian Railway. For which all the firms (currently working and new firms) will need to comply with the following guidelines.

1. New users will first have to register their firm on **www.ireps.gov.in,** for which it is mandatory for the user to have a digital signature.
2. All the firms which are already registered on IREPS module will have to activate the e-auction module by going to my profile option on their IREPS user account.
3. Current account of the firm has to be opened in any branch of State Bank of India and this account has to be linked on IREPS module (current account should be in **SBI** only).
4. One Time Non Refundable Registration Fee ₹ 10,000+GST has to be deposited on the IREPS portal.
5. All the participants have to keep their account Lien Marking of Funds before participating in the e-auction.
6. All the users have to enter the Turnover Details of the last 03 financial years.

In order to complete the above process easily without any problem, a camp is being organized by the officers of State Bank of India at Divisional Railway Manager (Commerce) Office, Jhansi on 17.05.2022 from 10:00 to 18:00. In which all interested contractors (already working and new contractors) can participate. For more information, you can contact the Chief Commercial Inspector through his M.No. - 9794825100 **570/22(R)**

North central railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @ CPRO NCR

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ

No.-Jhansi/W/T/Tender General Date:- 13.05.2022

E-Tendering Tender Notice

Divisional Railway Manager (Works) N.C. Railway, Jhansi for and behalf of President of India invites sealed "Special Limited Tender" through on Line (E-Tendering) for the following work.

Description of work	E-Tender No.	Approx Cost	Earnest Money	Date of closing Tender	Date of completion /period from issue acceptance letter
Zone No. 8: Annual Sectional contract for repair and maintenance work and supply of material under ADEN/Mahoba sub division from Jhansi (Excl) to Baripura (Including), MBA (Including) to KURJ (EXCL.) for the year 2022-23.	JHS-ENGG -E-2022-45	₹ 10450000.00	₹ 202300.00	06.06.2022 at 15:00 hrs.	12 Months
Zone No. 8A: Annual Sectional contract for repair and maintenance work and supply of material under ADEN/Mahoba sub division from KURJ (Including) to LAR (EXCL) for the year 2022-23	JHS-ENGG -E-2022-46	₹ 12000000.00	₹ 210000.00	06.06.2022 at 15:00 hrs.	12 Months
Zone No. 9: Annual Sectional contract for repair and maintenance work and supply of material under ADEN/BNDA sub division from Baripura (Excl) to MKP (Excl.) and KID to BZM (Excl.) for the year 2022-23.	JHS-ENGG -E-2022-47	₹ 9900000.00	₹ 198000.00	06.06.2022 at 15:00 hrs.	12 Months

• Tender online can be submitted upto 15:00 hrs on 06.06.2022. • For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website www.ireps.gov.in

573/2022 V

North Central Railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @CPRONCR

कार्यालय नगर निगम, भोपाल

विद्युत शाखा

आई.एस.बी.टी. गोविन्दपुरा भोपाल

निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना

क्रमांक/वि.शा. 1083/2022 दिनांक 12.05.2022

निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु दो लिफाफा पद्धति के अनुसार पर सेन्टेज/आयटम रेट मोहरबंद निविदायें निर्धारित प्रपत्र पर ऑनलाईन आमंत्रित की जाती है।

क्र.	ऑनलाईन टेण्डर नं.	कार्य स्थल का नाम	अनुमानित राशि	धरोहर राशि	निविदा प्रपत्र की कीमत	ठेकेदार की श्रेणी	कार्य हेतु निर्धारित एस ओ आर	कार्य की अवधि
1.	2022_UAD _202828_1	Street light arrangement at various places in Bhopal	3,99,16,800/-	2,00,000/-	12,500/-	Original manufacturer/authorized dealer/contractors registered as Electrical contractor in centralized registration system in MPPWD having valid A class eletrical license from MP licensing Board	Non SOR item	06 Month

नियम व शर्ते :-

निविदा प्रपत्र की निर्धारित राशि, धरोहर राशि एवं अन्य आवश्यक दसतावेज ऑनलाईन प्रस्तुत करने होंगे। समस्त विस्तृत जानकारी www.mptenders.gov.in पर देखी जा सकती है।

कार्यपालन यंत्री (विद्युत)
नगर निगम भोपाल

नि.क्र. 165/022/023

यूको बैंक (भारत सरकार का उपक्रम) **UCO BANK** (A Govt. of India Undertaking)

POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property) RULE 8 (1)

Whereas, The authorized officer of **UCO Bank** under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security interest Act 2002 and in exercise of power conferred under 13(12) read with rule 3 of the security interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued a demand notice on dates mentioned below calling upon the below mentioned borrowers & Guarantors to repay the amount mentioned in the notice and interest thereon with in 60 days from the date receipt of the said notice.

The borrowers & / or guarantors having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned, being the Authorized officer of Uco Bank has taken **Possession** of the property described herein below in exercise of power conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the Said rules on dates mentioned below in table.

The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property will be subject to the charge of the **UCO Bank, Concern Branch** for an amount mentioned below & Interest & other charges thereon.

The borrowers & / or guarantors attention is invited to the provisions of sub-section 8 of Sec 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Name & Address of Borrower	Description of Property & Property Owner	Demand notice Dt. / Possession Date	Amount Outstanding
Lalghati Branch : Bhopal			
Borrower : **Mr Raju Ahmed S/o Mr Sardar Ahmed And Mrs Rehana Ahmed W/o Mr Raju Ahmed**	All that part and parcel of the property situated at Plot No. B-33, Housing Board Colony, Bairasia Road, Bhopal Boundaries: North : Road, South - LIG Plots, East : Shed No 32/B, West : Shed No 34/B	24.01.2022 / 12.05.2022	₹ 283034.75 + Interest & other charges

Date & Place : Bhopal, 12-05-2022 Authorised Officer, UCO Bank

Bank of Maharashtra (A Govt. of India Enterprise) www.bankofmaharashtra.in

Hoshangabad Branch : Hoshangabad -461001 Phone: 07574-250121

POSSESSION NOTICE [Rule – 8 (1)]

WHEREAS,

The undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Bank of Maharashtra under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, and in exercise of the powers conferred under Sub-Section (12) of Section 13 read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rule, 2002, issued a Demand Notice dated mentioned below calling upon the borrower and guarantor to repay outstanding Amount (mentioned below) within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice. The notice was sent by Regd AD Post and hand delivery.

The borrower having failed to repay the amount, the undersigned has taken possession of the properties 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 dates mentioned below. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of **Bank of Maharashtra, Hoshangabad Branch** for an amount herein above mentioned.

The borrower's attention is invited to the provisions of sub-section 8 of Sec 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Name & Address of Borrowers & Guarantor (s)	Details of Property	Outstanding Amount ₹
Borrower : **Mr. Rahul Athwani S/o Anil Athwani** Address :- Ganesh Ganj, Hoshangabad 461001 Co-Borrower: **Mr. Anil Athwani S/o Mr. Shobharam Athwani,** Address :- Ganesh Ganj, Hoshangabad 461001 **Mrs. Kanchan Athwani W/o Mr. Anil Athwani,** Address :- Malakhedi, Hoshangabad 461001	All the piece and parcels of the residential open plot Mouza Kishanpur (Narayan Nagar) NB No 270 PH No 17 W No 19 Kandita 03 KH No 72/4 (Old) New KH No. 72/23 Area 744 Sq Feet Tehsil & Dist. Hoshanagbad-461001 Which is bounded as under:- North: 13 Foot Rasta, South: Plot Of Manoj Badani, East: Others House, West: 20 Feet Rasta.	₹ 11,20,791/- + unapplied interest + Penal Interest @2%, Other Expenses w.e.f. 25.01.2022 Demand Notice Date 27/01/2022 Possession Notice 10/05/2022

Date & Place : Hoshangabad, 13-05-2022 Chief Manager & Authorised Officer

कार्यालय नगर पालिका परिषद सॉची, रायसेन (म.प्र.)

निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना

निम्नलिखित निर्माण कार्य हेतु निकाय द्वारा वेबसाईट www.mptenders.gov.in पर निविदा आमंत्रित की गई हैं। निविदा प्रपत्र वेबसाईट दिनांक 13.05.2022 से 20.06.2022 तक डाउनलोड की जा सकती है। विस्तृत निविदा सूचना आमंत्रण एवं अन्य जानकारी उक्त वेबसाईट पर देखी जा सकती है। निविदा संशोधित होने की स्थिति में वेबसाईट पर ही प्रकाशित की जावेगी समाचार पत्र में नहीं –

एन.आई.टी. क्र./दि.	निविदा क्र./ टेण्डर नम्बर	निविदा क्रम	कार्य का विवरण	अनुमानित लागत	अमानत राशि	ठेकेदार की श्रेणी	कार्य की समया वधि	निविदा प्रपत्र की कीमत
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1716 13.05.2022	2022_UAD _203381_1	द्वितीय	राज्य आपदा प्रबंधन निधि (SDRF) योजनान्तर्गत संबोधी पुलिया से विदिशा रोड पुलिया तक आर.सी.सी. नाला निर्माण कार्य।	26269000.00	131345.00	म.प्र. लोक निर्माण विभाग में पंजीकृत ठेकेदार	06 माह वर्षा ऋतु सहित	15000.00
1717 13.05.2022	2022_UAD _203397_1	प्रथम	मुख्यमंत्री शहरी अधोसंरचना विकास योजना (प्रथम चरण) वार्ड नं. 10/11 में कनक सागर से मांची तथा नागोरी तक बी.टी. रोड एवं नाली निर्माण शेष कार्य।	16572000.00	82860.00	म.प्र. लोक निर्माण विभाग में पंजीकृत ठेकेदार	06 माह वर्षा ऋतु सहित	15000.00

शर्ते–

(1) निविदा की वैधता निविदा खोले जाने के दिनांक स 180 दिन तक की होगी।

(2) निविदा प्रपत्र क्रय करने से पूर्व ठेकेदार को उचित श्रेणी में पंजीकृत प्रमाण–पत्र की प्रति फर्म होने ककी दशा में साझेदारी की डीड एवं पॉवर ऑफ एटार्नी की प्रति प्रस्तुत करना होगा एवं अमानत राशि बैंक एफ.डी.आर. के रूप में स्वीकार होगी।

(3) निर्माण कार्य में नर्मदा सेन्ड का उपयोग करना अनिवार्य होगा।

(4) निर्माण कार्य में उपयोग होने वाली समस्त सामग्रियों का परीक्षण शासकीय मान्यता प्रयोगशालाा से कराना होगा।

(5) निर्माण में प्राक्कलन, ड्राईंग–डिजाइन एवं संबंधित अन्य जानकारी कार्यालयीन समय में नगर पालिका लोक निर्माण शाखा से ली जा सकती है।

(6) MP Municipalties (Accounts & Finance) नियम 2018 के नियम 238 के अनुसार संविदाकारों से अनुबंध सम्पादन के समय तीन प्रतिशत Performance Security एवं सात प्रतिशत Security Deposit प्रत्येक चलित देयकों में से काटी जावेगी/जमा करनी होगी।

(7) जी.एस.टी. की राशि पृथक से देय होगी। कृपया दरें बिना जी.एस.टी. की ही प्रस्तुत करें।

(8) मटेरियल की टेस्ट रिपोर्ट ठेकेदार द्वारा स्वयं के व्यय से मान्यता प्राप्त संस्थान से करवाना होगा।

प्रशासक
नगर पालिका सॉची

मुख्य नगर पालिका अधिकारी
नगर पालिका सॉची

SC refuses to pass interim status quo order on survey of Gyanvapi complex

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday refused to grant an interim order of status quo on the survey of the Gyanvapi-Shringar Gauri complex at Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh. The apex court agreed to consider listing the plea of a Muslim party against the survey of the Gyanvapi premises, when mention was made.

The Bench comprising Chief Justice NV Ramana and justices J K Maheswari and Hima Kohli was told by senior advocate Huzefa Ahmadi, appearing for the Muslim side in the Gyanvapi mosque case, that a plea has been filed against the survey being conducted at the Varanasi site.

"We have filed in relation to a survey which has been directed to be conducted in relation to the Varanasi property. This (Gyanvapi) has

been a mosque since time immemorial and this is clearly interdicted by the Places of Worship Act," Ahmadi said.

He said the direction to conduct a survey has been passed and an order of status quo be passed at the moment. "I do not know anything. How can I pass such an order? I will read. Let me see," the CJI said. The Muslim side has been referring to the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991 and its section 4 which bars filing of any suit or initiating any other legal proceeding for a conversion of the religious character of any place of worship, as existing on August 15, 1947.

A Varanasi local court on Thursday rejected a plea to replace the advocate commissioner it had appointed for conducting a videography survey of the Gyanvapi-Shringar Gauri complex here and ordered the completion of the task by May 17.

The district court also appointed two more lawyers to help the advocate commissioner carry out the survey at the mosque, which is located close to the iconic Kashi Vishwanath temple. It ordered the police to register FIRs if there are attempts to scuttle the exercise.

SC seeks Centre, J&K admin, ECI replies on plea against delimitation commission

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday sought a response from the Centre, the Jammu and Kashmir administration and the Election Commission of India on a plea of two Kashmir residents challenging Government's decision to constitute the delimitation commission for redrawing the Assembly and Lok Sabha constituencies in the UT.

A bench of Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul and MM Sundresh issued notice to the Centre and Election Commission of India and sought their responses within six weeks and said the rejoinder affidavit shall be filed in two weeks thereafter. The bench said the delimitation commission was formed sometime back and asked the petitioners, where were they during that time and why did not they challenge the Constitution of the commission.

The counsel said as per the delimitation order, it is the Election Commission that is empowered to do any changes.

The bench told the counsel, who was making objectionable submissions, to choose his words properly and said that Kashmir was always part of India and just a special provision was removed.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said effectively the plea is two-fold and that delimitation can be conducted only by the ECI and not the delimitation commission.

CBI books Army officer posted at Port Blair for graft

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has booked an Army officer posted at Port Blair for alleged corruption and graft from different private suppliers in connivance with field officers in procurement of ration and other materials for canteen stores department.

It is alleged that Lt Col Abhishek Chandra, the then Station Staff Officer SSO (Contract and Victualling) had demanded bribes from different suppliers during 2018.

The CBI action came following Government sanction to the CBI to proceed with the probe against the officer.

The FIR alleged that Chandra in 2018 entered into criminal conspiracy with Subham Choudhary of Kolkata-based Rochak Agro Food Products Ltd and its representative Dayal Chandra Das to "extend favours" in return for bribes.

Chandra allegedly misused his official position and ensured award of the contract for supply of food items including spices to Base Victualling Yard, Minnie Bay, Port Blair, Andaman without Price Negotiation Committee (PNC) to Rochak Agro Food Products Pvt Ltd., Kolkata and also extended favour in return of bank guarantee of the said company, deposited for the previous contract with BV Yard, Port Blair, it alleged.

In return for the favours, Chandra allegedly demanded and agreed to accept a bribe of Rs 75,000 from Choudhary either in the form of two cheques issued from the account of anyone except the favoured company or in the form of two gift vouchers of jewellery brand Tanishq.

Choudhary could not arrange gift vouchers so Chandra allegedly got the amount deposited in two bank accounts in Bokaro (Jharkhand) through NEFT.

It was also alleged that Chandra had demanded a bribe of Rs three lakh from a representative of another supplier based in Port Blair. On June 6, Muthu, the representative, allegedly tried to pay Rs 1 lakh as part payment but Chandra refused and demanded the full amount. Muthu then used debit cards to withdraw money from the ATM and made a payment of Rs 2.5 lakh to Chandra, the FIR alleged.

Chandra had also directed Das to negotiate with the officers posted in BV Yard so that they "do not raise hue and cry" regarding late arrival of consignment or discrepancy in materials ordered and supplied.

Das allegedly paid a bribe of Rs 10,000 in March 2018 to one Routh who was posted in BV Yard for not raising any objection with respect to the supplies of Rochak Agro Products.

1 serving, 2 retired IAF officers get life sentence for custodial death of cook 27 years ago

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A special CBI court in Ahmedabad has sentenced two retired and one serving officers of the Indian Air Force (IAF) to life imprisonment for the custodial murder of a cook 27 years ago, officials said here on Friday.

Girija Rawat, a cook at the air force station in Jamnagar, was tortured to death in November 1995 after it was suspected that he stole liquor the canteen.

The convicted officers are Anoop Sood, then a Squadron Leader at the Air Force-I in Jamnagar, and then Sergeants Anil K N and Mahendra Singh Sherawat.

Sood, who retired as Group Captain, claims to be an orientation programme speaker and a trained commando from the NSG on his social media profile.

Anil also retired from the IAF, while Sehrawat was still serving. The CBI had taken over the case on February 22, 2012 on the orders of the Gujarat High Court on a plea of Rawat's wife.

"...It was further alleged that on November 13, 1995, 10-12 Air Force Police Officials, including then Squadron Leader Anoop Sood, conducted searches at the residence of Rawat and took him with them

forcibly to confess about stealing of liquor from the Air Force Canteen," CBI Spokesperson R C Joshi said.

He said Rawat's wife visited the guard room in the evening seeking release of her husband.

"She was told that her husband would be released soon. The accused allegedly tortured him which caused his death. On November 14, 1995, she was informed about the death of her husband and was asked to collect the body," Joshi said.

After thorough investigation, the CBI filed a charge sheet on July 30, 2013 against the accused on the charges of criminal conspiracy and murder, he said.

"The trial court found the said accused guilty and convicted them (recently). Three accused were acquitted by the court and one accused expired during the trial," Joshi said.

Seminar to discuss threat to democracy from dynasty politics

With PM hitting out at dynastic politics, think tank RMP is taking the discourse further

DEEPAK K UPRETI ■ NEW DELHI

Against the backdrop of Prime Minister Narendra Modi repeatedly hitting out at dynastic politics asserting it deprived the common man his rightful place to participate in the political process, the Mumbai-based RSS-BJP-linked think tank Rambhau Mhalgi Prabodhini (RMP) is taking the discourse further.

A day-long seminar to discuss the impact of "dynasty based political parties" on the health of democratic process in the country and "ways and means to regulate" party formation will be organised here on May 19 and the recommendations will be submitted to the Election Commission of India for its consideration.

The seminar organised at Nehru Memorial Auditorium will be inaugurated by BJP president J P Nadda. According to Rajya Sabha member Vinay Sahasrabuddhe, who is also Vice Chairman of the RMP, the discussion would cover aspects like "democratic deficit" due to dynastic parties and "possible regulatory framework for preventing mushrooming of dynasty based political parties". Besides Nadda, RMP

Chairman Devendra Fadanvis, senior advocate Mahesh Jethmalani as also representatives of "non-dynastic parties" like Union Minister RCP Singh of JD (U), AIADMK's M Thambidurai and AGP's Birdendra Prasad Baishya will share their views on "dynasty-ism."

Academics like Prof Anand Ranganathan and Prof Sandeep Shastri will also speak at this Seminar. JNU Vice Chancellor Santishree Pandit will be delivering the valedictory address.

"Recommendations evolved at the end of deliberations will be presented to the Election Commission of India, later," said Sahasrabuddhe.

"Defining that dynastic parties are those that are controlled by a particular dynasty for generation after generation, and where not just the Presidentship is held by a dynast but other key office bearers also come from the same family, organisers of the seminar said that such practices dilute democratic credentials and cause a serious harm to the institution of political parties," said a statement by the think-tank without naming any political parties including Congress, Samajwadi Party, Rashtriya Janata Dal , National Conference or the DMK.

The 'anti-dynasty theme' was recently also raised by the Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia, (who incidentally hails from the royal Scindia family and his aunt Vadsundhara Raje , ex-Rajasthan Chief Minter; too is in the party).

Last week he said, "Dynastic politics has no place in the BJP and the Prime Minister believes that party workers be rewarded based on their work and not as per family affiliations".

Sahasrabuddhe sought to say that the total monopoly of dynasties over political parties "serves as a death-knell to internal democracy in parties".

"Under the existing mechanism in such dynasty driven parties a single family controls practically everything, party finance, party membership, party candidacy, and also decisions about alliances and political partnerships. This serves as a death-knell to internal democracy in Parties", said Sahasrabuddhe.

" A party giving candidature to sons and daughters of its leaders is one thing and a family acquiring total control of a party is totally different. The latter is most detrimental to the cause of democracy," he said.

In India, out of th 50 major political parties from the 2700 registered and recognised parties, at least 4/5th are dynasty based. This phenomenon "seriously narrows down the available choices for a voter as it afflicts the element of competition," he said.

Rajnath to launch two indigenously designed, built warships on May 17

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will on May 17 concurrently launch two indigenously designed and built warships at the Mazgaon Docks Limited (MDL), Mumbai. The two ships are destroyer 'Surat' and frigate 'Udaygiri.'

While the Surat is a Project 15-B destroyer, Udaygiri is a Project 17-A frigate, officials said here on Friday. The Project 15B class of ships are the next generation stealth guided missile destroyers of the Indian Navy being built at the Mazgaon Docks .

'Surat' is the fourth ship of Project 15B Destroyers which heralds a significant makeover of the P15A (Kolkata Class) destroyers and is named after the commercial capital of the state of Gujarat and also the second largest commercial

hub of western India after Mumbai. Surat city has a rich maritime and ship building history and vessels built at the city in the 16th and 18th centuries were known for their longevity (of more than 100 years).

The ship 'Surat' has been built using the block construction methodology which involved hull construction at two different geographical locations and has been joined together at MDL. The first ship of this class was commissioned in 2021. The second and third ships have been launched and are at different stages of outfitting and trials.

'Udaygiri,' named after a mountain range in Andhra Pradesh, is the third ship of Project 17-A Frigates. These are follow-on of the P-17 Frigates (Shivalik Class) with improved stealth features, advanced weapons and sensors and platform management systems. _

'Udaygiri' is the reincarnation of erstwhile 'Udaygiri', the Leander class anti-submarine warfare frigate, which saw numerous challenging operations in its illustrious service to the country spanning over three decades from 1976 to 2007.

Under the P-17A program, a total of seven ships, with four at the MDL and three at the Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers, Kolkata are under construction.

Various novel concepts and technologies like integrated construction, mega block outsourcing, project data management project lifecycle management have been adopted for the first time in indigenous warship design and construction in this project. The first two ships of P-17A project, were launched in 2019 and 2020 at MDL and GRSE respectively.

Both P-15B and P-17A ships have been designed in-house by the Directorate of Naval Design (DND), which has been the fountainhead for all warship design activities of the nation and during building phase at Shipyard, around 75% of orders for equipment and systems have been placed on indigenous firms including MSMEs which is a true testament of 'AatmaNirbharta' in the country.

Senior IAS officer appointed as chairperson of CBSE

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Senior IAS officer Nidhi Chibber has been appointed as the chairperson of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) in a top-level bureaucratic reshuffle effected by the Centre on Friday. Chibber, a 1994 batch Indian Administrative Service officer of Chhattisgarh cadre, is currently Additional Secretary, Ministry of Heavy Industries.

Vivek Kumar Dewangen, a 1993 batch IAS officer of Manipur cadre, has been named Chairman & Managing Director, REC Ltd., Ministry of Power. He is currently Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Power.

While S Gopalakrishnan, Additional Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) has been appointed as Additional Secretary, Department of Health and Family Welfare, Rakesh Sarwal, Additional Secretary, NITI Aayog will be Managing Director, National Waqf Development Corporation Ltd., Ministry of Minority Affairs, the order said.

Aditi Das Rout, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development has been promoted as Additional Secretary in the same ministry. Shyam Bhagat Negi, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Coal will be Additional Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat.

Manisha Sinha, Joint Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance has been appointed as Additional Secretary, in the same department and Kumar Anugreh Prasad Sinha will be Additional Secretary of the National Disaster Management Authority.

Sinha, a 1992 batch IAS officer, is currently working in his cadre state Punjab. Amar Nath, Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, has been posted as Additional Secretary, Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions.

Vikas Sheel, Additional Secretary, Department of Health and Family Welfare has been named as Additional Secretary and Mission Director, Jal Jeevan Mission, Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation while Alok Shekhar, who is presently working in his cadre state Punjab, will be Additional Secretary, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

Rakesh Kumar Singh, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs will be Additional Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs and Surendra Singh, Joint Secretary, Department of Social Justice and Empowerment has been appointed as Additional Secretary in the same department. Pravir Pandey, a 1992 batch officer of Indian Audit and Accounts Service, has been appointed as Additional Secretary and Financial Advisor, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

Vandana Kumar, Joint Secretary, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy has been named as Additional Secretary, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy and Ajay Tewari, currently Joint Secretary in Ministry of Labour & Employment will be Additional Secretary, Ministry of Power.

Alka Nangia Arora, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises has been named as Joint Secretary and Financial Advisor, Department of Agricultural Research and Education by temporarily downgrading the post of Additional Secretary and Financial Advisor in the department, the order said.

President Kovind to visit Jamaica, Saint Vincent and Grenadines from May 15 to 21

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In the first ever visit by an Indian head of state, President Ram Nath Kovind will visit Jamaica and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) from May 15 to 21. This visit to the two countries is reflective of a commitment to Small Island Developing States and Carribean Community(CARICOM).

Giving details of the President's schedule, Secterary(East)Ministry of External Affairs Saurabh Kumar said here on Friday, Kovind will present cricket kits to aspiring Indian cricketers during his visit to the two countries including Jamaica and St. Vincent and Grenadines (SVG).

The President will also hold discussions with his counterpart Governor-General Susan Dougan and will also meet Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves. Kovind will address the Parliament of SVG. Kumar said the SVG has about 7,700 people of Indian origin settled in the SVG.

As regards his itinerary in Jamaica, the President will hold delegation-level talks with his counterpart Patrick Allen, the Governor-General of Jamaica. Kovind will also meet Prime Minister Andrew Holness. He will also address the Joint Sitting of the two Houses of the Jamaican Parliament.

Jamaica and India have friendly relations. Jamaica is also one of the Girmitya countries with a 70,000 strong Indian diaspora, who acts as a living bridge with India," the ministry said. The visit comes at a significant milestone as 2022 is the 60th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Jamaica, it added.

Jamaica and SVG are active members in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). The first-ever Head of State visit to these countries is a continuation of India's high-level engagement with the countries in the Caribbean region and emphasizes our continued commitment to work with Small Island developing countries, the external affairs ministry had said a few days back.

Monsoon to hit Kerala on May 27, five days early: IMD

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

South-west monsoon, considered as the lifeline of India's agri-based economy, is likely to bring first showers to Kerala by May 27, five days earlier than the normal onset date, the weather office announced on Friday.

"This year, the onset of southwest monsoon over Kerala is likely to be earlier than the normal date of onset. The monsoon onset over Kerala is likely to be on May 27 with a model error of four days," India Meteorological Department (ID) said.

In 2009, the south-west monsoon had reached Kerala on May 23. Weather scientists attribute the early onset of southwest monsoon over Kerala to the influence of the remnants of cyclone Asani that triggered the cross-equatorial flow, a key factor for the seasonal rains. The early arrival of the south-west monsoon comes at a time when parts of north-west India were experiencing extremely high maximum temperatures.

On Thursday, the weather office had forecast the onset of south-west monsoon over Andaman & Nicobar islands on May 15, nearly a week ahead of schedule.

"In association with enhanced cross equatorial winds, conditions are becoming favorable for the advance of Southwest Monsoon into South Andaman Sea, Nicobar Islands and some parts of southeast Bay of Bengal, around May 15," the IMD said in a statement.

At the same time, the weather office made it clear that past data suggest that there is no association of the date of monsoon advance over the Andaman Sea either with the date of monsoon onset over Kerala or with the seasonal monsoon rainfall over the country.

The IMD said due to strong westerly flow from Arabian Sea to south peninsular India in lower tropospheric levels fairly widespread light/moderate rainfall with isolated thunderstorm/lightning/gusty winds likely over Kerala, Mahe, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal, south interior Karnataka and Lakshadweep over the next five days.

Security preparedness for Amarnath Yatra reviewed

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla on Friday reviewed the security preparedness for the Amarnath Yatra scheduled to begin on June 30 after a gap of two years.

The Home Secretary reviewed the security preparedness for the Amarnath Yatra with top officials of paramilitary forces and the Jammu and Kashmir administration, officials said.

About 10,000 paramilitary personnel (100 companies) in addition to Jammu and Kashmir Police are expected to be deployed along the two pilgrimage routes via Pahalgam and Baltal, they said. About three lakh pilgrims are likely to take part in the yatra, which is expected to end on August 11.CRPF Director General Kuldiep Singh and BSF DG Pankaj Singh, along with other officers, attended the meeting physically, while Jammu and Kashmir officials attended it through video conference.

The annual pilgrimage to the cave shrine located in the upper reaches of south Kashmir could not be carried out in 2020 and 2021 due to the coronavirus pandemic, while it was cut short in 2019 just before the abrogation of Article 370. Amarnath pilgrimage will be a big security challenge for the government as Jammu and Kashmir has been witnessing a number of targeted killings in recent weeks.

TN Min takes jibe at 'Hindi will fetch job' claims

Points out at pani puri sellers

PTI ■ COIMBATORE/CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Higher Education Minister K Ponmudy on Friday asserted that the State Government will continue with the two-language formula as its policy, and decried any attempts of alleged Hindi imposition and questioned claims that learning the language will fetch jobs.

Taking a dig on those who insist jobs will be available for people learning Hindi, the Minister asked who are selling 'pani puri' in the Coimbatore now, an obvious reference to the predominantly Hindi-speaking vendors involved in the trade in the city. He, however, later clarified his comments on pani puri sellers did not amount to 'profiling.'

His comments came at the 37th convocation of Bharathiar University in Coimbatore, presided over by state Governor R N Ravi, also the varsity Chancellor, where the minister reiterated the ruling DMK's stand against 'imposition' of Hindi, a claim which Ravi sought to dismiss by saying "there is no question of imposition of Hindi or any other language on anyone."

Ponmudy said he used the platform to highlight Tamil Nadu's sentiments over the language issue as the Governor would convey them to the Centre. He recalled that English and Tamil have been in vogue in Tamil Nadu for long and that the same will continue while students were not against learning other languages, including Hindi.

"Many said you will get jobs if you learn Hindi. Is it so...Look here in Coimbatore, who is selling pani puri. It is them (Hindi-speaking individuals)," he said.

"If a cat can go through a hole, can't a rat," he asked cryptically. Ponmudi said students of the state were ready to learn any language and that they were not against other languages including Hindi.

Noting that the state government was ready to adopt good schemes in the New Education Policy (NEP 2020), the minister said there should not be any imposition of Hindi and students can prefer any language as the third option, but the state will follow the system prevailing now. Alleging Hindi imposition through NEP 2020, the Tamil Nadu government has already said the two-language policy, comprising Tamil and English, will continue to remain in practice.

"We don't want to agitate against the good things in NEP. We are ready to follow them. But at the same time, in Tamil Nadu we should have our own language. India is a land of unity in diversity. In Tamil Nadu we shoould follow our own education system... We should follow certain good policies from the NEP," Ponmudy added.

Heatwave sweeps western Raj; Barmer, Jaisalmer worst hit

PTI ■ BARMER/JAISALMER

Streets in many places in western Rajasthan bear a deserted look during much of the day as if a lockdown is in place, with people keeping indoors due to the heatwave.

Barmer recorded the highest day temperature of 48.2 degree Celsius on Thursday while the mercury soared to 47.2 in Jaisalmer.

The Meteorological Department has issued a red alert for Bikaner, Churu, Jaisalmer, Ganganagar, Hanumangarh, Jhunjhunu, and Kota districts for May 14.

It said the situation is likely to continue for next two days, after which some respite may be expected.

Meanwhile, dust storms coupled with heatwave in rural areas have disrupted the routine life.

"The heat is unbearable. As the day progresses, conditions become tougher and it becomes a challenge to go out in the afternoon," Sunil Kumar, a trader in Barmer, told PTI.

He said the sale of ACs and coolers has suddenly shot up and customers visit either in the morning hours or in late evening hours to avoid heatstroke.

The heatwave persists till late in the night and before sleeping on the roof, people sprinkle water to reduce the impact of the heat.

Generally, people used to take bath in the evening but due to the scorching sun, water of the tanks kept on the roof turns too hot to use.

Be it Barmer or Jaisalmer, people start the day quite early and finish morning routine work by 8-9 am.

"The situation is such that even the use of water from tanks kept on the roof late in the evening can scorch the body. Even in the morning, we try to take a bath before the sun rise," Barmer resident Ram Suthar said.

Most business establishments lower their shutters and roads remain almost empty.

To minimise the impact of sunlight, shopkeepers in Jaisalmer's Pokaran town use green nets.

"It is too hot and blistering heat has made all of us suffer. Roads remain almost empty from 12 to 5 pm, and it feels like a lockdown like situation," Jai Bhati, a local vendor in Jaisalmer said.

BJP shares Pawar speech, calls him 'Hindu hater'; NCP says video edited

PTI ■ MUMBAI

An NCP youth wing leader on Friday approached the cyber cell of Mumbai police seeking action against the BJP for uploading an alleged edited version of Sharad Pawar's recent speech in order to portray him as a "Hindu hater".

The @BJP4Maharashtra on Wednesday tweeted a short video of the speech and claimed that "atheist Sharad Pawar always hated Hindu religion" and he would not have achieved his political success without taking such a stand. However, some social media users pointed out it was an edited video and Pawar, in the speech made at an event on May 9 in Satara, was in fact referring to a poem by Jawahar Rathod that deals with casteism and untouchability.

In his complaint to the police, Suraj Chavan, president of the state unit of the NCP's youth wing, said, "An attempt was made to create a divide in communities and cause law and order problems by sharing such a tempered video on Twitter. Action must be taken against the Twitter handle (of the BJP) as per sections 499, 500, 66A and 66F." Pawar had told reporters on Thursday that he was reading out lines from a poem that depicts the pain of the labour class, but went to take a swipe at the BJP by saying those who wanted to spread disinformation were free to do so.

Panama Papers: ED seizes ₹88.30 L after raids in MP, Goa

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has seized Rs 88.30 lakh in cash after it searched the premises of a man, whose name figured in the Panama Paper leaks, in Madhya Pradesh and Goa as part of money laundering investigation against him.

The ED has conducted searches at four premises based at Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh) and Goa in a money laundering case registered against Sanjay Vijay Shinde.

"Sanjay Vijay Shinde figured in the Panama Paper Leaks, wherein, names of various individuals were revealed who had beneficial interests in various offshore entities.

Sanjay Vijay Shinde had beneficial interests in a British Virgin Islands based offshore entity, in whose Singapore-based bank account, more than Rs 31 crore were deposited by various offshore entities," the ED said in a statement.

The Income Tax Department filed a prosecution complaint against Sanjay Vijay Shinde under provisions of Black Money (Undisclosed Foreign Income and Assets) and Imposition of Tax Act, 2015. Subsequently, investigation under provisions of Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) was initiated by the ED.

Searches were conducted at the four premises related to Shinde, including the residential premises at Goa and Bhopal, the premises of his then employer VS Dempo Holdings Pvt Ltd, Goa and the premises of RPM Sonic Adventures and Caravan Resorts at Bhopal.

It said a cash amount of Rs 88.30 lakh and various incriminating documents were recovered from the premises and further investigation is under progress.

Dubbed 'Panama Papers',

An investigation of a stockpile of records from Panamanian legal firm Mossack Fonseca by the Washington-based International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) in 2016 was dubbed as 'Panama Papers'. It named several world leaders and celebrities who allegedly stashed money abroad in offshore companies.

As many as 426 India-linked cases figured in the Panama Papers.

ED files chargesheet against two PFI leaders under PMLA

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has filed a Supplementary Prosecution Complaint (charge sheet) against two leaders of the Popular Front of India (PFI) under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) before the Special PMLA Court, Lucknow with a prayer for awarding punishment to the accused.

The Court has taken cognizance of the offence of money laundering against the duo.

Earlier, a Prosecution Complaint had been filed by the ED on February 6 last year against five office bearers / members of PFI and its student wing Campus Front of India.

The latest supplementary prosecution complaint has been filed against PFI leaders Abdul Razaq Peediyakkal alias Abdul Razak BP and Asharaf Khadir alias Ashraf MK who, in association with other PFI leaders and members associated with overseas entities, were developing a residential project - Munnar Villa Vista Project (MVVP) at Munnar, Kerala.

The motive of the accused was to launder money collected from foreign countries as well as within the country and to generate funds for PFI to finance its radical activities, the ED said in a statement.

"Investigation established that 'proceeds of crime' in the form of unaccounted & unexplained cash as well as foreign funds were parked in MVVP and were projected as untainted," it said.

Scientists report spotting of fossil of Madtsoiidae snake

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Scientists from Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology, Dehradun and a few other academic institutions including Panjab University Chandigarh and IIT, Ropar, have reported sighting of the fossil of a Madtsoiidae snake from the molasse deposits of Ladakh Himalaya for the first time indicating their prevalence in the subcontinent for much longer time than previously thought.

According to the scientists, Madtsoiidae is an extinct group of medium-sized to gigantic snakes, firstly appeared during the late Cretaceous and mostly distributed in the Gondwanan landmasses, although their Cenozoic record is extremely scarce.

From the fossil record, the whole group disappeared in the mid-Paleogene across most Gondwanan continents except for Australia where it survived with its last known taxon Wonambi till late Pleistocene.

The lucky team members included Dr. Ningthoujam Premjit Singh, Dr. Ramesh Kumar Sehgal, and Mr. Abhishek Pratap Singh from Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology, Dehradun, India in association with Dr. Rajeev Patnaik and Mr. Wasim Abass Wazir from Panjab University Chandigarh; Dr. Navin Kumar and Piyush Uniyal from Indian Institute of Technology Ropar, and Dr. Andrej Cernanský of Comenius University Slovakia.

The occurrence of Madtsoiidae from the Oligocene of Ladakh indicates their continuity at least to the end of the Paleogene (geologic period and system that spans 43 million years from the end of the Cretaceous Period 66 million years ago). The research published in Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology shows that the members of this group were successful in this subcontinent for much longer time than previously thought.

The global climatic shifts and the prominent biotic reorganization across the Eocene-Oligocene boundary (which correlates to the European Grande Coupure), did not cause the extinction of this important group of snakes in India, said an official from the Science and Technology Ministry.

He said that the newly described specimen is housed in the repository of the Wadia Institute, an autonomous institute of the Department of Science and Technology.

West Bengal School Service commission recruitment scam

Judicial panel recommends criminal proceedings

Justice RK Bag (retd) committee submits report showing how 381 people were illegally appointed in Group C posts circumventing panel of candidates

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

A judicial panel instituted by the Calcutta High Court to look into an alleged West Bengal School Service Commission recruitment scam has submitted a damaging report before the court that threatens to implicate a flock of senior Government staff and Ministers, sources said.

Recommending criminal proceedings against four former SSC officials and the then president of the autonomous institution, Justice RK Bag (retd) committee on Friday submitted a report showing how 381 people were illegally appointed in Group C posts circumventing the panel of candidates who had cleared the recruitment tests. The said 381 appointees had not even appeared for the examinations. The report says that recommendations for appointment were made by an advisory panel allegedly created during when TMC General Secretary Partho Chatterjee was the Education Minister. The advisory panel thus created by the ministry did not have any legal validity as the SSC is an autonomous body — with its own time-tested recruitment procedures — the judicial committee has said.

According to sources another 222 successful candidates — whose names figured in the waiting list — were given appointments upon the recommendations of the advisory committee much after the date of appointment had elapsed.

The report has also held the then West Bengal Board of Secondary Education and the five-member advisory panel headed by SP Sinha — created by the Education Ministry to supervise the appointment procedures — responsible for the recruitment scam.

The Division Bench of justices Subrata Talukdar and Ananda Kumar Mukherjee hearing the case would pass an order on May 18.

The single Bench of Justice Abhijit Gangopadhyay had earlier ordered a CBI investigation into the matter asking the central agency to go to the extent of arresting any one — even a minister. The ordered was stayed by the Division Bench.

Similar recruitment cases involving hundreds of aspirants for primary and secondary teachers' posts as well as Group D staff are pending in the High Court while the aspirants who had cleared the tests and whose names appeared in the waiting lists were still holding dharnas.

According to sources appointments were made in lieu of crores of rupees.

"We have reports that anywhere between Rs 5 and Rs 15 lakh were accepted for Group D and Group C and teachers' posts. According to Group D employees who had earlier lost jobs following the order of the single Judge Bench "not only the Trinamool Congress but also some turncoat leaders from East Midnapore who are now in the BJP had also accepted cash for appointment…"

Maha: Firm owner arrested for GST fraud of ₹8 crore

PTI ■ THANE

Officials of the Central Goods and Services Tax (CGST) have busted racket involved in generating fake input tax credit worth Rs 8 crore and arrested the proprietor of a firm dealing in trading of construction material, an official said on Friday.

Acting on a specific input, the anti-evasion wing of the CGST Thane Commissionerate initiated an investigation against J.J. Lime Depot, which deals in trading of construction material, he said.

The probe revealed that the firm had fraudulently claimed input tax credit of Rs 8.05 crore and had also issued bogus invoices of more than Rs 40 crore for passing on of this tax credit, without any supply of goods, in gross violation of provisions of the CGST Act, 2017, the official said.

In his statement, recorded during the investigation, the proprietor of the firm admitted that he had issued fake invoices to many Mumbai-based infrastructure companies, for commission, he said.

The firm's proprietor was arrested on Thursday under the CGST Act, 2017 and has been remanded to judicial custody for 14 days, the official added.

DS Chauhan assumes additional charge as UP police chief

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Director General of Police (Intelligence) Devendra Singh Chauhan assumed the additional charge of the State's DGP on Friday, two days after Mukul Goel was removed from the top post. Chauhan is an IPS officer of the 1988-batch.

DGP (Intelligence) Chauhan on Friday assumed the additional charge of the Uttar Pradesh police chief at the police headquarters here.

He will hold the additional charge till the appointment of a permanent director general of police (DGP), Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Awanish Kumar Awasthi had said on Thursday.

Following Goel's removal from the post on Wednesday, Additional Director General of Police (Law and Order) Prashant Kumar was given the additional charge of the state police chief. The officer had also a courtesy meeting with Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath during the day.

"I thank the chief minister from my heart for giving me the opportunity to serve the public as the (acting) DGP of Uttar Pradesh Police," Chauhan said in tweet on the official Twitter handle of the UP DGP.

"The UP police will work with complete integrity and honesty according to the priorities of the government while maintaining team spirit like a family," he added.

Rape victim attempts self-immolation outside DM office in Aligarh

PRADEEP SAXENA ■ ALIGARH

A woman, a rape victim, tried to commit suicide by pouring petrol on herself outside the DM's office. Meanwhile, the eyes of the security personnel fell on her. They surrounded her and caught her. This woman was hurt due to the lack of action in the case of rape on the pretext of a job.

As soon as the matter came to the notice, the DM called the women's police station, after which a report was filed on behalf of the victim woman against Dr. Saud Ali, former principal of Aligarh Muslim University's Tibia College, on charges of rape and cheating. The victim has been sent for medical examination.

A 24-year-old woman resident of the metropolis reached the collectorate. On meeting DM Selva Kumari J, she told that in the year 2018, she got a temporary job as a ward attendant in Tibbia College and Hospital, Aligarh. Dr. Saud Ali, who was the principal during that time, called her and said if you arrange five lakh rupees, then he will make the job permanent. When she talked about not having money, Dr. Saud Ali proposed to have a physical relationship and on her refusal, Dr. Said Ali started harassing her.

Woman tied to pole, heckled in Meghalaya

PTI ■ SHILLONG

A woman was tied to a pole at a market place at Jowai in Meghalaya and heckled for alleged pickpocketing prompting police to initiate action against those involved, officials said on Friday.

An undated video of the incident went viral on the social media on Friday.

It showed the woman being taken to a shed by unknown people during the daytime, asked questions and then being tied to a pole amidst jeering by onlookers.

Children, young people and women present at the spot were seen making fun of her.

Her shawl and her bag, which she was seen carrying to the shed, could not be viewed in the video when she was being tied to the pole or afterwards. A senior police official told PTI, "An officer and a team from the women police station in the area have been sent to investigate the matter. All the people seen in the video will be called for questioning."

He said, "Perpetrators will be dealt with in accordance with the law".

Meghalaya Police, which was tagged along with Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma, said on Twitter, "Action has been taken by @Jowai_Police in this regard." Details were, however, not given.

The person who posted the image of the woman tied to the pole said that the superintendent of police of West Jaintia Hills district had been informed of the matter on Thursday.

"I hope the perpetrators are dealt with and the woman is safe and rehabilitated," he said in his post. Women's rights activist Agnes Kharshiing condemned the incident.

"We demand immediate arrest of all those involved in torturing the woman," she told PTI.

'Disease free India campaign' launched

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

On the occasion of the 4th Naturopathy Day celebration here, "Disease Free India Campaign" has been launched with an aim to ensure better well being of the society amidst Covid-19 crisis.

Those present on the occasion included Dr Mahenderbhai Munjapara, Union Minister of State for Ayush, Raju Bisht, Member of Parliament, Jayaprakash, Founder Surya Foundation, Dr. Ishwar Basavaraddy, Director, Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga, Prof (Dr) K Satyalakshmi, Director , National Institute of Naturopathy, Dr Raghvendra Rao, Director, Central Council for Research in Yoga and Naturopathy among others. On the occasion of 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav' with the support of National Institute of Naturopathy, Union Ministry of Ayush to propagate the Naturopathy, INO-Surya Foundation has organized approximately 500 naturopathy camps in which more than 50 thousand people from rural and urban area of India have participated.

"Today, there is a need to expand naturopathy scientifically to common men as an option to the costly allopathic system," Dr. Anant Biradar, National President-INO said.

He added that in this direction, INO-Surya Foundation has been working for the last 25 years. "More than one lakh yoga naturopathy doctors, students and other people have joined this campaign from all over the country whose motive is to realize the dream of Self Health Reliance of Father of Nation Mahatma Gandhi ji and to reduce the health budget of family and country," he said.

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PAPER WITH PASSION

An unforgiving May

Revised work hours protocol for extreme summers is needed

The effect of Cyclone Asani has waned. The moisture-laden easterly winds did lower temperatures for a couple of days in the north. The plains are back to witnessing a return of the debilitating heatwave. The weather office has issued a yellow alert that could soon be upgraded into an orange alert. Are any steps afoot to mitigate people's misery as the temperatures threaten to cross 46 degrees Celsius in Delhi and neighbouring states? A welcome step is shortening school hours, limiting students' outdoor activities, and relaxing the dress code norm. However, is there a need for primary schools to function? The heat threatens the adult population in no less measure. Sunstrokes are on the rise and dehydration is common. And yet there is no attempt to advance or shorten office hours. Private offices can easily shift to the WFH mode if advancing office hours is not possible. Online work in digitised government departments is recommended. The situation eminently suits half-day work timings. Routine activities in courts like date extensions, submission of documents, and bail arguments, especially related to petty crimes, can be online. However, what about the daily-wage labourers, agricultural labourers, and civic workers of the public works departments?

Millions spend their days under the unrelenting sun with barely any protection or nutritious supplements. The civic works have not been stopped or postponed anywhere. Big projects related to national highways, track-laying, and construction of bridges and buildings have no systems to allow for reduced working hours. In some states, the governments make arrangements for cool drinking water, buttermilk sachets, and medical camps. Most states have first-aid kits at the primary health centres in rural areas. But all these efforts miss the point. They essentially deal with basic resuscitation measures for labourers and workers suffering heat strokes. We are witnessing a definite, recurring pattern of extreme summer heat. The pattern is already an intrinsic part of summers,and climatologists fear things may become worse in the coming years. So, we should be talking about more than the basics. The focus should be on tweaking working hours without affecting productivity but sparing the workers from heat fatigue. Proposals for the work hours to begin earlier than usual or shift to the late afternoons and early eveningsare worth examining. Implementing them is not easy without backup infrastructure, including the provision of power and, possibly, transport and arrangements of creches, temporarily in 'anganwadis', for the children of the labourers. By now, the National Disaster Management Authority could have met to discuss a summer public works protocol roping in organisations from the Centre, the States, and the non-governmental sector. The Authority's website does recognise the threat that extreme summers pose. The homepage lists the criteria offered by the weather office for heatwaves and spells out first-aid and stroke-prevention measures. It also acknowledges that India is also feeling the impact of heatwaves. But that is all.

PICTALK

People perform yoga during a yoga event ahead of International Day of Yoga at the banks of Lower Lake in Bhopal PTI

Walk the talk

If Congress did not resolve the leadership issue then talks about revamp will have few takers

Both Opposition and the BJP camps will keenly watch the deliberations at the three-day Congress Chintan Shivir at Udaipur where the GOP will try to find ways to stem the rot within the party and settle the leadership issue. Ironically, the grand old party which wants to lead the nation has no permanent leader itself. The continuation of Sonia Gandhi as interim president is not only a perceptional disaster but it also reflects a complete lack of professionalism in the functioning of the party and its obsession not to allow anyone outside the Gandhi family to steer its course even when 10 Janpath has failed to perform, at least electorally. An army is as good as its general, the saying rings so true in the case of Congress. Sonia Gandhi rarely makes any public appearance, and Rahul Gandhi has yet to project himself as a leader who can keep the party together, mend fences with old guards, and sacrifice his foreign jaunts for the party's sake. Somehow a perception has gained ground over the years that Rahul Gandhi lacked the killer instinct to lead the party to electoral victories. It's one thing to address public rallies and hit out at the Modi Government, it's another to plan and plot strategies to fight electoral battles. Take the case of Punjab and Uttarakhand, where Congress virtually gave walkovers to the BJP in the assembly polls because of the failure of the leadership to resolve the infighting even at the peak of electioneering.

Sonia Gandhi's words in her inaugural address at the Chintan Shivir that "We need to change the way of our working", apply as much to the party workers as to the leadership. Similarly, when Sonia urged party leaders to keep the organization above personal ambitions, saying the party has given "us a lot and it's time to pay back," many would ask should not charity begin from home. For years the Congress leaders have been playing the same old tune. It's time they walk the talk themselves. Sonia Gandhi may have rightly said that the Shivir is an occasion to discuss the challenges before the party and bring organisational changes, but if Congress did not resolve the leadership issue and showed a readiness to empower leaders from outside the Gandhi family, too, then all the talks about organizational revamp will have few takers.

Hindus' incoherent angst about identity

PRAFULL **GORADIA**

If the Hindus had found a sufficiently eloquent manner of expressing their pain, the Muslims could then have taken the current changes in their stride

A few people know what Sir Arnold Toynbee told his Indian audience when he came to address them to commemorate Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. Toynbee had come at Jawaharlal Nehru's special invitation in the early 1960s. Arnold Toynbee said: "In the course of the first Russian occupation of Warsaw, the Russians had built an Eastern Cathedral in the city that had been the capital of the once independent Roman Catholic country Poland. The Russians had done this to give the Poles a continuous ocular demonstration that the Russians were now the masters. After the re-establishment of Poland's independence in 1918, the Poles pulled this cathedral down. I do not blame the Polish Government for having pulled down the Russian church. The purpose for which the Russians had built it had been not religious but political, and the purpose had also been intentionally offensive."

In the Abrahamic religious tradition, a church or mosque is a prayer hall. It is not unusual for a parish in Europe to sell for money a church; say, for the reason it does not attract an adequate number of worshippers on Sundays. I was present in England when such a sale was made in Leicester and the sold-off place was brought down to be replaced with a temple. In West Asia, including Saudi Arabia, mosques are brought down to straighten or widen highways. By sharp contrast, in the Hindu belief, a temple is the residence of the divine. Therefore, it is very impious to meddle with its structure. Contrast a prayer hall with a residence of God, and one would know how deeply the Hindu sentiment has been hurt for centuries by the demolition of temples by Islamic invaders and conquerors from West and Central Asia; it is almost impossible for an Abrahamic person to imagine the extent of the psychological injury thus caused.

Quite to the contrary, when the communists came to power in Russia in 1917, they went about targeting all places of worship. This is no surprise; communism is the fourth sibling in the Abrahamic family of religions and shares their intolerance towards any other belief system and like its siblings, has no hesitation in turning upon its fellow siblings as well.

However, it must be admitted that it is the Hindus who have largely been at fault in first allowing the emergence of a separate entity within the sovereign state of India after 1947, and thereafter, not putting forth their point of view eloquently and convincingly enough. In fact, over the centuries, they have not reacted sufficiently for the Muslims to know how badly they have hurt Hindu sentiments. In fact, more often than not, they have gathered around their destroyed edifices, wept and beaten their breasts. As a result, when the Babri structure at Ayodhya was brought down by Hindus, they had surprised the Muslims for the first time in centuries. Being the first such incident it could be taken as an exception that proves the rule. Now, with demands being raised for the restoration of Gyanvapi at Varanasi and the Idgah at Mathura, there is amazement, albeit privately, as to what has come over the Hindus.

> CONTRAST A PRAYER HALL WITH A RESIDENCE OF GOD, ONE WOULD KNOW HOW DEEPLY THE HINDU SENTIMENT HAS BEEN HURT FOR CENTURIES BY THE DEMOLITION OF TEMPLES BY ISLAMIC INVADERS AND CONQUERORS FROM WEST AND CENTRAL ASIA

Of equal consternation, if not greater, are the demands for changes in the names of roads named after medieval Muslim conquerors. While there is much stomach-churning and hand-wringing, accompanied by a flurry of attempts to turn the narratives in favour of the "secular-liberal" lobby, hardly anyone has stopped to think, leave alone acknowledge that the injuries were first inflicted by Mahmud of Ghazni on the famous Somnath Temple and soon followed by his attack on the Keshav Dev Mandir at Mathura. Not long thereafter, were the unholy adventures by Mohammed Ghori when he converted three temples into one mosque at Ajmer and named it "Adhai Din Ka Jhopra"; the aggression was completed in 60 hours and hence the name. Barely a few years earlier, he had devastated Kannauj, then considered the capital of India. Qutbuddin Aibak's destruction of 27 Jain temples at Delhi's Meharauli and converting them into a mosque called "Quwwat-ul-Islam" or the "might of Islam" was the next chapter of deliberate humiliation inflicted upon the Hindus.

I suppose the type of sentiments would differ from person to person. Even if we accept this contention, it was all supposedly settled with the partition of the country on the midnight of August 14, 1947, when one-thirds of Hindu were given away to appease the progeny of those medieval conquerors, whose political representatives had declared in unambiguous terms that they could not co-exist with the Hindus. But such a settlement did not materialise and post-independent India allowed "a state within a state" to exist and flourish. When Vladimir Lenin conquered the Russian Empire for communism, most of the churches, synagogues and mosques were converted into municipal offices, departmental stores or places of any other civil purpose. In 1973, I happened to visit the sites of three such conversions. These changes were presumably accepted on the morrow of the Russian Revolution.

Be that as it may, it would have been much better if the Hindus had found a sufficiently eloquent manner of expressing their pain, the Muslims could then have taken the current changes in their stride.

(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

JOURNALIST'S KILLING

Sir—The killing of Al Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Akleh by the Israeli forces in a raid in Jenin in the occupied West Bank was tragic. Documenting life under occupation was her sole crime. It was what led to her targeted killing by the Israeli forces. The 51-year-old brave journalist did her job in a place where her life was susceptible to danger. But undeterred by the prospect of being killed, she discharged her duties. She was the epitome of a passionate and brave journalist. She sympathised with the Palestinian cause.

She reflected in her work the pain and suffering of the Palestinians living in occupied areas. She was affectionately called "a daughter of Palestine". She keenly observed the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; she chose to be on the frontlines and at flashpoints to tell the story – the Story of the stories of the Palestinians. Her face is familiar to all those who follow the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Her unique way of telling the story won her many admirers. Her voice conveyed the strength of her feeling when she reported the systematic and structural oppression and repression of the Palestinians on a daily basis by the right-wing Israeli regime. The Israeli military stilled her voice, but her martyrdom will inspire all those who cherish freedom and justice.

G David Milton | *Kanyakumari*

Historic verdict

The Supreme Court's verdict to stay all pending cases, appeals and proceedings with respect to the charges framed under Section 124A (Sedition law) was historic and courageous. In its first affidavit filed before the Supreme Court, the Central Government had vociferously defended the sedition law, and argued that the 1962 verdict of a constitution bench in Kedar Nath Singh vs State of Bihar case upholding its validity had withstood "the test of time" and needed no reconsideration. However, the Government filed another affidavit, wherein it said, it had decided to re-examine and reconsider the sedition law, and urged the apex court to wait for the review by a "competent forum" and to "not invest time" on petitions filed by the Editors' Guild of India and others. The dramatic political volte-face reflected the discomfort of the ruling establishment in losing the sharp claws of the colonial law.

In the early 1960s, Kedar Nath Singh was sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for his speech, "We believe in that revolution, which will come and in the flames of which the capitalists, zamindars and... will be reduced to ashes and on their ashes will be established a government of the poor and the downtrodden people of India." India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru had wanted to "get rid of it (Section 124A)," and the latest Supreme Court verdict is a ray of hope.

Haridasan Rajan | *Kozhikode*

BACK-BREAKING INFLATION

Sir— The retail inflation shoots up to a 95-month high in April, paving the way for more policy rate hikes by the central bank. Inflation has remained above the central bank's upper tolerance limit for four consecutive months. The data released by the National Statistical Office showed the food inflation rate in April soared to 8.38 per cent as prices of edible oils and vegetables shot up by 17.3 per cent and 15.4 per cent, respectively.

Fuel inflation also breached the double-digit mark at 10.8 per cent in April due to rising retail prices of petrol, diesel, and cooking gas even as crude oil prices softened from March. The second round impact of higher energy prices has become visible with transport and communication prices rising in double digits by 10.9 per cent. The services sector inflation rate rose to a 115-month high at 8.03 per cent as household goods and services (7.79 per cent) and personal care (8.62 per cent) inched up. With this there is very heavy burden on the common people who are struggling for survival and the country is heading for a disastrous situation.

Bhagwan Thadani | *Mumbai*

WIDENING NATO BLOC

Sir—Recently, in Russia's neighbouring country Finland, a referendum was held regarding joining the NATO. About 62 per cent of people had given their consent to join the NATO. However, it is noteworthy that just before the Russian invasion of Ukraine, most people in Finland wanted to remain neutral. However, seeing the condition of the people of Ukraine, they felt that joining the NATO bloc would secure their 13,00 kilometres border with Russia. Moreover, till 1917 Finland was a division of Russia. Therefore, the vultures of Russia may also have an eye on them. NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg has said he expects the membership process for Sweden and Finland to be "quite quickly".

Jang Bahadur Singh | *Jamshedpur*

MARITAL RAPE A CRIME

Sir—It is gut-wrenching to read the split judgment on marital rape by the Delhi High Court where one judge said it is not a crime as the existing law. A husband has no right to force himself on his wife. A rape is a rape, there is no exception.

The act of rape itself destroys the institution of marriage. It was expected that both the justices should have declared marital rape as a crime. However, the only grace is that both the judges have allowed the parties to move the Supreme Court against their split verdict on marital rape.

Vishal Mayur | *Tumkur*

Send your feedback to:
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUNDBITE

I am deeply saddened to know about the passing away of HH Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed.

Prime Minister
— Narendra Modi

Competition system in India is well behind big boxing countries and it needs to seize the momentum back.

High Performance Director
— Santiago Nieva

Excited to bring 'Jungle Cry' to audiences and share with them the journey of these heroes.

Actor
— Abhay Deol

I'm a player living with an injury. It's nothing new. It's something that is there, unfortunately.

Tennis star
— Rafael Nadal

Many said you will get jobs if you learn Hindi. Is it so...Look here in Coimbatore, who is selling pani puri.

TN Higher Education Minister
— K Ponmudy

FIRST COLUMN

THE JAPANESE HAVE THEIRS, WE'LL SOON HAVE OURS

It's all about commuting from home to work and back!

R C **ACHARYA**

Urbanisation the world over has spawned transport systems ranging from bicycles to horse drawn carriages, buses, cars, trains.The ultimate in trains being the 'Bullet' trains which first appeared in Japanin 1964. Typically, a commute should last no more than 2 or 3 hours beyond which sustaining it on a daily basis,5 days a week, months on end, would be somewhat inconvenient. The urban sprawl has been somewhat limited by this need to commute where typically the Railway commuter systems world over such as the Delhi Metro, London tube, or New York Transit system running at an average speed of 100 kmph would cover 200 kms in 2 hrs. However, the Japanese found a way to beat this limit by introducing trains with an average speed of 250 kmph, the bullet-shaped nose of the lead bogie earning it the name — 'Bullet' train. It connected Osaka 500 kms away to Tokyo, enabling a daily commute in just 2 hours. Rising out of the ashes of the Second World War II, Shinkansen was a bold reassertion of Japanese national pride, and involved concerted effort by the Government, business and the scientific community to place priority on train travel. These state-of the-art trains run on dedicated tracks laid usually on concrete to minimise maintenance, and have few level crossings, enabling them to maintain an accident-free record for the last almost 60 years. Tokaido Shinkansen, covering 515 km between Tokyo and Shin-Osaka, was the first service, serving a number of major cities Shin-Yokohama, Shizuoka, Nagoya, and Kyoto en route.

Laid with tracks having a curve radius of no less than 4 km, the speed could now be raised to 260 km. Serving the major cities of Shin-Osaka, Shin-Kobe, Okayama, Hiroshima, Kokura, and Hakata, the line was a precursor to a nationwideShinkansen network. Now, most trains attain a maximum speed of 300 kmph. A new station complex at Shinagawa, just south of Tokyo station, was opened in October 2003, which allowed some trains to start and terminate there, thereby increasing the number of trains on the Tokaido line from 11 to 15 per hour, that is, one every four minutes. In all, nine lines, ranging from the smallest of Hakata-Minami with just 8.5 km run by JR West, and the longest of Tokyo-Hachinohe of 593 km, totalling 2556 km are now in operation. Japan, being a relatively small country, the short runs at high speeds have successfully made the nation virtually a suburb of Tokyo. And to keep commuters happy, trains run, as suburban trains of Mumbai do, on some sections atthree-and-half-minute intervals during peak hours. Back home, we still have to dream about our own "Bullet" trains soon becoming part of the Indian scenery running between Ahmedabad and Mumbai, making the 492-km journey in just two hours against the seven now taken by the super-fast Shatabdi Express.In the process it would also put fast growing tier 2 cities such as Surat, Valsad, Bharuch, and Vadodara, on a quick transit map connecting to India's financial capital, Mumbai. With trains running at an average speed of 250 kmph, completing a journey from city-centre to city-centre in just under two hours would also save a traveller the hassles of a long commute to and from the airport, security checks and uncertaintycreated during foggy days. Trains may be delayed, but you don't have to cool your heels in the passenger lounge waiting for the announcement to board. Last but not the least, they will always reach you to the intended destination, and in one piece.

(The writer is a former Member,Railway Board. The views expressed are personal.)

Sustainability - road to a better future

SANJEEV **SINGHAL**

Sustainability emphasizes the need for society to conserve resources, protect natural ecosystems, minimize pollution and promote social equity

Mankind is facing the greatest threat of climate emergency which is being termed as "Code red for humanity". Industrialization, urbanization and increasing population has led to unprecedented crisis catalysed by over exploitation of natural resources, and their contamination with toxic chemicals and pollutants. There are far-reaching impacts of ever-increasing greenhouse gases on our planet. According to estimates of various agencies like, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) this will result in rise of earth temperature by 02 °C by 2050.

Global warming is giving rise to natural calamities like, flood, drought, melting of glaciers, etc. As per a United Nations report the human-caused rate of extinction of species of both plants and animals at present is hundreds of times higher than the natural rate in the past and as the situation is turning out it can be thousands of times higher in near future. Across the world, people are facing challenge of availability of potable water, pure air to breathe and also ever an alarming problem of land degradation.

"The Global Risks Report 2022" issued by World Economic Forum states that over a 10-year horizon, the health of the planet dominates concerns: environmental risks are perceived to be the five most critical long-term threats to the world as well as the most potentially damaging to people and planet, with "climate action failure", "extreme weather", and "biodiversity loss" ranking as the top three most severe risks. Human-induced climate change is causing dangerous and widespread disruption in nature and affecting the lives of billions of people around the world, despite efforts to reduce the risks. People and ecosystems least able to cope are being hardest hit.Non-degradable wastes being generated is increasing every minute and are the cause of contamination of natural resources and also causing harm to the humans. As per a recent report, a mass of plastic waste named as "Great Pacific Garbage Patch" approximately 1.6 million km in size, twice the size of Texas, is floating on the surface of Pacific Ocean.

This alarming situation is the major attention area and it is the need of the hour that Governments and non-government organizations involving individuals, communities, countries, and the globe as whole, aligns themselves with the basic principles of 'sustainability'. Human society and economy are thriving on nature, and only harmonious existence will allow Homo sapiens to persist and thrive on this planet.

Sustainability emphasizes the need for society to conserve resources, protect natural ecosystems, minimize pollution and promote social equity. In 1987 the World Commission on Environment and Development, also popularly known as the Brundtland Report, defined development as 'sustainable' when it 'meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. There are three pillars of sustainability - environment, society and economy. Environmental sustainability is the most familiar concept which emphasizes on not overusing natural resources and focus on their sustainable management. Global actions are required to protect natural ecosystems and biodiversity, for ensuring clean water and air. Social sustainability has the objective to ensure that everyone has access to basic necessities like, clean, water, adequate food, healthcare, shelter, and human rights. It also means setting policies to encourage fair policies at workplace so that there is no exploitation and discrimination. Economic sustainability has been defined as practices that support long-term economic growth without negatively impacting social, environmental and cultural aspects of the community. Multi-level collaboration is required to achieve sustainability and address interconnected problems by balancing the needs of economic growth and resource conservation equally. We all should all take steps to incorporate sustainability into every aspect of our life. Our willingness to think and act differently by putting economic development and environment on equal footing as central parts of the same equation will help us resolve glaring problems like, air pollution, food shortage and food scarcity.

> A MASS OF PLASTIC WASTE NAMED AS "GREAT PACIFIC GARBAGE PATCH" APPROXIMATELY 1.6M KM IN SIZE, TWICE THE SIZE OF TEXAS, IS FLOATING ON THE SURFACE OF PACIFIC OCEAN

Entities can have positive impact on society and the economy by improving their sustainability performance. Sustainability Reporting is gaining momentum year on year due to stakeholder's ever-rising demands for more transparent and better communication regarding their sustainability practices, initiatives and performance. Much like their global counterparts, Indian corporates too are leaning towards the reporting frameworks to demonstrate their ability to create, preserve and grow value for a diverse stakeholder base.

The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) has a strong tradition of service to the country towards sustainable as well as economic development. ICAI through Sustainability Reporting Standards Board (SRSB), has taken several initiatives in the sustainability domain and is working to strengthen the sustainability reporting ecosystem in the country.With a view to strengthen sustainability reporting ecosystem in the country, important publications like, Background Material on Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reporting (BRSR) and Standard on Assurance Engagements (SAE) 3410 "Assurance Engagements on Greenhouse Gas Statements" have been released. Sustainability Reporting Maturity Model (SRMM) Version 1.0, a comprehensive scoring tool, has been developedto measure their sustainability performance in terms of four levels of maturity of sustainability reporting namely Level 1 to Level 4. Publication on "Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - Accountants Creating Sustainable World - Part 1, 2 and 3" has been developed to encourage all stakeholders to contribute towards the attainment of SDGs. ICAI Sustainability Reporting Awards 2020-21 and ICAI Sustainability Reporting Awards 2020-21 are being conducted to recognize, reward and encourage Excellence of Businesses in Sustainability Reporting and bring to light their outstanding contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Capacity building of the chartered accountants in this emerging area is being done by conducting online Certificate on Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reporting. Awareness initiatives like, Carbon Footprint Challenge, ICAI Sustainability Literacy Drive, Corporate film on Simple Steps to make our Planet Sustainable, Champions of SDGs and SDG Videos have also been undertaken.Contributing to the initiatives of SEBI to create an ecosystem via Social Stock Exchanges, ICAI is in the process of developing Social Audit Standards and working on Certification Course for Social Auditors.

ICAI is partnering with stakeholders, government, regulators, and others to help maximize contribution to SDGs and also collaborating with international bodies in advancing sustainability agenda. ICAI also welcomes the announcement of formation of new International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB) by the IFRS Foundation (IFRSF) and extends full support towards convergence to a single set of sustainability reporting standards. New initiatives have been planned in the area of Sustainable Finance, Green Bonds, ESG rating and Climate related Financial Disclosures. ESG Talk show, sustainability awareness quiz, training program for board members on ESG, tree plantation drive are other initiatives in pipeline. All these initiatives are focused towards promoting sustainable organizations that create long-term value for investors and society.

A sustainable future requires that homo sapiens live within planetary boundaries in harmony with nature. Governments and policymakers should work together to enhance national implementation and strengthen institutions to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by the target date of 2030, leaving no one behind. As individuals, we all should contribute in addressing this global crisis by changing our mindset and habits and adopting sustainable choices in our day-to-day life. A healthy planet will thrive and nurture happy and safe survival for present and future generations.

(The writer is a C.A. and Chairman, Sustainability Reporting Standards Board. The views expressed are personal.)

POINT COUNTERPOINT

"MY BEST WISHES TO THE NEWLY APPOINTED PM…I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING TOGETHER WITH HIM TO MAKE SRI LANKA STRONG AGAIN."
— PRESIDENT OF SRI LANKA
GOTABAYA RAJAPAKSA

"…MR. (RANIL) WICKREMESINGHE HAD NO LEGITIMACY IN THE CURRENT PARLIAMENT RIGHT FROM THE BEGINNING. HE DID NOT EVEN WIN IN HIS CONSTITUENCY."
— MP, TAMIL NATIONAL ALLIANCE
M A SUMANTHIRAN

Venture Capitalists to provide strategic direction to startups

The role of venture capitals has to be much more than selecting a good business to provide funding and should extend to value-creation

The importance of start-ups in an economy cannot be undermined as they are technological revolutionaries, disruptors and creators. They create new industries, provide jobs, increase income levels, improve quality of life and play a critical role in the changing the image of a nation. With as many as 50,000 startups, of which a significant increase is from tier-II and tier-III cities like Kochi, Ahmedabad and Pune, India is now considered world's 3rd largest ecosystem, according to Startup India portal.

However, failure is the other side of Startup industry. In a study conducted by Oxford Economics and IBM's Institute of Business Value, it was found that 90% of India's startups fail due to lack of innovation. In fact, according to KPMG report, in 2020, revenue of atleast 30 percent of Indian startups declined by about 80 percent, whereas 70 percent of them had the probability of running for the next three months only.

HIMA BINDU **KOTA**

(The writer is Associate Professor at Amity University, Noida. The views expressed are personal.)

Apart from business environment created by government and a robust banking network, a strong venture capital industry is one of the crucial requirements to develop successful startups. Overall, the success of start-ups is a collaborative effort of both entrepreneurs and venture capitalists.

Venture capitalists work in a highly competitive environment and yet typically generate a mediocre return. Add to this the high failure rate of entrepreneurs, a better working strategy is a critical need of the hour for venture capitalists. The type of financing provided by venture capitalists is unique and very different from that provided by private equity funds or commercial banks. These organizations provide funds in the form of corporate lending to firms that are established and have a proven track record of operations and profitability. On the other hand, venture capitalists provide funding to new, high risk, technology-oriented companies that operate in a fast and volatile environment with constantly changing paradigms. They work with entrepreneurs with an idea but fairly less experience about implementing the idea, identifying and putting together a competent team and developing the customer base. The lack of experience and an established record of performance of startups make investments in them extremely risky and uncertain. According to Harvard Business School's entrepreneurship professor Shikhar Ghosh, about three-quarters of startups backed by venture capitalists are not successful enough to return cash to their investors. Therefore, the role of venture capitals has to be much more than selecting a good business and provide funding and should extend to value-creation. In addition to providing strategic direction, most venture capitalists are already extending their support to various functional aspects of start-ups. Firstly, venture capitalists help in team building in start-ups by identifying and recruiting appropriate talent, which is the most important asset of a start-up. Secondly, providing support to the administrative activities like accounting, legal and other routine organizational responsibilities can free up founders' time which can be further used for growing business. Thirdly, venture capitalists help start-ups in building the right skills for all employees and the leadership team. Fourthly, probably the most important, is providing strategic focus by defining the target market, underlining the scope of the product or service, identifying the competitive advantage and providing appropriate strategic direction. Additionally, support to building a customer base is an essential encouragement. And lastly, the most important aspect of venture capitalist and entrepreneur relation is access to its network. Venture capitalists also provide performance metrics to startups to monitor, measure and report their performance at their early stage.

So, on what basis should a venture capital fund decide the extent of its involvement in a startup - at a very basic level, the participation is only financial; the next level is mentorship and guidance; and the advanced level is operational. The decision is ought to be made by analyzing its assets and resources. The most common and important resource of a VC is cash that represents the absolute amount of funds available. If the cash resources are strong, VCs would invest in an administrative function that would add value to a startup, and in case the cash resources are not strong, VCs can introduce the startups to their network which can meaningfully assist them. Brand resources are also very important for a VC which can be evaluated by the frequency of their citing in print, electronic and social media. Network resources are perhaps the most crucial of all contributions towards the growth of startups. Introductions to members of personal networks can help startups in either time-savings or cost-savings or both.

Zelenskyy says he's ready to talk with Putin

AP ■ ROME

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says that he's ready to talk with Russian President Vladimir Putin and that "we must find an agreement," but with no ultimatum as a condition.

Zelenskyy also told Italian RAI state TV in an interview scheduled to be broadcast on Thursday night that Ukraine will never recognize Crimea as part of Russia, which annexed that part of southern Ukraine in 2014.

"Crimea has always had its autonomy, it has its parliament, but on the inside of Ukraine," Zelenskyy said, in excerpts of the interview that RAI released earlier on Thursday.

The interviewer asked the Ukrainian leader about a comment by French President Emmanuel Macron cautioning against any humiliation of Putin.

"We want the Russian army to leave our land, we aren't on Russian soil,'' Zelenskyy replied. "We won't save Putin's face by paying with our territory. That would be unjust."

In another comment, Zelenskyy sounded a forward-looking note. "We have to think of the future of Russia. I, as president of Ukraine, say these are our neighbors. There will be other presidents, other presidents and other generations" of Russia, Zelenskyy said.

UN: Ukraine war child rights crisis with school attacks

AP ■ UNITED NATIONS

The war in Ukraine is a "child rights crisis" where education is under attack, nearly 100 youngsters have been killed in just the last month, and millions more have been forced to flee their homes, the UN children's agency said Thursday.

Omar Abdi, deputy executive director of UNICEF, told the UN Security Council that children are paying "an unconscionably high price" in the war, with 239 confirmed killed and 355 wounded since Russia's invasion of Ukraine on Februrary 24. He said the actual numbers are much higher.

"These attacks must stop," he said. "Ultimately, children need an end to this war -- their futures hang in the balance."

Abdi said the school year came to a standstill after Russia invaded its smaller neighbour, and as of last week, at least 15 of 89 UNICEF-supported schools in the country's east had been damaged or destroyed in the fighting.

"Hundreds of schools across the country are reported to have been hit by heavy artillery, airstrikes and other explosive weapons in populat-

ed areas, while other schools are being used as information centres, shelters, supply hubs or for military purposes -- with long-term impact on children's return to education," Abdi said.

In mid-March, over 15,000 schools resumed education in Ukraine, mostly through remote learning or in-person hybrid options, he said. "It is estimated that 3.7 million (37 lakh) children in Ukraine and abroad are using online and distance learning options," he said.But, Abdi said "enormous obstacles" to education remain, including school availability, resources, language barriers and movement of children and their families. Less than five per cent of refugee pre-school children are estimated to be enrolled in public kindergartens, he said.

Abdi and many council members spoke about what he called a "horrifying attack" on a school in the eastern Ukrainian town of Bilohorivka last weekend, when a bomb hit while women and children sheltered in the building.

US deputy ambassador Richard Mills said the blast killed as many as 60 people, many of them children. "And reliable reports indicate that when first responders arrived at the school to assist victims of the bombing, Russia's forces opened fire on them," he added.

Ukraine's UN ambassador, Sergiy Kyslytsya, said only 30 civilians were rescued and the school that had once been filled with joyful children "was turned by a Russian pilot into another mass grave".

British Ambassador Barbara Woodward said there is evidence "that Russia is committing four of the Security Council's six grave violations against children in times of war" -- violations listed in a 1999 council resolution that condemned the targeting of children in conflict as well as recruiting and using children as soldiers.

Ukraine puts Russian solider accused of war crimes on trial

AP ■ KYIV

The trial of a Russian soldier accused of killing a Ukrainian civilian opened Friday, the first war crimes trial since Moscow's invasion of its neighbour.

Scores of journalists packed inside a small courtroom in the Ukrainian capital where the suspect appeared in a small glass cage for the start of a trial that has drawn international attention amid accusations of repeated atrocities by Russian forces.

Vadim Shyshimarin, 21, is accused of shooting a 62-year-old Ukrainian man in the head in the northeastern village of Chupakhivka. He could get up to life in prison.

The killing occurred in the early days of the war, when Russian tanks advancing on Kyiv were unexpectedly routed and tank crew retreated.

Shyshimarin, a member of a tank unit that was captured by Ukrainian forces, admitted that he shot the civilian in a video posted by the Security Service of Ukraine.

"I was ordered to shoot," said Shyshimarin, of the killing on Feb. 28. "I shot one (round)

at him. He falls. And we kept on going."

Shyshimarin's video statement is "one of the first confessions of the enemy invaders," according to the Ukrainian security service.

The trial comes as Russia's campaign to take Ukraine's east slowly grinds on - but its invasion has resulted in widespread repercussions beyond the battlefield.

Two and a half months after Russia's invasion of Ukraine sent a shiver of fear through Moscow's neighbors, Finland's president and prime minister announced Thursday that the Nordic country should apply right away for membership in NATO, the military defense pact founded in part to counter the Soviet Union.

Russia took losses in failed river crossing, officials say

AP ■ KYIV

Russia lost significant numbers of troops and important equipment when Ukrainian forces thwarted their attempt to cross a river in the east, British officials said Friday, another sign of Moscow's struggle to win decisive victories and salvage a war gone awry.

Ukrainian authorities, meanwhile, opened the first war crimes trial of the conflict, in proceedings that will be closely watched by international observers eager to ensure atrocities are fairly prosecuted. A Russian soldier stands accused of killing a Ukrainian civilian in the early days of the war.

The trial gets underway as Russia's campaign in Ukraine's eastern industrial heartland of the Donbas makes faltering progress.

Ukraine's airborne forces command has released photos of what it said was a damaged Russian pontoon bridge over the Siversky Donets River and several destroyed or damaged Russian military vehicles nearby. Ukrainian news reports said troops thwarted Russian passage across the river earlier this week, leaving dozens of tanks or military vehicles damaged or forcing troops to abandon them.

Britain's Defense Ministry said Friday that Russia lost "significant" elements of at least one battalion tactical group — about 1,000 troops — as well as equipment used to quickly deploy a makeshift floating bridge while trying to cross the river.

"Conducting river crossings in a contested environment is a highly risky maneuver and speaks to the pressure the Russian commanders are under to make progress in their operations in eastern Ukraine," the ministry said in its daily intelligence update. They have struggled to do so, even after diverting troops from other parts of the country to the Donbas, the statement said.

Russian threats push Finland towards joining NATO

AP ■ KYIV

Finland's leaders Thursday came out in favour of applying to join NATO, and Sweden could do the same within days, in a historic realignment on the continent two-and-a-half months after Russian President Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine sent a shiver of fear through Moscow's neighbours.

The Kremlin reacted by warning it will be forced to take retaliatory "military-technical" steps. On the ground, meanwhile, Russian forces pounded areas in central, northern and eastern Ukraine, including the

last pocket of resistance in Mariupol, as part its offensive to take the industrial Donbas region, while Ukraine recaptured some towns and villages in the northeast.

The first war-crimes trial of a Russian soldier since the start of the conflict is set to open Friday in Kyiv. A 21-year-old captured member of a tank unit is accused of shooting to death a civilian on a bicycle during the opening week of the war.

Finland's president and prime minister announced that the Nordic country should apply right away for membership in NATO, the military defence pact founded in part to counter the Soviet Union. "You (Russia) caused this. Look in the mirror," Finnish President Sauli Niinisto said this week. While the country's Parliament still has to weigh in, the announcement means Finland is all but certain to apply -- and gain admission -- though the process could take months to complete. Sweden, likewise, is considering putting itself under NATO's protection.

That would represent a major change in Europe's security landscape: Sweden has avoided military alliances for more than 200 years, while Finland adopted neutrality after its defeat by the Soviets in World War II. Public opinion in both nations shifted dramatically in favour of NATO membership after the invasion, which stirred fears in countries along Russia's flank that they could be next.

India exploring options to minimise impact of Russian war on its students studying in Ukrainian universities

PTI ■ UNITED NATIONS

India has said that it is exploring options to minimise the impact on the education of Indian students in Ukrainian universities, as several of them, mostly studying at medical colleges, were worried about their future after fleeing the war-torn East European country.

India's Deputy Permanent Representative at the UN Ambassador R Ravindra, during a briefing on the humanitarian situation in Ukraine at the UN Security Council, said the impact of the situation on the education of children has been severe and further aggravated the pandemic-related challenges that children were already facing.

He said that the situation has affected foreign students, including those from India. India facilitated the safe return of about 22,500 Indians, mostly students, from Ukraine after Russia launched a large scale military aggression against it.

"We are exploring options to minimise the impact on our students' education. We appreciate the relaxations made by the Ukrainian Government for this academic year in respect of medical students," Ravindra said. Ravindra reiterated that India supports calls for guarantees of safe passage to deliver essential humanitarian corridors. He also noted that the food security challenges emanating from the conflict "requires us to respond by going beyond constraints that bind us presently.

RUSSIA-GAS-SANCTIONS

Russian pipeline sanctions raise fears of gas interruption

AP ■ BERLIN

Natural gas prices rose Friday after Russian state-owned exporter Gazprom said it would no longer send supplies to Europe via a pipeline in Poland, citing new sanctions that Moscow imposed on European energy companies. The move doesn't immediately block large amounts of natural gas to Europe but intensifies fears that the war in Ukraine will lead to wide-ranging cutoffs.

Gazprom said Thursday that it would ban the use of the Yamal pipeline that reaches Germany through Poland. While that cuts off a supply route to Europe, the pipeline's entry point to Germany has not been used in recent months. Plus, Gazprom has already cut off gas to Poland for refusing to meet Moscow's demand to make payments in rubles.

"A ban is in place on making transactions with and payments to persons under sanctions. In particular, for Gazprom, this means a ban on the use of a gas pipeline owned by (the Polish company) EuRoPol GAZ to transport Russian gas through Poland," Gazprom representative Sergey Kupriyanov wrote in a Telegram post.

The fear is that gas disputes and cutoffs will keep escalating amid the war in Ukraine. Last month, Gazprom said it had completely cut off natural gas supplies to Poland and Bulgaria over the rubles dispute.

On Tuesday, Ukraine's pipeline operator shut down a pipeline that carries gas from Russia to Europe, saying Russian forces were interfering with a compressor station in Russian-held territory and diverting gas. It asked Gazprom to move gas through another pipeline, which the company said it could not do. By itself, the shutdown was not expected to cut off major amounts of gas.

Energy tensions ramped up when Russia imposed sanctions Wednesday on Gazprom Germania, a subsidiary of the Russian supplier that the German government took control of in April.

German Vice Chancellor Robert Habeck said the loss of gas from the Russian moves was "manageable" at around 10 million cubic meters per day and could be made up from other sources.

The actions further roiled volatile energy markets. Natural gas traded Friday at 104 euros per megawatt hour, up from 94 euros before the announcements.

"Moscow has fired a second volley of gas disruption at Europe, causing fresh uncertainty and spiking prices," said Kaushal Ramesh, senior analyst at Rystad Energy.

European utilities and governments have scrambled to refill underground gas storage that was depleted over the winter and have made enough progress to cover gas needs for the year without Russian supplies. But they would face difficulty in getting through the end of the upcoming winter without rationing. High natural gas prices have led to higher bills for home heating and electricity generated by the fuel.

European governments are trying to get off Russian energy and the EU's executive commission has proposed measures to reduce imports from Russia by two-thirds by year end. It remains to be seen if that can be achieved.

Before the war, Europe got 40% of its natural gas and 25% of its oil from Russia.

Turkey's leader opposes letting Finland, Sweden join NATO

Helsinki: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Friday said his country is "not favourable" toward Finland and Sweden joining NATO, indicating that Turkey could use its status as a member of the Western military alliance to veto moves to admit the two countries. "We are following developments concerning Sweden and Finland carefully, but we are not of a favourable opinion," Erdogan told reporters. The Turkish leader explained his opposition by citing Sweden and other Scandinavian countries' alleged support for Kurdish militants and others whom Turkey considers to be terrorists. *AP*

KISHAU CORPORATION LIMITED
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प्र.सं. 208 **Date Extension Notice/Corrigendum- 01** दि0: 13.05.2021

Due to unavoidable reasons the Date of Submission & opening of the e-NIT No. 01/DGM(/Kishau)/KCL/2022-23 invited by the office of the Deputy General Manager, Kishau Project, Dakpathar is being extended as below:

Last date & time for submission of bids on the Portal : Upto 21.05.2022 at 17:00 Hrs.

Last Date & time of Offline Submission of document (in original) : Upto 23.05.2022 at 17:00 Hrs.

Date & time of opening of bids on the Portal : On 24.05.2022 at 12:00 Hrs.

The Corrigendum has been uploaded on the e-Procurement portal **https://uktenders.gov.in**".

Other Terms & Condition will remain same.

Information regarding Addendum/Corrigendum/Cancellation etc. of tender may be obtained from the website.

Full & Further Details of tender can be seen from the e- procurement portal **"https://uktenders.gov.in"**.

Dy. General Manager Kishau Project

"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

UK adds Putin's ex-wife, alleged girlfriend to sanctions list

AP ■ LONDON

The UK Government on Friday added further names to its list of financial sanctions aimed at Russian President Vladimir Putin, including his former wife and a retired gymnast allegedly in a relationship with him, in reaction to the ongoing conflict with Ukraine.

US in close touch with India on standing up against Russian aggression: White House

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The United States continues to be in close touch with India about its efforts to rally the world to stand up against Russian aggression, the White House said on Thursday.

"We continue to remain in close touch with India about our efforts to rally the world to stand up against Russian aggression. That means implementing and abiding by sanctions that have been put in place," White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki told reporters at her daily news conference.

US Deputy Security

Advisor Dileep Singh recently took a trip to India to have a conversation about that, she said.

"We continue to encourage countries to speak out about Russian aggression. And obviously on COVID-19, we have been an important partner with India in providing supply and vaccines in their times of need over the course of the last 15 months and certainly will continue to work with them on that," Psaki said in response to a question.

Responding to another question, Psaki said she is sure President Biden would travel to two Quad countries -- India and Australia -- in the future. Biden is scheduled to travel to Japan and South Korea later this month.

"I am sure he will, in the future. But we have two foreign trips we are still trying to finalise at this point. And so I do not have any predictions about when," Psaki said.

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

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

Whereas

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

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

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Bhavesh Kumar/ Neha Sharma/ M/s Bhavesh Kumar Huf/ LBLUD00005076880/ LBLUD00005331735	House Comprised in Khasra No.699, Khatta No.1601/1994, Situated at Village Barewal Awana, H.B No.157, Abadi Known as Kalka Ji Enclave, Tehsil & Distt. Ludhiana Punjab/ May 10, 2022	December 15, 2021 Rs. 1,14,62,390/-	Gurgaon

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

Date : May 13, 2022
Place: Gurgaon

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

India abstains from UNHRC resolution on deteriorating human rights situation in Ukraine

PTI ■ UNITED NATIONS/GENEVA

India abstained in the UN Human Rights Council on a resolution on the deteriorating human rights situation in Ukraine stemming from the Russian aggression, in which the Council reiterated its demand for an immediate cessation of military hostilities.

The Geneva-based Council on Thursday closed its 34th special session after adopting the resolution. The resolution was adopted by a vote of 33 in favour, China and Eritrea voting against and 12 abstentions, including India, Armenia, Bolivia, Cameroon, Cuba, Kazakhstan, Namibia, Pakistan, Senegal, Sudan, Uzbekistan and Venezuela.

Since January this year, India has abstained on procedural votes and draft resolutions in the UN Security Council, the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council that deplored Russian aggression against Ukraine.India's Permanent Representative to the UN and other International Organisations in Geneva, Ambassador Indra Mani Pandey, at the session said that India's position on the Ukraine conflict has been steadfast and consistent.

"We remain deeply concerned at the unfolding developments in Ukraine. We have constantly called for immediate cessation of violence and an urgent end to hostilities," he said, adding that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has reiterated this in his interactions with global leaders, including the leaderships of Russia and Ukraine. "India continues to believe that pursuing the path of dialogue and diplomacy is the only way out," he said.

In the resolution as orally revised, the Human Rights Council reiterated its demand for an immediate cessation of military hostilities against Ukraine, to refrain from any human rights violations and abuses in the country, refrain from any State-sponsored disinformation, propaganda for war or advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence, related to the aggression against Ukraine.

The Council also requested the Commission of Inquiry to conduct an inquiry, consistent with its mandate and international standards, and in coordination with other national and international mechanisms, to address the events in the areas of Kyiv, Chernihiv, Kharkiv and Sumy regions in late February and March 2022, including their gender dimension, with a view to hold to account those responsible.

Pandey said that the impact of the Ukraine situation is being felt beyond the region as oil prices are skyrocketing, there is shortage of food grains and fertilisers in the world.

Moldova is wary amid fears fighting may spread

AP ■ WEISSENHAUS (GERMANY)

Moldova's foreign minister says the small eastern European country is on alert for any signs the conflict in neighboring Ukraine could spill across the border.

Foreign Minister Nicu Popescu told reporters Friday on the sidelines of a G-7 foreign ministers' meeting in Germany that "the situation is of course fragile, but it is nonetheless relatively calm. We do not face an acute military crisis today." At the same time the government has been preparing for "the full spectrum of options," he said. "Our interior ministry, defense ministry, intelligence services are on high alert," Popescu said, citing the presence of Russian troops in the separatist Moldovan region of Transnistria.

Transnistria is a disputed, Russian-backed breakaway state that borders southwestern Ukraine. Popescu said the Moldovan government was in regular contact with the de facto authorities in Transnistria "because we all have a commitment and an obligation and a duty to keep peace in the entire Moldova, which includes the Transnistrian region."

Opp parties in Lanka not to become part of Wickremesinghe Govt

Would support its economic recovery prog from outside

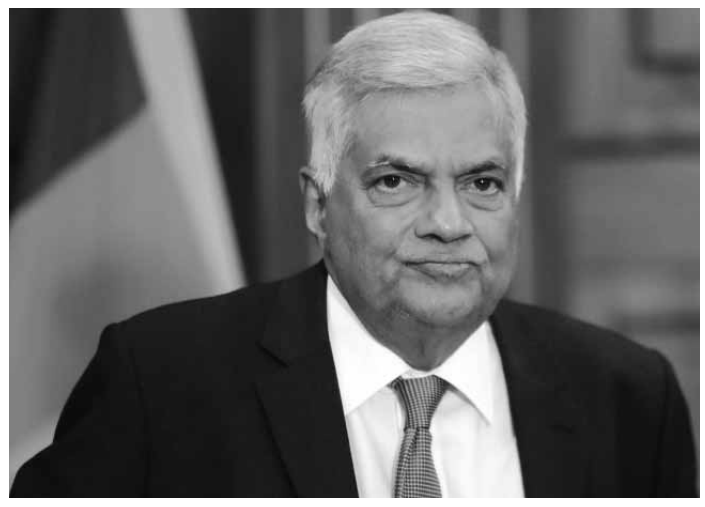
PTI ■ COLOMBO

Most of the Opposition parties in Sri Lanka on Friday announced that they would not become a part of Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe's interim government but would support its economic policies from outside to help the debt-ridden island nation's early recovery.

The 73-year-old United National Party (UNP) leader was appointed as Sri Lanka's 26th prime minister on Thursday as the country was without a government since Monday when President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's elder brother and prime minister Mahinda Rajapaksa resigned after violence erupted following an attack on the anti-government protesters by his supporters. The attack triggered widespread violence against Rajapaksa loyalists, leaving nine people dead and wounding over 200 others.

"We cannot become a part of this Rajapaksa-Wickremesinghe government," Wimal Weerawansa, a legislator for the independent group from President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's SLPP said.

Former President Maithripala Sirisena's SLFP central committee has also decided not to be part of the government.



The Marxist Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) said they would also not be part of the government while the main Opposition Samagi Jana Balavegaya (SJB) said United National Party (UNP) leader Wickremesinghe has no legitimacy as he was not even elected in the 2020 parliamentary election.

SJB general secretary Ranjith Madduma Bandara said the party would not accept ministerial positions and called for Wickremesinghe's resignation.

JVP leader Anura Kumara Dissanayake said the decision taken by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa to appoint Wickremesinghe as Prime Minister, is one that was made with zero regard to the voice of the people. The JVP leader ridiculed the decision, saying the appointment has no legitimacy and has no democratic value.

"Wickremesinghe is a person who held the post of Prime Minister, formed governments, and yet could not even win a single seat at the last General Election. He did not even have the required number of votes to enter parliament. If an election is used to measure the consent of the people, elections have shown that he has no mandate, and that is why the people sent him packing," he said.

The interim government idea was mooted by the powerful Buddhist clergy and civil society as a means to find a solution for the ongoing economic crisis. With Mahinda Rajapaksa's resignation on Monday, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa said he was talking to political parties to set up an interim government.

Wickremesinghe, who had been sworn in as the prime minister of Sri Lanka on five occasions before, said his primary task was to tackle the worst economic crisis with assistance from all parties.

The new prime minister, who has only his seat in the Parliament, said he commanded a majority coming from both sides.

Sri Lanka's worst economic crisis has provoked widespread protests calling for political reform and the resignation of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa. On April 1, President Rajapaksa imposed a state of emergency, lifting it five days later. The government reimposed a state of emergency on May 6 after police fired teargas and arrested students protesting near parliament, which was adjourned until May 17.

Although the protests have been overwhelmingly peaceful, the police fatally shot a protester on April 19, and on several occasions have used teargas and water cannons against protesters. The authorities have made numerous arrests and repeatedly imposed curfews. The political crisis was triggered in late March when people hurt by long hours of power cuts and essential shortages took to the streets demanding the resignation of the government.

Missile attack kills 10 Syrian soldiers: Report

AP ■ BEIRUT

A missile struck a Syrian military bus in the country's north early on Friday, killing 10 soldiers, Syria's state-run media and an opposition monitor said.

It wasn't immediately clear who was behind the attack, one of the deadliest since a truce deal reached more than two years ago.

The official news agency SANA said "terrorists" targeted the bus in the western countryside of Aleppo, in the Anjara area. Nine soldiers were wounded in the attack, the report said.

There was no claim of responsibility. The area is dominated by the al-Qaida-linked militant group, Hayaat Tahrir al-Sham.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights - a war-monitoring group with a network of activists on the ground - reported the attack but said that Syrian opposition forces fired the missile and that the 10 killed were government-allied fighters.

Most of Syria has returned to government control after a decade of war, with the exception of the opposition-held bastion of Idlib in the northwest and nearby areas, and the oil-rich northeast, held by US-backed Syrian Kurdish groups.

The violence has largely tapered off in most of the country, but few among the nearly six million refugees scattered across the globe have returned.

US-SHOOTING

Several hurt after shots fired outside Arkansas graduation

AP ■ HOT SPRINGS (US)

Several people were injured after a large fight broke out and shots were fired outside of an Arkansas convention center where a graduation ceremony had taken place, police said.

The shooting happened Thursday night outside of the Hot Springs Convention Center, which had hosted a graduation ceremony for Hot Springs World Class High School, The Sentinel-Record reported.

The fight and subsequent shooting happened in a parking lot adjacent to the convention center, said Hot Springs Police Officer First Class Omar Cervantes. He said "multiple people" were injured but did not have an exact number or the nature of their injuries.

The injured were taken to hospitals and their conditions weren't immediately released. No arrests have been announced.

China reacts guardedly to Wickremesinghe's appointment

PTI ■ BEIJING

China, one of the largest creditors of Sri Lanka, on Friday reacted warily to the appointment of Ranil Wickremesinghe as the country's Prime Minister succeeding pro-Beijing Mahinda Rajapaksa, saying it supports the government's efforts to sustain stability in the face of chaos.

"As a traditional, friendly country to Sri Lanka, we closely follow the latest developments, and we also support the Sri Lanka government's effort to sustain stability," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian told a media briefing here.

He was replying to questions, seeking China's reaction to United National Party (UNP) leader Wickramasinghe's appointment considering that he had a history of probing Chinese investments and whether Beijing will offer debt relief to Sri Lanka like India.

Zhao reiterated Beijing's earlier call to all political parties in Sri Lanka to maintain solidarity, sustain stability, and overcome difficulties together but gave no indication whether China will step in to help the debt-ridden island nation like India which has committed more than USD 3 billion in loans, credit lines and credit swaps since January this year.

Scientists grow plants in soil from Moon for first time

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Scientists have for the first time grown plants in lunar soil brought back to Earth by astronauts in the Apollo missions, a step towards producing food and oxygen on the Moon or during future space missions.

The researchers at the University of Florida (UF) in the US showed that plants can successfully sprout and grow in lunar soil.

Their study, published in the journal Communications Biology, also investigated how plants respond biologically to the Moon's soil, also known as lunar regolith, which is very different from soil found on Earth.

This research comes as NASA's Artemis Program plans to return humans to the Moon.

"Artemis will require a better understanding of how to grow plants in space," said Rob Ferl, one of the study's authors and a professor at UF Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS).

"For future, longer space missions, we may use the Moon as a hub or launching pad. It makes sense that we would want to use the soil that is already there to grow plants," Ferl said.

The researchers designed a simple experiment: plant seeds in lunar soil, add water, nutrients and light, and record the results.

They only had 12 grammes -- just a few teaspoons -- of lunar soil with which to do this experiment. On loan from NASA, this soil was collected during the Apollo 11, 12 and 17 missions to the moon.

The researchers applied three times over the course of 11 years for a chance to work with the lunar regolith.

N Korea reports 6 deaths after admitting Covid-19 outbreak

AP ■ SEOUL

Six people have died and 350,000 have been treated for a fever that has spread "explosively" across North Korea, state media said Friday, a day after the country acknowledged a COVID-19 outbreak for the first time in the pandemic.

North Korea likely doesn't have sufficient COVID-19 tests and said it didn't know the cause of the mass fevers. But a big coronavirus outbreak could be devastating in a country with a broken health care system and an unvaccinated, malnourished population.

The North's Korean Central News Agency said of the 350,000 people who developed fevers since late April, 162,200 have recovered. It said 18,000 people were newly found with fever symptoms on Thursday alone, and 187,800 are being isolated for treatment.

One of the six people who died was infected with the omicron variant, KCNA said. But it wasn't immediately clear how many of the total illnesses were COVID-19.

North Korea imposed a lockdown Thursday after acknowledging its first COVID-19 cases. Those reports said tests from an unspecified number of people came back positive for the omicron variant.

It's unusual for isolated North Korea to admit to the outbreak of any infectious disease, let alone one as menacing as COVID-19, as it's intensely proud and sensitive to outside perception about its self-described "socialist utopia."

While North Korean leader Kim Jong Un had occasionally been candid about his worsening economy and other problems, he had repeatedly expressed confidence about pandemic response and wasn't seen wearing a mask in public until Thursday.

State TV showed Kim wearing a mask as he entered what the broadcast described as the country's headquarters of its pandemic response, which appeared to be Pyongyang's landmark Koryo Hotel. He took off the mask and smoked a cigarette while talking with officials.

KCNA said Kim criticized officials for failing to prevent "a vulnerable point in the epidemic prevention system." He said the outbreak was centered around the capital, Pyongyang, and stressed all work and residential units should be isolated from one another while residents should be provided every convenience during the lockdown.

"It is the most important challenge and supreme tasks facing our party to reverse the immediate public health crisis situation at an early date, restore the stability of epidemic prevention and protect the health and well-being of our people," KCNA quoted Kim as saying.

The spread of the virus may have been accelerated by a massive military parade on April 25, where Kim gave a speech and showcased his army and weaponry in front of tens of thousands of people.

Cheong Seong-Chang, an analyst at South Korea's Sejong Institute, said the pace of the fever's spread suggests the crisis could last months and possibly into 2023, causing major disruption in the poorly equipped country.

According to the latest figures from the World Health Organization, North Korea reported to the U.N. Agency that it tested 64,207 people for COVID-19 in 2020 through March 22 this year, a small number that may indicate insufficient tests for a population of 26 million.

Imran seeks review of Pak SC verdict on Speaker ruling on no-confidence vote

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's former prime minister Imran Khan has filed a review petition in the Supreme Court, challenging the apex court's April 7 decision on the ruling of the then National Assembly speaker on the crucial vote of no-confidence.

In a major blow to Khan, the Supreme Court had struck down then National Assembly Speaker Qasim Suri's controversial move to dismiss a no-confidence motion against the cricketer-turned-politician.

Suri, who is associated with Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party, on April 3 dismissed the no-confidence motion against the ex-premier, claiming that it was linked with a "foreign conspiracy" to topple the government and hence was not maintainable.

Minutes later, President Arif Alvi dissolved the National Assembly on the advice of Khan who had effectively lost the majority.

The Express Tribune newspaper reported on Friday that in his review petition on Thursday, Khan pleaded that Article 248 of the Constitution barred any other institution from interfering in the affairs of Parliament and Suri's ruling was in accordance with Article 5, when he rejected the no-confidence motion.

The review petition, filed through Imtiaz Siddiqui and Chaudhry Faisal Hussain, stated that Article 248 did not make the applicant answerable for exercising any constitutional powers before any court. It contended that the bench had erred to appreciate the provisions of Articles 66, 67 and 69, the report said.

"The Apex Court has erred to appreciate the mandate of the Constitution which ensures that Parliament, as well as the members/officers thereof, the President as well as the Prime Minister, are not answerable in the exercise of their functions as well as discretionary powers before any Court," the plea said.

Also, their discharge of constitutional obligations could not be called into question before any court under the Constitution, it added.

Biden admin to release $45bn for nationwide internet

AP ■ WASHINGTON

The Biden administration is taking the first steps to release USD 45 billion to ensure that every US resident has access to high-speed internet by roughly 2028, inviting governors and other leaders on Friday to start the application process.

Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo is overseeing the distribution and said that universal access to broadband internet would be akin to the electrification of rural America during the 1930s, a recognition that the internet is a utility needed for US residents to function in today's economy. "There's more than 30 million Americans who don't have internet," Raimondo said."And in this day and age without high-speed internet, you can't go to school, can't go to the doctor, can't do simple things. Think of how many times in a day you Google something or go online."

The funding is part of the USD 65 billion for broadband in the USD

1 trillion infrastructure package that President Joe Biden signed into law last November.

That bipartisan package is one of the policy achievements that the Democratic president is trying to sell to voters ahead of the mid-term elections, though it's unclear how much the message will resonate when much of the country is focused on high inflation, cultural differences and political identity.

Former President Donald Trump has dismissed the infrastructure spending as "fake" even though the broadband spending was one of his own priorities.

His Agriculture Department said in 2020 that it had invested USD 744 million on rural internet connectivity, a sum that was meaningful yet insufficient.

Raimondo is travelling to Durham, North Carolina. She'll announce that governors can send their letters of intent to receive the broadband money, which comes from three programmes totalling USD 45 billion. Each state would then get USD 5 million to help it consult with residents and write its plan.The Commerce Department recognises that internet needs vary by state. The money could be used to lay fibre optic cable, build out Wi-Fi hotspots or even reduce monthly charges in places where price is the main challenge.

After the administration's announcement on Monday that it would provide a USD 30 monthly subsidy to low-income households, Raimondo noted that states could use the additional money from these programs to make the service free to some users.

No environment for fruitful, constructive dialogue with India, says Pakistan

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan has ruled out any imminent talks with India due to the absence of a proper "environment" for "a fruitful, constructive dialogue".

The remarks by Foreign Office spokesman Asim Iftikhar came in response to questions on ties with India during a weekly briefing on Thursday.

He was asked about talks in the context of overtures by the new government and the appointment of a trade minister in Delhi.

Iftikhar said there was a national consensus on this issue and successive governments had pursued the same policy of seeking peaceful settlement of disputes with India.

"In diplomacy, you never shut the doors," he said.

Iftikhar said that notwithstanding Pakis-tan's desire for a diplomatic resolution of disputes, "the environment for a fruitful, constructive dialogue is not there". India has repeatedly told Pakistan that it desires normal neighbourly relations with Islamabad in an environment free of terror, hostility, and violence. India has said the onus is on Pakistan to create an environment free of terror and hostility.

Hopes for the revival of talks between the two countries were rekindled after Pakistan decided to appoint a trade minister at its High Commission in New Delhi after more than two years.

However, the commerce ministry in a statement on Thursday ruled out any change in the trade policy toward India.

Pakistan Prime Minister Sharif and his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi had exchanged messages after the former was elected as the prime minister to succeed Imran Khan. Soon after he was elected as Pakistan's Prime Minister, Sharif in his inaugural speech had raised the issue of abrogation of Article 370 in Kashmir.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform general public that Mr. Suraj has acquired the Entire Ground Floor without roof rights, "said floor" on Plot bearing no. 5, area measuring 15*12 ¼ out of Khasra no. 272 min, situated in village Saddarpur, Mohan market east Rotash nagar, Shahdara, Delhi on POA basis vide Notarized GPA, ATS dated 13.02.1985 & Will, executed by Mr. Mahendra Kumar, and Now, Mr. Suraj is intending to sell the above said property to Mr. Pawan kumar Aggarwal vide Sale Deed. Further Mr. Pawan kumar Aggarwal is mortgaging the above said property with Fullerton India Home Finance Co. Ltd. & in case anyone has any objection, the same may be raised within 07 days of this publication to Mr. Muneesh Dhawan/ Mr. Sudhir Jain (Advocates), Law Veritas, Unit no 907, 9th Floor, GD-ITL Tower, (B-08), Netaji Subhash Place, Delhi-110034 or contact at 9066707172/9818228636 (M).

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the public at large, on behalf of our client, **Mrs. Preeti Bhasker W/o Mr. Bhanwar Singh R/o 47, Kadambari Apartments Sec-9, Rohini, New Delhi.("Owner") Mrs. Savitri** was the owner of schedule property from **POI through DDA** by virtue of Conveyance Deed which was duly registered with the concerned Sub-Registrar-VII, Delhi, as Document No. 1685, in Addl. Book No.1, Volume No. 2838, on pages 52-53, on 25/01/2008 & Allotment Letter is stated to have been lost, an FIR dated 29.07.2017 **(Police Station: Crime Branch, Delhi)** bearing **LR No.1265856/2017 & SO No. 430 / 2014** was also lodged.**(LOST CONVEYANCE DEED & ALLOTMENT LETTER).** Public are warned not to deal with the Document and any person receiving or dealing with the said Document would do so at their own risk and responsibility **(including criminal liability)** and our client shall not be liable in any manner whatsoever for any loss incurred by such person (s) on account of any such unauthorized dealing, our client will proceed to take such action including applying to concerned authorities for issue of duly Certified Copies / Certified True Copies / Duplicate Copies of the Document.

Schedule Property

Flat No.-47, in the Layout Plan of Delhi University Staff Co-operative Group Housing Society Ltd. Presently Known as Kadambari Apartments, situated at Plot No. 19, Sector-9, Rohini, Delhi-110085.

Sachin Maheshwari & Associates (SMA)
(Law Offices)
Sachin Maheshwari Advocate
Phone No.- 011-42236352

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client Mr. Bhupesh Kumar Chandna is the registered owner of freehold Entire First Floor of Builtup Property No. 15 and 16 (old) New No. A-70, land measuring 75 Sq.Yards, out of Khasra No. 230, Village SindhoraKalan, Colony known as Sri Nagar Colony, Delhi by virtue of registered Sale Deed dated 02.03.2021 and Original Sale Deed dated 19.08.2009 in favour of Mr. Ravi Shankar Sharma and Mrs. Priti Sharma have been lost/misplaced and now my client is mortgaging the said property with LIC HFL. If anybody including Bank, Financial Institutions, persons, relative has any claim, right, interest whatsoever in the said property shall also inform within 7 days to the undersigned with documentary evidence. In the event of no response to this notice, than our client shall precure that title of the said property is unencumbered and clear.

Karnail Singh, Advocate,
K-8, Basement, Jungpura Extension New Delhi
Contact No. 9811163363 & 9953683363

Public Notice

For Disposal Of Medical Records Older Than 31-12-2017

SAVE SIGHT CENTRE

A-14, opp, Adarsh Nagar Metro Station Gate No.1, Adarsh Nagar, Delhi-110033.

With reference to the advertisement given on 06-05-2022 we hereby inform that the Medical Records of patients in save sight centre hospital A-14,opp, Adarsh Nagar Metro Station Gate No.1, Adarsh Nagar Delhi till 31-12-2017 have been destroyed.

MRD Incharge
Save Sight Centre Hospital.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that Mr. Sanjay Singhal, Mr. Arvind Singhal & Mr. Sachin Singhal partners of M/s. SAS International are the absolute owners of Industrial Property Bearing No. D29, (area measuring 1500 sq. mtrs), situated in the Industrial Area at Surajpur Site-IV, Village-Kasna, Greater Noida, Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar. (U.P.) vide Lease Deed dated 2/1/07, whereas they have lost the following Documents pertain to the said property:-

Allotment Letter, Possession Letter and Stamp papers of Lease Deed dated 2/1/07 having document No. 32, Book No. 1, Volume No. 1604, on Pages No. 377-446, on dated 02.01.2007 duly registered in the office of SR, G B Nagar.

All person/s having any claim against or in respect of the said Property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage(equitable/registered or otherwise), gift, trust, inheritance, family arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnership, possession, lease, sublease, tenancy, license, lien, charge, pledge, easement or otherwise howsoever, are hereby requested to notify the same in writing to us with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned below within 7 days from the date hereof, failing which the claim or claims, if any, of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned.

Kamal Kant Gupta (Advocate)
Shop No. 5 & 6, Pkt-E, CSC, Mayur Vihar-II, Delhi-91, Mob. 9810063351

KISHAU CORPORATION LIMITED
(A JV OF GoU & GoHP)
H.O.: LAKHWAR BHAWAN, TONS COLONY, DAKPATHAR, DEHRADUN-248125
(Telephones: 01360-222799 Fax-01360-222799) CIN No U7999UR2017SG007521

प.सं. 208 **Date Extension Notice/Corrigendum- 01** दि: 13.05.2021

Due to unavoidable reasons the Date of Submission & opening of the e-NIT No. 01/DGM(/Kishau)/KCL/2022-23 invited by the office of the Deputy General Manager, Kishau Project, Dakpathar is being extended as below:

Last date & time for submission of bids on the Portal : Upto 21.05.2022 at 17:00 Hrs.

Last Date & time of Offline Submission of document (in original) : Upto 23.05.2022 at 17:00 Hrs.

Date & time of opening of bids on the Portal : On 24.05.2022 at 12:00 Hrs.

The Corrigendum has been uploaded on the e-Procurement portal **https://uktenders.gov.in**".

Other Terms & Condition will remain same.

Information regarding Addendum/Corrigendum/Cancellation etc. of tender may be obtained from the website.

Full & Further Details of tender can be seen from the e- procurement portal **"https://uktenders.gov.in"**.

Dy. General Manager Kishau Project

"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

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

Whereas

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

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

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Bhavesh Kumar/ Neha Sharma/ M/s Bhavesh Kumar Huf/ LBLUD00005076880/ LBLUD00005331735	House Comprised in Khasra No.699, Khatta No.1601/1994, Situated at Village Barewal Awana, H.B No.157, Abadi Known as Kalka Ji Enclave, Tehsil & Distt. Ludhiana Punjab/ May 10, 2022	December 15, 2021 Rs. 1,14,62,390/-	Gurgaon

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

Date : May 13, 2022
Place: Gurgaon

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

Twitter deal temporarily on hold, says Elon Musk

AP ■ LONDON

Elon Musk said on Friday that his plan to buy Twitter for $ 44 billion is "temporarily on hold" as he tries to pinpoint the exact number of spam and fake accounts on the social media platform, another twist amid signs of internal turmoil over the proposed acquisition.

Musk, who has been vocal about his desire to clean up Twitter's problem with "spam bots" that mimic real people, appeared to question whether the company was under-reporting them.

In a tweet, the Tesla billionaire linked to a Reuters story from May 2 about a quarterly report from Twitter that estimated false or spam accounts made up fewer than five per cent of the company's "monetisable daily active users" in the first quarter.

"Twitter deal is temporarily on hold pending details supporting calculation that spam/fake accounts do indeed represent less than five per cent of users," Musk said, indicating he's sceptical that the number of unauthentic accounts is that low.

It wasn't clear whether the issue could scuttle the deal. Stocks of both Twitter and Tesla swung sharply in opposite directions, with Twitter's stock tumbling 18 per cent, and shares of Tesla, which Musk had proposed using to help fund the Twitter deal, jumping five per cent.

Musk has already sold off more than USD 8 billion worth of his Tesla shares to finance the purchase.

Wedbush analyst Dan Ives, who follows both Tesla and Twitter, said Musk's "bizarre" tweet will lead Wall Street to either think the deal is likely falling apart, Musk is attempting to negotiate a lower deal price, or he is simply walking away from the deal with a USD 1 billion penalty.

"Many will view this as Musk using this Twitter filing/spam accounts as a way to get out of this deal in a vastly changing market," Ives wrote.

He added that the Musk's use of Twitter rather than a financial filing to make the announcement was troubling and "sends this whole deal into a circus show with many questions and no concrete answers as to the path of this deal going forward."

Investors have had to weigh legal troubles for Musk, as well as the possibility that acquiring Twitter could be a distraction from running the world's most valuable automaker. *PTI*

Fisheries subsidies: WTO talks to resolve sticky issues

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) will hold intensive negotiations from May 16-20 in Geneva to resolve contentious issues related to the proposed global deal on curbing harmful fishing subsidies, ahead of the 12th Ministerial Conference (MC12) next month.

The chair of the negotiations, Ambassador Santiago Wills of Colombia, has said this 'Fish Week' will be an opportunity for members to work on finalising the draft agreement, according to a WTO statement.

"WTO members on May 16-20 will hold intensive negotiations aimed at resolving remaining issues for a global deal to curb harmful fishing subsidies ahead of the MC12 next month," it said.

Members are negotiating a proposed fisheries subsidies agreement. The objective is to discipline subsidies for sustainable fishing and eliminate IUU (Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated) fishing subsidies and prohibit them from contributing to overcapacity and overfishing.

"MC12 is now scheduled to begin on June 12 — that is only four weeks away. So now is the time to end decades of negotiations and conclude the WTO fisheries subsidies negotiations so that the results can be adopted by ministers," the chair said in a video message.

The 12th ministerial conference, the highest decision-making body of the WTO, is scheduled to meet on June 12-15 in Geneva.

"Ultimately, we should not be negotiating against each other but against the unrelenting depletion of global fish stocks so vital for livelihoods, food security, and a healthy planet," he said.

The contentious issues which ar yet to be resolved include matters related to special and differential treatment, and non-specific fuel subsidies.

India has time and again emphasised that it is keen to finalise an agreement on fisheries subsidies in the WTO as irrational benefits and overfishing by many countries are hurting domestic fishermen and their livelihood.

The country wants an equitable and balanced outcome as it provides support to its small and marginal fishermen who depend on the sector for sustenance. *PTI*

Maruti allots site for new ₹11K cr manufacturing facility in Haryana

New Delhi: The country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) on Friday said it will invest Rs 11,000 crore in the first phase of its new manufacturing facility in Haryana.

The company on Friday completed the process of allotment of an 800-acre site at IMT Kharkhoda in Sonipat district with HSIIDC (Haryana State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited), the auto major said in a regulatory filing.

The new plant's first phase with a manufacturing capacity of 2.5 lakh units per annum is expected to be commissioned by 2025, subject to administrative approvals.

In the first phase, the investment would be over Rs 11,000 crore, MSI said.

"The site will have space for capacity expansion to include more manufacturing plants in the future," MSI noted.

At present, MSI has a cumulative production capacity of around 5.5 lakh units per quarter or about 22 lakh units per annum across its manufacturing plants in Haryana and Gujarat. *PTI*

Govt fixes LIC issue price at ₹949 a share; policyholders, retail investors get discount

New Delhi: The government has fixed the issue price of LIC shares at Rs 949 apiece, the upper end of the IPO price band, ahead of the listing of the country's largest insurer on May 17.

However, LIC policyholders and retail investors have got the shares at a price of Rs 889 and Rs 904 a piece, respectively.

The Initial Public Offering (IPO) of Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) closed on May 9 and shares were allocated to bidders on May 12. The government sold over 22.13 crore shares or 3.5 per cent stake in LIC through the IPO at a price band of Rs 902-949 a share.

The retail investors and eligible employees of LIC were offered a discount of Rs 45 per equity share over the issue price, while policyholders got a discount of Rs 60 per share.

As per the prospectus filed by LIC on May 12, the offer price of the share sale has been fixed at Rs 949 per equity share.

Shares were allocated to policyholders and retail investors after applying the discount applicable to them.

The share sale fetched the government around Rs 20,557 crore. The LIC IPO -- India's largest to date -- closed with nearly 3 times subscription, predominately lapped up by retail and institutional buyers, but foreign investor participation remained muted.

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

Vodafone Idea debt a challenge; fundraise critical for competitiveness, say analysts

New Delhi: Even as debt-ridden telecom operator Vodafone Idea's financial performance in the March 2022 quarter has been in line with the industry expectations, the long-pending fundraise is crucial for the company to remain competitive, say analysts.

According to a JP Morgan report, high leverage makes the value of Vodafone Idea (VIL) equity complicated and very sensitive to small changes in assumptions, thus largely unforecastable.

"We expect value to migrate to debt holders, including the government of India, which is effectively the largest creditor via spectrum obligations including AGR dues," the report said.

VIL expects the government to complete the conversion of around Rs 16,100 crore dues into 33 per cent stake in the company in the coming weeks, a top official of the firm said.

During the company's earnings call, Vodafone Idea CEO Ravinder Takkar said as part of the telecom reforms package, the company has opted for converting government dues into equity and its proposal has been confirmed by the Department of Telecom (DoT).

Post the conversion, the government will hold a 33 per cent stake in the company while promoters' holding will

come down from 74.99 per cent to 50 per cent, he said.

"We have already opted for deferment of spectrum and AGR dues as well as conversion of interest arising from such deferment into equity.

"The net present value of the interest liability on moratorium period amounting to Rs 161.3 billion towards AGR dues and deferred spectrum liabilities have been confirmed with the DoT. With this we expect the conversion sub process to conclude in the coming weeks," Takkar said.

JP Morgan said that the March 2022 quarter was a decent one but fundraise still remains critical for VIL's competitiveness.

"The board has approved another Rs 100 billion (Rs 10,000 crore) of fundraise and the company is in talks with investors and lenders. We believe fundraiser is critical to improve competitiveness," the report said.

VIL has reported narrowing of its consolidated losses to Rs 6,563.1 crore for the fourth quarter ended March 2022 compared to the same period of the previous year, while its Average Revenue Per User (ARPU) improved sharply on a sequential basis aided by tariff hikes in November last year.

VIL's losses were at Rs 7,022.8 crore a year ago, according to a company filing.

Its revenue from operations rose 6.6 per cent year-on-year to Rs 10,239.5 crore in Q4 FY22. Seen sequentially, the revenue was up 5.4 per cent supported by tariff hikes effective November 25, 2021, the company said in a statement.

The realisation per user measured in terms of ARPU -- a key metric for telcos -- rose to Rs 124 for the just-ended quarter from Rs 115 in the preceding three-month period. This translated into a sequential increase of 7.5 per cent in ARPU, although the company's subscriber base declined to 24.38 crore against 24.72 crore in Q3 FY22, primarily due to the tariff hike.

Takkar also said the industry needs more tariff hikes.

"We would like to see ARPU going up to Rs 200 in the short term and then further increase to Rs 250 or higher in the longer term," he said.

As on March 31, 2022, the total debt (including interest accrued but not due) of the group was Rs 1,97,878.2 crore.

The company has around Rs 8,160 crore of payments due over the next 12 month.

An IIFL Securities report said that the moratorium on government payouts until October 2025, refinancing of maturing debt bonds and recent tariff hikes provide near-term relief. *PTI*

Ford shelves plans to make EVs in India

New Delhi: US auto major Ford has shelved plans to manufacture electric vehicles in India for exports despite getting approval from the government for production-linked incentives.

The company, which in September last year had announced that it would stop vehicle production at its two plants in the country as part of a restructuring exercise, said it is exploring other alternatives for its manufacturing facilities at Chennai and Sanand in Gujarat.

As part of the ongoing business restructuring in India, Ford has continued to explore possible alternatives for its manufacturing facilities. This included applying for the production-linked incentives scheme, which allowed us to explore utilising one of the plants as a potential EV manufacturing base, a Ford India spokesperson said.

"After careful review, we have decided to no longer pursue EV manufacturing for exports from any of the Indian plants.

We remain grateful to the government for approving our proposal under the Production-Linked Incentives and for being supportive while we continued our exploration," the spokesperson added.

Ford was among the 20 automotive firms, along with the likes of Tata Motors, Suzuki, Hyundai, Kia and Mahindra & Mahindra, that got approval for the Rs 25,938 crore Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for the automobile industry in February this year.

On the future of the company's two plants, the spokesperson said, "Ford India's previously announced business restructuring continues as planned, including exploring other alternatives for our manufacturing facilities. We continue to work closely with unions and other stakeholders to deliver an equitable and balanced plan to mitigate the impacts of restructuring." *PTI*

SBI Q4 profit jumps 41% to ₹9,114 cr on fall in bad loans

New Delhi: The country's largest lender SBI on Friday reported a 41 per cent surge in standalone net profit at Rs 9,114 crore for the fourth quarter ended March 2022, helped by decline in bad loans.

State Bank of India (SBI) had registered a profit of Rs 6,451 crore during January-March period of 2020-21, the lender said in a regulatory filing.

Total income of the bank during the March quarter increased marginally to Rs 82,613 crore, from Rs 81,327 crore in the same period of the previous fiscal.

On a consolidated basis, the bank reported a 56 per cent increase in net profit at Rs 9,549 crore, compared to Rs 6,126 crore in the fourth quarter of the previous fiscal.

With regard to asset quality, gross non-performing assets (NPAs) of the bank declined to 3.97 per cent of gross advances as on March 31, 2022, as against 4.98 per cent by the same period of 2021.

Net NPA or bad loans too came down to 1.02 per cent as on March 31, 2022 from 1.50 per cent in the year-ago period. For the entire financial year 2021-22, the bank reported a 55 per cent rise in standalone profit at Rs 31,676 crore, from Rs 20,410 crore in the previous financial year. *PTI*

India-UAE trade pact to create huge job opportunities, boost economy: Goyal

Mumbai: The comprehensive trade agreement between India and the UAE will help in creating huge job opportunities and boost growth of the domestic economy, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Friday.

The bilateral pact, officially dubbed as the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) is expected to increase the bilateral trade in goods to over USD 100 billion and trade in services to over USD 15 billion within five years.

It came into effect from May 1. The agreement opens the door for many sectors, particularly labour-intensive ones such as textiles, gem and jewellery, pharmaceuticals and agriculture, Goyal said while briefing the media along with the UAE Minister for Economy Abdullah Bin Touq Al Marri here. The ministers launched 'India-UAE Start-up Bridge' at the India-UAE Partnership Summit, organised by industry body CII here.

"Clearly millions of jobs will be added if our exports which are now at about USD 36 billion, which is about nearly Rs 2.5 lakh crore, grows as we are planning. And my own guess estimate is this partnership can finally go up to about USD 250 billion of bilateral trade on both sides.

"So my sense is that this will give a big boost to economic growth, to jobs. And the opportunities it opens not only in the UAE, but in the larger ground for the African region. (It) should significantly give a bump up to the Indian economy as well," Goyal said.

He added that the pact would not only open doors for Indian businesses to UAE but also to other countries as UAE is a transit point for large parts of Africa, CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) countries, and the Gulf region.

CIS countries include Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, and Tajikistan.

Further, Goyal said that Indian pharma products will get immediate access to the UAE market and "we believe (bilateral) trade will grow to at least to USD 100 billion in the near future....Our own commitment is to take it to a much higher level".

According to the minister, the framework is expected to add a million jobs in India and provide opportunities to the startup ecosystem in the country and has huge potential for engagement on skill development and education.

"We are looking at significant investments as the UAE has committed over USD 100 billion of investments into India in manufacturing, infrastructure, (and) service (s). So the business will get a booster shot," the minister said.

He informed that there are a large number of startups which have emerged in the last six years, with more than 65,000 registered with the ministry. India also has over 100 unicorns with the third largest startup ecosystem in the world, he said.

The UAE minister said the pact will add 1.7 per cent GDP growth to their economy.

He also said the agreement is not just on products and commodities but also into services, adding that there are other opportunities that can come along.

"Now, the growth that we're looking at, that we want to reach USD-100 billion dollars from USD 40 billion or so today, in the next decade... Our economic modelling showed that this is an opportunity of growth, it can actually reach that number," the minister said. *PTI*

Swiggy to acquire Dineout

New Delhi: On-demand convenience platform Swiggy on Friday said it has entered into a definitive agreement with Times Internet to acquire dining out and restaurant tech platform Dineout for an undisclosed sum.

Dineout, which serves diners across its network of 50,000 restaurants in 20 cities, will continue to operate as an independent app post the acquisition, Swiggy said in a statement. Founders of Dineout -- Ankit Mehrotra, Nikhil Bakshi, Sahil Jain and Vivek Kapoor -- will join Swiggy once the acquisition is completed, it added.

"The acquisition will allow Swiggy to explore synergies and offer new experiences in a high-use category," Swiggy CEO Sriharsha Majety said.

Dineout co-founder & CEO Ankit Mehrotra said, "We strongly feel that with Swiggy's deep understanding of the ecosystem and our shared passion for a superior consumer and restaurant experience, our joint forces will help provide a holistic platform in this industry. *PTI*

Reliance top-ranked Indian firm on Forbes Global 2000 list

New Delhi: Billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries Ltd climbed two spots to No. 53 on Forbes' latest Global 2000 list of public companies worldwide. Forbes Global 2000 ranks the largest companies in the world using four metrics: sales, profits, assets and market value, Forbes said releasing the 2022 ranking of the world's top 2,000 companies.

Reliance is the top-ranked Indian firm on the list, followed by State Bank of India at No. 105, HDFC Bank at No. 153 and ICICI Bank at No. 204.

Other top 10 Indian firms on the list include state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) at 228 rank, Housing Development Finance Corporation Ltd (HDFC) at No. 268, Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) at No.357, Tata Consultancy Services Ltd (TCS) at No. 384, Tata Steel at No. 407 and Axis Bank at No. 431.

"Energy and banking sector corporations were among the highest-ranking Indian companies in Forbes' Global 2000 list of public companies this year," the publication said.

Oil-to-telecom-to-retail conglomerate Reliance, which recorded sales of USD 104.6 billion between April 2021 and March 2022, became the first Indian company to generate over USD 100 billion in annual revenue. "On the Global 2000, Reliance climbed two spots to No. 53 among all public companies worldwide and ranked first among Indian companies," it said. "Earlier this year, Forbes estimated Ambani's net worth to be USD 90.7 billion, landing him at No. 10 on this year's billionaires list."

Mukesh's father Dhirubhai launched the business in the early 1960s, starting with import and export licences for nylon, rayon and polyester.

Today, the company's businesses include plastics and petrochemicals, mobile telecom services and retail.

With a market cap of USD 56.12 billion, SBI grabbed the No. 2 spot on the list of India's largest. "The bank, headquartered in Mumbai, has 24,000 branches and 62,617 ATMs across the country. Private sector banks ICICI and HDFC followed next on the Global 2000 list of Indian companies, highlighting the growth of the banking sector in India." *PTI*

DANIEL SAMS HASN'T SHOWN THE TALENT HE HAS WITH THE BAT. WE SPOKE ABOUT PUTTING HIM UP THE ORDER BUT HE HASN'T GRABBED THAT OPPORTUNITY — SHANE BOND

SRH face KKR in battle of survival

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

PTI ■ PUNE

Smarting from four straight losses, Sunrisers Hyderabad will need to sort out their bowling issues when they face an inconsistent Kolkata Knight Riders, as both the teams look to stay afloat in the IPL play-offs race here on Saturday.

A series of losses after a five-match winning streak has dragged SRH down to the sixth spot with 10 points and they would need to win all their remaining three games to harbour any hopes of making it to the play-offs.

KKR, however, are on the brink of elimination and their woes were compounded with the ruling out of pace spearhead Pat Cummins owing to a hip injury.

Shreyas Iyer's men have just two more matches to go and wins in both will only take them to 14 points, which might not be enough with Rajasthan Royals and Royal Challengers Bangalore already sitting pretty in the top four with 14 points from 12 games.

One of the main reasons behind SRH's awful run in the last few games is injuries to frontline bowlers -- Washington Sundar and T Natarajan -- and the sudden loss of form of speedster Umran Malik.

It culminated in SRH conceding more than 190 plus runs in each of the last four games.

While Sundar had injured his bowling hand again, death over specialist Natarajan had picked up a niggle. But coach Tom Moody was hopeful of the duo's return against KKR.

Malik, who looked fast and furious in the earlier games clocking 150kmph consistently, has gone wicket-less and conceded too many runs in the last few matches and his form will be key for SRH.

Fazalhaq Farooqi and Karthik Tyagi were taken to the cleaners by RCB in their last game, adding to SRH's problems.

In batting, SRH have the quality but skipper Kane Williamson will have to take more responsibility as he has just one fifty to show for this season. Although Abhishek Sharma has given them solid starts, the youngster has not been able to anchor the innings.

Rahul Tripathi, Nicholas Pooran and Aiden Markram, too, have been among runs but SRH batters will need assistance from their bowlers, who will have to ensure that they limit their opposition to a reasonable total.

KKR, on the other hand, are paying the price for making constant changes to their playing XI and are staring at elimination after losing seven of their 12 games.

KKR, however, are coming into the match after beating Mumbai Indians in their last game and they would look to end things on a high.

The 2021 finalists have struggled in the power play this season but with Venkatesh Iyer, who was dropped due to his lean run, back in the mix, KKR produced a good effort against MI.

The seasoned Tim Southee and Cummins produced a solid effort after returning to the XI, sharing four wickets against MI. However, KKR were dealt a massive blow as the team management confirmed that Cummins has been ruled out of the remainder of the IPL with a mild hip injury and has already left for Australia for rehabilitation.

PUNJAB'S GOT TALENT

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Jonny Bairstow's opening blitzkrieg found its ideal match in Liam Livingstone's finishing carnage as Punjab Kings put up an imposing 209 for 9 in a must-win IPL game against Royal Challengers Bangalore here on Friday.

While Bairstow laid the foundation with a 29-ball-66, Livingstone was equally good in his 42-ball-70 as the RCB bowlers had a day which they would like to forget in a hurry.

Bairstow, who was rusty during the earlier phase of the tournament, was back in his element with as many as seven sixes and four boundaries during a knock where he literally went hell for leather.

Such was his dominance that by the time six overs of Powerplay ended, Bairstow had hit seven towering sixes and Shikhar Dhawan (21 off 15 balls) rubbed salt to the wound with another one which made it eight in all.

Punjab Kings, which had set the template of blazing Powerplay starts, got 83 in six overs with Glenn Maxwell (1/17 in 2 overs), Josh Hazlewood (0/64 in 4 overs) and Mohammed Siraj (0/36 in 2 overs) being treated with utter disdain.

While Maxwell did manage to get Dhawan, both Hazlewood and Siraj were guilty of bowling short on a pitch offering true bounce. Bairstow effortlessly pulled and flicked them into the stands and by the time, deliveries pitched up, they landed in the stands as well.

It only helped that the boundary on one side was 66 metres only, which is a dream for any power-hitter.

Siraj had a forgettable first spell where he was hit for four sixes, while Hazlewood in his first over had gone for 22. The Australian had his worst IPL figures ever.

However post Powerplay, once Wanindu Hasaranga (2/15 in 4 overs) and Shahbaz Ahmed (1/40 in 4 overs) started operating, RCB stemmed the flow of runs with some tight wicket-to-wicket bowling.

Bengal left-arm spinner Shahbaz was rewarded for his tight lines as Bairstow finally mistimed one and Siraj did well to pouch the skier.

After 83 in the first six, there was a drastic dip in scoring as 22 came in between 7th and 10th overs.

Both Hasaranga and Shahbaz bowled wide outside the off-stump not letting Livingstone and Agarwal to charge down the track.

Still the Englishman managed a couple of sixes and a reverse swept boundary to continue his good form in the competition and then muscled into the stands towards the fag end even as Harshal Patel (4/34 in 4 overs) was exceptional at the death.

His fifty came off 35 balls and by the time he was out, he had four out of those 14 sixes in the Punjab innings.

pointstable

Po.	TEAM	M	W	L	NR	Pts	NRR
1.	GT (Q)	12	9	3	0	18	0.376
2.	LSG	12	8	4	0	16	0.385
3.	RR	12	7	5	0	14	0.228
4.	RCB	12	7	5	0	14	-0.115
5.	DC	12	6	6	0	12	0.210
6.	SRH	11	5	6	0	10	-0.031
7.	KKR	12	5	7	0	10	-0.057
8.	PBKS	11	5	6	0	10	-0.231
9.	CSK	12	4	8	0	8	-0.181
10.	MI	12	3	9	0	6	-0.613

boundarymeter

4s	1645
6s	854

Quality of execution matter more than raw pace: Nortje

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Umran Malik will surely play for India but to survive the rigours of international cricket, raw pace alone wouldn't be enough and the youngster will need to supplement his skills with quality execution, star South African pacer Anrich Nortje said on Friday.

Nortje, one of the fastest bowlers in world cricket and who has made a comeback in this IPL after a four-month lay-off due to a hip injury, spoke about the hardships related to his return and missing his new ball partner, Kagiso Rabada.

When asked about his assessment of India's new pace sensation, who is regularly hitting upwards of 90 miles per hour, Nortje sounded cautiously optimistic.

"I am sure Umran is going to be one of the key players for India in near future. Luck will also have to play its part. But most importantly, it's about the quality of what you deliver as we have seen fastest deliveries that are being awarded are going for boundaries," Nortje said.

"It doesn't matter at what pace it is bowled. Pace is not the be-all and end-all.

"It is about the quality of execution. And I believe he is improving on that aspect of having control with pace. Also at Sunrisers Hyderabad, under Dale (Steyn, fast bowling coach), Umran is in good hands. He has a lot of senior and experienced players around him, so he will certainly improve," the Proteas speed merchant said.

COMING BACK AFTER LONG BREAK

The current season hasn't been the best for Nortje as he got picked in only four of Delhi Capitals' 12 games, taking six wickets in them.

"It's been a long break but it's good to be out there on the field with the team and it was long time at home. I needed a break at the start (of my injury) but got very long at the end not knowing what's going on.

"It's really good feeling to get going again and obviously trying to bowl at level I was bowling," the 28-year-old .

Captaincy has helped Hardik temper his emotions: Shami

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The responsibility of leadership has considerably mellowed down an otherwise fiery Hardik Pandya, which has been the key recipe for Gujarat Titans' first-season success in the ongoing IPL, feels senior pacer Mohammed Shami.

Shami has played a lot of international cricket alongside Pandya and has always found the flamboyant all-rounder to have wore his heart on his sleeve but in his first season as an IPL captain, he has been able to keep his emotions under check.

"After he (Hardik) became captain, he has become more normal, his reactions have been tempered (mellowed). I have advised him to control his emotions on the field because the entire world watches cricket," Shami told mediapersons on Friday.

"It is very important as a leader to be sensible, understand situations and he has performed that role to perfection," the veteran fast bowler added. Titans are already in play-offs with 18 points from 12 games and Shami does give Hardik a lot of points for his captaincy.

"He has kept the team together. I have witnessed a lot of changes in him as a captain in comparison to a player," said Shami, one of the star performers for GT with 16 wickets from 12 games. Having played under Mahendra Singh Dhoni, Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma in the national team along with multiple captains in different IPL teams, Shami knows that each one has his unique style.

"Every captain has different temperament. Mahi (Dhoni) bhai was quiet, Virat was aggressive, Rohit leads according to match situations, so understanding Hardik's mindset is not a rocket science."

Which 3 teams can join GT in IPL 2022 playoffs?

DRITI ATRI ■ NEW DELHI

With nine wins in 12 matches played so far, IPL debutants and table-toppers Gujarat Titans have confirmed their place in the Indian Premier League playoffs.

On the other hand, the two most successful teams in the tournament's history, Mumbai Indians and Chennai Super Kings, are out of contention after having a disastrous season.

But the remaining seven teams are still in the fray for the three vacant spots, and the race to reach the last four is all set to go down to the wire once again.

While the likes of Rajasthan Royals, Lucknow Super Giants, and Royal Challengers Bangalore are in a more comfortable situation, one can't rule out Delhi Capitals, Sunrisers Hyderabad, Kolkata Knight Riders, and Punjab Kings as well.

KL Rahul-led Lucknow Super Giants have a better chance of making the playoffs than the other six franchises. They are currently in second place with 16 points and need only one more win to secure their position.

Under the leadership of Sanju Samson, the Rajasthan Royals have lit up the 2022 edition. And even though the Jaipur-based side has failed in the last few matches, they also have better chances of making it to the next round than the others. They have two more matches to play, and a win will be enough to get them through.

The same is the situation with Royal Challengers Bangalore as well. They have 14 points from 12 matches and two wins out of two will confirm their spot, while one win out of two will still give them an edge unless the others pip them on net run rate.

If Rajasthan Royals, Lucknow Super Giants, and Royal Challengers Bangalore manage to win all their remaining matches, then irrespective of how others perform, they won't be able to qualify for the last four. But if the three teams mentioned earlier slip at any point, then DC, SRH, Punjab Kings, and KKR can sneak a chance.

For Delhi Capitals, the equation is simple; they need to win the remaining two matches anyhow if they want to reach the playoffs for the fourth consecutive year.

Sunrisers Hyderabad will have to work harder than other teams to make it to the playoffs after three consecutive defeats. They have to win all the remaining three league stage matches and also keep their net run rate better than the others.

The same is the story with the Punjab Kings as well. Both PBKS and SRH have 10 points from 11 matches. KKR can only reach a maximum of 14 points and they need favours from other teams as well if they are to advance.

Cummins leaves for Aus to recover from hip injury

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Kolkata Knight Riders pace spearhead Pat Cummins will not take part in the remainder of the IPL and has left for home to recover from a minor hip injury.

His franchise confirmed the development on Friday, few hours after a report in cricket.com.au said that the Australian Test captain, who was roped in by KKR for Rs 7.25 crore, is returning to Sydney for his rehabilitation ahead of the national team's tour of Sri Lanka next month.

"Pat Cummins has been ruled out of the remainder of the TATA Indian Premier League with a mild hip injury and has returned to Australia for two weeks of rest and rehabilitation," stated the official release. Cummins' recovery is expected to take a fortnight.

Before leaving for Australia, Cummins said, "I had an amazing time in India, and I would like to thank KKR for taking care of my family and me. I wish all the team members the best of luck for the remainder of the tournament. I will be watching the games and be cheering on."

Following the match against Mumbai Indians on Tuesday, Cummins, who bagged 3-22 from his four overs, underwent an MRI on his right hip.

KKR, who will take on SunRisers Hyderabad in Pune on Saturday, has not asked for any replacement for Cummins.

Cummins played only five matches in the IPL this year and picked up seven wickets at a strike rate of 17.0.

With the bat, he scored 63 runs, which includes a blazing 14-ball 56 not out against Mumbai Indians -- the joint fastest fifty in the history of the IPL — last month.

Yamaguchi beaten again as Japan bow out

AP ■ BANGKOK

World number one Akane Yamaguchi suffered a second defeat in three days at the Thomas and Uber Cup Finals in Thailand on Friday as Japan were dumped out in the semi-finals by South Korea.

An Se-young's battling win over Yamaguchi set the Koreans on their way to a 3-0 victory and a place in Saturday's final of the women's team championships against China.

Holders China defeated hosts Thailand by the same 3-0 scoreline in Bangkok in the other semi-final.

Cheered on by her Japanese team-mates whacking drums and shaking tambourines, world champion Yamaguchi dominated the first game 21-15 against the world number four An.

She also looked in control early in the second game, but the 20-year-old An was able to turn around a six-point deficit.

A spate of unforced errors from Yamaguchi also contributed to An's change of fortune as she won the second game 21-18.

FIDE prez nominates Anand as part of team to fight polls

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Indian chess legend Viswanathan Anand would become the deputy president FIDE if the incumbent Arkady Dvorkovich is re-elected as the president in the elections scheduled during the 44th chess Olympiad here in July-August this year. Anand, a five-time world champion, has been nominated by Dvorkovich as part of his team to fight the forthcoming elections. "Hope to be part of a brighter and better future for Chess. *#SayChess #DvorkovichTeam2022*," Anand tweeted after the announcement of Dvorkovich's presidential team. Making the announcement about his team, Dvorkovich said, "Dear Colleagues and Chess Friends, On the way to FIDE Presidential elections, I am happy to present my team: Arkady Dvorkovich — President; Viswanathan Anand — Deputy President; Zhu Chen — Treasurer; Joran Aulin-Jansson — Vice President; Mahir Mammedov — Vice President.

Donnarumma says PSG must choose him or Navas next season

AP ■ PARIS

Gianluigi Donnarumma has warned Paris Saint-Germain that they must choose between him and rival goalkeeper Keylor Navas next season.

Italian Donnarumma signed from AC Milan last summer to join veteran Navas, 35, who has been in the French capital since leaving Real Madrid in 2019.

Despite stressing his "very good relationship" with Navas, Donnarumma insisted it was out of the question to share the job next season.

"No, I think it will surely not happen like that, because I think the club will make choices," Donnarumma said.

"We're two good guys, we understand the situation, but it was hard, and for him too, but let's say that we managed it well."

Donnarumma said "yes of course" he wanted to stay next season with his contract running until 2026.

The 23-year-old lifted his first league title with PSG, while for Costa Rican Navas it was a second in France to join the La Liga trophy and three Champions League trophies he won in Spain.

"It's beautiful, it's my first league title, I'm very happy, and it's my first trophy with the Paris Saint-Germain shirt," said Donnarumma.

"I'm very proud to belong to a great, very ambitious club, always aiming higher."

Donnarumma arrived in France after being named the best player in the European championships which Italy won.

"The debut was not easy, because it was my first outside Italy, in a new club, a new city (but) pressure, no," explained Donnarumma, who had spent six years in Milan.

"I feel a big family behind me, a big club, the welcome was great, and after it was easier for me."

Donnarumma sid it hadn't been an "easy" season, giving it seven out of 10.

"I know I can do more," he said. "I haven't played so many matches, only half, that wasn't easy. In the conditions I experienced, I couldn't give the maximum, but I'm convinced that I can give a lot more to this team and this club."

In addition to PSG's Champions League exit to Real Madrid in the last 16, Donnarumma's Italy failed to qualify for a second straight World Cup.

"It was hard, very hard," he sighed.

"The following days were very difficult, but there is no going back. What we did at the Euro will remain in history, we have achieved something incredible.

It's Liverpool vs Chelsea in FA Cup final

AP ■ LONDON

Liverpool will bid to keep their quadruple chase alive in Saturday's FA Cup final against a Chelsea side hoping to welcome incoming owner Todd Boehly with victory at Wembley.

Jurgen Klopp's men have four matches left in their historic attempt to become the first English team to win all four major trophies in one season.

They beat Chelsea to lift the League Cup in February and have reached the finals of the FA Cup and Champions League, where they face Real Madrid on May 28.

No English club has come this close to such an incredible clean sweep, but Liverpool know their hopes of winning the Premier League are starting to fade.

Manchester City moved three points clear of the second-placed Reds with a 5-1 win at Wolves on Wednesday and need four points from their last two games against West Ham and Aston Villa to retain the crown.

If a second English title in three seasons proves beyond Liverpool despite their blistering form in the second half of the season, then winning two more cup competitions would be a memorable consolation.

First up is a rematch with Chelsea, who fought gamely in an intense League Cup final in February before Liverpool prevailed 11-10 in the shoot-out that followed a 0-0 draw.

Liverpool and Chelsea are the first English teams to meet in both domestic finals in the same year since Arsenal and Sheffield Wednesday in 1993.

Klopp's side will hope they emulate Arsenal, who did the cup double against Wednesday that season.

But, in their 60th game this season, fatigue could be a threat to Liverpool's hopes of a first FA Cup triumph since 2006. In a bid to keep his stars fresh, Klopp made several changes in Tuesday's win at Villa, yet still lost Brazil midfielder Fabinho to an injury that rules him out of the final.

The history chasers will be back on league duty at Southampton on Tuesday and, aware of the strain on the squad, Liverpool captain Jordan Henderson called for one last push, starting at Wembley.

"The more it goes on, the more important and intense the games are. We are using all the squad and I thought the boys that came in were brilliant (against Villa)," Henderson said.

"That's football and there's going to be ups and downs in a game. You've got to react in the right way. To be honest, the boys have done that for a long period of time.

"The boys have been incredible. Stay together in important moments and you get your rewards in the end. Let's prepare now for a big game on Saturday."

Like Liverpool, Chelsea's season will conclude with 63 games played, but it has been Thomas Tuchel's side who have looked more drained in recent weeks.

Before Wednesday's 3-0 victory at Leeds consolidated their grip on third place, the Blues had won just once in five league games as they struggled to recover from their painful CL quarter-final exit at Real Madrid.

Man City unveil Aguero statue

AP ■ MANCHESTER

One of the most famous moments in Premier League history has been immortalized outside the Etihad Stadium in Manchester.

To mark the 10-year anniversary of Sergio Aguero's title-clinching goal against Queens Park Rangers in 2012, Manchester City unveiled a statue of the Argentine striker celebrating his dramatic strike.

"Truthfully, it is a very beautiful thing for me, to see myself 10 years ago is very moving," Aguero said.

"In those 10 years, I was able to win a lot of trophies and was able to help the club become one of the most important in the world.

"I am very grateful to the club for making this statue in recognition of my football career in Manchester. It is something very special."

Villa seal permanent deal for Coutinho

AP ■ BIRMINGHAM

Aston Villa completed the permanent signing of Barcelona playmaker Philippe Coutinho on Thursday in a deal the La Liga club said is worth 20 million euros.

The Brazilian has impressed since arriving at Villa on loan in January after struggling to make an impact at Barcelona.

Barca confirmed the transfer includes a 50 percent sell-on clause if Coutinho leaves Villa.

The former Liverpool star, who has scored four times and contributed three assists for Villa, has agreed a contract that runs until 2026.

"This is a brilliant signing for Aston Villa," Villa boss Steven Gerrard told the club's website.

"Phil is a model professional and his impact on the group has been very clear since he joined in January."

Spurs win North London derby

AP ■ LONDON

Harry Kane scored twice as Tottenham beat 10-man Arsenal 3-0 on Thursday with a north London derby masterclass that kept alive their hopes of finishing in the Premier League's top four.

Antonio Conte's side would have been eliminated from the race to qualify for next season's Champions League if they had lost to their bitter rivals on Thursday.

But Kane tormented Arsenal once again as the Tottenham striker opened the scoring with a controversial penalty.

Crucially, Arsenal's Rob Holding was sent off for two bookings in seven minutes.

Kane netted again before the interval and Son Heung-min bagged Tottenham's third goal in the second half.

Instead of sealing a return to the Champions League for the first time since the 2016-17 season, fourth-placed Arsenal now face a nerve-jangling conclusion to the top-four battle.

Arsenal still hold a slender advantage, but the end of their four-match winning run leaves them just one point ahead of fifth-placed Tottenham, with both sides having two games left.

Conte said several weeks ago that it would be a "miracle" if Tottenham reached the Champions League given their lowly position when he replaced the sacked Nuno Espirito Santo in November.

But their victory in arguably the biggest north London derby since Arsenal won the league at White Hart Lane in 2004 ensured that miracle could still come true.

Conte believes finishing in the top four is "like winning a title in another country, a big achievement" given the depth of talent and wealth at the top of the Premier League.

To decide who takes the lucrative prize, Tottenham host struggling Burnley on Sunday then travel to relegated Norwich, while Mikel Arteta's men visit Newcastle on Monday and entertain Everton.

Arteta's bewildered expression throughout Arsenal's capitulation suggested it is far from certain he will be able to lift his players to finish the job.

Third-placed Chelsea, five points above Tottenham, will likely need a draw from their last two games to be sure of their top-four place given their vastly superior goal difference.

As well as the huge European stakes for both sides, Tottenham also felt lingering resentment about Arsenal's successful appeal to have this fixture postponed in January due to Covid and injury problems.

Benzema equals Raul's Real goal record

AP ■ MADRID

Karim Benzema continues to add his name to Real Madrid's record books, scoring his 323rd goal on Thursday to draw level with Raúl González as the club's second-highest scorer behind Cristiano Ronaldo.

Benzema netted in the first half of the team's 6-0 rout of last-place Levante in the Spanish league, with Madrid having secured the title a few rounds ago.

The result sealed Levante's relegation after five consecutive years in the first division.

Vinícius Júnior, Benzema's trusted attacking partner all season, scored a hat trick for Madrid as it continues to prepare for the Champions League final against Liverpool in Paris on May 28, when it will try to win a record-extending 14th European title.

Benzema is now 128 goals shy of the 451 scored by Ronaldo, who played at the club until 2018.

Benzema's close-range header in the 19th minute off a cross by Vinícius gave the French striker his league-leading 27th goal, which is nine better than any other player in the competition this season. He has scored more than a third of Madrid's 77 league goals so far.

It was the 20th goal in the last 15 matches in all competitions for Benzema, who has been key in the team's run to the Champions League final, scoring decisive goals in every knockout round of the European tournament — including two hat tricks.

He could have added another goal on Thursday but unselfishly fed Vinícius the ball for the team's fifth after clearing the goalkeeper inside the area.

Vinícius had netted his first goal in the first half before closing the scoring in the final minutes for his maiden hat trick with Madrid. Ferland Mendy and Rodrygo scored their goals before halftime. Benzema was replaced in the 75th along with Luka Modric, who set up three of Madrid's goals.

Lewa turns down Bayern extension

MUNICH: Robert Lewandowski has opened the door to a high-profile transfer after telling Bayern Munich that he will not be extending his contract beyond June 2023 when it expires, German media reported on Friday.

The 33-year-old Poland international forward has scored 343 goals for Bayern and twice picked up FIFA's Player of the Year Award since joining from Dortmund in 2014.

"Goal machine Robert Lewandowski will leave the club no later than the summer of 2023," claimed the daily *Sport Bild*.

"In recent weeks, FIFA's 2021 Player of the Year told his bosses at Bayern that he would not extend his contract, which is still valid for one year."

The Sport1 site, citing its own sources, confirmed this information.

According to several reports, Lewandowski has recently been in contact with Barcelona. **AP**

Tsitsipas sees off Sinner to reach Rome semis

AP ■ ROME

Stefanos Tsitsipas reached the semi-finals of the Italian Open on Friday after beating local hero Jannick Sinner 7-6 (7/5) 6-2 in a match which was stopped for over 10 minutes at match point after a spectator fell ill.

World number five Tsitsipas has already won the Monte Carlo Masters this season and reached the last four in impressive style against Italian Sinner, who was in his first ever Rome quarter-final.

Next up Tsitsipas will face Alexander Zverev, who made the semis after comfortably seeing off Cristian Garin, the only unseeded player left in the tournament, 7-5, 6-2.

It will be the third time in the space of a month that the German will meet the Greek in the last four, with the pair sharing the honours from clashes in Monte Carlo and Madrid.

The Greek finally took the opening set after breaking Sinner to take the tie-break to 6-5 and from their his opponent didn't recover.

The fervent atmosphere was finally dampened when Tsitsipas broke Sinner in game three and world number 13 Sinner had no reply, losing his serve again to love in game seven.

Sinner's fate seem sealed but at match point for Tsitsipas someone in the crowd appeared to collapse and play was stopped amid loud whistles directed at the umpire who wanted to continue.

What seemed like an age passed before the spectator was stretchered out of centre court and Tsitsipas could finally serve his match point, and a simple passing shot from Sinner's miscalculated drop shot sent him through.

SABALENKA WINS

Tsitsipas will take number four spot in the world rankings on Monday after Rafael Nadal's shock third-round exit at the hands of Denis Shapovalov on Thursday night.

Shapovalov faces Casper Ruud knowing a win would give him a possible semi-final against Novak Djokovic, who is in action in the day's final match against Canada's Felix Auger-Aliassime.

Djkokovic needs to beat Canada's Auger-Aliassime in order to maintain top spot in the world rankings, a position he has held for a record 369 weeks.

Aryna Sabalenka reached the women's semi-finals after beating Amanda Anisimova 4-6, 6-3, 6-2 and setting up a potential clash with world number one Iga Swiatek.

Third seed Sabalenka beat American Anisimova for the first time in five attempts and now awaits the result of Swiatek's last-eight match with Bianca Andreescu.

कार्यालय कार्यपालन यंत्री
नया भोपाल संभाग लोक निर्माण विभाग
भोपाल (म.प्र.)
निविदा सूचना

निविदा सूचना क्रमांक 05/व.ले.लि./2022-23 भोपाल, दिनांक 10.05.2022

निम्नलिखित कार्यों हेतु निविदायें आमंत्रित की जाती है। उल्लेखित कार्य का विस्तृत विवरण वेबसाईट mptenders.gov.in पर देखा जा सकता है।

क्र.	पोर्टल टेण्डर क्र.	कार्य का नाम	आमंत्रण क्र.	ठेके की अनु. राशि (रू. लाख में)
1	2	3	4	5
1	2022_PWDRB _202357_1	उपसंभाग क्रं. 3, लो.नि.वि. भोपाल के अंतर्गत सेक्शन क्रमांक-7 बी के जे.पी. अस्पताल, न्यू एफ-टाईप क्वार्टस से जे.पी. अस्पताल तक के आंतरिक पहुंच मार्गो पर बी.टी. नवीनीकरण एवं अन्य कार्य।	प्रथम आमंत्रण	96.91
2	2022_PWDRB _202359_1	उपसंभाग क्रं. 3, लो.नि.वि. भोपाल के अंतर्गत सेक्शन क्रमांक-7 बी, 18 एवं 27 के सड़को पर साधारण, विशेष मरम्मत, नाली, फुटपाथ, साइड सोल्डर, सेन्ट्रल वर्ज एवं अन्य कार्य।	प्रथम आमंत्रण	37.40
		योग :-		134.31

उपरोक्त वेबसाईट ऑनलाईन भुगतान करने के उपरान्त निविदा प्रपत्र (टेण्डर डाक्यूमेंट) वेबसाईट के माध्यम से प्राप्त हो सकेगा। निविदा प्रपत्र क्रय करने की अंतिम **दिनांक 25.05.2022 सायं 17.30 बजे** निर्धारित है। विस्तृत एन.आई.टी. एवं अन्य जानकारी उपरोक्त वेबसाईट में देखा जा सकता है। निविदा में होने वाले समस्त संशोधन का प्रकाशन केवल उपरोक्त वेबसाईट पर किया जायेगा। पृथक से समाचार पत्रों में प्रकाशन नहीं किया जायेगा।

कार्यपालन यंत्री
नया भोपाल संभाग ला.नि.वि.
भोपाल (म.प्र.)

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