

OPINION 6

TIME PAKISTAN
REJIGGED ITS CREDO

WORLD 8

TURKEY EARTHQUAKE SURVIVORS SEEK
HOT MEALS AS RESCUES WANE

MONEY 10

SENSEX EXTENDS
LOSSES FOR 2ND DAY

NEW DELHI, TUESDAY FEBRUARY 14, 2023; PAGES 12 ₹3

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GILL WINS ICC
PLAYER OF THE
MONTH AWARD
12 SPORT

Centre OK for panel to protect investors

Govt agrees to SC proposal to form panel to boost regulatory regime

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Monday agreed to the Supreme Court's proposal to set up a panel of experts to look into strengthening the regulatory mechanisms for the stock market in the wake of the recent Adani group shares crash triggered by Hindenburg Research's fraud allegations.

Saying it has no objection to constituting the panel, the Centre, at the same time, stressed that market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and other statutory bodies are "fully equipped", not only regime wise, but otherwise also to deal with the situation. It also wanted to be allowed to provide details such as names and the scope of the panel's mandate in a "sealed cover".

The top court on Friday said the interests of Indian investors need to be protected against market volatility in the backdrop of the Adani stocks rout and asked the Centre to consider setting up a panel of domain experts headed by a former judge to look into strengthening the regulatory mechanisms.

The Court, which was hear-



ing two PILs alleging exploitation of innocent investors and "artificial crashing" of the Adani Group's stock value, was told by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta that the Centre was agreeable to the proposal as it came from the court.

Mehta, however, told the bench also comprising Justices PS Narasimha and JB Pardiwala, that the "remit" of the proposed committee would be relevant because any "unintentional" message to the investors that regulatory bodies here needed a monitoring by a panel may have some adverse impact on flow of money into the country.

"I have instructions that the SEBI and other agencies are fully equipped, not only regime wise, but otherwise also to take care of the situation. However, responding to the suggestion which fell from the court, the Government has no objection to constituting a committee."

"But the remit of the com-

mittee would be very relevant because any unintentional message to international investors or domestic investors that the regulatory authorities need a monitoring by the committee may have some adverse impact on the flow of money," the top law officer said at the outset of the hearing.

He said the Centre may be allowed to suggest names, who are people of "some calibre" and scope of the proposed committee in a sealed cover because it may not be appropriate to discuss these in open court hearings.

The bench then asked the law officer to give the note by Wednesday and listed the two PILs for further hearing on February 17.

The top court had also sought the views of the SEBI and the Centre as to how to ensure putting a robust mechanism in place since the capital movement now is "seamless" in the country.

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Def yield 'rejuvenated', export to rise by 233% to ₹5bn in 2025: PM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI/BENGALURU

India has boosted its defence production in the last eight to nine years and is expected to export military hardware worth over five billion dollars by 2024-25 from the current 1.5 billion dollars, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday.

Making this assertion after inaugurating the 14th edition of the prestigious international exhibition "Aero India" in Bengaluru, he showcased India as an attractive destination for investment in the defence manufacturing sector.

Modi said the country will move towards becoming one of the leading exporters of military hardware globally backed by favourable economic policies. A commemorative stamp was also released by the PM on the occasion. The five-day event, on the theme "The runway to a billion opportunities", will showcase India's growth in aerospace and defence capabilities. It will display indigenous equipment and technologies and forge partnerships with foreign companies, in line with "Make in India, Make for the World" vision for a secure and prosperous future.

Addressing the gathering, the PM said Bengaluru sky is bearing testimony to the capabilities of New India. "This new height is the reality of New India, today India is touching new heights and transcending them too," he said.

The PM said India has



Indian Air Force's Light Combat Helicopter (LCH) performs during the inauguration of Aero India 2023, at Yelahanka air base in Bengaluru on Monday (top)

PTI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses during the inaugural ceremony of Aero India 2023, in Bengaluru, on Monday (right)

PTI

"rejuvenated" its defence production sector in the last eight-nine years and is looking at increasing the export of military hardware from \$1.5 billion (one billion=₹100 crore) to USD five billion by 2024-25.

"The new India of the 21st century will neither miss any opportunity nor will it lack any effort. We are gearing up. We are bringing revolution in every sector on the path of reforms,"



Modi said.

"The country, which was the biggest defence importer for decades, is now exporting defence equipment to 75 countries of the world," he said.

Modi said India's defence exports have increased six times in the last five years and

that it has crossed the figure of USD 1.5 billion in its exports.

The five-day aerospace exhibition, considered the largest in Asia, is seeing participation of over 700 Indian and foreign defence companies besides delegates from around 100 countries which included

several Defence Ministers as well.

"You also know that defence is such an area in which technology, market and business are considered the most complicated. Despite this, India has rejuvenated its defence sector within the last 8-9 years. Therefore, we consider this to be just a start," Modi said. "Our target is that by 2024-25, we will increase this export figure from 1.5 billion to 5 billion dollars," he said.

Modi also described Aero India as an example of India's growing potential. "The presence of around 100 countries of the world shows how much the world's faith in India has increased. More than 700 exhibitors from India and abroad are participating in it. It has broken all old records till now," he said. The PM said efforts made in the defence and aerospace sector, including at the Aero India, will act as a launch pad for India.

"Now from here India will move fast to join the world's largest defence manufacturing countries. And our private sector and investors are going to play an important role in this. Today I would call upon the private sector of India to invest in India's defence sector as much as possible," Modi said.

"Your every investment in the defence sector in India, apart from India, will in a way create new avenues for your trade-business in many countries of the world," he said.

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CAPSULE

3RD INDIA-AUS TEST TO BE PLAYED IN INDORE NOW

New Delhi: The third Test between India and Australia scheduled to be played from March 1-5 has been shifted from Dharamsala to Indore, owing to poor outfield conditions, BCCI said on Monday. That the match will be shifted was confirmed on Sunday itself after BCCI curator Taposh Chatterjee's report deemed the re-laid outfield as unfit for an international match.

DUBAI PLANS FOR FLYING TAXI SERVICE FROM 2026

Dubai: Dubai again is planning for the takeoff of flying taxis in this futuristic city-state on the Arabian Peninsula, offering its first details yet Monday for a pledged launch by 2026.

MUMBAI TOP COP GETS BOMB BLAST CALL

Mumbai: Police have launched a probe after a man threatened a bomb blast in Mira Bhayandar area under the Mumbai Metropolitan Region, an official said on Monday. The caller gave this information after identifying himself to a Joint Commissioner of Police-rank officer in Mumbai over a phone call in the early hours of the day, the official said.

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Mayoral election — stalled thrice due to fight in the House — scheduled for February 16 has been postponed again as the Supreme Court on Monday observed that nominated members of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) cannot vote in a mayoral election.

As the wait for a Delhi mayor gets longer after results of the civic polls were announced on December 7, the court also said the constitutional provision is "very clear" on the voting rights of nominated members (aldermen).

As a bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud posted for Friday the hearing on a plea filed by AAP mayoral candidate Shelly Oberoi seeking early holding of the mayoral poll, Additional Solicitor General (ASG) Sanjay Jain, appearing for the office of Delhi Lieutenant Governor, said the February 16 poll would be postponed to a date after



February 17.

"Nominated members cannot go for election. The constitutional provision is very clear," the bench, also comprising Justices PS Narasimha and JB Pardiwala, orally observed.

"Nominated members should not vote. That is very well settled. It is very clear Mr Jain," the CJJ told the ASG.

However, Jain said he would argue on this aspect.

Delhi Lt Governor VK Saxena had given his approval to convene the next session of the MCD House on February 16 for election to the post of

mayor, his office said on Sunday.

After the December civic polls, three meetings were adjourned amid ruckus and commotion over the decision to give voting rights to aldermen (nominated members).

After the court hearing, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) indulged in a blame game with the ruling party accusing the Centre of resorting to "dishonest tactics".

The BJP hit back alleging that its "suspicion" that the AAP did not want voting in MCD House has proved true.

Both the BJP and the AAP have previously accused each other of preventing the mayoral poll with the bone of contention being the appointment of aldermen and their voting rights in the House.

The AAP, which has a majority with 134 out of 250 elected members, has alleged that the BJP is trying to steal its mandate by giving voting rights to the nominated members.

Continued on P2

SC rejects plea against J&K's delimitation

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday dismissed a plea challenging the Government's decision to constitute the Delimitation Commission for redrawing the legislative Assembly and Lok Sabha constituencies in Jammu and Kashmir.

A bench of Justices SK Kaul and AS Oka delivered the verdict on a plea filed by two Kashmir residents. While pronouncing the verdict, Justice Oka said nothing in this judgement shall be construed as giving an imprimatur to the exercise of power under clauses one and three of Article 370 of the Constitution.

The bench observed that issue of validity of the exercise of power relating to Article 370 is subject matter of petitions pending before the apex court.

The top court is seized of petitions challenging the constitutional validity of the Centre's decision to abrogate provisions of Article 370 on August 5, 2019.

Continued on P2

Suicide by Dalit student puts IIT Bombay in spot

PNS ■ MUMBAI

After an 18-year-old student of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay, located in Powai area, allegedly committed suicide by jumping off the seventh floor of a hostel building located on the campus on Sunday, a student group on Monday alleged discrimination prevalent on the campus against Scheduled Caste students.

The Ambedkar Periyar Phule Study Circle-IITB had pointed fingers at the IIT-B holding various lapses on the part of the management to address their distress, etc, and sought redressal the reason behind the student taking extreme step on Sunday afternoon.

There was no suicide note and the police have registered a case of accidental death. Investigations, though are on.

The IIT-B condoled the death by suicide of BTech first



year Dalit student, Darshan Solanki, terming it as "a great loss to the family and to the IITB community."

In its first reaction, the IIT-B said, "It is unfortunate that such a loss could not be prevented despite the efforts of the Institute and Student Mentors to support our students. A committee has been constituted to investigate the incident."

The IIT-B held a condolence meeting and observed two minutes of silence in memory of the departed soul, said a spokesperson.

According to certain reports, Solanki reportedly did not need warning shouts from other co-students who noticed him just before he took the plunge to death.

Retail inflation 6.52% in Jan, 3-month high

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Retail inflation again breached the Reserve Bank's upper tolerance limit and touched a three-month high of 6.52 per cent in January, mainly due to higher prices in the food basket, including cereals and protein-rich items.

With the exception of November and December 2022, retail inflation has remained above the RBI's upper tolerance level of 6 per cent since January 2022.

The retail inflation based on the Consumer Price Index was 5.72 per cent in December and 6.01 per cent in January 2022. The previous high was 6.77 per cent in October. While the prices of vegetable declined in January, most of the other items, including 'fuel and light' became dearer.

The rate of price rise in the food basket was 5.94 per cent in January, up from 4.19 per cent in the preceding month and 5.43 per cent in the year-ago month, as per data released by the NSO.

Detailed report on P10

LTTE chief still alive, claims Indian leader, Lanka terms it 'a joke'

PTI ■ THANJAVUR (TN)

Fourteen years after the killing of LTTE's Velupillai Prabhakaran, a veteran Tamil nationalist leader claimed here on Monday the leader of Eelam Tamils is doing well and said a conducive atmosphere prevails for him to appear now.

The Sri Lankan Defence Ministry dismissed the claim as a "joke" and referred to DNA proof to assert Prabhakaran was killed way back in 2009.

In a Press conference, Pazha Nedumaran, a noted Tamil nationalist leader, prefixed his declaration as a 'true announcement' and said the international (political) atmos-



phere and fierce opposition to the Rajapaksa by the Sinhalese people in Sri Lanka has created the right conditions for the leader of the Eelam Tamils, Prabhakaran to emerge.

Nedumaran's assertion, however, did not find acceptance with even well-known sympathisers of the cause of Tamil nationalism, including MDMK general secretary Vaiko.

Continued on P2

Mandhana hits pay dirt as 10 Indians get crore-plus WPL deals

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Smriti Mandhana stole the thunder in the inaugural Women's Premier League (WPL) auctions as Royal Challengers Bangalore pipped Mumbai Indians in a bidding war to buy the India vice-captain for ₹3.40 crore (USD 410,000) here on Monday.

On a day when 10 Indian players got crore-plus deals, skipper Harmanpreet Kaur came much cheaper for Mumbai Indians at nearly half the price of Mandhana at ₹1.80 crore. Harmanpreet is also not the highest paid in her team where England's Nat Sciver-Brunt got way more at ₹3.20 crore.

In fact, Harmanpreet was not even among the top-six Indian buys as the second costliest player from the country is all-rounder Deepti

Sharma, who was bought by UP Warriorz for ₹2.6 crore.

The hard-hitting Shafali Verma and Jemimah Rodrigues, the star of the T20 World Cup win against Pakistan on Sunday, were picked by Delhi Capitals for ₹2 crore and ₹2.20 crore respectively. All-rounders Pooja Vastrakar and Richa Ghosh laughed their way to the bank with ₹1.90 crore deals each offered by MI and RCB respectively.

Jemimah and Richa's deals were also a case of recency bias as the Pakistan match on Sunday did play a big role.

Yastika Bhatia, who opened the batting with Shafali Verma against Pakistan, went to Mumbai Indians for ₹1.5 crore.

The two other Indians who got crore-plus deals were Renuka Thakur (bought by RCB at ₹1.5 crore) and Devika



In this file photo dated Dec. 11, 2022, cricketers Smriti Mandhana and Harmanpreet Kaur during the T20 International series between India and Australia, at Dr DY Patil Cricket Stadium in Navi Mumbai.

Vaidya (bought by UP Warriorz at ₹1.4 crore).

However, Delhi Capitals pulled off a coup by roping in one of contemporary women's cricket's best leaders Meg Lanning of Australia for ₹1.10 crore.

The RCB, which teed off the buying spree, also explained their choices and the price attached to it. "Everyone knows Mandhana and (Australia's Elyse) Perry — ₹1.7 crore; we were pretty committed to the couple of people we wanted to get. We're very happy to get such quality players. It's a dream result for us to get Mandhana, Perry and (Sophie) Devine (₹50 lakh)," RCB Director of Cricket Mike Hesson said.

"Smriti has got plenty of captaincy experience and is familiar with the Indian conditions, so highly likely (she'll

be the captain)."

Mandhana, who watched the auction with her team cheering each bid, was ecstatic. "We have been watching auction of men's (players). It is such a big moment for women to have an auction of this sort. The whole thing is exciting. RCB's legacy is big, they have built a big fan-base. Hope we both can together build a big team," Mandhana said.

Deepti, on her part, said, "We waited for this opportunity and since I am from UP, it is a great feeling. I want to contribute as much as possible for UP Warriorz."

One of the prominent picks during the first round of auction was Australia's off-spin all-rounder Ashleigh Gardner, who was bought by Gautam Adani-owned Gujarat Giants for ₹3.20 crore.

Continued on Page 2

45 students of Delhi Govt schools crack JEE Mains

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government Schools have created yet another milestone with 45 students cracking the prestigious Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) Mains with flying colours. The JEE score is required for admission in the engineering colleges.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia interacted with the 45 Delhi Government School students who scored the feat.

All the 45 students from the Delhi government schools have secured above 98 per centile in JEE Mains, of which two have secured 99.98 per centile, the Delhi government said in a release. "There is no dearth of talent in Delhi government school students; if given an opportunity, they can also work hard and crack tough exams like JEE," Sisodia said.

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said, "Along with the students, the hard work of their parents, teachers and the entire team of Delhi Education



has also contributed a lot in this stupendous success of these children of Delhi."

"Our schools come from varied socio-economic backgrounds and have seen the toughest times in their lives, but still they are determined to achieve their goals.

Hard work of students and teachers along with facilities like upgraded libraries, free coaching classes, and reading rooms have contributed to this success," Sisodia said.

Last year, 496 students of Delhi government schools qualified for Mains and thereafter 74 cleared the JEE Advanced competition that allows admissions into Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs).

ACB arrests three contractors for swindling ₹20 cr of DJB funds

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi government's Anti-Corruption Branch (ACB) has arrested three people for allegedly embezzling Rs 20 crore from the Delhi Jal Board, a senior enforcement officer said on Monday.

The accused were identified as 56-year-old Raju Nair, 52-year-old Gopi Kumar Kedia, and Dr Abhilash Vasukuttan Pillai, he said.

According to the officer,

DJB had awarded the work of "Setting up automotive bill payment collection machines" at different DJB offices to the Corporation Bank (Now Union Bank of India).

The machines were meant to facilitate bill payments in cash and cheques and other modes by DJB consumers. Corporation Bank in its turn gave the contract to Freshpay IT Solutions which further gave it to Aurrum e-Payments Pvt Ltd. The contract was valid up to October 10, 2019,

but Aurrum e-payments Pvt Ltd collected the amount till March 2020, the officer said. One of the three accused, Nair, who hails from Kerala, has an Indian passport but lives in Moscow in Russia. He was the owner and Director of Aurrum e-payment.

Kedia, another accused, was the CFO and authorised signatory of Aurrum e-payment, and Pillai was the Director of Freshpay IT Solution and also an authorised signatory of Aurrum

e-payment and Freshpay IT Solution, the senior ACB officer said. "The preliminary enquiry conducted by the Vigilance Department of DJB revealed embezzlement of DJB funds amounting to Rs 20 crore ... by private persons in connivance with Corporation Bank and DJB officials," he said.

"Accordingly, a case was registered on November 12, 2022, with the Anti Corruption Branch and an investigation was taken up," he added.

With Sharad's nod formed 2019 Govt with Ajit: Fadnavis; Pawar denies

PTI ■ MUMBAI

More than three years after he teamed up with NCP leader Ajit Pawar in an overnight coup to form a short-lived Government in Maharashtra, deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis on Monday said the dramatic exercise had NCP chief Sharad Pawar's backing.

However, Sharad stoutly denied Fadnavis's claim and said he never thought the senior BJP leader will base his asser-



tion on falsehood.

"We had an offer from the NCP that they needed a stable government and we should form such a government together. We decided to go ahead and hold talks. The talks happened with Sharad Pawar. Then things changed. You have seen how things changed," Fadnavis said, referring to Ajit

Pawar quitting the Government 80 hours later.

"In all fairness I want to State that Ajit Pawar took oath with me with honesty... But later on their (NCP's) strategy changed," Fadnavis said, during an event organised by TV9 news channel. Responding to Fadnavis' remarks, Sharad Pawar said, "I felt that Devendra is a cultured person and a gentleman. I never felt that he will take recourse to falsehood and make such a statement."

Soldier's wife raped by landlord in Ambala

Ambala: A man was booked for raping the wife of his tenant, an armyman, police said on Monday. According to police, the victim, a middle-aged woman, lives with her husband in a rented house.

She in her complaint to the police alleged that on February 3, their landlord came to their house and lied to her that her husband had met with an accident, and tricked her into coming to his house.

PTI

Mandhana hits pay dirt as 10 Indians...

From Page 1

Gardner and Nat Sciver are the two highest-paid overseas players. Gujarat primarily bought foreign players and are yet to buy prominent India players save Harleen Deol for Rs 40 lakh.

Star Australian all-rounder Perry received a cool Rs 1.70 crore (USD 205,000) winning bid from RCB, who also got New Zealand skipper Devine dirt cheap at a base price of Rs 50 lakh. UP Warriorz also got England left-arm spinner Sophie Ecclestone on board for Rs 1.80 crore.

The five potential captains are Mandhana (RCB), Harmanpreet (MI), Lanning (DC), Beth Mooney (Gujarat Giants) and Deepti Sharma (UP Warriorz). Some of the big names to miss out are Sri Lankan skipper Chamari Atapathu and South African batter Laura Wolvaardt.

Delhi Capitals' co-owner Parth Jindal was happy with the players picked up during the auction, saying the strategy was not to go after the stars but build a good squad.

DC acquired batter Jemimah Rodrigues (Rs 2.2 crore) and all-rounders Radha Yadav (Rs 40 lakh) and Shikha Pandey (Rs 60 lakh) along with the U-19 Women's T20 World Cup winners Shafali Verma (Rs 2 crore) and Titas Sadhu (Rs 25

lakh) in the auction. "Some of the early names that we went for, the prices went very high, so we had to pull out. But if we look back at how the three rounds have gone, we're happy. We have Jemimah, who has done tremendously well. And then Shafali, she has just won the U-19 World Cup.

"We are looking for all-rounders. We're looking for bowlers. We're looking to obviously make the squad. When we came into the auction, we had a very clear-cut strategy that we were going to build a very competitive squad of 15. We didn't want star players; we wanted a very good squad," said Jindal.

Legendary India cricketer and Gujarat Giants mentor Mithali Raj said she was thrilled with the squad she and her team had put together during the auction.

Gujarat picked Australian all-rounder Aishleigh Gardner for Rs 3.2 crore and two-time T20 World Cup winner Beth Mooney for Rs two crore besides India player Harleen Deol.

"My team and I are thrilled to leave the table feeling delighted with the squad we have put together. With all our bases covered, from here onwards we begin our preparation for the upcoming tournament," said Mithali.

SC rejects...

From Page1

Several petitions have been filed in the apex court challenging the Centre's decision to abrogate provisions of Article

Aldermen can't vote, observes SC; Feb 16 MCD mayoral poll put off

From Page 1

Advocate Shadan Farasat, appearing for Oberoi, told the bench that the petitioner is seeking two directions —nominated members should not be permitted to vote and the elections of mayor, deputy mayor and standing committee be separated. The apex court had on February 8 sought responses of the LG office, pro-tem presiding officer Satya Sharma of the MCD and others on Oberoi's plea.

Senior advocate A M Singhvi, appearing for the AAP leader, had pointed out that the MCD House was convened three times but the election of the mayor was not held.

"We have several objections including that the pro-tem presiding officer of the MCD is insisting on holding elections for mayor, deputy mayor and members of standing committee all at once. This is contrary to the Delhi Municipal Corporation Act," he had said.

Singhvi had said the other issue is the voting rights of nominated members of the House and it needs to be adjudicated. The petitioner had moved the apex court on February 7, a day after the MCD House failed to elect a mayor for the third time following a ruckus as the AAP objected to the presiding officer saying that the aldermen nominated by the LG will vote in the election.

Our "suspicion" that the AAP does not want voting in the MCD House for mayor has been proved correct, alleged Delhi BJP working president Virendra Sachdeva.

"They had gone to the court for a stay (on voting) in which they have succeeded. Our endeavour has always been that Delhi

gets its mayor at the earliest," he said.

He hoped the Supreme Court will decide the matter at the earliest, and added the BJP will accept whatever is its judgement.

The AAP alleged that giving voting rights to the nominated members was a "shameful act" by the BJP-led Central government.

"It was shameful act by the Centre that despite there being a well-settled law that nominated members cannot vote, they were indulging in dishonest tactics. Because of this, they ensured that the MCD House proceedings were disrupted thrice," alleged AAP national spokesperson Saurabh Bhardwaj.

The electoral college for the election of the MCD mayor comprises 250 elected councillors, seven Lok Sabha and three Rajya Sabha MPs from Delhi and 14 MLAs. The Delhi Assembly Speaker has nominated 13 AAP MLAs and a BJP member to the civic body.

The AAP won 134 wards and the BJP 104 in the civic body polls held. A BJP rebel, who had contested as an independent, rejoined the party after winning from the Mundka ward. The total votes in the mayoral polls are 274. The numbers game favours AAP, which has 150 votes against the BJP's 113.

The Congress had earlier declared it will not participate in the mayoral poll.

However, in the MCD House meeting on February 6, presiding officer and BJP councillor Satya Sharma had decided that the 10 LG-appointed aldermen will vote.

If the aldermen are allowed to vote, the committed voting strength of the BJP could go up to 123 from 113.

Def yield 'rejuvenated'...

From Page1

"Your every investment in the defence sector in India, apart from India, will in a way create new avenues for your trade-business in many countries of the world," he said.

The PM said the "defeating roar" of Aero India also has the echo of India's mantra of "Reform, Perform and Transform."

"Today, the kind of decisive Government that India has, the kind of stable policies, the kind of clear intention in the policies, is unprecedented. Every investor should take full

advantage of this supportive environment created in India," he said. "Where there is demand, capability and experience, the natural principle says that there the industry will grow day by day. I assure you that the process of strengthening the defence sector in India will move forward at an even faster pace," Modi said.

He said when a country moves forward with new thinking and new approach, then its systems also start changing according to the new thinking. "This event of Aero India also

reflects the new approach of New India today. There was a time when it was considered to be just a show or just a window to 'Sell to India' in a way. In the past years, this perception has also changed in the country," Modi said.

"Today Aero India is not just a show, it is also the strength of India. Today it also focuses on the scope of the Indian defence industry and also on self-confidence," he said.

He further said, "The sky of Bangalore is witnessing the

potential of New India today. The sky of Bengaluru today is testifying that new heights are the reality of new India. Today, the country is touching new heights as well as crossing them."

Officials said around 250 business-to-business agreements are expected to be signed up at the Aero India which is estimated to unlock investment to the tune of around Rs 75,000 crore. A plethora of aircraft of the Indian Air Force displayed their aerial prowess in an air

35 vie for BJP tickets to fight G'gram local poll

PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM

At least 35 candidates have shown interest in contesting the upcoming Manesar Municipal Corporation (MCM) elections in Gurugram on BJP tickets. The civic body comprises a total of 20 wards and is expected to go to the poll in March-April.

Apart from this, over a dozen of contestants have come forward for the Mayor's election, a party source claimed. For the first time, the Mayor in Manesar will be elected directly through the municipal polls.

These candidates also submitted their bio-data during a recently held meeting chaired by Haryana's former Education Minister and Election in-charge of MCM Ram Bilas Sharma.

In a few wards, not even a single contestant came forward, while the party was expecting that it would get at least four to five claimants in each ward, but it did not happen, the sources said.

The election in charge of MCM on Saturday said: "The dedicated workers will be given a strong hold on the upcoming corporation elections." "For

this, an internal survey will be conducted, and based on the report, the organisation will start ticket distribution," he said. "I have also submitted my profile to the party's senior leader.

Wazirpur Gram Panchayat which falls under the MCM has got a 6-star rated award in cleanliness in streets, functional solar street lights, CCTV Cameras, the hygienic atmosphere in the Community Health Centre, Ayush Centre, Government school of the village," said Sarpanch Sher Singh Chauhan of village Wazirpur.

Singh said if he wins the Municipal Corporation of Manesar Mayor his top priority would be to make Manesar Corporation 7 rated across Haryana.

"During the meeting, bio-data of the workers willing to contest the mayor's election were sought from Manesar Corporation. More than a dozen workers have submitted their profiles before the senior party leader," Sharma said.

The former minister said, "The election date will be decided by the Election Commission, but the party organisation is fully prepared for the upcoming Manesar Corporation Elections."

Centre OK for panel to protect...

From Page 1

The stock market is not the place where only high value investors invest, it had said, adding that with the changing financial and tax regime investments are being made by "the wide spectrum of middle class." It had noted that as per some reports the total loss suffered by Indian investors due to the recent Adani stocks rout was in the range of several lakh crores of rupees.

On the issue of strengthening the existing regulatory regime, the bench had mooted a committee which can comprise experts from the securities areas, the international banking sector and a "wise guiding figure in the form of a former judge".

"We have also suggested to the solicitor general, if they are willing to accede to forming a committee to see the overall situation. If the Union government is so inclined to accept the suggestion, the necessary submissions can be urged on the constitution of the committee to that end," it had said in the order.

One PIL filed by lawyer Vishal Tiwari sought a direction to the Centre to constitute a committee monitored by a retired apex court judge to inquire into the Hindenburg Research report which has made a slew of allegations against the business conglomerate led by industrialist Gautam Adani.

Another PIL filed by advocate ML Sharma sought prosecution of short-seller Nathan Anderson of the US-based Hindenburg Research and his associates in India and the US for allegedly exploiting innocent investors and the "artificial crashing" of the Adani Group's stock value in the market.

show at the event.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said Aero India will act as a catalyst in further growth of the aerospace sector in India. He will host a Defence Ministers' conclave on Tuesday on the theme "Shared Prosperity through Enhanced Engagements in Defence (SPEED)".

The major exhibitors at the Aero India include Airbus, Boeing, Dassault Aviation, Lockheed Martin, Israel Aerospace Industry, BrahMos Aerospace, Army Aviation, HC

Robotics, SAAB, Safran, Rolls Royce, Larsen & Toubro, Bharat Forge Limited, Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) and BEML Limited.

United States Charge d'Affaires Ambassador to India Elizabeth Jones is leading the largest-ever US delegation to the biennial air show. US also unveiled its fifth-generation fighters, the stealthy and super-sonic F-35A Lightning II and F-35A Joint Strike Fighter.

firmated that Prabhakaran was killed. Videos and photographs showing a dead Prabhakaran with some visible injuries were also made available by the island nation. Meanwhile, Sri Lanka's defence ministry on Monday dismissed Nedumaran's claim as a joke.

"It is confirmed that he was killed on 19 May 2009. The DNA has proved it," Colonel Nalin Herath, Sri Lanka's defence ministry spokesman told PTI in Colombo.

In his reaction, filmmaker-turned-politician and Naam Tamizhar Katchi chief Seeman, known for his sympathies for the cause of Tamil nationalism, wondered if Prabhakaran would have safely escaped by giving up on the life of his son Balachandran, who was also killed. "Our Annan (elder brother, Prabhakaran) had declared that he will not leave

the country at any cost and he valourously fought. Do you think that our Annan is a coward to escape to protect his life alone," he asked reporters in Erode.

He wanted to know if Prabhakaran, if he had been alive, would be quiet till now, nearly 15 years after the civil war in Sri Lanka ended, during the phase of which Tamils underwent untold sufferings.

"He is not the one to declare ahead that he will be coming. He has taught us action before words. There is no need to make unnecessary confusion.

They say that he (Prabhakaran) will one day appear before the people. Let us talk when that happens." The LTTE was fighting for an independent state for Tamils in Sri Lanka's north and eastern provinces.



THANKSGIVING

Thank you holly spirit blessings Celine.

PD(90269)C

PUBLIC NOTICE

Property Paper, Demand Letter, Possession Slip, From DDA File no. F23(359)84/TP/NP/MIG issued by Asst. Director (H) DDA, possession letter and, NOC for Water and Electricity connection in respect of H.No. 102B PKT IV Mayur Vihar Phase 1, Delhi-110091, in the name of Ruchika Bhardwaj D/o Balkrishna Sharma, have been lost report whereof has been lodged vide LR no. 1454/94/2023, with Crime Branch, Delhi. Anyone in possession of said document is advised to refrain from misusing them.

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

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

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

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

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Kusha Charan Swain/ Sradhanjali Swain/ LBGHZ00002360284	Flat No- 1602, 16th Floor, Block- B, Gayatri Aura, Plot No- Gh011, Sec- 01 Noida Extension Greater Noida West/ 10 February, 2023	September 23, 2022 Rs. 17,03,919/-	Delhi

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

Date : February 14, 2023
Place : Delhi/ NCR

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

Locals protest demolition; drive has legally admissible flaws: AAP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

An "anti-encroachment drive" in the Mehrauli Archaeological Park area went on for the fourth consecutive day on Monday, with Delhi Development Authority (DDA) and police personnel facing protests from many local residents during the exercise. Amid the ongoing 'anti-encroachment' drive AAP MLA Somnath Bharti has urged the Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena to stop the exercise and enforce the city government's order for fresh demarcation.

The demolition drive continued on Monday and action was taken in the area located near the Bhoolai Bhulaiya monument, a senior DDA official said. "We will continue the drive to remove illegal structures. Some parties have approached court seeking a stay on the demolitions and so

only those structures will be removed which are not part of any litigation," an official source said.

A group of around 50 women staged a protest in the locality against the anti-encroachment drive. They raised slogans "demanding justice" and also showed their documents to members of the media present during the drive. Officials spoke to them and pacified them, and eventually they ended their protest, a senior police officer said.

Meanwhile, Bharti, in a letter to the L-G, said the demolition drive in Mehrauli has been causing "extreme hardships" to the residents there and that it suffers from "fundamental and legally admissible errors". "The L-G is kindly requested to direct the authorities to stop any demolition further and to take remedial measures to compensate the already demolished struc-

tures to their rightful occupiers or owners," he said. The AAP MLA further requested the L-G to carry out new demarcation and said that, present owners or occupiers should be made party to all such demarcation processes and their objection must be duly considered.

The demolition drive will be carried out till March 9, officials had said on Friday. "If the lands, on which these buildings are situated, happened to be of the government then before undertaking any demolition exercise on the buildings situated on such lands, you are kindly requested to direct the concerned to come up with a rehabilitation package for the people who will get displaced," the letter read.

Bharti further urged to identify the authorities of DDA and Delhi police who were supposed to guard these government lands and during whose

tenure such buildings came up. "There should be thorough investigation of all the people involved in cheating ordinary people and selling them government lands for construction. Officers involved in moving the line of division from Gair abadi to Abadi should be identified and suitable punitive action including termination should be taken against them," he wrote in the letter.

The drive had begun on Friday and comes a month ahead of a proposed G20 meeting at the park in South Delhi that, according to the DDA, has about 55 monuments under the protection of the archaeological Survey of India, state archaeological department and the authority.

A day before, a group of protesting women had thrown chilli powder at many police personnel who were deployed during the drive, he said.



The anti-encroachment drive at Ladha Sarai village that began on Friday had triggered protests as well as a blame game between the AAP and the BJP. Nearly 1,200 sqm of government land has been reclaimed during the "anti-encroachment drive" carried out in the Mehrauli Archaeological Park area, and the exercise will continue, DDA officials had said on Saturday.

Earlier a demolition order dated December 12, 2022, was

pasted on walls of structures along with markings. It had directed to "encroachers to remove all the unauthorised construction from the land in question within 10 days".

The order said the land on which the demolition is being carried out is part of the Mehrauli Archaeological Park and the "existing unauthorised encroachment is acting as a hindrance to the development of the Mehrauli Archaeological Park".



Pics by Ranjan Dimri

PIONEER

SC on Mayor poll row: AAP, BJP trade charges

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Hours after the Supreme Court observed that nominated members (Aldermen) cannot vote in the MCD House polls for Mayor's job, the ruling AAP in Delhi and the BJP traded charges. The AAP said the BJP was resorting to "dishonest tactics" and the Opposition party retorted it always suspected that the Kejriwal-led party was delaying voting in the MCD House.

Hearing a plea filed by the AAP's mayoral candidate Shelly Oberoi, the apex court on Monday observed that nominated members of the MCD cannot vote in the mayoral election and the constitutional provision is "very clear" on that. The electoral college for the election of the MCD mayor comprises 250 elected councillors, seven Lok Sabha and three Rajya Sabha MPs from Delhi and 14 MLAs. The Delhi Assembly Speaker has nominated 13 AAP MLAs and a BJP member to the civic body. LG

The LG VK Saxena nominated 10 people as Aldermen of the MCD. The AAP won 134 wards and the BJP 104 in the civic body polls held in December last year. A BJP rebel, who had contested as an independent, rejoined the party after winning from the Mundka ward. The total votes in the mayoral polls are 274. The numbers game favours AAP, which has 150 votes against the BJP's 113. The Congress had earlier declared it will not participate in the mayoral poll.

However, in the MCD House meeting on February 6, Presiding Officer and BJP Councillor Satya Sharma had decided that the 10 LG-appointed Aldermen will vote in the mayor's election. If the Alderman are allowed to vote the voting strength of the BJP will go up to 123 from 113.

Referring to the plea being heard by the top court, Delhi BJP working president Virendra Sachdeva said the date for the mayoral election on

February 16 has been postponed. He alleged that the BJP's "suspicion" that AAP does not want voting in the MCD House for Mayor has been proved to be correct. "They had gone to the court for a stay (on voting) in which they have succeeded. Our endeavour has always been that Delhi gets its Mayor at the earliest," Sachdeva said.

The BJP leader said he hoped that the Supreme Court would decide the matter at the earliest, and added that his party would accept the court's judgement. A Supreme Court Bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud posted the matter on Friday for further hearing. Additional Solicitor General (ASG) Sanjay Jain, appearing for the office of the Delhi LG, said the February 16 poll would be postponed to a date after February 17.

The AAP alleged that giving voting rights to the nominated members was a "shameful act" by the BJP-led central government. "It was shameful



act by the Centre that despite there being a well-settled law that nominated members cannot vote, they were indulging in dishonest tactics. Because of this, they ensured that the MCD House proceedings were disrupted thrice," alleged AAP national spokesperson Saurabh Bhardwaj.

The AAP thanks the Supreme Court, he said, adding, "There is an institution in this country that is still governed by law and is not under pressure from Centre or any other institution." Meanwhile, the Delhi

People with less than 67 sq mtr plot eligible for flats, says DDA

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With a large number of flats built by Delhi Development Authority (DDA) remaining unsold in one housing scheme after another, a person having less than 67 sq mtrs flat or plot in Delhi would now become eligible to apply for allotment of newly constructed flat offered by DDA for the first time.

In a move to enable general public to buy DDA flats without any hassles, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) has approved modifications proposed by the authority in Housing Regulations 1968 which were issued under section 57 of DDA Act, 1957. "Earlier, the main regulations didn't allow any person to apply for allotment of DDA flats, if he/she or family members were having any flat/plot irrespective of area of flat/plot," the DDA said in a statement on Monday.



The key features of the approved modifications/relaxations in the Regulations are that any person having less than 67 sq. mtrs. Flat or Plot in Delhi now became eligible to apply for allotment of newly constructed flat offered by DDA for the first time.

The main Regulations did not allow any person to apply for allotment of DDA flats, if he/she or family members were having any flat/plot irrespective of area of flat/plot.

Waiting list of a main Housing Scheme shall be 100 percent of the total flats offered under the respective Housing

Scheme. Till now numbers of waitlisted applicants were restricted up to 25 percent. These wait listed applicants are allotted surrendered/cancelled flats through a mini draw.

If more than 25 percent flats remain unsold in any area/locality on closing of the Housing Scheme in which they are offered for the first time, such locality/area shall be deemed to be a 'Developing area'.

There will not be any restriction in terms of having flat/land in Delhi to the applicants as and when such unsold flats located in a developing area are offered under the subsequent Housing Scheme.

Apart from individual/certain Government entities like Central Government, State Government, Local Bodies, Autonomous Bodies of Central/State Government shall be eligible for allotment of flats.

DERC yet to issue order on power tariffs even as financial year ends

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The power tariff order of Delhi for 2022-23 is yet to be announced by the city's electricity regulator Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission (DERC) even as the financial year is coming to an end.

Ideally, the exercise should be completed before the next financial year starts, and a delay in announcement in tariff will affect consumers as well as distribution companies in the long run "financially", according to officials.

The power tariff order is ready but its announcement has been delayed due to various reasons, a senior functionary at Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission (DERC) said.

"The tariff order is ready. Its announcement was delayed earlier due to court cases and now, the DERC chairman has

retired. We are waiting for a fresh appointment to the post so that the tariff order can be announced by the new chairman," he said. The DERC comprises two members and a chairman. Currently, the post of chairman and that of a member are vacant.

The power ministry had in a letter in 2021 directed all state and central power regulators to issue tariff orders before April 1 of a financial year. It had also said the tariff order should be cost reflective.

Sources, however, said that the DERC, which has only one member (technical), AK Ambasht, can announce the new power tariffs if there is a delay in appointment of chairman. Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, who is minister for power, had last month urged Lt Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena to "urgently" clear the appoint-



ment of DERC chairman.

The name of Justice (retired) Rajeev Shrivastava was approved by the Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal for the post. Every year, the DERC announces new power rates for consumers here keeping in consideration various petitions filed by companies involved with generation and distribution of power in the national capital.

Ideally, the exercise should be completed before the commencement of a financial year. But for several years, the announcements of tariff orders

have been delayed due to different reasons, said a power sector expert on the condition of anonymity.

The AAP government claims that it has not allowed increase in power tariff in the city since it came to power in 2015. The last tariff hike in Delhi was in 2014. Since 2002, power purchase costs for distribution companies (discoms) here have increased by over 300 per cent as compared to just 91 per cent increase in the retail power tariff in the same period, another expert, who did not wish to be named, said.

DTC's e-fleet to get 100 buses in March

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Transport Corporations' (DTC) electric bus fleet will get 100 new buses by March end or April this year, taking the total number of such buses to 400.

This year, the Delhi government is planning to procure 1500 electric buses taking the total number of e-buses to 1800. By 2025, the government is planning to procure 6,380 buses.

"We will receive the first batch of 100 buses by March end or the first week of April. DTC MD Shilpa Shinde had recently visited the Tata Motors plant in Karnataka to inspect the buses that are equipped with security features like CCTV cameras, panic buttons. After the configuration and registration process, they will likely be on the roads in April or May," said an official privy to the development.

These low floor zero emis-



sion electric buses will be inducted this year in a phased manner. "All 1500 buses will be inducted into the transport department's bus fleet by the end of 2023 after which the total number of electric buses in Delhi's public transport fleet will be 1800. This will be the highest in any state within the country," he said.

The official said that the addition of these buses will also provide a shot in the arm in the fight against pollution. The DTC is also trying to procure 1000 buses by September before the G-20 Summit begins in the city.

Police to buy 500 hi-tech vehicles for G-20 security

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Police has decided to procure 500 new vehicles equipped with high-tech security gadgets to provide fool-proof protection to foreign dignitaries attending the programme in view of G20 events in the national capital.

The G20 or Group of 20 is an intergovernmental forum of the world's major developed and developing economies. The bloc comprises Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Türkiye, the UK, the US and the European Union (EU). India assumed the presidency of the G20 on December 1 last year.

Over 200 meetings at 55 locations across the country will be held during this period, culminating with a summit in



September in Delhi. According to the officials, the security wing of Delhi Police will be getting 200 Mahindra Bolero -- seven-seater compact SUV -- and 200 Maruti Ertiga which is also a seven seater-vehicle. These two brands of vehicles will be inducted by March in the lead up to the G20 summit. "We are also procuring 100 Scorpio cars. Although we have sufficient number of vehicles for our routine security arrangements, but for the G-20 summit, we are procuring additional 500 new vehicles which will be used by the security wing of our force as the security of foreign dignitaries visiting the national capital from across the world is our responsibility," a police officer said.

NDMC to hold 13-day Tulip Festival at Shanti Path lawns

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) is going to hold a 13-day Tulip Festival, beginning Tuesday, in the lawns of Shanti Path, Chanakyapuri to herald the spring.

Shanti Path and several roundabouts in its vicinity are already decked with thousands of red and white tulips imported from the Netherlands. The Tulip walk will be held on the lawns of the Shanti Path on February 18, 19, 25 and 26.

A total of 1.24 lakh tulip bulbs were brought from the Netherlands and planted in the first week of January in Shanti Path lawns by the NDMC.

"The quantity of tulips planted has been doubled in order to showcase the beauty of the city with tulip blossoms in every location of NDMC area," said an official from the NDMC. The blooming of tulips



will coincide with the G20 Foreign Ministers meeting to be held on 1-2 March 2023.

Besides walks, the NDMC will also organise photography competitions on tulips during the near fortnight-long festival.

"Give me Trees Trust", or GMTT, an NGO associated with the landscaping of Sunder Nursery, has developed the content of the walk keeping in mind the monuments. GMTT is the largest tree planter in India and is involved in edu-

cating people on nature and conducting theme-based walks.

The civic body, in collaboration with 'Heritage Photography Club', has invited photography enthusiasts to click pictures of tulips and submit them for the contest. The rules and regulations for the competition are listed on the NDMC website. NDMC will judge the three best pictures every day and upload them on its social media platforms.

OSD to Raj CM appears before police for questioning in phone tapping case

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Lokesh Sharma, the OSD to Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, on Monday appeared before Delhi Police for questioning in connection with a phone-tapping case stemming from the July 2020 political crisis in the state. Sharma appeared before the city police's Crime Branch unit.

According to officials, Sharma was questioned for one and a half hours and gave verbal as well as written answers. The Delhi Police had served a notice on Sharma -- the Officer on Special Duty (OSD) to the Rajasthan chief minister -- asking him to appear for questioning in the case.

The notice was issued days before the Delhi High Court is scheduled to hear the Crime

Branch's application seeking vacating of an interim order staying coercive action against Sharma. Hearing on the Crime Branch application and a petition by Sharma seeking quashing of the FIR against him is scheduled for February 20.

On March 25, 2021, the Delhi Police registered an FIR against Sharma for criminal conspiracy, criminal breach of trust and unlawfully intercepting telegraphic signals (telephonic conversation) on a complaint lodged by Union minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, the BJP MP from Jodhpur. According to sources, this is the sixth notice to Sharma under Section 41.1 (A) of the CrPC.

Sharma has appeared for questioning twice -- on December 6, 2021, and May 14, 2022 -- and submitted reasons for not being able to appear on three other dates.

Yamuna cleaning: LG's panel to scout land for STPs, Delhi Govt tells NGT

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government has informed the National Green Tribunal that Delhi Lieutenant Governor-led high-level committee for Yamuna cleaning has constituted a panel to identify land parcels for sewage treatment plants and biodiversity parks.

Unavailability of land has delayed the construction of a number of STPs and decentralised sewage treatment plants (DSTPs) in Delhi, where the Arvind Kejriwal government aims to clean the Yamuna to bathing standards by February 2025.

The Delhi Jal Board is upgrading and rehabilitating the existing STPs and constructing new STPs and decentralised STPs to be able to treat all the sewage generated in Delhi which will help reduce the pollution load in the river. (The) High-level com-

mittee also decided to constitute a committee under the chairmanship of Divisional Commissioner, Revenue Department of GNCTD, with Pr. Secretary (Forest and Environment); VC DDA; and CEO DJB to resolve all land-related matters (like identification and handing over land

to DJB/NMCG for setting up of STPs, de-centralised STPs, biodiversity parks, etc.) and the committee shall ensure identification and handing over the requisite land parcels to DJB or NMCG, as the case may be, within a fortnight," the report submitted to the NGT on January 31 read.

Sisodia approves sewer line project in unauthorised colonies

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Monday approved a project to lay sewer lines in two unauthorised colonies and a village in Bawana. The project which cost Rs 68-crore will benefit 20,000 people in these areas.

Besides, the AAP led Delhi government will construct a decentralised sewage treatment plant (STP) of a capacity of 1 MLD (million litres a day) and a sewage pumping station of 3 MLD capacity, he added. Sisodia also said free sewer connections will be provided to 4,824 households in Bawana under the Mukhyamantri Muft Sewer Connection Yojana. He instructed Delhi Jal Board (DJB) officials to complete the work within the stipulated time.

RS disrupted as Opp presses for JPC probe into Adani row

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Rajya Sabha on Monday witnessed disruptions by the Opposition MPs demanding a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) probe into the allegations against the Adani group and revocation of suspension of Congress MP Rajani Patil. The House was adjourned for a brief period in the morning session. Later, Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar adjourned the first part of the Budget Session of the Upper House till March 13.

Dhankhar, who spoke about "deliberate obstruction of proceedings," adjourned the House for the day after repeated appeals to bring order unheeded and Opposition MPs raised slogans in support of their demand for a JPC and also revocation of the suspension of the Congress MP. The treasury benches demanded an apology from the Opposition for creating a ruckus during Prime Minister Narendra's Modi speech in the house last week.

Soon after the listed papers were laid on the table of the House, Opposition MPs insist-

ed that the Chair allow Leader of Opposition and Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge to speak. When Dhankhar permitted Kharge to speak, several members from the treasury benches started raising slogans. However, Kharge's remarks were expunged by the chair. Opposition MPs too kept raising slogans and some of them trooped into the Well of the House.

Patil was suspended from the House for the remainder of the Budget session for circulating an unauthorised video of house proceedings during Modi's speech.

Dhankhar said he was getting sleepless nights because of inputs he had been getting. "The entire world is watching... It is beyond my comprehension how members can behave like this and attack the Constitution," he said earlier in the morning as the slogan shouting continued.

Asking the Opposition to maintain decorum and allow question hour to continue, he said, "Does the public expect us to be like this... It does not." "I am constrained on account of persistent obstruction and I would go to the extent of say-



ing deliberate obstruction..."

He said precious time had been lost already. Before adjourning the House till next month, he warned, "Members, I am pleading with you for the last time. If the House is subjected to such kind of disturbance, disruption, violation of rules, I will be constrained to act as per expectations of the people."

Earlier, Congress MP Pramod Tiwari urged the Chair to revoke Patil's suspension of Rajani Patil in the best tradition of the house and order a JPC

probe.

However, Leader of the House Piyush Goyal asked Opposition MPs to first apologise for their behaviour during the Prime Minister's speech while replying to the Motion of Thanks. Only after that, he said, could the demand for revocation of suspension be considered. This led to more slogan shouting and uproar from Opposition benches, forcing the chair to adjourn the house.

Before the House resumed, Leaders of 14 Opposition parties held a meeting to discuss

their joint strategy in Parliament. Sources said the leaders of Congress, RJD, DMK, NCP, JDU, AAP and Left parties were among those that met in the chamber of Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge in Parliament complex.

The meeting also happened after the Rajya Sabha suspended Congress member Rajani Patil from the House for the remainder of the Budget session for circulating an unauthorised video of house proceedings.

Why stubborn refusal to order JPC probe into Hindenburg report on Adani, Cong asks Govt

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Monday asked the Government why it was "stubbornly refusing" to order a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) probe into the Hindenburg report on the Adani group when earlier, too, stock market manipulations had been probed by JPCs.

Congress general secretary, communications, Jairam Ramesh asked if Prime Minister Narendra Modi feared being "personally implicated" by a truly independent investigation. Posing a set of three questions to the Prime Minister as part of the "Hum Adani ke Hain Kaun" series, he tweeted, "Does he think we had run out of questions for him, on this 'maha mega scam' he facilitated and that took place under his nose with his eyes wide open?"

The Congress leader said both Indian National Congress



and Bharatiya Janata Party-led Governments have in the past agreed to set up a JPC to investigate large-scale cases of stock market manipulation.

In 1992, he said, a JPC was set up to look into the Harshad Mehta case while in 2001 a JPC investigated the Ketan Parekh case. Both Narasimha Rao and Atal Bihari Vajpayee as prime ministers had the confidence and trust in elected representatives to investigate scams that affected crores of Indian investors.

"What are you afraid of? Do you fear that a truly independent investigation might implicate you personally in

the Adani Group's wrongdoings," Ramesh asked. He also alleged that "the government is turning a blind eye to fresh collusion between (stockbroker Ketan) Parekh and the Adani Group".

Ramesh claimed a 2007 SEBI ruling following an investigation into excessive volatility in the shares of Adani Exports (now known as Adani Enterprises) between 1999 and 2001 had found that entities associated with Ketan Parekh had indulged in "manipulative activities such as synchronised trading/circular trading and creation of artificial volume to influence the price in the scrip of Adani".

This bears a disturbing resemblance to the current allegations against the Adani Group, he claimed "Why did SEBI tolerate an even more extreme rise in Adani Group stock prices after 2020 without investigating it with the required seriousness," he asked.

Appointment of judges: Ensure most of what is expected is done, SC tells Centre

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday told the Centre to make sure that "most of what is expected is done" on issues concerning appointment and transfer of judges as recommended by the apex court Collegium.

A Bench headed by Justice SK Kaul observed that it is "concerned with some issues" regarding judges' appointment.

As Attorney General R Venkataramani was not available, the top court adjourned to March 2 the hearing on two pleas, including one alleging delay by the Centre in clearing the names recommended by the Collegium.

"Please make sure, most of what is expected is done. Communicate to the Attorney General," the Bench, also comprising Justices Manoj Misra and Aravind Kumar, told the counsel who sought a short accommodation on behalf of the top law officer.

Advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for one of



the petitioners, told the Bench that some appointments are being selectively notified while some are being kept pending.

"Mr Bhushan, I have already flagged the issue. I am also concerned with some issues," Justice Kaul said, adding, "Issues are, let me say, more than one."

Bhushan said this cannot go on endlessly.

"I can assure you that I am equally concerned, if not more, of what is happening," Justice Kaul said.

Bhushan said at some point of time, the apex court will have to "crack the whip so to say, otherwise this will go on endlessly".

He said on some recom-

mendations for appointments and transfers, the government does not do anything.

"I am putting it after two weeks," Justice Kaul said and posted the matter for March 2.

At the outset, an advocate told the bench that he was seeking a short accommodation on behalf of the attorney general as he is not available.

"Some developments, but much more required," the bench observed.

Senior advocate Arvind Datta, appearing for one of the petitioners, told the bench that they have filed a chart containing details in four categories.

The first is about appointment of chief justices in high courts and in some cases appointment have been notified while in others, it is pending, he said.

"Obviously, there is no rationale for a very long delay but state government's consent has to be obtained," the bench said.

While hearing the matter

on February 3, the top court had expressed displeasure over the delay in clearing recommendations for the transfer of high court judges, calling it a "very serious issue".

The attorney general had then assured the bench that the collegium's recommendation of December last year for the elevation of five judges to the apex court will be cleared soon.

On February 6, five judges

-- justices Pankaj Mithal, Sanjay Karol, P V Sanjay Kumar, Ahsanuddin Amanullah and Manoj Misra -- were administered the oath of office as apex court judges.

On Monday, the top court got two more judges - Justices Rajesh Bindal and Aravind Kumar - who were sworn in by Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud, taking the number of judges in the apex court

to its full sanctioned strength of 34.

The appointment of judges through the collegium system has become a major flashpoint between the Supreme Court and the Centre with the mechanism drawing criticism from different quarters.

During the earlier hearing in the matter on January 6, the government had told the apex court that all efforts were being

made to "conform" to timelines laid down by the top court for processing the names recommended by the collegium for appointment of judges to constitutional courts.

The attorney general had told the apex court that the government will adhere to timelines and the recent recommendations made by the collegium for high courts have been processed with "utmost

dispatch".

One of the pleas in the apex court has alleged "wilful disobedience" of the time frame laid down in its April 20, 2021, order to facilitate timely appointment of judges.

In that order, the apex court had said the Centre should appoint judges within three-four weeks if the collegium reiterates its recommendations unanimously.

Only accused, victims' kin, lawyers to be present: SC on Lakhimpur trial

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday said nobody except the accused, victims' representatives and their lawyers shall be present in the court conducting the trial in the Lakhimpur Kheri violence cases in which Union Minister Ajay Kumar Mishra's son Ashish is among those facing prosecution. The apex court order came after the

victims' lawyer Prashant Bhushan informed the court that a large number of supporters of Ashish Mishra were usually present during trial court proceedings creating an "intimidatory atmosphere".

The apex court said it was passing the order to ensure that trial proceedings in the sessions court in Lakhimpur Kheri in Uttar Pradesh are conducted smoothly. "With a view to ensure that trial proceedings

are conducted smoothly and no impediment is caused by anyone, it is directed that the accused persons in both the FIRs and one representative of the victim or complainant are permitted to attend the court proceedings along with their respective counsel," a Bench of Justices Surya Kant and JK Maheshwari said.

During the hearing, advocate Prashant Bhushan, representing the victim families in the case against

Ashish, said summonses to witnesses were reaching a day after the date of proceedings. "I am told that a large number of their supporters come inside the courtroom and this creates a kind of intimidatory atmosphere. I don't know how it can be dealt with, I am just flagging it," Bhushan submitted.

Senior advocate Siddhartha Dave, representing Ashish Mishra, said there were more supporters of the

other side in the trial court than the supporters of the accused. He submitted that the top court may order in-camera proceedings in the trial court as allegations of influencing witnesses or tampering with evidence are levelled against them repeatedly. "I am an accused and I am saying do it in-camera and protect me from these allegations. They want media publicity to go on," Dave submitted.

1.12 lakh daily wage earners committed suicide in 2019-21, Labour Min tells LS

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A total of 1.12 lakh daily wage earners committed suicide in three years -- 2019 to 2021 -- Union Labour Minister Bhupendra Yadav said in Lok Sabha on Monday, quoting reports of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB). As many as 35,950 students and 31,839 people engaged in the farming sector such as cultivators and agricultural labourers also committed suicide in three years, the Minister said during the Question Hour.

Yadav said 66,912 housewives, 53,661 self-employed persons, 43,420 salaried persons and 43,385 unemployed persons also committed suicide during the period.



The minister said that according to the Unorganised Workers Social Security Act, 2008, the government is mandated to provide social security to workers in the unorganised sector, including daily wage workers, by formulating suitable welfare schemes on matters relating to life and disability cover, health and maternity benefits, old age protection, and any other benefit as may be determined by the central government.

'ICHR to include key figures not part of history books now'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Sa country that respects all languages, cultures and faiths, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said on Monday that the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR) had not launched any project to "rewrite Indian history" but is working on incorporating all prominent figures and incidents that are not part of history books.

"The ICHR has not

launched any project to rewrite Indian history. The government has no intention to rewrite history. But if you ask me, if the ICHR has taken any project on history, with due respect and humbly, I would like to inform this House that, yes it has taken," he said.

"We are expanding history" and filling "gaps" by incorporating major historical events, personalities and incidents, the Union Minister said during the Question Hour in response to a question.



India, Nepal to enhance eco, dev ties

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI/KATHMANDU

India and Nepal on Monday resolved to further enhance their ties in the sphere of economic and development cooperation during talks between Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra and his Nepalese counterpart Bharat Raj Paudyal. They also reviewed the wide-ranging bilateral partnership and had a fruitful exchange on strengthening the comprehensive bilateral relations.

Kwatra arrived in Kathmandu on a two-day official visit to hold talks with the country's top political leadership on the entire range of multifaceted cooperation between the two countries.

"Foreign Secretary Shri Vinay Kwatra met his counterpart Mr Bharat Raj Paudyal and reviewed the wide-ranging India-Nepal partnership," the

Indian embassy here tweeted. "Both sides agreed to further strengthen their economic and development cooperation for benefit of the two countries and region as a whole," it said.

Later, Kwatra called on Foreign Minister of Nepal Bimala Rai Paudyal and had a fruitful exchange on strengthening the comprehensive India-Nepal relations.

"Foreign Secretary Shri Vinay Kwatra called on Hon'ble Foreign Minister of Nepal @bimalarp today and had a fruitful exchange on strengthening the comprehensive India-Nepal relations," the mission tweeted.

During his visit, Kwatra, who was earlier India's ambassador here, will pay courtesy calls to Nepal's Prime Minister Pushpakamal Dahal 'Prachanda' and Foreign Minister Paudyal.

It is expected that Kwatra

will also discuss with his Nepalese interlocutors the possibility of a visit to India by Nepal's Prime Minister Prachanda. Prachanda has said that he will travel to India on his first foreign visit.

Nepal and India will discuss various matters of bilateral cooperation such as connectivity, power trade, agriculture, health and culture among others during the foreign secretary's visit, according to a statement issued by Nepal's foreign ministry on Sunday. "The visit is in continuation of the regular exchange of visits between the two friendly neighbours," it said.

Earlier, Kwatra was received at Tribhuvan International Airport by his Nepalese counterpart Paudyal upon arrival. He had a one-to-one meeting with Paudyal before the delegation level meeting started.

Seven members each from Nepal and India took part in the



Foreign Secretary level bilateral meeting. Indian Ambassador to Nepal Naveen Srivastava was among the members of the Indian delegation while Joint Secretary and spokesperson at the Foreign Ministry Sewa Lamsal was among the members of the Nepalese delegation.

This is the first high-level visit from India after Prime Minister Prachanda assumed office for the third time in December. Kwatra is also expected to meet Nepal's top political leaders, including Nepali Congress president Sher Bahadur Deuba and CPN-UML chairman KP Sharma

Oli. "The visit is in keeping with the tradition of regular high-level exchanges between the two countries and the priority India attaches to its relations with Nepal under its 'Neighbourhood First' policy," the Ministry of External Affairs has said.

India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy is an integral component of Indian foreign policy. The policy seeks to build cordial and synergetic relations with India's South Asian neighbours in various areas such as economy, science and technology, research and education, among others.

India, Germany discuss ties, Ukraine war, China aggression

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India and Germany on Monday discussed the entire spectrum of their bilateral ties, the situation in Ukraine and the Indo-Pacific in the backdrop China's aggressive stance there during talks here between External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Foreign and Security Policy Advisor to German Chancellor Jens Plotner today.

Plotner reviewed bilateral cooperation and exchange views on global and regional issues, including the Ukraine conflict with Doval.

India and Germany remain closely engaged on the issue of Ukraine and share concerns about the humanitarian crisis in the country. Germany has shown understanding of India's position on Russia while emphasising, along with India, that the contemporary global order has been built on the UN Charter, international law

and Security Policy Advisor to German Chancellor Jens Plotner today.

Discussed our expanding strategic partnership and exchanged views on the situation in Europe and the Indo-Pacific," Jaishankar said in a tweet.

Plotner reviewed bilateral cooperation and exchange views on global and regional issues, including the Ukraine conflict with Doval.

India and Germany remain closely engaged on the issue of Ukraine and share concerns about the humanitarian crisis in the country. Germany has shown understanding of India's position on Russia while emphasising, along with India, that the contemporary global order has been built on the UN Charter, international law

and respect for sovereignty and the territorial integrity of states.

Modi and Scholz are expected to focus on destabilising effect of Ukraine conflict and its global implications, not least in the form of food and fuel shortages, in their upcoming meeting. Ahead of the summit, Plotner and Doval also discussed ways to ramp up cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, the situation in Afghanistan and also counter-terrorism cooperation.

The bilateral relations between India and Germany are founded on common democratic principles. India was amongst the first countries to establish diplomatic ties with the Federal Republic of Germany after the Second World War.

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PAPER WITH PASSION

Unacceptable

The Rajasthan Government must follow CAG’s norms and should not try to set its own

The Rajasthan Government’s reluctance to share the state’s accounts with the Comptroller and Auditor General is as weird as it is fraught. The Ashok Gehlot Government reportedly intends to launch its own Pay and Accounts System (PAO), thus dispensing with the established treasury system which is in tune with the Constitution. In this system, the Comptroller & Auditor General (CAG), through its accountant general, keeps the pay and pension accounts of a state. Cognisant of the impropriety, the CAG has written a letter to Rajasthan Chief Secretary Usha Sharma, reminding her that Article 150 of the Constitution mandates that the accounts of the Union and of the states “shall be kept in such form as the President may, on advice of the CAG, prescribe.”



The CAG has also rightly informed the state Government that any change in the current system of treasury to the PAO independently would “cause disruption in compilation, preparation and reporting of government accounts.” The federal auditor has also warned the state administration a new PAO system by one state “will derail the time-tested treasury system where huge human and digital resources have evolved along with corresponding treasure rules and with its inherent system of checks and balances and the linkage of entire IT infrastructure with PFMS, etc.” Besides, it can also have a domino effect, with other states following suit.

This will also strengthen separatist elements, most of which have been reined in. We should not forget that various kinds of secessionists—for instance, Tamil nationalists in Tamil Nadu, Khalistanis in Punjab, and different insurgencies in the North East—were threatening to tear our country apart as we know it. Thankfully, none of these centrifugal forces are strong enough to imperil the sovereignty and integrity of India. This burdens the political class with greater responsibility; they should not do anything that could trigger a chain reaction fattening those who have a vested interest in destroying national unity. Chief Minister Gehlot is a seasoned politician; he must realise that tampering with a constitutionally-compliant process is much more dangerous than badmouthing his political rival Sachin Pilot. In political bickering, careers are made or marred, but when any leader tries to trifle with the established constitutional norms and conventions, there could be far-reaching ramifications. Unfortunately, it is not that just a government under the Congress is not playing by the book; other parties are no better. Tamil Nadu Governor RN Ravi recently suggested ‘Tamizhagam’ as the new name of Tamil Nadu; it would be, he said, “a more appropriate name.” This without informing the state Government, leading to unsavoury scenes in the Assembly. Then there is Kerala Governor Arif Mohammad Khan, battling continually with the state Government. Both the Bharatiya Janata Party and Opposition must realise that maintaining Constitutional propriety is the sine qua non of stability.



A rufous treepie perches on the branches of a red silk-cotton tree in Nadia district

Cow Hug Day

The Government withdraws the “Cow Hug Day” following public outcry

“Cow Hug Day” declared by the AWBI is being portrayed by the western media as an order issued by the Government of India asking its citizens to hug the cow and set aside the global Valentine’s Day celebrations. This order or notification has tarnished India’s image as the liberals, intellectuals, and secularists were handed over a weapon by the AWBI with which the Government is being mocked, trolled, and criticized. The issue is whether the AWBI is empowered to issue a notification on a controversial issue like this. Students of law are aware that there are two kinds of laws visualized in the Constitution, viz Supreme Legislation and Subordinate Legislation. Supreme Legislation is the law enacted by Parliament/State Legislatures. Since the time at the disposal of these Houses are limited and some of the legislations to be enacted in the Houses are left to be formulated by the executive branch of the government. The laws enacted by the executive branch are known by the name delegated or subordinate legislation. The Constitution has enough safeguards to check and ensure that the executive branch does not violate its brief. Any misadventure by the executive branch while enacting legislation could be nipped in the bud itself by the Supreme Court.

The Cow Hug Day notification issued by the AWBI was a misadventure and the Government was forced to withdraw the controversial order following public outcry. It has to be said that the Constitution has enough inherent provisions like judicial reviews to preserve its sanctity. This helps in preserving the pristine glory of the Constitution. The Cow Hug Day

Order is not the first time the executive wing has put the Government on the wrong wicket. The Supreme Court order banning Jallikattu (taming of bulls) was quashed in 2017 through a notification following a stage-managed sit-in at Chennai’s Marina Beach. The crowd masquerading as animal lovers were mobilized by political parties which were aided by Tamil chauvinist. The fact that hundreds of people and bulls get killed in the Jallikattu melee every year and millions of rupees change hands during this inhuman pastime went unnoticed by the authorities. When the apex court banned the cruel sports, these animal lovers sold the bulls to slaughter house! That much for love of animals. The possibility of these babus issuing orders in the future to hug cobras, tigers, elephants, lions, and leopards could not be ruled out.

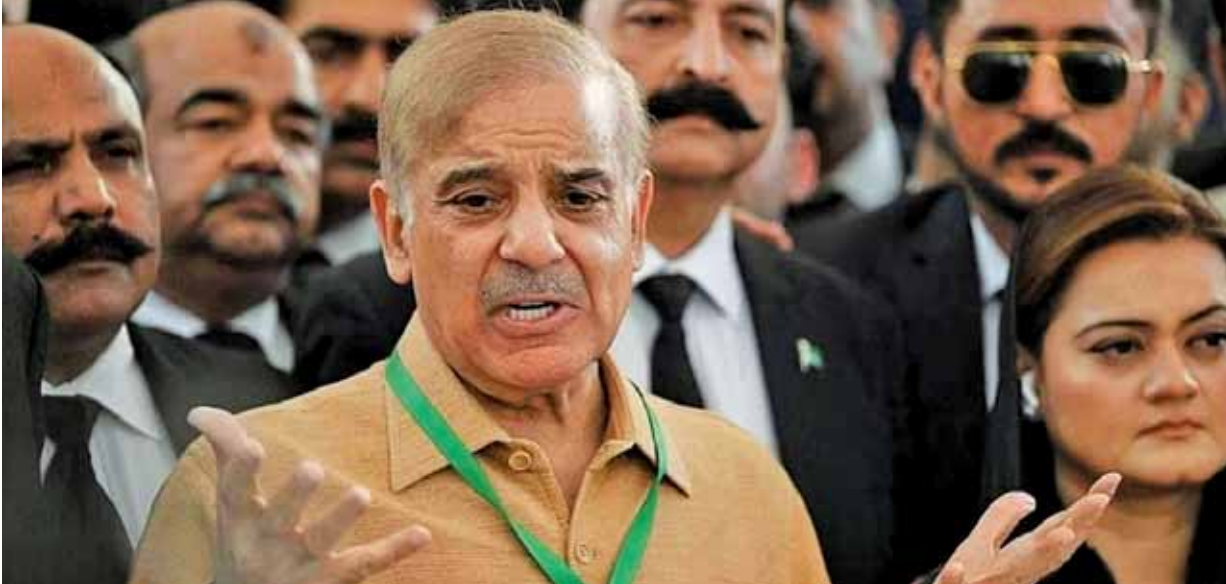
Time Pakistan rejiged its credo

Pakistan is in deep trouble, but most of its problems were invented by its own ruling elite. It is a case study in how not to run a country

The socio-economic security crisis in Pakistan is unprecedented with the official annualized inflation soaring upwards of 35%, and the severe ‘corrective’ measures insisted on by the *International Monetary Fund*, yet to kick in. Estimated two million jobs have evaporated in just one year. Coming on the back of the Covid pandemic-related misery and devastation, coupled with the imploding issues of secessionism, violent terrorism, and polarising religiosity, the ‘land of the pure’ is under acute stress. Even more economic tightening, inflationary pressures, and counter-insurgency actions are guaranteed if Pakistan is to survive.

So where did it err? What explains its morass? Is it because of its unhinged politicians? Is it because of its frequent disruption to democracy by its military dictators? Is it to do with its governance choices in diplomacy and geopolitics?

While all these factors are true, however, there is one basic foundational flaw in the ‘Idea of Pakistan’ bestowed by its founding fathers that have spun completely out of control, metastasized, and institutionalized itself in everything that Pakistan does i.e., religiosity, that has emptied its coffers and brutalized its society. This sovereign instinct has necessitated selectivity and curation of historical narrative—much before the independence of Pakistan as ‘*New Medinah*’ (echoes of the same persist with Imran Khan’s call to *Riyasat-e-Medinah*), ensuring the imagined history to start with the arrival of Muhammad bin Qasim in Sindh, got fixed. The long civilizational past is not just obliterated or diminished, but outrightly denied. Even flashes of Pakistan’s *Qaid-e-Azam*, Muhammad Ali Jinnah’s invocation of secularism are completely removed from public consciousness e.g., Jinnah’s address to the first Constituent Assembly of Pakistan goading secularism. But Jinnah himself had knowingly used the bigoted ‘two-nation theory’ politically and to assume that it wouldn’t grip the narrative societally and culturally was both,



naïve and fatal. Pakistan has centralized religiosity and its outcomes are playing out.

Exclusivist ideology of intolerance and discrimination led to the ‘othering’ of many of its majoritarian masses, most notably the Bengalis, but soon enough, even the Shias, Ahmediyas, etc., were ‘othered’. Denialism was used to galvanize a powerful section of society as part of political propaganda. *Bangladesh* was a natural outcome of the flawed ‘two-nation’ theory – but Pakistanis remained committed to their path to religious hardening. Even the once secular *British Raj* military had adopted a decidedly religious tenor in Pakistan as within months of independence, it recruited tribal *Lashkars* in the name of *jihad* that was discussed in every *hujra* and *jirga*. Martial myths of Islamic *Ghazis* e.g., Akbar Khan’s leading of *Lashkars* under the nom de guerre of General *Tariq* (Moorish invader) connected the Pakistani Military to religious symbolism. Misplaced hope for local uprisings on account of co-religiosity beset misadventures like *Operation Gibraltar* (1965) and *Kargil* (1999). It was after all a Military man in Zia-ul-Haq who accelerated the slippery slope of religiosity by



TODAY, THE INSTITUTION OF PAKISTAN MILITARY THAT HAS NEVER WON ANY BATTLE FOR ITS NATION, SUCKED ITS FINANCIALS, AND INVESTED HEAVILY IN FANNING ‘ANTI-INDIA’ SENTIMENTS

changing the motto of the Pakistan Army to *Iman, Taqwa, Jihad fi Sabilullah* (Integrity, Steadfastness, and Jihad in the Path of God).

Today, the institution of the Pakistan Military which has never won any battle for its nation, sucked its financials, and invested heavily in fanning ‘anti-India’ sentiments to justify its own bloated and privileged existence, is under the scanner. It had conceptualized the devious idea of ‘Strategic Depth’ in Afghanistan, nurtured the ‘global nursery’ of terrorism, and the antecedents of its *Inter-Services-Intelligence* (ISI) for playing double games (e.g., harboring Osama Bin Laden) are well documented – now, the chickens are coming home to roost. In this melee, civilian politicians outdid each other to prove themselves more pious than the other, and that willy-nilly tantamount to appeasing the regressive and pernicious forces of the clergy. Normalizing relations with neighboring India could have brought in incalculable economic benefits, but that would have delegitimize the foundational sovereign tenet, the carefully created ‘Islam is in danger’ war cry. Net result, it is not the 900 km long Iran-Pak border or the 750 odd km long *Line of Control* (LOC) on

the Indo-Pak front but instead, the 2640 km long *Durand Line* dividing Pakistan and Afghanistan (controlled by its progeny i.e., *Taliban*), that is wreaking havoc in the ‘land of pure’. Pakistan is under attack by even more vicious strains of religiosity, a genie unleashed by Pakistan itself. In civil society, instances of cabinet ministers hailing a rare victory over India in a cricket match as one of ‘Islam’ or a former Captain hailing the moment a player offered namaz on the grounds ‘in front of Hindus’ as the turning point is a picture of normalized religiosity. The conflation of religiosity and hatred of ‘others’ is the definition of patriotism in Pakistan as it concurrently beseeches IMF for ‘bail’. But beyond ‘bail’, it must reflect its sovereign-societal anchorages as it is not just a socio-economic-security crisis, but a fundamental and existential one. Religion must remain a private matter and not one for the state, an important lesson for us too, saved as we were by those who framed an alternative constitution and normalcy.

(The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry. The views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

GOVERNATORIAL RECALIBRATION

Sir — Bhagat Singh Koshyari, the controversial Governor of Maharashtra, eventually had his resignation accepted. The decision for a change in the Maharashtra Raj Bhavan was necessitated since Koshyari’s actions and remarks throughout his three-year tenure not only inflamed the Opposition parties but he also did everything in his power to make the ruling party look bad. Even in the State’s non-political circles, his comments on Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, Mahatma Phule and Savitribai Phule sparked hostility. He found it challenging to remain in office as a result of these controversies.

In this regard, the President’s decision was made in a way that all the parties felt relieved. Jharkhand Governor Ramesh Bais, who was transferred to Maharashtra, will also be remembered for political controversies during his nearly one year and eight months in office. On more than a dozen occasions, there was mutual disagreement and even discord within the Hemant Soren-led Government. However, the same cannot be said for Governors appointed to other States. The Governors have been replaced in a total of 13 States, with transfers being effected in seven of them.

Abhijit Roy | Jamshedpur

LET PARLIAMENT FUNCTION

Sir — All is not well in Parliament as the first part of the Budget session of the Rajya Sabha was adjourned till March 13 after continued disruptions by Opposition MPs who kept up their demand for a Joint Parliamentary Committee probe into allegations against the Adani Group. Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar, who spoke about obstruction of proceedings, adjourned the House but Opposition MPs raised slogans in support of their demand for a JPC and also revocation of the suspension of Congress MP Rajani Patil and trooped into the well of the House. Patil was suspended for the remainder of the Budget session for circulating video of House proceedings.

Need for safer democracy



Former Supreme Court judge Abdul S Nazeer has been appointed the Andhra Pradesh Governor. Barely 39 days ago, on January 4, he retired from his post. Justice Nazeer was part of several landmark judgments, including the historic 2019 Ram Mandir-Babri Masjid dispute (in which it directed the Centre to allot a five-acre plot to the Sunni Waqf Board for a mosque at a different location), the verdict validating the legality of demonetisation (two days before his retirement), the triple talaq verdict and

the verdict that declared ‘right to privacy’ a fundamental right. This is not the first time that an SC judge has been rewarded for judgments in favour of the day’s Government.

Former Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi got a Rajya Sabha Seat, Justice Ashok Bhushan has become a member of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) and now Justice Nazeer is the new Governor of Andhra Pradesh. Who can forget former Union Minister Arun Jaitley saying in 2012 that “pre-retirement judgments are influenced by post-retirement jobs”. However, it should not become the norm if we want our democracy to be better, stronger, clean and safe. No judge should accept political posts immediately after retirement. There has to be a delay clause of three-four years at least. I can’t help but think that there have been cases of quid pro quo between the Government and some of the judges.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

Earlier, Congress MP Pramod Tiwari urged the Chair to revoke Patil’s suspension in the best tradition of the House and order a JPC probe. However, leader of the House Piyush Goyal asked Opposition MPs to first apologise for their behaviour during Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s speech while replying to the motion of thanks. Only after that, he said, could the demand for revocation of suspension be considered. With this, the Adani issue over the demand for a JPC is getting very serious and the House sittings will probably keep getting adjourned time and again.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

PROMOTE GOA MODEL OF TOURISM

Sir — The tourism industry in India needs a much-needed boost just as the Budget boasts of better prospects for it. India is one of the prime places with the potential to become the tourism capital of the world. We are surrounded by mountains, beaches and spirituality. It is time to boost coastal tourism. The work needs to be

speeded up with utmost care and providing basic infrastructure to tourists must be ensured. Moreover as a tourist spot for foreigners coming to India, the security aspect should be taken care of as the first and foremost preference.

The Mumbai-Goa highway within a year is yet another boost to this venture. In India, Goa is one of the cities that recycles 80% of its waste with a strong model created for waste management and sustainability. In addition to stirring creativity among the community, the collaboration builds awareness for environmental sustainability and encourages people to be more conscious of their actions. Being a tourist spot, cleanliness is of utmost importance there. With environmental awareness, we can see a heaven on earth in Goa in future. Besides, these steps will provide a handsome income for the State and a boost to the Indian economy.

CK Ramanathan | Ghaziabad

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

Wish you had a double-engine government here. Congress delays progress and development. They don’t work and don’t let anyone work.

Prime Minister — Narendra Modi

The cabinet is meeting today to prepare for even broader action against those carrying out terrorism and their supporters in East Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria.

Israel Prime Minister — Benjamin Netanyahu

In the 70s, the film and fashion industry were male-dominated, and I would often be the only woman on a set.

Actor — Zeenat Aman

They had probably spotted the rough from the flight itself. The atmosphere they created that it would spin; it didn’t spin that much. They got out more on straight balls.

Indian cricketer — Ravindra Jadeja

Surprisingly where bidding has been permitted, competitors have miraculously vanished from bidding... IT raids appear to have helped “convince” the port owner to sell it to the Adani Group.

Congress leader — Jairam Ramesh

FIRST COLUMN

NOTHING SPECIAL FOR WOMEN IN BUDGET '23

Interest rate under Mahila Samman not attractive




S KALYANASUNDARAM

In 2019, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman became the second woman to have presented the Budget after Indira Gandhi, who had presented the budget for the financial year 1970-71. Sitharaman is the sixth minister in independent India to present five consecutive budgets, joining a select league of legends like Manmohan Singh, Arun Jaitley and P Chidambaram.

Sitharaman's Budget for the fiscal year starting April 1, 2023, is her fifth straight since 2019. But on seeing her Budget proposal, there seems to be no special treatment for women. The budget presentation discusses women only at two places. Let us have a look at what the second woman finance minister has done to the segment of women.

Under para 13 (1), the FM has discussed Economic Empowerment of Women. She has claimed that Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana National Rural Livelihood Mission has achieved remarkable success by mobilizing rural women into 81 lakh Self Help Groups.



She has outlined the following for further action: "We will enable these groups to reach the next stage of economic empowerment through formation of large producer enterprises or collectives with each having several thousand members and managed professionally. They will be helped with supply of raw materials and for better design, quality, branding and marketing of their products. Through supporting policies, they will be enabled to scale up their operations to serve the large consumer markets, as has been the case with several start-ups growing into Unicorns".

When we analyse this statement, there is no concrete proposal with outlay of funds or credit dispensation or structural methodology, etc. What is described is good intention to carry forward the good work that is claimed to have been achieved earlier.

Under para 108, the FM has outlined this new savings scheme for women. This scheme is launched to commemorate 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' and the scheme is a one-time new small savings scheme, 'Mahila Samman Savings Certificate', which will be made available for a two-year period up to March 2025. This will offer deposit facility up to Rs 2 lakh in the name of women or girls for a tenor of two years at fixed interest rate of 7.5 per cent with partial withdrawal option.

The purpose of the scheme is not clear. There are various bank fixed deposit schemes with similar interest rates available in the market. Suryoday Small Finance Bank offers 8.01 per cent for two years, Fincard Small Finance Bank offers 7.30 per cent for two years and 8.00 per cent for 1000 days, Utkarsh Small Finance Bank offers 8.00 per cent for 700 days, City Union Bank offers 7.75 per cent for 444 days, while there are more options.

IDFC First Bank offers 7.5 per cent for 18 months plus one day and RBL Bank offers 7.55 per cent for 15 months. Suryoday Small Finance Bank, Fincard Small Finance Bank, IDFC First Bank and RBL Bank offer 0.50 per cent additional interest for senior citizens. Jana Small Finance Bank offers 0.70 per cent additional interest and City Union Bank offers 0.25 per cent additional interest for senior citizens.

The interest rate under this Mahila Samman Savings Certificate is not attractive. It is also not clear what are the other terms and conditions of this scheme. What is the interest in periodicity is not known. Banks provide interest once in three months, though they may pay monthly also. It is mentioned that partial withdrawal is allowed. It is not clear about any penalty clause for this. In the same way additional interest for senior citizens or nomination facility or joint account facility are not informed. One expects the government to come out with more details and clarity on the scheme.

(The author is a retired banker)

We need judiciary for people and by people

It is time we re-evaluated the collegium system and addressed its flaws to serve the best interest of the nation

As the cornerstone of any democratic society, the 'will of the people' forms the foundation of the Constitution of India. Among its various facets, the selection of judges for the higher judiciary, which serves as the repository of citizens' rights, is of paramount importance for maintaining public faith in the judiciary. The current system of judicial appointments in India, the collegium system, has been the subject of much debate and controversy. It is imperative that we evaluate whether this system truly reflects the will of the people and serves the best interests of the nation.

Judicial appointments: History and evolution

When the Constitutional provisions relating to the appointment of judges to the Supreme Court (SC) and the High Courts were being debated, it was proposed that the appointment of judges should be made by the President in consultation with the Chief Justice of India (CJI). This was to strike a balance between the independence of the judiciary and ensuring that appointments are made in a fair and impartial manner. Accordingly, Articles 124 and 217 were framed to state that the President shall appoint the judges in the SC or High Courts in 'consultation' with the CJI, Governor of the relevant state (for appointments to High Courts) and other judges as the President may deem fit.

Despite the clarity with which the Constitution spells out the primacy of the executive as regards to the judicial appointments, the same has been the subject of multiple judicial decisions. In the First-Judges case (1981) the SC ruled that the government was not bound by the views of the CJI in the appointment of judges. This was overruled in the 'Second-Judges case (1993)' wherein the word 'consultation' in Articles 124 and 217 was interpreted to mean that the government was 'bound' by the advice of the CJI, who in turn would consult two senior-most judges of the SC.

This paved the way for the current collegium system of appointment, which was further solidified in 1998. Despite subsequent challenges to the system, the SC has consistently upheld it, reaffirming its status as the established method for appointing judges. However, the question remains whether the Constitution intended for such a system in the first place.

Justice Dinakaran's saga

It claims independence and impartiality. The collegium system is beleaguered by serious flaws that have had a detrimental impact on the functioning of the judiciary. Justice Ruma Pal noted "consensus within the collegium is sometimes resolved through a trade-off, resulting in dubious appointments with disastrous consequences for litigants and credibility



THE JUDICIARY MUST ADOPT THE APPROACH OF, IN THE SC'S OWN WORDS, 'SUNLIGHT IS THE BEST DISINFECTANT' IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT IT IS TRULY REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SOCIETY IT SERVES AND IS NOT BEHOLDEN TO ANY PARTICULAR GROUP OR INDIVIDUAL

(The author, a BJP MLA and lawyer, is former Joint Director of the Enforcement Directorate)



ty of the judicial system. Besides, institutional independence has also been compromised by growing sycophancy and lobbying within the system."

The case of Justice PD Dinakaran, who was recommended by the collegium for appointment to the SC in 2009, is a case in point. Despite facing serious allegations of illegal land acquisition and owning assets disproportionate to known sources of income, the collegium seemed hesitant in taking any action. Instead, in an unprecedented move, the collegium requested Justice Dinakaran to go on leave, which he refused, stating that the collegium did not have the power to do so. Subsequently, the collegium had him transferred to the Sikkim High Court as Chief Justice without investigating the allegations against him.

This raises several questions about the integrity and functioning of the collegium system. It begs to ask, why a judge who has an alleged case of corruption against him would be transferred to any High Court without investigation. Surely, Sikkim did not deserve to have a judge with such serious allegations against him.

Striking down NJAC Act, 2014

It is high time that we re-evaluated the collegium system and addressed its flaws to ensure that it truly reflects the will of the people and serves the best interest of the nation. The judgment of the SC striking down the National Judicial Appointments Commission

(NJAC) Act, 2014, was a missed opportunity for meaningful reform of the appointment process. The Act included the right checks and balances that could have contributed to a more transparent and accountable appointment process.

A key aspect of the Act was the composition of the Commission, which was to consist of the CJI, two senior-most judges of the SC, the Union Minister of Law and Justice, and two 'eminent persons' who would have been appointed by a committee consisting of the CJI, Prime Minister and the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha. This diverse composition could have ensured a balanced yet representative selection process.

Furthermore, the NJAC was required to invite applications and hold interviews for judicial appointments, and to make the proceedings of the interviews and the reasons for selection public. This transparency would allow the executive to participate in the selection process, but ensure that appointments were on merit and not lopsided. The SC, however, disregarding the merits of the enactment suggested that the executive is not to be trusted and that it would do all things possible to appoint the people they wanted to.

Accordingly, the Law Minister being a member of the NJAC, and that the participation of the Prime Minister and the Leader of Opposition along with the CJI in appointing the two 'eminent persons' would

mean political involvement and would vitiate the whole process. Thus, the enactment was abolished.

Democratisation of the judiciary

It is important to acknowledge that the current system, despite being upheld by the Supreme Court, is not perfect and there is room for improvement. It is within legal bounds to engage in discussions about the system and consider ways to improve it.

The greatest irony of our country is that the people have no say in the selection of judges, which is not fair as the judges are appointed to serve the people. A completely unaccountable judiciary does not align with the concept of democracy. The Judicial Standards and Accountability Bill, 2010, and the NJAC Act, 2014, were proposed to ensure that elected representatives of the people have a say in the appointment of judges, this is the only way to ensure that the judiciary is representative of the diverse population of India and the views and concerns of the citizens are taken into consideration.

It is imperative that the judiciary remains open to interventions and suggestions for reform, as transparency and inclusivity are essential for the functioning of a fair and just judiciary. The judiciary must adopt the approach of, in the SC's own words, "sunlight is the best disinfectant" in order to ensure that it is truly representative of the society it serves and is not beholden to any particular group or individual.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

HUGGING A COW BRINGS EMOTIONAL RICHNESS AND INCREASES INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE HAPPINESS. IT'S A GOOD INITIATIVE. WE SHOULD LOVE COWS. — UNION MINISTER GIRIRAJ SINGH



WAS THE GOVT COW-ED BY THE JOKES OR WAS IT MERELY COW-ARDICE? MY GUESS IS A HINDIRASHTRAVADI MISHEARD 'GUY' AS 'GAAY!' — CONGRESS MP SHASHI THAROOR

BJP's Mission 350 vs Congress' post-yatra gusto

Both the BJP and the Congress have to overcome their disadvantages and maximise their advantages successfully

There could be a musical chair this year with nine states going for elections. It will be a trailer and the semi-final before the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. The results will show whether the BJP continues to sway the voters or the Congress-led Opposition will defeat the BJP in the upcoming elections.

Regional satraps would naturally want to protect their turfs. The nine election-bound states are Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Telangana, and the four North-Eastern states—Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Tripura.

The poll schedule runs through the year. Meghalaya, Nagaland, and Tripura will go to polls from February to March, and Karnataka from



KALYANI SHANKAR

(The author is a senior journalist)

April-May. Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Telangana, and Mizoram will face elections at the year-end. Jammu and Kashmir may also go for polls, which will be the first since the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019.

The BJP, Congress, and regional parties are all playing it, marshaling all their resources. The states where the BJP and the Congress remain leading contenders are the big states like Karnataka, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh. The Congress is ruling Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, while the BJP is in power in Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh. A 2 per cent swing either way would change the results.

The BJP wants to expand further while the Congress

struggles to raise its head. It has already lost the northeastern states, which was its stronghold at one point in time to the BJP. The BJP has increased its foothold steadily everywhere. Even the Communists have lost Tripura to the BJP. With such high stakes, the worst-case scenario for the Congress is to lose Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh and not win any of the other seven states. The best-case scenario is to retain what it has and gain more.

The BJP is on a mission. Mission 350 (to get 350 seats in Lok Sabha) is their stated goal. It is going all out to enable Prime Minister Narendra Modi to perform a hat trick.

BJP chief JP Nadda sounded the poll bugle this month, asking the cadres to "Prepare to win all nine Assembly polls

this year". The party is getting votes of Backward Classes, SCs and STs and is giving them representation. This shows "our resolve of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, and Sabka Prayas", he said, while addressing the party's national executive recently.

The two parties have already begun their poll exercises, with Modi campaigning in the North East and the Congress concentrating on Rahul's Bharat Jodo Yatra. Key regional players like the ambitious Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhara Rao, hoping for a hat trick, are also preparing for the battle of 2023.

The BJP wants to focus on the South, which has 129 Lok Sabha seats, of which the party has only 29 seats—25 alone coming from Karnataka. The

party wants to win at least 50 seats. But the regional satraps have a firm hold in Southern states, be it Telangana or Kerala.

"The upcoming 2023 assembly elections will be the final journey for communists, and the Congress party will become a poster," according to Tripura's former Tripura chief minister Biplab Kumar Deb. It will be a trial by fire between BJP and regional parties in the northeastern states. The seven states count for 25 seats.

After completing Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra last week, Congress workers are enthused. We must wait for Yatra's electoral impact, as it depends on follow-up. Organisational unity is a crucial challenge, especially in states such as Rajasthan, Karnataka, and Telangana,

where traditionally, the Congress had done well in the past. The party's high command must not mess up as it did in Punjab and elsewhere. It must choose its alliance partners and assess its strength correctly.

Secondly, it has to find a balance between the old guard and younger leaders. Thirdly, the Congress must choose a new, catchy narrative and raise correct issues, particularly of interest to the common man, like bread and butter issues.

For the BJP, money is no constraint, nor is the organisation. Above all, the BJP depends on Modi's magic to sway the voters.

However, the saffron party is on the back foot regarding price rise, inflation, and jobs. There are no takers for its

Hindutva ideology in the South. If the Opposition concentrates on the bread and butter issues and convinces the voters to move away from the BJP, it would be an 'advantage Opposition.' The BJP also has to fight the dynasties, welfare politics, and social engineering to conquer the South. Regional satraps like K Chandrashekhara Rao still have a hold on the electorate.

Each player has to use a different poll strategy to win and go for a suitable alliance. The Congress needs a different narrative, while the BJP ideology does not attract people in the South. The parties have to overcome their disadvantages and maximise their advantages successfully. Ultimately, it all depends on voters and Dame Luck.

Russia pushes advance on Bakhmut

Bolsters defences in South

AP ■ KYIV, UKRAINE

Pierce battles raged outside Bakhmut as Russian forces pushed their advance on the eastern city with heavy shelling and infantry attacks, Ukraine's presidential office said Monday, with at least five civilians killed and as many wounded in action across the war-torn country in the last 24 hours.

The presidential office said the situation in Bakhmut's northern suburb of Paraskoviivka is "difficult" as Russian forces continued to pummel the area with "intense shelling and storming actions." The nearby town of Vuhledar is also under heavy bombardment.

Ukrainian soldiers began training on Leopard 2 battle tanks, Germany's Defense Ministry spokeswoman



Nadine Krueger said in Berlin. Germany pledged to deliver 14 of the tanks to Ukraine by the end of March.

Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg again urged Ukraine's Western allies to

ramp up their military support. Asked Monday when he expects Russia's so-called spring offensive to begin, Stoltenberg said that "the reality is that we have seen the start already."

"For me, this just highlights the importance of timing. It's urgent to provide Ukraine with more weapons," he told reporters in Brussels. Stoltenberg said that NATO sees "no sign whatsoever that

President Putin is preparing for peace" and that arming Ukraine more quickly could save lives by bringing a quicker end to the conflict.

Russian forces shelled a dozen cities and villages in the Donetsk region in the last 24 hours including in Druzhkivka where a missile hit a hospital and in Pokrovsk where shelling damaged seven houses and a kindergarten.

"The shelling intensifies, and the Russians accumulate more forces for an attack on peaceful cities," Donetsk Gov. Pavlo Kyrylenko said. "We're seeing a very tough battle in which the Russians aren't sparing neither themselves, nor us."

In the neighboring Luhansk region, Russian troops pulled back after several days of intense fighting near the key city of Kreminna, although they're not "running out of steam," Luhansk Gov. Serhii Haidai told Ukrainian television.

In the partially occupied southern region of Kherson,

artillery fire hit more than 20 cities and villages over the past 24 hours including the regional capital of the same name which was recaptured by Ukrainian forces in November. Two men were killed in one of the villages when their car ran over a landmine.

In the neighboring Dnipropetrovsk region, Russian shelling of the city of Nikopol killed one person and wounded two others. The shelling also damaged a residential building, a water treatment facility and a college.

Meanwhile, the U.K. Defense Ministry said Russian forces are bolstering defensive fortifications on the edge of the battlefield in southern Ukraine to protect their flank, despite their focus on the Donbas region.

"This is demonstrated by continued construction of defensive fortifications in Zaporizhzhia and Luhansk oblasts and deployment of personnel," the Ministry said in a briefing Monday.

Ex-Italy Prez blames Zelenskyy for war

AP ■ MILAN

Former Italian Premier Silvio Berlusconi has blamed Ukraine's president for Russia's invasion, again putting him at odds with Premier Giorgia Meloni's support for Kyiv.

Berlusconi, whose party is part of Meloni's right-wing coalition government, is a long-time friend and ally of Russian President Vladimir Putin.

He said the war in Ukraine "would have never happened" had Zelenskyy "ceased attacking the two autonomous republics of Donbass."

Berlusconi said he judged Zelenskyy's behaviour "very, very negatively."

He also criticised Meloni for meeting with Zelenskyy, telling reporters Sunday that



he wouldn't have done the same if he were premier.

The comments drew a quick rebuttal from Meloni's office, which said that "the government's support for Ukraine is solid and unwavering."

Her office said support for Ukraine is clear in both government policy and in parliament, manifesting itself in weapons deliveries to Ukrainian forces.

Russia threat for all of Europe: Norway Training of Ukrainians on new tanks observed

AP ■ COPENHAGEN

Russia is the main security threat for all of Europe and will remain so for a long time, Norway's intelligence officials said Monday, warning that recent burnings of Islam's holy book in Scandinavia could possibly lead to terror attacks in the country.

"Russia today poses the biggest threat to Norwegian and European security, and the confrontation with the West will be long-lasting," said Defence Minister Bjorn Arild Gram. Arild Gram made the remark after the government received the annual threat assessments from Norway's three security services: the domestic and the foreign intel-

ligence agencies and the Norwegian National Security Authority, or NSM. "The burning of the Quran could be seen as offensive or provocative and we expect that such events will also occur in 2023 in Norway," said Beate Gangas, head of the domestic security service, known by its acronym PST.

"When such events take place in Norway, the likelihood of radicalisation and ultimately terrorist planning against Norway increases."

Despite the warning, Norway's terror domestic threat level was left unchanged at "moderate." The deputy head of the foreign Norwegian Intelligence Service Lars Nordrum said that Norway's oil

and gas installations could be targeted by Russian sabotage. NSM head Sofie Nystrom warned that "all of Europe will suffer" if Norwegian gas and oil installations were hit.

"Norway is now Europe's most important energy supplier after Russia ended its gas exports to the West," said Nordrum. But PST assessed that it's unlikely Russia would carry out any sabotage operation on Norwegian soil this year.

Desecrating a book held sacred by a religious community is protected in Scandinavian countries by freedom of speech. On February 2, police in Oslo, the Norwegian capital, had barred a group to stage a protest outside the

Turkish Embassy that would have involved setting a fire a copy of the Quran on grounds that security could not be ensured "in a satisfactory manner" at the event.

Ankara is angry that anti-Turkish protests have been allowed to take place, and particularly that it has not prevented an anti-Muslim activist from repeatedly burning the Quran, the Muslim holy book in Stockholm and Copenhagen, the capital of Denmark.

Last week, the Swedish domestic security agency SAPO warned that the threat of attacks in Sweden has increased in the weeks since a far-right activist burned a Quran outside the Turkish Embassy in Stockholm.

AP ■ WARSAW

Poland's president and defence minister met on Monday with Polish instructors intensively training Ukrainian troops to operate the German-made Leopard 2 tanks that some European countries have offered Kyiv to help fight the Russian invasion.

President Andrzej Duda and minister Mariusz Blaszczak also watched Leopard 2 training at a military base and test range in Swietoszow, in southwestern Poland.

The training is part of the European Union's military assistance to Ukraine. Taking part are Ukrainian troops from units fighting in the east of the country. The intensive training



lasts up to 10 hours a day, including weekends, the Polish military said. Instruction is also being held in Germany. Stationed in Swietoszow are Poland's 10th Armoured Cavalry Brigade and a U.S. Armoured cavalry combat

group. Warsaw is among the most active supporters of neighbouring Ukraine, and has pushed European nations to provide the Leopard 1 and 2 tanks. Germany has pledged at least 178 Leopard 1 tanks and 14 Leopard 2s. Poland has

pledged 14 Leopard 2s. Other contributing countries are Denmark and the Netherlands. Poland has also provided or pledged more than 300 of its Soviet-era T-72 tanks and modernised PT tanks. Ukrainian officials say they expect Russian forces to make a new drive in eastern and southern Ukraine, as the Kremlin strives to secure territory it illegally annexed in late September and where it claims its rule is welcomed.

Germany's Defence Minister Boris Pistorius said last week that first battalion of 31 Leopard 1 tanks in Ukraine should be ready in April. The first Ukrainian soldiers to be trained on tanks departed for Germany last week.



कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, द्वितीय वृत्त, लोक निर्माण विभाग, नैनीताल

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पत्रांक : 628 / 41 एम-2 / 22-23 दिनांक : 08 / 02 / 2023

शुद्धि पत्र

इस कार्यालय के पत्रांक 249/41 M-22/23 dated 17/01/2023 द्वारा आमंत्रित ई निविदा सूचना (E-Tender) के माध्यम से मा 10 मुख्यमंत्री घोषणा संख्या 319/2013 के अन्तर्गत जनपद नैनीताल के विधानसभा क्षेत्र लालकुआ के विकास खण्ड हल्द्वानी में ग्राम लक्ष्मपुर (नकेल) को मोटर मार्ग से जोड़ने हेतु कच्चे मार्ग का सुधार / डामरीकरण एवं सूखी नदी पर 60 मीटर स्पायन का स्टील गार्डर सेतु का निर्माण कार्य की डबल बिड सिस्टम (Double Bid System) के अनुसार आमंत्रित की गयी है, जो दिनांक 09-02-2023 को खोली जानी है, मा 10 उच्च न्यायालय नैनीताल में गतिमान रिट पिटिशन सं 258 / 2023 के क्रम में मा 10 उच्च न्यायालय नैनीताल के आदेश दि 24.01.2023 द्वारा निर्देशित किया गया है कि निविदा प्रक्रिया पूर्व की भांति चलेगी परन्तु प्राप्त निविदायें खोली नहीं जायेंगी।

अतः उक्त आमंत्रित निविदा अब ऑन लाईन दिनांक 20-02-2023 अपरान्ह 03:00 बजे तक Website <http://www.uktenders.gov.in> में अपलोड की जा सकेगी एवं निविदा से संबंधित आवश्यक प्रश्न दिनांक 20-02-2023 अपरान्ह 03:00 बजे तक वृत्तीय कार्यालय में जमा किये जा सकेंगे जोकि अपरान्ह 03:30 बजे वृत्तीय कार्यालय में निविदा समिति के समक्ष खोली जायेगी। निविदा की अन्य शर्तें यथावत रहेंगी।

अधीक्षण अभियन्ता
द्वितीय वृत्त, लोक निर्माण विभाग, नैनीताल

ORIENTAL NAGPUR BETUL HIGHWAY LIMITED				
Regd. Off.: Unit No 307A, 3rd Floor, Worldmark 2 Asset Area No 8, Hospitality Dist. Delhi Aerocity New Delhi - 110037				
E-mail: onbhinvestors.relations@orientalinfrastrust.com; CIN: U45400DL2010PLC203649				
FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2022				
(Amount in Millions)				
Sl. No.	Particulars	Quarter Ended 31.12.2022 (Un audited)	Quarter Ended 31.12.2021 (Un audited)	Year Ended 31.03.2022 (Audited)
1	Total income from operations (net)	1,246.41	1,323.27	12,603.25
2	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period (before Tax and Exceptional Items)	603.56	601.87	2,428.91
3	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional Items)	603.56	601.87	2,428.91
4	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional Items)	1,080.76	593.37	1,649.92
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period (Comprising Profit/(Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax))	1,080.76	593.37	1,649.92
6	Paid up Equity Share Capital	181.35	181.35	181.35
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve)	10,770.62	9,991.72	10,249.02
8	Securities Premium	3,443.66	3,443.66	3,443.66
9	Net Worth	12,772.67	12,196.58	12,353.51
10	Paid up Debt Capital/Outstanding Debt	22,235.29	24,242.42	23,244.17
11	Outstanding Redeemable Preference Shares	-	-	-
12	Debt Equity Ratio	1.94:1	1.99:1	2.11:1
13	Earnings Per Share (of Rs 10/- each)			
	1. Basic:	59.60	32.72	90.98
	2. Diluted:	59.60	32.72	90.98
14	Capital Redemption Reserve	-	-	-
15	Debiture Redemption Reserve	1,820.70	2,023.51	1,923.14
16	Debt Service Coverage Ratio	1.07:1	1.19:1	1.32:1
17	Interest Service Coverage Ratio	2.11:1	2.03:1	2.03:1
Notes:				
a) The above is an extract of the detailed format of quarterly unaudited financial results filed with the Stock Exchange under Regulations 52 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations 2015. The full format of the quarterly unaudited financial results are available on the websites of the National Stock Exchange (NSE) and the listed entity (http://www.nagpurbetulhighway.in).				
b) For the other line items referred to in Regulation 52(4) of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations 2015, pertinent disclosures have been made to the Stock Exchange and are available on the websites of the National Stock Exchange (NSE) and the listed entity (http://www.nagpurbetulhighway.in).				
c) These quarterly unaudited financial results have been reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of Directors of the Company at their meeting held on February 13, 2023. The Statutory Auditors have carried out limited review of the aforesaid results.				
d) The financial results of the company have been prepared in accordance with Indian Accounting standard prescribed under section 133 of Companies Act, 2013.				
For and on behalf of Board of Directors of Oriental Nagpur Betul Highway Limited				
Sd/- Abhishek Sehgal Director DIN - 09771934				
Place: New Delhi Date: 13.02.2023				

Turkey earthquake survivors seek hot meals as rescues wane

AP ■ ADIYAMAN (TURKEY)

Thousands left homeless by a massive earthquake that struck Türkiye and Syria a week ago packed into crowded tents or lined up in the streets on Monday for hot meals as the desperate search for survivors entered what was likely its last hours.

Thousands of rescue teams, including Turkish coal miners and experts aided by sniffer dogs and thermal cameras, were searching pulverised apartment blocks for signs of life.

In southern Hatay province, rescuers cheered and clapped as a 13-year-old boy identified only by his first name, Kaan, was pulled from the rubble.

Stories of near-miraculous rescues have flooded the airwaves in recent days, including many that were broadcast live on Turkish television and beamed around the world.



65-year-old Atari Kales mourns for her daughter in law and two grandchildren near the collapsed building that they were trapped in Antakya. Rescue crews have pulled more survivors, including entire families, from toppled buildings despite diminishing hopes as the death toll of the enormous quake that struck a border region of Turkey and Syria five days continued to rise

AP Photo

But tens of thousands of dead have been found during the same period. Experts say the window for

such rescues has nearly closed, given that temperatures have fallen to minus 6 degrees Celsius (21

degrees Fahrenheit) and the total collapse of so many buildings.

The 7.8 magnitude earthquake and its aftershocks, including a major one nine hours after the initial tremor, struck southeastern Türkiye and northern Syria on February 6, reducing huge swaths of towns and cities to fragments of concrete and twisted metal. The death toll has surpassed 35,000.

The Turkish Enterprise and Business Confederation, a non-governmental business organisation, estimated the quake's financial damage in Türkiye alone at USD 84.1 billion.

Calculated using a statistical comparison with a similarly devastating 1999 quake, the figure was considerably higher than any official estimates so far.

Senior United Nations officials conceded that help to quake victims in Syria had been too slow, and Türkiye on Monday offered to open a second border crossing to

assist the international effort.

The UN Security Council scheduled a closed meeting on the quake's effect on Syria for Monday afternoon.

Some 100 kilometres (62 miles) from the epicentre, almost no houses were left standing in the village of Polat, where residents salvaged refrigerators, washing machines and other goods from wrecked homes.

Not enough tents have arrived for the homeless, said survivor Zehra Kurukafa, forcing families to share the tents that are available.

"We sleep in the mud, all together with two, three, even four families," Kurukafa said.

Turkish authorities said on Monday that more than 150,000 survivors have been moved to shelters outside the affected provinces. In the city of Adiyaman, Musa Bozkurt waited for a vehicle to bring him and others to western Türkiye.

After quake, war-hit Syrians struggle to get aid, rebuild

AP ■ ATAREB, SYRIA

After years of war, residents of areas in northwest Syria struck by a massive earthquake are grappling with their new and worsening reality.

Almost one week after the devastating 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck northern Syria and neighboring Turkey, the United Nations has acknowledged an international failure to help Syrian quake victims.

In Atareb, a town that Syrian rebels still hold after years of fighting government troops, survivors dug through the debris of their homes Sunday, picking up the remnants of their shattered lives and looking for ways to heal after the latest in a series of humanitarian disasters to hit the war-battered area.

Excavators lifted rubble and residents with shovels and picks destroyed columns to even out a demolished building. Dozens of newly displaced families gathered for hot meals from local volunteers and the local opposition-run government.

A private citizen went tent to tent to give out wads of cash in a makeshift shelter — the equivalent of about \$18 to each family. Syrians were doing what they have honed over years of crises: relying on themselves to pick up the pieces and move on. "We are licking our own wounds," said Hekmat Hamoud, who had been displaced twice by Syria's



ongoing conflict before finding himself trapped for hours beneath rubble. Syria's northwestern rebel-held enclave, where over 4 million people for years have struggled to cope with ruthless airstrikes and rampant poverty, was hit hard by the Feb. 6 quake.

Many in the area were already displaced from the ongoing conflict and live in crowded tent settlements or buildings weakened by past bombings. The quake killed over 2,000 people in the enclave, and displaced many more for a second time, forcing some to sleep under olive groves in the frigid winter weather.

"I lost everything," said father of two Fares Ahmed Abdo, 25, who survived the quake. But his new home and body shop where he fixed motorcycles for a living were destroyed. Once again with barely any shelter and no power nor toilets, he, his wife, two boys and ill mother are crammed in a small tent.

10 US balloons flew in our airspace: China

AP ■ BEIJING

China on Monday said more than 10 US high-altitude balloons have flown in its airspace during the past year without its permission, following Washington's accusation that Beijing operates a fleet of surveillance balloons around the world.

The Chinese allegation comes after the US shot down a suspected Chinese spy balloon that had crossed from Alaska to South Carolina, sparking a new crisis in bilateral relations that have spiralled to their lowest level in decades.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin gave no details about the alleged US balloons, how they had been dealt with or whether they had government or military links.

"It is also common for US balloons to illegally enter the airspace of other countries," Wang said at a daily briefing. "Since last year, US high-altitude balloons have illegally flown over China's airspace more than 10 times



Wang Wenbin, Foreign Ministry spokesperson, gives a daily briefing in Beijing.

without the approval of Chinese authorities."

Wang said the US should "first reflect on itself and change course, rather than smear and instigate a confrontation".

China says the balloon shot down by the US was an unmanned airship made for meteorological research that had been blown off course. It has accused the US of overreacting by shooting it down and threatened to take unspecified action in response.

Following the incident, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken cancelled a visit to Beijing that many had hoped would put the brakes on the

sharp decline in relations over Taiwan, trade, human rights and threatening Chinese actions in the disputed South China Sea.

Also on Monday, the Philippines accused a Chinese coast guard ship of targeting a Philippine coast guard vessel with a military-grade laser and temporarily blinding some of its crew in the South China Sea, calling it a "blatant" violation of Manila's sovereign rights.

Wang said a Philippine coast guard vessel had trespassed into Chinese waters without permission on February 6 and that Chinese coast guard vessels responded "professionally and with restraint".

China claims virtually all of the strategic waterway and has been steadily building up its maritime forces and island outposts.

"China and the Philippines are maintaining communication through diplomatic channels in this regard," Wang said. China's Defense Ministry did not immediately respond to a question about the incident.

US denies Beijing's accusation

AFP ■ WASHINGTON

The White House on Monday denied Beijing's accusation that the United States has been sending balloons over China to conduct surveillance, as tensions about espionage rise between the two superpowers.

"Any claim that the US government operates surveillance balloons over the PRC is false," National Security Council spokesperson Adrienne Watson said on Twitter.

"It is China that has a high-altitude surveillance balloon program for intelligence collection, that it has used to violate the sovereignty of the US and over 40 countries across 5 continents."

The State Department responded with a similar rejection, and called Beijing's accusation "the latest example of China scrambling to do damage control." It has repeatedly and wrongly claimed the surveillance balloon it sent over the United States was a weather balloon and to this day has failed to offer any credible explanations.

Haley faces 'high-wire act' in 2024 bid against Trump

AP ■ CHARLESTON (US)

Few have navigated the turbulent politics of the Trump era like Nikki Haley.

In early 2016, the then-South Carolina governor said she was "embarrassed" by candidate Donald Trump and decried his reluctance to condemn white supremacists. Nine months later, she agreed to join his Cabinet, serving as a key validator as Trump sought to win over skeptical world leaders and voters at home.

And shortly after Trump left the White House, Haley, whose resume by then included an ambassadorship to the United Nations, vowed not to step in the way if he ran for the 2024 Republican presidential nomination.



Haley is poised to become the first major Republican candidate to enter the race against him.

"It's going to be quite the high-wire act," said veteran Republican strategist Terry Sullivan. "She says she's always been an underdog. She will be again."

The 51-year-old Haley may be the first to take on Trump, but a half-dozen or more high-pro-

file Republicans are expected to join the GOP's 2024 presidential nomination contest over the coming months. Some would-be competitors may be more popular than Haley even in South Carolina, where she lives and has established a campaign headquarters.

Likely rivals include Sen. Tim Scott, a fellow South Carolinian and perhaps the most celebrated elected official in a state where Trump has already locked up endorsements from the governor and its senior senator, Lindsey Graham. Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis and former Vice President Mike Pence could also be formidable foes should they run, as widely expected.

Indeed, on the eve of this week's announcement, there is broad agreement that Haley —

the only Republican woman of color expected in the 2024 contest, a politician who loves to remind people that she has never lost an election — is about to be tested as never before.

Trump has stepped up his attacks on Haley in recent weeks. But allies describe the former governor, who is the daughter of Indian immigrants, as a savvy executive uniquely positioned to lead a new generation of Republicans. They understand that the fight ahead could get ugly.

"She took the bull by the horns and said, 'That doesn't matter to me, I'm going to run,'" said longtime supporter Gavin J. Smith. "She did that when she ran for governor, and that's what you're going to see when she runs for president."

After their genitals were cut, some women search for healing

AP ■ CAIRO

She remembers it all: How female relatives held her down when she was 11, legs spread and genitals exposed. The fear that stiffened her body. The stranger in black holding the scissors. And the pain.

Like so many others, the 34-year-old Egyptian woman has lived with the psychological and physical repercussions of that day, when she was subjected to a practice many activists call "mutilation."

For N.S., who asked to be identified only by her initials to discuss the sensitive topic, the trauma continuing into adulthood was accompanied by a desire to reclaim control over her health and body.



N.S., 34, says she remembers the pain of the procedure. She was subjected to a practice many activists call "mutilation."

"I had a feeling of being incomplete and that I will never feel happy because of this," she said. "It's a horrible feeling."

A global target aims to eradicate the deeply entrenched practice by 2030, and protect the next generations of girls, though campaigners acknowledge the difficulties in achieving that. The United Nations has designated

an International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation, or FGM, observed every February 6.

Meanwhile, some women living with the consequences have embarked on deeply personal journeys to heal. They search for answers, sometimes scouring the Internet, amid treatment gaps in many countries, or shame and possible related sexual complications.

Prevalent in parts of Africa, the Middle East and Asia, cutting has been performed in communities of different cultures and faiths. It can be viewed as a rite of passage or linked to beliefs about chastity or femininity and cleanliness, and be fuelled from generation-to-generation by social pressure.

France: Its troops misrepresented in Wakanda Forever

AP ■ Paris

France's defence minister has denounced the way he says French soldiers deployed in Africa appear to be depicted in the Marvel Studios superhero film "Black Panther: Wakanda Forever" as "false and misleading."

Minister Sebastien Lecornu "strongly condemned" the similarity of a fictional group of villainous mercenaries with French armed forces members, in a tweet published Sunday about the film that came out in November in France and the US.



AP ■ JERUSALEM

Tens of thousands of Israelis — hoisting flags, blowing on horns and chanting "democracy" and "no to dictatorship" — protested outside the parliament building Monday as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government formally launched a contentious plan to overhaul the country's legal system.

It was the largest protest outside the Knesset in years and reflected the deep divisions over the plan. The proposed changes have triggered weeks of mass demonstrations, drawn cries of protests from influential business leaders and former military men and even prompted a statement of concern from President Joe Biden.

Despite a plea from the nation's figurehead president to put the legislation on hold, Netan-

yahu's allies approved a series of legislative changes during a stormy committee meeting Tuesday. The vote now sends the legislation to the full parliament for a series of votes — an opening salvo in a battle expected to stretch on for weeks.

"They hear our cry. They hear the strong voice of truth," opposition leader Yair Lapid said from the stage outside parliament. "They hear it and they're afraid."

Netanyahu and his supporters say the proposed changes are needed to rein in a judiciary that wields too much power. But his critics say the judicial overhaul is tantamount to a coup and will destroy Israeli democracy. They also say that Netanyahu, who is on trial for a series of corruption charges, has a conflict of interest.

The protesters came from across the country. Organizers said that upwards of 100,000 people were in attendance, with female LGBTQ activists and leaders of the opposition parties addressing the crowd.

Thousands of people arrived in Jerusalem on packed trains, streaming up escalators in the city's main train station chanting, "democracy," cheering and whistling, and waving the national flag. Hundreds of others gathered in protest at Jerusalem's Western Wall, the holiest site where Jews can pray, before marching toward the Knesset.

Police in Pak arrest 75 over blasphemy killing

PTI ■ LAHORE

Over 75 suspects, including members of the radical Tehreek Laibbaik Pakistan (TLP) outfit, have been arrested for their alleged role in the lynching of a blasphemy-accused man in Punjab province of Pakistan, police said on Monday.

A violent mob on Saturday stormed the police station at Warburton in Nankana Sahib, some 80kms from Lahore, took custody of Waris Ali Issa, who was arrested for allegedly desecrating the holy book, stripped him naked, and dragged him into the streets before beating him to death.

An FIR has been registered against over 800 suspects for killing Waris, attacking police personnel, and ransacking the police station under terrorism and different sections of the Pakistan Penal Code.

RATHI STEEL AND POWER LIMITED

Regd. Office: 24/1, Block -A, Mohan Cooperative Industrial Estate, Mathura Road, New Delhi - 110044
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Extract of Unaudited Statement of Financial Results for the quarter and Nine Months ended 31st December 2022 (in Lacs)									
SL. No.	PARTICULARS	QUARTER ENDED			NINE YEAR ENDED		PR. YEAR		
		31.12.2022	30.09.2022	31.12.2021	31.12.2022	31.12.2021	31.03.2022		
		(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Audited)		
1	Total income from operations (net)	17,302.02	19,573.35	17,794.95	56,068.27	44,655.92	54,577.56		
2	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before tax, exceptional and / or extraordinary item.	300.65	185.05	88.68	713.42	(55.04)	462.49		
3	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (before Extraordinary items)	300.65	185.05	88.68	713.42	(55.04)	462.49		
4	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional and / or Extraordinary items)	300.65	185.05	88.68	713.42	(55.04)	(3,648.86)		
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	334.91	229.25	90.39	747.68	(27.79)	(3,607.54)		
6	Equity Share Capital	3,130.81	3,130.81	3,130.81	3,130.81	3,130.81	3,130.81		
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve as shown in the Balance Sheet of previous year)	--	--	--	--	--	--		
8	Earnings Per Share (after extraordinary items) (of Rs.10/- each)								
	a) Basic :	0.96	0.59	0.28	2.28	(0.18)	(11.65)		
	b) Diluted:	0.96	0.59	0.28	2.28	(0.18)	(11.65)		

The above is an extract of the detailed format of Statement of Unaudited Financial Results for the quarter and Nine Months ended on 31st December 2022 filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Statement of standalone Audited Financial Results are available on the websites of the BSE Limited (www.bseindia.com).

The above financial results were reviewed by the audit committee and approved by Board of Directors of the Company at their meeting held on 13-02-2023

Date: 13-02-2023, Place: New Delhi

UNITED LEASING AND INDUSTRIES LIMITED

Regd. Office : Plot No.66, Sector-34, EHTP, Gurugram, Haryana-122001.
CIN : L17100HR1983PLC033460, Website:www.ulilttd.com, Email id: investorrelations@ulilttd.com, Phone:011-26258237
Statement of Unaudited Financial Results for the Quarter and Nine Months Ended December 31, 2022 (Rs. In lacs, except per share data)

Sl. No	Particulars (Refer Notes below)	Quarter Ended			Nine Months Ended		Year Ended
		31.12.2022	30.09.2022	31.12.2021	31.12.2022	31.12.2021	31.03.2022
		(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Audited)
1	Total Income from Operations	445.19	289.91	176.16	935.51	302.11	525.32
2	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period before tax and exceptional & extraordinary items	17.13	30.49	45.56	63.34	42.75	67.05
3	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period after tax and exceptional & extraordinary items	12.85	18.94	45.56	47.51	42.75	56.59
4	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period after tax	12.85	18.94	45.56	47.51	42.75	56.59
5	Total Comprehensive Income	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	Paid-up equity share capital	300.00	300.00	300.00	300.00	300.00	300.00
7	Earning Per Share of Rs.10/- each (not annualised)						
	a) Basic	0.43	0.63	1.52	1.58	1.43	1.89
	b) Diluted	0.43	0.63	1.52	1.58	1.43	1.89

Notes :
The above is an extract of the detailed format of Unaudited Financial Results for the Quarter and Nine Months ended December 31, 2022 filed with the Stock Exchange under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Unaudited Financial Results for the Quarter and Nine Months ended December 31, 2022 are available on the Bombay Stock Exchange website www.bseindia.com and on Company's website www.ulilttd.com.

For United Leasing & Industries Ltd.
Sd/-
Anil Kumar Khanna

Place : Gurugram, Haryana
Dated : February 13, 2023
Managing Director
DIN : 00207839

KAMA HOLDINGS LIMITED

CIN : L92199DL2000PLC104779

Registered Office: The Galleria, DLF Mayur Vihar, Unit No. 236 & 237, 2nd Floor, Mayur Place, Noida Link Road, Mayur Vihar Phase I Extn, Delhi – 110091
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UNAUDITED STANDALONE AND CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND NINE MONTHS ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2022 (Rs. in Lakhs)

Sl. No.	Particulars	STANDALONE				CONSOLIDATED			
		QUARTER ENDED		NINE MONTHS ENDED		QUARTER ENDED		NINE MONTHS ENDED	
		31-Dec-22	31-Dec-21	31-Dec-22	31-Dec-21	31-Dec-22	31-Dec-21	31-Dec-22	31-Dec-21
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
		Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited
1	Total Income from Operations	6.97	0.11	20035.89	3606.18	350322.71	336097.01	1130647.08	893876.36
2	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax	(29.01)	(42.84)	19962.28	3466.24	64802.67	73317.57	226065.67	180545.80
3	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after tax	(20.57)	(42.58)	19523.30	3466.67	52447.74	50665.02	175865.86	128620.51
4	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	(20.49)	(42.44)	19523.06	3466.65	63252.45	55062.20	154715.07	133785.33
5	Paid up Equity Share Capital	645.26	645.26	645.26	645.26	645.26	645.26	645.26	645.26
6	Earnings Per Share (of Rs. 10/- each)								
	(a) Basic :	(0.32)	(0.66)	302.56	53.73	420.76	399.82	1497.76	1012.58
	(b) Diluted:	(0.32)	(0.66)	302.56	53.73	420.76	399.82	1497.76	1012.58

Note: The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly/Nine-months Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly/Nine-months Financials Results are available on the Stock Exchange websites (www.bseindia.com) and the Company's website (www.kamaholdings.com).

Place : Gurugram, Haryana
Date : 13th February, 2023

For and on behalf of the Board

Kartik Bharat Ram
Chairman
(DIN: 00008557)

Retail inflation 3-month high at 6.52% in Jan

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Retail inflation again breached the Reserve Bank's upper tolerance limit and touched a three-month high of 6.52 per cent in January, mainly due to higher prices in the food basket, including cereals and protein-rich items.

With the exception of November and December 2022, retail inflation has remained above the RBI's upper tolerance level of 6 per cent since January 2022.

The retail inflation based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) was 5.72 per cent in December and 6.01 per cent in January 2022. The previous high was 6.77 per cent in October.

While the prices of vegetable declined in January, most of the other items, including 'fuel and light' became dearer.

The rate of price rise in the food basket was 5.94 per cent in January, up from 4.19 per cent in the preceding month and 5.43 per cent in the year-ago month, as per data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO).

The inflation in rural areas was higher at 6.85 per cent as



compared to 6 per cent in the urban centres.

Last week, the RBI — which has been mandated to ensure inflation remains below 6 per cent — had raised the key short-term rate (repo) by 25 basis points to 6.5 per cent with an aim to check price rise.

The Reserve Bank has projected the retail inflation at 6.5 per cent in 2022-23, with January-December quarter at 5.7 per cent.

Headline CPI inflation moderated by 105 basis points

during November-December 2022 from its level of 6.77 per cent in October 2022.

This was due to a softening in food inflation on the back of a sharp deflation in vegetable prices, which more than offset the inflationary pressures from cereals, protein-based food items and spices, the RBI had said last week.

It also said the ongoing pass-through of input costs, especially in services, could keep core inflation at elevated levels.

Sensex extends losses for 2nd day

IT, bank stocks top drags

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark Sensex declined around 251 points on Monday, pressured by heavy selling in IT, bank and finance stocks amid a mixed trend overseas.

A depreciating rupee further weighed on sentiment, traders said.

Sliding for the second straight session, the 30-share BSE Sensex ended 250.86 points or 0.41 per cent lower at 60,431.84. During the session, the index touched a high of 60,740.95 and a low of 60,245.05.

On similar lines, the broader NSE Nifty dropped 85.60 points or 0.48 per cent to finish at 17,770.90.

SBI was the biggest loser in the Sensex pack, tumbling 2.83 per cent, followed by Infosys, TCS, Bajaj Finance, Tech Mahindra, Wipro and Axis Bank.

In contrast, Titan, L&T, NTPC, Power Grid, Sun Pharma, ITC and HDFC twins



were among the prominent winners, rising as much as 1.97 per cent.

"In response to rising bond yields and the dollar index, the domestic market is experiencing a broad-based sell-off, with IT and PSBs at the forefront. Clampdown in Adani group is adding anxiety to the domestic market," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap and smallcap indices dropped up to 1.25 per cent.

Sector-wise, BSE services, IT, realty, tech and commodities lost as much as 2.30 per cent, while capital goods and industrials finished higher.

"Domestic equities succumbed to weakness in global markets as investors fret over the Federal Reserve's stress on the tightening of the monetary

policy to tame inflation....We expect market to remain lacklustre as investors await key economic data on global as well as domestic front to provide some clear direction," said Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Retail Research, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd.

Global equities were mixed ahead of keenly-awaited US inflation data which will determine the pace of rate hikes by the Federal Reserve.

Elsewhere in Asia, markets in Tokyo, Hong Kong and Seoul closed in the red, while Shanghai settled higher.

Equity exchanges in Europe were trading with gains in the afternoon session. The US markets had ended in the positive territory on Friday.

The rupee fell by 15 paise to close at 82.73 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday.

International oil benchmark Brent crude was trading 1.34 per cent lower at \$85.23 per barrel.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) turned buyers in the capital markets on Friday, purchasing shares worth a net Rs 1,458.02 crore, according to exchange data.

Adani group stocks lower, Adani Enterprises by 7% as Moody's downgrades rating

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Shares of Adani group companies settled lower on Monday, with flagship company Adani Enterprises witnessing a 7 per cent slump after credit rating firm Moody's revised the rating outlook on four companies of the conglomerate to 'negative' from 'stable'.

Amid volatile trading in the market, shares of the group companies closed in the red.

"Adani group stocks were under pressure today. During the day, there were more negative news flow for the group which weighed on investor sentiment, including a sharp cut to the revenue growth target by the conglomerate along with a downward revision to the outlook of four Adani group companies by Moody's.

"The Adani group stocks (including Ambuja, ACC and NDTV) have lost around Rs 10.2 lakh crore or about 53 per cent of their combined market cap since January 24th till today," Manish Chowdhury, Head of Research at Stoxbox, said.

On Monday, the scrip of Adani Enterprises declined a



7.03 per cent to settle at ₹1,717.55 apiece. During the day, the shares of the flagship company went lower by 10 per cent to ₹1,662.65 each — also its lower circuit level on the BSE.

The flagship company's market valuation dipped ₹14,797.22 crore to stand at ₹1.95 lakh crore.

Shares of Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ) slipped 5.25 per cent to end at ₹553.20 per share, while Ambuja Cements dipped 5.17 per cent to close at ₹342.40 a scrip.

The market capitalisation of APSEZ dropped ₹6,620.82 crore to ₹1.19 lakh crore.

Besides, the stock of Adani Power settled lower at ₹156.10 each, Adani Transmission at ₹1,126.85, Adani Green Energy at ₹687.75 and Adani Total Gas at ₹1,195.35.

Jaypee Infratech Q3 net loss widens to ₹601 cr

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Debt-ridden Jaypee Infratech Ltd, which is undergoing insolvency resolution, on Monday reported widening of its consolidated net loss to ₹601.24 crore for the third quarter of this fiscal.

Its net loss at stood ₹540.03 crore in the year-ago period. Total income rose to ₹312.66 crore in the December quarter of this fiscal from ₹294.76 crore earlier.

During the April-December period of this fiscal, the consolidated net loss stood at ₹1,825.03 crore as against a net loss of ₹1,683.32 crore in the year-ago period.

Total income rose to ₹946.19 crore in the first three quarters of this fiscal from ₹770.4 crore in the corresponding period of the previous year. The company is earning revenue from the Yamuna Expressway Project that connects Greater Noida to Agra.

T-Hub, Suzuki Motor Corp ink pact to accelerate Indian start-up eco growth

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

T-Hub, an innovation hub and ecosystem enabler on Monday announced its partnership with Suzuki Motor Corporation (SMC), a leading corporation in the automobile sector to accelerate the growth of the Indian start-up ecosystem.

A press release from T-Hub said with the collaborative partnership, both the firms aim to provide mentoring and support Indian entrepreneurs to access Japan's ecosystem.

Suzuki Innovation Center (SIC), which is an open innovation platform, will provide growth opportunities to T-Hub incubated start-ups. In addition, SIC provides an open platform for new connections and innovation between India and Japan among academia, industries, and start-ups.



Mahankali Srinivas Rao, CEO of T-Hub, said, "Through our partnership with Suzuki Motor Corporation, we are aiming to address broad challenges on and beyond mobility, in India and Japan, on top of the synergistic combination of technology and design.

The partnership will empower T-Hub entrepreneurs to scale globally enduring homegrown technology start-ups with access to mentorship, and guidance from Suzuki Innovation Centre, he further said.

Gold jumps ₹114; Silver declines ₹319

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold price jumped ₹114 to ₹56,982 per 10 gram in the national capital on Monday, according to HDFC Securities.

In the previous trade, the precious metal had settled at ₹56,868 per 10 gram.

Silver, however, declined Rs 319 to ₹66,802 per kilogram.

"Spot gold prices in the Delhi markets traded at ₹56,982 per 10 gram, up ₹114 per 10 gram," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst - Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

In the overseas market, gold was trading flat at \$1,863.10 per ounce and silver quoted lower at \$21.97 per ounce. Comex gold prices traded flat in Asian trading hours on Monday.

Gold prices should consolidate in limited range of \$1,850-1,875 per ounce before US CPI data, Gandhi said.

Rupee falls 15 paise to close at 82.73 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee fell by 15 paise to close at 82.73 (provisional) against the US currency on Monday, weighed down by gains in the greenback and a muted trend in domestic equities.

Firm crude oil prices further dented investor sentiments, forex traders said.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 82.68 against the greenback, and fell to an intraday low of 82.77. It finally settled at 82.73 (provisional), down 15 paise over its previous close.

In the previous session on Friday, the rupee settled at 82.58 against the dollar.

According to Anuj Choudhary - Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas, the Indian rupee depreciated



on a weak tone in Asian markets and a strong dollar.

Traders also pared their positions ahead of CPI data which is expected a tad higher from the previous month's reading. However, a weak start to crude oil on Monday cushioned the downside.

"We expect the rupee to trade with a negative bias amid risk aversion in global markets and rising US dollar. Sustained outflows by foreign investors may also mount downside pressure on the domestic currency," Choudhary said.

Power Finance Corporation net profit rises 7% to ₹5,241 cr in December qtr

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned Power Finance Corporation (PFC) on Monday posted a 7 per cent rise in its consolidated net profit at ₹5,241.10 crore in the December quarter, mainly on the back of higher revenues.

The consolidated net profit of the company was ₹4,893.91 crore in the October-December quarter of FY22, according to a regulatory filing.

Total income of the company increased to ₹19,662.65 crore in the quarter under review from ₹19,213.69 crore in the same period a year ago.

The board also approved third interim dividend of ₹3.50 per share, bringing the cumulative interim dividend for the financial year 2022-23 to ₹ 8.75 per share.

The consolidated loan asset book crossed ₹8 lakh crore. The loan asset book as on December 31, 2022 stood at



₹8,04,526 crore.

The consolidated disbursements crossed Rs 1 lakh crore-mark at ₹1,06,875 crore for the nine months period in FY23 (April-December 2022) and registered an increase of 28 per cent versus 9M'22 (April-December 2021). This reflects PFC group robust business performance, a company statement said.

The synergies in resolution of stressed assets has led to Gross NPA (bad loan) ratio to fall below 4 per cent, from 5.55 per cent in 9M'22 to 3.91 per cent in 9M'23.

JSW Steel crude steel output surges 15% in January

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

JSW Steel on Monday reported a 15 per cent rise in crude steel production at 18.91 lakh tonnes in January.

The company's crude steel production was at 16.46 lakh tonnes (LT) in January 2022, JSW Steel said in a regulatory filing.

JSW Steel reported highest-ever standalone crude steel production for the month of January, 2023 at 18.91 lakh tonnes, a growth of 15 per cent y-o-y on standalone basis," the filing said.

The production of its flat-rolled products increased by 14 per cent to 14.24 LT over 12.47 LT in January 2022.

Its output of long-rolled products also registered a growth of 14 per cent to 4.25 LT, as against 3.74 LT in January 2022.

HeidelbergCement India Q3 net profit falls 81.66% to ₹5.58 crore

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

HeidelbergCement India Ltd on Monday reported an 81.66 per cent decline in its net profit at ₹5.58 crore in the third quarter ended December 2022, on account of an increase in operating cost.

The company had reported a net profit of ₹30.44 crore in the October-December quarter period a year ago, HeidelbergCement India said in a regulatory filing.

Its revenue from operation was flat at ₹540.12 crore during the quarter under review as against ₹544.52 crore in the corresponding quarter previous fiscal.

The firm's total expenses were at ₹542.67 crore, up 5.52 per cent in Q3FY23.

"On a per tonne basis, operating costs, including freight increased by 8.8 per cent



y/y (year-on-year) due to a steep increase in coal, Pectoke & diesel costs. The increase was partially offset by an increase in prices resulting in EBITDA of 339 per tonne, a decrease of 44 per cent y/y," HeidelbergCement India said in its earning statement.

Its sales volume was down 2.9 per cent to 1,095 KT as against 1,095 KT of October-December of FY22.

"An increase in prices by 2.2 per cent was offset by 2.9 per cent decrease in volume," it said.

'M&A deals jump 40% to \$163 bn in 2022, aided by \$ 57-bn HDFC merger'

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The USD 57-billion HDFC-HDFC Bank deal helped the overall merger and acquisition activity in the country rise by 40 per cent to reach \$163 billion in 2022, a report said on Monday.

Strategic deals like the one involving the HDFC twins accounted for a bulk \$126 billion of the overall quantum, while transactions involving private equity funds stood at \$37 billion, the report by Deloitte, a consultancy firm, said. Despite global headwinds like rising interest rates and elevated inflation levels leading to increased margin pressures for companies, the firm expects the overall activity to remain "strong" in the ongoing 2023.

The overall M&A (merger and acquisition) deals were much higher when compared with \$69 billion in 2019.

Audi expects high double digit growth in India this yr

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

German luxury carmaker Audi on Monday said it expects to have a significant double digit growth in India in 2023 on the back of new products and full-year availability of its popular models.

The company launched its Q3 Sportback model, a sporty compact crossover style of its popular SUV Q3, priced at Rs 51.43 lakh (ex-showroom) line as it seeks to continue with the momentum of its strong sales growth posted last year.

"I am looking at a significant high double digit growth for this year as well. We grew 27 per cent last year, but this year also we will continue to grow because the whole product line is available," Audi India



Head Balbir Singh Dhillon told PTI.

He was responding to the company's sales growth expectation in 2023.

This year, he said the company will have the full product line available, including the popular models such as SUV Q3, Q7 and top end sedan A8, which were launched last year.

"Then additionally, we now have the Q3 Sportback, also to be followed by the Q8 e-tron (electric SUV) in the third quar-

ter of this year. So I'm sure this will help us gather much more volumes," Dhillon said.

In 2022, Audi India posted sales of 4,187 units as compared to 3,293 units in 2021, a growth of 27.14 per cent.

On the expectations from the new Q3 Sportback, he said, "We are very hopeful that we are able to offer more choice to our customers who are very well travelled across the world and they look at newer possibilities in terms of not just the interior, but also the body style."

The Q3 has been Audi's one of most successful cars historically and by extending the range to Sportback, it is the "first time any luxury player is trying it in this segment this particular kind of a body style", Dhillon added.

Renault-Nissan to invest ₹5,300 cr to introduce six new models in India, including two EVs

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Franco-Japanese automotive alliance Renault-Nissan on Monday announced an investment of \$600 million (₹5,300 crore) in India to bring six new products, including two small electric cars, and upgradation of their Chennai plant.

The new vehicles will also include four SUVs with conventional engines, the first of which will hit the market by 2025. Of the six vehicles, three each will be for Nissan and Renault.

The alliance expects the fresh investments to create 2,000 new jobs in the country through additional R&D activities and it also has plans to locally produce electric vehicles in India.



Nissan Global Chief Operating Officer and Member, Alliance Board, Ashwani Gupta, in the presence of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin and Renault India Country CEO Venkatram Mamillapalle exchanged a memorandum of understanding with the state government pro-

moted nodal agency Guidance Bureau MD and CEO Vishnu Venugopal at an event here.

The two firms are also restructuring the capital structures of their joint manufacturing and R&D arms in India to make them equal partners.

The announcement follows the restructuring of the alliance's global structure earlier this month, putting both Renault and Nissan in an equal footing, doing away with the earlier dominance of Renault.

"We are writing the next chapter for the alliance in India after the global alliance announcement we did in London about getting into the next level," Gupta told reporters in a virtual interaction.

BARCA GO 11 POINTS CLEAR

AP ■ BARCELONA

Pedri's strike earned Barcelona a battling 1-0 win over Villarreal on Sunday to move 11 points clear of second-placed Real Madrid at the top of La Liga. The champions, who won the Club World Cup on Saturday, face Elche in midweek to try and bite back into the growing gap.

Earlier Memphis Depay scored his first Atletico Madrid goal as Diego Simeone's side beat Celta Vigo 1-0 to consolidate their position in fourth.

Barcelona rode their luck in a gripping clash at Estadio de la Ceramica but held off a Yellow Submarine onslaught to continue marching towards their goal of winning the title for the first time since 2019.

Defender Ronald Araujo in particular made a number of superb blocks and interceptions to help protect Barcelona's slim advantage until the end, locking in another clean sheet.

Barcelona have shut out opponents 16 times in 21 league games this season, conceding just seven goals. "The truth is we are working really hard (defensively)," Araujo told Movistar.

"We had to correct this from last season, when teams scored a lot of goals against us, and it was hard for us to keep clean sheets.

"We're doing well at the back and the midfielders aren't leaving spaces, the forwards too. It's the fruit of (our) work."

La Liga top scorer Robert Lewandowski missed two big chances for Barcelona.

However the Polish international, La Liga's top scorer, made up for it with a cushioned pass for Pedri to open the scoring after 18 minutes.

Barcelona fashioned a superb team move, finished off by the 20-year-old midfielder for his fourth goal in seven games across all competitions.

Jose Luis Morales should



have levelled for Villarreal but did not connect well with a volley and later fired wide when through on goal.

The hosts, who beat Real Madrid in January, were willing to attack the leaders and it led to an entertaining battle which ebbed and flowed from end to end. The Catalans face Manchester United in the Europa League next, on Thursday.

"There's a lot of points left (to play for), there's so long to go," said Barca coach Xavi. "The run is extraordinary but we can improve things. We are efficient and very solid, to win these games which are really hard."

Villarreal, eighth, have now lost three league games in a row.

DEPAY STRIKES

Earlier Simeone's Atletico, down to 10 men after Stefan Savic's red card, were outplayed by Celta but Depay reacted quickly to spin and bury a loose ball in the 89th minute.

The Dutch forward, signed from Barcelona in January, netted in La Liga for the first time since September.

"It was an important goal above all for the team, and for him," said Simeone.

"He worked well this week, he needs minutes and will com-

pete in training to get them.

"There's competition between the players and it's good that it's hard for us to decide (who plays)."

Goalkeeper Jan Oblak made a string of stunning saves, while Celta striker Iago Aspas hit the crossbar from a free kick, as the hosts dominated at Balaidos.

Atletico defender Savic was dismissed in the 70th minute for hauling down Swiss striker Haris Seferovic on the edge of the area.

Remarkably the Montenegrin defender has been dismissed three times in his last five appearances across all competi-

tions. With Atletico out of European competition and beaten in the Copa del Rey by rivals Real Madrid, securing Champions League football with a top-four finish is their target.

The harsh defeat leaves Celta Vigo provisionally 14th, unable to add a third consecutive victory to their wins over Real Betis and Athletic Bilbao.

Elsewhere Rayo Vallecano, sixth, were unable to beat lowly Getafe in a Madrid derby, sharing a 1-1 draw, while Real Valladolid and Osasuna drew 0-0.

Real Sociedad, third, travel to face Espanyol on Monday.

Napoli close to Scudetto title

AP ■ MILAN

Napoli continued their march towards a first Serie A title in over three decades with Sunday's 3-0 win over rock-bottom Cremonese which provisionally moved the runaway league leaders 16 points clear.

A 33-year wait for the league crown looks closer to ending with each passing week and once again Khvicha Kvaratskhelia and Victor Osimhen were the key men for Luciano Spalletti's flamboyant team at the Stadio Maradona.

Winger wizard Kvaratskhelia set Napoli on their way with a delightful individual effort in the 22nd minute on his 22nd birthday before Osimhen's league-leading 17th goal of the season midway through the second half and an Eljif Elmas strike 11 minutes from the end.

Thanks to a sixth straight league win Napoli will be at least 13 points ahead of Inter Milan come Tuesday morning, their closest rivals travelling to crisis club Sampdoria for the final match of this round of fixtures on Monday night.

"The city is making sure that we're always on the case, we all want to win," Spalletti told DAZN.

"We need to take it one match at a time... we can't think it's already done and start thinking about other things, or think everything's going to look after itself.

"We need to take care of everything ourselves."

Cremonese meanwhile are still yet to win in their first Serie A season since 1996 and look certain to go straight back down despite another committed performance under recently-appointed coach Davide Ballardini.

The away side, who knocked Napoli out of the Italian Cup on the same ground last month, started well but as soon as Kvaratskhelia weaved into the box and drilled home his ninth league goal of his debut Serie A campaign the game was up.



Osimhen was not in his usual fiery form but in the 65th minute the Nigeria striker was in the right place to tap in from practically on the goal line when following a corner Kim Min-Jae nodded the ball over to him.

And substitute Elmas ensured that Napoli's tally of dropped points stayed at an incredible seven, exchanging passes with Giovanni Di Lorenzo before lashing in his sixth goal of the season past Marco Carnesecchi.

RABIOT KINKS FIORENTINA

Juventus survived a scare in their 1-0 home win over Fiorentina after Gaetano Castrovilli's 89th-minute leveller for the away side was ruled out for an extremely tight offside.

France midfielder Rabiot met Angel Di Maria's exquisite cross with a header which just

crossed the line in the 34th minute in Turin, his fourth Serie A goal of the season which moved Juventus up to ninth.

And Castrovilli's superb first-time strike was chalked off following a pitchside VAR check when referee Michael Fabbri ruled Luca Ranieri was interfering with play in the build-up to the goal as his heel strayed offside.

Massimiliano Allegri's side are in mid-table due to the 15-point penalty inflicted last month for transfer offences, 10 points behind Lazio who currently occupy the last European place in sixth.

"We needed a bit of time to adapt (to the punishment), now we need to go after the teams above us one by one," said Allegri.

"We shouldn't forget that we would have been second on 44 points."

India start favourites against Kazakhstan in Asia Mixed Team C'ships opener

PTI ■ DUBAI

Spearheaded by a fit-again Sand rejuvenated PV Sindhu and HS Prannoy, India will fancy their chances against Kazakhstan in their opening Group B tie at the Badminton Asia Mixed Team Championships 2023, starting here on Tuesday.

Two-time Olympic medalist and world No.7 Sindhu has recovered completely from a stress fracture that kept her out of action for five months last year and is gunning for success in the new season.

After winning the gold medal at the Birmingham Commonwealth Games, the injury forced Sindhu to pull out of the World Championships and also missed the remainder of the last season.

Having made a scratchy start to the new season in the Malaysia Open and India Open at home, Sindhu is itching for success and would be going full throttle here.

Sindhu's back-up in the women's singles is 32nd-ranked Aakrushi Kashyap, winner of the Bangladesh International Challenge last month. The men's singles will be led by world No.8 Prannoy and will also have world No.10 Lakshay Sen.

In men's doubles, Chirag Shetty will partner Dhruv Kapila in the absence of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy, who has pulled out of the event due to a hip injury.

The other Indian pair in the men's doubles is Krishna Prasad Garga and Vishnuvardhan



Goud P.

In Satwik's absence, the men's doubles remains India's weakest link as it will be very difficult for Kapila to pair up with Shetty and deliver against the top men's combinations of other Asian countries.

Commonwealth Games bronze medallists Treasa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand will be the lead pair in women's doubles and will also have Ashwini Bhat and Shikha Gautam as back-up. Ishaan Bhatnagar and Tanisha Crasto will be the only Indian pair to shoulder the mixed doubles duties.

Players ranked in the top-10 received direct entries, while the rest of the squad was chosen through selection trials.

India's toughest opponents in the group will be Commonwealth Games champions Malaysia against whom they lost in Birmingham. The other team is host UAE.

The top two teams from each of the four groups will qualify for the quarter-finals and, barring upsets, India and Malaysia are expected to progress from Group B.

But the topper of the group will be decided after India's second tie, which is against Malaysia on Wednesday before they round off their league engagements against UAE on Thursday.

Lakshya Sen expects India to sail into the quarter-finals. "We have a strong team. The

draw of group stage is okay, should not be difficult. I think we can qualify for the quarter-final. In knockout, it will be one match at a time," Sen told PTL.

In the inaugural edition of the tournament in 2017, India made the quarter-finals, while in 2019 they failed to get past the group stage.

The tournament returns after three years as the 2021 edition was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Seventeen countries will fight it out for the continental crown in the event to be held from February 14 to 19 at the Dubai Exhibition Centre.

China, Japan, Indonesia, and Malaysia are the top four seeds in the tournament.

Mbappe included in PSG squad for Bayern CL tie

AP ■ PARIS

Kylian Mbappe has been named in Paris Saint-Germain's squad for their Champions League last 16, first leg against Bayern Munich on Tuesday after making a faster-than-expected return to training following a thigh injury.

After Mbappe suffered the injury against Montpellier on February 1, the French champions said he would be out for three weeks.

On Saturday, coach Christophe Galtier said he did not think Mbappe would play on Tuesday.

"I don't think so. He follows his rehabilitation protocol. He was a victim of a muscle injury," Galtier said after PSG lost 3-1



away at Monaco in Ligue 1. "We will take zero, zero, zero risk with Kylian."

But his name featured in the

squad of 22 players announced by PSG on Monday, along with Lionel Messi and Marco Verratti, both of whom sat out the Mon-

aco game due to injury.

Mbappe trained on Sunday and on Monday was seen in the part of training which is open to the media, participating in an exercise with Messi, Neymar, Sergio Ramos, goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma, Verratti, Achraf Hakimi and Marquinhos.

Bayern coach Julian Nagelsmann had previously suggested PSG were playing mind games when they announced the France superstar would not be fit for the first leg.

"I am preparing for the game as if he is going to play," Nagelsmann said last week.

Qatari-owned PSG are seeking to stay on course to win the Champions League for the first time.

MORGAN RETIRES FROM CRICKET

AP ■ LONDON

Eoin Morgan, who captained England to a thrilling ODI World Cup success in 2019, said on Monday he was retiring from all forms of cricket. The 36-year-old Ireland-born batsman had already called it a day in terms of international cricket last June when he stepped down as England ODI skipper.

Morgan captained England in a record 126 ODIs and 72 T20s. His 118 wins as skipper across the two formats is also a record. He had gone on playing for London Spirit in The Hundred and then most recently South African outfit Paarl Royals in the SA20. "It is with great pride that I am announc-

ing my retirement from all forms of cricket," said Morgan. "After much deliberation I believe that now is the right time to step away from the game that has given me so much over the years.

"From moving to England in 2005 to join Middlesex, right up to the very end, playing for Paarl Royals in SA20, I have cherished every moment."

Morgan said he had been fortunate to have had the chance to travel the globe. Morgan played for Ireland, including at the 2007 World Cup, but was eligible to play for England through his English mother.

He went on to play 16 Tests for them but it was the shorter form of the game that was his real forte.

Pioli hoping for Milan revival on return to CL knockouts



AP ■ MILAN

Stefano Pioli is hoping that AC Milan have pulled out of their damaging downward spiral as his team prepare for their first Champions League knockout tie in nearly a decade.

Milan host Tottenham Hotspur on Tuesday night having snapped a seven-match winless streak in all competitions which left their Serie A title defence in tatters and threatened to completely derail their season.

The San Siro breathed a heavy sigh of relief on Friday night when Olivier Giroud headed Milan to a 1-0 win over Torino and coach Pioli wants that tight victory to be the turning point after two Milan derby defeats and heavy league losses to Lazio and Sassuolo in just over a fortnight.

Pioli said that Friday's win should be looked at as a "rebirth" as it ended a run which had left fifth-placed Milan not only miles behind runaway league leaders Napoli but also in a real

fight for a place in next season's Champions League.

"We need to keep going, playing the Champions League next season would be a good finish at this point, but we need to be more consistent," he told DAZN.

Pioli will be hoping for a better result than nine years ago, when Milan were thrashed 5-1 on aggregate by Atletico Madrid and became also-rans for a tournament which they have won more times than any other club apart from Real Madrid.

He will be boosted by the return of both Ismael Bennacer and Fikayo Tomori from injury and a public rebuttal of rumours of a major dressing room bust-up which was given as a reason for Milan's collapse in form.

After beating Torino, France left-back Theo Hernandez and his club captain Davide Calabria jokingly posed in a boxing stance together for a picture on Instagram.

It was an attempt to brush off talk widely circulated via a WhatsApp voice note that the pair had exchanged punches following a row over a woman, talk which led to Calabria lamenting people's capacity for "imagination and malice".

"We accept criticism and we're the first to not be happy and want to turn things around," said Calabria.

"What we don't accept are the endless lies about me and my teammates."

Chennai Open Challenger: Nagal, Mukund enter singles main draw

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Indian players Sumit Nagal and Sasikumar Mukund entered the singles main draw of the Chennai Open ATP Challenger tennis tournament with victories in their respective qualifying round matches here on Monday.

Nagal posted a fluent 6-1, 6-3 win over Ji Sung Nam in his second round qualifying while Mukund stunned Jason Jung of Taipei, the No.1 seed in the qualifying, 4-6, 6-4, 6-4 to book their spots in the main draw.

Digvijaypratap Singh, however, lost 2-6, 6-7 (2) to third-seed James McCabe of Australia to

make an exit from the tournament. With Nagal and Mukund qualifying for the main draw, India will have four players in the fray as the duo join the country's top stars Prajnesh Gunneswaran and Ramanathan Ramkumar.

The 26-year-old Mukund wore down Jung in a battle that lasted two hours and 24 minutes. He will meet 2022 Wimbledon men's doubles champion Max Purcell in the first round of the main draw. Nagal faces fourth seed Ryan Peniston of Great Britain in the first round.

Prajnesh and Ramkumar, who received wild card entries into the 32-player main draw,

take on Jay Clarke (Great Britain) and Dimitar Kuzmanov in their respective opening matches. There was a huge upset in the singles main draw with Seong Chan Hong beating third-seed Sebastian Ofner of Austria 6-4, 6-3 in the first round.

In another first round match, top-seeded Chun-hsin Tseng, ranked 132 in the world, survived a tough battle against Nino Serdarcus before prevailing 6-4, 7-6 in one hour and 58 minutes. Yasutaka Uchiyama, Nicolas Moreno de Alboran and Arthur Cazaux won their respective first round matches to advance to the round of 16.

Storms won't cloud 'exciting' NZ-England series: Anderson

AP ■ WELLINGTON

England seamer James Anderson admitted Monday that a tropical storm battering New Zealand would affect preparations for this week's first Test, but was looking forward to an "exciting" series once the weather abates.

New Zealand host the first of a two-Test series against England in Mount Maunganui where heavy rain is forecast, though the storm is predicted to have cleared by the start of the day-night, pink-ball encounter on Thursday afternoon.



"It's not that different to England, to be honest," Anderson joked as heavy rain and high winds lashed Mount Maunganui's Bay Oval ground.

"We have a cover over the nets, but it's going to be tricky

to get out in the middle and see the wicket."

The storm grounded flights in and out New Zealand's largest airport in Auckland on Monday, hitting travel plans of arriving England fans.

"We are aware of how hard it is to travel at the minute, given the situation in Auckland and the amount of rain in the next few days isn't going to help," said Anderson, England's all-time leading wicket-taker. "We are appreciative of all the supporters who follow us around and New Zealand is probably as far (away) as you can go."

IYER UNLIKELY TO PLAY 2ND IND-AUS TEST

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Star batter Shreyas Iyer, who was ruled out of the first Test due to a lower back injury is still doing rehabilitation at the National Cricket Academy and it is unlikely the team management will risk playing him directly in a Test match.

India and Australia will play the second Test at the Ferozshah Kotla from Friday and it is to be seen if Iyer is able to join the team.

Iyer had posted a few videos of his intense rehab programme at the NCA in Bengaluru under trainer S Rajnikanth.

Iyer is doing his strength and conditioning routines but the norm for return to play in international arena is to at least play a domestic game of some form before donning national colours again.

Hence Iyer, who hasn't played any competitive cricket for a month now, might not be directly thrown into a Test match where he might have to field for 90 overs, crouch and stand close-in and then bat for long hours.

It will be interesting to see if the Chetan Sharma-led selec-



tion committee names Iyer in the Rest of India squad for the Irani Cup match against Madhya Pradesh from March 1-5 to prove his fitness just like they asked Ravindra Jadeja to play a Ranji Trophy game against Tamil Nadu.

BUMRAH MIGHT NOT BE RUSHED

Jasprit Bumrah's recovery from stress fracture has been a slow one and the Indian team management is unlikely to risk playing him in the three ODIs against Australia just after the

end of the four-match Test series.

Bumrah will be needed for the potential World Test Championship final at the Oval in London from June 7-11 and also for the big ODI World Cup in India at the end of the year.

Therefore, there is a possibility that Bumrah will return to play during Mumbai Indians' campaign at the IPL this year where his workload will be monitored.

JADEJA, PUJARA SWEAT IT OUT

In less than 48 hours after he had won the 'Player of the Match' award in the opening Test, Ravindra Jadeja was back in the nets at the VCA Stadium in Jamtha for an optional training session ahead of the second Test in Delhi starting Friday.

Jadeja, who took seven wickets, including a five-for along with a polished 70, did bat and bowl at the nets and was accompanied by senior batter Cheteshwar Pujara, who will play his 100th Test at the Ferozshah Kotla.

Jaydev Unadkat, who will be flying to Kolkata on Tuesday, to play the Ranji Trophy final

against Bengal, also rolled his arm over while KS Bharat honed his keeping and batting skills.

The Australian team, which couldn't train at the centre wicket after the Nagpur Test as the groundsmen had watered the track, had a lengthy session on the match strip on the day. A few social media pictures featured Marnus Labuschagne keeping wickets to the spinners.

STARC TRAINS AT KOTLA

While the Australian team will be reaching Delhi on Tuesday morning, Mitchell Starc, who missed the first Test due to an injury, is already up and running as he had his first nets session at the Kotla on the day.

While he bowled at the nets, he also invited the local net bowlers and had a knock for about 20 minutes.

It has been learnt that the DDCA groundstaff hasn't yet stopped watering the strip at the Ferozshah Kotla and, unlike conjectures by the Australian media, sources in the DDCA said that no specific instructions have been given by the Indian team management on preparation of the track.

Shubman Gill named ICC Men's Player of January



PTI ■ DUBAI

India batter Shubman Gill was on Monday named ICC Men's Player of the Month for January following a series of impressive innings in the ODI format, while England U-19 skipper Grace Scrivens became the youngest player to be named for the women's honour.

Gill enjoyed a record-breaking month in white-ball cricket in January. The free-scoring batter was a prolific source of runs throughout the month, most notably in the ODI format, scoring big against both Sri Lanka and New Zealand.

With 567 runs during January, which included three century-plus scores, the 23-year-old Gill wowed fans with a lethal combination of graceful and attacking strokeplay.

In a month which presented several highlights for Gill, his stand-out performance came in the form of a stunning double-hundred in the nail-biting victory over New Zealand in the series opener in Hyderabad.

His unbeaten 208 came off just 149 balls with 28 boundaries — a startling feat not just because it made him the youngest double-century in the ODI format, but also because all those around him seemed to falter on a difficult pitch for batters.

Sandwiched between this innings were two further centuries — 116 in a dominant victory over Sri Lanka, and 112 in the final ODI against New Zealand.

Gill overcame a competitive field to claim his first ICC Men's Player-of-the-Month award, beating New Zealand opener Devon Conway and compatriot Mohammed Siraj in the global vote. In doing so, he becomes the first Indian winner since Virat Kohli in October 2022.

"January was a special month for me and winning this award makes it all the more memorable. It is always heartening to be recognised for your performances, and I will take great confidence from these innings, especially as we head into an extremely important period prior to an ICC Men's Cricket World Cup on home soil," Gill said in an ICC release.

Scrivens bagged the award after her all-round brilliance in the inaugural ICC U-19 Women's T20 World Cup. Equally, the England captain excelled in her leadership role, guiding her side to the final, only to lose to eventual title winners India.

Women's cricket set to turn new corner with WPL but IPL is a different entity



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India women's cricket team vice-captain Smriti Mandhana becoming ecstatic after being picked by Royal Challengers Bangalore for Rs 3.4 crore during the Women's Premier League (WPL) auction was a moment that exemplified the excitement among players for the big day.

After all, the women were seeing the occasion as the beginning of a new dawn where they would also be able to call themselves millionaires like their male counterparts in the Indian Premier League (IPL).

For long, there had been talk about a T20 league for women in India, with several veterans like Mithali Raj, Jhulan Goswami and Harmanpreet Kaur, among others, waiting for this seminal moment in country's cricketing landscape.

But all that will change on March 4 this year when the inaugural match of the five-franchise tournament begins.

While it will most likely continue to be the precursor to the 'big event', the IPL, women cricketers will finally have a niche window, which they will be able to call their own in a milieu overcrowded with men's T20 leagues.

While in terms of money and clout, the WPL and IPL, will never be comparable, the new baby of Indian cricket will at least add a lot of glamour to women's cricket, which was so far lacking, and also bring in hordes of fresh Indian and foreign faces, hoping to make big bucks through WPL.

As India women cricketer set foot into hitherto uncharted territory, it would be fair to say the auction has gone way beyond expectation for several of them if one compares it with the IPL.

Mandhana getting Rs 3.40 crore, spinner Deepti Sharma being bought by UP Warriorz for Rs 2.60 crore and Jemimah Rodrigues and young India opener Shafali Verma earning Rs 2 crore-plus deals, certainly bodes well for the women cricketer in the country, given that the salary cap for each of the five franchises was just Rs 12 crore compared to the IPL mega auction last year where the total budget per franchise was increased from Rs 90 crore to Rs

95 crore.

Comparing the inaugural WPL auction to the first IPL auction ahead of the 2008 season, there is just a three-fold difference between what CSK dished out for Mahendra Singh Dhoni (Rs 9.5 crore) and what Mandhana got on Monday.

In fact, during the 2010 IPL auction Shane Bond (KKR) and Kieron Pollard (MI) were the highest money earners at Rs 4.8 crore each. It was only in 2011, that the salary purse of franchises started getting bigger and Gautam Gambhir (KKR) broke bank to earn a mind-boggling 14.9 crore.

Over the years, IPL has become the biggest and best domestic T20 tournament in the world, thanks to the multi-fold increase in telecast, broadcast and online revenue, which has translated into huge monetary gains for the players as well.





Ravindra Jadeja got Rs 12.8 crore in 2012, RCB shelling out Rs 14 crore for Yuvraj Singh and Delhi Daredevils (Delhi Capitals) buying him for a then IPL auction record of Rs 16 crore, were the offshoot of the burgeoning salary purse of the franchises. The upward trend has continued with England all-rounder Sam Curran now the highest ever money-earner from the 2023 IPL auction at Rs 18.5 crore.

When compared to the mega-bucks being earned by male cricketers, Mandhana's Rs three crore-plus pay packet certainly pales in front of these celebrated IPL icons.

But, come to think of it, the inaugural IPL auction too had a "humble" start and gradually, over the years, more money started flowing into the environment. As the WPL brand takes baby steps towards creating a niche for itself, it's just a matter of time before more TV money gets pumped into the league and the salary caps of franchises are revised.



Ten years down the line, who knows, a new woman cricketer could be laughing her way to the bank with a Rs 20-plus crore purse. By then, the IPL would be touching astronomical figures.

While not getting into the debate of who gets what, women's cricket was certainly the winner on Monday and with WPL, it'll turn a new corner.



“We are trying to make cooperative societies, institutions competitive in the market, by providing them a level playing field with other market players.”

- Narendra Modi



Inauguration and Laying the Foundation Stone of Various Projects of the Cooperative Sector

by

Sh. Amit Shah

Union Home and Cooperation Minister

Presided Over by

Sh. Manohar Lal

Chief Minister, Haryana

August Presence

Dr. Banwari Lal


Cooperation Minister, Haryana

Tuesday, February 14, 2023 | 2:30 pm


Cooperative Export House, Karnal

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Inauguration



Laying of Foundation Stone

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2. Sanjhi Dairy Scheme
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3. Internet Radio - Sahakarita Vani
Farmers and cooperative institutions will have access to major scientific information related to farming, animal breeding, improvement in quality of milk and marketing etc.


1. Ethanol Plant at Cooperative Sugar Mill, Panipat
To improve the economic condition of sugar mills, ethanol plant with 90 KLPD production capacity will be set up in Panipat at a cost of about Rs. 150 crore

2. Cooperative Milk Plant, Village Bidwas (District Rewari)
State-of-the-art cooperative milk plant with a capacity of 5 lakh litre per day will be set up at a cost of about Rs. 200 crore to meet the requirements of milk in the National Capital Region and increase the income of milk producers

The National Cooperative Development Corporation will present a Letter of Acceptance of Rs. 10,000 crore to the Cooperative Institutions of Haryana

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