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'Centre using its slave EC to finish political rivals'

Will bury Shinde-led party in elections, vows Thackeray

Aday after the Election Commission of India (ECI) declared the faction led by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde as the real Shiv Sena and allotted the "Bow and Arrow" symbol to the Shinde-led party, Shiv Sena (UBT) president Uddhav Thackeray on Saturday hit out at the BJP Government at the Centre for using the "Government machineries" like the ECI as the "slave" of the Government to finish off rival political parties, but said that Modi would not be able to "fin-

ish" his party.
Addressing party workers gathered in front of his Bandra residence "Matoshri" from an open jeep, a combative Uddhav said: "Yesterday, the Election Commissioner proved that he was the slave of Government. May be he is expecting to be appointed as the Governor of a State after his retirement as it recently happened in the case of a Supreme Court judge who came to be appointed as a Governor after his retirement."

"These slaves cannot decide to whom the parent Shiv Sena belongs. Only the people of Maharashtra can take a decision in this regard," he said. Dubbing the functionaries of the Eknath Shinde-led faction as "thieves'



Former Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhay Thackeray addresses supporters outside Matoshree on Saturday

who had stolen the parent's party name and its "Bow and Arrow" symbol", Uddhav vowed

to "bury" the Shinde-led party in the elections. Making an emotional appeal to his party men to prepare themselves for elections, Uddhav Thackeray said: "Today is Maha Shivratri. Tomorrow is the birth anniversary of Maratha warrior Chhatrapati Shivaji.Taking advantage of the occasion, some thieves have stolen Shiv Sena's

name and walked away with the symbol. *Contd on P2*

'Doodh ka doodh, paani ka paani', Shah hails EC decision

Pune: Union Minister Amit Shah on Saturday said those who chose to "lick the soles" of people with opposite ideologies have found which side the truth was on after the Election Commission did 'doodh ka doodh, paani ka paani (brought out absolute truth)' and declared the faction headed by Maharashtra Chief Minister

Eknath Shinde as the real Shiv Sena and gave it the 'Bow and Arrow' symbol. Without naming Uddhav Thackeray, Shah, who was speaking at the launch of the book 'Modi@20', also reiterated there was no agreement on sharing the Chief Minister's post in the run up to the 2019 Assembly polls. *Contd on P2*

Dangerous, opinionated, EAM tears into George

Soros still thinks his views should determine how entire world works, says Min

PIONEER NEWS
SERVICE/AGENCIES ■ NEW

Slamming billionaire investor George Soros for his remarks regarding Prime Minister Narendra Modi, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Saturday termed the tycoon as "old, rich, opinionated and dangerous."

The Minister also said Soros still thinks his views should determine how the entire world works, adding he invests resources in shaping narratives. Jaishankar made these sharp remarks at a session at the Raisina@Sydney Dialogue when asked about the tycoon's recent comments on Modi and the Adani Group.

The 92-year-old hedge fund tycoon said at the Munich Security Conference on Thursday the turmoil in Adani's business empire may open the door to a "democratic revival" in the country. Soros also claimed Prime Minister Modi and Gautam Adani's fates are entwined and claimed Modi was not a



Soros predicted that Modi will be weakened by the business troubles of Adani. Soros also said Modi would "have to answer questions" from foreign investors and in Parliament on allegations of fraud and stock manipulation at Adani's industrial empire.

Taking exception to his observations, Jaishankar said Soros is an "old, rich, opinionated person sitting in New York, who still thinks that his views should determine how the entire world works." "Now, if I could only stop at old, rich and opinionated, I would put it away but he is old, rich, opinionated and dangerous," Jaishankar said.

He said a few years ago at the same conference, Soros had accused India of planning to strip millions of Muslims of their citizenship. "We know the dangers of what happens when there's outside interference .. if you do this kind of scaremongering, like millions of people will be deprived of cit-izenship, it actually does real damage to our societal fabric,"

ifestations of this in different countries, where people like him think an election is good if the person we want to see wins. If the election throws up a different outcome, then we actually will say it's a flawed democracy," he said.

Jaishankar said globalisation allows seamless opportunities but also allows narratives to be shaped, money to come in, and organisations to get about their agenda. "All this is done under the pretence of advocacy of an open society of transparency."
The BJP alleged that Soros

targeted not just the Prime Minister but also the Indian democratic system. On Friday Union Minister Smriti Irani in a Press conference called upon Indians to "unitedly respond to foreign powers who try to intervene in India's democratic processes", calling Soros's remarks an "attack on India". Everyone should condemn his remarks in one voice, Irani said. She alleged that Soros wants to destroy Indian democracy and wanted some "hand-picked" people to run the Government

here.

The BJP has also questioned Soros' link with the Congress. BJP spokesperson Shehzaad Poonawalla pointed out that the vice-president of Soros' NGO Open Society Foundations, Salil Shetty, walked with Rahul Gandhi during Congress' Bharat Jodo Continued on P2

CAPSULE

BUS PLUNGES 2 DIE, 19 INJURED IN J&K Jammu/Rajouri: Two people

including a boy were killed and 19 others injured when a bus carrying pilgrims to Shiv Khori temple skidded off the road and plunged into a gorge in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district on Saturday, officials said. The accident took place near Tarvath in Ransu area around 12.30 pm when driver of vehicle lost control while maneuvering a curve and rolled down over 50

RAPE PROCEEDINGS STAYED AGAINST BABU New Delhi: The Supreme Court

feet into a gorge, they said.

has ordered an interim stay on the proceedings against a senior Government official accused of molesting and raping a minor nirl in Uttarakhand's Almora. A Bench of Justices V Ramasubramanian and Pankaj Mithal issued notices to the Uttarakhand Government, the Central Bureau of Investigation and others while seeking their response in four weeks. P2

RUCHIRA ELECTED FOR 62D UN SESSION Washington: The UN Commission for Social Development has elected India's Permanent Representative to

the United Nations Ruchira

Kamboi as its chair for the 62nd session. Kamboj was elected chair by acclamation at the first meeting of the 62nd session of UN Commission for Social Development at LIN headquarters in New York. It also elected Jon Ivanovski from North Macedonia, Carla Carlson from Dominican Republic and Thomas Lammar from Luxembourg as Vice-Chairs.

CBI summons Sisodia again in excise scam

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) once again summoned Delhi's Sisodia asking him to appear before the probe agency on Sunday in connection with Delhi excise policy 2021-22. According to sources, certain leads in the case needed investigation and hence, Sisodia has been asked to again join the investigation, he has been asked to appear at 11am at the CBI

headquarters. Earlier in a tweet, Sisodia said nothing was found against him during searches, and he would continue cooperating in the investigation. "The CBI has called again tomorrow. They have used the full power of CBI, ED against me, raided my house, searched bank locker, but nothing was found against me," Sisodia said. The AAP leader was last questioned by the anti-corruption agency on October 17, last year for almost nine hours.

Apparently referring to the Centre, he said the CBI has



been made to go after him want to stop him from doing "good work" on the education of the children in Delhi. "They want to stop me. I have always cooperated with the investigation and will continue to do so," he

Sisodia has not been named as accused in the charge sheet as the investigation against him and other suspects is still going on. The Deputy Chief Minister in the Aadmi Government, who also held the charge of the Excise Department, was earlier questioned on October 1711 tioned on October 17 last year and his home and bank lockers were also searched in con-

further investigation in the case regarding the money trail and the larger conspiracy in the formulation and implementa-2021-22 is still in progress," an

The CBI is now focussed on the alleged influence of a 'South Lobby" of businessmen and politicians in formulating and implementing Delhi liquor policy to swing it in their favour using middlemen, liquor traders, and public servants, the CBI said.

In a charge sheet filed on January 6, the ED cited Sisodia's secretary C Arvind's statement alleging that the decision to fix the 12 per cent profit margin for the wholesale private enti-ties was conveyed to him at Kejriwal's residence in mid-March 2021.

It has also been alleged that there was no discussion in the Group of Ministers (GoM) meetings - Sisodia, Satyendar Jain and Kailash Gehlot were in the GoM - about giving whole-sale liquor business in Delhi to private entities. *Contd on P2*

Feb 22: L-G, Kejriwal set date for Mayor poll

Delhi Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena has approved the Arvind Kejriwal Government's recommenda-tion to hold the Delhi mayoral polls on February 22. The LG's nod came hours after

Minister Arvind Kejriwal recommended to him that the mayoral election be held on the said date.

The development comes a day after the Supreme Court ordered the issuance of a notice

within 24 hours for convening the first meeting of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) to fix the date of elections for the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor and the members of the Standing Committee. "Recommended MCD mayor elections to be held on 22 Feb," Kejriwal said in a tweet earlier in the day. In a shot in the arm for the ruling AAP the apex court also held on Friday that the members nominated by the LG to the

MCD cannot vote to elect the Mayor. According to the Delhi Municipal Corporation (DMC) Act, 1957, the Mayor and the deputy mayor are to be elected in the very first session of However, it's been over two

months since the municipal elections were held on December 4 and Delhi is yet to get a

Mayor.
The MCD could not elect the Mayor on three previous occasions amid tumult as AAP and BJP councillors

fought over the voting rights of the nominated members.

The first meeting of the newly-elected MCD House was adjourned on January 6 amid clashes between AAP and BJP members. The AAP, which holds the majority in the 250member House with 134 councillors, has alleged that the saffron party is trying to steal its mandate by giving voting rights to nominated members. The BJP won 104 wards to fin-

12 imported cheetahs join first batch in Kuno Park

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

The country's wait for the 12 cheetahs - seven males and five females — from South Africa landed at Madhya Pradesh's Kuno National Park (KNP) in Sheopur district on Saturday to join the first batch of eight of these fastest land animals which were brought there from Namibia, another African nation almost six months ago. This takes the total number of felines to 20 in the region. All of them are being kept in enclosures.

Their inter-continental translocation is part of the Indian Government's programme to reintroduce these animals in the country seven decades after they became

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Union Minister for Environment and Forests Bhupender Yadav released these felines into the quarantine bomas. Continued on P2

Centre, DWB on collision course Govt to take over

123 denotified Wagf properties; won't allow it, says

Amanatullah Khan

The decision of the Union Ministry of Urban and Housing Affairs to take over 123 denotified Delhi Waqf Board (DWB) properties including mesques dargabs including mosques, dargahs, and graveyards is expected to open a Pandora's Box and will lead to yet another confrontation between the Centre and the Opposition parties, including the Congress and the Arvind Kejriwal Government in the national Capital. In fact,
DWB Chairman and AAP
MLA Amanatullah Khan has already announced that he would not allow it.

According to the Ministry, the decision is based on the report of a Delhi High Courtconstituted committee headed by a former High Court judge.

The Deputy Land and Development Officer of the Ministry, in a letter to the DWB on February 8, informed it of the decision to "absolve" it from all matters pertaining to the 123 Waqf properties. After the notice, physical inspection of all the 123 properties will now be carried out by the LDO.

These 123 properties were provided to Delhi Waqf Board by the previous Congress Government before the 2014 Lok Sabha elections. The Vishwa Hindu Parishad had raised concerns about the prominent locations of these properties and had approached

he court. Two committees were formed to hear matter, including a two-member committee and a one-member committee, comprising a former judge of the Delhi High Court and a retired SDM. The two-member committee's report said that the DWB had been allowed to present its case but failed to do so within prescribed time. The committee suggested a physical inspection of these 123 properties. *Continued on P2*

GST Council adopts GoM report on tribunals, with modifications: FM

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday said the GST Council adopted the report of the Group of Ministers on GST Appellate Tribunal with certain modifications, and the final draft amendments will be circulated to State Finance Ministers for their comments.

The GoM on Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunals (GSTATs) was set up in July last year under the chairmanship of Haryana Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala.

The panel has suggested that the tribunals should consist of two judicial members, and one technical member each from the Centre and States, besides a retired



ident. The GoM report on the establishment of the GST Appellate Tribunal has been accepted with slight modifications in the language that will be shared with States on Sunday and following which a final draft of the Tribunal's set-ting up will be worked out, Sitheramen told reporters after Sitharaman told reporters after chairing the 49th meeting of the GST Council. *Contd on P2* witnessed the country's politics being disgraced for 32 of those

Country has already gone bankrupt, says Pak Def Min years.The PML-N leader also

Sialkot: Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif suggested on Saturday that onefourth of Pakistan's debt could be paid off if only two golf clubs built on expensive Government land are sold, media reports said. The Minister acknowledged that Pakistan has already gone bankrupt, and that the solution to the country's problems lies within the country, and not with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Samaa

TV reported.

He also blamed the establishment, bureaucracy, and politicians for the current economic situation. Asif revealed that he has been in the Parliament for 33 years and had

pointed out that golf clubs had been built on Government land, and that selling two of them would reduce one-fourth of Pakistan's debt, Samaa TV reported. Asif also expressed his condolences for the loss of personnel in the fight against terrorism, saying that security agencies are working tirelessly to combat the issue He claimed that terrorists were allowed to settle in the

country two years ago. Asif also said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will announce major austerity measures in all Government institutions to control the fiscal deficit by

Sahil married Nikki in 2020: Priest **STAFF REPORTER** ■ NEW DELHI

mid new revelations about

A mid new revelations about the relationship of Nikki Yadav and Sahil Gehlot that they were not just live-in partners but were married, the priest who solemnised their wedding has confirmed the

Vipin Arya, the priest, who solemnised their wedding said that Nikki and Sahil got married on October 1. 2020. According to Arya, their families agreed to the marriage but they were not present for some reason. The priest confirmed that only 1-2 people were there when they got married.

A purported photo of Nikki and Sahil in wedding dresses is also doing the round on social media. Meanwhile, Sunil Yadav, the father of Nikki, said he is "unaware" that his minimising Government daughter got married to expenditures, The Express Tribune reported. *Contd on P2* daughter got married to accused Sahil in an Arya Samaj Temple in 2020. The two,



solemnised their marriage in 2020. "She was actually his wife fridge, sources said. Sahil already under police custody, and not a live-in partner," Special Commissioner of Police (Crime) Ravindra Yadav said. has been interrogated at length. Therefore, she was pleading Since his arrest, he has conwith him not to go ahead with fessed to murdering his girl-friend, Nikki, because she had the marriage fixed by his family with another woman on February 10, he added. According to reports, the

police have also recovered the

marriage certificates of Sahil

been pressuring him to marry Yadav said that five people including 24-year-old Sahil's father, his two cousins, and two friends have been arrested in "All five co-accused, including the father Virender

Singh, two cousins Ashish and Naveen and two friends Amar and Lokesh of Sahil, were thoroughly interrogated and arrested after verifying and ascertaining their role in connection with the killing," Yadav added.
"Naveen, a constable in Delhi Police, is a relative of prime accused Sahil, he said.
His father has also been arrestated.

His father has also been arrested on the charges of helping him in the conspiracy," the spe cial commissioner said. Virender Singh has been arrested after police found that he knew that his son had alleged-ly murdered Nikki. He has been booked u/s 120B (crimi-nal conspiracy) of IPC. "When Sahil could not convince Nikki to make way for his marriage to woman he

his marriage to woman, he hatched a plan to kill her and roped in others. Contd on P2

Evading arrest in Raj lynching case

Monu leading face of cow vigilantism in Haryana

Mohit Yadav alias Monu Manesar, who is evading arrest in the murder case of two men in Rajasthan, became a prominent face of cow vigilantism in Haryana during the last five years - helped by his presence on social media.

A member of the Bajrang Dal, 30-year-old Monu in a video message denied his involvement in the case and claimed he was at a hotel at the time of the incident. He also shared CCTV footage from the hotel on social media.

He joined the Bajrang Dal as a co-coordinator in his home district Manesar in 2011 and was a member of the district cow protection task force formed by authorities after Harvana's cow protection law came into force in December 2015. He is now the district president of Bajrang Dal and frequently courts controversy over the actions of his own cow protection group and shares videos of vigilantes chasing, confronting and nabbing alleged cow smugglers.

The videos, mostly live streams, have thousands of views and comments

He has 83,000 followers on Facebook and more than 2 lakh subscribers on YouTube. He received a silver play button from YouTube in October last year as the number of subscribers crossed one lakh.

Under the Gauvansh Sanrakshan Gausamvardhan Act that was implemented in 2015, cow slaughter in Haryana attracted rigorous imprisonment ranging from three years to 10 years. After this law, a number of cow protection groups, including those already present, became



There have been allegations that cow protection groups have been targeting a particular community and indulging in highhandedness. AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi has alleged that the BJP government was shielding such vigilantes. Monu has, however, claimed that he has been receiving death threats from suspected smugglers. The Haryana police last month filed two FIRs on his complaints.

Just days prior to that, the family of 22-year-old Varis had accused cow vigilantes, including Monu, of thrashing him to death after branding him a cow smuggler in Nuh district of Haryana, though police had said

he died in a road accident. The police said a Santro car with Varis and two others, Shokeen and Nafis, had rammed into a tempo near Khori Kalan village on Tauru-Bhiwadi road on Saturday.

Monu had claimed that they had rescued a cow from the car and taken the injured to hospital. "I went live on Facebook and also asked the name of one of the injured, but we did not hurt any of them," he had said.

He is now among the five accused in the case in which the charred bodies of two Muslim men from Rajasthan were found

in a car in Haryana's Bhiwani after they were allegedly abducted by cow vigilantes.

Nasir (25) and Junaid alias Juna (35), both residents of Ghatmeeka village in Bharatpur district of Rajasthan, were abducted allegedly Wednesday and their bodies were found inside a burnt car in Loharu in Bhiwani in Haryana on Thursday morning. However, Monu Manesar had claimed his innocence in this case. "My colleagues and I have no role but Rajasthan Police registered a case against me and my group members. I don't even know the deceased," he had said in his video message. Rajasthan police has launched a manhunt for him.

The Gurugram police in Haryana also conducted raids to nab him in a case of murder attempt which was registered against him on February 7 at Pataudi police station, said offi-

According to police, a brawl broke out between two groups in Pataudi's Baba Shah Mohalla when Monu Manesar was there along with his team.

Ā complaint was filed by Mubin Khan, a resident of the same locality, who said that his son Mohin was shot at during firing in two groups and received a bullet injury.

Following the complaint of Mubin Khan, an FIR was registered under Section 307 (attempt to murder) against Monu and others at the Pataudi police sta-

"In the case of murder attempt, Monu Manesar is wanted and we are also conducting raids to nab him", said Manbii Singh, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Manesar. After completing class 12, Monu had joined a polytechnic

Ex-AN Chief Secy misused position to destroy proof in gangrape case: Chargesheet

PTI ■ PORT BLAIR

The chargesheet filed by the Special Investigation Team against former chief secretary of Andaman and Nicobar Islands Jitendra Narain in connection with gangrape of a 21vear-old woman has revealed that he misused his position to destroy evidence of her presence at his official residence

During the interrogation of B Sony, the personal assistant to the former CS, it was found that the "accused Jitendra Narain had sent some voice notes to Sony through WhatsApp, which were found to be crucial evidence in this case regarding destruction of evidence, particularly Digital Video Recorder (ĎVR) at Narain's official residence".

The chargesheet also mentions about the removal of "Network Video Recorder", which was installed at Narain's plush government bunaglow in Port Blair and also of the dispatch of "4TB Hard Disk Drive" of the NVR to "Delhi" through a private airline on July 25, 2022. Sony's mobile phone was seized and sent to the Central Forensic Science

ination and date extraction. Later, it came to be known (based on Narain and Sony's chats) that he had dispatched the "4TB Hard Disk Drive" to Delhi through the private air-

Texts of the chats between Narain and Sony accessed by PTI reads: "GM Sir today 8 boxes by AI 486." Narain replied: "Ok cost." Responding to Narain, Sony said: "Rs 4757, 135 KG I.E. Per kg Rs 35.24."After this conversation, there was a missed voice call.Then, Sony texted again: "Sir gadgets cannot go in cargo." Narain

responded: "Wires." Subsequently, Narain sent five voice notes to Sony on WhatsApp and then texted: 'Plchk. (please check)"Sony replied: "Sir will check and

The final note sent by Sony to Narain was a PDF file which read: "Sent - Cargo Bill AI 486 PB DEL 25.07.22." Speaking to PTI, the woman's lawyer, Phatick Chandra Das, said, "In respect of the case of ex-chief secretary Jitendra Narain, the police has submitted the chargesheet before the have perused as an advocate on behalf of the victim, and I have seen the detailed report of the

"It is based on proper evidence on records, and valuable material on these are available in the chargesheet. I appreciate the effort of the police. The matter is now fixed before High Court Circuit Bench in Port Blair of bail plea of Jitendra Narain on February 20. I will be appearing on behalf of the victim for opposing the bail plea."

A copy of the chargesheet available with PTI also revealed that before leaving for Delhi (upon receiving his transfer letter) on July 27, 2020, Narain called the CCTV technician Sawab Hussain at his residence, and told him to delete/erase the data in the hard disk.

"Hussain told him that it will take considerable time to delete the data, following which Narain asked him to remove the hard disk from the installed NVR, and he removed the two 4TB hard disks and handed those over to Narain on July 23, 2022," the chargesheet said. "Jitendra

honourable court, which I Narain carried out this incident intending to destroy the evidence related to his wrongdoings, including the exploitation of innocent victim (which was corroborated with the documents obtained by APWD and Webstep Technologies Pvt Ltd) and statement of witnesses," it said.

According to the chargesheet, investigation also revealed that whenever any lady "guests", including the woman (who was allegedly sexually exploited on March 27 and April 27 last year by Naranj came to his bungalow in Port Blair, the cooks were confined to the kitchen and asked not to come out till they were told to, and the other staff and watchmen were directed to go to the electric room behind the house.

"Not the least, he also instructed the security guards not to make record entry of guests' vehicles, and the guards were asked to keep the gates open prior to entry of 'certain

Also, the staff were terrified with him due to his highly aggressive and abusive behaviour," a witness report in the chargesheet showed

ex-CS Jitendra Narain directed R L Rishi (suspended Labour Commissioner and one of the accused in the case) over VoIP call through WhatsApp 'to bring one girl' to his bungalow, and it was then Rishi approached Sandeep Singh alias Rinku (Port Blairbased businessman, also an accused) to convince the victim to fulfil Narain's direction, the document said.

The chargesheet, which was filed earlier this month, was based on the statements of nearly 90 witnesses, forensic science reports and electronic evidence, police had said.

The SIT is probing allega tions that the 21-year-old woman was lured to the former chief secretary's residence with the promise of a government job, and then allegedly raped by multiple people, including Narain.

Narain was arrested on November 10 last year, and the FIR registered on October 1 when he was posted as chairman and managing director of the Delhi Financial Corporation. At present, all the three accused are in judi-

Rape proceedings stayed against babu

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has ordered an interim stay on the proceedings against a senior government official accused of molesting and raping a minor girl in Uttarakhand's Almora. bench of Justices Ramasubramanian and Pankaj Mithal issued notices to the Uttarakhand government, the

Investigation and others while seeking their response in four

Senior advocate Dama Sheshadri Naidu, appearing for the petitioner, told the court that the report of the Medical Officer, Government Hospital, Ranikhet, also countersigned by the Remand Magistrate, Almora, records the fact that the petitioner is

a bilateral amputee (100 per cent handicapped by hands). The said report was made when the petitioner was arrested and was medically examined at the time of production before the Magistrate.

Since the petition raises serious questions, issue notice, returnable in four weeks. It is stated that the final report has been filed on November 30, 2022 and the charges are yet to

be framed. Therefore, there shall be an interim stay of fur-ther proceedings," the bench said. The top court was hearing a plea filed by AV Premnath, who was posted as joint secretary at Delhi Secretariat, seeking a CBI investigation into alleged

The officer had been charged under the POCSO

criminal conspiracy against

Act and IPC sections 376 (rape), 511 (punishment for attempting to commit offences) and 506 (criminal intimidation), and some provisions of the Information Technology Act.

The police had claimed that the accused molested the minor in a school run by his wife's NGO 'Pleasure Valley Foundation' in Dandakanda

Country has already gone bankrupt: Pak Def Min

From Page1

Meanwhile, Opposition also asked the Government to take some bold decisions and implement austerity measures to cut its expenditures in order to steer the country out of the econom-

Opposition leader Shahzad had closed corruption cases involving Rs 1,100 billion and the Pakistani people were bearing the brunt of it. He also expressed fear that the new budgetary measures would stoke inflation, The Express Tribune reported.

'Centre using its slave EC...

From Page1
H added, "I will not rest till I bury these thieves and also the owner of the "Chor Bazar" in the elections". "The thieves who have stolen the Shiv Sena's name and its symbol do not know that they have hit a stone on a beehive. So far they have enjoyed honey generated by bees. They have not experienced the bee sting yet. They will do so now," Uddhav

Shiv Sena for "misusing" the name of his father and late Sena chief Bal Thackeray, Uddhav said: "These people want the face of late Balasaheb Thackeray, but they do not want the family of late Thackeray. When we used to

be accused of seeking votes in the name of Modi, we were part of the Shiv Sena-BJP

These people used to attend meetings with the mask of Modi. Now time has come for Modi to come to Maharashtra with the mask of late Balasaheb Thackeray. That's the strength of late Balasaheb Thackeray. These people cannot get votes in the name of Modi today. That's of late Thackeray.

Daring the Shinde-led Shiv Sena to contest the elections against his party, Uddhav said: "You come to the elections with the stolen 'Bow and arrow', I will fight against your party with my new symbol

`flaming torch'. Let's see what happens in the election. I will not rest till I finish you in the elections," he said.

Reposing the faith in his supporter, Uddhav said: "I have not fallen yet nor I would ever fall. You are my strength. As long as I enjoy your support, I can defeat and bury as many thieves and the owner of Chor bazar". Uddhav said that in the

coming days he would reveal s party had told the ECI during the hearings over the dispute on the Senas name and its symbol.

"Nothing of this sort has happened in the country during the last 75 years. In the past there were similar disputes in the Congress,

Samajwadi Party and the AIADMK, but never was the original party name or symbol given to the breakaway faction, but this is for the time that the ECI has given name-symbol of the parent to those thieves," Uddhav said.

Uddhav stood in an open jeep to address his supporters - a sight which was akin to the manner in which late Balasaheb Thackeray had done way back on October 30, 1968. ers drew comparisons between Uddhav and his late Shiv Sena Sena chief-father.

Earlier, Uddhav met the Sena (UBT) top leaders, including MPs, MLAs, MLCs to chalk out the strategy to challenge the ECI's order.

'Doodh ka doodh, paani ka paani', Shah hails EC decision

The Shiv Sena broke its alliance with the Bharatiya Janata Party after the results of the 2019 Assembly polls were declared claiming the latter had reneged on a promise to share the CM's

Yesterday, the Election Commission did 'doodh ka doodh, pani ka pani' (bring out absolute truth). Yesterday, the term 'satyamev jayate' (truth always triumphs) was characterised," Shah said in the presence of CM Shinde and Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis. Those who used to shout by taking refuge of falsehood today found out on whose side the

truth is," he said without naming Thackeray.

"During the (2019) state election, I was the party chief. We fought the election together, put

up a bigger photo of Modiji than his (Thackeray), and contested the election by knowing Fadnavis But to become CM (he) went on to l

ology," Shah further said.

He exhorted those attending the gathering to ensure all seats in Maharashtra should come to the kitty of the BJP and the Shinde-led Shiv Sena.

Maharashtra will see Assembly polls just a few months after Lok Sabha elections in 2024. "In elections, victories and defeats take place. But those who betray should not be spared as their courage gets a boost (if they are spared). I heard Shinde's press conference yesterday where he said he had freed the bow and arrow that had been mortgaged with the NCP and Congress,

12 new cheetahs join...

From Page1

While eight cheetahs have been put up in separate quarantine enclosures, four others are kept in two bomas in pairs. With their arrival, there are now 10 male cheetahs and as many females at the park. The South African big cats will be kept in the quarantine enclosures for at least a month

before they are moved into the acclimatisation bomas. The cats from the previous batch who have been in India's park since September last are yet to be released in the wild and make a kill in the open forest. At present, they are feeding on the prey available in the enclo-

The eldest of the twelve cheetahs from South Africa is an eight year-and-threemonth-old male, while the youngest is a female which has completed two years and four months, officials said. Prime in the region.

Minister Narendra Modi had released eight felines from Namibia into the KNP on September 17 last year on his birthday with much fanfare. As per Indian wildlife laws, a month-long quarantine is mandatory before importing animals and they are required to be kept in isolation for another 30 days after arrival in the country. The average lifespan of a South African cheetah is 8-10 years. The Government has plans to bring at least 50 cheetahs in the next five years

GST Council adopts

From Page1

She also informed that the Council has authorised the chairperson to take the final view and incorporate it in the Finance Bill, since there is not much time for the Council to meet again. Meanwhile, the Council

did not take up the GoM report on online gaming as the

Chairman of the panel was occupied with Meghalaya Assembly elections. The panel is headed by Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad Sangma. Headed by Union Finance Minister, the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council comprises Finance Ministers of States and UTs (with Legislature).

From Page1

Accordingly, Sahil executed plan and murdered her and informed the other co-accused persons about it on the same day ie February 10 and then all of them went ahead with marriage ceremony," the officer said. Several other charges, including those of criminal conspiracy, destruction of evidence, and harbouring a criminal have been added to the FIR, police said. The incident had come to light on February 14, Valentine's Day, four days after the fact, when Sahil under police custody confessed to the crime and led police to the fridge in his eatery where he

had been hiding the body.

A metropolitan court on Saturday has allowed three-day custodial interrogation of five people, including the father, two relatives and two friends of main accused Sahil.

Investigators on Friday revealed that Sahil did not

murder his live-in partner to marry another woman on February 10, but strangled his first wife and some of his relatives, including his father and cousin, were aware of the mur-

The Crime Branch sources earlier revealed that Sahil had "deleted all the data from Nikki's phone"."The accused knew that his and Nikki's chat was big evidence for the police, so he deleted all the data as earlier many times they had quarrels through WhatsApp chat,"

Dangerous, opinionated...

From Page1

The Adani Group has been under severe pressure since the US short-seller Hindenburg Research on January 24 accused it of accounting fraud and stock manipulation, allegations that the conglomerate has denied as "malicious", "baseless", and a "calculated attack on India.

LOSS OF ID CARD

Public Notice

This is to bring to the notice of the general public that one ID Card of Gudiya issued by ICICI Bank ltd. having ID card no. 2314810 has been found missing and/or lost on 16/02/2023. Anyone, who finds the said ID card, is requested to return the said ID card to the Manager Debt Services & Management Group, ICICI Bank Limited, SD Tower, Sector 8, Rohini, Delhi - 110085

Therefore, all the customers of ICICI Bank Limited are hereby notified not to make any payment to any unauthorised person holding the said ID card no 2314810 Please take further notice that anybody making payment to any

person holding the said ID card shall do so at his/her own costs, risk and peril and ICICI Bank shall not be bound and/or responsible for any payment

Date: 19/02/2023 Place: Delhi

ICICI BANK LTD

CBI summons...

From Page1

Suddenly, in the mid-March 2021, C Arvind was called by Sisodia to Kejriwal's residence (where Jain was also present) and Sisodia handed over a document to C Arvind which was a draft GoM report proposing that wholesale should go to private entities and asked him to prepare the draft GoM report based on the said document.

He said it was the first time that he saw this proposal as the same was never discussed in any GoM meetings, the ED charge sheet says. Recently, the CBI arrested Butchibabu Gorantla, a former Chartered Accountant of K Kavitha, a BRS MLC in Telangana and a daughter of Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao.

It is alleged that Babu had met several accused named in the FIR in Delhi, Hyderabad, and Mumbai and was one of the prime negotiators from the South Lobby, which wanted to swing the now scrapped excise policy for 2021-22 in its favour. The CBI had also ques-

tioned Kavitha in connection with the case in December last year. During its probe, the CBI had found evidence that Babu acted on behalf of the South Lobby comprising the Telangana MLC, YSRCP MP Magunta Srinivasulu Reddy, and Aurobindo Pharma's P Sarat Chandra Reddy.

Centre, DWB...

From Page1

The Abdul Nabi Mosque, Mathura Road, Babar Shah Mosque & Takia, near Tilak Bridge, Babar Road Mosque near Railway Line and School, Nizam Gali House Mosque inside Nizam Palace, Abdul Haq Mosque opposite Vidya Bhavan, Curzon Road, the graveyard, behind Indian Express, Mathura Road, Mosque and Dargah Sayed, Qabristan Quad in South Indraprastha, Mathura Road, Ghosian Mosque alias Jheel ki Piao, opposite Link House, Mathura Road, Tomb of Shah Sardulla Gulshan near Plaza Cinema, 'H' Block and Masjid and Graveyard Fazal Mohd. Ramlila Ground, Turkman Gate are among the 123 Waqf properties located on prime

land of the national Capital. The LDO said the two-member committee headed by Justice (Retired) SP Garg on the issue of denotified Waqf properties in its report submitted that no representation or objection was received by it from the DWB. The letter said the committee was formed by the Government of India on the order of the Delhi High Court.

The LDO said the Delhi Waqf Board was the main stakeholder/affected party to whom the opportunity was given by the committee.

However, it did not appear before the committee or filed any representation or objection regarding 123 properties. "It is evident from the above facts that Delhi Waqf Board does not have any stake in the listed

properties, neither have they shown any interest in the properties nor filed any objections or claims. It is, therefore, decided to absolve Delhi Waqf Board from all matters pertaining to '123 Waqf Properties'," said the LDO's letter.

"We have already raised our voice in the court on 123 Waqf properties, our Writ Petition No.1961/2022 is pending in the High Court. Some people are spreading lies about it, the proof of this is in front of all of you. We will not allow anyone to occupy the properties of the Waqf Board," Khan in a tweet in Hindi.

Khan said these 123 properties are used by the Muslim community. The day-to-day management of these 123 properties was done by Mutawallis or the management committees

sources said.

appointed by the DWB.

The DWB has a statutory right under Section 32 of the Waqf Act, 1995, to exercise the powers of general supervision, administration and control over these properties. According to the Waqf Act, all the Waqf properties vest in the concerned Waqf Board, which in the present case, is DWB Khan said. Khan is an accused in a case concerning alleged irregularities in the DWB. He is currently out on bail.

In 2016, the Modi government constituted a one-member committee to decide on the issue. One-member committee submitted its report in 2017, On February 10, 2023, the Delhi High Court observed that the Qabristan Qadeem was undisputedly handed over to the ITBP in 2017.

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CM accuses LG of constitutional overreach

Aday after the Supreme Court ruled in favour of the AAP that members nominated by the Lieutenant Governor cannot vote in the Municipal Corporation of Delhi mayoral election, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has accused L-G Vinai Kumar Saxena of constitutional overreach.

The AAP supremo accused Saxena of interfering in the administration of justice and being in contempt of court by trying to "forcibly prevent" the government from presenting its views before the Supreme Court by directing the urban development department to appoint solicitor-general Tushar Mehta, who happened to be the L-G's counsel, to argue the govern-

Addressing a press conference, Kejriwal alleged that the LG tried to "interfere in the administration of justice" and committed "contempt of court". No reaction was immediately available from the LG's office to the claims and allegations made by the AAP leader. Kejriwal said the petitioner in the case, the AAP's mayoral candidate Shelly Oberoi, had added the LG and the Delhi government as separate parties to her petition in the apex court.

He said the AAP government and the LG had "contrary viewpoints on all the issues

had vociferously opposed the nomination of 10 aldermen by the LG to the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) and the decision of the civic body's presiding officer to give them the right to vote to elect the mayor, the deputy mayor and the standing committee members.

"The Delhi government had asked the urban development secretary to hire Gautam Narayan in the case. But the LG, on February 9, directed the official to appoint Solicitor General Tushar Mehta as the government's lawyer to defend the case," Kejriwal said. The chief minister added that he has written to the LG, conveying it to him that his actions did not behove the constitutional post he held. "LG forced Del government to appoint Tushar Mehta in MCD Mayor case in SC. So, Tushar Mehta represented both opposing parties - Del government and LG. Isn't this interference in administration of justice? Isn't this a criminal act?" Kejriwal asked in a tweet. In his letter to Saxena, the chief minister said in the interest of justice and to enable the Supreme Court to arrive at a proper conclusion, it was important that all viewpoints were presented before it.

"However, there was an attempt by the LG to prevent the Delhi government from in a tweet in Hindi, saying he

presenting its views before the Supreme Court," he said, citing the directions issued by the LG's office on February 9. The AAP leader claimed that Saxena wanted to decide the submissions to be made before the top court for himself as well as for the Delhi government.

"Most actions taken by the LG regarding MCD mayor election were brazenly illegal and unconstitutional. Was that the reason why the LG wanted to prevent the truth being stated before the Supreme Court?" he

The chief minister also alleged that officers were threatened to do the bidding for the LG, saying it was a "crime" and 'conspiracy" on the part of Saxena to hide the truth. Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia also lashed out at the LG

thinks of himself as a "Bollywood villain" who is above courts, law and justice.

Kejriwal said the Supreme Court foiled the "conspiracy" hatched by the BJP and the LG to influence the mayoral poll, and asserted that the AAP candidate will win the election since the party has the majority in the MCD House. The AAP ended the BJP's

15-year rule in the MCD by winning 134 of the 250 wards. The saffron party won 104 wards in the civic body polls held in December. Three previous attempts to hold the first meeting of the MCD House to elect the mayor, the deputy mayor and the standing committee members failed due to adjournments over various issues, including the appointment of aldermen and the voting right accorded to them.

AAP seeks Saxena's resignation for supporting 'BJP's hooliganism', delaying mayoral polls

The AAP staged a protest on Saturday outside the Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena's residence demanding his resignation for allegedly supporting "BJP's hooliganism" and delaying the mayoral polls. The AAP leaders sien a tight alan on the feet of the I tight slap on the face of the L-G and the BJP and no one is above law and constitution in the country.

Several AAP leaders including MLA Atishi and Durgesh Pathak gathered at Raj Niwas Marg with banners and raised slogans demanding LG's resignation. "The order of Supreme Court on the Delhi mayoral poll is a tight slap on the face of the BJP. What the LG has done so far in Delhi is unconstitutional and after what has been said in the court order, the LG should step down," Pathak said at the

Supreme Court has proved that BJP-LG were unconstitutionally and illegally controlling MCD. "LG has no right to stay on his position anymore. The

Supreme Court has given a tight slap on the face of BJP & LG, and told them that no one is above law and constitution in

wrong decision after another," she said. The Supreme Court had AAP leader Atishi said that ruled that nominated members of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) cannot vote in the mayoral election. Pathak alleged that several decisions

were taken by the LG "uncon-

the country. Despite being on

a constitutional post, the LG

disregarded the constitution

and the law and took one

stitutionally" and that he also supported "BJP's hooliganism".

"First, the aldermen were appointed by the LG, bypassing the Delhi government. Then, they tried to get the aldermen to vote in the MCD house. After all this, shouldn't the LG of Delhi resign? This is the country of Gandhi, Nehru and Shastri. Such unconstitutional things cannot happen here," he

After the newly elected Delhi civic body failed thrice to elect a new mayor, the Supreme Court on Friday ordered

hours for convening the first meeting of the MCD to fix the date of Mayoral and deputy Mayor elections. The top court's order came on a plea moved by the Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) mayoral candidate, Shelly Oberoi, seeking

early conduct of the election.

The apex court on February 8 had sought the responses of the Lieutenant Governor's (LG) office, MCD's pro-tem presiding officer Satya Sharma and others on Oberoi's

No liquor scam, says Kejriwal as CBI summons Sisodia | G-20 preparations hit due to frequent

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

hief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has asserted that there is no "liquor scam" in Delhi and that the case over his government's excise policy was created as a result of '"political vendetta and conspiracy" ahead of his deputy Manish Sisodia's questioning by the CBI slated for

Reacting to Kejriwal's assertion, Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva wondered why did the AAP government scrap the excise policy if there was no scam

Leader of Opposition in Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri also lashed out at the Keiriwal saving that Sisodia and Kejriwal should be arrested in the "Sisodia excise policy scam. should tell what is his relation with many names like Arun Pillai, Sameer Mahendru and whether he was in regular con-



tact with them on mobile or not? Why did the Kejriwal government give permission to open liquor vends in unauthorized colonies and residential areas?, Bidhuri questioned.

The Excise Policy 2021-22 was withdrawn by the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government last year after a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe was recommended by Delhi Lieutenant Governor (LG) VK Saxena into "violation of norms and lapses".

Addressing a press conference here on Saturday, Kejriwal



said his government will fully cooperate with the CBI's investigation into the alleged irregularities in the implementation of the now-scrapped Excise Policy 2021-22. "First of all, there is no such thing as a liquor scam. We formulated the best and most transparent policy in the country," he said when asked about the CBI summoning Sisodia.

The same policy implemented in Punjab has led to a 48per cent rise in revenues, the chief minister said."In Delhi, they have framed the case as a result of political vendetta and



conspiracy. Manish will go there and we will fully cooperate. Finally, the truth will prevail," he

At another press conference, Sachdeva posed questions to Kejriwal, asking why a court denied bail to one of the accused in the case on four different occasions and whether Sisodia had any contact with the other accused.

The BJP leader also wondered why did the deputy chief minister frequently change his mobile phones. Leader of Opposition in the Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri alleged that the liquor "scam" involved an amount of Rs 6,000 crore and asserted that the truth will come out after the CBI

BJP MP Parvesh Verma said the "liquor scam" of the AAP government has been "exposed" before people and Kejriwal is now defending Sisodia. The CBI has called Sisodia for questioning in connection with the excise policy case nearly three months after filing the chargesheet.

Sisodia has not been named as an accused in the chargesheet as the probe against him and other suspects is still going on, officials said.

The deputy chief minister, who also held the charge of the excise department, was first questioned by the federal agency on October 17 last year and his house as well as bank lockers were also searched in connection

transfers of PWD officers, alleges Govt Such "brazen" attempt by

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi government alleged on Saturday that the work on several of its infrastructure projects, including some related to G20 summit preparations, were affected due to "frequent" transfers of officers heading its public works department (PWD).

In a statement, the Arvind Kejriwal government claimed that since September 2020, PWD had five different secretaries. "The Delhi government has been working tirelessly to develop the infrastructure of Delhi but frequent change of PWD secretaries by the LG has obstructed our progress. It is a deliberate attempt to abuse the powers of his office and derail the vision of CM Arvind Keiriwal to transform Delhi



into a world-class city," Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, who holds the PWD portfolio, alleged.

Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena and the Arvind Kejriwal government have been at loggerheads over various issues. Sisodia alleged that the lieutenant governor shuffled PWD secretary every six months to leave the department "headless" and stall infrastructure works of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) governthe lieutenant governor to "abuse" his hold on the Services department have "stalled" key infrastructure projects such as Ashram flyover and redevelopment of major roads, he

These frequent changes have impacted several important infrastructure projects of the national capital, many of which were being planned in view of the forthcoming G20 Summit," Sisodia charged.

As head of the department, the PWD secretary presides over a team of over 3,000 engineers and officials, provides administrative and financial approvals, and plays a critical role in coordinating the execution of infrastructure projects, according to the state-

Deshbhakti curriculum helping students develop right perspective: Sisodia

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said on Saturday that the Deshbhakti curriculum is helping students develop the right perspective towards events around them and aiming to teach them to raise their voices against any injustice with people. Holding a review meeting with the core team of the government's flagship programme, Sisodia said they aim to inculcate the spirit of patriotism among stu-

dents.
"Deshbhakti curriculum also aims to teach children to raise their voices against any wrong and injustice with peo-



ple in their surroundings. Students should have the feeling that being an Indian it is their responsibility to respond to needs of the society," he said. The education department has planned to include a new teachers' manual from class 6 to class 12 for the curriculum, train the teachers associated with it and hold orientation of school heads.



Delhi Metro operations between Kashmere Gate and Vishwavidyalaya stations on Yellow Line will be partially curtailed for a few hours on Sunday due to maintenance

In another update, Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) informed that gate no. 5 of the Central Secretariat metro station on Violet Line will remain closed from February 19 for renovation

"To undertake the scheduled track maintenance work between Kashmere Gate and Vishwavidyalaya section of the Yellow Line (i.E. HUDA City Centre to Samaypur Badli), train services will not be avail-



able on two stations i.E, Civil Lines and Vidhan Sabha falling in this section till 06.30 AM from start of revenue services on 19.02.2023," DMRC said in a statement. Civil Lines and Vidhan Sabha Metro stations will remain closed from the start of revenue services till 6.30 am, it said. "Connectivity between Kashmere Gate Metro station and Vishwavidyalaya metro stations will be provided through free feeder bus service during this period," it added. Passengers are advised to plan their journey accord-

ingly, officials said. DMRC further updated that entry and exit from gate no. 5 at Central Secretariat Metro Station will remain closed from February 19 for civil renovation work. "Passengers can use Gate No 1 & 2 for entry/exit," it added.

Desi signalling tech launched for operations on Red Line staff reporter New Delhi

n a first for a mass rapid transit system in India, an indigenously developed signalling technology was launched on Saturday for operations on the Red Line of the Delhi Metro.

According to Delhi Metro, India's first-ever Indigenous Automatic Train Supervision System (i-ATS) has been developed by a joint team of DMRC and Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), under the government of India's 'Make in India' and 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' initiatives for metro rail transit sys-



The i-ATS system was formally launched on the Red Line from the Operations Control Centre (OCC) in Shastri Park by Manoj Joshi, the Secretary of Union Ministry of Housing and

DDA to get ISRO's help to check

encroachment on its vacant plots

Urban Affairs, who is also Chairman of Delhi Metro Rail Corporation. Vikas Kumar, Managing Director, DMRC and Bhanu Prakash Srivastava, Chairman & Managing Director, BEL, were also present during the inauguration.

Progress of works at Airport Drain project inspected

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena on Saturday inspected the progress of works on the ongoing Airport Drain project, which aims at providing a big relief from flooding and waterlogging in and around the IGI Airport and the adjacent Dwarka sectors during the Monsoons.

Travellers bound to the IGI Airport and the residents of the Dwarka sub-city can expect relief from flooding and waterlogging during the monsoon. The project is also ensure hassle-free movement of delegates and dignitaries visiting the national Capital during the monsoon months for the G-20 Summit this year.

This major drainage project that would channelize the rain and storm water discharge from the IGI Airport to Najafgarh Drain, is being executed by Delhi Development

guidance of the LG, who has ensured seamless inter-agency coordination. This has resulted in fast-pacing of tasks as a result of which the project is expected to be completed by June 2023. This major project had been stuck for the last two years due to pending permissions for tree cutting/translocation from the Delhi Government. It was only after the LG's intervention that permission for tree translocation was given and the work on the airport drain commenced on November 20, 2022.

The LG, who has already undertaken five visits to the Airport Drain in the last three months, inspected the construction site of the culvert beneath the railway track and the site at Dwarka Sector - 8 on Saturday and directed the officials to enhance the manpower and other resources to complete the drainage work at the

existing 02 drains at the IGI Airport have proven insufficient for discharging the huge amount of rain water from the airport which has often resulted in severe waterlogging in and around the IGI Airport during heavy rains and thus causing disruption and cancellation of flights for several days major inconvenience to the passengers. Heavy waterlogging even forced closure of the IGI Airport on several occasions. This also caused flooding in the adjoining Dwarka Sector 8, which houses several prominent Government organizations. During the LG's visits to

Dwarka, the residents had also complained of crippling waterlogging in several areas. DDA, at the same time, is also creating 05 water bodies in the Dwarka region that will be used for storing the overflowing rain water during the monsoons. Once completed these

water bodies will have the total storage capacity of 1.22 lakh CuM of water that will prevent the rain water from flooding onto the streets

Saxena said construction of the airport drain along with the creation of water bodies will be a big relief for the air travellers and the local residents of Dwarka. He said during the monsoon, the overflowing water from the airport as well as from the streets of Dwarka could be channelized to these

The airport drain will be capable of discharging 70 CuM of water per second during the peak rains. The drain would start from inside the IGI Airport premises, pass beneath the Railway tracks though a broadened culvert adjoining the airport boundary in Dwarka Sector-8 and would connect to DDA's Trunk Drain - 2 (TD-2) that would further channelize the rain water to

Najafgarh Drain. The airport

drain will be 20 meter wide and

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will help the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) to check the

encroachment on 3000 vacant

'For encroachment detection and control on DDA Land, about 3000 vacant land parcels of DDA have been digitised and handed over to ISRO(Indian Space Research Organization) for mapping," the authority said on Saturday. With the help of this, real time information of the plot will be available

Encroachment on its land has been a major problem for the DDA. A few years ago, the agency started a system to upload pictures of vacant land on a monthly basis to check on encroachments. While work will have a depth of 2 meter. \ \ on the project started in 2018,



DDA officials said the pace of work was affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Officials say that Land Information Management System (LIMS) software has been developed to make land records of about 240 villages online. It has other facilities including online damage collection, online demolition program management.

The layout plan has been digitized under Geo-Maps-Geoportal to depict the allotted plot realistically on the ground. Apart from this, to help the people, DDA has also started a new website. With

get affordable housing and other necessary information. About six lakh files have been digitized and a computerized record room has been set up to facilitate easy access to records and easy search of files. "Some of the recent initia-

tives introduced are various applications like, AWAAS for housing (applicants can do all the formalities for application, payment and possession online), BHOOMI for land disposal (design, development and implementation of online services in Land Disposal Department), Provakil for court case management (to track court proceedings and compliances), DDA-311 for grievances monitoring and STF for complaints management. These are implemented fully online in a seamless manner," DDA said in a statement.

SC seeks Centre's response on failure to assess bearing capacity of fragile Himalayan region

gainst the backdrop of the Arecent land cracking and sinking issues in Joshimath, a plea has been filed in the Supreme Court raising the failure of Centre and state governments in assessing the "carrying capacity or bearing capacity" of the ecological fragile Indian Himalayan region.

The plea claimed this region, which is spread across 13 states/Union Territories (UTs), is facing issues of unsustainable and hydrologically disastrous constructions - home stays, hotels, and commercial accommodations -- hydropower projects and unregulated tourism, which has allegedly collapsed the drainage and waste management system.

The plea filed by Ashok Kumar Raghav, which was argued by advocate Akash Vashishtha before a bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud, said the governments -- in the

Indian Himalayan Region, spread across 13 states/UTs -have failed in preparing and implementing the master plans/tourism plans/layout/area development/zonal plans, and also failed to the "carrying capacity or bearing capacity of ecologically fragile areas," which is home to near-

ly 50 million people.

The region includes:
Uttarakhand, Himachal
Pradeh, Jammu & Kashnir, Ladakh, West Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Sikkim, Nagaland, Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh.

The plea said, "Carrying or bearing capacity of the ecologically fragile areas, hill stations, and highly visited areas in hills is necessary as the same would inter alia determine how much can a given place bear the load of human population or human intervention and the extent of infrastructure projects could be permitted, given its geologi-cal/tectonic/seismic position,

habitat, air quality and other resources.

It further added that due to non-existent carrying/bearing capacity studies, grave geological hazards in the form of landslides, land subsidence, land cracking and sinking issues such as that in Joshimath and previously as flash floods/glacial bursts in Kedarnath (2013) and Chamoli (2021), are being witnessed and serious ecological and environmental depredation is taking place in the hills.

The plea added, "That the Uttarakhand Tourism Policy 2018, of the Department of Tourism, State of Uttarakhand, had itself recognised identification of the permissible carrying capacities as a major challenge of the Uttarakhand Tourism. The objectives of the said policy are, inter alia, to resolve the carrying capacity issues of the prominent tourism destinations in the state."

On Friday, the Supreme

Court asked the petitioner to

approach the National Green Tribunal. However, Vashishtha insisted that there is a bar under Section 14 of the NGT Act as there has to be a specific case of environmental violation. After Vashishtha pressed that this is an important issue, the Supreme Court issued notice to the Centre, Ministry of Jal Shakti, and others.

The plea added that 56,37,102 tourists visited Himachal Pradesh in 2021, which was 75.43 per cent over

places which witnessed the most number of visitors include but not limited to Shimla, Manali, Lahaul & Spiti Sirmour, Bilaspur and Chamba. "In 2020, 32,13,379 per-

sons toured Himachal Pradesh, which was 81.33 per cent above that recorded in 2019. In 2019, 1,72,12107 visitors arrived in the state, according to the tourist statistics of the Department of Tourism, Himachal Pradesh,"

Centre announces specialised B Tech, diploma courses in engineering

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

In a major decision to meet the acute demand and supply of semi conductors in the country, the Centre on Saturday announced for a specialised four year degree B.Tech and Diploma courses in the engineering eco system of the country.

So far study of semi conductors also known as "chips" in common parlance, has been merely and introductopart of BTech in Electronics at institutions but with the massive demand for automation in future industries like white goods, cars and automobiles, IoT etc. Railway and IT Minister

Ashwani Vaishnaw informed that AICTE, which falls under the purview of Ministry of Education, has launched the curriculum designed for BTech Electronics VLSI Design & Technology and Diploma in IC manufactur-

"This course will provide



variety of employment roles featuring outstanding salary incentives for Indian students in global companies as well as indian companies. VLSI sector is a high-paying industry and immune to automation. It will create an environment for Semiconductor ecosystem for setting and scaling up,' Vaishnaw told The Pioneer.

The decision comes at the backdrop of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's remarks recently that semiconductors are playing a critical role in the world in more ways than we can imagine and thus it is our collective aim to establish India as one of the key partners in global semiconductor supply chains".

AICTE, the statutory

body for technical education has launched the curriculum designed for (i) BTech Electronics Engineering (VLSI Design & Technology) and (ii) Diploma in IC man-

and (II) Diploma in 10 man-ufacturing.

This course will provide variety of employment roles featuring outstanding salary incentives for Indian students in global companies as well as

indian companies. The Semicon India program with a total outlay of Rs 6,000 crore is aimed at the development of semiconductor and display manufacturing ecosystem in India.

An integrated circuit (also called IC, a chip, or a microchip) is a set of electronic circuits on one small flat piece (or chip). An IC is the fundamental building block of all modern electron-

Very large-scale integra-tion (VLSI) is the process of creating an integrated circuit (IC) by combining many metal oxide silicon transistors

for passing secrets to ISI



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

An Army jawan will face court martial for allegedly passing on secret information regarding the China border to an ISI agent posted here in the Pakistan High Commission. The soldier also reportedly was paid Rs 15,000 for giving information.

Giving details here, sources said here on Saturday the Army is going to start court martial in the next few

border with China in the field area and was allegedly nabbed supplying secret information to the Pakistani spy posted in their embassy in The soldier was caught by

erman)Alim Khan. He was

posted in a unit close to the

the security agencies supplying secret information to Pakistani spy- Abid Husain alias Naik Abid- a Pakistani national working in the High

Jawan to face court martial India & Australia will have to work together: Jaishankar

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE/AGENCIES NEW

India and Australia will have to work together to build robust economic ties and resilient supply chains, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Saturday.

He also underlined it is necessary for the two countries to work together more closely to shape the direction in which the world is going at an event in Sydney. His visit comes days ahead of Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese summit with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi on March 8. Next day, the visiting dignitary will travel to Ahmedabad to watch the cricket test match between India and

Jaishankar met the Australian Prime Minister in Sydney where both of them reviewed ties between the two countries. Albanese later said "Minister, can I welcome you,

very much, back to Australia. You're a regular visitor here. And I, of course, am looking forward to being in India in just a few weeks' time now for the bilateral visit. And I thank Prime Minister (Narendra) Modi for the invitation." Albanese is set to arrive in

India this March to lock the India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA) deal and upgrade the relationship between the two countries. The two sides will carry out

discussions on a variety of issues like clean energy, technology, digital trade and pro-Speaking about the Quad

Leaders meeting which will be hosted in the first half of this year, Albanese said, "And then, of course, I will welcome the Quad Leaders meeting, including Prime Minister Modi, that we will be hosting here in just a short period of time in the first half of the year." The Australian Prime Minister also talked about another visit for the G20 in the second half of

And then, of course, there will be another visit for the G20 in the year's second half. And I know that my Treasurer is there, I think, next week for a series of meetings that will be hosted in India for the G20. It will be an important period," said Albanese.

He also reiterated that the Australia-India relationship "goes from strength to strength" and highlighted that "economic relationship is important."

Delivering the keynote address at Raisina @ Sydney' Business Breakfast, Jaishankar said the state of the world creates a very compelling case for India and Australia to do more with each other.

"One of the big goals would really be how do you de-risk the global economy, one by building more reliable and resilient supply chains, which is exactly one of the initiatives that India and Australia and

Japan have embarked on to," said the minister who is in Australia. India and Australia are

"on-track" in further strengthening their bilateral ties and the India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA) will "tur-bocharge" the relationship. Signed on April 2, 2022, the India-Australia ECTA came

into force on December 29 last year. The agreement will help boost the bilateral trade in goods and services to cross USD 70 billion in the next five years, according to economic think tank GTRI. The state of the world

creates a very compelling case for India and Australia to do more with each other... I think we can see the direction the world is going (in) and it's in transition and it's necessary for countries like India and Australia to work more closely to shape the direction in which the world is going,"



per cent economic growth this

"But we do expect it to improve in the next five years. And definitely, we think we would stay in that 7 to 9 per cent range at least for a decade, decade-and-a-half," he said.

A bullish economic scenario in India today and a positive investment climate are results of decisions taken during difficult times, Jaishankar said. "Economic confidence is being seen in our ability to create, collaborate and manufac-

'EC settles disputes in parties

The minister noted that there has been a very substantial movement of Indian talent to Australia. "How do we expand in the ability to impart skills and education? We would very much welcome Australian universities in India to do that," he said.

"And for us, it's not just

about Indian students coming to Australia, it's about India and Australia working together in India to produce more skilled, more competent talent," he

NIA seizes vehicles as proceeds of crime from J&K DSP

PNS NEW DELHI

The National Investigation said it has seized vehicles as 'proceeds of terror' in the case regarding recovery and seizure of arms and ammunition from Deputy Superintendent of Police, Jammu and Kashmir Police, Devender Singh.

The agency seized the vehicles relevant Sections of the Activities (Prevention) Act in the case. These vehicles were used by accused persons for the furtherance of terror activities in Kashmir Valley, the NIA said in a statement:

"The seized vehicles are a Hyundai i20 Car bearing registration number JK-03H-1738, Maruti 800 car bearing registration number. JK-13B-0814 and one Hyundai i20 Sportz car bearing registration number IK-01AK-8878," it said.



The case relates to the arrest of four accused persons, including two active terrorists of Hizb-ul- Mujahideen (HM), who were going out of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir in order to commit terrorist acts, in a Hyundai i20 Car bearing Registration No. IK-03H-1738.

Based on information, this car was intercepted at Al-Stop naka on Srinagar-Jammu Highway, near Mir Bazar Police Post, Kulgam district of Jammu and Kashmir on January 11,

ammunition and other incrimered and seized.

The case was initially registered in Qazigund police station, Kulgam district of the Valley on January 11, 2020 and re-registered by NIA on January 17, 2020.

"Investigations have revealed that the Hyundai i20 owned and used by accused Irfan Shafi Mir, Maruti 800 registered in the name of Mushtaq Ahmad Shah and used by his son accused Syed Naveed Mushtag Ahmad Shah, and Hyundai i20 Sportz registered and used by Tanveer Ahmad Wani, son of Ghulam Ahmad Wani and resident of Humhama, Srinagar (J&K), were used for terror activities in Kashmir Valley," it said, adding, further investigations During the search opera- in the case are in progress.

tion, one AK-47 Rifle, three pistols, one hand grenade, NIA conducts searches at Raj as part of PFI conspiracy case

PNS NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Saturday conducted searches at multiple locations in Rajasthan in the Popular Front of India (PFI) conspiracy case.

The agency conducted searches at seven locations in Rajasthan in the districts of Kota (3 locations), Sawai Madhopur (1 location), Bhilwara (1), Bundi (1) and Jaipur (1) in connection with the investigation of the case, the agency said in a statement. These locations are resi-

dential and commercial premises of suspects in the case. The case is related to infor-

reliable sources that Sadiq Sarraf of Shyopuriyon Masjid, Talabpada,

Kotwali police station, district Baran, Rajasthan and Mohammed Ásif of Retipada, Sangod, district Kota of Popular Front of India (PFI) along with officer bearers, members and cadres of PFI are indulging in unlawful activities. The case was initially registered suo-moto by the NIA on September 19, 2022, it said.

During searches digital devices, air-gun, sharp weapons and incriminating documents were seized. Further investigations in the case are in progress,

with test of majority'

NEW DELHI

The Election Commission (EC) has settled internal disputes in several political parties with the test of majority in their legislative and organisational wings, according to EC sources. After it recognised the group led by Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde as the real Shiv Sena, the commission is now expected to deliver its final order on the internal dispute in the Lok Janshakti Party.

The LJP split in 2021, months after the demise of its founder Ram Vilas Paswan, Its two factions are now led by the founder's son Chirag Paswan and brother Pashupati Kumar

In an interim order on

Question of who says 'I love you' first: Cong on Nitish's unity advice



October 2, 2021, the EC had barred the two factions from using the Lok Janshakti Party name or its symbol "bungalow" till the dispute was settled by it.

The interim order of the poll watchdog remains in force. According to EC sources, the two factions have been

seeking more time before the physical hearing in the dispute commences in the court of the Commission. On Friday, the Election

Commission allotted the name Shiv Sena and its poll symbol "bow and arrow" to the group

Minister Eknath Shinde, in a big blow to Uddhav Thackeray. Article 324 of the Constitution and the Symbols Order of 1968 empower the

Election Commission to adjudicate internal party feuds. While settling such disputes, the EC functions as a quasi-judicial body and the aggrieved parties are free to approach the high court or the

Supreme Court challenging its Since 1969, when the Congress witnessed its first split, the EC has applied the test of majority in the legislative

and organisational wings of parties to settle various dis-The EC's orders have been

upheld by courts when chal-

Mobile health intervention can prevent secondary stroke: Study

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI**

Mobile health intervention like SMS text messages, health education videos and prevention workbooks for patients can help ensure improved lifestyle-related behaviours that can prevent secondary stroke, according to a first-of-its-kind study conducted in India. The findings are published in the Lancet

Global Health journal. Mobile health (mHealth) refers to the use of mobile and wireless devices to improve health and deliver care. India has a high burden of stroke, attributable to its large population and epidemiological shift and also to a high prevalence of risk factors.

The trial conducted in 31 stroke centres across the coun-SPRINT-India (Secondary Prevention by Structured Semi-Interactive



Stroke Prevention Package) under ICMR's Indian Stroke Clinical Trial Network (INSTRuCT), one of its kind in developing countries and the fourth government-supported

network around the world.
"The SPRINT study is the first trial in India (and perhaps globally) to try to assess the role of an mHealth intervention in secondary prevention of stroke at such a large scale," said Dr Meenakshi Sharma Scientist-G, Noncommunicable Diseases

Division, ICMR. It was a multicentre, randomised-controlled trial of a semi-interactive mHealth intervention among stroke patients,

The messages given on mobile phones focused on control of blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol, improving physical activity, eating a healthy diet and not missing taking medicines to prevent stroke. The awareness mater-

the ICMR said in a statement.

languages. The patients in the control group received standard care whereas those in the intervention arm received awareness material at weekly intervals to promote healthy living and adherence to medicines, the statement said.

ial was systematically devel-

oped in 12 different regional

A total of 4,298 patients were randomly allocated to the intervention arm (2148) and control arm (2150). Besides, 1502 patients in the intervention arm and 1536 patients in the control arm completed a one-year follow-

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI/PATNA

In its first reaction to the Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar desiring to know the Congress course of action sooner the better towards Lok Sabha 2024, the Congress express even they desire the same. Congress said "the Bihar model serves as a viable alternative to the Gujarat model" an obvious reference to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi who served as Gujarat CM before his incumbent tenure.

"It is a question of who utters I love you first," summed up senior Congress leader Salman Khurshid with reference to his party's intent to forge opposition unity and take on the BJP juggernaut in Lok Sabha polls next year. Nitish JDU along with RJD is in a coalition government with Congress in Bihar and ever since Nitish dumped BJP there has been clamour that the Bihar CM be projected as



Prime Ministerial candidate in General Elections.

The former Union minister drew the analogy of romance at a symposium he attended, besides Nitish Kumar and Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav.

"Honorable chief minister, you made many points, some bluntly and others indirectly", Khurshid said about the speech of Kumar, the JD(U) boss, who had exhorted the grand old party to take the lead in forging opposition unity.

'As far as my understanding of my own party goes, I can assure you that your sentiments are shared by us. But the

situation is akin to lovers taking their time to decide who should say I love you first", said the senior Congress leader evoking peals of laughter.

Showering encomiums on the Bihar CM and his deputy for giving up their old political hostility, the former Union minister said "the Bihar model serves as a viable alternative to the Gujarat model (of Prime Minister Narendra Modi)".

He also lavished praise on the CPI(ML) Liberation, which had organized the event and supports 'Mahagathbandhan' government in Bihar from outside, for adapting to changed political realities.

Chidambaram wonders if Soros' remarks can topple Modi Govt PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI

Former Union Minister Senior P Chidambaram on Saturday said labelling remarks by George Soros as an 'attempt to topple the democratically elected government in India' was a puerile statement. He wondered if the Modi government was "so feeble" that it can be toppled by a stray statement of a 92-year-old rich foreign national

Chidambaram's statement came after the BJP reacted angrily to remarks made by Soros on Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Munich Security conference, alleging that Soros was targeting the Indian democratic system so that people "hand-picked" by him get to run the government

The people of India will determine who will be in and who will be out of the government of India. I did not know that the Modi government was so feeble that it can be toppled by the stray statement of a 92year-old rich foreign national," Chidambaram said in a series of tweets. He also alleged that the

Modi government's policies have created oligopolies instead of ushering in competition. "I did not agree with most of what George Soros had said in the past and I do not agree with most of what he says now. But to label his remarks as an 'attempt to topple the democratically elected government in India' is a puerile statement," Chidambaram

humanity in Ukraine: America

US Vice President Kamala Harris said Saturday Washington has determined that Russia has committed crimes against humanity in Ukraine, and insisted that "justice must be served" to the per-

Speaking at the Munich Security Conference, Harris said that the international community has both a moral and a strategic interest in pursuing those crimes, pointing to a danger of other authoritarian governments taking advantage if international rules are under-

"Russian forces have pursued a widespread and systemic attack against a civilian population - gruesome acts of murder, torture, rape, and deportation," Harris said. She also cited "execution-style killings, beatings, and electrocution."

"Russian authorities have forcibly deported hundreds of thousands of people, from Ukraine to Russia, including children," she added. "They have cruelly separated children from their families."

The Biden administration formally determined last March that Russian troops had committed war crimes in Ukraine and said it would



Vice President of the United States Kamala Harris speaks at the Munich Security Conference in Munich, Saturday, Feb. 18, 2023. The 59th Munich Security Conference (MSC) is taking place from Feb. 17 to Feb. 19, 2023 at the Bayerischer Hof Hotel in Munich. AP Photo

work with others to prosecute offenders. A determination of crimes against humanity goes a step further, indicating that attacks against civilians are being carried out in a widespread and systematic manner.

Harris said that, as a former prosecutor and former of California's Department of Justice, she knows "the importance of gathering facts and holding them up against the law." "In the case of Russia's actions in Ukraine,

we have examined the evidence, we know the legal standards, and there is no doubt,'

"These are crimes against humanity." Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who also was attending the Munich conference, said in a statement issued as Harris spoke that "we reserve crimes against humanity determinations for the most egregious crimes.

The new determination underlines the "staggering

Ukrainian civilians and "also reflects the deep commitment of the United States to holding members of Russia's forces and other Russian officials accountable for their atrocities," he said

Harris told the annual gathering of security and defense officials from around the world: "Let us all agree on behalf of all the victims, both known and unknown justice must be served."

"Such is our moral interest," she said. "We also have a significant strategic interest.""No nation is safe in a world where one country can violate the sovereignty and territorial integrity of another, where crimes against humanity are committed with impunity, where a country with imperialist ambitions can go unchecked," Harris

If Russian President Vladimir Putin succeeds in attacking international rules and norms, "other nations could feel emboldened to follow his violent example," she said. "Other authoritarian powers could seek to bend the world to their will, through coercion, disinformation and even brute force." Harris' audience Saturday didn't include any Russian officials

Russia has done crimes against | Kremlin's UN Envoy claims West out to destroy Russia

AP UNITED NATIONS

week before the anniver-A week before the annuel sarry of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the Kremlin's UN ambassador claimed that the West is driven by its determination to destroy Russia and declared: "We had no choice other than to defend our country — defend it from you, to defend our identity and our future?

Western ambassadors shot back, accusing Russia of using a Security Council meeting it called on lessons learned from the failure to resolve the conflict between Ukraine and Russian-backed separatists that began in 2014 to justify what France's U.N. Ambassador Nicolas De Riviere called "the unjustifiable" – Russia's invasion of its smaller neighbor on

Friday's meeting in the council — the only international venue where Russia regularly faces Ukraine and its Western supporters — put a spotlight on the deep chasm between the warring parties as the conflict moves into its second year with no end in sight, tens of thousands of casualties on both sides, and new military offensives expected.

Russia's U.N. Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia accused Western nations including



France and Germany of "holding back" on implementing the Minsk agreements brokered by the two countries to end the conflict between Ukraine and the separatists in Luhansk and Donetsk in the country's mostly Russianspeaking industrial east that flared in April 2014 after

Russia's annexation of Crimea. "You knew very well that the Minsk process for you is just a smoke screen, so as to rearm the Kyiv regime and to prepare it for war against Russia in the name of your geopolitical interest," Nebenzia said. U.S. Deputy ambassador Richard Mills accused Russia of failing to implement "a single commitment it made" in the Minsk agreements while the other signatories — France,

Germany, Ukraine and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe "sought to implement them in good faith."

France's De Riviere said his country and Germany have worked "tirelessly" since 2015 to promote dialogue between parties. "The difficulties encountered in implementing these agreements can never serve as justification or mitigating circumstances for Russia's choice to end the dialogue with violence," he stressed. De Riviere recalled that exactly a year ago, on Feb. 17, 2022, Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Vershinin reaf-firmed to the council that the Minsk agreements were "the only international legal basis" to resolve the conflict in

Ukraine, and that rumors of Russian military intervention were unfounded and stemmed from Western paranoia. Four days later, Russia recognized the independence of Donetsk and Luhansk, and on Feb. 24 it

and Lunansk, and on Feb. 24 it invaded Ukraine.

"The one and only lesson to be learned here is that Russia, by attacking Ukraine, has chosen alone, to put an end to dialogue and protestion." to dialogue and negotiation,"

De Riviere said. "It took the decision alone to shatter the Minsk agreements, whose main objective, let us remember, was the reintegration of some regions of Donetsk and Luhansk under full Ukrainian sovereignty, in exchange for broad decentral-

Britain's U.N. Ambassador Barbara Woodward also cited Vershinin's statement to the council that allegations of a Russian attack were baseless a week before President Vladimir Putin ordered the invasion, and said the United Kingdom had learned some lessons.

"Russia lied when we warned of its intention to attack Ukraine," she said. "Russia was planning for war while we called for diplomacy and deescalation, and Russia continues to choose death and destruction while the world calls for a just peace."

North Korea fires missile as US, S Korea prepare for drills

AP SEOUL

North Korea on Saturday fired a long-range missile from its capital into the sea off Japan, according to its neighbours, a day after it threatened to take strong measures against South Korea and the U.S. Over their joint military exercises.

According to the South Korean and Japanese militaries, the missile was fired on a high angle, apparently to avoid reaching the neighbours' territories, and travelled about 900 kilometers (560 miles) at a maximum altitude of 5,700 kilometers (3,500 miles) dur-

ing an hourlong flight.

The details were similar to
North Korea's Hwasong-17
intercontinental ballistic missile test flight in November, which experts said demonstrated potential to reach the U.S. Mainland if fired on a nor-

27 feedback loops, or

urgency to respond to

Washington: Scientists have identified 27 global warming

accelerators known as amplify-

ing feedback loops, including

some that the researchers said

may not be fully accounted for

findings added urgency to the

need to respond to the climate

crisis. In climate science, ampli-

fying feedback loops are situ-

ations where a climate-caused alteration can trigger a process

that causes even more warm-

ing, which in turn intensifies

warming in the Arctic, leading

to melting sea ice, which results

in further warming because sea

water absorbs rather than

ration, led by Oregon State

University (OSŬ), US,

researchers, also provided a

roadmap for policymakers

aiming to avert the most severe

consequences of a warming

The findings have been reported in the journal One Earth. The study in all looked at 41 climate change feed-

"Many of the feedback

loops we examined signifi-

cantly increase warming

because of their connection to

greenhouse gas emissions," OSU College of Forestry post-

doctoral scholar and one of the

lead researchers Christopher

Wolf said. "To the best of our

knowledge, this is the most

extensive list available of cli-

mate feedback loops, and not

all of them are fully considered

in climate models.

planet, they said.

The international collabo-

reflects solar radiation.

An example would be

Scientists said that the

in climate models.

the alteration

climate crisis: Study

global warming

accelerators, add



ernment Hirokazu Matsuno said no damage has been reported from the missile, which landed within Japan's exclusive economic zone, about 200 kilometers (125 miles) west of Oshima island. Oshima lies off the western coast of the northernmost main island of Hokkaido. North Korea's Foreign Ministry on Friday threatened with "unprecedentstrong action against its

spokesperson announced a series of planned military exercises with the United States aimed at sharpening their response to the North's growing threats. The office of South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol said his national security director, Kim Sung-han, presided over an emergency security meeting where members described the launch as a "serious" provocation that violates U.N. Security Council resolutions and esca-

Post attack, Pak law enforcement agencies to conduct 'security audit'

PTI ■ KARACHI

Pakistan's law-enforcement agencies and the Sindh government will conduct a "security audit" into the serious security lapses that led to an audacious attack on the office of the Karachi Police chief by heavily-armed Pakistani Taliban terrorists, a media report said on Saturday.

The incident took place at 7.10 pm local time on Friday, during which Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) terrorists stormed the five-storey Karachi Police Office (KPO) building situated in the coun-

try's most populous city.

In the hours-long operation between the Pakistan police commandos and paramilitary soldiers, three TTP terrorists were killed and four others, including three security

India-US relation 'defining partnership' for this century, says Richard Verma

PTI WASHINGTON

The relationship between India and the US is the "defining partnership" for the 21st century, America's former Ambassador to the country Richard Verma has told lawmakers and urged the Senate to confirm the next envoy to New Delhi at the earliest.

A strong advocate of deepening Indo-US ties, Verma played a key role in the Congressional passage of the civil nuclear deal. He was sworn in as the US Ambassador to India in 2014, becoming the first ever Indian-American to hold the post. He served as the US Ambassador to India from 2014 to 2017.

"I continue to believe this is the defining partnership for this century. The relationship is so consequential in so many



cial on the ground that represents the president makes a big difference," Verma told members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee during his confirmation hearing for Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources.

Verma was responding to a confirmation of the next US Ambassador to India, a post that has been laying vacant for more than two years now. "I

appreciates the urgency with the need to put someone there as soon as possible. It's also, I would say, a morale issue for the team. But more importantly, just delivering on the president's priorities," Verma said.

Senators Jeanne Shaheen and Chris van Hollen underscored the importance for the Senate to confirm an ambassador right away to represent the US in New Delhi.

In July last year, US President Joe Biden nominated Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti as his Ambassador to India. But because of the allegation of sexual assault by one of his senior staffers, the Democrats have been unable to muster enough support in the Senate. Responding to a question on the current visa waiting period at American diplomatic missions in India, Verma IS attack in Syria at 53 now AP BEIRUT

Death toll from

The death toll from an attack by the Islamic State group against an army checkpoint and people collecting truffles in central Syria has risen to at least 53, most of them civilians, state media and an opposition war monitor reported Saturday.

The attack near the central town of Sukhna on Friday was the deadliest by the extremist group since so far this year, the Observatory for Human Rights, an opposition war mon-

The Observatory said the attack targeted a Syrian army checkpoint and people collecting wild truffles nearby, killing 68 people, including 61 civilians. It said IS fighters reached the area on motorcycles. On Friday, it reported that the

attack killed 46. The Observatory, which tracks Syria's conflict, said the IS gunmen took advantage of the Feb. 6 earthquake that hit Turkey and Syria killing tens of

thousands of people to carry out their deadly attack. The attention in Syria has been mostly focused on the earthquake over the past two weeks. Syria's state news agency, SANA, quoted the head

of the general hospital in the central town of Palmyra as saying that they have received the bodies of 46 civilians and seven soldiers.

Despite their defeat in Syria in March 2019, Islamic State sleeper cells still conduct attacks around Syria and Iraq, where they once declared a "caliphate." On Friday, the U.S. Military said a helicopter raid led by its forces in northeast Syria left a senior leader with the Islamic State group dead and four American service members wounded.

Defence Minister: Finland could join NATO ahead of Sweden

 $F_{\text{said Saturday that his coun}}^{\text{inland's defence minister}}$ try will join NATO without waiting for Sweden if its Nordic neighbour's accession is held up by the Turkish government. Mikko Savola told The

Associated Press on Saturday that Finland would prefer that the two countries join the alliance together, but it wouldn't hold up the process if Turkey decides to approve Finland, but not Sweden, as it has warned. "No, no. Then we will ioin," Savola said in an interview on

the sidelines of a security conference in Munich. Since they broke with

decades of non-alignment in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine last year, Finland and Sweden have insisted they want to join NATO together. But Turkey's reluctance to accept Sweden unless it steps up pressure on Kurdish exile groups has made it more likely the two will have to join the alliance at dif-



ferent speeds. "Sweden is our closest partner," Savola said. "Almost every week our defence forces are practising together and so on. It's a very deep cooperation and we also trust each other fully. But it's in Türkiye's hands now."

Speaking later Saturday at a anel in Munich, Finnish Prime Minister Sanna Marin struck a similar note. "Of course, we cannot influence how some countries would ratify, but our message is that we are willing to join and would prefer to join togethexcept Turkey and Hungary have already given both countries the green light to join the

Hungary has said it will do so soon, but Turkey says Sweden hasn't done enough to meet Turkish national security concerns, causing a rift in NATO at a time when the U.S. And other allies are seeking to project a united front against Russia. In recent weeks, NATO offi-

cials have played down the significance of the two nations joining simultaneously. "The main issue is not

whether Finland and Sweden are joining at the same time. The main issue is that Finland and Sweden join as soon as possible, and it is of course a Turkish decision whether to ratify both protocols or only one protocol," NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg told reporters in Munich on Friday.
Savola said he hopes

Finland, which shares a 1,340kilometre (830-mile) border with Russia, will become a member of the alliance before a NATO summit in July.

Until then, Savola said, Finland isn't worried about the security situation, noting Finland has a conscription army with a wartime strength of 280,000 soldiers, 95% of them reservists, and plans to buy F-35 fighter jets from the U.S., while also investing in its naval and land forces.

"We are strong and our willingness to defend the country is also strong," Savola said.

Finland has supported Ukraine with weapons from the start of the war. Savola said the military support amounts to 600 million euros so far. The country has said it will participate in a joint effort by European countries to deliver Leopard 2 tanks to Ukraine, but hasn't specified whether it will hand over any of its own tanks.

"There are many ways to join. There are those tanks, of course, training, spare parts and

China representative met with protests on visit to Taiwan

AP TAIPEI

Avisit by a Chinese official at the invitation of the Taiwanese capital's newly elected China-friendly mayor has drawn protests on the self-ruled island.

The head of Shanghai city's Taiwan Affairs Office, Li Xiaodong, arrived Saturday morning for a three-day visit that marks a rare point of contact between the sides. China deems Taiwan a part of its territory to be conquered by force if necessary and has been courting pro-Chinese media and politicians on the island to further its unification agenda.

The vast majority of Taiwanese back the status quo of de-facto independence while still maintaining close economic and social ties with the mainland.

Taiwan's democratic system allows broad leeway for local governments to act without central authority. Taipei recently elected Chiang Wanan from opposition Nationalist Party as mayor. Dozens of pro-



testers gathered at Sunshan Airport in downtown Taipei, while representatives of pro-China minority parties shouted welcomes. Neither Li or any members of his delegation issued any arrival statements. Protesters at the airport

chanted to denounce Chinese efforts undermining Taiwan's security, democracy and independent diplomatic relations.

Wang Sing-huan, chair of Taiwan State Building Party, told protesters that Li had a right to visit but that Taiwan's 'way of peace is to prepare for any possibility of war, and to ally other democracies so that China would not dare invade

Antarctic sea-ice cover hits record low for second

PTI WASHINGTON

ntarctic sea ice extent has Antarctic sea ice extensional been reported to have broken its last year record low, and has also recorded it sooner than when it did last year, according to a statement by the National Snow and Ice Data Center (NSIDC).

On February 13, 2023, Antarctic sea ice extent fell to 1.91 million square kilometers, it said. This set a new record low, dropping below the previ-



square kilometers set on

year represents only the second year that Antarctic extent has fallen below 2 million square kilometers, the statement said. In past years, the annual

February 25, 2022, it said. This

minimum occurred between February 18 and March 3, so, further decline this year is expected, it said. With a couple more weeks likely left in the melt season, the extent is expected to drop further before reaching its annual minimum, it said. Much of the Antarctic

coast is ice free, exposing the Administration (NOAA) ice shelves that fringe the ice sheet to wave action and warmer conditions, the statement said.

The NSIDC is a US information and referral centre in support of polar and cryospheric research. NSIDC is part of the University of Colorado Boulder Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences (CIRES), and is affiliated with the National Oceanic Atmospheric

National Centers **Environmental Information** through a cooperative agree-

The sea ice extent has tracked well below last year's melt season levels since mid-December, according to the statement by NSIDC. A positive Southern Annular Mode has led to stronger-than-average westerly winds. Along with a strong Amundsen Sea Low, the weather conditions have

brought warm air to the region on both sides of the Antarctic Peninsula, the statement said.

This has largely cleared out the ice cover in the Amundsen and Bellingshausen Seas, and reduced the sea ice extent in the northwestern Weddell Sea, NSIDC said.

Sea ice is patchy and nearly absent over a long stretch of the Pacific-facing coastline of Antarctica, NSIDC said. Earlier studies have linked low sea ice cover with wave-induced

shelves that hem the continent, leading to break up of weaker areas, the statement said. Antarctic sea ice extent

stresses on the floating ice

has been highly variable over the last several years. While 2022 and 2023 have had record low minimum extent, four out of the five highest minimums have occurred since 2008, NSIDC said. Overall, the trend in Antarctic minimum extent over 1979 to 2023 is near zero, NSIDC said.

₹17 k cr GST compensation cess to States to be cleared, says FM

inance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman rinance Minister Mirihala Sitharaman said on Saturday that the entire GST compensation cess for June 2022 totalling Rs 16,982 crore will be cleared. She said this while addressing a press conference soon after the 49th meeting of

the GST Council ended.

She also informed that Rs 16,524 crore to six states which have submitted the accountant general's (AG) certificate will also

Delhi, Tamil Nadu and Telangana are among the six states which have submitted

Though submission of AG certificate is a requirement for the states to seek GST compensation, Sitharaman said that it wasn't a strict pre-requisite, as 90 per cent of funds are anyway released to the states, while the remaining amount is given after the AG certificate is submitted.

The GST Council meeting, which was held at Vigyan Bhavan here, discussed matters pertaining to setting up of appellate tribunals and curbing tax evasion in pan masala and gutkha businesses.

The groupf of ministers' (GoM) report on taxation for pan masala was accepted by



At the meeting, the GST Council decided to reduce GST on pencil sharpeners and certain tracking devices. Exemption on coal rejects supplied by and to the washeries was also approved by the Council. Also, GST on a type of liquid jaggery has been reduced to nil from 18 per cent if sold loose. If its prepackaged and labelled, the tax rate on it would be 5 per cent.

The GST Council also recommended rationalisation of late fee for delayed filing

However, no decision could be arrived at by the fitment committee for SUVs and

Sitharaman said that the GST Council decided to tax services supplied by courts and tribunals under the reverse charge

mechanism.

She also informed that the decision on the GST Appellate Tribunal has been accepted with change in language and the modification in draft will be circulated within a

Sitharaman said that she expects to finalise the GoM report on GST tribunals with slight modifications so that it is ready by March 1 and can be included in the The GoM's report on online gaming

could not be taken up at the meeting as the

Chairman of the GoM, Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad Sangma, could not attend the meeting due to the upcoming Assembly elections in the state, the Finance Minister

TN CM unveils Real Estate Vision 2030, affirms steps on to meet changing needs

With nearly 49 per cent of Tamil Nadu's population living in urban areas, and ever increasing need for housing for families and commercial space, the state government is taking steps to meet the changing requirements, Chief Minister M K Stalin said here on Saturday.

The government is committed to providing speedy approvals for projects and is also planning to establish new satellite cities, he said.

Unveiling the Tamil Nadu Real Estate Vision 2030 at the real estate exhibition Fairpro 2023 being held under the aegis of the Confederation of Real Estate Developers' Associations of India (CREDAI), Chennai, the Chief Minister said: "I believe that there will be huge opportunities in the real estate sector due to the increasing population in Chennai, and coming up of new industries, and increasing demand for housing and offices for companies.

He urged CREDAI to take the major responsibility of build-



ing and providing houses and

commercial spaces. The urban population in Tamil Nadu, which was 1.90 crore in 1991 increased to 3.49 crore in 2011. It is expected to increase further to 5.34 crore in 2031. As per the 2011 Census, the State has 832 cities and towns. Nearly 49 per cent of the population live in urban areas. Tamil Nadu is the leading state in the country in urbanisation," the Chief Minister said in an address to the gathering at the Chennai Trade Centre here.

Metropolises emerge due to rapid growth, especially increase in population and migration. Keeping this in mind, the State Housing and Urban Development Department, has formu-

lated and implemented various housing projects, he said. "The government is taking all steps to meet the changing needs and is committed to providing speedy approvals to projects. We are also planning to build new satellite cities besides develop outer ring

Aiming for the overall deve-

roads," Stalin added.

lopment of the state, the gov ernment has been focusing on all sectors like education, agriculture, medical, small business, women development, and

"At this juncture, I am obliged to remind you that it was Kalaignar (as late chief minister M Karunanidhi was called) who created the Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board (now TN Urban Habitat Development Board), to provide housing for slum dwellers for the first time in India 50 years ago," he said.

UAE-India Business Council launched to boost bilateral trade

IANS DUBAI

Marking the first anniversary of India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), the top business houses of India and UAE came together to open the UAE India Business Council -UAE Chapter (UIBC-UC), to bolster economic ties and facilitate shared goal of enhancing bilateral trade and investment.

The UIBC-UC was launched by UAE Minister of State for Foreign Trade Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, in the presence of Ambassador of India to the UAE Sunjay Sudhir, Consul General of India in Dubai Aman Puri and founding members of the UBIC-UC.

The founding members of the UIBC-UC from the Indian side, large conglomerates such as TATA, Reliance, and Adani are represented, as well as tech innovators like Ola, Zerodha, Udaan, and EaseMyTrip, along with prominent Indian entrepreneur-led corporations based in the UAE such as KEF Holdings, Buimerc Corporation, Apparel Group, EFS and Lulu Financial. From the UAE side Wealth Fund of the UAE, Wizz Financial, DP World, EMAAR OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL, GOVT. DOON MEDICAL COLLEGE Patel Nagar Dehradun-248001 Uttarakhand Tel: 0135-2726020-2726021 Email: doonmedicalcollege@gmail.com, Website: www.gdmcuk.com

Ref. No.: GDMC/Advt./Residents/2023/732

10:00 am to 1:00 nm

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the General Public that Mrs
Kamla Devi is owner/ attorney holder and in possession
of Property bearing No. 644, bull on plot No. 57-B, area
measuring 50 Sq., vds., out of khasra No.205, Situated at
Onkar Nagar C, Tri Nagar, in the area of Village Chowkr
Mubarkabad, Delhi "the said property". by virtue of GPA
Agreement to sell and will all dated 20.11.1979 executed
VM RS. Sixbila Devi Gunta All Dersons are hereby infor-

by Mrs. Sushila Devi Gupta., All persons are hereby info med that above mentioned attorney holder want sell ti

said property to someone who is taking home loan fro Fullerton India Home Finance Company Ltd. for purcha:

said property, in anybody last any objectionly upon said property fits ownership & Title/ its Sale and Mortgage kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within O7 days of the press Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants 200, lind fiton, 23, Shivaji Marg, Mott Nagar, N. Delhi-15 Ph.: 011-4112527-26 kumarassociates.advocate@gmail.com

admcuk.com

WALK-IN-INTERVIEW FOR SENIOR RESIDENT/

JUNIOR RESIDENT

A Walk-in-Interview for SENIOR RESIDENT/JUNIOR

RESIDENT will be held in the office of Principal, Government

Doon Medical College, Patel Nagar, Dehradun on 28th

FEBRUARY, 2023 from (10:00 AM to 02:00 PM). Reporting time

The details about the vacancies in various departments are

uploaded in the website of Govt. Doon Medical College



increase bilateral trade to \$100 billion and attract \$75 billion in investment from the UAE to India. The UIBC-UC is poised to play a crucial role in supporting both governments in achieving these objectives and maximising the potential of the UAE-India relationship. By leveraging the strong bond between the two nations, the council brings together key partners and stakeholders from both nations and will serve as a valuable source of policy guidance, fostering innovative collaboration between Emirati and

Speaking on the occasion, Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi

Dated: 17-02-2023

highlighted that the establish ment of the UAE Chapter of the The two nations aim to UAE India Business Council marks a significant moment in the deepening of the relationship between the United Arab Emirates and India. He also mentioned that the Council will

> ioint mission to boost bilateral trade and investment. Indian Ambassador to the UAE, Sunjay Sudhir, said, "The launch today marks a significant milestone in the strengthening of the relationship between the United Arab Emirates and India. I extend my sincere congratulations to all the founding mem-Council and look forward to seeing the Council's initiatives drive greater prosperity for both

> > The UIBC-UC will serve as the counterpart organisation to the UIBC India Chapter, which was established in New Delhi on September 3, 2015, by UAE Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan and then Indian Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj, during the 11th Session of the India-UAE Joint Commission Meeting.

play a critical role in supporting

the two governments in their

PUBLIC NOTICE b be known to all that I, Dolly Saxena & Anand axena S/D/O Late Shri N.C. Saxena, Cont. Savena S/D/O Late Shri N.C. Saxena. Cont. 9999798360, Email: advocate12nm@gmail.com, R/O. Flat No 92 Block & Pocket-AO TCPO Officers CGHS Ltd Shalimar Bagh Delhi, has applied for the conversion of aforesaid property. The documents like Original Share Certificate, Allotment Letter and Possession Letter of Flat No 92 Block & Pocket-AO TCPO Officers CGHS Ltd Shalimar Bagh Delhi-88, issued by DDA, of aforesaid property have been lost. An FLR to this effect has been lodged in police station on dated 31.01.2023. Any person(s) claiming any right, having any objection or found in possession of original document may write/contact with above named person at above address within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice & can personally contact. Deputy Director (GH) C-block, 2nd floor, Vikas Sadan, INA, New Delhi.

Date17/2/2023

Fair, unfettered choice for digital citizens must; Digital space can't be dominated by few large cos: MoS IT

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India will not allow domination of digital space by 1-2 big players and boundary conditions of openness and fair choice to users will have to be followed, IT Minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar said on Saturday as he outlined how the country is racing full steam ahead towards its trillion dollar digital economy goal.

Addressing the Economic Times Global Business Summit 2023, the Minister agreed that time has come for clear standards to be defined for new-age technologies such as AI (Artificial Intelligence) and ML (Machine Learning), and asserted that innovation cannot be a reason to escape scrutiny and accountability.

The upcoming Digital India Act, which is set to replace the 22 year old IT Act (currently regulating the internet), will address this area, he

As many as 80 crore Indians are now online, and by 2025 that number will rise to 120 crore (1.2 billion), making India the largest connected country in the world and the India will be among pack

of nations, which will shape the future of technology, products, devices and platforms, the Minister said. He added that the country's digital ambitions are being fueled by a powerful combination of T/ITES, start ups, semiconductors, new age computing, enabling policies and key legislations.

To a question on whether standards to be defined for AI, the Minister said: "Certainly, I think one of the big things that governments around the world have learnt is to start having clear definitions about these things because I think we will all agree that big tech platforms, escaped regulation for many years by constantly talking about innovation and that innovation should not be regulated," Chandrasekhar said.

He added: "So we certain-

ly will not want to go down that road again and say as long as people use AI and algorithms, that somehow that is an escape from scrutiny or accountability or regulation".

In the architecture of the forthcoming Digital India Act, this aspect has been kept in

"You will find that there will be accountability, and certain sense of scrutiny about everything including references to AI...So we believe user harm is at the heart of Digital India Act, and openness, safety and trust are at the heart of the DIA...These are areas we will certainly address," the Minister assured.

India has assumed the Chair of the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence, an international initiative to support responsible and human-centric development and use of AI.

"There is not just the use of AI from the point of view of escaping scrutiny and accountability, but there is also an overreach of AI. There is the whole issue of harm and misuse of AI. So those are all the boundaries that we want to the way of innovation, but certainly not allowing innovation to be a reason to escape scrutiny and accountability," he said.

To a question put in the context of ONDC on whether Government's intent is to control key businesses in the digital economy, the Minister made it clear that India will not allow domination by a few companies, in any space.

'In no space do we want domination by a few companies, and there are many segments of the digital economy and digital space that are uncomfortable, dominated by 1-2-3 big companies whom we...Refer to...As big tech. Our government's views is very clearly that we don't want to discourage anybody from being in India, we want all the companies to come to India, but we certainly don't want the digital economy to be throttled or to be controlled,"

FCI to offer 11.72 lakh tonnes wheat stock to bulk consumers

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

State-run Food Corporation of India (FCI) will offer 11.72 lakh tonnes of wheat to bulk consumers like flour millers during the third e-auction to be held next week, the food ministry said on Saturday. FCI plans to sell 25 lakh

tonnes of wheat to bulk consumers under the Open Market Sale Scheme (OMSS) till Marchend as part of the government's measure to check rise in domes-In the last two weekly e-auc-

tions, about 12.98 lakh tonnes wheat was sold, out of which 8.96 lakh tonnes has already been lifted by the bidders which has resulted in cooling down of retail prices of wheat and atta. In a statement, the food

ministry said FCI will offer 11.72 lakh tonnes of wheat from 620 depots across the country during the third e-auction to be held at 11 am on February 22. Bidders, who have registered themselves on the e-por-

tal of M-Junction by 10 pm on February 17, will be allowed to participate in the e-auction on February 22, it said.

The last date for deposit and uploading of earnest money is February 21 till 2:30 pm.

On Friday, the government further reduced the reserve price for sale of wheat through OMSS scheme to bring down the price of wheat and atta.

The reserve price of fair and average (FAQ) quality wheat has been reduced to Rs 2,150 per 2,125 per quintal.

These new reserve prices are applicable from the third sale of wheat through e-auction.
"The announcement of revi-

sion in uniform reserve price across the country by the GOI would benefit the consumer across the country and would further bring down the prices of wheat and atta," the ministry

In order to address the rising price of wheat and Atta in the country, as per the recommendation made by the Group of Ministers, FCI is releasing a toal 30 lakh tonnes wheat stock from the Central pool stock to the market through various routes under the OMSS.

Out of 30 lakh tonnes, FCI will sell 25 lakh tonnes to bulk consumers like flour millers through e-auction, 2 lakh tonnes will be given to states/union territories and 3 lakh tonnes to institutions and state-PSUs at concessional rates for converting

quintal, while for Under Relaxed Specifications (URS) wheat to Rs wheat into wheat flour. Future Enterprises defaults on ₹12.75 crore interest

payment on NCDs

PTI NEW DELHI

Debt-ridden Future Enterprises Ltd (FEL) has defaulted on the payment of interest of Rs 12.75 crore on two non-convertible debentures (NCDs).

The due date for payment was February 16, 2023, FEL said in a regulatory filing.

"The company is unable to service its obligations in respect of the interest on Non-Convertible Debentures was due on February 16, 2023," it said.

The debentures have a cou-

pon rate of 9.60 per cent for both series. The Gross Principal amount on which the default has occurred is Rs 265 crore, which is Rs 106 crore for Series XVI A and Rs 159 crore for Series XVI - B fund.

FEL had recently defaulted on payment of interest on several non-convertible debentures.

The debt-ridden Future group has been facing three petitions filed by its operational creditors before the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) to initiate insolvency proceed ings against the company.

Lenders of FEL have also appointed an auditor for conducting a forensic audit of the firm. It is engaged in the business of manufacturing, trading, leasing of assets and logistics services. It used to develop, own and lease the retail infrastructure for the Future Group.



North America inks pact with Kalyani Strategic Service

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Rolls-Royce Marine North America has inked an initial pact with Pune-based Bharat Forge subsidiary KKSL for naval marine propulsors, the company said on Saturday.

The pact may include, but is not limited to, design and development, licensed manufacturing, pre-sales and sales support; installation, commissioning, testing and aftermarket services and support, Rolls-Royce said in a statement.

Kalyani Strategic Service Limited (KSSL) is a whollyowned subsidiary of the Punebased Bharat Forge.

Rolls-Royce's propulsion systems are désigned to be used in all modern warships and the company is one of the key suppliers to the US Navy, according to the statement.

The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two firms is to explore the opportunity for Kalyani Strategic Service to become an in-country provider for propulsor sales within the Indian market, it said.

The new pact is expected to enable the creation of a local supply chain ecosystem in India for controllable pitch propellers

yani Strategic Service Ltd and Bharat Forge will further strengthen the company's defence ecosystem in India, said Kishore Jayaraman, President for India and South Asia at Rolls-Royce.

GOVERNMENT OF UTTARAKHAND Office of Superintending Engineer 10th NH Circle, P.W.D., Dehradun.



Govt. Doon Medical College, Dehradun

PUBLIC NOTICE

that we are going to destroy all medical

to Dec-2019 (13594/18-20604/19) as per

government's documents retention policy In case any person thereof wants to see the treatment records or to have a copy of

the same, may please contact medica

record department within one month

after the publishing of this article

MATA ROOP RANI MAGGO HOSPTAL PVT. LTD. C-8&9, Om Vihar, Phase-1, Uttam Nagar, Metro Pillar No. 709, N.D.-59 Dr. Aman Maggo - Medical Director

Letter No.770/13 Yata- NH-10/2023

Short Term Tender Notice National Competitive Bidding (E-procurement)

The Superintending Engineer, 10th NH Circle, PWD Dehradun on behalf of "Governor of Uttarakhand" invites Tender for following work in Two bid system. Tender related information will be available on Web-site https://uktenders.gov.in from 20.02.2023.

SI No	Name of work	Cost	Earnest Money (Rs. in Lakh)	of	of	Contractor's Category of Registration
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Improvement by bituminous concrete of road surface at NH-58 Chainage 228.500 to 229.700, Chainage 229.700 to 231.725, Chainage 232. 350 to 234.400, Chainage 234.450 to 234.775, Chainage 235.725 to 235.900 under G-20 Summit 2023	5000.00 +18% GST	5.82	45 days	01 Month	Category "A" for Road work in any state Central Govt/State Govt or CentralGovt. undertaking

PUBLIC NOTICE Entire Property Bearing No. C-95, DDA Shed, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase-1, New Delhi-110020

Measuring 97.53 Sq.mtrs.

Be it known to all that my client Ananta Buildcon through its proprietor Mr. Tushar Arora intend to purchase the above captioned property from its owner NMP Technologies Pvt. Ltd. throught its Directors Ms. Bina Gupta and Ms. Mita Bhan, having office at 62, Godavri, Alaknanda, Delhi-110019. original title deeds/ documents being conveyance deed dt. 08.08.2006, duly registered in the office of the sub registrar, New Delhi as document no.17661 in addl. Book No.i Vol.No. 2176 on pages

182 to 193 on dated 14.08.2006.

Any person/Bank/F.I/Authority having any right, title, interest, claim or demand of any nature whatsoever in respect of the above captioned property, or has any sort of dispute/litigation and/or otherwise any objection for its sale to my clients, he/she/they should contact and notify such objection (with valid documentary proof) to the undersigned within 7 days from the date of publication hereof, failing which it will be presumed that the above captioned property is free from all sorts of encumbrances and my clients complete the

RADHIKA ARORA (Advocate) Chamber No. 564 Saket Court Complex New Delhi -110017 Email: radhikaar03@gmail.com

Ola to invest ₹7,614 cr in TN to produce EVs, lithium cells PTI CHENNAI "The project comprises an

Electric vehicles firm Ola Electric on Saturday committed investments to the tune of Rs 7,614 crore in Tamil Nadu to roll out electric light motor vehicles days after the state government unveiled its electric vehicle policy to boost the indus-

The investments include setting up of lithium-cell manufacturing facilities with capacity of 20 GW while the overall investments by Ola Electric would generate 3,111 new jobs in the state, the Tamil Nadu government said. Recently, the Tamil Nadu

government unveiled its electric

vehicle policy 2023 which aims

to garner investments to the tune

of Rs 50,000 crore and generate

1.50 lakh jobs, in a boost to the EV industry.

Ola Electric Mobility Pvt

Ltd signed a memorandum of understanding committing investments worth Rs 7,614 crore with the Government of Tamil Nadu in the presence of Chief Minister M K Stalin, an official release here said.

electric vehicle cell plant and an electric 4-wheeler plant to be set up in SIPCOT Bargur, Krishnagiri district generating employment for up to 3,111 people," Guidance Tamil Nadu, the nodal agency to boost investments set up by the government "This MoU and the newly launched (EV) policy are a significant step towards Tamil

> the EV capital of India, building upon its existing reputation as the automotive capital of India," Guidance said. CEO Bhavish Aggarwal said, "Ola will set up the world's lar-

Gigafactories in Tamil Nadu."

Nadu's transition to becoming

Ola India Co-founder and gest EV hub wit integrated twowheeler, car and Lithium cell

and shafting, Rolls-Royce said. The partnership with Kal-

Napoli increase massive Serie A lead Ghana footballer Atsu found dead in Turkey

apoli took another step towards their first Serie A title since 1990 on Friday as stars Khvicha Kvaratskhelia and Victor Osimhen shot the leaders to a 2-0 win at Sassuolo and 18 points clear.

It looks only a matter of time before Luciano Spalletti's rampant side secure a Scudetto dreamed of by Napoli fans since the days of Diego Maradona.

And on Spalletti's 1,000th match as a manager his team made no mistake at a Mapei Stadium which with the away section closed saw an invasion of Napoli fans in the home supporters' stands.

A seventh league win on the bounce leaves their rivals trailing way off in the distance, a whopping 62 points collected in 23 matches underlining their dominance of Italy's top flight. The best second-placed

Inter Milan can do this weekend is maintain the pre-match gap of 15 points by beating off-form Udinese on Saturday night.

"The only thing we can do is keep doing the things we do well," said Spalletti to DAZN.

"Sassuolo are a team that

know how to play football, you can't dominate for 90 minutes, but in the second half we did a lot of things really well."

Napoli's attentions now turn to their Champions League trip to Eintracht Frankfurt on Tuesday, a run in Europe's top club competition surely a possibility given the superb form of their attacking jewels Kvaratskhelia and Osimhen.

"Eintracht are a really good team, they have a lot of pace... they attack spaces really quickly and have technically gifted



players," added Spalletti.

"They've got more experience than us of playing knockout football, last season they had a run in the Europa League... that's what we trying to do."

OSIMHEN ON TARGET

Kvaratskhelia got the ball
rolling in the 11th minute in
Reggio Emilia with his 10th goal
of an incredible debut Serie A season, a beautiful run and low finish which highlighted why Europe's biggest clubs are

already eyeing the Georgian wing wizard.

Osimhen, who had already hit the post, then doubled the hosts' lead in the 33rd minute when he collected Amir Rrahmani's pass, spun Martin Erlic and rifled home from an improbable angle past Andrea Con-

The pair have now scored 28 of Napoli's 56 league goals, Osimhen netting nine times in eight league matches since the

turn of the year. Sassuolo couldn't repeat

their heroics of recent weeks against ailing champions AC Milan and Atalanta but put up a decent fight on Friday night despite having to play without injured star Domenico Berardi, Alessio Dionisi's side, who are seven points above the relegation zone in 15th, caused Napoli problems and struck the post through

Kvaratskhelia's opener. The match might have taken on a different look had Lauriente's close-range finish not been ruled out for Gregoire

Defrel interfering with play from an offside position. Napoli fans were worried about Osimhen's condition when he was subbed with six minutes to go, but Spalletti said after the match that there "no particular issue" with the Nigeria forward.

That left the only low note

on an otherwise perfect night being super-sub Giovanni Simeone having a late goal chalked off for Hirving Lozano being offside before swinging in his perfect cross for the Argen-



 $F^{
m ormer\ Ghana\ international}_{
m Christian\ Atsu\ was\ found}$ dead on Saturday under the rubble of his home almost two weeks after a devastating earthquake in Turkey.

Atsu, 31, was caught up in a 7.8-magnitude quake that rocked Turkey and Syria on February 6, killing more than 43,000 people in both countries.

There were initial reports the former Chelsea and Newcastle player had been rescued a day after the quake, but these turned

out to be false. His manager in Turkey, Murat Uzunmehmet, told DHA news agency on Saturday that his body had been found under the

rubble of luxury flats that crum-

bled in the Turkish southern province of Hatay.

"We have reached his lifeless body. His belongings are still being removed. His phone was also found," Uzunmehmet told

"It's with a heavy heart that I have to announce to everyone the body of Christian Atsu was found this morning," his Ghana agent Nana Sechere tweeted.

Ghana's ministry of foreign affairs said it had "received the unfortunate news".

"The elder brother and twin sister of Christian Atsu and an officer of the (Ghanaian) embassy were present at the site when the body was recovered," the ministry said in a statement.

Midfielder Atsu scored the last of his 33 career goals for Hatayspor in Turkey's Super Lig on February 5, hours before the quake struck.

There are no words to describe our sadness," tweeted his Turkish top-flight club.

"We will not forget you, Atsu. Peace be upon you, beau-

tiful person." Earlier in his career he spent four seasons at Chelsea, mostly out on loan, before a permanent

transfer to Newcastle in 2017. Chelsea issued a statement declaring: "It is with enormous sadness that Chelsea Football Club receives the news that Christian Atsu is confirmed as

Newcastle also paid hommage to "a talented player and a special person".

The club added: "He will always be fondly remembered by our players, staff and supporters.
"Initially joining on loan, he

played a key role in the Magpies squad that secured the Championship title in 2017 before making a permanent move to help us establish our place back in the Premier League."

On the international stage Atsu earned the first of his 65 senior caps with Ghana in 2012. At the 2015 Africa Cup of Nations he scored a hat-trick in

a 3-0 win over Guinea in the quarter-finals. The Black Stars reached the final, losing on penalties to the Ivory Coast with Atsu picking up both the Player and the Goal of the tournament awards.

He was also part of the Ghana squad at the 2014 World

FC Barcelona facing more questions over refereeing chief payments

AP BARCELONA

 $B_{\hbox{\scriptsize questions about payments of}}^{\hbox{\scriptsize arcelona are facing further}}$ millions of euros made to a former refereeing chief's company following revelations that the amount in question was four times bigger than the one orig-inally declared.

According to the Spanish newspaper El Mundo, Barcelona paid over 6.6 million euros between 2001 and 2018 to Jose Maria Enriquez Negreira, the former refereeing technical coming the club with verbal advice on topics relating to referees.

This is far greater than the 1.4 million euros being spoken about in the media on Thursday when La Liga president Javier Tebas said that no sporting sanctions could be taken because it happened more than three years ago. El Mundo also alleges that after Barca decided to stop payments, Negreira, dismissed from his position in the federation, sent a fax to the club on February 5, 2019 to threaten them with revealing a "scandal".

The online investigative site El Confidencial also revealed on Friday that two other companies are being investigated in connection with the affair. Soccercam SL belongs to Negreira's son while Tresep 2014 SL, which was owned by Josep Contreras Arjona, a former Barca director who died in December, was allegedly used to funnel payments to the former referee.

"We will wait for the bodies responsible for the good governance of the Spanish championship to shed light on this situation, which we have learned about through the media," said Spanish prime minister Pedro Sanchez on Friday during his

Scotland's cricketers refused to shake hands with rape-accused Nepal star

Sandeep Lamichhane following a

match between the two nations in

a 17-year-old girl in a Kathmandu

He was suspended as national captain and arrested, but was freed on

bail at the end of last month, with

Nepal's cricket association announc-

ing a day later his ban had been lift-

Lamichhane is accused of raping

AP ■ KATHMANDU

Kirtipur on Friday.

hotel room last August.

Barcelona top La Liga at present but in the wake of the revelations were held to a 2-2 draw by Manchester United in the Europa League on Thursday.

"If I saw that we were winning by cheating, I would go home," said Barcelona coach Xavi in the press conference after the match

'LOT OF HARM'

Tebas said ethically no services should have been provided by Negreira to Barcelona, and made by the club.

He said that no sporting sanctions could be taken but that punishment under "criminal jurisdiction is another issue".

"Now the prosecutor's office is investigating the events that occurred and whether there may be a possible crime of corruption between individuals," he

The Spanish football federation have requested information from Barcelona and the refereeing technical committee (CTA) regarding the payments.

The investigation began after Spain's tax authorities identified irregularities in tax payments made between 2016 and 2018 by the company Dasnil 95 — owned by Negreira, vice-president of the CTA between 1994-2018. Dasnil 95 reportedly received payments from Barcelona between those years.

The last invoice, according to Cadena Ser radio, was issued in June 2018. After that the CTA was restructured and Enriquez

Negreira left the organisation. Josep Maria Bartomeu, then-president of Barca, told reporters the club had decided to dispense with these services in order to cut costs.

Arsenal regain top spot in Premier League

AP ■ BIRMINGHAM

Arsenal moved back to the top of the Premier League in dramatic fashion as an own goal from Aston Villa keeper Emiliano Martinez in stoppagetime handed the Gunners a crucial 4-2 victory on Saturday.

With just minutes left at Villa Park, Mikel Arteta's side were in danger of stumbling again in their bid to win the title for the first time since 2004.

Arsenal had twice trailed to goals from Ollie Watkins and Philippe Coutinho, only for Bukayo Saka and then Oleksandr Zinchenko to haul them A draw would have taken

Arsenal above Manchester City of holding off the champions in a thrilling title race. But they received a helping

hand from their former keeper as Martinez inadvertantly deflected Jorginho's shot into his own net after it hit the bar in stoppage-time.

Gabriel Martinelli capped Arsenal's remarkable escape with a goal in the final seconds to lift the north Londoners three points clear of second placed City.

Pep Guardiola's men would go back above Arsenal on goal difference if they win at Nottingham Forest later on

Armand Lauriente just after

For the first time since August 20, the Gunners were not starting a round of fixtures on top of the Premier League table after losing 3-1 to City on Wednesday. Arsenal were without a win

in their previous three top-flight games and last four in all competitions, but this spirited victory will give them renewed belief they can pip City to the Tom Hanks, a self-con-

fessed Villa fan, was watching from the stands and Arsenal scripted a Hollywood ending in Arteta had bemoaned the "very difficult" fixture schedule

just 63 hours after the final whistle in their defeat against City on Wednesday. And Arteta's fears about Arsenal struggling to cope with the quick turnaround came true

that saw Arsenal back in action

after just five minutes. Ćaught with too many players pushed upfield, Arsenal were exposed by Matt Cash's superb lofted pass towards Watkins,



who showed nimble footwork to skip past William Saliba before drilling a fine finish into the bottom corner.

Arsenal hit back with a 16th minute equaliser when Mings could only clear Ben

White's cross as far as Saka and the England forward smashed a ferocious strike past Martinez from 12 yards.

Coutinho restored Villa's lead in the 31st minute. Alex Moreno got behind

White down the right flank and crossed towards Emiliano Buendia, whose clever dummy wrong-footed the Arsenal defence as Coutinho applied the finishing touch with a clinical strike from just inside the area.

Arteta's men had to dig deep after Coutinho's first goal this season and they were up to

Zinchenko put Arsenal back on level terms in the 61st minute, drilling a blistering strike past Martinez from the edge of the area for his first Gunners goal since signing from Manchester City.

Leon Bailey almost won it for Villa in the closing stages

when his stinging strike was pushed onto the bar by Aaron

But Arsenal held their nerve and snatched the points in an astonishing finale.

In stoppage-time, Jorginho's first-time effort from the edge of the area hit the bar, bounced the head before rebounding

into the net. Martinez was crestfallen and the Argentine World Cup winner was involved again when the Gunners wrapped up the points with virtually the last kick.

Martinez went up for a Villa corner but when Arsenal cleared Martinelli was able to run half the length of the pitch before slotting into the empty net as Arteta and his staff celebrated wildly on the touchline.

Swiatek beats Kudermetova to reach Doha Open final

World number one and defending champion Iga Swiatek breezed past Veronika Kudermetova for the loss of just one game in a 56-minute Doha Open semi-final demolition on Friday. The French and US Open champion triumphed 6-0, 6-1 and will face world number four Jessica Pegula of the United States for the title.

Second seed Pegula reached the final by seeing off Greek fifth seed Maria Sakkari 6-2, 4-6, 61 in just under two hours.

Poland's Swiatek, the top seed, coped with blustery conditions the better of the two in the Qatari capital, hitting 14 winners to five unforced errors and breaking serve five times.

"I was pretty worried about how I was going to compete with the conditions today, so I'm glad that I could play the smart way,' Swiatek told wtatennis.com.

"I'm pretty happy that I was so solid." Swiatek has lost just two games in two completed matches in Doha this week

Scotland cricketers refuse to shake hands with rape-accused Lamichhane



She beat Danielle Collins for the loss of one game and then was given a walkover into the semi-

final by Belinda Bencic. Pegula will be playing in her first final of 2023 on Saturday, but sixth of her career. She had been heading for a straight sets win on Friday when leading 6-2, 4-2 but Sakkari dug deep to level the contest. "That was probably the hardest conditions I've ever had to play in, windwise. I'm glad I didn't get too frustrated. I think I played very smart," said the American.

Alcaraz into Argentina Open semi-finals

AP BUENOS AIRES

op seed Carlos Alcaraz Top seed Carros Into the conditions to sweep into the semi-finals of the Argentina Open with a straight sets victory over Serbia's Dusan Lajovic on Friday.

The Spanish world number two, who is making his return to tennis at this week's event in Buenos Aires after a four-month injury layoff, eased into the last four with a 6-4, 6-2 victory in 1hr 33min.

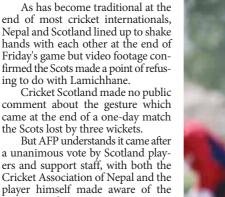
Friday's quarter-finals took place in chilly conditions after a week of wild weather swings in Buenos Aires which saw temperatures go from 38.1 C (100.6 degrees Fahrenheit) last Sunday to 7.9C (46.2F) on Thursday.

"Everything was very differ-

ent from what we have been used to — there was rain and it was cold," Alcaraz said of the conditions.

ed very well, I have played at a great level, but I want to continue improving in the semi-finals." Alcaraz will face either

Argentinian fifth seed Francisco Cerundolo or Spain's Bernabe



protest in advance. Lamichhane returned to the side Lamichhane, who has denied the in the opening game of the ODI World allegations against him in a Facebook Cup League 2 tri-series against Namibia in Kathmandu on Tuesday. post, is likely to receive similar treat-

ing to do with Lamichhane.

the Scots lost by three wickets.



ment when the teams next meet on February 21. The 22-year-old took 3-27 on Friday as Nepal recovered from 77-5

and 177-6 to chase down 275 with three overs to spare. In Tuesday's opening game against Namibia, Lamichhane took 3-66 in a

two-wicket win. Before the tri-series started,

Cricket Scotland issued a statement, saying it was "aware of the reports regarding the legal status of Nepal's Sandeep Lamichhane, ahead of the upcoming ICC Cricket World Cup League 2 Qualifiers".

It added: "As a governing body, and as a squad, Cricket Scotland stands firmly against all forms of abuse, which have no place in modgames is a matter for the Cricket Association of Nepal and the ICC (International Cricket Council) to consider.' The ICC, however, have yet to

"The player's availability for these

ern society

Lamichhane's selection. Lamichhane had been a poster boy for the rise of cricket in Nepal, which gained one-day international status in 2018.

comment publicly comment on

His big break came when he was snapped up by the Delhi Capitals for the big-money Indian Premier League that year, and he has since been Nepal's most sought-after cricketer.

Nepal's next match of the tri-series is against Namibia on Saturday.

"But the tennis player's dayto-day job is to adapt to the conditions, and I think a great match came out. "I have compet-

Zapata Miralles in the last four.

AXAR, ASHWIN LEAD INDIA FIGHTBACK

xar Patel and Ravichandran Ashwin added another significant chapter to India's lower-order fightbacks as their priceless 114-run eighth-wicket partnership put the hosts on an even keel against Australia on an engrossing second day of the second Test here on Saturday.

Thanks to Axar's invaluable 74 off 115 balls and Ashwin's 37 off 71 balls, India, who were in complete mess at 139/7, recovered well to end their first innings at 262 in 83.3 overs, just one run behind Australia's 263.

At stumps, Australia were 61/1 in their second innings, taking a handy 62-run lead.

Had the two all-rounders not bailed the hosts out, Australia would have been far more happy than they actually were at stumps on Saturday.

Travis Head (39 batting), opening for a concussed David Warner, and Marnus Labuschagne (16 batting) attacked the Indian spinners, knowing that defending wasn't an option. They picked up a handful of boundaries in the process

As has been the script over the past few years, batter No.6 (Jadeja), No.8 (Ashwin) and No.9 (Axar) were at the forefront of the recovery act after specialist batters were caught in two minds on whether to attack or defend against the Australian spinners led by Nathan Lyon (5/67 in 29 overs), who grabbed his 22nd five-wicket

There were no demons in the track but a few cracks on

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Had Nathan Lyon been an India skipper, he would

have issued a quick rebuttal if

someone had dared to call Axar

Patel and Ravichandran Ashwin

day, Ashwin (37) and Axar (74)

added 114 runs for the eighth

wicket after India had slumped

to 139/7, with Lyon taking his

22nd five-wicket haul in Test

complimented the two India

players for their gritty batting

display, saying the duo could

easily bat at No.6 for any Test-

playing team.
"They are not lower-order

(batters). Let's get that clear. Axar and Ash could easily bat in the

top-six in a few teams in Test

cricket around the world in my

eyes. They (India) have a very

long top order, let's just say that," said Lyon.

Axar and Ashwin, India kept

Australia's first-innings lead

aggressively in their second

innings scoring 61/1, but Lyon

said he will not get into any tar-

number. Whatever we get we

have to make sure it's enough.

That's the mentality we need to do (go with); we need to come

get setting at the moment.

down to just one run.

Thanks to the efforts of

Australia have started

"I'm not going to give you a

The Australian spinner

as lower-order batters.

Axar & Ashwin can bat in

top-six in any Test team: Lyon

methods.

enough.

the good- and short-of-good-length spots on both sides of the strip led the ball to keep

Most top-order India batters were adjudged leg-before on the front-foot, barring skipper Rohit Sharma, who was bowled playing across the line. The worrying trend was India batters playing the Australian spinners with their pads as the first line of defence.

However, Axar and Ashwin applied the strategy to consistently counter-attack the bowlers despite the fall of seven wickets. Instead of plonking the front-foot forward, they used the pace of the deliveries from Todd Murphy (2/53 in 18 overs) and debutant left-arm spinner Matt Kuhnemann (2/72 in 21.3 overs), to score

Axar got his third fifty and a second consecutive one in the series — with a six over cow corner off Kuhnemann and another over extra cover off Murphy. He also hit a six off Lyon, but his standout shot was a back-foot punch through the covers off Pat Cummins. Ashwin too was deter-

mined at the other end and did not let go of the scoring opportunities as Australia lost the initiative after dominating the better part of the first one-anda-half sessions on Saturday. India lost wickets in a heap

in the morning session before Virat Kohli (44 off 84 balls) and Ravindra Jadeja (26 off 74 balls) steadied the innings in the post-lunch session by adding 59 runs for the fifth

But once Murphy, playing his second Test, and debutant

here tomorrow and be really

all guns blazing scoring 39 in quick time and Lyon said he

trusts his team-mate's aggressive

support of the whole change

room to go out there and play

the way they want to play and

the way they think they can

combat the quality bowling India have. Whatever we set, we

have just got to make sure it's

he could extract from the

Ferozeshah Kotla track had

bounce in Delhi compared to

Nagpur, which I obviously like

to exploit."

Lyon got all his five wickets

goal. If you understand cricket,

you will understand what I am

trying to do and trying to get

them defending because we

know how good the Indian bat-

ters are. If I can make them

defend, hopefully, I'll create a few

chances here and there.'

his second five-for in Delhi

helped him immensely.

ing uneven bounce.

Lyon said the more bounce

'There is (a) lot more

Travis Head has come out

"We need to trust the guys'



Kuhnemann dismissed the duo in quick succession, things went downhill quickly for the

The difference one saw between the Australian spin

attack in Nagpur and Delhi could be due to the pace of the Kotla track. Credit must be given to stalwart Lyon and the two young spinners for keep-

ing up the pressure despite los-

ing three referrals in the first hour of day two.

Kohli, who played with a lot of composure and was looked good for a big score,

unlucky that he had to head back due to an umpire's call.

Kuhnemann's arm ball seemed to be brushing the leg-bail and India's No. 1 bat-

stand to keep India in the hunt. But England skipper

Heather Knight made some

brilliant bowling changes

towards the end to stifle India's

final two overs, Sophie Ecclestone bowled a brilliant

penultimate over, giving away just three runs and also account-

ed for the wicket of Deepti

In the final over, the asking

Needing 34 runs off the

on whether the ball hit the pad

Before that, a Murphy slider caught India's most consistent Test batter Jadeja plumb in front. In the morning session, KL Rahul's bad patch continued while Cheteshwar Pujara had a forgettable first innings outing in his 100th Test.

Only Rohit Sharma (32) looked in good touch as a vintage Lyon was in his element, troubling the top-order repeatedly. Rahul (17), who survived two DRS appeals, was trapped leg-before as Lyon tossed one from round the wicket and got it to deviate enough and find

Rahul's run of failures will again spur the debate about whether young Shubman Gill should have been given the ongoing Test.

Rohit seemed to carry from where he had left in the first Test and was also playing the sweep shot to good effect. However, he played across the line to a straighter one from Lyon and was castled in the process.

Rarely has Pujara walked in to bat amid such fanfare — the 20,000-plus Kotla crowd kept chanting his name — but his milestone match turned out to be an anti-climax as he failed to bother the scorers.

It was another flighted delivery from Lyon which turned back enough and the orthodox Rajkot man tried to play a half-forward defensive stroke only to be caught plumb in front. He would like to forget the innings in a hurry.



Warner out of 2nd Test due to concussion, hairline fracture

PTI NEW DELHI

Star Australia opener David Warner will miss the remainder of the second Test against India after suffering a concussion with Matthew Renshaw coming on as his substitute.

The 36-year-old could also be a doubtful starter for the third Test, which begins in Indore on March 1, after it emerged that he has also sustained a hairline fracture on his

Warner will now follow the graduated return to sport protocols ahead of the third Test in Indore in line with Cricket Australia guidelines," a Cricket Australia statement said on Saturday.
In the 10th over of the

Australian innings on Friday, Warner was struck on the head by a Mohammed Siraj delivery. The southpaw had received on-field medical

However, he did not

Earlier, while navigating through a barrage of short balls from Siraj, Warner had suffered a knock to his left elbow.

The Australian had continued batting despite the twin blows, eventually perishing for 15, but he did not come out to field when India batted on day

After the end of play on the opening day fellow opener Usman Khawaja had said Warner was "a little bit weary".

"A knock to the arm and then to the head has made him a little bit weary at the moment," Khawaja had said.

Warner's concussion means a return to the side for Renshaw, who had been dropped from the playing XI after an underwhelming first Test, where he scored 0 and 2.

However, Renshaw, a parttime off-spinner, will not be able to bowl as according to the ICC rules, a concussion substireplacement and Warner rarely

India lose by 11 runs against England

PTI GQEBERHA

Medium pacer Renuka Singh's fifer and vice-captain Smriti Mandhana's fine half-century went in vain as India lost to England by 11 runs to suffer their first defeat in the ICC Women's T20 World Cup here on Saturday. Renuka Singh registered her best bowling figures (5/15) to help India restrict England to 151 for seven after Harmanpreet Kaur opted to

Renuka did the early damage, picking up the first three wickets to peg England back and then returned to take two more towards the fag end of the In the chase, vice-captain

with a 41-ball 52, which was studded with seven boundaries



and a six, while Richa Ghosh remained unbeaten on 47 off 34 balls as India fell short by 11 runs, managing 140 for 5 in

India did not have the best of starts, losing Shafali Verma in the fourth over. Jemimah Rodrigues and Harmanpreet too departed in quick succession as India slumped to 62 for 3 in

shared a 43-run fourth-wicket

became too steep, but Ghosh found the boundary twice and also hit a six off Katherine Sciver-Brunt, but it was not With India needing 59 off

30 balls, Mandhana tried to up the ante and stepped out to hit But Mandhana and Ghosh bring up a well-deserved half-

Conversations with Ponting, change in mindset behind Axar's rapid rise as a batter

PTI NEW DELHI

A xar Patel has attributed his rapid growth as a batter over the last 12 months to a change in mindset besides crediting Delhi Čapitals coach Ricky Ponting for the transformation. Axar has come of age as a batter,

coming up with crucial performances across formats in the last three months. On Saturday, he scored a potential-

after the 2013-14 series — from ly match-changing 74 while batting alongside Ravichandran Ashwin (37). the Old Pavilion End, as the cracks created at the Ambedkar The duo shared a 114-run stand for the Stadium End helped in generateighth wickets to help India reach 262, Bowling around the wickjust one run short of Australia's first et in this game, I'm still trying innings total. to target off stump. That's my

His 84 in the first Test in Nagpur helped India get to 400 as the hosts effectively batted Australia out of the

"At Delhi Capitals, I talked a lot with Ricky on how I can get better with my batting. Even in the Indian team, I was talking to the batters. I felt I was not realising my potential with 30s and 40s. I was not able finish the game. "So, it was a lot about the mindset. Sometimes you can relax as an all-

rounder if you have taken wickets, you could get casual. So I thought I could improve on that and convert my 30s and 40s into match-winning scores. "That is how I think now and that

has made a big difference," said Axar after stumps on day two of the second Axar and Ashwin also got high

praise from Australian spinner Nathan Lyon who feels the Indian spin duo is good enough to bat in the top-six of any international side. "When I am bowling, we think how

the batter is making things difficult for us. I use the same technique while batting. If the bowler is landing all the balls in the same area, the batters keep defending confidently. While batting, we also try to defend confidently and force him to change his tactics. Having a bowler's mindset helps in batting as



With India reeling at 139 for seven, Axar and Ashwin were feeling the heat.

The left-arm spinner said they had the confidence of stitching a big partnership with the pitch getting easier to "There was pressure as we were

behind in the game. So, it was important to get as close to the Australian target as possible. When Ashwin and I got set, we thought the wicket was getting easier to bat on and felt we could forge a long partnership. Eventually we ended just one run behind Australia. So felt good about that. Coming from white-ball cricket,

I was in good touch in Nagpur as well. I am just carrying that confidence and trying to be consistent," said Axar, who is playing ahead of Kuldeep Yadav in the team because of his superior batting abilities.

With Australia racing to 61 for one in 12 overs in their second innings, the Indians will have to rework their plans

Axar said his team would be comfortable chasing anything in the range

"The sooner we bowl them out the better. If we can stop them between 220-250, we can defend that while batting on day four. For that, we will have to bowl well because the wicket is getting slower with the game progressing.

'We will have to work really hard to get wickets, it won't be easy for sure. We will have to vary our pace to test the

"Towards the end of play, they (Australia) were aggressive and we noticed that. At stumps, we were thinking about how to do things differ-

ently and try to stop them." On missing out on a deserving hundred, he added: "The ball was new so I thought I could take my chances with Shami and Siraj bhai left. I wanted to take my chances. Last time I got

out on 84 while batting (in Nagpur) so wanted to take my chances (to get to

Saurashtra take firm grip as Unadkat, Sakariya grab two wickets each

Saurashtra look poised to lift their second Ranji Trophy after skipper Jaydev Unadkat and Chetan Sakariya grabbed two wickets each to leave hosts Bengal struggling at 169 for four in their second innings on day three of the final at the Eden Gardens on Saturday

While Bengal skipper Manoj Tiwary remained unbeaten on 57, the hosts are still 61 runs short of Saurashtra's firstinnings total of 404, and with both Saurashtra left-arm pace bowlers breathing fire, Unadkat's side could well wrap up the game on Sunday. Bengal's paceheavy attack looked ineffective in the morning as Saurashtra,

had left on Friday evening -317/5 — added 87 more runs to take their score past 400.

continuing from where they

Though overnight batters Arpit Vasavada (81) and Chirag Jani (60) perished quickly, tailenders Prerak Mankad (33) and Dharmendrasinh Iadeia (29) gave Saurashtra the winning edge. To add to Bengal's woes, they gave away 35 extras.

Coming in to bat in the second innings, Bengal had a harrowing start with the pace duo of Sakariya (2/50) and Unadkat (2/47) rattling the top-order to reduce them to 47/3 in the

post-lunch session. Still trailing by 183 runs, an innings defeat loomed large when the veteran duo of Anust-

up Majumdar (61) and Tiwary came together and gave the 1,000-odd fans some hope with their 99-run partnership. At close, Shahbaz Ahmed (13 batting) was giving Tiwary

company at the crease. Bengal can only hope for a magical turnaround in quest of their maiden Ranji Trophy title

in 32 years. The onus is on Tiwary and Shahbaz, the last recognised batting pair for Bengal, to make an improbable turnaround.

Earlier pace bowler Mukesh Kumar emerged the most successful Bengal bowler on Saturday, finishing with figures of 4/111 and getting rid of both well-set overnight batters Vasavada and Jani



Having managed just three wickets on Friday, the muchvaunted Bengal attack wrapped up Saurashtra's last five wickets in two hours and six minutes in the first session on Saturday. But it seemed too little, too late as the host bowlers had allowed Saurashtra to take their score past 400.

Vasavada failed to add to his overnight total of 81 and nicked an away-going delivery. Jani was dismissed when Mukesh got the ball to swing away after pitching. The ball made a feather-touch contact with Jani's bat and sailed to the wicket-

Akash Deep hit the deck hard to bounce out Prerak Mankad with a ball that sharply

cut back in and clipped the batter's gloves.

He got his third wicket, dismissing Unadkat (4) cheaply. But from 369/9, Saurashtra raced to 404 with their last pair of Parth Bhut (14 not out) and Dharmendrasinh Jadeja (29) frustrating the Bengal bowlers.

Pressed into the opener's role, Bengal debutant Sumanta Gupta showed he still has a lot of work to do, as he poked at a Sakariya delivery to be caught in the slip cordon.

Bengal's biggest letdown was India A regular Abhimanyu Easwaran (12) whose horror show with the bat continued, done in by a length delivery that

Bengal's crisis man Anustup

soaked up the pressure. But Unadkat dismissed the veteran cricketer when he chased an away-going delivery to be caught

at gully.

Tiwary and Shahbaz then survived some anxious moments to keep the faint hopes alive. Saurashtra had won their

Majumdar looked in control and

maiden Ranji Trophy title beating Bengal three years ago at Rajkot. Brief scores:

Bengal 174 and 169/4; 52.5 overs (Anustup Majumdar 61, Manoj Tiwary 57 batting). Saurashtra 404; 110 overs (Arpit Vasavada 81, Chirag Jani 60, Sheldon Jackson 59, Harvik Desai 50; Mukesh Kumar 4/111, Akash Deep 3/111, Ishan Porel 3/86). Bengal trail by 61 runs.

New Delhi, February 19, 2023

the pioneer

'A woman has to be intelligent, have charm, a sense of humor, and be kind. It's the same qualities I require from a man'





Winds of change are sweeping across Jammu and Kashmir as tourists flock to experience the beauty of the Valley, writes MOHIT KANDHARI from Jammu

s the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir gradually sheds its image of being a troubled 'hotspot', a large number of tourists from different parts of the country are flocking to Kashmir, reaping rich dividends of peace in the aftermath of abrogation of Articles 370 and 35-A.

Å record number of 1.88 crore tourists visited the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir in 2022, the highest number so far in the last one decade. Recently, the UT administration also hosted the third edition of Khelo India National Winter Games in the world-famous ski resort of Gulmarg.

The successful conduct of the sporting event not only ensured good business for everyone in the hotel and adventure sports industry but also brought back smiles on everyone's faces.

Next in line is the Tulip Festival. It commences with the arrival of the spring season in the Valley. This year the festival will be celebrated from April 1 to 20. The 20-day celebration attracts nature lovers and floriculture enthusiasts to welcome the season of spring and to witness the blooming tulips spread across the sprawling 30 acres of land which gives a breathtaking view of the Dal Lake and snow-capped mountains in the backdrop.

Out of 1.88 crore tourists, around 26 lakh, including 3.65 lakh Amarnath pilgrims, visited the Kashmir Valley in

On the other hand, the pilgrim traffic at the cave shrine of Mata Vaishno Devi, nestled in Trikuta hills near the Katra township also registered a record jump and touched over 91 lakh footfalls during the same period. The footfall of foreign tourists is also witnessing an upward trend in the Valley in the wake of the prevailing peaceful situation.

During 2022, around 20,000 foreign tourists relished the hospitality and soaked themselves in the cool climes while taking a Shikara ride in the famous Dal Lake and participated in the adventure sport activities, including skiing on the icy slopes of Gulmarg.

Before the repeal of Article 370 only 8.5 lakh tourists visited Kashmir in 2018 and 11 lakh in 2017. However, two years of travel restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic broke the backbone of the tourism industry.

SKYROCKETING HOPES

With every single footfall, the hopes of common Kashmiris are skyrocketing as it is not only bringing them economic benefits but also making their lives more productive and peaceful.

Saleem Ahmad, who runs a food joint in the Dal Lake area, said, "I launched my cafe in 2019 during the

summer season. Before I could establish myself, the special status of Jammu and Kashmir was revoked and Article 370 was abrogated. The city witnessed complete shutdown and instead of earning profits, I ended up making losses only.

Ahmad said, "Since last year, as the tourists' rush witnessed an upward trend, I managed to break even and now I am hoping to earn profits in the coming spring season."

Ahmad also talked about his close friends who have launched 'home stays' and liaison with his friends in the metro cities to attract tourists in the Kashmir

The young entrepreneurs working in the hospitality industry have launched many startups and generated employment opportunities for fellow Kashmiris with little help from the government agencies. They have developed 'home stays' at different locations and also provide different logistics to aid trekking clubs and enthusiasts flocking to participate in the adventure sport activities. Several Vloggers and Youtubers are also producing good content and making big through their social media pages and earning hefty money by way of showcasing the rich cultural heritage and tourist destinations of the Kashmir

SPOTLIGHT ON G-20 MEETING

In the coming months, global spotlight will also be on Jammu and Kashmir as one of the G-20 group meetings will be hosted in the Valley. It is expected, the Narendra Modi government would go all out, showcasing the changing face of Jammu and Kashmir in front of the global leaders during the summit.

The incidents of terrorist-related violence, cross-border infiltration and terror attacks are also witnessing a declining trend. The security forces are in full control of the situation on ground zero and the leadership of different terrorist outfits, active in the Kashmir Valley, has been completely wiped out.

The terrorist commanders have been forced to rely on 'hybrid' terrorists and indulge in killing of soft targets to register their presence.

The shelf life of these young terrorists, mostly local youths, radicalised by their handlers from across the line of control in Pakistan, is less than three months. In many cases, these terrorists have been eliminated within days of picking up the gun.

The random 'hartal calls' and enforced shutdowns have also become a thing of the past following crackdown on terror financiers and their sympathisers. The common Kashmiris



THE YOUNG **ENTREPRENEURS** WORKING IN THE HOSPITALITY **INDUSTRY HAVE** LAUNCHED MANY STARTUPS AND **GENERATED EMPLOYMENT** OPPORTUNITIES FOR FELLOW KASHMIRIS WITH LITTLE HELP FROM THE GOVERNMENT **AGENCIES**

are heaving a sigh of relief as they are able to transact their businesses and lead a peaceful life without facing abrupt disruptions and forced bandh

As winds of change are sweeping across the Valley, the Central government has also started hosting regular conferences, workshops and seminars in Kashmir Valley to showcase the changes on ground zero.

The iconic Clock Tower near Lal Chowk, the busiest city centre in Srinagar, has also become a hot spot and is attracting tourists' attention. Visitors from different parts of India can be seen patiently waiting for their turn to click selfies and family photographs before posting the same on their social media pages. In the past, the Lal Chowk remained out of bounds as visitors were prevented from coming closer to the Clock Tower and every time enthusiasts indulged in some dramatics they were whisked away by the security personnel deployed there.

The street vendors, mostly nonlocals, are a happy lot as they offer tasty snacks and serve fellow Indians from

different parts of the country.

Rakesh Kumar, a street vendor from Bihar selling tasty snacks in the Valley for over a decade, said he catered to local customers and sometimes security personnel. "Very few tourists used to spend time in the evening in this area due to security concerns. Now it is not the case. The markets remain open and there is no fear. Tourists from nearby hotels prefer eating out. The taxi operators are also a happy lot in the Kashmir Valley. Due to opening up of new tourist hotspots in Tangmarg, Sonmarg, Gulmarg and Pahalgam, the taxi operators are getting good rates and first time tourists are opting out for these destinations.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah, in a recent interview, has said Kashmir has become a tourist destination rather than a place for protests, stone pelting, and revolution. To revive the tourism industry, considered the backbone of the local economy in Jammu and Kashmir, the UT administration has focused on it.

The benefits of the recent boom in the sector have benefited the ordinary man. Strikes, stone pelting and broad daylight encounters have almost ended, allowing the local tourists to venture out with their families too. During the winter season last year, popular tourist spots like Pahalgam, Gulmarg and Sonmarg had their resorts and guesthouses running with 100 per cent

occupancy A senior official of the Tourism department in Kashmir told 'Sunday Pioneer, "Tourists from all parts of the world have been visiting J&K. We had a very good winter season and now we are fully geared up to welcome the fresh footfalls in the coming summer season."

"Our initiatives for boosting tourism have borne fruit. The local traders, houseboat owners, taxi and shikara operators, dry fruit sellers, restaurant owners, businessmen who

IGLOO CAFE: MAJOR ATTRACTION

- An igloo cafe, originally a brainchild of Syed Wasim Shah, has attracted a huge rush of tourists in the skiresort of Gulmarg ever since it was launched this winter
- season. Shah claimed the igloo cafe designed by him this season is turning out to be the world's largest cafe and is set to create many more records in the
- coming weeks. • The ice cafe is 37.5 feet high and has a diameter of 44.5 feet. A total of 10 tables have been placed inside the cafe and they can accommodate 40 guests at one time.
- Such igloo cafes are a major hit in the snow clad mountains of Switzerland. Shah revealed he too was inspired to design his own cafe while he came across the one in Switzerland.

depend on tourism, and Kashmir's economy will get a big boost," the official added.

Due to the increasing number of flights and better road and rail transport facilities, different categories of tourists are opting for different routes to reach the Kashmir Valley and enjoy the pristine beauty of nature.

OPENING ROUTES OF NEW TOURIST HOTSPOTS

On one hand, steps have been taken by the government to provide better facilities to the old tourist spots, the Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor's administration has, for the first time, introduced about 100 very beautiful places which were overlooked by the previous governments. These places have been brought on the tourist map. Bringing these places on the tourist map will generate employment for the locals.

On its part, the Tourism department is roping in local staff of private hotels and imparting them training as part of the capacity building exercise. Doodhpathri has been the best offbeat tourist destination and is expected to attract maximum tourists followed by Kokernag, Pahalgam and Sonmarg.

A local hotelier in Gulmarg, Syed Niaz Ahmad Shah, told 'Sunday Pioneer', "We had a good winter season last year and now we are looking forward to a hectic spring

and summer season ahead."

He appealed to the government to come to the aid of local stakeholders by providing them incentives and supporting them in order to provide quality services to the tourists. To promote tourism during the peak season, Syed Niaz Ahmad Shah also suggested that airlines should offer lucrative packages for group tourists and urged the government to regulate the tariff as ticket prices skyrocket during the peak season. He observed that the government must increase the total bed capacity to cater to the rush of tourists in the ski resort of Gulmarg and

other emerging hotspots. "The Tourism department should also rope in hoteliers, travel agents, logistic teams and others before designing the packages," Niaz Shah added.

The Government of India is also making a significant thrust to ensure better infrastructural facilities for the region's people and entice visitors. This has resulted in a fortuitous surge in tourist activities with better law and order, promising security system, and maintenance of peace in addition to infrastructural and connectivity improvements.

The J&K administration is also focused on exploring the full potential of pilgrimage tourism by developing various religious tourist circuits across the Union Territory. Keeping in view the increasing number of devotees coming to visit Mata Vaishno Devi shrine, facilities and infrastructure is being strengthened.

As per the official data, the construction work of Mantalai Wellness Centre has been completed at a cost of Rs 80 crore and the design of Katra multi modal station has been finalised. Similarly, work on Tawi Riverfront is going on in full swing while Mansar and Surinsar have made their presence on the tourism map of the country. The government is working tirelessly to open Sanasar Tulip Garden for local people and tourists this year.

Similarly, work on conservation and renovation of 18 historical-cultural heritage sites in Jammu, Kathua, Ramban, Reasi, Samba and Udhampur will commence shortly. In April this year, Jambu Zoo shall be thrown open to the people. The Home-stay Scheme has been launched with a view to foster employment generation and economic prosperity in rural areas.

Remarkably, with the launch of the new J&K Film Policy in 2021, Jammu and Kashmir has emerged as the favourite shooting destination for film industry and permission has been granted for shooting of more than 150 films and web series in less than two

CHILDHOOD CANCERS ARE CURABLE

February 15 was marked as International Childhood Cancer Day. Contrary to the popular belief, pediatric cancer or childhood cancer is very much prevalent in India. The World Health Organisation says, India is home to at least 20% of the global childhood cancer burden, with nearly 75,000 kids getting cancer every year. Though India has made significant progress in ensuring childhood cancer services in the last few years with financial aid being doled out through Ayushmaan Bharat scheme, the outcome still remains unimpressive as compared to global standards. This is mainly due to delay in recognition, diagnosis and cure, say doctors. ARCHANA JYOTI reports.

rarious reports assert that the available data shows lower incidence of childhood cancer incidence especially in leukaemia and CNS tumours which may suggest poor awareness of caregivers and delayed diagnosis with many "missed cases". Dr Sameer Bakhshi, from Institute Rotary Cancer Hospital India, AIIMS, Delhi attributes this to significant barriers in early diagnosis, inability to accurately diagnose, poor access to health care facilities, and inability to initiate treatment promptly.

In a study 'Childhood Cancer in India', published in ScienceDirect, he expressed concern that incidence data are also skewed towards male preponderance which suggests gender bias in seeking healthcare. "The childhood cancer services in India are predominantly restricted to a few tertiary care centres in major cities. The outcome in major groups of cancer is complicated by delayed and more advanced stages of presentation and poor supportive care during intensive treatment. Treatment refusal and abandonment due to stigma attached to the disease remains major barriers,"

The health expert notes that the situation can be improved by ensuring there is an enhanced awareness about the problem and ensuring access to quality healthcare for all.

"Another major problem is that childhood cancer care services are currently available only at tertiary health centres in major cities, forcing a majority of India to depend on these few centres."

Treatment for such cancers would include surgery, chemotherapy, radiotherapy, or a combination depending on the nature of malignancy and its stage of presentation. Doctors say focus should be on improving awareness about childhood cancers and its symptoms among parents and healthcare providers and improving healthcare access to remote areas. India needs to have a policy framework specifically to address childhood cancer care, according to



Most common childhood cancers EyeRetinoblastoma)+o Bone (Osteosarcoma Kidney (wilms tumour Neuroblastoma

Dr Shuvadeep Ganguly, Department of Medical Oncology, IRCH, AIIMS, Delhi who is co-

SYMPTOMS

Symptoms of childhood can-cers generally include unexplained weight loss, persistent pain in bone, joints or legs, lumps/mass in the abdomen, chest, neck or pelvis, excessive bruising or bleeding, prolonged fatigue, whitish appearance of the pupil etc.

Bakshi calls for a more intensive protocol that may result in decreasing relapse rate but the increased incidence of toxicity, which is more common in presence of malnutrition and absence of proper support structure, may offset survival advantage.

essary in adopting uniform treatment protocols along with strengthening of supportive care logistics. It is also important to focus on proper pretreatment counselling allaying anxiety and undue fear regarding diagnosis of cancer so that drop-outs are reduced, and effective telephonic tracking mechanism to ensure that each child receives complete care," he says as per the study.

Since, the cost of cancer care is often financially prohibitive due to significant out of pocket expendi-ture, the introduction of the National Health Protection Scheme under Ayushman Bharat Program by the Government is likely to ensure healthcare access for the financially needy. "The availability

ICMR SURVEY ON CHILDHOOD CANCER 2022

R esults of a survey published by the Indian Council of Medical Research in September 2022 shows that childhood cancers comprise four per cent of all reported cancers in the national cancer registry pro-

These cancer patients face delayed diagnosis resulting in delayed treatment, incomplete treatment and therefore, low survival rate. As national health programmes and policies are focused on cancers in adults, the ICMR report suggested that specialised policy is developed to address childhood cancer.

The survey showed that the country has just half of the healthcare facilities needed to treat and take care of these children. For example, while only 41.6 per cent of the sampled tertiary level public hospitals in the country had a dedicated pediatric oncology department, 48.8% of private hospitals had these facilities.

The maximum (64%) were available in charitable hospitals. Less than 50% of the tertiary hospitals provided hospice care, play therapy and parental support groups and less than 35% had provision for diagnostics such as Postrom Tomography-Emission Computerise Tomography, bone scan and MIBG scan.

There is very little understanding on what causes cancer in children. Some chronic infections, such as HIV, Epstein-Barr virus and malaria, are risk factors for childhood cancer. While some 10% of all children with cancer have a predis-

hood cancer is still low in both public and private healthcare pharma-

cies and also remains unaffordable;

streamlining medicine procure-

ment and promotion of health

insurance is being done by the

government to address the same,"

self-reported confidence of under-

graduate students in suspecting

The authors also point out that

notes the study.

THE SURVEY SHOWED THAT THE COUNTRY HAS JUST HALF OF THE HEALTHCARE FACILITIES NEEDED TO TREAT AND TAKE CARE OF THESE CHILDREN. WHILE ONLY 41.6 % OF THE SAMPLED TERTIARY LEVEL PUBLIC HOSPITALS HAD A DEDICATED PEDIATRIC ONCOLOGY DEPT, 48.8% OF PRIVATE HOSPITALS HAD THESE

position because of genetic factors, more research is needed to identify the triggers for the remaining.

Most children with cancer suffer from leukemia (approximately 33 per cent) followed by brain tumors (around 20 per cent) and lymphomas (some 11 per cent).

Fewer children in India survive cancer compared to developed countries. While less than 30% of cancer patients in India and other developing countries survive, the mortality is just around 20 per cent developed countries.

Delhi has the highest rate of childhood cancers among boys in the age group of 0-14 years in Asia, recently published data from the National Cancer Registry has Out of every one million boys

aged upto 14 years living in Delhi, 203.1 suffer cancer, the data report, that took into account the cancer landscape in India's select places from 2012-2016, showed.

In the age group of 0-19 years,

Oncology under IAP PHO Chapter

is an important initiative which will

promote early recognition and refer-

ral of childhood cancer cases"

Delhi trails behind China's Jiangmen the highest cancer incidence city among boys in Asia — only by a difference of six cases per million pop-

The report includes figures from 28 population-based cancer registries (PBCR) and 58 hospitalbased cancer registries (HBCR) in

Boys aged upto 14 years contributed 4.7% of all cancer cases in Delhi. The corresponding figure for the 0-19 years age group is 6.3 per

Delhi, thus, topped the list of 28 PBCRs in terms of how many childhood cancers were registered among all cancers. The national capital was followed by the districts of Aurangabad (Maharashtra), Hyderabad (Telangana) and Wardha (Maharashtra) as well as the

entire state of Manipur. Among girls, the trend was not much different. Delhi was followed by Barshi Rural and Aurangabad in Maharashtra and the states of Manipur and Mizoram.

Delhi's incidence rate of childhood cancers among boys in the 0-14 age group was 203.1 per million population; again, the highest among all the PBCRs.

It was followed by Chennai, Aizawl, Thiruvananthapuram, Patiala, Kollam districts and Bengaluru. The order of PBCRs in this category is not different in the last cancer registry figures. However, the incidence has come down a bit in all these cities except for a couple of outliers.

cases is lacking even after their pae-diatric clinical training which sug-gests a need for more focus on childing programs for pediatric oncology nursing as well as other paramedical disciplines is additionally required for dissemination of such hood cancer in training curricula. "The regular training of paediatricians through National Training Project in Practical Paediatric services, they say. If all these are realized then the WHO Global Initiative for

Childhood Cancer which was launched in September 2018 setting a target of achieving at least 60 per cent survival for all children by 2030

HEALTH BRIEFS

HIGH-TECH HEMODIALYSIS UNIT FOR KIDNEY PATIENTS AT SAFDARJUNG HOSPITAL, DELHI

NEW DELHI: The central government-run Safdarjung Hospital can now boast of having a State-of-the-art Hemodialysis unit(to purify the blood of kidney patients) which was unveiled its Medical Superintendent Dr BL Sherwal recently. Due to the increase in cases of people suffering from kidney ailments and the consequent demand for dialysis, the upgradation of technology is expected to help the patients with better outcomes.

Dr Himanshu Verma,

HOD Department of Nephrology, Safdarjung Hospital said that "his unit

TWO MORE PVT HOSPITALS GET 'BREASTFEEDING FRIENDLY' TAG

Two private hospitals--

Rainbow Children's Hospital,

Bangalore and Sri Sathya Sai

Sanjeevani Mother and Child

Hospital, Chhattisgarh and a

government hospital, Mother

and Children Hospital,

Kamareddy in Telangana have

got accreditation as

"Breastfeeding Friendly" hospi-

tals. To promote breastfeeding

among the mothers and ensure

good health of child and moth-

er during delivery, maternity

hospitals are being certified as

"Breastfeeding Friendly" based

tal to highlight the best stan-

mothers, said Dr. Arun Gupta,

the Breastfeeding Promotion



is the first central government hospital in Delhi to be equipped with online Hemodiafiltration (HDF) Machines. This hemodialysis Unit will also provide a hemodialysis Facility to CGHS patients. will be helpful to provide quality hemodialysis facilities to the kidney patients and

will expedite kidney transplant programs in the hos-

Dr Sherwal added that the OPD timings have been increased to 8 pm for the services to be available 24x7. The inauguration was attended by Prof Geetika Khanna, Principal VMMC among others.

developed this initiative aiming to boost early breastfeeding rates among mothers within an hour of birth of the baby. He said that this inexpensive but effective strategy can be a game changer if more hospitals come

forward to notch the tag.
In total 7 hospitals are accredited Breastfeeding Friendly and have received certificates valid for 3 years.

COMPLEX LIVER SURGERY CONDUCTED AT SIR GANGA RAM HOSPITAL, DELHI

A 29-year-old Bihar man, suffering from liver cirrhosis, on WHO's Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding. It is for a maternity hospireceived a new lease of life after undergoing a transplant surgery at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital here for liver donated dard of care for breastfeeding by his wife. The 12-hour-long surgery was challenging as Pediatrician and coordinator of their blood groups didn't match, said the doctors con-Network of India (BPNI)who ducting the transplant.

The challenge was that the blood group of the recipient Shiv is 'B', and it was not matching with any of his siblings. Although his wife, 21year-old Parvati, was willing to donate her liver, her blood group is 'A', they said.

The challenge for us was that the blood group of the recipient and the donor were not matching, Dr. Naimish Mehta, Chief Liver transplant Surgeon at Sir Ganga Ram who led the investigation said adding that "therefore, the family was then counselled about 'blood group incompatible' liver transplantation (ABOi) which can be performed with adequate pre-operative prepara-

Mehta said in such cases, blood antibody level against blood group 'B' needs to be reduced to an optimum level with use of multiple sittings of plasmapheresis so that Shiv's

BOLLYWOOD STAR AYUSHMANN KHURRANA UNICEF INDIA NATIONAL AMBASSADOR



NEW DELHI: UNICEF India has appointed Indian film star Ayushmann Khurrana its National Ambassador to take up the cause of "ensuring rights of every child to survive, thrive, be protected as well as promoting their voice and agency in decisions that concern them".

Khurrana (38) who has also been previously associated with several social causes, said," In this new role with UNICEF, I will keep up a strong voice for children's rights, especially for the most vulnerable supporting solutions for issues that impact them the most."

body would not reject Parvati's partial liver. Once optimum levels of antibody titres were achieved, a liver transplantation procedure was scheduled, where a team of 21 personnel were involved, including doctors and technicians, he said.

Dr Jayashree Sood, Chairman, department of anaesthesia at the SGRH, said maintaining adequate organ perfusion during the liver transplant procedure is very critical as any error giving a mismatched blood transfusion can lead to "a catastrophic

Mehta said there are 'potential risks' involved with blood group incompatible liver transplant, especially in adults, as children have high resilience in accepting a different blood group organ. Successful results can be achieved with adequate preparations and in experienced centres.

IMA PUSH FOR BAN ON KILLER GLASS COATED

NEW DELHI: Despite ban, as manjha or sharp kite strings including those imported from China and cotton kite strings reinforced with glass powder continue to be sold in the market, posing threat to lives, the Indian Medical Association on Friday called for a stringent nationwide policy prohibiting sale and manufacture of all forms of such strings.

"As doctors, we can attest that cotton threads coated with glass, metal or any other sharp material are dangerous and can cause injury or death to humans as well as birds," Dr Sharad Kumar Agarwal, national president of the IMA, said in the letter sent on February 14 to Union Minister Environment Bhupender Yadav.

Alcohol Bad for Brain Cells

Even modest amounts of alcohol can trigger brain atrophy--the loss of brain cells--and increase the number of amyloid plaques, which are the accumulation of toxic proteins in Alzheimer's disease. THE HEALTH PIONEER shares details of the study published in Neurobiology of Disease.

Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia, accounting for 60% to 80% of dementia cases, according to the Alzheimer's Association. While current research suggests alcohol use disorder is a risk factor in Alzheimer's disease, the impact alcohol use disorder has on Alzheimer's disease pathology is an area of continued research.

'These findings suggest alcohol might accelerate the pathological cascade of Alzheimer's disease in its early stages," said Shannon Macauley, associate professor of physiology and pharmacology at Wake Forest University School of Medicine.

The study was a collaboration led by Macauley and Jeffrey Weiner, professor of physiology and pharmacology at Wake Forest University School of Medicine, through the medical school's Alzheimer's Disease Research Center and Translational Alcohol Research

Using mouse models of Alzheimer's disease-related pathology, researchers used a 10week chronic drinking approach where mice were given the choice to drink water or alcohol, mimicking human behavior regarding alcohol consumption. They then explored how voluntary, moderate consumption of alcohol altered healthy brain function and behavior and whether it altered the pathology associated wih the early stages of Alzheimer's disease.

The researchers found that alcohol increased brain atrophy and caused an increased num-



ber of amyloid plaques including a greater number of smaller plaques, potentially setting the stage for increased plaque proliferation in later life.

Interestingly, researchers also noted that acute withdrawal of alcohol increased the levels of amyloid-beta, which is a key component of amyloid plaques that accumulate in Alzĥeimer's disease.

Further analysis showed that chronic alcohol exposure poorly regulated brain and peripheral metabolism—another way to accelerate Alzheimer's disease pathology. Macauley previously showed that elevated blood sugar increases amyloidbeta and amyloid plaques. In the current study, researchers found that even moderate drinking caused elevations in blood sugar and markers of insulin resistance, which increases the risk not only for Alzheimer's disease but also for other diseases such as type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

The study also found that moderate alcohol use altered anxiety and dementia-related behaviors. "These preclinical findings suggest that even moderate consumption of alcohol

can result in brain injury," Macauley said. "Alcohol consumption may be a modifiable risk factor for Alzheimer's disease and dementia." The study holds impor-

tance for India too where so far, there is no national policy on liquor consumption at an individual level nor have any guidelines on safe consumption. Ashim Sanyal from Consumer Voice, a consumer rights group had recently at a press conference had cited a 2018 World Health Organisation report which said the per capita consumption of alcoholic beverages in India had more than doubled from 2.4 litres in 2005 to 5.7 litres in 2016. After China, India is the sec-

ond largest consumer of hard liquor like rum, whiskey, or vodka. India's per capita consumption of hard liquor was 13.5 litres, the highest in the world, compared to 6.6 litres in Regul 4.8 litres in the US or 3.2 Brazil, 4.8 litres in the US, or 3.2 litres in Germany. However, India's per capita alcohol from beer was 1.1 litres, compared with 6.4 litres in the US or 5.3 litres in Australia, as per the report released by the con-



A New World Order or disorder?

 $T^{\text{he world is facing a new}}_{\text{dilemma: Whether it is a}}$ New World Order (NWO) or a new disorder. The US and China are engaged in perpetual brinkmanship to change the course of action of global governance. While the US is at the top of the global liberal order, China is trying to take a pivotal step by projecting its own Asian Order of sorts.

At the same time, Russia under Vladimir Putin is remerging. But the European Union (EU) as a unit is fast losing its strength after the departure of its most powerful member i.e. the UK, which is now working hard to carve out its own sphere of influence all around the world. And other emerging global regional power like India, Brazil, South Africa and Australia are grabbing their own slots as per their regional and global spheres of influence. Against this background, a multipolar world order alongside an intensive fight for either a new bipolar world or for sustenance of a unipolar world order under the leadership of America is making matters worse.

China is no more hiding its global ambitions. Though very unequivocally, its Foreign Minister Wang Yi said in September 2018: "China will not, repeat, not repeat the old practice of a strong country seeking hegemony." For decades, Beijing has been trying to display its benign intentions to the international community, especially to the US, that it does not have any expansionist or globe-trotting agenda and the West need not be threatened or cautioned.

However, what Beijing is doing right now is only flexing its muscles and annoying the US. Jiang Zemin, the late Chinese statesman, assured the world of mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and cooperation in managing external relations of the country in the 1990s. With the coming of Hu

aphorism was spread to the world. So many of the neighbours and global partners were assured that China's future rise will not be aggressive and it would look for peaceful and cordial relations with all in the regional and global politics.

But then, with the emergence of Xi Jinping in 2012 as the paramount leader of the People's Republic of China (PRC), the country's tone and tenor have changed dramatically both at regional and global platforms. The "Stealth Superpower" employs all tactics — its aggression (muscle power), wolf warrior diplomacy, economic prowess, tech superiority and finally, the salami slicing approach to push its real big agenda to the main-stream of global politics.

Now the big question is can China and America escape the "Thucydides Trap"? Probably not. When a rising power tries to replace a ruling power, according to Greek historian Thucydides, the most likely outcome is war. As rapidly ascending China challenges the accustomed predominance of the US, these two giants risk falling into a deadly trap. For China under Xi, it is an

open confrontation with the US. Whether it is the recent "spy balloon controversy" or the long-standing trade war that then US President Donald Trump escalated to a level beyond repair, it is all that Washington does go against Beijing's interest. And Xi, the new Communist apparatchik, ensures that his country people find an enemy in America. Forgetting the fact that it is the US that has made China great again. It all started from America's warm welcome to China to be a member at the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001. Then US President Bill Clinton and Chinese President Jiang Zemin thought the journey to be entirely a rejuvenating one. At



In this image provided by the FBI, FBI special agents assigned to the evidence response team process material recovered from the high altitude balloon recovered off the coast of South Carolina, on Feb 9, 2023, at the FBI laboratory in Quantico

least for the liberal theorists in the West, it was just the beginning of the end of one of the most powerful Communist regimes in Asia, and the heralding of a new era in the Middle Kingdom, with massive market reforms and the gradual transfer of power to the popularly elected representatives of the people. But then nothing happened as prophesied by the liberal pundits. China has remained the same old Communist fiefdom; however, it allowed the huge global market forces without changing the very backbone of the founding credentials of the

The emerging NWO is at best a disorder. Neither it is leading to a Multipolar World Order (MWO) nor is it reviving the old bipolarity wherein two ideological camps compete for its influence over the nations.

Unless Beijing moderates its globe-trotting ambitions and Washington agrees to share primacy in global platforms in general and in the Pacific in particular, both might head for a collision for sure. At the moment what the international community is witnessing is occasional cyber conflicts,

Defining NWO in inter-

national politics has both risks and opportunities. Xi's "permanent provocative thesis" (PPT) against the West, especially the US, may boomerang. Sooner or later, he will realise what China thinks today was practised in Europe centuries back. And America must have done it a few decades earlier. A propulsive narrative could be a good motivating force, but if it is accompanied by aggression and outright threat to its neighbours, it may cost China dear.

While dealing with the aggressive rise of China, the whole world is closely watching the reassertion of Russian Federation not only in Europe but also in the West Asian region. Vladimir Putin, a former KGB chief, has been in power in Moscow since 1999 except for four years when he functioned as the Prime Minister of the country by offering the post of the President to his proxy called Dimitry Medvedev. But everyone knows how, where and when Putin needs to control the levers of power in the country. His only aim is to bring back the glory of the Old Russian Empire.

Looking back, we find that the former USSR dwindled from the world stage as the "superpower" following the dissolution of the union. Indeed, it was a landmark historical saga that eventually led to the declaration of the End of History and the Last Man by Francis Fukuyama in 1992 and subsequently countered by Samuel P Huntington in his masterpiece called "The Clash of Civilization" and "the Remaking of the World Order" in 1996.

Today, the Russian Federation has a population of 142.24 million, the GDP of 4.365 trillion USD and is the biggest country in the world sharing borders with 14 nations, commanding tremendous power, influence and position in international politics. But Putin's war-mongering attitude and complete disrespect to the global liberal order is inviting challenges from the West and the US. However, former US Secretary of State and veteran US diplomat Henry Kissinger opines that the former superpower will remain influential for decades, notwithstanding its declining population and narrow economic base. But again, Kissinger argues that because of its vast size and lack of geographic defences, Russia suffers from an abiding perception of insecurity deeply rooted in

popularly known as Catherine the Great, who ruled Russia from 1762-1796 after the overthrow of her husband Peter III, echoed her empire's insecurity then. Her idiosyncratic fear is rightly reflected in her prophetic words: "I have no way to defend my borders, but to extend them." Therefore, Putin is also guided by such fears and he is in the mood to expand the territories of his country today. And his apprehension of the NATO encirclement of Russia is a fact. If Ukraine joins NATO today, the West would simply be 300 miles away from the capital city of Moscow. And in the process, Russia would be directly facing or confronting the huge NATO alliance led by the US. So, experts like Kissinger are suggesting that it would be better if Ukraine remains neutral and in this way, the border conflicts with Russia like that of today could be easily avoided. But then he gave no solution to Ukraine

how it could maintain its security as a neutral buffer state. Last August, the US Senate agreed in a unanimous vote to ratify the expansion of NATO to include Finland and Sweden. And to top this, Putin immediately warned both these countries and the West that the consequences of such a move could be perilous. US President Joe Biden then highlighted how Ukraine invasion backfired in Russia. To him, Putin's war move was a great miscalculation on his part. And Biden said: "He (Putin) is getting what he did not want. He wanted the Finlandization of NATO, but he is getting the NATOization of Finland, along with NATO." Since then the war front in Ukraine is becoming more complex, leading to engagement of more troops and ammunition both from NATO and from Russia. But it is very clear that this war has squeezed the Russian economy, further leaving the country

geopolitically and militarily weaker.

Therefore, the hope of Russia coming back to the superpower orbit is very thin if Russia continues to wage war. In the past, Russia twice pledged to respect the sovereignty of Ukraine. First, when Ukraine was given an independent seat at the UN after its break from the USSR, and second, under the Budapest Memorandum, when Ukraine acceded to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. But it did not matter to Putin when he justified invading Ukraine in the name of a "Peace Mission" simply to save the ethnic Russians in the Donbas region. Finally, it has led to a Third World War like situation as it involves all major global powers of the day.

The tectonic shifts in global politics run much deeper than what we have witnessed in the Russia-Ukraine conflict for now. NATO and the EU are ageing. The global liberal order under the US is fast losing its grip. China is fast trying to expand with full aggression. India is looking at every opportunity to place its strength and influence all around the world. The rule-based order that the UN is talking about is not appealing to many. Since the UN does not have a legal mandate to oblige its members, at times it fails to stop war mongers like Putin and authoritarian leaders like Xi. The road ahead is long and arduous. Anytime a conflict could be between China and the US. Understanding the promises and perils behind this power competition is very difficult. And thus, what lies ahead is making the international community anxious. Either war or peace. The middle path is fast missing. We are at risk.

(The writer is the Head of the Department of Arts and Humanities at Geeta University,

The big question is: Can China and America escape the 'Thucydides **Trap'? Probably** not. When a rising power tries to replace a ruling power, according to **Greek historian** Thucydides, the most likely outcome is war. As rapidly ascending China challenges the accustomed predominance of the US, these two giants risk falling into a deadly trap



MAKHAN SAIKIA

PERSPECTIVE •

Holistic growth impetus to MSMEs in Budget

The rise in budgetary allocation for mote cashless transactions in the economy along with the easing of revised estimate of last year to ₹22,137.95 crore (up by more than 40 per cent) in the first Union Budget of "Amrit Kaal" for the fiscal year 2023-24 is a prominent feature of the Budget. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman highlighted that Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) sector is the growth engine of our economy and announced a slew of measures for them.

The salient point of the Budget is the revamping of the "Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises" (CGTMSE) scheme with the injection of ₹9,000 crore into the corpus, from April 1, 2023. Furthermore, the scheme would enable collateral-free loans of ₹2 lakh crore (additional amount) with a reduction in the cost of credit by 1 per cent. It seems to be a great step for funddeprived MSMEs that aim at improving loan availability and opening the way for the country to boost entrepreneurship. However, the interest rate under the CGTMSE scheme is quite high ranging from 14-18 per cent that requires it to be lifted in order to maximise the use of the fund.

Further, the Budget has also announced some tax relief measures for MSMEs. To qualify for the presumptive taxation system, the Minister recommended an extension of the turnover range for small businesses from ₹2 crore to ₹3 crore and specified professionals from ₹50 lakh to ₹75 lakh. Under this regime, small firms and professionals are not bound to maintain books of account or get them audited, which saves them time on tax filings.

However, this option is conditional on the aggregate amount received in cash throughout the year not exceeding 5 per cent of total gross receipts or turnovers. This approach will also proprocesses

In addition, the "Vivad Se Vishwas scheme is another feature that attempts to help MSMEs struggling in the aftermath of Covid-19. MSME suppliers who were unable to complete contracts due to the Covid epidemic will be reimbursed 95 per cent of their forfeited funds by the Government and Government undertakings with whom they were working. Besides, to encourage prompt payments to micro and small firms, it is recommended that payments made to such businesses be included within the scope of Section 43B of the IT Act.

Accordingly, a new clause (h) is oposed to be added in Section 43B of the Act. It stipulates that any money payable by the assesses to an MSME firm outside the time restriction prescribed in Section 15 of the MSMED Act 2006 shall be permitted as a deduction only on actual payment. This move implies that buyers cannot claim a deduction unless they first pay MSMEs. It will compel buyers to pay the bills on time, thus a pivotal initiative to deal with the delay in payments made to MSMEs.

The Budget 2023-24 has also proposed setting up an "Entity DigiLocker". This initiative is taken to encourage further innovation in fintech services such as the storage and sharing of documents online with regulators, lenders, and other businesses when required. This will decrease paper-based works and fasten credit access. The digital ecosystem through the "Unified Skill India Digital" platform would be launched for upskilling of youngsters. The portal will concentrate on three major aspects viz. facilitating demand-based skilling, collaboration with MSME employers, and enabling access to entrepreneurial programmes. On top of that, for the first time an aid plan called "the PM Vishwakarma Kaushal Samman" (as PM VIKAS) has been conceptualised for the traditional crafts people and artisans.

This scheme will help in addressing the scale of products with quality and reachability by collaborating with the value chain of MSMEs.

The FM's speech echoed, "We envision a prosperous and inclusive India in which the fruits of development reach all regions and citizens, especially our youth, women, farmers, OBCs, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes." Though not a single provision in the Budget has a direct effect on the women MSMEs, the PM VIKAS scheme may have an indirect effect on women as they constitute a significant proportion of the traditional sector.

Empirical research supports the concept that MSMEs have the most significant potential to reduce poverty and provide disadvantaged people with sustainable employment and inclusive development because it does not require a highly skilled workforce. With the new classification using turnover criteria, new larger units are clubbed into the micro sector, further weakening the Government's attention for tiny businesses. Researchers believe that this expansion only allows larger entities to fall inside the MSMEs scope and reap benefits. It is nothing but the corporatisation of informal enterprises. The need of the hour is guaranteed inclusive development with formalisation, interlinkages with institutions, facilitations, deal with demand side barriers and large-scale surveys on these enterprises in the endemic periods.

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PRATAP MOHANTY



SHRUTI SHUVAM

Widening gap in poll pledges and delivery

It is unfortunate that the AAP Govt infatuated with its so-called development propaganda has turned a blind eye to developmental work in unauthorised colonies



segments in the federal Union. The party's proposed focus on the promotion of education and health, besides extending the bare requirements to Delhiites, namely water and electricity, heralded a new hope of citizen-centric administration.

tion — the Aam Aadmi Party —

in Delhi in November 2012 from

anti-corruption movement that

gradually spread across other

Getting wide support across communities and "isms", the AAP emerged victorious thrice in succession at the hustings in Delhi leaving an impression that the party has filled in the void after

the downfall of the Congress. Further the AAP also gained wide sympathy as it played victimisation card well by peddling a narrative that its hands have been tied by the regular interference of the Lieutenant Governor on BJP-ruled Centre's instruction. People started believing in it and even at times sympathised with Kejriwal that the Centre was not letting his Government unroll development projects in the Capital city.

However, with the passing of time, Delhiites' patience started

running out as they noticed that things hardly moved in the expected direction, save a few cosmetic alterations in school and hospital buildings that completely belied and shattered the popular optimism into disappointments and the messiah image of the ashes of the 2011 Indian the leadership started diminishsoon caught popular currency to ing. Muslims, who had left the Congress and voted for the AAP, in hope of their areas getting attention from government agencies, were left dejected.

And some of the AAP policies, including Kejriwal's deafening silence on Delhi riots, anti-CAA movements and targeting of Tablighi Jamaat for spike in Covid-19 cases by calling the "Markaz Masjid" cases in the city Government's health bulletins, raised many eyebrows.

The electoral losses the AAP suffered in Muslim majority MCD constituencies are an eveopener that the party needs honest retreat to its promised agenda at its formation and not to take refuge in gimmicky assurances and publicity.

It is unfortunate that the AAP administration infatuated with its so-called development propaganda has completely turned a blind eye to developmental work in Muslim-dominated Okhla and other areas. To understand this, the CM or his MLAs should undertake a random visit to personally see the



conditions of sanity and hygiene in Dalit and Muslim localities such as Ghaffar Manzil or Johri

Farm in Jamia Nagar. Inordinate delay in paving dug-up roads for sewer work has caused hardship to residents with open manholes and sewer water sipping into drinking pipes leading to rise in diarrhea cases in the locality. Worst of all, several complaints by residents have failed to move the local representatives into action with daily cases of elderly, children and women falling. Waterlogged streets are a common sight in such colonies with residents compelled to reside in hell-like situations despite paying taxes.

A Government in a democratic culture that fails to honour its own commitments in attending to the bare needs of the citizenry, presenting trifling alibi, is nothing but a chimera.

It was expected that the AAP will ensure a people-oriented administration, a healthy and development focused governance, a non-partisan and fair patronage, but the way things seem to be moving only suggest that the party is cannibalising on the very notions that it professed to adhere, promote and sustain.

(The writer is a former Director of UGC-Human Resource Development Centre, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi)

























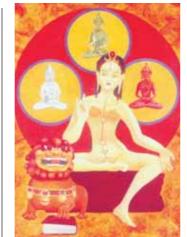




ARIES March 21-April 19

Excellent health news is on its way. You are now in a better position and have more control over your surroundings. Any efforts you make to improve your health this week will be successful. The only thing you need to do is investigate alternate techniques of coping with health difficulties for long-term advantages. You'll be happy with your job since a raise or promotion will bring you more money. This is due to your dedication to reaching your goals. Those seeking a job may find it. In terms of love, you know exactly what you want from your relationship. This is a good sign, but how you interact with your partner will be crucial. Channel your energy in a way that will allow you to better control your emotions.

Lucky number 18 Lucky colour White Lucky day Wednesday



LEO July 23-Aug 22

Your self-esteem and self-awareness of what is going on within you will help you strive toward liking yourself. This will allow you to really cherish your inner essence. When you perceive yourself positively, it will reflect in the behaviour of others, and they will respond positively to your personal sense of value. On the professional front, you may lack the expertise required for your current position or enterprise. Your easy-going and casual approach is unsuitable, and you may lose your dream project as a result This week is jam-packed with love and romance, and you'll adore every minute of it. You will receive pleasant messages from loved ones in the coming days. Some of you may get married or get engaged. Singles should celebrate because love is in the air and you have chosen to follow your heart.

Lucky number 20 Lucky colour Green Lucky day Sunday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

You are about to enjoy a relaxing and fulfilling phase in which you will appreciate nature's bounty and blessings. You will be in excellent health, and your own mindset will provide you the most happiness in life. Professionally, you must use caution in your field of employment. You must be kind toward your co-workers and those who provide positive energy to the office. Your kind and forgiving demeanour will create a secure and trustworthy environment in which you may gradually persuade others. Therefore, you will triumph over all challenges and win the scenario. Relationships may be less rewarding this week. You may be irritated by your partner's rapid mood swings. Someone who doesn't want your relationship to succeed might be envious. The most useful solution will be meditation or yoga.

Lucky number 14 Lucky colour Parrot Green Lucky day Saturday



TAURUS April 20-May 20

You must establish a balance between your personal and professional obligations this week. This will make your life more difficult, so be patient. Make time for yourself to heal during the stress. Prioritize your tasks to avoid sickness. Workplace stress and anxiety are likely to have an impact on you. Worrying about your career's future will prevent you from achieving your objectives. Do not quit up and instead employ a flexible approach to dealing with a challenging situation. Those who are committed to their partner are more likely to get unhappy in some scenario or with their partner. If this is the case, you must seek a solution within yourself. Do not let the pain of the past destroy your relationship. Appreciate the love you have in your life; else, it will fade.

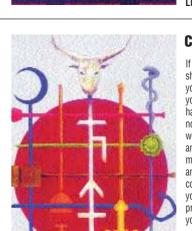
Lucky number 13 Lucky colour Brown Lucky day Saturday



VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

Your physical health this week is directly connected to your mental state since you are naturally sensitive and emotional. Minor emotional upheavals might have a harmful influence on one's health. Do not be scared to seek medical attention. Among other things, you may attempt psychic healing, Tarot reading, acupressure, or the art of living. A potion or liquid medication is a better option. Emotions and sentiments will drive your career this week You are determined and capable of leadership, but you may need emotional support to reach your objectives. Your love life has been unsatisfactory, and you may be feeling discouraged and lonely. Try not to be possessive. Married couples may separate. You must let go of the past, be forgiving, and patient with your partner.

Lucky number 17 Lucky colour Sky Blue Lucky day Tuesday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

If you believe that something is wrong with your body, you should seek medical attention. Instead of panicking, trust your instincts and look for alternate options. Be patient while you await the results. Maintain a nutritious diet, relaxing habit, and exercise regimen. Things in your profession may not go as planned. Some of you may face challenges when working on a project. You should take some time off work and avoid making any significant choices this week. In the middle of the turmoil, you must keep your calm. Look for another job if you can't keep your calm. Those that are committed must focus on their future connection. Change your old attitude about an ongoing issue. To fix the problems, attempt to openly discuss your intentions with your spouse. Think twice before rekindling an old flame.

Lucky number 12 Lucky colour Grey **Lucky day** Wednesday



GEMINI May 21-June 20

This week, it is best to avoid hostility and hasty work. Instead, direct your energies toward productive and creative endeavours. Work overload may be exhausting, so relax. Those with health issues are more likely to recover rapidly. Maintain a moderate and balanced thinking to avoid sickness. In your job, your creative side will emerge clearly. You will have feelings that you may or may not share with others. Some of you could start a new creative endeavour or sign up for an art or dance class. In the following days, new opportunities may present themselves, allowing your abilities to grow. You are likely to have some challenges in your love life because of your professional commitments. Make time for your loved ones: otherwise, the distance will irritate them and may lead to separation.

Lucky number 5 Lucky colour Orange **Lucky day** Tuesday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

Your body, mind, and spirit will be in perfect harmony this week. Positive ideas and aura will flood your inner being, and you will wield great power. Females will feel strongly drawn to femininity. Spending quality time with your partner or exploring new creative endeavours will revitalize you. This week may provide more options for folks looking for projects in other places. You will most likely accomplish a pending assignment. Work-related travel is expected. Some of you may be honored for your achievements. You will have a good time celebrating and succeeding. In terms of relationships, your long-term benefits strategy will prepare the way for a solid relationship foundation. Issues and disagreements may arise, but you may still win your partner's heart.

Lucky number 23 Lucky colour Turquoise Lucky day Monday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

Your health will improve, and your efforts will most likely yield fruit. You have total control over the events around you; thus, you should use this to your advantage and seek alternative techniques to dealing with health-related issues. The most essential variables will be how you present yourself and behave yourself at work. Conflict and disagreement among peers are indicated. This will be stressful. Disparity is quite likely in your company. However, be assured that you are not the root of the problem. Instead of selecting fights, choose your battles wisely. This week will feel like a full circle in your connection. As a result, it may lead to a marriage, and it may give closure for some. Singles have a good possibility of meeting someone special.

Lucky number 22 Lucky colour Yellow Lucky day Thursday



CANCER June 21-July 22

You will have abundant energy and superb health this week. Your love for life will motivate and drive you to achieve more and better things in life. You are wellknown for your high degree of energy and practicality. It is advantageous to redirect this energy towards productive and positive endeavours. On the professiona front, you must be upbeat and dynamic while avoiding rash decisions. Your enthusiasm will astound others around you but be patient with your temper or you will irritate others. Conflicts with co-workers are likely. You will be able to get control of the situation if you pay attention to your thinking. This week is likely to bring heartbreak in love. Separation or rejection is indicated. You could feel emotionally exhausted.

Lucky number 15 Lucky colour Pink Laucky day Friday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

Your hard work, aspirations, and desire will inspire you this week. As a result, your health is likely to suffer. Workload will exhaust you. When it comes to your health, be exceedingly cautious. A little carelessness may be hazardous. Keep colds, coughs, and water-borne diseases at bay. Your income will increase as your career progresses. You will almost certainly make a consistent living. Your pleasant demeanour and pleasant interactions with co-workers will give you an advantage at work. A promotion or wage increase is on the way. Financial security will instil trust in you. In your connections, you will gain self-awareness. Be wary; your partner's life is likely to include an adulterous affair or a medical emergency. Someone with similar expertise will assist you in getting out of this problem

Lucky number 6 Lucky colour Peach Lucky day Tuesday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20

When it comes to your health, you must pay attention to your emotions. There will be moments when you are unable to meet the challenges to your maximum potential. If you are sick, instead of feeling sorry for yourself, start educating yourself by interacting with professionals. Maintain a healthy way of living. This is a fantastic time for your career. Your contributions will be recognized, and some of you may be named. This can help you enhance your self-esteem while stopping you from getting arrogant. Your peers and elders will not allow any arrogance or pride. Those looking for a new employment should be pleased with the outcome. Those who are committed to one another will have a spiritual encounter. You will engage spiritually with your partner, which will strengthen your bond.

Lucky number 10 Lucky colour Indigo Lucky day Wednesday

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comprehensive look at the world in entirety would reveal that it is a unified organic whole, compulsively set into an inseparable and integrated dynamic mechanism. We are aware that the world has been on its incessant run. And, if such an exhaustive and complicated mechanism has been on its run for so long in an orderly way, simply implies that the system as such must be following a flawless intelligent design.

The cosmos, we are aware, is subject to a continued spell of creation and disintegration. In between, some of the existences stay for a while, before losing their forms. Yet, amidst these goings, nature maintains its balance. For, all the functionaries in the cosmos, up above in the cosmos have been strictly following the design parameters driving them, with no scope for making any digression. They have been moving in unison as co-travellers of a large collective existence almost in a giving mode, as if they would be conducting as one unified family. The beauty of this dispensation is that strictly following the laws of nature, they remain supportive to each other

without interfering in each other's domain. The fact that the cosmic players have been strictly following this very design is what holds the key to their orderly conduct and being in perfect harmony and balance with each other. And, together they extend sustained support to life mechanism on planet earth, a model aptly exhibited by the 'Solar family." The Sun together with other planets circling around it, remain in perfect harmony and balance. This, despite each of them following their respective paths at their exclusive speeds, and never encroaching in each other's domain. And, together they carry on their assigned functions dedicated to the larger existence, life on planet earth included. The prime reason: they do not digress from the rules they are set to follow. Now moving on to the planet earth, here again, all live existences but for human beings, are respectively bound by their pre-defined nature, primarily driven by their security and food concerns. They however, cannot, and do not anyway disturb the overall balance of nature. For, they live in their present moment, with no trace of

Lord Shiva – Existence Personified



fear for their future concerns, nor are they bothered any mental hang because of imprints of happenings in the past. They, therefore, do not have any urge for working overtime to encroach upon other's share of nature's

bounties to secure their future. Even if animals go for a kill, it is only when they are hungry. They will not go for their next kill till they do not become hungry again. So, even the killing on their part is again need-based, not

greed-driven. The biodiversity balance thus gets no way disturbed. We may be aware or not, but the animal world continues to play its part towards sustenance of the collective organism that the worldly order is.

The operative principle, however, takes a fresh turn with arrival of human beings on the centre-stage, as unlike other dynamic existences, they enjoy freedom to make choices. So is said: "God envies the man," because, all other dynamic existences in the universe, are bound by design parameters driving them, and with no scope for making any exception.

Naturally, with man enjoying the exclusive distinction of enjoying the freedom of making choices, could strike at will to effect changes in the self and the environment. The choice option exercised by human beings makes 'the sense of duality' imperative. Consequently, people may have varied perception about the same thing, thus creating ground for having contrarian views. The sense of duality makes a man as much vulnerable to misuse of freedom as his potential to apply it positively.

The issue continues......

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