WORLD 5

TRUMP RAISES

MONEY 6

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sunday pioneer



Supari given for 'Modi teri kabar khudegi': PM

PNS BHOPAL

In a veiled attack on the Congress, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said some people are hell-bent to sully his image and they have given a "supari" (contract) for this purpose colluding with certain people sitting in India and also outside the country.

Modi said such people have taken a pledge that "Modi Teri Kabar Khudegi".

Modi's comment has come amid a slugfest between the the Congress and the BJP over Rahul Gandhi's "democracy under brutal attack in India' remarks in the UK and Germany taking note of Rahul's disqualification from the Lok Sabha. The BJP has accused the Congress of "inviting foreign powers" for interfering in Îndia's internal matters.

The Prime Minister was addressing a gathering at Rani Kamalapati railway station in Bhopal after flagging off the semi-high-speed Bhopal-Delhi Vande Bharat Express train.

"There are some people in our country who have been determined since 2014, spoken publicly and declared their resolve that they will tarnish Modi's image. For this, they have given "supari" (contract) to various people.

"Some people are sitting inside the country to support



They are colluding with some abroad, but they don't know that common Indians are my 'Suraksha Kavach'

— PM NARENDRA MODI

these people and some are doing their work sitting outside the country. These people have been continuously trying to spoil and dent Modi's image,"

But India's poor, the mideclass, tribals, Dalits, backward classes and every Indian have become the security cover of Modi, which made these people furious forcing them to adopt new tricks, the prime minister said.

Amid their conspiracies,

to building the nation, he said. Slamming the Congress without taking its name, Modi said previous governments were busy with vote bank appeasement whereas his government is busy satisfying people. "They (the previous governments) considered one family (a reference to the Gandhis) as the first family of the country. They ignored the poor and middle class, and the Railway is a living example of this (ignorance)," he said.

attention to the development of

the country and pay attention

À fresh war of words erupted between the BJP and the Congress after senior Congress leader Digvijaya Singh on Thursday thanked the German foreign ministry and Richard Walker, Chief International Editor of Deutsche Welle, for

'taking note of how the Democracy is being compromised in India through the persecution of Rahul Gandhi

Union Law Minister Kiren Rijiju had shared a screenshot of Digivijaya Singh's tweet, saying, "Thank you Rahul Gandhi for inviting foreign powers for interference into India's internal matters. Remember, Indian judiciary can't be influenced by foreign interference. India won't tolerate 'foreign influence anymore because our Prime Minister is:- Shri @narendramodi Ji".

Modi said when he was informed about this programme (flagging off Vande Bharat express train from Bhopal), he asked why it is scheduled on April 1. "I said Congress friends will say that Modi will make (people) April fool but the train is being run from April 1. This is a symbol of our confidence, capabilities and skills", he said.

The PM said the average Railway budget for Madhya Pradesh used to be ₹600 crore before 2014 but it has now gone to more than ₹13,000 crore.

Modi said previous governments could have easily upgraded the already existing rail network which India acquired after Independence but the development of railways was sacrificed due to vested political interests.

Stay ready to deal with new threats, PM urges military

PNS NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday asked the three Services to stay ready to deal with new and emerging threats, emphasising that all steps are being taken to equip the Armed Forces with necessary weapons and technologies.

He made these assertions during the Combined Commanders' Conference in Bhopal which began on March 30. He also reviewed the security situation and operational readiness of the Armed Forces during the valedictory session of Combined Commanders' Conference.

He was also updated about the steps underway for the creation of Theatre Commands in an effort to fight the modern day war with perfect synergy between the three Services namely army, navy and air force, sources said.

During the conference, deliberations were held over a spectrum of issues pertaining to national security, including jointness and theaterisation in the armed forces

Giving details here, officials said the Prime Minister was briefed by Chief of Defence Staff(CDS) General Anil Chauhan about the various discussions conducted during this year's conference.

Detailed report on Page 4

Defence export soars by ten-fold in last six years

Make-in-India paying dividends, asserts PM Modi

PNS NEW DELHI

ndia has achieved an all-time Lhigh defence equipment export worth ₹15,920 crore in 2022-23 and it is a ten-fold jump in last six years. Prime Minister Narendra Modi lauded this development after Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday made the announcement.

"Indian defence exports reached an all-time high of ₹15,920 crores in FY 2022-23. It is a remarkable achievement for the country," Rajnath said in a tweet. He also said defence exports will continue to grow exponentially under the inspiring leadership of Modi. The Prime Minister laud-

ed India's defence export under Make in India and said it indicates the reforms in this sector over the last few years are yielding good results.

"Excellent! A clear manifestation of India's talent and the enthusiasm towards 'Make in India.' It also shows the reforms in this sector over the last few years are delivering good results. Our Government will keep supporting efforts to make India a defence production hub," the PM wrote on



crore in 2017-18, ₹10,745 crore in 2018-19, ₹ 9,115 crore in 2019-20, ₹8,434 crore in 2020-21, and ₹12,814 crore in 2021-22.

India exports missiles, the advanced light helicopter (ALH), offshore patrol vessels, personal protective gear, surveillance systems and a variety of radars to around 85 countries. Talks are on with potential customers for light combat aircraft Tejas, different types of helicopters, artillery guns, Astra beyond-visual-range air-to-air missiles, Akash surface-to-air missile systems, tanks, sonars and radars.

Egypt and Argentina have evinced interest in procuring 20 and 15 Tejas jets respectively. Moreover, India may export ALH to the Philippines.

Last year, BrahMos Aerospace and the Philippines signed a deal worth almost \$375 million for the Philippine Marines to buy three batteries of the BrahMos supersonic million for supplying 155mm artillery guns, the first such order for an Indian firm.

In 2020, the Union Cabinet gave its go-ahead to the export of Akash missile systems and also created a high-powered panel for swifter export approvals. The Government has given

a major boost to self reliance over the last few years and inked deals worth over ₹36,000 crores on Thursday including warships, supersonic missiles for the navy, and surface-to-air missiles and weapon locating radars for the army. In fact, the last financial

year ending Friday saw the defence ministry placing orders with domestic manufacturers worth ₹53,000 crores including basic trainer aircraft, a satellite for the army, training ships, medium-power radars, radar warning receivers, air defence systems, and Dornier aircraft

Georgia 1st US state to pass resolution against Hinduphobia

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

L passed a resolution condemning Hinduphobia, making it the first American State to take such a legislative step. Condemning Hinduphobia and anti-Hindu bigotry, the resolution said Hinduism is one of the world's largest and oldest religions with over 1.2 billion adherents in over 100 countries and encompasses an array of diverse traditions and belief systems with values of acceptance, mutual respect and

The resolution was introduced by Representatives Lauren McDonald and Todd Jones from Forsyth County in the suburbs of Atlanta, home to one of the largest Hindu and Indian-American diaspora communities in Georgia.

that the American-Hindu community has been a major contributor to diverse sectors such as medicine, science and engineering, information technology, hospitality, finance, academia, manufacturing, energy, retail trade, among Stating that there have

been documented instances of hate crimes against Hindu-Americans over the last few decades in many parts of the country, the resolution said Hinduphobia is exacerbated and institutionalised by some in academia who support the dismantling of Hinduism and accuse its sacred texts and cultural practices of violence.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacts with students on Bhopal-Delhi Vande Bharat Express train after flagging off the semi-high speed train in Bhopal on Saturday. The train will run on all days except Saturday. It will depart from Rani Kamalapati station at 5.40am and reach Hazrat Nizamuddin station at 1.10pm. The Delhi-Bhopal leg of the train will start at 2.40pm and reach Bhopal at 10.10pm, officials said. The train is scheduled to halt at Gwalior and Agra enroute

CM approves metro rail project



BBSR, Cuttack, Puri to be linked BHUBANESWAR

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik approved the muchawaited metro rail project on the auspicious occasion Utkal Divas on Saturday. The metro rail project

would connect Bhubaneswar, Puri and Cuttack cities.

A high-level meeting was held to review the feasibility for the proposed metro train service on different routes in

ber last year.

As per sources, the metro train service will begin from the Bhubaneswar airport to Trisulia covering the Bhubaneswar railway station, Vani Vihar, Jayadev Vihar, Patia, Nandankanan and Trisulia. The project will be

extended to Puri subsequently. Bhubaneswar MP Aparajita Sarangi had made efforts for the project. She met concerned Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri in New Delhi in this regard in Octo-

BJP, BJD celebrate **Utkal Divas in Kotia**

 $U_{\rm nion}$ Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Saturday visited Phatusineri in Kotia panchayat in Koraput district along with some BJP MLAs and celebrated the Utkal Divas by singing 'Bande Utkal Janani' with lo-

The people of Koraput would never allow anybody to intrude into this region, he said. Pradhan came down heavily on the Andhra Government's attempt to intrude into the region. "Where I am standing is Odisha's land. Why the Andhra police are here? All the nameplates

of Andhra Government

should be taken off." he said and asked the Andhra officials to go back, amid cheers from the crowd.

He also paid tributes to Utkalgaurab Madhusudan Das, Utkalmani Gopabandhu Das, Maharaja Sriram Chandra Bhanja Deo, Maharaja Krushnachandra Gajapati and other legends. The BJD also celebrated the

special day in this disputed area. Some party MLAs of Koraput district, Special Development Chairman Chandrasekhar Majhi and Nabarangpur MP Ramesh Chandra Majhi took part in celebrations

panchayat.

Jagannath Sports Complex to be ready soon

5T Secy visits Puri, reviews various projects BHUBANESWAR

5_T Secretary VK Pandian visited Puri and reviewed the Jagannath Sports Complex on Saturday as directed by CM Naveen Patnaik.

Constructed under the ABHADA scheme, the sports complex comprises a cricket stadium, a multipurpose indoor hall with facilities for boxing, wrestling, gymnasium, table tennis, besides a swimming pool. A 100 seated hostel is also being built there. The CM had laid the foundation stone for the project in

Ganjeipadar village in Kotia It was known from the review that the cricket stadium,

swimming pool, and gymnasium works have been completed and the stadium will be dedicated to the public very

The sports complex would add to the importance of Puri as a world-class heritage spot, said Pandian. He also took stock of the Srimandira Heritage Corridor project and Municipal Market Complex constrictions.

Last week Pandian had visited Puri and reviewed the progress of works of the Heritage Corridor Project, Sri Setu and Jagannath Ballav. The CM has asked Pandian to visit Puri every Saturday and make a weekly review of the progress of all the projects implemented in the pilgrim town and update him about them, said

Edgy calm day after Ram Navami clashes; Shah on Bihar visit

Not natural, disturbing **Nitish blames vested** interest for violence

PNS PATNA/HOWRAH

A day after communal clash-es over Ram Navami celebrations in six States, situation remained peaceful but tense on Saturday.

However, the prohibitory order Section 144 was still in force in the affected areas

Howrah, a police officer said. Meanwhile Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Saturday asserted communal tensions during Ram Navami festivities at Sasaram and Bihar Sharif towns were triggered by some people indulging in "gad-(mischief) and rejected the BJP's charge of poor law and order situation in the State.

And on the day when the BJP and Kumar's JD(U) traded charges over communal disturbances which caused Union Home Minister Amit Shah to cancel one of the programmes scheduled on April 2, the Union Home Minister reached Bihar on Saturday.

Taking over investigations into the clashes, Bengal CID collected samples and spoke to local people as well as police personnel who were deployed there during Thursday's clash, the officer

disturbing. Such incidents happened for the first time in the area. It's not natural....We know that some people are indulging in "gadbad" (mischief) and are trying to disrupt communal harmony in the state. We will not allow

In Patna, while interacting with media persons here

on Saturday, Kumar also made light of Shah canceling

his tour of Sasaram in view of

riots, remarking, "I don't

know why he was coming and

I don't understand why he

ing Ram Navami festivities at

Sasaram and Bihar Sharif are

"Communal tensions dur-

decided not to come".

Minister said. He said police officials have been instructed to identify those who are indulging in mischief and to "take strict action against them".

this to happen," the Chief

Normalcy has been restored in both the places though senior officers are camping in the affected areas by way of caution and security forces have been deployed in the area, Kumar said.

The State police have so far arrested 45 people in connection with communal riots at Sasaram and Bihar Sharif that erupted during the Ram Navami festivities. Vehicles, houses and shops were torched and several people injured in communal flareups reported in both towns.



Direct BBSR-Dubai flight to take off on May 15

CM launches ticket sale on Utkal Divas

■ BHUBANESWAR $oldsymbol{A}$ head of the launch of

much-awaited international flight from Bhubaneswar to Dubai, sale of tickets started here on the Utkal Divas on Saturday.

The maiden international flight will take off from the Biju Patnaik International Airport here on May 15.

Launching the ticket sales at the Naveen Niwas, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said, "Direct connectivity with Dubai, which is one of the biggest aviation hubs, will

open up a direct gateway to the world. Not only it will provide seamless connectivity but also will have a huge multiplier effect on investment in Odisha in sectors like IT, manufacturing and tourism. This is the aspiration of New Odisha."

The CM handed over the first eight tickets to Mission Shakti women, sportspersons, tribal leaders, Skilled in Odisha students and artists. They are Sundargarh SDC Chairperson Binay Kumar Toppo, Keonjhar SDC Chairperson Laxmi Nayak, Koraput DLF President Jyotirekha Chetty, sand artist Sudarshan Pattnaik, footballer Anuradha Biswal, shooter Shriyanka Sadangi,

Balaram Rout from Jajpur Govt Polytechnic and Himansu Sahoo from Rourkela Govt ITI.

While attending Make in Odisha Conclave in Dubai, the CM had assured the investor community and Odia diaspora that such a direct flight would commence to ease travel from Middle East. He had also given approval to completely fund the flight operations.

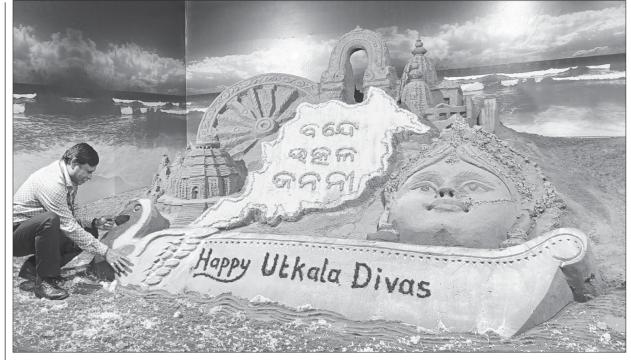
Further, within two weeks of the launch of direct flight to Dubai, international flight operations will commence to Singapore and Bangkok to realise Odisha's vision to become the gateway to the

The Indigo Airlines recently

won the bid to operate direct flights to the aforesaid three important gateways. As per the agreement, the Indigo Airlines will operate direct flight from Bhubaneswar thrice a week. Inaugural ticket prices have been set to begin at 10,000 per single-side journey and 20,000 for round trip. Each flight will have the subsidised tickets on a firstcome-first-serve basis.

The CM said a larger delegation from Odisha would go on the first flight to Dubai. hanked

Government of India, especially Union Minister of Civil Aviation Jyotiraditya M Scindia for facilitating services for the flight operations.



Sand artiest Subala Maharana creates a sculpture titled "Happy Utkala Divas" at the State of India head office in Bhubaneswar on

Ravenshaw PG-1991 batch meet today

Ravenshawvian-PG'91. Urge Driven Relationship Advancement

CUTTACK

Ravenshawvian PG-91 Urge Driven Relationship Advancements (RUDRA), an alumni association of Ravenshaw College PG-1991 batch, irrespective of departments, will be meeting for the first time in the campus

of the university on April 2. A saplings plantation programme will be held in fond memory of the august premier higher education institute of the country with the dignitaries like the Vice-Chancellor, Registrar and others, which will be followed by a photo session.

Later, all the members and invitees will congregate at Odisha Cricket Association Convention Hall to get to know one another after a gap of 32 years. Forming a whatsapp group the batch mates have been associated since 2019 and this time have decided to meet. DS Mishra, Amiyabala Parida, Dhirendra Kar, Manoranjan Mohanty, Jhumpa Mitra, Manjushree Shastri, Gangotri Sarangi, Kantiprava, Sachi Mishra, Dinesh Das, Mahendra Agasti,

Susant Nayak, Bikram Ghadei, Debajyoti and Raj among

others are monitoring the

CM releases Rs 877-cr KALIA aid to 43L farmers

BHUBANESWAR

On the Utkal Divas, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Saturday disbursed monetary assistance to farmers under the KALIA scheme. The assistance has been provided for agriculture in Kharif season.

Except poll-bound district Jharsuguda, the farmers of other districts have been given the KALIA assistance.

The CM released total Rs 877 crore under the scheme benefitting over 43 lakh agricultural households in the

Patnaik said, "The State's development is linked with welfare of farmers. 'Therefore, we started the new financial year by providing KALIA assistance on this auspicious

Stating that Odisha is now self-reliant in the production of food grains, it is able to



provide food to the country's food reserves.

the State He said Government has taken many steps for development of agriculture. He advised the farmers to use more machines and modern equipments. He said the Government is implementing several grainbased missions to increase the production of nutritious food in and improve farmers'

income. He also advised farmers to focus on crop diversification.

Agriculture & Farmers' Empowerment and Fisheries & ARD Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain said the Kalia scheme has made the farmers self-reliant. Farmers' morale has improved with relief from farm loans.

Many farmers from different districts including Malkangiri, Puri and Bargarh also gave their views on the KALIA assistance and the changes it has brought to their

Kiran Kumar Sahu from Kukudakhandi block of Ganjam district, who received the scholarship, described how he got the opportunity to get enrolled into medical studies at the MKCG Medicial College in Brahmapur.

Set up Odia Varsity in Cuttack'

Utkal Divas: Prez, PM

Odisha, Odia people and culture in the progress of our

Naveen Patnaik paid

tributes to the legendary

leaders who played pioneering

roles in creation of a separate

Governor Prof Ganeshi Lal,

Union Ministers Amit Shah,

Dharemndra Pradhan and

Ashwini Vaishnaw and many

other leaders cutting across

political party lines also

greeted the people of Odisha

State Odisha.

on the occasion.

wish Odisha people

■ BHUBANESWAR

On the occasion of Utkal

Divas on Saturday, President

Droupadi Murmu, Prime

Minister Narendra Modi and

Chief Minister Naveen

Patnaik greeted the people of

Odisha and wished them a

Murmu in her message said

that Odisha has the potential

to be the growth engine of

Modi said, "This is a day to

acknowledge the rich role of

bright future.

Indian economy.



Govt nod to 5 industry projects worth Rs 35,760 cr

The Odia University should be set up in Cuttack city, which made contributions for Odia language and literature's advancement, demanded eminent personalities of the

■ BHUBANESWAR

city in a letter to Governor Prof Ganeshi Lal. The signatories to the letter included former Higher Education Director Premananda Mishra, former Ravenshaw College Principal Prabhat Kumar Mishra, Prof They stated that as Cuttack

which is the State's cultural hub is being neglected in political and administrative sectors, the Odia language is being ruined. Besides, steps have been taken on a war-rooting to set up an Urdu University, over which they expressed surprise.

A delegation consisting of Rotarian Ashok Bihari Mahapatra, Prof Dinesh Prasad Patnaik, Prof Subashini Lenka, Prof Gyanendra Kumar Sharma and Prof Naryan Mohanty met the Governor at the Raj Bhavan submitted memorandum

Assembly adjourned undemocratically: BJP

scheduled to be held till April 6, but it was adjourned six days ahead of the schedule undemocratically. The State Government should answer why it adjourned the Assembly arbitrarily, said the BJP on Saturday.

Leader of Opposition Jayanaryan Mishra said this is an escapist Government. Six important Bills were to be passed in the Assembly, but

the Government adjourned it on Friday. The Government has failed to meet the farmers'

In Odisha, a "duplicate" Government is operating. Certificates are fake; medicines are fake and the Ratna Bhandar keys are fake. The people of the State are distressed due to the BJD Government. Government could not face the barrage of questions posed

by the BJP, for which it adjourned the Assembly,

38,100 job opportunities expected To be set up in

Bhadrak, Dhenkanal, JSpur, Keonjhar PNS BHUBANESWAR

The State Government, in a bid to convert investment intents received during the Make in Odisha Conclave 2022 into ground reality, has approved five industrial projects of diverse sectors. The proposals, estimated at Rs 35,760 crore, were cleared by

Authority (HLCA) in its 31st meeting held under the chairpersonship of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik here

The endeavours are part of the Government's effort to welcome industrialists to

on Saturday.

invest in the State. Official sources said the projects have the potential to generate over 38,100 employment opportunities and are spread across the sectors like IT & ESDM/ green energy equipment, steel, chemicals and textile. The committee has given a go-

ahead to two steel projects, one

project in green energy and

equipment, one project in

technical textile. The projects will be set up

in Bhadrak, Dhenkanal, Jagatsinghpur and Keonjhar The proposal of WAREE

Energies Limited entails an investment of Rs 25,000 crore for an integrated solar equipment manufacturing complex in Dhenkanal with an employment potential of 14,000 people.

The committee also approved the proposal of Super Smelters Limited for an integrated steel plant of capacity of 1.8 MTPA in Keonjhar which promises an investment of Rs 5,436.10 crore and is expected to

19,000 people. The HLCA approved

another project by Kashvi Power and Steel Private Limited for an integrated steel plant in Keonjhar with an investment of Rs 1,600 crore. In the technical textile

sector, the committee gave a nod to a project by MCPI Private Limited. With an investment of Rs 2,223.25 crore, the company proposes to set up a plant in Bhadrak.

In the chemicals sector, the authority approved a project of IV Dhunseri Petrochem Industries Ltd Jagatsinghpur with an investment of Rs 1,500 and employment opportunities for over 500 people.

Sujata Mahapatra and many the High Level Clearance chemicals and one project in provide employment to about Rahul case shows Indian democracy not in good shape Red Cross study-cum-training camp ends

Volunteers oriented on host of subjects

BHUBANESWAR

Under the guidance of honorary secretary, Indian Red Cross Society Odisha State Branch Bibhubi Bhusan Pattnaik, a five- day JRC study- cum -training camp was organised at Nilachal Polytechnic, Bhubaneswar from March 26 to 30. Honorary treasurer Bhabani Prasad Nanda presided over the valedictory programme and advised the students to come forward to take care of nature for a healthy society.

Former secretary IRCS OSB Maj Dr Kalpana Das, Additional Secretary, Health Family Welfare Department Ashok Kumar Rath and Youth Red Cross



officer Dr Ramesh Chandra Behera joined as guests and motivated the volunteers.

During the camp different technical sessions on subjects like history of Red Cross, school safety, substance abuse, first aid, climate change, fire safety, disaster management and WASH, importance of medicinal plants and road safety etc were held. The Fire Department demonstrated

different skills on search and rescue during fire hazards. Additional Transport Commissioner Sanjay Kumar Biswal held a quiz competition and winners were given helmets.

Similarly, Tree Man of India Dr Dilip Kumar Srichandan took a session on climate change and encouraged everybody to plant saplings. Agriculture

officer Jayanta Kumar Jena made the volunteers how understand medicinal plants play a vital role for a healthy life. Master Trainer Chandan Kumar Mohanty oriented the volunteers on disaster management, sanitation and hygiene. different Winners of competitions felicitated.

always describes the Indian democracy as a vibrant one. But the way Congress MP Rahul Gandhi was convicted in a Surat Court of defamation on March 23 for his Modi jibe in an election rally in 2019 and within the next 10 hours was "disqualified" as an MP of the Lok Sabha tells that Indian democracy is clearly in a deplorable shape

The Freethought Party of India (FPI) is of candid opinion that neither Prime Minister Narendra Modi nor his business friend Gautam Adani is to be equated with India. Attack on anyone of them should never be construed as an attack on India. Fact is nobody in India is above criticism.

The FPI disapproves of the mischievous conduct of BJP MPs in not allowing the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha to function as per the



B RAMCHANDRA CST VOLTAIRE

Parliamentary rules.

It is quite shameful that Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla did not assert his authority; rather he succumbed to the pressures mounted on him by the PMO. As a result, he could not allow Congress MP Rahul Gandhi to speak his mind on the floor of the House on the demand of the BJP MPs to tender his 'apology" for his speeches that he delivered in UK.

Gandhi wrote two letters to the Speaker. He met the pleaded that he should be allowed to make his stand clear on the issue of tendering an apology in the House. The Speaker acted as per the direction to him by the ruling party. Thus it proves that India is not the Mother of Democracy.

Debiprasad Nanda, Prof

Basanti Ray, Aparna Mishra,

Om Birla should not have given in to the pressures of the ruling party; rather he should have threatened to the Prime Minister that he must be allowed to perform his constitutional duty towards the Republic of India; otherwise he would resign from the post of Speakership of the Lok Sabha. It is quite disturbing parliamentary democracy is being sabotaged almost everyday authoritarian attitude of PM

The Lok Sabha Speaker should have not expunged any part of the speech that the Lok Sabha on February 7th while participating in the Motion of Thanks to the President of India. In that speech Gandhi asked for clarification from the Prime Minister on the financial relationship that he was having with Gautam Adani whose fraudulent activities have been exposed by the Hindenburg experts. Instead of replying to the debate PM Modi utilised the Speaker to expunge the key points of Gandhi's speech in the proceedings of the Lok Sabha. If critical remarks on the activities of the Government are to be expunged then why should we record the proceedings of

(Voltaire is general secretary, FPI, Copernicus Bhawan, 121, Dharm Viahar, Khandagiri, Bhubaneswar, Mob: 9238878280)

the House at all?

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MCL achieves record output of 193.3 MT

192.7 MT

BHUBANESWAR

Scaling new heights, the Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) registered a record 193.3 million tonne coal production with highest ever 192.7 million tonne coal despatch to consumers during the financial year (FY) 2022-

Chairman-cum-Managing Director Om Prakash Singh, while addressing at a Press conference here on Saturday, expressed his gratitude to the State and the Central Governments for extending all necessary support to the company, which ensured new milestones in its pursuits of energy security in the country.

"The MCL registered a growth of 15 % for the FY while



Functional directors of MCL, including Director (Personnel) Keshav Rao, Director (Technical) Jugal Kumar Borah and Director (Finance) Ajit Kumar Behura, besides Chief Vigilance Officer, PK Patel also shared

the stakeholders, employees of

the company and contractors'

"We are happy to share that MCL has achieved all its targets much ahead of schedule and contributed to Coal India surpassing its target of 700 million tonnes set for FY 2022-23," the CMD added, while informing that the 97 per cent of total production of MCL was through eco-friendly

equipment surface miners. Singh informed that the coal dispatch to power sector also increased from 127.12 million tonne in FY 2022 to 148.8 million tonne in FY 2023 with a growth of 17 per cent. Strengthening its business activities, the company made Capital Expenditure (CapEx) of Rs 3,850 crore during the FY

ANNUAL MEDIA CONFERENCE

In the year ended March 31, 2023, the company had spent around Rs 200 crore under various CSR initiatives for social and economic upliftment of society, particularly the remote and peripheral areas of the

5T Secy visits Madhubabu birthplace



BHUBANESWAR

On the direction of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, his 5T Secretary VK Pandian on Saturday visited the birthplace of Utkalgaurav Madhusudan Das in Cuttack district and paid his tributes to the legendary figure.

Pandian also discussed with locals about the Madhubabu memorial's development plan. The renovation work would be carried out under the 5T initiative and the plan would be submitted to the Chief Minister by April 15 for his approval. A museum would be constructed at Madhubabu's

birthplace and a 15-feet bronze statue of his would also be installed.

Notably, after returning from Kolkata, Madhubabu used to stay in a house near his birthplace and dedicated himself to the service of Odisha. This is famous as his workplace.

The road connecting his birthplace and workplace would be renovated. Arrangements for a light-andsound show would also be made and the life and achievements of Madhubabu would be narrated in different languages for the benefit of the

INBRIEF

COMPUTER CENTRE OPENS IN UTKAL UNIVERSITY

Bhubaneswar: On the occasion of Utkal Divas, a Computer Centre of the Utkal University was inaugurated by Vice-Chancellor Prof Sabita Acharya in the presence of Registrar Dr



Abhay Kumar Nayak, CDC Director Dr Nigamananda Das Development Officer Dr Manoranjan Senapati and Professor in-Charge of Computer Centre Dr Prafulla Kumar Behera. The Computer Centre along with a videoconference room, a computer lab, a supervision room and a technical team office were also opened. Forty-eight students can use the computer at the same time availing high-speed Internet access.

U SAMMIILANI OBSERVES UTKAL DIVAS

Bhubaneswar: The Utkal Sammiilani here on Saturday observed the Utkal Divas by paying floral tributes to the statues of Utkalgaurav Madhusudan Das and Samilani's first president Maharaja Sriram Chandra Bhanja Deo. Governor Prof 📗



Ganeshi Lal, who attended as chief guest, also paid tribute to Madhubabu. Utkal Sammilani Mancheswar branch president Dillip Dashsharma presided over the function, in which advisor Ananta Prasad Jena, vice-president Surendra Mohan Mishra, branch advisor Nimai Charan Das, vice-president Sital Chandra Mohanty and secretary Gobinda Charan Subudhi were present.

CSPUR DAVIANS CELEBRATE UTKAL DIVAS

Bhubaneswar: The DAVians of Chandrasekharpur here celebrated the 88th Utkal Divas amidst various activities on Saturday. Principal Indira Bhattacharya, joining as chief guest, appealed to all to uphold Odisha's rich culture and heritage



and rededicate themselves for the greater cause of the State. Mass rendition of Bande Utkal Janani, presentation of cultural programmes, enactment of skit show and speeches on the importance of the day marked the occasion.

UTKAL DIVAS HELD AT POKHARIPUT DAV

Bhubaneswar: The Utkal Divas was observed at the DAV School, Pokhariput here. Schoolchildren sang the State Anthem 'Bande Utkal Janini' to mark the occasion. A documen-



tary 'Aadmya Odisha' was also exhibited. DAV Regional Coordinator and school Principal D Sujata said that though it is necessary to go to foreign countries, it is needed to return to the country to serve the motherland.

KALINGA HOSPITAL OBSERVES UTKAL DIVAS

Bhubaneswar: The Kalinga Hospital here celebrated the Utkal



by eminent personalities like Justice Choudhury Pratap Keshar Mishra, spiritual leader Swami Mukundananda, former Chief Secretary Sahadev Sahu along with Dr Sitakantha Dash, Chairman, Kalinga Hospital. The hospital felicitated 80 employees for their uninterrupted service. Hospital MD Nilanjana Mukherjee also spoke.

PROF NANDA NEW SOA VICE-CHANCELLOR

Bhubaneswar: Eminent researcher Prof Pradipta Kumar Nanda has taken over as Vice-Chancellor of the Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (SOA) Deemed to be University here.

MO BUS SERVICE NOW IN ROURKELA

Rourkela: The Capital Region Urban Transport (CRUT) expanded the Mo Bus service in Rourkela by rolling out the buses on six new routes with effect from April 1 on occasion of Utkal Divas. Notably, for the



past four and a half years, the CRUT has been providing the Mo Bus service in Bhubaneswar with a significant impact on the public transport system in the State capital.

In Baleswar

Woman's body found stuffed in sack

Police recovered a decomposed body of a woman stuffed in a sack from the Subarnarekha river in Basta

While the identity of the

river at Benapur-Baruni ghat in the morning and informed On getting information,

spotted a sack floating in the

The body has been sent for

police reached the spot and

postmortem and the exact cause of death would be revealed after the availability of the reports. Further investigation was on, police

NIST holds 2-day techno mgmt symposium Chikiti BJD leader Deo no more



BRAHMAPUR

Durga Prasad Deo (known as Sana Deo), a strong organiser of BJD in Chikiti Assembly seat, died here on Friday night following prolonged illness, sources said.

Hundreds of BJD workers and senior leaders including Brahmapur MP Chandra Sekhar Sahu and his wellwishers rushed to Chikiti for the last darshan of Deo. State Housing and Urban Development Minister Usha Devi was also present. He was cremated at Swarga Dwara,

Puri. Late Deo was an unchallenged leader and capable organiser of the ruling BJD who played a vital role for repeated win of BJD for two decades from Chikiti. Brahmapur MP Sahu in his message said the death of Deo is a great loss not only for Chikiti, but also for the BJD. He was a strong grass root level organiser, he added.

Former Deputy Speaker of Assembly and senior BJD leader Rama Chandra Panda also conveyed his sincere condolences to the bereaved family.

Sasan Canal mishap

Transport, WR, Works officials visit spot

After a tragic accident near Bishalkhinda under Sasan police station in which a vehicle of a wedding party skidded into a canal killing seven people under water, the local administration has formed a committee to inquire into the incident and suggest remedial measures to curb such incidents in future.

"We have visited the spot with police and staff of the Water Resources and Works departments to find the flaws there and make permanent constructions so that no vehicles skid off the canal embankment," said Sambalpur

RTO cum the member of the Road Safety Committee Ramdas Tudu. "No one had informed us earlier about the spot. It has come to our knowledge only after the accident. Hence, at the instruction of the Collector cum Chairman of the Road Safety Committee, we are visiting the spot and we will make it an accident free spot with necessary modifications," said Tudu. However, locals have demanded quick measures by the Government, including widening of the bridge and the approach roads to it on both sides. Besides, they demanded sign boards, solar lights and increased height of the bridge.

 $T_{
m he\ NIST\ here\ organised\ a}$ two-day techno management symposium 'Sankalp 2K23' in its campus at Palur Hills on Thursday.

As a national-level event, Sankalp aims to nurture technical expertise and skills among young individuals, providing a platform for showcasing their talents in various events such as Robotics, Web Designing, Quizzes, Coding, Paper Presentation, and more, said its Principal Dr Priyadarshi Tripathy.

The inaugural ceremony was attended by Chairman, ISTE Odisha section Dr Pravat Kumar Parhi; Principal Dr Tripathy; ISTE faculty advisor Prof Mitubaral, Sankalp Student president Sayed Imran, secretary Sritam



in online mode. During the inaugural address, Chairman ISTE Odisha section Dr Parhi emphasised on the importance of industry collaborations to empower students on the latest technologies and to lead a meaningful career by learning

The event promises to be an enthralling techno-fiesta, giving students opportunity to explore and conquer new horizons while redefining the meaning of success itself, said the Founder chairman Dr Mahapatra. Principal Dr Tripathy in his address said that these kinds of symposiums provide a platform to the students to showcase their latent abilities

and ingenuity. ISTE faculty advisor Prof Baral advised students to be multi skilled and focus on multidisciplinary projects.

The symposium featured talks by industry experts, who shared their experiences and provided valuable insights into the latest technologies and trends in the industry. Besides, cultural events like Mr and Miss Sankalp, DJ and Band were organised.

NREGS public hearing held in Boden Block

Officials asked maintain transparency in use of funds

AJIT PANDA NUAPADA

A block level public hearing on Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) for the financial year 2021-22 for Boden block under Nuapada district was held at Boden on March 28.

The Nuapada Sub-Collector presided over the event and urged the implementing agencies and officials to maintain records properly so that there are no loopholes or



misuse of funds.

Findings of the social audit regarding worksite issues, financial deviation, process violation. improper maintenance of records and financial misappropriation found during the social audits at village and Panchayat level audits were presented by the District Social Audit team headed by district coordinator Milan Pati. This was followed

by a discussion Panchayatwise. The Sub-Collector strongly stated that funds have to be utilized strictly for the projects sanctioned. The public hearing committee suggested proper maintenance of records and recovering funds have misappropriated. executing officials were given fifteen days' time period to set their records right.

performing districts so far as social audits of MGNREGS is concerned. Every year about Rs 25 to Rs 30 lakh is recovered from the officials in charge of implementation of the projects. "Things have improved a lot, the field level officials are cooperating which was very difficult to get in the initial period. However, there is a need to sensitise the elected representatives on social audits to get their active support in the process," said the district coordinator.

Nuapada is one of the best

The Boden block BDO, Asst Engineer, APO, MGNREGS and all field level officials were present.

NTPC Kaniha project makes dreams come true for many

40 meritorious students succeed in jobs, 10 join higher studies **SURAJ MISHRA**

BHUBANESWAR

Satyabrat Mohapatra used to visit Maa Hingula Yatra every year as a devotee. But this year he would be joining the fest as an administrator.

Satyabrat has been included in the team of district administrators for public control administrative coordination in the nine-day long festival at Gopalprasad area from April 4 to 12.

A student of NTPC Kaniha's educational CSR initiative Project "Vijay", Satyabrat cleared the prestigious Odisha Civil Service Examination (OCS) 2020 and joined as trainee Assistant Collector in Angul district, which is also his home district. Son of a bus stand

hawker in Angul headquarters bus stand and a physically challenged, Satyabrat cracked the prestigious examination with a rank of 279.

AGM (CSR) Kaniha, Rafiqul Islam congratulated him for his remarkable achievement in the Odisha Civil Services Examination and wished him all success in future endeavours.

left-hander but meritorious, Satyabrat managed his studies with scholarships all though his educational career. He has completed bachelor's degree in Agriculture from Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology (OUAT). He joined NTPC's short term CSR programme "Vijay", which offers free civil service coaching classes in association with Gurukul Foundation's IAS Gurukul in

PPP mode. 'This is an important milestone in my life and I will try for IAS soon. I am grateful to NTPC CSR initiative, which in collaboration with Gurukul

Foundation's IAS Gurukul, is helping aspirants of Odisha," said Satyabrat. With "Vijay" free online pre-

recruitment coaching by NTPC TSTPS Kaniha, nearly 40 candidates have become successful in various stages of different competitive exams such as a bank, railway, paramilitary, police, RI, State Government, Central Government, Secretariat, Assistant Professor, teacher, engineer and corporate jobs etc. Besides, nearly 10 of them joined in higher studies in Masters, MBA, Ph.D and B.Ed courses etc., through competitive exams at state and state universities. The focus is on having meritorious disadvantaged and poor boys and girl students from remote villages including handicapped, widow, orphan, SC, ST, backward and war soldiers families from NTPC Kaniha project affected areas including

Kaniha, Talcher and Pallahara

DCBL mushroom farming training to 1M women



Already, hundreds have started earning in Cuttack, Rajgangpur BHUBANESWAR

he Dalmia Cement (Bharat) Limited (DCBL), a subsidiary of Dalmia Bharat Limited, is aiming to provide earning source to one million rural women through enterprise development programme in mushroom cultivation in Odisha. The company is facilitating

the training programme for

Self Help Group (SHG)

women in communities surrounding its plants in Cuttack, Rajgangpur and Lanjiberna mines, enabling them to earn an additional income of Rs 5,000 a month through establishment of mushroom cultivation units.

As a case study in point, Dalmia Cement's Kapilash Cement Manufacturing Works (KCMW) in Cuttack, in the last 7 months witnessed 130 SHG members selling around 300 kg mushrooms in the local markets earning profits worth Rs 75,000. In Rajgangpur, 140 women from 17 villages have benefited through the programme.

The Dalmia Cement

provides raw materials and market linkage support to all SHG women to build their own cultivation enterprises. The company has been

promoting various income generation and skill development programmes in the region for empowering disadvantaged women and providing them an opportunity to earn a secure livelihood. Apart from mushroom farming, initiatives like Project Hastakala handicraft production, spices and pickle making, flower and organic vegetable farming, terracotta products making, etc have been introduced, a release said.

Murder Sources said some locals

suspected BALESWAR

tehsil of Baleswar district on Saturday.

woman was yet to be ascertained, it was suspected that she was murdered by miscreants and the body was stuffed into a sack and thrown fished out the body from the

of Armed Forces

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday asked the three Services to stay ready to deal with these new and emerg-ing threats, emphasising that all steps are being taken to equip the Armed Forces with necessary weapons and technologies. He made these assertions

during the Combined Commanders' Conference in Bhopal which began on March 30. He also reviewed the security situation and operational readiness of the Armed Forces during the valedictory session of Combined Commanders' Conference.

He was also updated about the steps underway for the creation of Theatre Commands



in an effort to fight the modern day war with perfect synergy between the three Services namely army, navy and air force, sources said.

During the conference, deliberations were held over a spectrum of issues pertaining to national security, including jointness and theaterisation in the armed forces.

Giving details here, officials said the Prime Minister was briefed by Chief of Defence Staff(CDS) General Anil Chauhan about the various

discussions conducted during this year's conference. Modi complimented the Armed Forces for their role in nation building and providing Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) assistance to friendly countries.

During the final day of the ession, various topics including aspects of digitisation; cyber security; challenges of social media; Aatmanirbharta; absorption of Agniveers and jointness were discussed.

In a significant development from the past, the scope of the conference was expanded this year, wherein, a few multi-layered and interactive sessions were conducted with participation of soldiers from every command of the Indian Army, Indian Navy and Indian Air Force, including the Tri-Services Andaman and Nicobar Command.

PM reviews op readiness | Raut gets death threat from Bishnoi, 1 held

Less than 24 hours after Shiv Sena (UBT) leader and MP Sanjay Raut received a threat message on his WhatsApp on alleged behalf of mafia leader Lawrence Bishnoi that he would be shot dead in New Delhi, the Maharashtra police on Saturday detained one person for questioning in Pune for

questioning.
Identifying the person detained as one Rahul Talekar who works at a hotel in Pune, the police said that he had been handed over to the Mumbai police for further investigations. Raut had received a whatsApp message late on Friday evening warning that he would be shot dead with an AK-47 in New Delhi along the lines of Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala who was eliminated last year.

Raut got a threat in a WhatsApp message on Friday evening warning that he would be shot dead with an AK-47 in New Delhi, with reference to the killing of the Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala last year. The threat received by Raut reward thus: "Anti-Hindu, I will kill you. Meet me in Delhi, will finish you off with an AK47. Like Moosewala. Treat this as a message from Lawrence Bishnoi," with a reference to Salman Khan Immediately after he received



the threatening message, Raut had complained to the Mumbai Police Commissioner about it. Raut's MLA-brother Sunil Raut lodged a formal complaint with the Kanjurmarg police on Saturday morning.

Based on the technical evidence gathered by the Mumbai police that the person who had sent the whatsApp message to Raut was in Pune, the crime branch sleuths of the Pune detained Talekar, a resident of Wadgaon Sheri, from a hotel at Kharadi Chandannagaer in

While it is not known immediately as to the motive behind Talekar handing a death threat to Raut, the detained person has told the police that he had sent a threat message to the Sena (UBT) MP under the influence of alcohol. He reportedly told the police that he had telephoned Raut many times, but the latter had not taken his call. Preliminary investigations have revealed that Talekar had no political affiliation nor were there any criminal antecedents.

Mumbai Police Commissioner, and a probe was initiated, leading to the detention of the suspect in Pune. The Mumbai police are questioning him on his links with the Bishnoi gang and also the recent email threats issued to Bollywood actor Salman Khan.

Reacting to the latest death threat, Raut - whose security was beefed up immediately after he received the whatsApp threat message – said: "I have been targetted in a similar manner in the past as well. But, I will not be cowed down by such threats".

"My security as well as the security covers of several Maha Vikas Aghadi leaders' security have been withdrawn and deployed for the 'gaddars' (traitors)... What has the government done about this?" Raut asked. Alluding to similar threats issued to prominent NCP leader of Thane Jitendra Awhad, Raut accused the state government of ignoring such threats faced by opposition

Leaders of Opposition in the State Assembly Ajit Pawar and his counterpart from Upper House Ambadas Danve, NCP MP Supriya Sule Congress leaders expressed serious concerns over threats and urged government to take matter seri

Now India, Malaysia can trade in ₹



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ **NEW DELHI**

Trade between India and Malaysia can now be settled in Indian Rupee (INR) in addition to the current modes of settlement in other currencies. This follows the decision by the Reserve Bank of India in July 2022 to allow settlement of international trade in Indian Rupee (INR), the ministry of external affairs(MEA) said here on Saturday.

This initiative by the RBI is aimed at facilitating the growth of global trade and to support the interests of the global trading community in Indian Rupee (INR).

India International Bank of Malaysia (IIBM), based in Kuala Lumpur, has operationalised this mechanism by opening a Special Rupee Vostro Account through its Corresponding Bank in India i.e. Union Bank of India, MEA

Bhutan King's 3-day India visit starts from Monday

NEW DELHI

King of Bhutan i g m e

Wangchuk will visit India for three days starting Monday at the invitation of President Droupadi Murmu. He will be accompanied by Lyonpo Dr. Tandi Dorji, Minister of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, and senior officials of the Royal Government of Bhutan.

The visit is in keeping with the long standing tradition of regular high-level exchanges between the two countries, the ministry of external affairs said here on Saturday. During the visit, King of Bhutan will meet with the President and the Prime Minister.

The External Affairs Minister and senior officials will call on the King of Bhutan. India and Bhutan enjoy unique ties of friendship and cooper-ation, which are characterized by understanding and mutual

The visit would provide an opportunity to both sides to review entire gamut of bilater-al cooperation and to further advance the close bilateral partnership, including economic and development cooperation.

Will not entertain any rebellion, says HDK after JD(S) faces 'Bhavani challenge'

PTI ■ BENGALURU

mid the family feud over Ama the family seat in poll-bound Karnataka, former chief minister H D Kumaraswamy on Saturday said he will not entertain any said the second list of candidates will be released on Monday including for the

Hassan seat. The Hassan seat has become a big headache for Janata Dal (Secular), which is witnessing a rebellion within the first family of the party.

The party which was among the first to release its list of candidates has not been able to finalise a name for Hassan constituency yet.

The reason being that the former Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda's daughter-in-law and H D Revanna's wife Bhavani Revanna is adamant about contesting the election from Hassan, which is a JD(S) stronghold.

It is now learnt that the would contest the election as an independent candidate if she is denied a ticket. Her two sons -Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna and MLC Suraj Revanna too have backed their mother. "I will not entertain any rebel-

Nobody can ignore late Hindutva ideologue VD

Savarkar's sacrifice for the

country's independence strug-

gle but disagreements over

him cannot be made a nation-

al issue today as there are

many pressing matters to focus

on, said Nationalist Congress

Party chief Sharad Pawar on

Rahul Gandhi, who is being

targeted by the Bharatiya Janata

Party for speaking about issues

in India on foreign soil, he said

this is not the first time an

Indian has spoken about issues

in the country while abroad.

Pawar was speaking at the

Press Club in Nagpur, where he

also visited Union minister

To a query on whether he spoke to Rahul Gandhi about

Savarkar and if the Congress

leader would slow down in his

criticism of the late Hindutva

ideologue, Pawar said leaders of

18-20 political parties recent-

ly sat and discussed major

Gandhi of repeatedly "insult-

ing" Savarkar. It is also organ-

ising Savarkar Gaurav Yatra in

his honour. "I suggested that

there is a need for us to delib-

erate on the way the country is

being run by those in power,"

The BJP has accused

issues before the country.

Nitin Gadkari's home.

Defending Congress leader

Saturday.

Can't ignore Savarkar's

freedom struggle: Pawar

sacrifice in India's

lion. I have already said this several times that we will respond to the sentiments of the party workers. Even if there is pressure it will not work because the final decision will be left to the wishes of the workers," Kumaraswamy told

According to sources in the JD(S), Kumaraswamy is keen on fielding H S Prakash's son H P Swaroop.

Prakash was a four-time MLA from this constituency who lost the 2018 Assembly election to BJP's Preetham Gowda. Six months after losing the Assembly election, Prakash passed away. The JD(S) second-in-com-

mand wanted to field Swaroop keeping in view the large sup-port base and sympathy he enjoys among voters, the sources said.

They added that 89-year old Deve Gowda, who is not keeping well, called the leaders from Hassan to discuss the issue at his Bengaluru residence. With the Hassan mous proportions, senior party leaders reached Bengaluru on Saturday to find a way out. "Some of our leaders have arrived here with regard to Hassan constituency and they too made an appeal.

he said. Pawar said, "Today,

Savarkar is not a national issue,

it is an old thing. We had said

a few things about Savarkar but

it was not personal. It was

against Hindu Maha Sabha.

it as well. We cannot ignore the

sacrifice made by Savarkar ji for

the independence of the coun-

try." About 32 years ago, Pawar

said, he had spoken in

Parliament about Savarkar's

house in Ratnagiri and also

constructed a small temple in

front of it. "He deputed a per-

son from the Valmiki commu-

nity to perform puja in the

temple. I think this was a very

progressive thing," said Pawar.

is no need to thrust Savarkar

into the national narrative

especially because there many

other major issues concerning

Gandhi, Pawar said the

Congress leader also has the

freedom to put his opinion like

leader to speak about issues

concerning India on foreign

soil, Pawar said one should not

give much importance to it as

this has not been done for the

first time. The NCP leader

leaders criticised the govern-

ment in the past as well.

On the BJP's criticism of

Asked if it is proper for a

the common public.

everyone else.

The NCP leader said there

He said Savarkar built a

progressive views.

But there is another side to

States responsible for implementing schemes related to menstrual health: Centre to SC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre has told the Supreme Court that it is dedicated to improve access to menstrual hygiene for young and adolescent girls but the responsibility of providing healthcare services lies with the respective state governments as public health is a state subject. In an affidavit filed before

the top court, the Health ministry said it has undertaken awareness and training programmes and made necessary resources available to girls across the country.
"It is submitted that public

health is a state subject and the responsibility of providing healthcare services is that of

"The Central government and its agencies are not the implementing bodies for schemes relating to menstrual health; and it is in fact the states and their agencies which are at the forefront of enforcement of the policies," the ministry said.

It submitted that the Central government is committed to improving menstrual hygiene for young and ado-lescent girls and to make necessary resources accessible to

The affidavit was filed in response to a PIL by Congress leader Jaya Thakur seeking issuance of directions for providing free sanitary pads to girls studying in classes 6 to 12 in government schools across the country

The ministry stated that menstruation and menstrual practices are clouded by taboos and socio-cultural restrictions for women as well as adolescent girls in India which is combined with limited access to products of sanitary hygiene and lack of safe sanitary facil-

"Moreover, traditionally, there have been practices of using old clothes as pads by recycling them, use of ash or straw, which not affect menstrual hygiene but also have long term implications for reproductive health. "The government is dedi-

cated to increase awareness among adolescent girls on menstrual hygiene, build selfesteem and empower girls for better socialisation. The government is also working towards increasing access to and use of high quality sanitary napkins for girls in rural areas," the ministry said.

Thakur in her plea said serious difficulties are faced by adolescent females between the ages of 11 and 18, years who come from poor backgrounds, in receiving education on account of lack of access to education, a constitutional right under Article 21A of the Constitution. "These are ado-



lescent females who are not equipped with and are also not educated by their parents about menstruation and menstrual hygiene. The deprived economic status and illiteracy leads to prevalence of unhygienic and unhealthy practices which has serious health consequences, increase obstinacy and leads to eventual dropping out from schools," the plea said. The plea, filed

Thakur, said to achieve gender equality, it is crucial that girls are able to actualize their educational potential.

Referring to a 2018 order of the Delhi High Court, the plea said it had mandated the Delhi government to provide free or subsidized access to menstrual hygiene products in schools and to make arrangements for education on menstruation and menstrual hygiene.

The Government of India has deliberated for several years with regard to the inclusion of the right to education as a fundamental right. The Saikia Committee of 1997 had been appointed to examine the economic viability proposal as to whether the right to free elementary education up to 14 years of age could be made a fundamental right," it said.

The plea said the Right to Education Act, 2009, was enacted and took effect from August 26, 2009 with the objective of providing free and compulsory education in the age group of six to 14 years. It added the apex

court's 2019 verdict in the Sabarimala temple case addressed menstrual taboos and the associated stigma and ruled that the discriminatory emphasis placed on biological differences constituted a violation of Article 14 -- the right to equality -- and emphasized that the social exclusion of women based on menstrual status is a form of untoucha-"Prevalent myths

about menstruation force millions of girls to drop out of school early or be ostracized for the duration of their menstrual cycle every month. They also affect the hiring of female workers, as it is felt that the menstruation hampers their productivity capabilities. Unfortunately, it continues to be treated as a taboo in many societies, shrouded in a culture of silence and shame," the plea

Trader cheats SBI of ₹95 cr, arrested

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Enforcement The Directorate (ED) has arrested Kaushik Kumar Nath, a Kolkata based businessman in a money laundering case linked to defrauding the public sector lender State Bank of India (SBI) to the tune of Rs 95 crore.

The ED said Nath availed various credit facilities from the State Bank of India by submitting forged and fabricated documents. The funds received in the guise of credit facilities were withdrawn in cash and used for purposes other than for which it was sanctioned.

The SBI has been cheated and defrauded to the tune of Rs 95 crore, it said. The ED has initiated the investigation under Prevention of Money

tered/filed by CBI, Kolkata. During investigation by ED, another case registered by the Crime Branch, Mumbai Police also came to the notice of the agency. "Kaushik Kumar Nath is frequently changing his identity and defrauding the banks. Recently, he had shifted his base to Mumbai and engaged in such type of criminal activities there," the ED said in a statement.

ED has identified several immovable properties acquired by the accused from the 'Proceeds of Crime'. Out of the said properties, four properties worth Rs 3.68 crore are already attached by the ED.

Nath was produced before the Special Court, Kolkata on Friday. The Court has granted him to ED custody for 10 days the basis of four different tion in the case is in progress,

NIA detains 2 in 27-K kg explosive recovery case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has arrested two accused persons from Raniganj and Kolkata, both in West Bengal, in connection with a 2022 case relating to recovery of 27,000 kg ammonium nitrate explosive.

The arrested duo is alleged to be illegal suppliers of explo-sives, detonators and gelatin sticks. In June 2022, a Tata Sumo car, which was found transporting around 81,000 electric detonators was intercepted by Special Task Force (STF) Kolkata.

The cache of detonators was seized and Ashis Keora, the driver of Tata Sumo was arrested. Ashis led the police to a stash of illegally stored explosives,

tric detonators. After the NIA took over the case, initially registered at Police Station Md. Bazar in Birbhum, in September 2022, the agency made its first arrest in January 2023 with the apprehension of Rintu Sk. The NIA on Friday arrested another two accused from Raniganj and Kolkata, who have been identified as Merazuddin Ali Khan of Bokaro and Mir Md. Nuruzzaman of Birbhum, the NIA said in a statement.

While Mir Md. Nuruzzaman had supplied 27,000 kg of ammonium nitrate to Rintu Sk, Merazuddin Ali Khan had supplied electric detonators and gelatine sticks to Rintu Sk, it said. Further investigations to establish the sources of pilferage of the explosives and other bomb making materials, tine sticks are in progress, it

Contract inked for building 6 next gen missile vessels at cost of ₹ 9,805 cr

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI/KOCHI

the Cochin Shipyard The Cocnin Surp, and Limited has signed a contract for building six Next Generation Missile Vessels (NGMV) for the Indian Navy at a cost of Rs 9,805 crore with the delivery of ships set to begin from 2027.

The state-run shipyard said the contract marks its entry into advanced weapon intense platforms."The primary role of the ships would be to provide offensive capability against enemy warship, merchantmen and land targets," Cochin Shipyard said in a release. It said the delivery of ships is



March 2027. "The NGMVs would be heavily armed war vessels incorporating stealth, high speed and offensive capability. These ships will be capable of conducting maritime strike operations, anti-surface scheduled to commence from warfare operations and would

be a potent instrument of sea denial for enemy ships especially at choke points," the release said. The shipyard said these ships would be employed for local naval defence operations and seaward defence of offshore development area. Cochin Shipyard Limited

CMD Madhu S Nair said the shipyard was keen to take up the construction of NGMVs after successfully delivering the country's first indigenous aircraft carrier, INS Vikrant.

In addition to the above, the state-run entity is also building eight Anti Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Crafts for the Navy and these vessels are under various stages of construction at the yard.

China granted visas to over 18,000 Indians since January: Envoy

Kolkata: China has issued visas to over 18,000 Indians in the last three months, a Chinese diplomat said. Interacting with a group of journalists in Kolkata, Minister Counsellor of the Chinese Embassy in India, Chen Jianjun, said he was looking forward to more Chinese being given visas by India.

"The number of visa applications for China has been on the rise. Since January, we have given visas to 18,560 Indians,"

"Since August, 9,409 student visas have been issued to Indian students," he said. However, Jianjun said, the number of visa applications is yet to reach the pre-pandemic

6 German Shepherds to take on wildlife thugs

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Cix German Shepherds, rang-Sing between six and nine months old, and their 12 handlers have joined the forest departments of Karnataka (4), Bihar (1), and Madhya Pradesh (1), to take on the wildlife criminals and protect flora and fauna in their respective states.

This takes the total number of wildlife sniffer dogs trained under TRAFFIC and WWF-India's programme in India to 94, said Ravi Singh, Secretary General and CEO WWF-India.

The canines had received seven-month-long training at basic training Centre, Indo-Tibetan Border Police Force



Panchkula, Haryana from September 2022. The dogs have been trained to detect tiger and leopard skins, bones and other body parts, bear

bile, red sanders, and other illegal wildlife products. BTC-ITBP had organised a passing out ceremony to felicitate the dogs and their handlers in their successful completion of the training course recently. Singh said, "Dogs are not just man's best friend. Once trained as wildlife sniffer dogs, they play a crucial role in protecting our wildlife from crime and illegal trade. This is also true for the 94 wildlife sniffer dogs trained by WWF-India and TRAFFIC over the years "

Dr Merwyn Fernandes, Coordinator of TRAFFIC's India Office, said, "Illegal wildlife trade is a serious threat to the conservation of species in the wild. Wildlife law enforcement practices are crit-

ical in containing this threat and the use of wildlife sniffer dogs for wildlife crime prevention and detection is crucial." "We hope at least four to five wildlife sniffer dogs are deployed in each state and at trans-border areas, working with law enforcement agencies to protect our wildlife." Dr Dipankar Ghose,

Director & HoD, Wildlife & Habitats Division, WWF-India, and Interim In-Charge, TRAFFIC's India office added. "Detecting smuggled wildlife is an ongoing challenge for law enforcement agencies. TRAF-FIC and WWF-India support initiatives that bring in new tools and technology for wildlife crime detection and

Indictment scrubs 'Teflon Don' of invincibility

When Donald Trump steps before a judge next week to be arraigned in a New York courtroom, it will not only mark the first time a former US president has faced criminal charges. It will also represent a reckoning win also represent a reckoning for a man long nicknamed "Teflon Don," who until now has managed to skirt serious legal jeopardy despite 40 years of legal scruting

of legal scrutiny.

Trump, who is the early frontrunner for the Republican presidential nomination, is expected to turn himself in Tuesday. He faces charges including at least one felony offense related to hush money payments to women during his 2016 campaign. Like any other person facing trial, he will be booked, fingerprinted and photographed before being given the chance to enter a plea.

The spectacle that is sure to unfold will mark an unprecedented moment in American history that will demonstrate once again how dramatically Trump — who already held the

president to be impeached twice — has upended democratic norms. But on a personal level, the indictment pierces the cloak of invincibility that seemed to follow Trump through his decades in business and in politics, as he faced allegations of fraud, collusion and sexual misconduct.

"Boy, after all this time it's a bit of a shock," Trump biographer Michael D'Antonio said of the indictment. "You know I always thought of him as the Gingerbread Man, shouting, You can't catch me!' as he ran

"Given his track record," he said, "I had trouble imagining he would ever be held account-

"These are not things that Donald Trump ever thought in his entire life, nor I, for that matter, that he would ever be confronted with," Michael Cohen, Trump's longtime fixer and a key witness in the case who served jail time for the payments, told CNN.

Of course, some of the celebration by Trump's detrac-



tors may be premature. The former president could seek to have a judge quickly dismiss the case. And even if it moves forward, there's no guarantee of conviction. Intensifying invesigations in Atlanta and Washington are seen as potentially more serious legal threats.

Still, Trump and his team were caught by surprise when word of the New York indictment broke Thursday evening, following news reports that the grand jury hearing the case was set for a weeks-long hiatus. As the deliberations dragged on, some in Trump's

orbit had become convinced that the case had stalled and that charges might never be brought. That included Trump attorney Joe Tacopina, who said Friday morning he had

hoped the "rule of law would

Trump, he said on the "Today" show, was "initially was shocked" by news of the charges, but quickly pivoted to his usual pushback playbook.

"After he got over that," he said, Trump "put a notch on his belt and he decided we have to fight now. And he got into a typical Donald Trump pos-

US museum

to return 15

smuggled

sculptures

 $T^{\text{he prestigious Metropolitan}}_{\text{Museum of Art will return}}$

15 sculptures to India after it

was learnt that the antiquities

were illegally removed from the

country and sold by disgraced

the Met said it will transfer the

15 sculptures for return to the

government of India. The

works range in date from the

1st century BCE to the 11th

century CÉ, and include terra-

at one point by Kapoor, who is

currently serving a prison sen-

All of the works were sold

cotta, copper and stone.

In a statement Thursday,

dealer Subhash Kapoor.

to India

PTI ■ NEW YORK

ture where he's ready to be combative on something that he believes is an injustice. ... I think he's now in the posture that he's ready to fight this."

and his team have tried to use the news to his advantage, the news to his advantage, hoping to energize his loyal base by painting the investigation as part of a larger plot to derail his candidacy.

Trump ally Rep. Jim Banks, R-Indi., who formally endorsed

the former president Friday, said Trump "doesn't back down" and was going to "fight back," telling a local radio show it was "yet another chapter where Donald Trump is going to come back on top in the end."
The media maelstrom has

catapulted the former president back into the spotlight he craves, at least temporarily limiting attention being paid to his rivals, including Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, who is widely expected to challenge Trump for the nomination, and has been holding events across the county to promote

Former president raises In the meantime, Trump I his team have tried to use over \$4m in 24 hours

Donald Trump raised over USD 4 million towards his 2024 presidential run in 24 hours after a Manhattan grand jury indicted the former US president on charges related to paying off a porn star, his office has said.

According to the former president's campaign, over 25 per cent of donations came from first-time donors to the Trump Campaign, further solidifying his status as the clear frontrunner in the Republican primary.

This incredible surge of grassroots contributions confirms that the American people see the indictment of President Trump as a disgraceful weaponisation of our justice system by a Soros-funded prosecutor," it said in a state-ment on Friday. "With an average contribution of only USD 34, Trump's 2024 campaign is funded by an unmatched coalition of hardworking patriots who are fed up with special interest donors like Soros spending billions of dollars to influence our elections," it said.

Americans from across all 50 states donated to President Trump's campaign within the first five hours of the "sham indictment", the

On Thursday, within minutes of Trump's indictment, the Trump campaign fired off a fundraising email soliciting contributions

toward the 76-year-old's 2024 campaign.
It was the first of more than half a dozen fundraising emails sent out by the Trump campaign after the indictment.

The White House has refused to comment on the indictment of the former president.

"I have no comment on that," President Joe Biden told reporters on Friday.

Vice President Kamala Harris told reporters in Zambia: "I am not going to comment on an ongoing criminal case as it relates to the former president."

Trump is currently the front-runner among all declared and potential contenders for the 2024 Republican White House nomination. There is nothing in US law that prevents a candidate who is found guilty of a crime from campaigning for and serving as president - even from prison.

Trump was twice impeached by the House of Representatives. He was acquitted by the

Indians among eight found dead near Canada-US border

PTI ■ TORONTO

Canadian police have recovered the bodies of two more migrants, including that of an Indian woman, who drowned in a river while two families of Indian and Romanian descent were attempting to enter the US from Canada illegally, taking the death toll to eight.

The bodies were found on Friday in a marsh on the riverbank near Akwesasne, a community which straddles Quebec, Ontario and New York state. One other person is still missing.

The two more bodies recovered included one infant, who was a Canadian citizen of Romanian descent. The second was of a woman who was an Indian national, CTV news reported. Police say the deceased —

believed to be two families of Indian and Romanian descent - were trying to cross the St

States from Canada. Among them were two children under the age of three, both Canadian citizens. "Unfortunately, these situations happen. It's not something new," Akwesasne Mohawk Police chief Shawn Dulude said of people trying to

"We've seen it happen in the past, and hopefully as we move forward ... it's something we can one day eliminate," the officer was quoted as saying by the Montreal Gazette newspa-

Akwesasne police are working with Immigration Canada to assist with identifying the victims and notifying the next of kin. They are also increasing surveillance on the river, it said. Authorities located the first

body in the marsh around 5 pm on Thursday during an aerial search conducted at the request of the Canadian Coast Guard.

Throughout the day on

Lawrence River into the United Friday, search crews could be seen wading through a marshy area near the local marina with the help of a light airboat. A helicopter also scanned the river. The last two bodies were retrieved from the water during the day.

Police recovered two more bodies from the river on Friday, after discovering six bodies and an overturned boat during a missing person search Thursday afternoon, CBC News reported.

They are believed to have been an Indian family and a Romanian family who were attempting to cross into the US, police said, adding, that an Akwesasne resident remains missing. The bodies were discovered as the result of a search for another missing person, Casey Oakes, that also started Thursday. He was last seen Wednesday boarding a small, light blue vessel departing from the east end of Cornwall Island,

tence in India. The Museum is committed to the responsible acquisition of archaeological art and applies rigorous provenance standards both to new acquisitions and to works long in its collection. The Museum is actively reviewing the history of ers. The Museum values highly its long-standing relationships with the government of India and is pleased to resolve this matter," the Met said in the statement. The museum contacted Homeland Security about its works from Kapoor in 2015 and is "pleased to be act-

Attorney's Office, it said. Through this cooperative partnership, the museum received new information from the Manhattan DA's office about 15 works of art that made it clear that the works should be transferred, resulting in a constructive resolution, the

ing on this matter today as a

result of the criminal investi-

gation into Subhash Kapoor" by the Manhattan District

statement said. In addition, in cooperation with the DA office's criminal investigation into Turkish sites Bubon and Perge, the museum recently removed from display from its Greek and Roman galleries three pieces from Turkey — two of which were loans and a third is part of the Met's collection, it said.

Pak inflation woes not over yet borrow directly from commer-

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

The cash-strapped Pakistan government has warned of more inflation coupled with a slowdown of the economy, blaming the delay in inking the crucial deal with the IMF for the worsening economic crisis, according to a media report on Saturday.

In its monthly outlook report issued on Friday, the Finance Ministry also said that political instability has started feeding the strong inflationary expectations, The Express Tribune newspaper reported.

Holding back its inflation

forecast figure for the outgoing month, the Finance Ministry painted a gloomy outlook of the economy, saying that the Monthly Economic Indicator, a tool to predict the economic growth rate based on past and current indicators, has further "Inflation in March may

remain in the upper bound as observed in February when it was 31.5 per cent," the ministry stated. Although it did not give a figure this time, the market expects inflation to shoot up to 36 per cent due to a host of negative measures, the report said.

A conservative internal assessment of the Finance Ministry suggested around 34 per cent inflation rate in March. The ministry said that a "potential reason for rising price level is political and economic uncer-The ministry also noted

that the delay in finalising the

USD 1.1 billion tranche of funding from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme was causing further economic distress. The economic distress resulting from delay of the stabilisation programme has exac-

erbated the economic uncertainty due to which inflationary expectations have remained strong," the report said. Pakistan has been struggling lion derailed IMF bailout pack-

hard to revive the USD 6.5 bilage that the Washington-based global lender approved in 2019. Although, its missteps, like the petrol subsidy and attempts to cial banks, have further complicated the matters for the cash-starved country. The Finance Ministry said

that even the contractionary

monetary policies of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) were not helping contain the inflation. "Despite the SBP's contractionary monetary policy, the inflationary expectations are not settling down," the ministry said, showing dissatisfaction

monetary policy. The SBP increased the policy rate by 3 per cent to 20 per cent in the last Monetary Policy decision held this month.

with the central bank's tight

The monthly outlook report stated that bulk buying during Ramzan may cause a demandsupply gap, resulting in an esca-lation of the prices of essential

Due to the lagged effect of last year's floods, production losses, especially of significant crops, have not yet been fully recovered. Consequently, the shortage of essential items has emerged and persisted.

As a result, "inflation is expected to stay at elevated levels owing to market frictions caused by relative demand and supply gap of essential items, exchange rate depreciation and recent upward adjustment of administered prices of petrol and diesel", the report added.

The Finance Ministry stated that the average Monthly Economic Indicator (MEI) during the first eight months of the current fiscal year indicates a further slowdown in domestic economic activities.

The slowdown seems to be driven by a lack of industrial dynamism, accelerating inflation, which erodes the purchasing power of consumers and investors and is also illustrated by negative growth in exports and imports.

The indicator was already in negative territory since the start of the fiscal year. The Finance Ministry's latest assess-ment indicates that there may not be any growth during the current fiscal year if no improvement is witnessed in the remainder period.

Lanka to bring counter-terrorism Bill in parliament this month: PM

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lankan Prime Minister Dinesh Gunawardena on Saturday said a new counter terrorism draft bill to replace the much maligned Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) of 1979 is to be introduced in the parliament later in April. Sri Lanka is replacing the

PTA with a new legislation called the Anti Terrorism Act (ATA) after the former law was roundly condemned for its draconian nature where people were allowed to be detained without being charged for indefinite periods of time.

Sri Lanka faced international calls to repeal the PTA which was enacted in 1979 as a temporary measure to counter the rising Tamil separatist militancy.
"The new bill will be pre-

sented in parliament in the third week of April. It will

On March 17, the 97-page ATA was published in the government gazette.

PTA which is often being criticised as a tool used by the successive governments to crush The European Union since

2016 has been urging the Sri Lankan government to repeal the PTA and bring in a new counter terrorism legislation in line with international standards. The EU has linked its GSP+ export tariff concessions to Sri Lanka modifying its counter terrorism Act.

The opposition and rights groups have already objected to the ATA, saying that it does not differ much from the PTA.

They hold that ATA could be used to crush democratic protests and political opposition while the security forces being conferred powers to crackdown with judicial procedure to brand any dissent as

opposition leader, told reporters: "We see this as unde-It aimed to replace the mocratic and authoritarian because it targets political opponents, trade unions and the public'

Mano Ganesan, a minority Tamil political leader, questioned the need for a new counter terrorism law when the country is currently free of any acts of terrorism.

Critics charge that the ATA would be more harmful than the PTA. Sri Lanka, which currently is reeling under its worst economic crisis, has witnessed several activities that have threatened its national security.

The nation saw the end of Tamil insurgency in 2009 after the killing of Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam leader Velupillai Prabhakaran. A fresh security threat dented the country's security after the Easter suicide attacks in 2019 that killed 290

Pakistan-China border trade to resume next week after 3 years

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

fter a three-year hiatus, APakistan and China are set to resume trade from Monday through the Khunjerab Pass - the only land route between the two allweather allies, a media report said on Saturday.

The Khunjerab Pass was closed in November 2019 to contain the transmission of the COVID-19 virus between the two countries.

The arrangements to reopen the border point for bilateral trade and other activities under the China-Pakistan Eco-nomic Corridor (CPEC) have been finalised by both sides, the Dawn newspaper reported.

The USD 60 billion CPEC, which connects Gwadar Port in Balochistan with China's Xinjiang province, is the flagship project of Chinese President Xi Jinping's ambitious

Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The CPEC is a network of roads, railways, pipelines, and ports in Pakistan connecting China to the Arabian Sea.

Gilgit-Baltistan Home Secretary Rana Mohammad Saleem Áfzal said that officials on both sides agreed to reopen Khunjerab Pass for trade and travel activities from April 3. He added that the process of issuing border passes would start soon, the report said.

"Most important aspect is that it's a CPEC route. CPEC consignments will enter Pakistan through Khunjerab Pass from China," he said.

Under an agreement, trade and travel activities between the two countries through the Khunjerab Pass start annually on April 1 and close on November 30. Daily bus service also plies from the Sost Valley of the Gilgit-Baltistan region to the Xinjiang province of China,

The first trade activity between China and Pakistan under the CPEC started via the Karakoram Highway in November 2016.

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Hina Rabbani Khar, said that the federal government had been working to revive CPEC activities, the report said. She added that all hurdles in the bilateral trade's way would be removed. The prolonged closure of

the Khunjerab Pass caused immense financial hardships to the local business community, and thousands of workers became jobless, the report said, quoting officials. During the last three years,

the Pass was occasionally opened for emergency cargo transportation from China to Pakistan on specific days.

The volume of trade between the two countries would increase after the reopening of the Khunjerab

Pass, Gilgit-Baltistan Collector of Customs Syed Fawad Ali Shah was quoted as saying in the report.

He said all required arrangements had been finalised for normal trade at the Sost dry port. Shah added that he met traders, the port management and other stakeholders, who were all happy and assured the administration of their cooperation in smooth trade activities at the dry port.

Haji Liaquat of the Gilgit-Baltistan Importers and Exporters Association said that the people affiliated with trade between the two countries were optimistic about the revival of economic activities in the region, according to the

He added that the people of the region and the government exchequer suffered losses worth billions of rupees owing to the prolonged halt of trade at the

Israeli cops shoot | Pope leaves hospital, to preside over Easter mass man in Jerusalem

AP ■ JERUSALEM

 $I_{ ext{a}}^{ ext{sraeli police shot and killed}}$ tried to snatch an officer's flashpoint compound.

The police said the slain man was 26-year-old Mohammed Alasibi from Hura, a Bedouin Arab village in southern Israel.

gun at an entrance to a Jerusalem holy site early Saturday, raising fears of further violence during a time of heightened tensions at the

Palestinian worshippers at the entrance to the site on Saturday morning had a different account, saying that

police shot the man at least 10 times after he tried to prevent them from harassing a woman who was on her way to the holy compound. Hours after the incident,

the muddy stone alleyway lead-ing to the compound was still stained with blood. Authorities said that offi-

cers detained the man for questioning outside the sacred compound home to Al-Aqsa Mosque in the heart of Jerusalem's Old City — the third holiest shrine in Islam. The compound, revered by Jews as the Temple Mount, is also the most sacred site in

Achipper-sounding Pope Francis was discharged

Saturday from the Rome hospital where he was treated for bronchitis, quipping to jour-nalists before being driven away that he's "still alive."

Francis, 86, was hospitalised at Gemelli Polyclinic on Wednesday following his weekly public audience in St Peter's Square after reportedly experiencing breathing difficulties. The pontiff received antibiotics administered intravenously during his stay, the Vatican said. In a sign of his improved health, the Vatican released details of Francis' Holy Week schedule. It said he would preside at this weekend's Palm

Mass on April 9, both held in St. Peter's Square and expected to draw tens of thousands of faithful. A Vatican cardinal will be at the altar to celebrate both Masses, a recent practice due to the pontiff having a troublesome knee issue. But Francis is scheduled to

celebrate Holy Thursday Mass, which this year will be held in a juvenile prison in Rome. Still unclear was whether he would attend the late-night, torch-lit Way of the Cross procession at Rome's Colosseum to mark Good Friday. Before departing Gemelli Polyclinic late Saturday morning, Francis comforted a Rome couple whose 5-year-old daughter died Friday night at the Catholic hospital. Outside,



Serena Subania, mother of Angelica, sobbed as she pressed her head into the chest of the pope, who held her close and

whispered words of comfort. Francis seemed eager to linger with well-wishers. When a boy showed him his arm cast,

the pope made a gesture as if to ask "Do you have a pen?" Three papal aides whipped out theirs. Francis took one of the pens and

The pontiff answered in a low voice that was close to a

added his signature to the child's

already well-autographed cast.

whisper when reporters pep-pered him with questions, indi-cating he had felt unwell — "I felt sick," he said, pointing to his mid-section — a symptom that convinced his medical staff to take him to the hospital Wednesday. Asked how he felt now, Francis joked, "Still alive, you know." He gave a thumbsup sign. Francis exited the hospital from a side entrance, but his car stopped in front of the main entrance, where a gaggle of journalists waited. He opened the car door himself and got out from the front passenger seat. Francis had a cane ready to lean

March GST at ₹1.60 L cr; 2nd highest ever

FY-2023 gross collection up 22%

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

ST collections in March grew 13 per cent to the second highest ever at ₹1.60 lakh crore, taking the growth rate of revenue mop-up for full 2022-23 fiscal to 22 per cent. March also saw over 91 per cent of the GST registered businesses filing returns and paying taxes — reflecting greater compliance and improving economic activity.

Gross GST revenue collected in March 2023 is ₹1,60,122 crore, of which Central GST is ₹29,546 crore, State GST is ₹37,314 crore, Integrated GST is ₹82,907 crore (including ₹42,503 crore collected on import of goods) and cess is ₹10,355 crore, the finance ministry said in a statement.

In April 2022, GST collection had touched a record high of close to ₹1.68 lakh crore. The second highest mop-up was recorded in March 2023, at a little over ₹1.60 lakh crore. For full 2022-23 fiscal year, gross

Goods and Services Tax (GST) mop-up grew 22 per cent to ₹18.10 lakh crore. The



average gross monthly collection for the full year is ₹1.51 lakh crore.

March is the fourth time in the just gone by financial year that the monthly oss GST collection has crossed ₹1.5 lakh crore-mark. Last month also witnessed the highest IGST collection ever,

Revenue for the month of March 2023 is 13 per cent higher than the GST revenue in the same month last year, the ministry said. During the month, revenue from import of goods was 8 per cent higher and revenue from domestic transaction (including import of services) is 14 per cent higher than the revenue from these sources during the same month last

The ministry said return filing during March 2023 has been the highest ever. 93.2 per cent of statement of invoices (in GSTR-1) and 91.4 per cent of returns (in GSTR-3B) of February were filed till March 2023 as compared to 83.1 per cent

and 84.7 per cent, respectively a year ago. KPMG in India Partner Indirect Tax

Abhishek Jain said the monthly and year ly GST collection point towards the grow ing trajectory of the Indian economy.

"Another cheer point is the highest ever compliance rate with 91.4 per cent of returns being filed in the month of March, indicating success of revenue authorities and businesses in ensuring tax compliance and preventing tax evasion," Jain said.

Deloitte India , Partner, Leader -Indirect Tax, Mahesh Jaising said with the growth in economic activity and increased focus on GST analytics based audits, the trend should see upward trajectory in the coming months.

"Also, with the new FTP being rolled out from today, we have to wait and watch the impact on the import-export which is expected to have a role in GST collections too," Jaising said.

Tax Connect Advisory Partner Vivek Jalan said businesses are also understanding that robust compliance is the way forward under GST and a significant boost in GST return filing taking the compliance ratio to more than 90 per cent from early 80 per cent shows that Indian businesses are fast moving into the mainstream. This would enhance the Income Tax revenues also and lead to overall GDP

FinMin launches 3-month campaign to boost micro-insurance schemes at Panchayat level

To achieve saturation under Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY) and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), the Finance Ministry on Saturday launched a three-month campaign.

"A special 3 months campaign has been launched by DFS at Gram Panchayat Level covering all districts in the country to saturate all eligible persons under the PMJJBY and PMSBY w.E.F 1st April 2023 to the 30th June 2023," Department of Financial Services (DFS) said in

Under the campaign, camps are going to be organised at the Gram Panchayat level across all districts in the country by the banks with active participation of the State administration and other Ministries of Government of India to ensure that benefits of the two Jan Suraksha schemes reach the masses.

taken a price hike of around 0.8

dispatches of 5,67,546 units last

fiscal, up 18 per cent from

4,81,500 units in the 2021-22

Exports rose 18 per cent year on year to 1,53,019 units.

nomenal year for the company,

as we introduced seven seg-

ment-defining products like the

all-new Hyundai Tucson, new

Venue, Venue N Line, all electric IONIQ 5, new Grand i10 NIOS, new AURA and the all-

new Verna catering to different

segments thus giving a strong

push to brand Hyundai amongst

Tarun Garg said in a

the company sees momentum

in the Indian auto industry to

Vehicles Managing Director

Shailesh Chandra stated noted

that the steep growth witnessed

continue, he added.

Despite global headwinds,

Tata Motors Passenger

Sebi bans 3 individuals from securities mkt for

new-age Indian customers,

"FY 22-23 has been a phe-

Hyundai reported domestic

per cent from April.

financial year.



UTs, Chairman/ MD and CEOs of Public Sector Banks (PSBs) have been advised to extend full support during the campaign, an

official statement said Lead District Managers (LDMs) will lead the campaign in consultation with State/ UT Level Bankers Committees of the States/ UTs and District Magistrates/ Collectors of the Districts. Line Ministries of functionaries for identification and mobilisation of the Scheme beneficiaries for enrolment, it

All Nodal Officers from DFS have been instructed to participate in the special SLBC/ UTLBC meetings and to undertake field visits for monitoring the Gram Panchayat level satu-

ration campaign, it added.

The PMJJBY offers life insurance cover of Rs 2 lakh in case of death due to any reason to people in the age group of 18-50 years having a bank or post office account, who give their consent to join or enable autodebit of premium.

On the other hand, the PMSBY offers insurance cover of ₹2 lakh for accidental death or total permanent disability and ₹1 lakh for partial permanent disability to people in the age group of 18-70 years with a bank or post office account, who give their consent to join or enable auto-debit of premium.

UltraTech Cement FY23 production up 12.4% to 105.7mn tn

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

eading cement maker Lultra Tech's consolidated sales rose by 12.4 per cent to 105.7 million tonnes (MT) in FY2022-23, Aditya Birla group firm said in a regulatory filing on Saturday.
The company produced 94
MT of cement in FY22.

Its total sales volume in the domestic market also crossed 100 MT for the financial year that ended on March 31, 2023.

for the India market in FY23 was compared to 89.5 MT a year ago. "We are pleased to inform the company has achieved 100

million tonnes of production, despatches and sales in FY23," it

Its grey cement production

in the domestic market was at 100.1 MT in FY23, reporting 13.75 per cent growth while its white cement production was 1.5 MT, up 11 per cent.

Ultra Tech's overseas production, mainly grey cement was 4.4 MT in FY23. For the fourth quarter that ended on March 31, 2023, Ultra Tech's total consolidated sales volume was at 31.7 MT and its India volume was at 30.5

UltraTech has a consolidat-UltraTech's total sales volume ed capacity of 132.35 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) of ed manufacturing units, 29 grinding units, one clinkerisation unit and eight Bulk Packaging

> It is the third largest cement producer in the world, excluding

Maruti Suzuki, Hyundai, Tata Motors report best-ever wholesales in FY23

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Maruti Suzuki, Hyundai and Tata Motors reported their highest-ever dispatches to deal-ers last fiscal, enabling the domestic passenger vehicle industry to log in best-ever performance to date.

The country's largest car-maker Maruti Suzuki India reported its highest wholesales to date at 19,66,164 units, up 19 per cent from 16,52,653 units in

Its domestic dispatches rose to 17,06,831 units in 2022-23, up 21 per cent from 14,14,277 units in 2021-22 fiscal.

Hyundai Motor India said its overall wholesales last fiscal were the highest ever since commencing operations in the

The automaker dispatched 7,20,565 units to dealers last fiscal, up 18 per cent from 6,10,760 units in 2021-22. Its domestic dispatches rose to 5,67,546 units last fiscal, up 18 per cent from 4,81,500 units in the 2021-22 financial vear.

The country's second-largest carmaker said it was its best performance to date in terms of sales volume in the domestic market in a financial year.

Tata Motors also reported dispatches in the domestic market last fiscal at 5,38,640 units, up 45 per cent from 3,70,372 units FY22.

Maruti Suzuki India Senior Executive Officer, Marketing and Sales, Shashank Srivastava said the company reported its highest-ever sales in a financial year despite chip shortage con-

Required Assistant Professor for B.Ed. Programme:

Librarian - 01 · Accountant - 01 · Clerk - 01

TO WHOMSOEVER IT MAY CONCERN

My client Mr. Vijay Chopra son of Late M

Tarsem Lal Chopra resident of 601, Tower C

The IVY, Sushant Lok, Phase-I, Gurugran

Haryana has entered into Agreement to Sel dated 5th of November, 2022 with Mrs. Nirma Arya, the widow of Late Dr Raj Pal Arya, residen

of 4 College Road North Liverpool L23 8UP, U.K, with respect to the purchase of Property No.Y-96, Regency Park-II, DLF City, Phase-IV, Gugugram, Haryana with condition that she will

get the sole ownership in her favour by getting the WILL Probated in the Indian Court of Law

(Haryana), within the stipulated date of 31st March, 2023.The said Property is registered under the joint ownership of Mrs. Nirmal Arya

and Late Dr Raj Pal Arya (who passed away on the 10 Sept, 2020 leaving behind a WILL in favour of his wife Mrs. Nirmal Arya) and as such under Indian Court of Law the WILL is required

to be probated to prove the ownership solely in favour of Mrs Nirmal Arya. The Seller has no provided the Probated WILL through Haryana

Court proving the sole ownership in her favou

as required and settled vide the said Agreemer

as required and settled vide the said Agreement to Sell, and didn't turn up for completing the transaction on the stipulated date. As the case is still pending in the court of law with next court date on 10-05-2023, my client had conveyed his willingness to the seller, through email, that he will get the Sale Documents registered upon the seller providing the proof of sole owhnership in her favour. This public notice is being given to caution the nublic in lange that anyone who

caution the public in large that anyone who intend to purchase the above subject property may be doing at their own risk and responsibility.

Gaiender Yadav (Advocate Chamber No.59, Distt. Court, Gurugram (Haryana) Mob: 931707317

Assistant Professor - 02

Foundation Courses - 02 Teaching of English - 01 Teaching of Science - 01

Teaching of History - 01
Teaching of Hindi - 01
Teaching of Social Science - 01
Teaching of Political Science - 01
Fine Arts/ Performing Arts - 01

Computer Lab Assistant - 01



tinuing to impact the production activity. He noted that the overall industry sales last fiscal rose to 38.89 lakh units, an increase of 27 per cent from 30.69 lakh units in 2021-22. "Both wholesales and retails were the highest for the industry last fiscal," Srivastava said.

The industry sales were expected to rise to 4.05-4.10 million in the current fiscal, he

"We expect the industry growth to be in the range of 5per cent this fiscal and the company would like to perform better than the industry," Srivastava said.

He noted that with models like Jimny and Fronx in its kitty, the company expects to corner in the current fiscal. MSI ended the last fiscal with a market share of 12.6 per cent in the SUV segment with sales of 2,02,800 units.

The company, which has discontinued its entry-level model Alto 800 citing affordability factor, said the SUV segment continues to outpace others

cent in the overall domestic passenger vehicle industry. Srivastava noted that the

contribution of the hatchback segment has come down to 35 per cent last fiscal from 46 per cent in 2016-17. "Affordability has been hit and it has affected the uptake in

this segment. If the income levels go up, we can hope for it to make a comeback. Even now the top best-selling cars in the country are hatchbacks," he Srivastava noted that the chip shortage would continue to

next few quarters. MSI's total order backlog stood at around 3.8 lakh units, with Ertiga leadings, he added. Srivastava confirmed that the company would have a certain production loss in the

impact the industry for the

fourth quarter due to supply constraints. The company had a production loss of around 46,000 units in the third quar-

Replying to a query, Srivas-

and easing of the semiconductor shortage.
While SUVs and EVs led

this growth, customers' rising preference for safe vehicles and smart technology features was equally pronounced, he added.

by the industry was driven by post-Covid pent-up demand in the early part of the year, the

launch of several new vehicles

Tata Motors scaled a new sales peak by posting its highest-ever annual domestic sales of 5,38,640 units, achieving a robust 46 per cent sales growth over FY22 and registering its third successive year of indus-try-beating growth, Chandra

"Looking ahead, we expect the demand for personal vehicles to remain robust with the trend of electrification further strengthening as more options are made available to customers plus support from a rapidly growing and improving ecosystem," he said. However, the growth rate of

the passenger vehicle industry may moderate due to a strong base effect as well as macro factors including hardening interest rates, rising inflation, and the cost impact from progressive regulatory norms, he added. "We continue to stay agile,

situation, particularly semiconductors and any potential waves of Covid," Chandra said.

Kia India said its sales stood at 2,69,229 units last fiscal, a growth of 44 per cent over 1,86,787 units in 2021-22. The company reported its highestever market share of 7.4 per cent

Honda reports 2% growth in domestic wholesales

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Honda Cars India on Saturday said its domestic sales increased by 2 per cent to 6,692 units in March. The company had dispatched 6,589 units to dealers in March 2022, the automaker said in a statement.

Exports stood at 3,189 units last month as compared with 2,243 units in March 2022, it added. The company said its domestic wholesales rose 7 per cent to 91,418 units last fiscal, as compared with 85,609 units in FY22. The automaker exported a total of 22,722 units during 2022-23 as compared with 19,401 units in 2021-22, register-

ing 17 per cent growth, it added. "The company has achieved a domestic sales growth of 7 per cent, driven by the strong and positive sales momentum of our models, specifically the Amaze and City," Honda Cars India Director, Marketing and

lenges posed by the global chip shortage and its impact on production volumes, the Indian automobile industry has had one of its strongest years in terms of sales, he noted.

Sales Yuichi Murata said.

"We believe that India holds significant potential and anticipate even greater demand in the years ahead," Murata said.

Public Notice This is to inform general public that Sh. Radhey Shyam has acquired the Property Bearing No. 51-A area measuring 9 Sq. Yqs., Out of Mustatili No. 81, Kilia No. 7. Situated at Vaka Moja Ballabgarh (Garg Colony) Tehsil Ballabgarh Disti-Faridabad Haryana vide two separate Transfer Deads dated 25.06.2018, Doc no. 3008 and dated 24.02.2023, Doc no. 8788 and Now, Sh. Harsh Bhardwaj and Sh. Radhey Shyam are mortgaging the above said property with IndusInd Bank Ltd. 8 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 Vieritas North, Unit no 907, 9th Floor, GD-ITL Tower, (B-08), Netaji Subhash Place, Delihi-110034 or contact at 90667071772/9818228636 (M).

PUBLIC NOTICE I, Rahui Shegai S/o Satish Kumar Sehgai, the absolute legal owner and in possession of Built up Third Floor with terrace rights, with area of 83 sq. yds., built on Property having Municipal No. 2640, Lambi Cali, Basti Punjabiyan, Subzi Mandi, Delhi-110007; by virtue of a Sale Deed reg, with doc no. 1581 on 10.02.2023, intends to mortgage the said Property in favor of Bajaj Housing Finance Limited and hus, invites any and / or all objection/s, claims, rights nterest and information on encumbrances, mortgages charges etc. in respect of the past and / or present title b charges etc. In respect of the past and of present the date of publication of this notice to **Adv. Vikram K. Saw**, Flat No. 544. 1°Floor, Sitz - I, Shankar Garden, New Delhi-110018 with Email - vikshalegal@gmail.com, Landline - 0.11 36668622, Mob - 98999384822. Amy such claims or information after the expiry of 7 days shall be deemed to

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Public at large is hereby notified that my client intend to purchase Flat No. A-301, situated in the layout plan of "The Aashiana Co-operative Group Housing Society Limited", Known as Aashiana Apartments, Plot No.05, Mayur Vihar Phase-I, Delhi-110091 from Mr. Sushil Garg S/o Mr. Ram Dhan Dass who represented himself as the sole owner of the said property. It is to inform the general public that the Original Agreement to Sell of the said flat in favour of Mr. Sushil Garg duly registered as Document No. 10214 in Book No. 1, Volume No. 1435 on pages 133 to 138, Dated: as Document No. 10214 in Book No. 1, Volume No.1435 on pages 133 to 138, Dated: 03/11/2004 in the office of S.R. VIII, Delhi duly executed by Mrs. Jaya Verma Wyo Mr. Vinod Verma has been lost/misplaced somewhere and not traceable by his best efforts. It is therefore, Notified that anybody claiming our disht vitil interest village are the form. said flat may file such claim or objection to the undersigned within a period of 15 days fron the date of Publication of this notice. Otherwise the date of Publication of this notice. Utherwise, it will be presumed that the said flat is free from all encumbrances, charges and/or lien, etc. and my client is free to purchase the said flat from the above named seller.

Mr. SAHIL ARORA (Advocate)
Enrolment No.: D/2186/2019
107, 1st Floor, M.S. Chambers, Aruna Park, Laymi Nadar Dalbi, 22, Ph. 98113112277.

Laxmi Nagar, Delhi-92, Ph.: 9811912277

Receptionist/Office Assistant-01 ay Scale & Qualification as per Govt. Norm Walk-in-Interview on 22rd April 2023 at 10:00 am onwards ave waived and/or abandoned and not be entertained. OFFICE OF THE DIGP, GROUP CENTRE, C.R.P.F. DADRI **PUBLIC NOTICE**

ROAD GREATER NOIDA-201306

ADVERTISEMENT

t is informed that requirement of Lady Headmistress, Teacher & Aaya for Nursery an KG for the academic Session 2023-24 at Montessori School of Deputy Inspector General of Police, Group Center, CRPF, Dadri Road, Sutiana, Greater Noida-201306 purely on temporary and contractual basis (From 01/07/2023 to 31/05/2024) Applications are invited from eligible Indian citizens for the following posts: Number Honorarium Age Education Qualification of Post per month

		01 1 001	per morner		
01	Headmistress	01	15,000/-	30-40	Graduation with at least 50% Marks and B.Ed or Two year Diploma in Elementary Education or B.T.C or equivalent and five years teaching experience in Basic School.
02	Teacher	04	12,500/-	21-40	Graduation with at least 50% Marks and B.Ed or Two year Diploma in Elementary Education or B.T.C or equivalent.
03	Aaya	04	10,000/-(2 post	18-30	Passed class V or equivalent examination

OZ. Application form/mode of application: (A) Application form has to be submitted in the following format (1) Name/paste photo of applicant (2) Name of the father/husband of the applicant (3) The post for which the application is made (4) Applicant's permanent address (5) Applicant's current correspondence address an nobile number (6) Applicant's cltizenship (7) Applicant's date of birth (8) Applicant's caste (9) Applicant's education (10) Applicant's class nursery educational experience 11) Any other information (12) Signature of the applicant (8) Method of applying: Application of interested candidates, for the appointment to the said posts can till date 24/04/2023 till 1600 hrs. to Office of Deputy Inspector General of Police, Group Centre entral Reserve Police Force, Dadri Road, Greater Noida-201306 and Candidate qualifying to the post will be called appear for the interview on 01/05/2023 at 10:00 hrs at the Office of Deputy Inspector General of Police, Group Centre, CRPF, Dadri, Greater

Note:- Detailed advertisement can be on the website of CRPF <u>www.crpf.gov.in.</u>
Sd/Deputy Inspector General of Police,
Group Centre, CRPF, Greater Noida



'Small tea growers made India self-reliant in production'

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Emergence of small tea growers (STGs) has made the country self-reliant in the production of the beverage and to meet domestic requirements and exports, Tea Board said. STGs have also helped local economic conditions and livelihood of the people, the Tea Board said in a statement.

India annually produces nearly 1400 million kg of tea, out of which the contribution of STGs is more than 50 per cent, it said. Tea exports from India in value terms is close to \$ 800 million. It attained a positive growth of 15 per cent in volume of around 220 million kg in 2022, the board said. The country is now the

second largest producer of the beverage after China and tea industry is one of the largest employers. India is also the fourth

largest exporter after China, Kenya and Sri Lanka, it said According to the Tea Board, the agency has helped in the development of the industry in terms of area under cultivation, production, productivity and domestic consumption.

2 yrs, fines ₹90 lakh in ZEEL insider trading case PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Sebi has barred three individuals from the securities market for two years and imposed penalty totalling Rs 90 lakh on them in a case pertaining to insider trading activities in the scrip of Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd (ZEEL). The three individuals

banned by the regulator — Bijal Shah, Gopal Ritolia and Jatin Chawla — have also been directed to pay the fine within 45 days. In addition, Ritolia and Chawla have been directed to

disgorge illegal gains to the tune of Rs 7.52 crore and Rs 2.09 crore respectively along with interest, the regulator said in its 152-page final order on Friday.

The case relates to insider trading activities by certain entities in the scrip of ZEEL, while in possession of unpublished price sensitive information (UPSI) pertaining to audited financial results of the media company for the quarter ended June 30, 2020 as well as launch of ZEEPLEX by the company on September 1, 2020.

Bijal Shah, who was head of



sis, strategy and investor rela-tions at ZEEL during the relevant time, had access to this unpublished price sensitive

the financial planning and analy-

the information to Ritolia and Chawla, who traded on the basis of this information and earned profits to the tune of Rs 7.52 crore and Rs 2.09 crore respectively, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi)

According to the regulator, Shah is not liable for insider trading, he has played the primary role in disclosing the unpublished Price sensitive information to Ritolia and Chawla, which resulted in the violation of the provisions of insider trad-

He in turn, communicated

Godrei Properties buys four acre in Pune for housing project; eyes ₹1K cr revenue

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 ${
m R}^{
m ealty}$ firm Godrej Properties has acquired a 4-acre land parcel in Pune to build a luxury housing project with an estimated revenue potential of ₹1,000 crore. In a regulatory filing on Saturday, Godrej Properties informed that it has acquired around 4-acre land parcel near Korgaon Park in Pune. The development on this

land will primarily be a luxury housing project.
"The project will have a developable potential of approximately 7.5 lakh square feet with an estimated revenue potential of approximate-₹1,000 crore," the company said.

financial details of the transaction. Gaurav Pandey, the MD and CEO of Godrej Properties, said the demand for luxury homes has remained strong over the past few years.

MCL reaches new high in coal production **PTI** BHUBANESWAR gets much ahead of schedule and has helped Coal

Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) on

Saturday said the company has registered a record 193.3 million tons of coal production during the 2022-23 financial

192.7 million ton coal despatch to consumers, Chairman-cum-Managing Director Om Prakash Singh, said while addressing the AGM here. "The MCL registered a growth of 15 per cent for the financial year 2023-23, while coal despatch showed nine per cent growth over the previous financial year 2021-22," Singh said.

The company has achieved all its tar-



sector also increased from 127.12 million tons 2,922 to 148.8 million tons in 2022-23 with a growth of 17 per cent. Strengthening its business activities, the company made Capital Expenditure (CapEx) of Rs 3,850 crore during the

CMD said.

India surpass its target of 700 million tons set for the

financial year 2022-23, the

He said 97 per cent of

financial year 2022-23, he said adding that MCL enjoys being the top company in Odisha contributing under CSR.

The company, however, did not disclose the

AFTER IMPRESSING AT WORLDS, PREETI EYES BERTH IN ASIAN GAMES-BOUND CONTINGENT

fter impressing in her maiden Women's World Boxing Championships the prodigiously talented Preeti Pawar is eager to put to test the learnings from the tournament at the first Olympic qualifiers -- the Asian Games this year -provided she secures a spot in the Indian contingent.

The 19-year-old put up a fearless display across all her three bouts in the marquee event here as she notched an RSC win before toppling the top seed and last edition's silver medallist Lacramioara Perijoc of

She made a pre-quarterfinal exit after losing a fiercely-contested bout to two-time medallist, Thailand's Jitpong Jutamas, earning plaudits from everyone.

"Junior and youth level is mostly about who attacks more but once you are at the senior level, you have to play with your mind and be more technical," Preeti told PTI.

"I feel I need to modify my game, I should not be attacking all the time, I need to counter more. I am working on improv-

ndian driver Kush Maini of

Campos Racing fought off a

strong challenge from

Arthur Leclerc of DAMS in a

rain-interrupted race to claim

his first-ever Formula 2 podi-

um with a third-place finish at

the Albert Park, here on

the grid on prime tyres and held

on to his position for several

laps while Arthur Leclerc was

right behind him putting pres-

Leclerc got past Maini but the Indian fought back and

made a last second dive onto

the inside and got back P3.

sure on the softer tyres.

Maini started from P3 on

AP MELBOURNE

Maini bags maiden F2

podium at Melbourne



ing my strength and tweaking techniques.

"If I qualify for the Asian Games that will be great. So, I want to be prepared for the Olympic qualifying event," added Preeti, who competes in

Leclerc kept the pressure on

"I have been waiting on the

"It was great to get my first

through the safety car restarts

as well but Maini held on to a

well-deserved maiden podium

doorstep of getting onto a podi-

um and narrowly missed it at

Bahrain," the 22-year-old said.

(Hitech Pulse-Eight) took the

the 54kg class, an Olympic cat-

The Asian Games from September 23 to October 8 in Hangzhou, China are the first Paris Olympics qualifying event for boxers from the continent.

For someone, who was averse to the idea of taking up boxing a few years back, the Bhiwani pugilist has made a name for herself quickly in the

"I never thought I'd come

into sports and choose boxing as my career. I wasn't interested in sports. I was focussed on my

"One day, my uncle and father came and said to me that I have to do boxing."

The then 14-year-old's

immediate reaction was "Main nahi karungi, boxing toh bilkul bhi nahi (I will never take up

But Preeti, whose father is an assistant sub-inspector in Haryana Police, reluctantly started training at her uncle and former national medallist boxer Vinod Sai Pawar's, boxing acad-

"In the beginning boxing was forced on me, I used to go for training but after coming back I used to cry, kabhi pair dard hota tha kabhi haath (sometimes my feet would hurt, other times my hands)."

"It went on for 6-7 months. When I started playing ,competitions I developed interest. Then when I won medals, the confidence and interest increased.

At her uncle's boxing club, there weren't many girls, so Preeti regularly sparred with

boys, much to the dislike of her mother.

"Mummy was scared that I'll get punched. Once during training, I got hit and passed out. I had to be taken to a doctor," recalls Preeti.

The Haryana-based boxer clinched the silver medal at the Youth Asian Championships in 2021. She also joined the Inspire Institute of Sports, which has sponsored her since then.

Making her transition to the senior level, Preeti won bronze in her maiden event -- the 2022 Asian Championships at Jordan. She lost to the Tokyo Olympics featherweight champion Sena Irie of Japan in the semifinal.

"When I boxed in my first senior competition, I felt this is where real boxing starts. I lost to the Tokyo Olympics champion but I got a lot of confidence from that bout."

The teenager is a little low on experience but believes there is no substitute to hard work.

"I don't think anyone has been able to achieve what I have in a such a short time. So, time doesn't matter how long you have been there, it is the hard work that counts

bags doubles title In fact, it was the second match of the day for Mukund and Vishnu and they showed great powers of concentration to stay focused on the task.

ITF Mysuru Open:

PTI ■ MYSURU

▼India's Mukund Sasikumar

🛘 and Vishnu Vardhan bagged

the doubles title at the ITF

Mysuru Open as the duo

showed admirable endurance

against compatriots B Ritvick

Choudary and Nikki

Poonacha here on Saturday.

seeds Choudary and

Poonacha 6-3, 6-4 in 1 hour

in the match while they con-

verted two opportunities to break their opponents to ease

my mom in 2012 I was recon-

sidering playing tennis profes-

sionally and from that point to

be in Grand Slam ranking and

India No 1, it has been a remarkable journey," said Mukund after the match.

"During the pandemic, my life had hit the rock bot-

their way to the title.

and 10 minutes.

The two defeated top

Mukund and Vishnu warded off seven break points

Mukund -Vishnu pair

They also won more than 80 percent of points on both first and second serves, indicating the consistency in their

Earlier in the day, Mukund and Vishnu romped into the doubles final upsetting second seeded Australia-Ukraine pair of Blake Ellis and Vladyslav Orlov 6-4, 7-5.

The USD 25,000 event is being hosted by the Karnataka State Lawn Tennis Association

In the singles, India's camoaign ended when Mysuru lad S D Prajwal Dev went down fighting to George Loffhagen of Britain 5-7, 4-6 in a tight semifinal match that lasted

who shocked second seeded American Oliver Crawford 7-5, 6-3 in the other last four clash. The final will be played

(Singles, semifinals) George Loffhagen (GBR) beat SD Prajwal Dev (IND) 7-5, 6-4 (8) Éllis Blake (AUS) beat (2) Oliver Crawford (USA) 7-5, 6-3

coming to Formula

¬aking a break in the

paddock after watch-

ing Max Verstappen set

a lap record in practice at the

Australian Grand Prix,

Melbourne teenager Kaitlyn

Bourne was loving her day at

who was wearing a clear plas-

tic poncho over a Red Bull

sweater on a wintry day at

Albert Park, is a massive fan

of Australian Formula One

driver Daniel Ricciardo, who

from a motorsport-loving

family and watches every

Grand Prix race, hopes that

But Bourne, who comes

is sitting out this season.

The 17-year-old Bourne,

One racing team

AP MELBOURNE

tom again but I was decided that irrespective of how this week had gone, this will be a Doubles, Final: Mukund Sasikumar

"I am very happy to return to Mysore Tennis Club. I was here as a 12-year-old and I was Haaland misses Man City match also the winner of the first International tournament here vs Liverpool due to injury in 2012. Now, I am very happy precisely two hours. Loffhagen will face eighth seeded Australian Blake Ellis, to win the doubles title, so I think I partially defended my title," Vardhan said after the The game was important for both teams, with City "When I came here with

anchester, Apr 1 (AP) Prolific striker Erling ■ Haaland was not part of Manchester City's squad to play Liverpool on Saturday after failing to recover from a groin injury.

podium on a new track as a The Norway internationrookie. It is most important to al, who has scored 42 goals in keep consistent as it's a very all competitions this season, had to withdraw from his long series. We have had a good country's start to the season so far with European Championship qualifiers against Spain and Georgia consistency in qualifying always Dennis Hauger (MP Motorsport) and Jak Crawford last week because of the prob-

"He is not fit. He doesn't feel proper," City manager



Pep Guardiola said ahead of

the game.
"It is not a big issue but today he was not right.'

Haaland leads the Premier League scoring charts with 28 goals and has hit nine in his last three games in all compe-

Guardiola earlier this week said the 22-year-old Haaland would be given the chance to prove his fitness during the team's training

session on Friday. Haaland's father, Alf-Inge, was quoted by Norwegian TV during the week saying his son had traveled to Barcelona for treat

eight points behind first-place

Arsenal with a game in hand,

and Liverpool fighting to

secure a top-four spot for

Champions League qualifica-

new start to an unforgettable journey this year and I hope IND) / Vishnu Vardhan (IND) beat Ritvick Choudary to return here soon but hope-(IND) and Niki Poonacha (IND) 6-3, 6-4. fully you will see me in bigger **Gender equality**

soon?

NBA, players reach deal for new labour agreement

in the top 8.

top-two finishes.



AP ■ NEW YORK

♦ he NBA will have labor peace for years to come. The league and its players came to an agreement early Saturday on a new seven-year collective bargaining agreement, the NBA announced. It is still pending ratification, though that process is almost certainly no more than a formality. The deal will begin this specifics publicly.

summer and will last at least through the 2028-29 season. Either side can opt out then; otherwise, it will last through 2029-30. Among the details, per a person familiar with the nego-

tournament that Commissioner Adam Silver has wanted for years will become reality, and players will have to appear in at least 65 games in order to be eligible for the top individual awards such as Most Valuable Player. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because neither the league nor the National Basketball Players Association released

Another new part of the CBA will be a second luxury tax level that, when reached, will keep teams from using their midlevel exception to sign players. That was a clear compromise, given how some teams wanted the so-called "upper spending limit" that would have essentially installed an absolute ceiling on and help balance the playing field between the teams that are willing to pay enormous tax bills and those who aren't.

Not in the CBA is a change to the policy that would allow high school players to enter the NBA draft. It was discussed and has been an agenda item for months, but it won't be changing anytime soon - probably not for at least the term of the next CBA. "We also appreciate that there is a lot of benefit to real-

ly having veterans who can bring those 18-year-olds along," NBPA executive director Tamika Tremaglio said in February during an NBPA news conference at All-Star weekend.

"And so, certainly any-thing that we would even consider, to be quite honest, would have to include a component that would allow veterans to be a part of it as well."

Silver said Wednesday, at the conclusion of a two-day Board of Governors meeting, that he was hopeful of getting deal done by the weekend. He also said there had been no consideration - at least on the league's part - of pushing the opt-out date back for a third

Marseille held 1-1 at home by **Montpellier** in French league

AP MARSEILLES (FRANCE)

arseille missed the chance to put pressure on French league leader Paris Saint-Germain after being held at home by in-form Montpellier to 1-1. Matteo Guendouzi's first-half penalty was all Marseille had to show for dominating possession and chances as the visitors stayed unbeaten in the seventh game since coach Michel Der Zakarian returned last month.

Marseille's draw means PSG can move nine points clear on Sunday with a win at home over Lyon. The visitors made a better start and Arnaud Nordin fired Montpellier ahead in the 12th minute, though he had to wait for a VAR check to celebrate after he was initially flagged offside. Wahbi Khazri made a fine turn to elude Guendouzi and set off on a run that sucked in four Marseille defenders before he played the ball to Elye Wahi, who sent it straight on to Nordin for the French forward's fifth league goal.

Verstappen takes pole position at F1 Australian Grand Prix

AP MELBOURNE

ax Verstappen will have his best chance IVI of claiming an inaugural Australian Grand Prix title after taking pole position in his Red Bull for Sunday's third race of the Formula One season on the Albert Park circuit.

Seven-time world champion Lewis Hamilton is among rivals sharing renewed hope after the dominance Red Bull has had over its rivals was diminished during Saturday's qualifying session. Verstappen, a two-time

world champion, was not pleased with the performance of his RB19 despite setting a track record around the circuit on Saturday.
After setting a lap record

during practice earlier on Saturday, the drivers' championship leader set a benchmark of 1 minute, 16:732 seconds in the final session of qualifying.

"I have been on the podium once, but I want to be on a different step this time," Verstappen said after claiming his first pole position in Australia. His teammate Sergio Perez, who sits just one point behind the Dutch driver in the championship, will start from the back of the grid after



enduring a horrible day in Melbourne

After declaring Red Bull would win every race this season after their supremacy in Bahrain, Mercedes driver George Hamilton shared the front row of the starting grid after recording a time 0.236 seconds slower than Verstappen.

Hamilton will start in third position on what was an encouraging day for Mercedes, with Aston Martin's Fernando Alonso qualifying

'This is totally unexpected. For us to be up in the two front rows is a dream," Hamilton said. "To be this

close to Red Bull is incredible. I think this gives everyone in the team a boost and a glimpse of hope. This will spur everyone on. It will inspire everyone to continue to push.'

Verstappen, who won the season-opening race in Bahrain, was progressively faster on Saturday but raised concerns about his car on the lap prior to setting the new

"Downshifts are getting worse as well," Verstappen

Verstappen said he has confidence in the Red Bull's reliability. But he was surprised by how close the Mercedes pair finished.

one day she will have the chance to support a female F1 "It is still a very male dominated sport, so it would be good to bring in more

females. I think it could happen," she said. There has not been a woman driver in a Formula 1 race for more than 40 years.

But with estimates suggesting that 40% of current Formula 1 fans are female, the motorsport industry is making a concerted effort to ensure that changes. Red Bull team principal

Christian Horner said this week in Melbourne he believes gender equality in the sport is inevitable.

"I think it is fantastic to see the amount of girls, females, that are showing interest in Formula One now and we're seeing it at all levels," he said.

"I think the interest is growing. It is appealing to more women to get involved in the sport, whether that is from an engineering basis, or across all aspects of the organization.

"As the sport does become more accessible, and we are pushing to make it more accessible, I think that is something that will naturally happen anyway.'

Sinner stuns top-ranked Alcaraz in Miami Open semifinals he also dealt with an apparent finger injury. He will lose the train has been so breakawav year-old legs. Between points in the third set, Alcaraz was Medvedev beat fellow

AP MIAMI GARDENS (FLORIDA),

enth-seeded Jannick Sinner of Italy stunned top-ranked Carlos Alcaraz in the Miami Open semifinals, rallying from a set down to beat the defending champion, 6-7 (5), 6-4, 6-2 in a three-hour thriller.

tiations who spoke to The

Associated Press: the in-sea-

Sinner ended Alcaraz's winning streak at 10 matches on Friday night. Sinner's powerfully steady baseline game wore down Alcaraz, who appeared to be cramping early in the decisive third set while

No. 1 ranking to Novak Djokovic.

Sinner, the 21-year-old who made the Miami Open final last year but hasn't been past the quarterfinals of a major, will face fourth-seeded Daniil Medvedev of Russia in the championship match Sunday. Medvedev has beaten Sinner in all five

meetings. Alcaraz had been so dominant recently, he hadn't lost a set since February before Sinner's rally in the Miami

NBA stars Luka Doncic and Jimmy Butler showed up to watch the Spanish star from the teal seats. Alcaraz also fought Sinner

in Indian Wells in the semifinals, and it was a taut match but not quite like this. These two young guns are poised for a long and spectacular rivalry. Sinner's victory ended Alcaraz's hope of becoming the first man since Roger Federer in 2017 to win the Sunshine Double of Indian Wells and Miami.



Russian Karen Khachanov 7-6 (5), 3-6, 6-3 on the same day Wimbledon announced Russians will be allowed back.

Medvedev has won 23 of 24 matches - the lone loss to Alcaraz - and is in his fifth straight final.

Also Friday, No. 15 seed Petra Kvitova beat unseeded Sorana Cirstea 7-5, 6-3 in the second women's semifinal. Kvitova will face Elena Rybakina in the final.

Alcaraz prevailed in the first set in a tiebreaker but that took a lot out of Alcaraz's 19-

stretching noticeably during the third set, trying to stave off cramps and waved to the crowd for support. Despite Alcaraz getting the second set back on serve,

Sinner stunned Alcaraz in the ninth game, breaking him at love to go up 5-4 and then closing it out. Alcaraz had won 21 straight sets.

An ATP trainer came out to attend to Alcaraz midway through the second set, examining one of his fingers before the cramps set in.

Mayers 73 propels Lucknow to massive 193/6 vs Delhi

Kyle Mayers made a grand entry on IPL stage with a scintillating 38-ball-73 to lead Lucknow Super Giants to an imposing 193/6 against Delhi Capitals in their season-opener, here on Saturday.

The left-hander from Barbados, who was included in absence of South African opener Quinton De Kock, made Capitals pay a heavy price for dropping him on 14, by blazing his way to a 28-ball fifty as his knock had as many as seven

Deepak Hooda (17, 18b) at the other end was a mere spectator to Mayers' fury as they stitched 79 runs in 42 balls to accelerate the run-rate in the middle overs.

The duo departed in the space of one ball, while Marcus Stoinis (12) got out cheaply in the middle overs.

But LSG maintained the momentum with Nicholas Pooran (36; 21b) and Krunal Pandya (15 not out; 13b) taking the charge, before Ayush Badoni's mini assault (18; 7b, 1x4, 2x6) and a last ball six from 'Impact Substitute' Krishnappa Gowtham yielded 22 runs from the 20th over bowled by Chetan Sakariya (2/53).



The last five overs produced 66 runs, primarily due to Pooran and Badoni using long handles to good effect. Playing their first-ever home game since joining IPL last year, LSG were in a spot of bother with DC bowlers making full use of the

two-paced tricky Ekana wicket after opting to bowl.

It took LSG openers, KL Rahul and Mayers, 16 balls to get going and hit their first bound-

They were reduced to 19/1 inside four overs when left-arm

pacer Sakariya prolonged Rahul's lean patch by dismissing the Indian opener with a slower one. It was Sakariya's third dismissal of Rahul in four IPL

But things soon tilted in the home team's favour after Khaleel

Kings opener Ruturaj Gaikwad's six-hit-

the IPL opener against Gujarat Titans,

saying all his hits over the fence were

four boundaries and nine sixes from 50

However, Gaikwad's show, featuring

"We don't associate him (Gaikwad)

with six hitting but to hit nine sixes in an

out of shape and trying to muscle it, just

pure timing," said Kumble in a release

Former India wicketkeeper Parthiv

from the official IPL broadcasters.

"clean" and results of "pure timing".

Ahmed grassed a sitter off Mayers in the last over the Powerplay.

Mayers unleashed his fury against debutant Mukesh Kumar, crunching him for two massive sixes in the very next



Mayers as he continued his assault on their frontline spinners Axar Patel and Kuldeep Yadav in his knock studded with seven sixes and two fours.

Patel however had the last laugh when he cleaned up Mayers with a ball that turned almost square from an imaginary fifth stump line.

Thereafter, it was his West Indies teammate Nicholas Pooran who seized the momentum in his 21-ball 36 (2X4, 3X6) as he along with Krunal Pandya kept the run flow.

Delhi were also let down by their ground fielding. For them, Khaleel was the pick of the bowler as he made a fine come back from injury to return 2/30 with wickets of Stoinis and Pooran, latter caught smartly by



fit for MI's opener: Coach Boucher

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Mumbai Indians head coach Mark Boucher confirmed that skipper Rohit Sharma and pacer Jofra Archer are fit for their IPL opener against Royal Challengers Bangalore on Sunday. There were speculations that Rohit might not be available for the opening game as he had missed the captains' photo shoot in Ahmedabad. But Boucher dispelled all rumours.

"Yes, Rohit is fit. He has trained the last two days and is 100 per cent ready to go. I think he didn't feel particularly well that morning and just as a pre-caution, we told him to stay at home," Boucher said at the pre-match press conference on Saturday.

"There are a lot of photo shoots the boys have had to do. He's not had a lot of time to himself so we thought it was better," he added. In Jasprit Bumrah's absence, England pacer Jofra Archer, who himself is coming off a long injury lay

off, will lead the MI pace attack. "Jofra is good, he is 100 per cent ready for tomorrow. He didn't train today, it was an optional training session. He felt that he was ready to put the spikes on tomorrow. We are very happy with his progression since he has been with us. He'll be playing tomorrow."

The five time champions had a poor last season where they finished 10th but Boucher doesn't want to look back as he wasn't in charge back then.

"I can't comment too much about last year I wasn't there. But we have spoken about it, some new talents in the team, new energy, some guys who have done really well in the previous IPLs. "They understand that last year we didn't have a good season but things can change very quickly, energies have been good, we are in a



Punjab Kings beat KKR via DLS method in rain-hit IPL season-opener

PTI MOHALI

Punjab Kings' costliest recruit Sam Curran dis-missed the dangerous Andre Russell at the nick of time over Kolkata Knight Riders via Duckworth-Lewis method in a rain-hit afternoon encounter of Indian Premier League, here on Saturday.

Chasing a target of 192, KKR were left stranded at 146 for 7 after 16 overs when heavy downpour put spanner on their hardwork. The DLS par score at that time was 153. Had KKR not lost Russell (35 off 19 balls), who was looking to walk away with the game and then Venkatesh Iyer to Arshdeep Singh in the next over, the par score would have been lower before heavens opened up.

The two wickets in the 15th and 16th over proved to be decisive as KKR needed 46 off 24 balls at that stage with Shardul Thakur (8 not out) and Sunil Narine (7 not out) were at the crease. Kolkata needed 62 from 32 balls when Curran dismissed an on-song Russell and Arshdeep removed the 'Impact Substitute' Venkatesh Iyer (34) which proved to be turning point. Russell was holed at deep mid-wicket and Iyer was snapped at point.

The burly West Indian Russell had ignited KKR's hopes of a turnaround with three fours and two sixes, while Iyer made the first real impact with in his 28 ball knock that had three fours and a six.

KKR had a poor start as they were reduced to 29/3 inside the first five overs but a 46-run stand for the fourth wicket between Iyer and skipper Nitish Rana (24) brought them back in contest. Then a 50-run partner-ship between Iyer and Russell put them on course for a possible chase. But KKR just did not have enough firepower in them on the day and Arshdeep's brilliant figures of 3/19 in 3 overs was a game-changer for the

Floodlights malfunction leads to near-30 minute delay in KKR's chase vs PBKS

Kolkata Knight Riders' chase against Punjab Kings in their IPL match on Saturday was delayed by almost half an hour due to floodlight malfunction. The PCA-IS Bindra Stadium here has a total of six floodlights at a comparatively lower height.

Floodlight malfunction is common at Indian stadiums and on the day, once KKR came out to bat, a lot of bulbs in multiple towers didn't turn on and it became a frustrating wait for the players, who then went inside the dressing room. The onus on stadium

maintenance lies with Punjab Cricket Association and the inordinate delay was certainly an embarrassment for the local

50 to guide Punjab Kings to a

challenging 191 for five against

the second wicket with captain

Shikhar Dhawan (40) to lay a

strong platform, with Sam

Curran (26 not out) providing

late flurry on a batting friendly

wicket.Punjab dominated the

first half of the innings with

aggressive batting and looked

primed to cross 200, but KKR

managed to pull things back in

control with regular wickets

after a sturdy 86-run association

between Rajapaksa and

Rajapaksa added 86 runs for

Kolkata Knight Riders.

the broadcasters — two this season as the match will now end well after 7:30 pm, the time when the next game starts. In the second match of the IPL season here, Punjab Kings lost momentum in the second half of their innings after being asked to bat, adding just 91 runs for four wickets to finish at a total of 191 for five in their 20 overs. Bhanuka Rajapaksa top

scored for Punjab Kings with 50

from 32 balls with five fours

and two sixes while their new

captain Shikhar Dhawan scored

40 from 29 balls with the help

unit. As of now, the cause of

malfunction hasn't been known

but it is a given that PCA brass

will get a rap on the knuckles

from the BCCI bigwigs. The

delay also causes problems for

Arshdeep bowled an event-The left-handed Sri Lankan ful second over, striking on the Rajapaksa made the most of first ball to have Mandeep Singh (2) caught at deep mid-wicket by wrong lines bowled to him by KKR bowlers, racing to the first Curran. After Anukul Roy hit half-century for PBKS this seahim for a four, the India pacer son. Riding on the momentum had the left-handed batter provided by Prabhsimran Singh caught at short mid-wicket. (23) at the top, Rajapaksa Earlier in the first half, Bhanuka ensured Punjab maintained the domination while Dhawan Rajapaksa slammed a quickfire

> throughout his stay. They went about their job with precision to score nearly 10 runs an over, adding 86 runs from just 55 balls for the second wicket. The Sri Lankan batter toyed with the KKR bowling, finding gaps and clearing the ropes at will and perished only after scoring 50 from 32 balls with five fours and two sixes.

Jitesh Sharma hit a couple of sixes to score a quickfire 21 from 11 balls while playing his first IPL match, Raza scored 16 from 13 balls with a six and a four

Gaikwad's sixes clean, pure timing: Kumble Patel also praised Gaikwad, one of the players retained by CSK during the ${f F}$ ormer India captain Anil Kumble was mighty impressed with Chennai Super mega auction last year ahead of IPL 2022, for his dazzling knock.

"It seemed like Ruturaj Gaikwad was batting on a different wicket compared to the other batsmen. The approach he used is extremely praiseworthy," said Parthiv, a JioCinema IPL expert. Gaikwad's form during IPL 2021

he scored 635 runs in 16 games, including a century — was instrumental in CSK winning their fourth IPL title. His dip in form coincided with the Chennai outfit finishing ninth among 10 teams last year. He has a special liking for Titans bowling attack, as in the three innings he

has played against Hardik Pandya's side, he has scored 218 runs, including a halfcentury in every game. Patel felt that CSK's score of 178 was not competitive enough to unnerve the

"On this wicket, the target was



think the Gujarat Titans got that and kept the momentum. The way the Titans started their chase, Wriddhiman Saha got the license to use the first six overs to his advantage as much as he could," said the former India wicketkeeper-batter.

Patel predicted that from the way Gill

was batting on Friday, he could score 600 "Shubman Gill did what we know

Shubman Gill can do and carried over his international form into the IPL. We may get to see a 600-run season from . Shubman Gill."

Gill's performance also came in for praise from Kumble, who hailed the youngster's attitude.

"Right at the end, he (Gill) said that 'I was not happy with the way I got out,' which means that he wants to improve and if he's in that situation in the next game, he wants to finish the game for his team. That's a very good sign for a young "We spoke about it on the pre-match

show on how he's improved from getting 40s and 50s to 100s in one-dayers and 200. Now, I am sure that this is a good sign for Indian cricket and Shubman Gill to start out on such a wonderful note," said Kumble.

Right knee injury may cut short NZ batter Williamson's IPL stint

New Zealand captain Kane Williamson's continuation in the ongoing IPL season has been put under doubt after suffering a right knee injury during his team's winning effort against Chennai Super Kings here.

The 32-year-old got injured following a nasty fall while fielding on the boundary during the CSK innings. He had limped off the field in the 13th over on Friday. The extent of his injury is not vet known, but going by what was seen on Friday night, it did not seem a minor injury. Williamson, who was mak-

ing his Gujarat Titans debut, intercepted a ball headed for a



possible six off CSK opener Ruturaj Gaikwad's bat.

He managed to palm the ball into the field of play before it bounced onto the boundary ropes. But he fell awkwardly on the ground and clutched his right knee in pain.

He was taken off after receiving on-field treatment and did not come back to ba with B Sai Sudharsan coming in as a substitute fielder first and later he took Williamson's place in the Titans' playing XI under the

dya had said at the post-match press conference that he did not know how serious was the

"It is knee (injury) for sure but I don't have any update about what exactly has happened. I don't know how serious the injury is and how much time it will take (to heal). Right now there is no time frame," Pandya

"I had just messaged him. He (Williamson) has gone for the scans, once he comes back after the scans and doctors check (on him), then only we will be able to know what exact-

If Ruturaj continues way he is batting, he will do wonders for Indian cricket: Hardik

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

hennai Super Kings batter Ruturaj Gaikwad's dazzling knock of 92 went in vain in the IPL opener against Gujarat Titans but opposition captain Hardik Pandya was all praise of him, saying that he will do wonders for Indian cricket.

Gaikwad's classy knock off just 50 balls from which he struck four boundaries and nine sixes took CSK to 178 for 7. The Titans, however, chased down the target with four balls to spare, riding on Shubman Gill's 63 off 36 balls on Friday.

"Some of the shots he (Gaikwad) played was nothing to do with the bowling. There were some tremendous shots. Full credit to him the way he batted, and if he continues to do so he is going to do wonders for Indian cricket," Pandya told reporters at the post-match conference.

"He has the game and when the time comes I am sure the Indian cricket team will back him enough," he said.

The 26-year-old Gaikwad has played nine T20Is after making his debut in July 2021, scoring 135 runs at a modest average of 16.87. He had also played one ODI in 2022.

Pandya said the way Gaikwad was batting on Friday, it was getting difficult to bowl at him.

"Obviously, we all know what kind of a player he (Gaikwad) is. It looked like at one time CSK would score 220-230. We were finding it difficult on what area we should bowl at him. I had genuinely felt that we would not get him out at all," the Titans

captain said. "He is all-round cricketer, some of the shots he played

good balls and that makes a lot of difference. As a bowling unit and as a captain, that made my job more difficult," he said.

Analysing his side's win in the last over, Pandya said, "A couple of shots from myself and Shubman put us in a difficult situation but again Rahul (Tewatia) getting the best out of his ability and Rashid coming in and showing what he can do.

"So overall we are quite happy but in a way, a lot of things we can learn from this victory Even (if) we had lost we would have learnt a lot of things."

AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit before Magistrate, Jagatsinghpur, I, Afzal Khan , S/o Ayub Ali Khan, Villa-Bishanpur, Po- Bishanpur, Ps.- Tirtol, Dist- Jagatsinghpur declare that, I have changed my Father 's name Ayab khan to Ayub Ali Khan for all

CHANGE OF NAME (SELF)

Ansuman Jayadev, son of Hemanta Kumar Sahoo, resident of Maheswarpur, P.O. Brahmabarada, Dharmasala, Dist. Jajpur, Odisha-755005, have changed my name from Ansuman Jayadev to Anshuman Jaydev vide Affidavit No. 12AA 085254 dated 03-01-2023 at Dharmasala.

Archer to go straight to Ashes after IPL stint: County club coach PTI ■ LONDON June 1, but his availability is sub-

England pacer Jofra Archer will continue to prepare for the Ashes while playing in the IPL, and once the lucrative T20 tournament is over, he'll straightaway get into the gruelling five-Test series against Australia, according to his country club played the second fiddle coach.

Sussex head coach Paul Farbrace said that Archer, who returns to Mumbai Indians this season after missing the entire last edition due to an elbow injury, is unlikely to play any redball cricket before the home Ashes series starts in June.

The first Ashes Test commences at Edgbaston on June 16.

Following his recovery from an elbow injury and a stress fracture in his back, Archer has appeared for the national side seven times this year.

"The England plan for Jofra is he'll go and play in the IPL. I

think all things being equal, he (Archer) will go straight into the Ashes off the back of the IPL,"

Farbrace was quoted as saying by 'BBC Sport'.

Since Archer is unlikely to play any red-ball cricket before the Ashes due to his IPL commitment, the 27-year-old doesn't want to waste the opportunity to fine tune his Test bowling ahead of the oldest cricketing rivalry in the world.

Archer could play a Test against Ireland at Lord's from ject to the five-time IPL champions Mumbai Indians' progress in the IPL. The IPL final is I think their plan is that between IPL games he'll bowl

some longer spells to get his overs up and make sure that he is match-ready.

That's the nature of international franchise cricket these days. I know there'll be a lot of people saying 'he should play at

least two four-day games to be ready for a Test match, but the preparation and the work that the medical teams do around these players is exceptional," added Farbrace. Archer returned to the England white-ball setup in January this year after spending 17 agonising months recovering from the elbow and back injuries. He has taken 42 wickets in 13 Tests for England, but he last played the longest format in February 2021.

the pioneer

"Reflecting on where I came from helps me to appreciate and balance what I have now"



Trump has become the first former president to be indicted in a criminal case after a grand jury investigation into hush money payments made on his behalf during the 2016 presidential campaign, write ALANNA DURKIN RICHER and MEG KINNARD

I STIFATION

onald Trump's unprecedented indictment comes as the Republican faces other legal investigations and launches a bid to return to the White House in 2024.

The indictment will test the Republican Party already divided over whether to support Trump next year, in part due to his efforts to undermine his 2020 election loss.

Trump has denied any wrongdoing and accuses prosecutors of engaging in a politically motivated "witch hunt" to damage his campaign.

Here's a look at the hush money case, the grand jury investigation and possible ramifications for Trump's presidential campaign:

WHAT'S THIS CASE ABOUT?

The grand jury spent weeks meeting in secret to probe Trump's involvement in a \$130,000 payment made in 2016 to the porn actor Stormy Daniels to keep her from going public about a sexual encounter she said she had with him years earlier. Trump lawyer Michael Cohen paid Daniels, whose real name is Stephanie Clifford, through a shell company before being reimbursed by Trump, whose company, the Trump Organisation, logged the reimbursements as legal expenses.

Earlier in 2016, Cohen also arranged for former Playboy model Karen McDougal to be paid \$150,000 by the publisher of the supermarket tabloid The National Enquirer, which then squelched her story in a journalistically dubious practice known as "catch

Trump denies having sex with either woman. Trump's company "grossed up" Cohen's reimbursement for the Daniels payment to defray tax payments, according to federal prosecutors who filed criminal charges against the lawyer in connection with the payments in 2018. In all, Cohen got \$360,000 plus a \$60,000 bonus, for a total of \$420,000.

Cohen pleaded guilty to violating federal campaign finance law in connection with the payments. Federal prosecutors say the payments amounted to illegal, unreported assistance to Trump's campaign. But they declined to file charges against Trump himself.

WHAT ARE THE CHARGES?

The indictment has not yet been unsealed, so it's not totally clear.

Some experts have said they believe Trump could be charged with falsifying business records, which can be a misdemeanor or a felony under New York law. To secure a conviction on the felony charge, prosecutors would have to prove that records were falsified with the intention of committing or concealing a second crime. It's not clear what prosecutors may allege as the second crime.

WHAT HAS TRUMP'S LAWYER SAID?

Trump's lawyer, Joe Tacopina, said Thursday that the former president didn't commit any crime and vowed to "vigorously fight this political prosecution in court.

Tacopina has accused prosecutors of "distorting laws" to try to take down the former president. He has described Trump as a victim of extortion who had to pay the money because the allegations were going to be embarrassing to him "regardless of the campaign."

"He made this with personal funds to prevent something from coming out — false, but embarrassing to himself, his family, his young son. That's not a campaign finance violation, not by any stretch," Tacopina said on ABC's 'Good Morning America' before the indictment.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Law enforcement officials have been making



"THE THUGS AND CRIMINALS WHO ARE **CORRUPTING OUR** JUSTICE SYSTEM WILL BE DEFEATED, **DISCREDITED AND** TOTALLY DISGRACED" — DONALD TRUMP



security preparations for days for the possibility of an indictment and a court appearance by the

Trump was expected to surrender to authorities next week, though details were still being worked out, according to a person familiar with the matter who was not authorized to discuss a matter that remained under seal.

WHAT'S THIS GRAND JURY AND WHO TESTIFIED?

A grand jury is made up of people drawn from the community, similar to a trial jury. But unlike juries that hear trials, grand juries don't decide whether someone is guilty or innocent. They only decide whether there is sufficient evidence for someone to be charged.

Proceedings are closed to the public, including the media. New York grand juries have 23 people. At least 16 must be present to hear evidence or deliberate and 12 have to agree there is enough evidence in order to issue an indictment.

David Pecker, a longtime Trump friend and the former chief executive of the parent company of The National Enquirer, returned to the courthouse this week where the grand jury was

meeting.
Pecker's company, American Media Inc., secretly assisted Trump's campaign by paying \$150,000 to McDougal in August 2016 for the rights to her story about an alleged affair with Trump. The company then suppressed

McDougal's story until after the election.

The grand jury also heard from Cohen, as well as Robert Costello, who was once a legal adviser to Cohen.

The men have since had a falling out, and Costello indicated he has information he believes undercuts Cohen's credibility and contradicts his incriminating statements about Trump. Costello testified at the invitation of prosecutors, presumably as a way to ensure that the grand jury had an opportunity to consider any testimony or evidence that might weaken the case for moving forward with an indictment.

Trump was also invited to testify, but

WHAT ARE THE POLITICAL RAMIFICATIONS

Neither the indictment itself nor a conviction would prevent Trump from running for or winning the presidency in

Last week in Waco, Texas, Trump took a defiant stance at a rally by disparaging the prosecutors investigating him and predicting his vindication as he rallied supporters in a city made famous by deadly resistance against law enforcement.

"You will be vindicated and proud," Trump said in a speech brimming with resentments and framing the probes as political attacks on himself and his followers. "The thugs and criminals who are corrupting our justice system will be defeated, discredited and totally

Before the charges were handed down, many party leaders had also already begun to defend the former president.

During a visit this month to Iowa, former Vice President Mike Pence called the idea of indicting a former president "deeply troubling." Another 2024 Republican prospect, New Hampshire Gov. Chris Sununu, has said there is a sense that the former president is being unfairly attacked.

Former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley, a declared candidate who also served as Trump's UN ambassador, has called Bragg's case an attempt at scoring "political points," adding, "You never want to condone any sort of prosecution that's being politicised."

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, who is considering joining the 2024 Republican field, slammed the investigation as politically motivated. But he also threw one of his first jabs at the former president in a quip likely to intensify their rivalry. DeSantis said he personally doesn't "know what goes into paying hush money to a porn star to secure silence over some kind of alleged affair."

WHAT ABOUT OTHER TRUMP INVESTIGATIONS?

The New York case is just one of many legal

woes Trump is facing. The Justice Department is also investigating his retention of top secret government documents at his Florida estate, Mar-a-Lago, after leaving the White House. Federal investigators are also still probing the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection at the US Capitol and efforts to overturn the 2020 election that Trump falsely claimed was stolen.

In Georgia, Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis has been investigating whether Trump and his allies illegally meddled in the 2020 election. The foreperson of a special grand jury, which heard from dozens of witnesses, said last month that the panel had recommended that numerous people be indicted, and hinted Trump could be among them. It is ultimately up to Willis to decide whether to move forward.



DIFFERENT, NOT LESS

April 2 is World Autism Awareness Day. This gives us the chance to introspect and act on increasing understanding, acceptance and awareness about autism, about how we can help break the hurdles that stop the community from leading their best lives. THE HEALTH PIONEER presents a macro view of the condition that affects 1 out of 89 children born in India

utism spectrum disorders (ASD) are a collection of disorders defined by issues such as social interaction and communication difficulties. It is the quickest-expanding developmental disorder in India, affecting one in 125 children between 2-6 years and one out of every 80 kids aged 6-9. As per INCLEN studies, one child out of 89 is generally on the autism spectrum. Boys are four times more likely than girls to have autism. There is no medical cure for autism, but early diagnosis and intervention helps a person to adapt and function better.

Children with Autism frequently exhibit behaviours such as difficulties transitioning from one task to another, a focus on minutiae. It's believed to be caused by environmental and genetic factors. Those with autism find social interactions difficult as well as have repetitive behaviors and focused interests. Autism is also a spectrum disorder, meaning the severity and range of symptoms are different

from person to person.
As such, healthcare systems are not only failing to provide appropriate care to autistic adults, but also that these failures may be detrimentally affecting the length and quality of life of autistic indi-

In India, it is estimated that around 18 million people have autism. Statistics further reveal that the number of children diagnosed with autism in India is increasing. Low awareness, a lack of basic services, and poor diagnosis, among other factors, have all led to the country's astonishing surge in the number of autism cases.

One of the main reasons why many parents keep diseases like autism hidden is a lack of information about mental health. Many individuals are unaware that such illnesses can affect children as early as a few months old. Such individuals exhibit abnormal behaviours, and a lack of public awareness of the disease makes society less compassionate and stigmatizes the disorder. In their growing years, these children are subjected to bullying, filthy remarks, and humiliation, which



FACTFILE

- ■About 1 in 100 children has autism globally.
- ■Characteristics may be detected in early childhood, but autism is often not diagnosed until much later.
- ■The abilities and needs of autistic people vary and can evolve over time. While some people with autism can live independently, others have severe disabilities and require life-long care and support.
- ■Evidence-based psychosocial interventions can improve communication and social skills, with a positive impact on the well-being and quality of life of both autistic people and their caregivers.
- ■Care for people with autism needs to be accompanied by actions at community and societal levels for greater accessibility, inclusivity and support.

 More than half (53%) have autism and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.
- ■More than half (51%) have autism and anxiety.

 A quarter (25%) have autism
- and depression. ■At least 60% of children with autism will have two comorbid conditions (e.g., sleep prob-lems, seizures, intellectual disabilities, or gastrointestinal
- Autism is not a learning disability, but it can affect cogni-

problems).

- tive function. Some children on the autism spectrum have delays in speech or learning, while others do not. Because it is a spectrum disorder, these delays can range from mild to
- One-third of children with autism were classified as having an intellectual disability (IQ equal to or less than 70).
- There is no cure or medication for autism spectrum disorder. Behavioral therapy is the most effective autism treatment. However, the vast majority (95%) of children with autism have at least one cooccurring condition, which is often treatable.

drives them to seek refuge in their

There is no 'cure' for autism. There are, however, ways that can help people with autism learn and perform more effectively. Because there are so many options to select from; individual viewpoints and experiences, as well as diverse research showcasing varying results, deciding on the best intervention for an individual with autism, may be complicated and often overwhelming. Autism patients benefit substantially from cognitive behaviour therapy, behavioural management therapy, occupational therapy, social skills training, and physical therapy. Furthermore, educational and school-based therapy, medication treatment, and nutritious food should be provided to such persnould be provided to such persons. Parents might also enrol in speech-language therapy.

Dr Deepak Gupta, a child and adolescent psychiatrist and

Founder Director of Centre for Child and Adolescent Wellbeing (CCAW, says, "Autism is one of the most misunderstood neurodevelopmental conditions. A peculiar trait of children with Autism is their concern with social communication difficulties.

"This, however, does not mean that they lack abilities to perform

SYMPTOMS

- No babbling or pointing by
- No single words by age 16 months or two-word phrases by age 2
- Impaired ability to make friends with peers
- Impaired ability to initiate or sustain a conversation with oth-
- Repetitive or unusual use of
- language Abnormally intense or focused
- interest Preoccupation with particular
- objects or subjects Inflexible adherence to specif-

ic routines or rituals

daily functions in life. On the contrary, some of the children with autism are brilliant and exhibit performance which is sometimes far superior to ones who are not on the Autism spectrum. With understanding and compassion for their special needs, we can surely induct

them into the mainstream."

Agrees Dr Alok Kumar
Bhuwan, Managing Secretary, Manovikas Charitable Society. While explaining stigma around children who are neurodiverse, he suggests that the strategy to help and build confidence, self-esteem, motivation and resilience is very important when we think about such kids. "Every autistic child has individual strengths and needs. We can help these kids with the concept of Universal design of learning (UDL) which can benefit them with learning and thinking differences. In fact, UDL uses a variety of teaching strategies to remove barriers to learning especially those with autism spectrum disorder, attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder."

Autism is the world's third most common developmental disability, a neurological illness that usually manifests by the age of three, says Bhuwan.

K. Nageswara Rao, President, All India Disabled Rights Forum, opines that autism affects early in childhood and needs to be addressed soon. "It varies in type and severity, but therapy can improve the ability of the person the function."

In a nutshell, people with autism can live a better life if they are raised in a happy and healthy environment. Today, the only requirement is that they be accepted totally and that they not be demeaned or discouraged at any

NEWSBRIEFS



INSTITUTE AND AIIMS DELHI JOIN HANDS

Heartfulness Institute and AIIMS, Delhi have inked a pact to collaborate in education and research activities to bring meditation and sciences into dayto-day life and impact various aspects of human health and well-

being.

The MoU was recently signed between 'Daaji' Kamlesh D Patel, President of Ram Chandra Mission, Founder and Guide of Meditation Heartfulness Worldwide, and Dr M. Srinivas -Director of the premier health research institute.

Speaking on the occasion, Daaji (Kamlesh D Patel) -Founder of Heartfulness Institute and Guide of Heartfulness Meditation Worldwide said, "This MoU will help in collaborative research and education in the sphere of meditation and science at the same time. There is a direct correlation between a healthy spirit and a healthy body. Science has time and again proven that meditation leaves positive impacts on mind and body. We want to delve deeper and make the outcomes beneficial to mankind."

Dr Srinivas was of the view that the agreement gives an opportunity to explore more beyond what is already known to medical sciences in terms of inner wellness. "The idea is to help people acquire holistic wellness backed by science. Previous research at universities abroad have already shown how Heartfulness meditation techniques are instrumental in positive behavioral changes as well".

THEN NORMAL LEVELS OF HOMOCYSTEINE IN THEIR BLOOD: TATA 1MG LABS SURVEY ¬ata 1mg Labs has claimed that

📘 data analysis of about 40,000 homocysteine, (an amino acid) tests conducted across its PAN India lab testing facilities in the last two years, indicates that more than 66 per cent of people in India have higher than-normal levels of homocysteine in their bloodstream, making them vulnerable to heart diseases, such as blood clots, heart attack and stroke.

It said that while 59 per cent of women were found with escalated levels of homocysteine, this figure was much lower for men at 40.1 per cent. The age group of 18-30 years had the lowest incidence at 15.3 per cent but rapidly climbed to the highest in the age bracket of 31-40 years at 30 per cent. This was followed by age groups of 41-50 years (about 19 per cent), above 60 years (18.3 per cent), and 51-60 years (17.3 per cent), as per the survey.



When asked about role of homocysteine levels in individuals, Dr Tarun Kumar, Professor of Cardiology, PGIMER and Dr RML Hospital, Delhi said that homocysteine levels are relevant in cases of young patients with Heart attack or brain stroke. As hyperhomocystenemia is associated with recurrent cardiac or brain stroke (thrombosis) events, treatment is quite low cost. "Young patients with thrombotic events like vascular thrombosis (DEep venous thrombosis, Pulmonary thromboembolism), Heart attack or brain stroke patients, should go for such tests," he said and advised that one should take vitamin B6, B-12, folic acid supplementation.

Reframe How We Think About Autism

DEVANGANA MISHRA, founder of Brain Bristle, works with children on the autism spectrum. In conversation with THE HEALTH PIONEER, she asserts that society needs to work with autistic children individually at a deeper level to bring out their best abilities. Excerpts:



Why is autism still a subject we don't fully understand?

Autism is a spectrum, ranging from severe to moderate to mild, lack of communication skills, reciprocity, eye contact, stemming and other such behaviours. Growth for each can look different or the same, how we push someone on the spectrum of autism forward is varied and with different ambitions and hopes than what might be possible for them or vice versa- as educators, what is right, what is wrong, what is enough and what has more scope is all so complicated and there's so much trial and error, who knows.

At what point do we give up on intervention for those on the spectrum of autism?

Honestly, I don't know, I do everything I humanly can until a child is 18, then I give up and see what goes on from there on. By

that I mean, I teach them everything that an adult would need or read- the daily news, romance, sex, cinema, dialogues, texts to send, what to wear on a date, how to dance at prom, how to sit while at dinner, what can you do if you can't do math, how to cheat at tests, how to cheat at everything but still be as good as one can possibly be, how to just figure life as smoothly as one can while being on the spectrum - and then I cross my fingers and hope for the best results possible.

Do you think that mental health and autis, how tangled they are.

You can't say one without the other, growth or experimentation for someone on the spectrum of autism can go haywire, then get back on track, then fall all over again, then find a way again, it's so complex- imagine you decide to

run a marathon, you twist your ankle, you have a choice to call for help and be airlifted or wobble back or let it heal while you lie back there then run or walk the marathon path until you can run again. It's all a mix of everything and that's how autism and mental health works for you and me, but even more importantly for someone on the spectrum of autism, as a teacher I could set them up for excellence but then what they do could be a total crash, who knows--it's all a guesswork for us to see.

Why do we historically have such few disruptions like Einstein or Bill Gates or Ramanujan or Hannah Gadsby in the space of autism, why not more such stories?

It's the same, education is so large and expansive and curricular and rule based, and the time from the ages of 3 to 18 is just not enough to prioritize where to close and where to expand for someone on the spectrum, sometimes educational interventions turn out right or sometimes a child gets an idea because of being caged and they break out and create something grand. It's all a mix of everything. It's almost like why do we have so many scientists yet so few who win the Nobel Prize eventually. But one thing is certain. Autistic children are different for a reason. They can shake up systems if given the right guidance.

What inspired you to take up the cause of people with autism?

I met my first grown-up with autism when I was 19 and the complete disregard for his giftedness led me to Columbia University, NY to study autism in detail and depth. This is how my journey with the autism spectrum began.

DOCTORSPEAK

aparoscopic surgery in kids is safe

Laparoscopic intervention has revolutionized the world of surgery with its minimal invasiveness and reduced postoperative pain. While laparoscopic surgery is not new in the field of surgery, it has witnessed enormous progress in the last three decades, and in the field of paediatric surgery as well.

The first laparoscopic cholecystectomy was performed on an adult in 1986. Since then, a significant advancement in technology and techniques has taken place in this field resulting in very outcome.

children, on the other hand, was restricted to diagnostic purposes till the 1980s. Paediatric surgeons in selected centres started performing paediatric laparoscopic procedures around the world. In India, advanced laparoscopic paediatric surgery was started in December 1998 by the author himself by performing the first laparoscopic Pull through surgery Hirschsprung's disease. It is estimated that over 80% of paediatric surgeons in the USA and many other countries perform laparoscopic surgery in



DR. RASIKLAL SHAH Senior Consultant - Paediatric Surgery, SRCC Children's Hospital, managed by Narayana Health

recent times. At present, there are extensive applications of this technique, and several advanced-level intricate surg-

eries are performed safely even in small children. In India, more and more parents are opting for this kind of surgery due to its benefits.

The key benefits of Laparoscopic Surgery in children include less pain, less cut/small incisions that look aesthetically better, less blood loss, less risk of infection, lesser hospitalisation (parents can go back to work sooner), faster recovery, early return to school, less risk of pneumonia and lesser chances of development of adhesive

Paediatric Minimally Invasive Surgeries are commonly performed for Hernia repair, Appendicectomy, Undescended testis. Pyeloplasty Nephrectomy, Pull through surgery for Hirschsprung's disease and anorectal malformation, Cholecystectomy and Choledochal Diaphragmatic Hernia Repair and Empyema surgery,

Fundoplication,

Pyloromyotomy, Malrotation,

Abdominal cyst, Ovarian

cyst, Mesenteric, and other

Is there any difference between Children and Adult's Laparoscopic Procedures? Many surgical conditions

- in children are totally
- DIFFERENT FROM ADULTS The laparoscopic hand instruments in children consists of smaller length and diameter
- In children, the inside space to work is less which makes surgery very difficult
- Minimally Invasive surgical team needs to be highly experienced and

Trump at the end of primrose path

The spectacle around Donald Trump's indictment and arraignment in a court will mark an unprecedented moment in American history that will demonstrate once again how dramatically Trump has upended democratic norms. But on a personal level, the indictment pierces the cloak of invincibility that seemed to follow Trump through his decades in business and in politics, as he faced allegations of fraud, collusion and sexual misconduct, writes JILL COLVIN

week to be arraigned in a New York courtroom, it will not only mark the first time a former US president has faced criminal charges. It will also represent a reckoning for a man long nicknamed "Teflon Don," who until now has managed to skirt serious legal jeopardy despite 40 years of legal scrutiny.

Trump, who is the early frontrunner for the Republican presidential nomination, is expected to turn himself in on Tuesday. He faces charges, including at least one felony offence, related to hush money payments to women during his 2016 campaign. Like any other person facing trial, he will be booked, fingerprinted and photographed before being given the chance to enter a plea.

The spectacle that is sure to unfold will mark an unprecedented moment in American history that will demonstrate once again how dramatically Trump - who already held the distinction of being the first president to be impeached twice - has upended democratic norms. But on a personal level, the indictment pierces the cloak of invincibility that seemed to follow Trump through his decades in business and in politics, as he faced allegations of fraud, collusion and sexual misconduct.

"Boy, after all this time it's a bit of a shock," Trump biographer Michael D'Antonio said of the indictment. "You know I always thought of him as the Gingerbread Man, shouting, 'You can't catch me!' as he ran

"Given his track record," he said, "I had trouble imagining he would ever be held account-

able."

"These are not things that Donald Trump ever thought in

When Donald Trump his entire life, nor I, for that matter, that he would ever be confronted with," Michael Cohen, Trump's longtime fixer and a key witness in the case who served jail time for the payments, told CNN.

Of course, some of the celebration by Trump's detractors may be premature. The former president could seek to have a judge quickly dismiss the case. And even if it moves forward, there's no guarantee of conviction. Intensifying investigations in Atlanta and Washington are seen as potentially more serious legal threats.

Still, Trump and his team were caught by surprise when word of the New York indictment broke Thursday evening, following news reports that the grand jury hearing the case was set for a weeks-long hiatus. As the deliberations dragged on, some in Trump's orbit had become convinced that the case had stalled and that charges might never be brought. That included Trump attorney Joe Tacopina, who said on Friday morning he had hoped the "rule of law would

Trump, he said on the 'Today" show, was "initially was shocked" by news of the charges, but quickly pivoted to his usual pushback playbook.

"After he got over that," he said, Trump "put a notch on his belt and he decided we have to fight now. And he got into a typical Donald Trump posture where he's ready to be combative on something that he believes is an injustice. ... I think he's now in the posture that he's ready to fight this."

In the meantime, Trump and his team have tried to use the news to his advantage, hoping to energise his loyal base by painting the investigation as part of a larger plot to



derail his candidacy.

Already, the charges have been a boon to his struggling fundraising. The campaign announced Friday evening that it had raised over \$4 million in the 24 hours after the indictment became public, far smashing its previous record after the FBI search of Trump's Mar-a-Lago club.

More than 25 per cent of

donations, according to the campaign, came from firsttime donors. The average contribution: \$34.

His campaign also continued to blast out supportive statements from dozens of top Republicans who have rallied behind Trump, including several of his declared and likely challengers, underscoring his continued hold on the party.

Trump has been in contact by phone with key congressional allies, including members of House leadership and top committees, according to people familiar with the conversations, who, like others, spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the response.

Trump ally Rep. Jim Banks, R-Ind., who formally endorsed the former president on Friday, said Trump "doesn't back down" and was going to "fight back," telling a local radio show it was "yet another chapter where Donald Trump is going to come back on top in

The media maelstrom has catapulted the former president back into the spotlight he craves, at least temporarily limiting attention being paid to

his rivals, including Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, who is widely expected to challenge Trump for the nomination, and has been holding events across the county to promote his book.

Trump aides have been discussing other ideas to maximise the situation, including the possibility of holding a press event either before or

after the arraignment. Trump is expected to travel from Florida to New York on Monday and stay overnight at Trump Tower in midtown Manhattan before heading to the courthouse early on Tuesday. He will return to Florida after the arraignment.

Trump has long denied that he had a sexual encounter with the porn actor known as Stormy Daniels and has blasted Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg for pursuing the years-old case.

Trump is also facing continued investigations in Georgia, over his efforts to overturn the results of the 2020 election, and in Washington, where a special counsel is probing the events of January 6, 2021, as well as Trump's handling of classified documents at Mar-a-Lago and potential obstruction of the investigation.

But Sam Nunberg, a longtime former aide who broke with Trump years ago, said that while he no longer supports Trump, he believes the Manhattan case is "a waste of time," given the allegations, which remain under seal. And he said he was skeptical it would ultimately matter.

"It doesn't surprise me," he said of the indictment. "What would surprise me is if he actually ended up behind bars in prison and I don't see that hap-

D'Antonio said that sentiment - and a continued belief that Trump will somehow prevail and dodge the charges continues among the many people who have reached out to him in the last 24 hours, despite the charges.

"They're like, he's going to get away with it," he said. 'Somehow, he's going to get it

PERSPECTIVE —

Demystifying philosophical layers of temples

 $\begin{array}{cccc} A \ \text{notion of sacred has held} \\ A \ \text{existential imperative for} \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \text{peaceful conditions prevail.} \\ \text{Such diagrams also illu} \end{array}$ mankind from time immemorial, bestowing meaning on material pursuits. The onslaught of rapid urbanisation and technological progress has intriguingly rendered sacred spaces all the more relevant. With changes unfolding at breakneck speed, such spaces facilitate introspection and selfenquiry. People from the Indian subcontinent would generally be familiar with the sanctifying ethos of a temple, but a few recognise its philosophical and cosmological foundations. Temples pave the way for individual salvation and also stimulate congregational worship. It is precisely at an interface of these two processes that the philosophical moorings of a temple can be located.

For several centuries, Vastu-shastras have functioned as the principal textual manuals for constructing temples. Texts like Manasara and Mayamatam emphasise the need to construct temples or even towns on square grid plans. Shapes like squares, triangles, circles and even points are liberally employed in temple architecture, and they each carry a distinct meaning. In this case, a square represents the manifest territorial world that needs to be transcended. The square grid plans, which in the words of scholar Stella Kramrisch function as "forecasts for temples", are known as vastu-purusha mandalas. Gods associated with each of the squares within the mandala are ritually invoked to pacify the vastu-purusha, and ensure that

Such diagrams also illus-

trate the underlying impulse of Indian philosophical traditions to collapse all distinctions between man, God and cosmos. The Samkhya philosophy stresses the unity between microcosm and macrocosm, while Advaita Vedanta extends this further in its theory of the union of atman and brahman. To that extent, each part of a temple is considered to represent the cosmos in a microcosmic capsule, and this imparts spiritual meaning to even the most insignificant components of a shrine. The components of a temple are generally named after parts of the human body, illustrating the organic unity underlying temple architecture in the Indian subcontinent.

This metaphysical union can also be most prominently noticed in the image-worshipping traditions that have passed on from time immemorial. If Vedic texts stress the importance of concentrating the mind on a single object, the Puranas and Agamas are known for their pronounced sectarian predisposition. Nonetheless, continuity can be seen in the way these texts extol aniconic traditions such as the worship of bana-lingas and salagramas.

The linga and yoni manifest forces embodied by Shiva and Parvati respectively. In other words, the stone shaft known as the linga represents Shiva as a silent spectator of the world whose existence is contingent upon the creative energies released by Shakti, who resides at the base. This creative



interplay of two opposing forces provides the dynamic equilibrium required for maintaining the cosmic balance. The salagramas, on the other hand, are stones resembling the discus of Vishnu, and generally acquire this shape because of weathering activity caused by

These continue to be venerated by Vaishnavites across the country, as was recently noticed in the ecstatic reception

to the Salagrama stones that arrived in Ayodhya from Nepal.

A regular visit to the temple is also suffused with philosophical import. Before entering the sanctuary, a devotee is greeted by the imposing structure of a temple, which in many ways resembles a mountain. Vastu-shastras frequently liken temples to Mount Meru, which is held in high esteem by Hindus. A devotee then enters the porch and views several sculptures adorning the walls of any temple. Subsequently, the devotee sets foot into the hallowed precincts of the dimly-lit garbha-griha which

almost like a cave within a mountain — is unadorned and houses the chief deity. Texts suggest that an invisible axis connects this deity with the superstructure of a temple. In fact, it is during the consecration of a temple that the deity's

attributes are manifested by the intervention of priests. This ritual process is called "pranapratishta" and literally suggests instilling prana (life) within the deity

In other words, the deity is considered to have life just like a human being, and germinates within the womb-chamber (garbha-griha) of a temple. After seeking darsan of the deity, a devotee circumambulates the shrine, and attends to

the subsidiary deities placed on its side walls. This is also a profoundly meaningful exercise as it helps a devotee absorb the energies prevailing within a temple.

The power of visual motifs can also be discerned in the narrative friezes adorning the walls of several temples in India, illustrating stories from epics and Puranas. The Virupaksha temple at Pattadakal, which is the only temple in the complex under active worship, contains such friezes and their stories are generally concerned with the restoration of dharma. The Kirat-arjuniya tale is illustrated in several temples of the region. This involves a conflict between Shiva in his incarnation as a hunter (kirata) and Arjuna, who seeks to consolidate his military powers when in exile. Arjuna is put through numerous challenges, before being blessed with the desired armoury. Such stories of perseverance, devotion and truthfulness serve to enhance a devotee's spiritual experience within a temple.

For all these reasons, the structural features of temples are chiefly responsible for making them an integral part of India's spiritual landscape. The vibrant temple culture of Bharat has withstood the ravages of time chiefly because of these empowering philosophical and cosmological concepts that subliminally enrich devotee's experience within a shrine. These need to be acknowledged to foster a society that is rooted to its traditions even as it embraces cosmopolitan

The vibrant temple culture of India has withstood the ravages of time chiefly because of the empowering philosophical and cosmological concepts that subliminally enrich devotee's experience within a shrine. These need to be acknowledged to foster a society that is rooted to its traditions even as it embraces cosmopolitan ambitions



ANIRUDH NAVEEN



















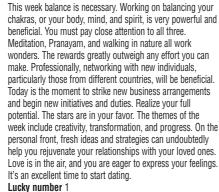




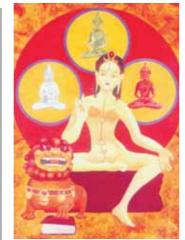




ARIES March 21-April 19



Lucky colour Golden Lucky day Sunday



LEO July 23-Aug 22

Take some time off for vourself this week, and your health will certainly improve. You're on the right track now; keep up the good work. Read more about old rituals. They will enable you to achieve balance by deepening your spiritual awareness and practice. On the professional front, there will be a lot of activity and getting things done. You could make your colleagues appear bad. You're not tired because being a workaholic is your passion. Maintain control of your behavior; there is a risk of using harsh words that will create a hostile environment around you. Maintaining your calm and maintaining your balance in any scenario can help your career. If you are currently committed, your relationship may soon reach new and greater heights.

Lucky number 5 Lucky colour Green Lucky day Friday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

You need a break from daily life this week. There is a need to take a break from the busy pace of work and unwind. Pushing vourself when you are exhausted might lead to sickness and damage. On the professional front, you will profit from your verbal and written communication skills and will receive positive news about your work. Businessmen can obtain a stable financial situation. People in the service will have the support from their superiors and employer this week, which will most likely serve as a stepping stone in their career. Be cautious and keep focused on your goals. A new beginning and stronger aspirations await on the personal front. Now is not the time to put additional effort into your relationship.

Lucky number 11 Lucky colour Brown Lucky day Monday



TAURUS April 20-May 20

You must strike a balance between your health efforts and your personal and professional obligations. Make sure you take time for yourself, for relaxation and recovery. Your health will suffer if you put yourself last on the priority list. Make sure you're getting enough rest and sleep. Professionally, if you are looking for work, you have the ability and skill to find it. If you already have a job, you can find a better one. If you don't see any possibilities for progress in your current position, consider looking for one that does. If you are devoted to your relationship, don't be afraid to express your feelings to your partner. You take a strong stance and convey your emotions. This will only strengthen your bond.

Lucky number 8 Lucky colour Pastel Lucky day Wednesday



VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

This week is going to be stressful for you. You may be suppressing your emotions, which will have a bad influence on your body. You must exercise caution in how, when, and where you express your emotional reactions. Anything that relieves stress is beneficial right now, even a five-minute walk. Think positively. Maintain your cool and stay connected. Anger is a silent killer. Tension is evident in the workplace. Be optimistic; this is only a passing phase. Now is an excellent moment to look for a new career. Having plans isn't enough; you must also follow through on them. You have the potential to get the job. On the personal front, the time is right for soul-searching and exploration of the inner realms. It is an ideal moment for you to strengthen relationships of all kinds. Lucky number 12

Lucky colour Yellow Lucky day Thursday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

With great care and attention, pay attention to your body. To lose weight, you are either overeating or starving yourself. These scenarios are hazardous to one's health. Adding balance to your eating habits not only helps you manage your weight, but it also offers you a confident attitude. You're otherwise in good health, so enjoy the rest of the week. Work-related investments made in the past are bearing fruit this week. This can be practical, such as a bank account refund. You will reap the benefits of your efforts. You're in your boss's good graces, and you'll be rewarded shortly. In terms of personal relationships, you favor solitude over love and feelings. Those who are committed must maintain contact with their time to keep the spark alive

Lucky number 13 Lucky colour Peach Lucky day Tuesday



GEMINI May 21-June 20

On the health front, you decide to self-validate and believe in yourself and your abilities. Your goal for a healthy, happy family will keep you active. It's time to reflect on how completely different and absolutely great things could be. Professionally, you are upbeat and want to instill love and compassion in your job. You are also quite perceptive. People are surprised to see you in this avatar. Now is the time to concentrate on your goals and objectives. Maintain your resolution and determination. People in business must be harsh when it comes to money. On a personal level, the mind, heart, and emotions are all moving in opposite directions. In love relationships, this is a very emotional moment. Things may quickly turn ugly. Treat your partner as a friend. Don't rush to end or start a relationship

Lucky number 17 Lucky colour Sky Blue Lucky day Wednesday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

Keep your stress under control this week to stay healthy. Deal with any physical issues that arise; do not try to ignore them. Make sure you get adequate sleep. If you require healing, ask it. Caring, loving, massage, and hugs from close friends will go a long way toward keeping sensitive people healthy. On the professional front, some may resist your fresh ideas or initiatives, but if you believe you're correct, move forward. You are eager, full of energy, and want to give your all, yet others are not impressed. Leave your simplicity behind and be clever and expressive. When you are confident in yourself, your relationship will enter a lighter, simpler, and more balanced

Lucky number 19 Lucky colour Black **Lucky day** Saturday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

Stress and depression may wear you down and leave you exhausted and vulnerable. Reading, meditation, and gentle activities will provide relief, and adequate sleep will aid to enhance your mental condition. If you have an optimistic and creative mentality, you will be able to overcome life's uncertainties and complexities. On the job, you must make some quick decisions. Make sure your intelligence and rationality are put to good use, and avoid wasting time on disagreements. A remedy to a problem is already available or will be available shortly. On a more intimate level, operate with a calm mind rather than a raging heart. If you are already in a relationship, this might be a critical time. This is the moment to be crystal clear about what you want from your relationships and then take the necessary measures. Lucky number 22

Lucky colour Blue Lucky day Sunday



CANCER June 21-July 22

You are easily swayed by anything that you assume is physically wrong with you. Do not ignore what your doctor has told you; instead, consider it carefully People suffering from serious diseases must be constantly monitored under doctors' supervision. Others require safeguards against seasonal diseases, which can deteriorate if not treated promptly. On the employment front, you may be unsure whether to leave your existing position, start your own firm, or confront some difficult circumstances. Shifting subjects or professions is not always a good idea. Determine your interests and potential. This is the time to stand firm and keep your ears and eyes open. There is hope and happiness on the personal front, as well as a renewed sense of security, protection, and recovery. Lucky number 3

Lucky colour White Laucky day Monday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

This week is ideal for taking care of your health and enhancing your appearance. You are upbeat, optimistic, and full of life. You take good care of yourself and the people you care about. It is not wise to compromise on health problems. It is critical to strike a balance between your work and your relationships. On the professional front, be cautious if you have a job; follow the discipline and set rules of the organization you work for, or else you might face displeasure from your superiors. Money transactions should be handled with caution by businesspeople. There will be conflicts and confrontations that will cause you to lose your cool. On the personal front, you may enter a wonderful partnership. You are probably feeling romantic.

Lucky number 15 Lucky colour Grey Lucky day Friday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20

This week, you are an extremely cheerful, creative, and upbeat person. Your personality reflects this. It's a great moment to show off your charm and embrace the process of personal growth. Your sense of fullness, vigor, and peace of mind will make you an extremely efficient person. You are self-assured and ready to face any challenges in your career. This week, you may win and receive recognition for your efforts. You'll be in your senior's good books. Do not get carried away with your accomplishment. Be cautious in your relationships since there is a possibility of fake love. Investigate before making a final choice. Current relationships should clear up any uncertainties to avoid future misunderstandings.

Lucky number 12 Lucky colour Red Lucky day Thursday

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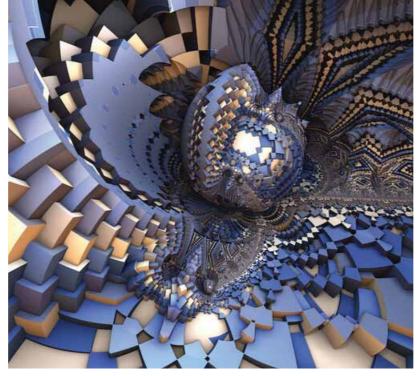


Get over illusionary tendencies of mind and evolve

iven its transitory nature, Indian philosophy views the living world a Maya (illusion). Be that as it may. But all live existences in the world can be physically perceived and are continuously engaged in creative activities. It will, therefore, be unfair to call it unreal, it may not though be an eternal reality. It is, however, again a fact that human mind is by and large illusioned – in terms of perceptions and beliefs. For, invariably all are born ignorant, having a preconditioned mind, coming as it may as Karmic carryover from the past. That limits one's vision and are invariably not open to look beyond for a reality check. They, thus, fail to look at issues in hand in the right perspective due. Consequently, they make inappropriate choices, often inviting failures, pain, and suffering.

A couple of years back a girl used to come looking for her marital prospects. She was looking for someone true to her fanciful dream perception, mostly distanced from ground reality. Carrying a perfectionist streak, she had made a long list of check points. Even if the prospective guy failed on one count, she would

reject him. Consequently, she never got married. I tried my best to make her understand that the world cannot move to one's asking as nobody could be ever born a perfect. The world is purposely designed as such. All carry their individualistic positives and negatives, the positives by and larger on a higher side. Also, we are an inseparable part of a large existence, where none has a reality independent of the whole. That calls for working out ways and means to relate to others overriding all individual differences. To make things further clear, I tried to explain that the whole creation chain began with a disorder (imperfection) at the primordial source, hitherto in an equilibrated state. But immediately thereafter, random mutation of energies emanating from primal source excited a process of harmonisation, which eventually led to the manifest world. As the cause permeates the effect, the imprint of both disorder and harmony are there in human construct. The whole challenge before us is to be in harmony with each other the way nature driven energies join hands to carry on the creative chain, overriding few individual limitations. In



marital relationship, both the partners carry their respective voids, but each complementing the other's. Not simply to together carry on the journey of life, but also evolve. No wonder Gautam Buddha used to say: "Life is a reflection of harmony of the opposites. In fact, even creation is a result of convergence of two opposite characters. So, reconciling dualities of life is called for." This is the premise on which all relationships can

An NRI guy came asking: "Despite sincere efforts we have not been able to find a suitable match. Why so much delay?" In nature's plan, you are being provided with enough of time and space to work upon your illusionary tendencies of mind and become matured enough to handle the subtleties of marital life with relative ease and comfort. Otherwise, it will be difficult to hold on to the marriage. "How come?" He countered.

Cluster of four planets - the Sun, Moon, Mars, and Mercury – are by themselves enough to make out a complexed mind. You have a vacillating mind. You suffer from 'I am the only right person syndrome'. You expect from

all others to prove true to your expectation, failing which you become hypercritical. Sun and Moon both being placed adverse to Saturn, bring in a sense of fear and insecurity towards uncertain future, pessimism, and self-pitying. The Sun, illdisposed of to mischievous Neptune make you stuck to delusional perceptions and beliefs, distanced from ground realities. Even more, because of inflated ego, coming as it may with both Mars and Sun placed adverse to expansive Jupiter. That further limits your vision, which doesn't allow you to look beyond for a reality check. Also, you are head strong.

Recently, he liked a girl and negotiation seems to be in its final stage. His delusional mind has again come into play with regards to the girl's career prospect. He came asking: "Sir, it will take more than a year for her to qualify getting a job suited to her discipline, and I will have to bear with her burden." My dear, you have yet not understood the meaning of marriage. Come out of your transactional attitude. With this mindset, it will be difficult for you to enjoy a stable and harmonious married life.