

WORLD 5

NEPAL PM PRACHANDA  
DUMPS OLI

MONEY 6

FM DISCUSSES DEBT  
RESTRUCTURING WITH IMF, WB

SPORT 8

AUS TO FACE SA IN WOMEN'S  
T20 WC FINAL TODAY

NEW DELHI, SUNDAY FEBRUARY 26, 2023; PAGES 12 ₹4



sunday pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com



# India ready to aid Ukraine peace process, says Modi

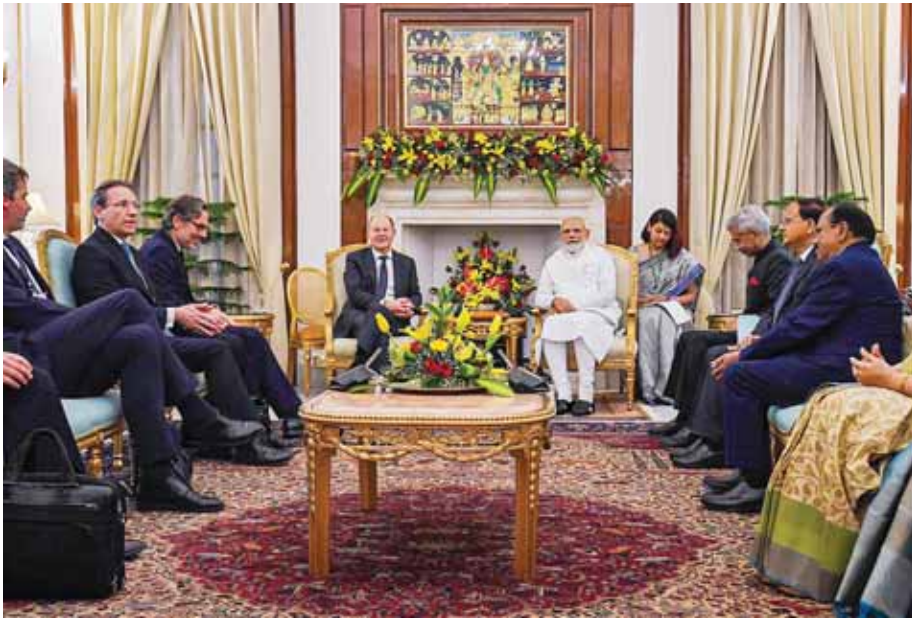
PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said India has all along called for dialogue and diplomacy to end the Ukraine conflict as the war and the corona pandemic have adversely impacted the developing world. He also said India is ready to contribute to any peace process.

Underlining these factors here after summit with visiting German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, Modi also said a joint effort by all is the need of the hour to overcome these challenges. India has stressed upon this during its G-20 presidency, he added.

Incidentally, both the leaders have met each other four times in the last one year. Modi and Scholz held bilateral talks in the Indonesian resort city of Bali on November 16 last year on the sidelines of the G20 summit.

The first meeting between the two leaders took place during Modi's visit to Berlin on May 2 last year for the sixth India-Germany Inter-Governmental Consultations (IGC). It was followed by Modi's visit to the Alpine castle of Schloss Elmau in southern Germany on June 26 and 27 to attend the annual summit of the G7 grouping. Scholz invited Modi for the G7 summit under the German presidency.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a meeting with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz in New Delhi on Saturday

PTI

dency.

Making the country's position clear, the Prime Minister said right from the beginning of the conflict a year ago India has favoured dialogue and diplomacy. He also said India is ready to play a constructive role in restoring peace. The Prime Minister enunciated these points in a joint media interaction with the German Chancellor.

Describing the Russia-Ukraine conflict as a "major catastrophe" as it violated the

principle of not changing borders through the use of violence, Scholz said it is important for countries to state very clearly where they stand on the war at the United Nations.

The Chancellor pointed to immense losses in Ukraine, including the destruction of infrastructure and energy grids. He said, "But above all, it is a disaster, a catastrophe because we know this war violates a fundamental principle to which we had all agreed for such a long time, and that is that you

do not change borders through the use of violence."

While calling for upholding international law, Scholz said, "Thus, it is important that in the United Nations too, we time and again state very clearly where we stand on this subject matter." Scholz also noted that India held the G20 presidency at a "difficult point in time" and said he is confident "India will fully comply with what needs to be done in that regard".

Continued on Page 2

# 3rd Front will help BJP; Opp unity urgent: Cong

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
RAIPUR | NEW DELHI

Sending a political message to parties like the TMC, the AAP and the BRS for attempting a "Third Front" to take on the Modi juggernaut in the Lok Sabha polls in 2024, the Congress on Saturday said any such a move will only give great advantage to the Bharatiya Janata Party.

The Congress said it should go all out to identify, mobilise and align like-minded secular forces as well as include secular regional outfits as "There is an urgent need for a united Opposition to take on the NDA on common ideological grounds."

Despite being the Congress' partners in the United Progressive Alliance, the Trinamool Congress (TMC) and the BRS under Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao have been attempting to build a new front. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said his party is willing to forge a viable alternative by aligning with like-minded parties in order to get rid of the "anti-people" BJP Government in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, and is ready to make any sacrifice required to achieve the goal.

The Congress president's remarks assume significance as they come amid talk of forging Opposition unity.

The draft was prepared by



Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge with senior party leader Sonia Gandhi during the 85th Plenary Session of the Indian National Congress in Raipur on Saturday

PTI

the political affairs sub-group for the plenary and it is being headed by former Union minister M Veerappa Moily and former Maharashtra chief minister Ashok Chavan.

The draft political resolution said the party will prepare a vision document for 2024, following a largest-ever mass contact programme, which will encompass the issues of unemployment, eradication of poverty, inflation, women empowerment, job creation and national security.

"Unity of secular and socialist forces will be the hallmark of the future of the Congress party. The Congress

should go all out to identify, mobilise and align like-minded secular forces, the draft resolution said.

In the prevailing difficult circumstances, the Congress is the only party that can provide capable and decisive leadership to the country, Kharge asserted. From 2004 to 2014, the Congress-led alliance effectively served the people of the country, he added.

According to other clauses of the draft political resolution, the Congress promised that it will pass a new law to prevent and punish hate crimes. The draft resolution also talked about the "threat to

**CONG TO FIX 50% SEATS FOR WOMEN, YOUTH IN PARTY BODIES**

SEE P2

the judiciary". The judiciary is constantly threatened by direct and indirect measures which create apprehensions in their mind, it said.

Unfortunately, the Law Minister himself is leading the blatant attack on the judiciary, the draft resolution said, promising that the independence and integrity of the judiciary will be maintained and protected at all costs

Continued on Page 2

## IMF, US support India's push to regulate crypto

### India urges IMF, FSB to prepare technical paper

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
BENGALURU/DELHI

G-20 President India's push to regulate cryptocurrencies gained support from both the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the United States on Saturday as finance chiefs of the bloc wrapped up two-days of talks.

India requested the IMF and the Financial Stability Board (FSB) to prepare a technical paper on crypto assets, which could be used in formulating a coordinated and comprehensive policy to regulate them, an official press release said on Saturday.

The international organisations are expected to present their joint paper during the 4th Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors meeting in October 2023.

The discussions are further expected to build informed debate within the G20 meetings.



Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman addresses a press conference after the G20 Finance meetings under India's G20 Presidency, in Bengaluru on Saturday

PTI

These will lead to formulation of a coordinated and comprehensive policy approach, release said.

This will require a data-based and informed approach to the global challenges and opportunities of crypto assets, allowing G20 members to shape a coordinated and comprehensive policy response.

## 8 ISIS men convicted of Kanpur terror plot, NIA claims 'big shot in arm'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Friday said it got a "big shot in the arm" in its nationwide crackdown on international terror group ISIS, with a designated court in Lucknow convicting eight accused in the Kanpur conspiracy case of planning terrorist acts.

These ISIS operatives were arrested in the Kanpur conspiracy case in 2017 under various sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, the Arms Act and the Explosive Substances Act. "The quantum of punishment in the case will be pronounced by the NIA court on Monday," the NIA said in a statement.

The case against the eight accused was initially registered as FIR No 03/2017 dated March 8, 2017 at Police Station ATS, Lucknow, and re-registered by the NIA on March 14 that year. Subsequently, a chargesheet was filed by NIA against all the eight arrested accused on August 31, 2017.



According to the NIA spokesperson, investigations in the case had clearly shown that the accused were members of ISIS and had sworn "bayat" (allegiance) to the Islamic State and its leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. Atif Muzaffar was the group's emir (leader) and was influenced by the propaganda of Dr Zakir Naik.

He was found to be a frequent visitor to ISIS-related websites, from where he was downloading contents and videos and sharing it with others in his group.

Continued on Page 2

## HC stays Mayor's notice for Standing Committee repoll

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Saturday stayed the re-election for six members of the Standing Committee of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), which was scheduled for February 27.

Justice Gaurang Kanth, in a special hearing held on a court holiday, said prima facie it appeared that the Mayor, who was also the returning officer, is conducting the re-election on Monday without declaring results of the previous poll held on February 24 which is in violation of regulations.

The BJP welcomed the Delhi HC ruling and said this is a "step towards justice". Interacting with reporters, Delhi BJP working president Virendra Sachdeva said Mayor Shelly Oberoi had made a "wrong, immoral and unconstitutional announcement" on Friday to hold the election afresh while the AAP also welcomed the court order saying



it's a major victory for the party.

"As the Delhi HC has refused to declare Standing Committee results in favour of the BJP, the saffron party wanted the HC to declare unconstitutional results in the party's favour, but the court refused to do so," the AAP said.

In their plea BJP councillors Kamaljeet Sehrawat and Shikha Roy told the court that the Mayor's order was wrong because the elections have been completed successfully where the BJP and the AAP both won three seats each.

After considering the case, the court stayed the order and said it will now consider the matter on March 22.

Continued on Page 2

## Sonia retiring? 'Innings over' spurs speculation, Cong scotches rumour

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
RAIPUR/NEW DELHI

Former Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Saturday indicated to call it a day from active politics by stating that her "innings could conclude with the Bharat Jodo Yatra, a turning point for Congress," though the party later clarified that she was not referring to her retirement.

The 76-year-old leader, once the most powerful political figure in the country, made this statement while addressing party leaders on the second day of the Congress' 85th plenary session, in Raipur, Chhattisgarh. "Our victories in 2004 and 2009, along with the able leadership of Dr Manmohan Singh, gave me personal satisfaction. But what gratifies me most is that my innings could conclude with the Bharat Jodo Yatra, a turning point for Congress," Sonia said.

However, former Union minister and AICC in-charge for Chhattisgarh Kumari Selja said Sonia's speech was about

the conclusion of her innings as the party president.

"This is a challenging time for Congress and the country as a whole. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP have captured every institution. The BJP is fuelling the fire of hatred. It viciously targeted minorities, women, Dalits, and tribals. We must tackle the BJP regime with vigour, reach out to people and convey our message with clarity," Sonia added.

She also accused the Government of causing economic ruin by favouring a particular businessman.

Sonia said the Congress is not just a political party, it reflects the voices of people of all religions, castes and genders.

On the occasion, party President Mallikarjun Kharge too launched a scathing attack on the BJP saying there is a conspiracy by the ruling party at the Centre to disrupt the country's democracy. "But the Congress is trying to unite India," Kharge remarked before Sonia's speech.

## CAPSULE

### WOMAN PRINCIPAL SET ABLAZE IN MP SUCCUMBS

**Indore:** The woman principal of a college in Indore who was set ablaze by a former student on February 20 succumbed to injuries on Saturday.

### 2 WITH PLAN OF ARMS TRAINING IN PAK HELD

**New Delhi:** Two men allegedly planning to go to Pakistan for weapons training were arrested near Red Fort here, police said.

### AMIT SHAH, NITISH FACE-OFF IN BIHAR

**Patna:** Bihar's grand alliance as well as its rival, the BJP, swung into election mode Saturday, almost a year ahead of the Lok Sabha elections, as their leaders Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and Union Home Minister Amit Shah faced off in rival rallies in the politically important Hindi heartland. P2

## Union Min's convoy attacked by TMC workers in Bengal

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The convoy of Union Minister Nisith Pramanik was attacked on Saturday allegedly by Trinamool Congress supporters in Dinhat area of West Bengal's Cooch Behar district.

Pramanik was going to visit an injured party worker at Ambari in Coochbehar district, BJP sources said. The situation reached a pass when his security personnel had to put a helmet on his head to save him from a hail of stones, sources said, adding however that the Minister escaped unhurt. Pramanik is a local MP.

The police had to fire rear gas shells at the unruly crowd



Union Minister Nisith Pramanik's convoy under attack in Cooch Behar

PTI

even as the TMC and saffron workers engaged each other with brickbats, sticks and even hand bombs.

While the local police called it a minor skirmish, Pramanik said TMC workers

showing black flag attacked his convoy and damaged a car wondering if a Union Minister had no safety in Bengal the condition of common people was easily understandable.

Continued on Page 2

## RRR bags 4 awards at HCA

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Filmmaker SS Rajamouli's Telugu blockbuster "RRR" has lifted four trophies at the 2023 HCA Film Awards, including best international film and best action film.

At the award ceremony, organised by Hollywood Critics Association (HCA) and held at Beverly Wilshire in Los Angeles on Friday night, the film also took home the award for best stunts, while its Oscar-nominated track "Naatu Naatu" won the best original song trophy.

Rajamouli accepted the award for best stunts and in his speech, the filmmaker praised the film's team for putting their best foot forward.

"In the innumerable action shots in the whole film, there were hardly two to three shots where we used body doubles. The actors performed each and every stunt. They are wonderful guys. It is the combined effort of the whole team. I thank my whole team for this. We have put in 320 days of hard work to make this film, most



of which were taken by the stunts," the director said.

He said the recognition means a lot, not just to him, but to the Indian film industry.

"Hope, we have these wings to fly further. Lastly to my country itself, a land of

wonderful stories, Bharat. Mera Bharat mahaan. Jai Hind," Rajamouli said. "RRR" is a pre-Independence fictional story focusing on two real-life Indian revolutionaries in the 1920s — Alluri Sitarama Raju (Ram Charan) and Komaram Bheem (Jr NTR).



# Grand alliance, BJP switch to poll mode

Nitish, Shah face to face

PTI ■ PATNA/LAURIA/PURNEA

Bihar's ruling Mahagathbandhan (grand alliance) as well as its rival, the BJP, swung into election mode Saturday, almost a year ahead of the Lok Sabha elections, as their leaders Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and Union Home Minister Amit Shah faced off in rival rallies in the politically important Hindi heartland state.

JD(U) strongman Kumar on Saturday asserted that the BJP will be restricted to under 100 seats if all the opposition parties, including the Congress, fight the 2024 Lok Sabha polls unitedly.

While Union Home Minister Amit Shah, the BJP's principal strategist, told a rally and a conclave of farmers and



labourers that the doors were shut "for ever" for Kumar, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's return to power will be followed by the party winning assembly elections on its own.

This seemed to be an answer of sorts to Kumar's statement made earlier last month that he would die rather than join hands with the saffron party.

Kumar and his adversary turned ally Lalu Prasad, the RJD president, asserted at a rally Saturday in Purnea that



"ideology" brought them together and Mahagathbandhan will set the tone for the defeat of the seemingly invincible BJP in 2024 elections.

The chief minister claimed his only goal was to work for unifying the opposition to unseat the BJP from power. "The people of Bihar have taught them a lesson. There is an urgent need for opposition unity ahead of the 2024 elections to wipe out the BJP from the country."

"Seven parties have formed an alliance in Bihar. Similarly, all opposition parties in the country should come together

to oust the Narendra Modi-led government," he said.

Shah, however, mocked the tie up between RJD and JD(U) of Kumar, comparing it to "a mix of oil and water" wherein a blend was impossible notwithstanding "Prime Ministerial ambitions" of the Bihar CM that drove him "into the laps of Lalu and Sonia Gandhi".

He also alleged that Kumar has entered a clandestine agreement with Lalu Prasad that the latter's son Tejashwi Yadav, currently the Deputy CM, will be made the Chief Minister in return for the support received from the RJD for the JD(U) supremo's alleged Prime Ministerial ambitions.

A highlight of Mahagathbandhan rally in Purnea was the speech of Lalu Prasad, who spoke through video conferencing from Delhi where he is recuperating after a kidney transplant operation in Singapore.

## Govt releases ₹22.2 cr for treatment of 134 rare disease patients

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Health ministry has released ₹22.20 crore for 134 patients undergoing treatment for rare diseases at eight designated hospitals since the guidelines for providing financial aid to such patients were issued last August.

On May 19, the ministry increased the financial support from ₹20 lakh to ₹50 lakh for patients belonging to all categories of rare diseases, and on August 11 issued guidelines to grant financial aid to such patients under the National Policy for Rare Diseases, 2021. According to officials, the number of Centres of Excellence (CoEs) designated for treating those with rare diseases like Gaucher Disease, Tyrosinemia, Severe Combined Immunodeficiency (SCID) and others have also been increased from eight to eleven.

The 11 CoEs are AIIMS, New Delhi, Maulana Azad Medical College, New Delhi,

Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences, Lucknow, Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, Centre for DNA Fingerprinting and Diagnostics with Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences, King Edward Medical Hospital, Mumbai, Institute of Post-Graduate Medical Education and Research, Kolkata, Centre for Human Genetics with Indira Gandhi Hospital, Bengaluru, AIIMS Jodhpur and SAT Hospital, Kerala.

"Since the guidelines were issued, applications from patients seeking financial assistance have been received from eight CoEs of which Rs 22.20 crore have been released for the treatment," an official source told PTI.

The budget allocation for the financial year 2022-2023 for rare diseases was ₹ 25 crore. Rest of the 2.80 crore will soon be disbursed for the treatment of rare disease patients, the source said.

## 2-day chintan shivir on drugs quality regulations, enforcement begins

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A two-day "chintan shivir" will be organised in Hyderabad from Sunday with the aim to build trust and confidence in the quality of Indian drugs, cosmetics and medical devices in domestic and export markets.

Organised by the Union Health Ministry in collaboration with the Department of Pharmaceuticals, the meet holds significance against the backdrop of questions being raised about India-made drugs following instances of Global Pharma Healthcare recalling entire lots of eye drop linked to vision loss in the US and cough syrups made in the country being linked to children deaths in Gambia and Uzbekistan.

The chintan shivir on "Drugs: Quality Regulations and Enforcement" will be held on February 26 and 27 at Shanti Vanam in Hyderabad. The objective of the two-

day chintan shivir is to review processes and implementation of policies and programmes related to drugs quality and enforcement in the country.

The meeting will also recommend ways and means for facilitating ease of doing business by reviewing predictability, transparency and compliance to Indian drug standards, regulatory capacities across states.

Participants will also discuss global best practices, introduction of newer interventions such as digital tools, clinical trial standards and in-turn give an impetus to creating a multi-stakeholder approach for benefit of common citizens.

As part of the chintan shivir, five sessions on several aspects have been planned which include building trust and confidence on quality of drugs, cosmetics and medical devices in domestic and export markets and effective enforcement at the field level.

## Atiq Ahmed named in FIR after key witness in BSP MLA murder case shot dead in UP

PTI ■ PRAYAGRAJ

A day after the prime witness in the 2005 BSP MLA murder case was shot dead, the Uttar Pradesh Police on Saturday registered an FIR against several people, including former MP Atiq Ahmed.

Umesh Pal, the prime witness in the 2005 murder of Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) MLA Raju Pal, was shot dead outside his residence here, the police said.

Pal was cremated at the Dataganj ghat on Saturday, after a postmortem examination was conducted on his body.

One of his gunners, who too was hit in the firing, died later. The main accused in the Raju Pal murder case is mafia-turned-politician Atiq Ahmed, currently lodged in a Gujarat jail.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

I Dinesh Kumar Goel , S/o of Late Sh Tilak Chand Goel, R/o of 8/43, 2nd Floor, South Patel Nagar, New Delhi- 110008 have changed name of my minor daughter from YEASHIKA GOEL TO YASHIKA GOEL for all future purposes.

**Proclamation Under Order 5, Rule 20, CPC**  
In the Court of Gaurav Mahajan, Motor Accidents Claim Tribunal-II, Hamirpur, H.P.

**MACT No: Reg No 37 of 2021**  
Ajay Kumar Sharma S/o Pyare Lal Sharma R/o Village Manwin, P.O. Lagmanwin, Tehsil Bhoranji, District Hamirpur, H.P.

**Versus**  
Salim S/o Asgar R/o D-320, Ambekar Colony, Chhattarpur, New Delhi South DL-110074 (registered owner of vehicle No DL-3C BJ0687) (Resp No 3)

**.....Petitioner.**

**.....Respondent**  
Notice to:- Salim S/o Asgar R/o D-320, Ambekar Colony, Chhattarpur, New Delhi South DL-110074 (registered owner of vehicle No DL-3C BJ0687)

**PD(90280)A**

Whereas in the above noted case it has been proved to the satisfaction of the Court that above named respondent is avoiding service of summons and cannot be served in the ordinary way. Hence this proclamation is hereby issued against him to appear in this court on **06.03.2023 at 10A.M.** to defend the case personally or through an authorised agent or pleader failing which ex-parte proceedings will be taken against them.

Given under my hand and the seal of the Court this 20th day of February, 2023. Motor Accidents Claim Tribunal-II, Hamirpur, H.P.

**PD(90281)A**

**OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER, CONSTRUCTION WING, UTTARAKHAND PEYJAL NIGAM**  
E-32, JUDGE FARM, HALDWANI - DISTT.- NAINITAL (PIN 263139)

**E-Tender Notice**

Letter No.: 634/Nivida-Anubandh/Ranikhet/77 Date : 24-02-2023

1. Name of the work:- Construction of proposed Multipurpose Hall cum Guest House for Nagar Panchayat Dwarahat, Distt.-Almora.

2. Estimated Cost:- Rs. 130.77 Lakh (excluding G.S.T.)

3. Period of Completion:- 08 Months

4. Date and Time of availability of Bid documents in the portal: 25-02-2023 (17.00hrs)

5. Online Bid submission: End date :- 18-03-2023 (17.00 hrs)

6. Date & Time of Technical bid Opening :-21-03-2023 (11.00 hrs)

7. Name and Address of the Officer inviting bid:- General Manager (Kumaon), Nirman Wing, Uttarakhand Peyjal Nigam, Haldwani.

8. Pre-bid meeting details (If required) Date & Place:- 03-03-2023 (11.00 hrs) Project Manager Construction Unit Uttarakhand Peyjal Nigam, Ranikhet

9. For further details, details of subsequent Amendment / correction documentation etc. may be obtained from the e-Procurement portal [www.uktenders.gov.in](http://www.uktenders.gov.in)

**GENERAL MANAGER**

## Union Min's...

From Page 1

BJP state president Sukanta Majumdar said, "If a Central Minister's car is attacked in this manner, this only proves the dismal (law and order) situation of the State".

BJP spokesperson Samik Bhattacharya said the Governor should take note of the attack on the Central Minister's convoy and initiate steps for the imposition of Article 355 in the State. Responding to the allegation, TMC state general secretary Kunal Ghosh accused the Bengal BJP leadership of "instigating" its workers to disrupt the "peaceful" atmosphere of the State. "The BJP workers ransacked the TMC party office in Dinhat and attacked our workers. The people in that area are angry over the BSF's killing of a Rajbanshi youth last year. Pramanik is a minister of that department," he said.

Notably, Pramanik's convoy was attacked in November last year in the Sitai area of Cooch Behar, and at that time, the BJP had alleged that "goons associated with the TMC were involved" in the incident. The ruling party dubbed the charge as "baseless" at that time.



### CHANGE OF NAME

**I, Firoza Begum W/o Mohd Naseem, R/o. 8949, Naya Mohalla, Pul Bangash, Delhi-110006** have declared that my name has been wrongly mentioned in my Passport as **Feeroza and my correct name is Firoza Begum.**

**I, Deepanshu Arora, S/o. Sunder Lal, R/o. H no.9/2211, Gali no-10, Kailash Nagar, Gandhi Nagar, Delhi-110031,** have declared that my father name has been wrongly mentioned in my 10th and 12th Marksheet /Certificate as **Sunder Arora** instead of **Sunder Lal.**

**PD(90281)A**

## Harassed girl escapes exams

PNS ■ ALIGARH

A girl was harassed so much that she could not give her intermediate exams. A girl from a village in Tappal area of Aligarh district has accused a boy of her own village of harassing her.

She said that because of this she could not give the intermediate exam. The teenager made a video and tweeted and requested the police officers for help. She also said that if action is not taken, she will be forced to commit suicide. After the video went viral on social media, the police swung into action and traced the girl in the night itself. A case has been registered against the accused youth in the case.

## 8 ISIS men...

From Page 1

"All the eight accused had come together to propagate ISIS ideology and promote its activities in India. In pursuit of this objective, Mohammad Faisal, Gauss Mohammad Khan, Atif Muzaffar, Md. Danish, Md. Saifulla had explored land routes. They had visited several key cities across the country, including Kolkata, Sundarbans, Srinagar, Amritsar, Wagah Border, Barmir, Jaisalmer, Mumbai, and Kozhikode, for undertaking 'hijrah' (migration)," the agency said.

It said Gauss and Atif had, in fact, explored a route to cross over to Bangladesh via Sundarbans, as per the investigations.

Faisal, Atif and Saifulla had also travelled to Kashmir in March, 2016 in a bid to contact some terrorist groups there that could help them to cross over to Pakistan, from where they could migrate to ISIS-controlled territories in Syria. Another accused, Saifulla, was killed during exchange of fire with Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS), Uttar Pradesh.

A notebook seized from their Haji Colony (Lucknow) hideout was found to contain handwritten notes about potential targets and details about bomb making.

"Investigations had also led to the discovery of sever-

al photographs of the accused making IEDs and even with weapons, ammunition and ISIS flag," it said.

The group had reportedly collected illegal weapons and explosives from various places. One of the accused, Atif, had also disclosed that he had compiled information on techniques to fabricate IEDs after collecting materials from various internet sources.

Investigations had also revealed that Atif and three others, identified as Md. Danish, Syed Meer Hasan and Md. Saifulla, had been responsible for fabricating the IED that was planted in the Bhopal-Ujjain passenger train. The train explosion on March 7, 2017 had left 10 people injured. This case was also investigated by the NIA and is currently under trial.

The breakthrough in the ISIS-backed criminal conspiracy case came when the main accused, identified as Faisal, a resident of Kanpur Nagar, Uttar Pradesh, was arrested for his involvement in the Madhya Pradesh train explosion of March 7, 2017.

Disclosures made by him led to the arrest of two of his associates, Mohammad Khan and Azhar Khan on March 9.

**DISTRICT POLICE HEADQUARTERS KATHUA**  
E- mail: [spkathua@jpkpolice.gov.in](mailto:spkathua@jpkpolice.gov.in)  
Fax/ Phone No.: 01922-234010

**Hue And Cry Notice**  
**Rule No. 712/191**

SHO P/S Billawar has intimated that the accused namely Tufeer Ahmed S/O Taj Ahmed R/O Dadwara Tehsil Billawar is evading his arrest in Case FIR No. 21/2023 U/S 366 IPC of P/S Billawar, since the commission of crime.

During the investigation of said case, best efforts are made by concerned I/O to locate/arrest said accused person which has yielded no result and accused person is still at large.

As such, description roll/photograph of wanted accused is being circulated with the appeal that anybody having information about his whereabouts may inform us on below given Phone Numbers/E-mail ID. The identity of the informer will be kept secret and he will also be rewarded suitably. Anybody found providing shelter to the accused person or concealing his presence will also be booked.

**Description Roll:-**

Name	: Tufeer Ahmed
Parentage	: Tufeer Ahmed
Address	: Dadwara Tehsil Billawar District Kathua
Tehsil	: Billawar
District	: Kathua
Age	: 21 years
Height	: 05 Feet 07 Inches
Complexion	: Wheatish

**1. DPO, Kathua : 01922-234010 (Phone/Fax)**

**2. dpokathua@jpkpolice.gov.in (Mail ID)**

**3. PCR Kathua- 01922-234311(Phone/Fax)**

**4. SHO P/S Billawar- 01921-222022**

**PHOTOGRAPH**

**Sr. Superintendent of Police Kathua.**

**DIP/J-16066/22**

## HC stays reelection...

From Page 1

"This court prima facie finds that an election has been conducted though the result has not been declared yet. No purpose will be served by conducting a fresh election," said the court in its order. Justice Kanth issued a notice to the RO, the Delhi Government, Delhi Lieutenant Governor and the MCD.

The court has also accepted the argument raised in the petition filed

by BJP councillors, which had argued that the Delhi Municipal Corporation Act does not allow the Mayor to stop the results of the election from being declared, even though the Mayor acts as the returning officer.

"From perusal of regulation 51, it is nowhere reflected that Respondent no 4 (Mayor/Returning officer) has authority to declare an election of the standing committee as null and void," noted the judge, adding that it was "prima facie clear" that the election has been conducted and counting of votes has been done, even though the result has not been declared

so far. The court has further directed that all ballot papers, CCTV footage of the election and the House proceedings, and "all other related material" will be kept preserved for three months by the Municipal Secretary and the Mayor, in case the court may need to consider the evidence.

The counsel for the Mayor told the court that she had no other alternative but to declare the earlier poll as null and void as the process was vitiated due to the unruly behaviour of the members.

The lawyer also alleged the Mayor did not get adequate cooperation from the

member secretary and technical experts.

The MCD descended into another bout of chaos and brawling as councillors from the AAP and the BJP clashed on Friday evening over the process to vote members of the Standing Committee of the MCD. The violence marked the lowest point yet in a series of undignified and violent exchanges in the House over the past three weeks.

The ruckus forced adjournment of the MCD House proceedings till February 27 and the mayor said the election exercise would begin afresh as "ballot papers" and other key

documents were torn or lost in Friday's melee.

Both the BJP and the AAP blamed each other for the incident that forced the Mayor to adjourn the House. In a video, councillors from both parties were seen hurling water bottles and apples at each other inside the House, while in another, women councillors were seen hitting each other. Some BJP members also flashed posters with slogans such as "Tanashahi nahin chalegi" and a few councillors were seen with kurtas torn. Pankaj Luthra, a BJP councillor, alleged that it was AAP's fault that led to the chaos in the House.

## Congress to give 50% reservation to women, youth at all party positions

PTI ■ NAVA RAIPUR

The Congress carried out 85 amendments in its constitution at its 85th plenary session here on Saturday to provide a 50 per cent reservation to scheduled castes (SCs), scheduled tribes (STs), other backward classes (OBCs), women, youth and minorities in its working committee and at all party positions.

According to the amended constitution of the party, the Congress Working Committee (CWC) will now include former prime ministers from the party and former AICC chiefs, besides leaders of the Congress in both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha. The party decided to provide 50 per cent reservation to SCs/STs/OBCs/minorities vertically and provide horizontal reservation to youth below 50 years and women in both reserved and unreserved categories.

The number of CWC members will go up to 35 from the earlier 23, with 18 members to be elected and 17 to be nominated.

The amended constitution says from now on, the party will only have digital membership and records.

The party also amended its constitution to make stringent provisions for those taking Congress membership and they should abstain from taking intoxicating drugs and psychotropic substances.

Congress general secretary Randeep Surjewala said the party has added the words psychotropic substances and intoxicating drugs which includes alcohol, tobacco and other substances.

## 3rd...

From Page 1

"We once again look forward to forging a viable alternative by aligning with like-minded parties to defeat the anti-people and undemocratic BJP Government," Kharage said.

"We are ready to strive for the welfare of the people of our country and (will make) whatever sacrifices that are required," he said.

Kharage also said the goal for the upcoming State elections and the 2024 Lok Sabha polls is clear.

The draft resolution also alleged that free discussions and debate in Parliament and legislative Assemblies have been curtailed.

"Expunging the truth and suppressing the voices of the opposition is becoming the order of the day. This is a blatant subversion of Article 105 of the Constitution, which guarantees freedom of speech as a right for members of Parliament," the draft resolution said.

The declining time and quality of debate in Parliament shows how the BJP is undermining parliamentary democracy, it said.

# India...

From Page 1

"A very important question is securing the supply of food and energy. We have to make sure that countries in Asia, Africa and America are not too strongly and negatively impacted by the terrible war of aggression that Russia started against Ukraine and that the impact is not too negative for them," the German leader said.

Modi said, "Increasing cooperation between the two largest democratic economies of the world is not only beneficial for the people of both the countries, it also sends a positive message in today's tension-ridden world."

New Delhi has, so far, refrained from voting against Russia in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) on the conflict issue. In fact, India abstained from voting on a resolution in the UNGA on Thursday. However, Modi in September last year told Russian President Vladimir Putin that "today's era is not of war".

Modi said India and Germany

also agreed to ushering in changes in multilateral institutions keeping in view the contemporary global realities. The Prime Minister said changes are also needed in the UNSC and India's active participation in G-4 in this regard is a pointer towards it.

The G4 comprises India, Brazil, Japan, and Germany and all of them are strong contenders for permanent membership of the UN Security Council.

As regards discussions on bilateral issues, Modi said more robust defence and security cooperation can emerge as strong pillars in enhancing strategic partnership. Both the leaders agreed to make joint efforts to realise full potential in these sectors. Both the leaders also called for more close ties between the two countries to fight the scourge of terrorism, Modi said adding India and Germany are on the same page on the issue of cross-border terrorism and favoured firm action to meet this challenge.

Regarding trade and commerce, Modi urged Germany, India's largest trade partner in Europe, to take advantage of opportunities opened up by the "Make in India" and "Self-reliant India" initiatives. The migration and mobility partnership agree-

ment signed by the two sides last December will further deepen the relationship, he said.

Scholz too lauded the migration pact as a model agreement for what can be achieved at the global level, and said, "Many skilled workers and qualified personnel from India have seized the opportunity. The agreement will help Germany address challenges in key areas such as research and development, IT and software with skilled personnel from India."

Scholz also said 1,800 German companies active in India have created tens of thousands of jobs and said he expects the number to go up massively. Germany is also keen on deepening trade relations between the European Union (EU) and India and wants negotiations on free trade and investment protection agreements to be speedily concluded. "I personally will make sure that this does not drag on," he said.

Scholz said fighting climate change - "the central topic for the future of mankind" - also figured in his talks with Modi that the two sides need to expand cooperation under their green and sustainable development partnership in areas such as solar, power, biomass, and green hydrogen.



# ‘Step towards justice’: BJP terms HC ruling

## Standing Committee members’ re-election stayed

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi BJP on Saturday welcomed the Delhi High Court ruling putting a stay on the re-election for six members of the Standing Committee of the MCD that was scheduled for February 27, and said this was a “step towards justice”.

Interacting with reporters, Delhi BJP working president Vinendra Sachdeva said Mayor Shelly Oberoi had made a “wrong, immoral and unconstitutional announcement” on Friday to hold the election afresh. “Now, the high court has put a stay on this unconstitutional move. And, this is a good decision, a decision that will sustain democracy.”

We welcome this stay. Truth will triumph and whatever result will eventually come out of it... We feel that the results of the technical experts in the election for the members of the Standing Committee



will hold good,” he said. Kamaljeet Sehrawat, BJP councillor and one of three candidates from the saffron party in the election, said the court’s stay means that “our demands were valid”. The hearing went for one hour and 35 minutes, and the other party’s counsel was asked what right the mayor has in announcing a fresh election for the standing committee’s members without finality on the election already held on Friday.

So, this is a step towards justice,” she told reporters. Sehrawat, a senior BJP leader and a former mayor of south

Delhi, said the entire election process went smoothly and counting was also done without any disturbance, then on what grounds a fresh election was announced, without completion of the poll already conducted. BJP councillor Shikha Rai alleged that Mayor Shelly Oberoi was behaving like a “dictator” on Friday and not announcing the results, despite the technical experts having submitted the documents on it. “On February 22 also, she had held councillors captive in the House by stretching the proceedings overnight and till next morning,” Rai alleged.

Earlier in the day, addressing a press conference, Sachdeva had alleged that the re-election for members of the MCD panel, called by the mayor on Monday, was “undemocratic and unconstitutional”. During the media interaction, Sachdeva also alleged that many AAP councillors “misbehaved with his party members” and “inappropriate language” was used and some of the BJP’s women councillors were “touched inappropriately”.

Later in the day, the Delhi High Court stayed the re-election for six members of the Standing Committee of the MCD, on two pleas. Justice Gaurang Kanth, in a special hearing held on a court holiday, said prima facie it appeared that the mayor, who was also the returning officer, is conducting the re-election on Monday without declaring results of the previous poll held on February 24 which is in violation of regulations.

# Victory for AAP, ruling not in BJP’s favour: Shelly, Atishi

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEWDELHI

Terming the Delhi High Court ruling to stay the re-election of the six members of the Standing Committee of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) that was scheduled to happen on February 27th it as a “victory” for the party, AAP leader and Mayor Shelly Oberai and Atishi said that Delhi High Court has refused to declare Standing Committee results in favour of BJP.

“The BJP wanted the High Court to declare unconstitutional results in the party’s favour, but the court refused to do so,” they said.

“I consider this decision a win; a stay on the re-election is a victory for us because



everyone has seen how the counting procedure was not allowed to be carried out properly; how BJP councillors rushed towards me and attacked me,” Oberoi said. She was present in the high court during the hearing.

The Mayor said that the court proceedings were in the party’s favour as “they pave the way for another possible hear-

ing on the matter in the HC following which I’m sure we will see justice prevail in the end”.

She further said that everyone saw how the BJP councillors in a planned manner staged a personal attack on her and the AAP councillors just before the results for the Standing Committee were to be declared on Friday. She added that the videos of the incident that happened on Friday are there in public domain and for everyone to see, and elaborated that the BJP councillors came onto the stage to fatally attack her and that she was forced to run out from the House to save her life.

She termed the incident as “shameful for the whole country” and said that she was

hopeful that as this case is further heard in the High Court, the truth of the matter will be there for everyone to see.

AAP leader and MLA Ms Atishi also said that the court order was a victory for the party as the BJP was hoping that the HC would endorse an illegal demand of the party regarding the counting of votes, but the court refused to accept their unconstitutional and illegal demand. She further said that BJP had approached the HC with the desire that the court accept their demand but this did not happen.

The court eventually said that it will examine the matter and see what powers the Constitution of India gives to the Mayor and the Municipal Secretary.

# DU represents India in all its richness, diversity: Prez

## Murmu gives awards to top 7 students of DU at university’s 99th convocation

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday said Delhi University represents India in all its richness and diversity, adding that there was a bit of the institution in every area of excellence in the country and abroad.

Speaking at the university’s 99th convocation, Murmu noted that the number of girls receiving awards at the function was more than boys this year which depicts the picture of a ‘developed India’. A total

of 170 students, including 51 boys and 119 girls, were awarded medals and prizes at the function. Digital degrees to 1,57,290 undergraduate and postgraduate students were awarded on this occasion, which include 54.7 per cent girls and 45.3 per cent boys.

“The University of Delhi represents India in all its richness and diversity, and it can be said that there is a bit of the varsity in every area of excellence in India and abroad.

The list of illustrious alumni of the university is really long and formidable,” the President noted. She also handed over awards to top seven students of the university. “It is a matter of pride that three of the awardees are physically challenged. This is the result of their strength and hardwork. I want to convey special congratulations to



President Droupadi Murmu at the 99th Annual Convocation of the University of Delhi, in New Delhi, on Saturday. Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan is also seen PTI Photo

them,” she said. “I know that 52 per cent are females who have taken admission to undergraduate (UG) courses at Delhi University. I am also happy that

the females outnumbered men in receiving awards in today’s programme. This change depicts the picture of developed India,” Murmu said. She urged

the younger generation to take forward the good of their previous generation and work on the contemporary challenges. “Due to consumerism and development, the challenges of pollution, climate change and lifestyle diseases are taking a more formidable form.

The convocation ceremony was also attended by Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan. Delhi University Vice Chancellor Prof Yogesh Singh presided over the event.

Referring to the glorious history of the varsity, Murmu said students of Delhi University had actively participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930. “During the Quit India Movement of 1942, many students of the university revolted against the British Raj and

went to jail,” she said. In her address, the president also said that India has been a country which has adopted new and in-depth ideas. “The thoughts of Vedas and Upanishads, Lord Mahavira and Buddha are still alive in our country. From Silicon Valley to Sydney, Indians have carved a respectable place for themselves at workplaces all over the world,” she said. Degrees were also awarded to 47 students of DM/MCh in the medical field on the occasion.

As many as 910 students were awarded PhD degrees. This figure for PhD degrees is the highest ever in the history of the university, officials said. Speaking on the occasion, Vice Chancellor Singh said Delhi University is one of the few varsities which conduct the convocation every year.

# Vietnam’s Nguyen gets PhD in Buddhist Studies

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

At the age of 14, Nguyen Thi Thanh in Vietnam was overcome with “profound sadness” and set out on a quest for inner peace which led her to a Buddhist monastery. After 22 years, she has travelled to several countries, is fluent in seven languages and has completed PhD in Buddhist Studies from Delhi University (DU).

Nguyen (36) was among the 910 scholars who were awarded PhDs at the Delhi University convocation on Saturday. Amid young women dressed in Indian attires, Nguyen stood out in a grey robe and a shaved head. “I left home in Vietnam at 14 because I felt profound sadness for no

reason. My mother and grandmother cried for three months after I decided to become a nun. Gradually, they came to terms with it. I went to a monastery where I learnt about Buddhism,” said Nguyen, who also left behind four siblings.

Away from home, Nguyen continued her studies and graduated in Buddhist Studies before she started travelling to different countries, including Taiwan. “I stayed in Taiwan for a year.

Then I decided to pursue MA in Buddhist Studies at Delhi University,” said Nguyen, who came to India in 2017. “I topped in MA and received a gold medal. Then I decided to pursue PhD in Buddhist Studies,” she said.

# Anti-encroachment drive Mosque, temple’s extension razed

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A mosque and a temple were demolished in ITO, New Delhi by the Public Works Department (PWD) as part of an anti-encroachment drive on the orders of the High Court, to ensure the right of way. A large number of police personnel have been deployed in the area to maintain law and order situation.

Saturday’s development comes after the Delhi High Court on Thursday directed the PWD to carry out work to make a pedestrian pathway at “Jheel ka Piao” on Mathura Road, ITO, even if it called for demolishing a portion of the temple and the mosque.

Before carrying out the action of encroachment in Delhi’s ITO, the Central Public Works Department had also issued a notice to the concerned parties. Not only this, the PWD department had also put up hoardings a few days ago to remove the encroachment.

In order issued in the name of necessary information, it is clearly written on the board of PWD that this land belongs to the Central Public Works Department. Any encroach-

ment on this is a punishable offence. This information is being issued by the Executive Engineer of PWD.

Earlier, Lt Governor VK Saxena cleared the proposal to remove nine “unauthorised” religious structures along the upcoming Delhi-Saharanpur



Expressway after the file approving their demolition was sent to him by the Delhi government.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Monday appealed to Saxena to prevent the demolition of religious structures for different infrastructure projects, saying these buildings were 40-90 years old and there were police reports that such an action could trigger a law-and-order situation.

# Places of worship cannot encroach public land: HC

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Allowing the demolition of portions of a temple and a mosque abutting a public pathway, the Delhi High Court has said places of worship cannot encroach public land and hin-

der development activities for the larger segment of public. The Public Works Department (PWD) said the width of the footpath in front of the two religious premises was insufficient for a pedestrian pathway which has to have a space of six metres.

The caretakers and bearers of the temple — Sanatan Dharam Mandir / Prachin Shiv Mandir, situated at Jheel ka Piao, Opposite Link House, Mathura Road, ITO — had moved the high court last year against a letter issued in October 2022 regarding alleged encroachment by it on PWD’s “right of way”.

Subsequently, the Delhi Waqf Board was also made a party to the petition after the court was informed that a mosque was also being run adjacent to the temple. The court said the PWD ought to be permitted to make the pedestrian path uniform and not inconvenience the pedestrians on the busy stretch of the road.

Since the wall of both the temple and the mosque about the pedestrian pathway, the walls would be required to be demolished and the pathway shall now be made uniform, it said. “This court is of the view that the larger public interest would outweigh the concerns raised by both the places of worship i.e., the Mandir as also the Masjid.

There is no gainsaying that places of worship cannot be encroaching public land and hindering developmental activities meant for the larger segment of the public,” said Justice Prathiba M Singh in a recent

order.

“In order to make the said pedestrian pathway uniform and so as to not inconvenience the pedestrians on the said busy stretch of the road which also has access to the Delhi Metro station, this Court is of the opinion that the PWD ought to be permitted to make the pedestrian pathway uniform. For the said purpose, if some portion of the Mandir/Masjid is to be broken/demolished, the same would have to be permitted by the Court,” it added.

The court said the PWD executive engineer concerned would confer with the caretakers of both the places of worship and arrive at a consensus as to the time and date for demolition exercise.

It added if any fresh construction is required to secure the area of two religious places, the cost will be borne by the PWD and their occupants will not be treated as unauthorised occupants and no penalties and/or damages would be liable to be levied against them.

The counsel for the two religious places submitted there was no encroachment and a pedestrian pathway existed in front of their premises.

# 2-day flower fest attracts visitors



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Lt Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena on Saturday visited Palaash-two day flower festival at Swarn Jayanti Park, Rohini. While appreciating the flora put on display, Saxena said that along with others, this festival was another step towards in making Delhi-a City of Flowers. The Palaash festival is organised by the Delhi Development Authority (DDA). DDA vice chairman Subhasish Panda along with officials were also present during the visit.

Palaash is also known as the “Flame of the forest” because of its bright and invigorating fire-like blossoms and the flower has many dimensions to itself. The Goddess of knowledge, creativity and music, Devi Saraswati, is fond of Palaash flowers. The festival has a goal towards a cleaner

# Sisodia to appear before CBI in excise probe today

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has prepared an exhaustive set of questions for Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia who is likely to appear for questioning before investigators in connection with the Excise policy case probe on Sunday amid apprehensions of his arrest.

Sisodia, was originally summoned last Sunday but he sought deferment of his questioning citing the ongoing Budget exercise, following which, the CBI had asked him to appear on February 26. Sisodia has expressed apprehensions that agencies might arrest him.

“They are using the CBI to take revenge and I am sure they will do that by getting me arrested,” he charged.

The Aam Admi Party leader was earlier examined for a day on October 17 last year, nearly a month before the central probe agency had filed its charge sheet against seven people, including middlemen and liquor traders, in which Sisodia was not listed as accused, but the agency had kept the probe into his alleged role open.

# 2 planning to go to Pak for weapons training arrested

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Two people allegedly planning to go to Pakistan for weapons training were arrested near Red Fort. According to police, the accused, identified as 21-year-old Khalid Mubarak Khan, a resident of Maharashtra, and 26-year-old Abdullah alias Abdur Rehman, a resident of Tamil Nadu, were radicalised over the social media by a Pak-based handler.

The two men were getting directions from their handler on ways to illegally cross the



border. Two pistols with 10 live cartridges, a knife, and a wire cutter were recovered from their possession, a senior police officer said. The Special Cell of Delhi Police made the arrests responding to an input



that some people were being radicalised by Pak-based handlers over social media and were given directions to receive weapons training in Pakistan before executing terror attacks in India, the officer said.

# 4 killed after truck overturns on them

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Four people, including a four-year-old boy, who was playing on the road, were killed and at least one person was injured after a speeding Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) truck overturned and fell on them at Main Rohtak Road in Anand Parbat in central Delhi early Saturday.

Police received information at around 1.30 am that a truck had overturned in street number 10, Anand Parbat and some people, including labourers, were stuck under it, a senior officer said. The truck belonging to a private firm was lifted with the help of a crane, Deputy

Commissioner of Police (Central) Sanjay Kumar Sain said, adding that the bodies of three people, who were killed on the spot, and a severely-injured man were pulled out.

The injured man, Killu, 40, was rushed to the nearby Jeevan Mala hospital, but he also succumbed to his injuries, police said. Among other dead, was Anuj, the four-year-old son of Killu, a 30-year-old Ramesh and his wife 25-year-old wife Sonam.

All of them were from Tikamgarh in Madhya Pradesh, the DCP said, adding that the boy was playing in the area when the accident occurred. The driver of the speeding

truck lost control over the vehicle, which overturned and fell on the labourers who were engaged in road construction work, the officer said. The victims’ bodies were shifted to the mortuary of the Ram Manohar Lohia (RML) hospital.

Legal action is being initiated on the basis of a statement from Moti, 40, a labourer who escaped with minor injuries, police said. The driver of the vehicle at fault, Suman Kumar, has been apprehended, police said.

The relatives and other labourers blocked a portion of Rohtak Road where the accident happened demanding justice for the victims.

# Man escapes from police custody in Delhi; arrested

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 23-year-old man was arrested after he escaped from police custody at Karkardooma court here where he was produced in connection with a case, officials said on Saturday.

The accused, Kartik, a resident of West Vinod Nagar in east Delhi, was arrested on Wednesday on theft charges. A scooter and a mobile phone were recovered from his possession, police said.

“He was taken to the Karkardooma court on

Thursday and was sent to judicial custody till March 9,” Deputy Commissioner of Police (east) Amrutha Guguloth said.

Head constable Sanny along with Assistant Sub Inspector Yashver took the accused to the court. Kartik then fled from the spot, the officer said. A case was registered in this connection at the Farsh Bazar police station, he said. Kartik was later arrested from a park in Mandawali. A pistol and four live cartridges were recovered from his possession, said the poice.



# Tejas to fly in foreign airspace for first time

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

The indigenously designed and manufactured Tejas light combat aircraft (LCA) will, for the first time, participate in an international air exercise abroad.

The exercise named "Desert Flag" will take place in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) from February 27 to March 17. Giving details of the drill, IAF officials said here on Saturday an IAF contingent comprising 110 "Air Warriors" arrived at the UAE's Al Dahfra airbase to participate in the exercise "Desert Flag".

IAF has deployed five Tejas jets and two C-17 Globemaster III aircraft. This is the first occasion when the LCA Tejas



will participate in an international flying exercise outside India, they said. The exercise "Desert Flag" is a multilateral air exercise in which air forces from the UAE, France, Kuwait, Australia, the UK, Bahrain,

Morocco, Spain, Republic of Korea, and the US will participate. The aim of the exercise is to participate in diverse fighter engagements and learn from the best practices of various air forces.

# Senior Services officers pay homage to fallen heroes

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

The National War Memorial (NWM) on Saturday observed its fourth anniversary and senior Services officers laid a wreath at the iconic monument here and paid homage to the fallen heroes.

Giving details of the event, officials said Chief of Integrated Defence Staff to the Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee (CISC) Air Marshal BR Krishna, along with Deputy Chief of Army Staff Lt Gen MV Suchindra Kumar, Officiating Vice Chief of the Naval Staff Vice Admiral Kiran Deshmukh and Deputy Chief of the Air Staff Air Marshal Narmadeshwar Tiwari, paid homage to the fallen heroes at the National War Memorial on the iconic monument's fourth anniversary, in New Delhi, on Saturday



Chief of Integrated Defence Staff to the Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee (CISC) Air Marshal BR Krishna, along with Deputy Chief of Army Staff Lt Gen MV Suchindra Kumar, Officiating Vice Chief of the Naval Staff Vice Admiral Kiran Deshmukh and Deputy Chief of the Air Staff Air Marshal Narmadeshwar Tiwari, pays homage to the fallen heroes at the National War Memorial on the iconic monument's fourth anniversary, in New Delhi, on Saturday

the Memorial for people to pay digital tributes to the fallen heroes. A whopping 12.76 lakh digital tributes were paid since February 25, 2022 by 24.94 lakh visitors from all walks of life.

To recognise the significance of Armed Forces in safeguarding the territorial integrity of the nation and inspire the youth to contribute to Nation Building, guided tours are being organised at the NWM for school students. Since the last anniversary, over 1,460 schools, with a strength of more than 1.80 lakh students, have visited the Memorial.

The NWM has also been organising school band performances, based on patriotic flair. Till date, more than 70 schools with 832 participants

have showcased their musical brilliance.

An online form-based process, facilitating online registration for band performance, has been created on the Memorial's web portal.

The iconic monument houses the eternal flame which exemplifies the supreme sacrifice made by a soldier in the line of duty thus making him immortal.

Since its inauguration, all homage ceremonies are conducted only at the NWM, including those on National Days. Eminent dignitaries and delegation from foreign countries have been visiting the NWM to honour the supreme sacrifice of the fallen soldiers from the Indian Armed Forces.

# BJP-led Centre, AAP Govt responsible for 'poor' law & order in Punjab: Cong

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI/RAIPUR**

The Congress on Saturday accused the BJP-led Centre and the AAP Government in Punjab of being responsible for the "deteriorating" law and order situation in the State and alleged they were working in collusion.

"First, we want to ask Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann...On one hand you are holding an investment summit and on the other near the border disinvestment is happening. If such a situation arises how investments will come," Leader of Opposition in the Punjab Assembly Partap Singh Bajwa said at a press briefing on the sidelines of the Congress' 85th plenary session here.

"This is a complete failure

and I want to assure the people of Punjab that the Congress was standing with them, is standing with them and those forces that want to weaken Punjab and India, we will stand strongly against them," said Bajwa flanked by Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh and other leaders from Punjab.

He alleged that the Central and State Governments are working in collusion and are responsible for the deteriorating law and order situation in Punjab.

Punjab Congress president Amarinder Singh Raja Warring alleged that the Centre wants that Punjab's situation deteriorates and it is able to establish its rule there and it is able to establish itself dominantly.



**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

Underscoring the vital role cooperatives and agriculture sectors can play in making the country Atmanirbhar, Prime Minister Narendra Modi at a recent webinar said various steps taken by his Government has ensured cooperative movement to spread across the country while the Budget allocation to agriculture sector has increased many-folds to touch Rs 1.25 lakh crore.

"The agricultural budget which was less than 25 thousand crores in 2014 has been increased to more than 1 lakh 25 thousand crores today... Every Budget in recent years has been called a budget for Gaon, Gareeb and Kisan", the Prime Minister said while virtually addressing a post-budget webinar on Agriculture and Cooperatives on Friday.

He asserted that the goal of complete development cannot be achieved until the challenges related to the agriculture

# Modi to open Shivamogga greenfield airport on Mon

**DEEPAK K UPRETI ■ NEW DELHI**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit the poll-bound Karnataka on February 27 where he will inaugurate and lay the foundation stone of a slew of projects at Shivamogga and Belagavi.

Modi will inaugurate the green field Shivamogga Airport, and also release the 13th instalment of Rs16,000 crores under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi, according to Prime Minister's office.

Karnataka is set for a keen triangular election contest with ruling BJP, Congress and the JDS in the fray for 224 assembly seats. Union home Minister Amit Shah had earlier this week addressed public meetings at Sandur in Ballari district and Bengaluru to give momentum to the BJP's poll campaigning. Elections are due in Karnataka before May, this year.

Prime Minister would inaugurate and lay projects worth Rs 3, 600 crore at Shivamogga and Rs 2700 at Belagavi. The Shivamogga Airport, the dream project of former state CM B S Yediyurappa is redeveloped at

cost of around Rs 450 crore. The domestic airport at iShivamogga district has been constructed under the Centre's UDAN scheme, which is aimed at making air travel affordable to all. The airport can handle 300 Passengers per hour.

The airport is expected to improve connectivity and accessibility of Shivamogga and other neighbouring areas in the Malnad region. Besides, Prime Minister will also lay the foundation stone for two railway projects in Shivamogga.

This includes Shivamogga – Shikaripura – Ranebennur new Railway line and Koteganguru Railway coaching depot. The Shivamogga – Shikaripura – Ranebennur new Railway line, will be developed at a cost of Rs. 990 Crore.

Shikaripura, a major town of Shimoga district, has been the legislative constituency of influential Lingayat leader of BJP Yediyurappa.

According to the PMO, Koteganguru Railway coaching depot at Shivamogga city will be developed at a cost of more than Rs 100 crores to help start new trains from Shivamogga and decongest maintenance facilities at Bengaluru and Mysuru. During his visit on

February 27, Prime Minister will inaugurate and lay the foundation stone of multi-village schemes worth more than Rs 950 crore under the 'Jal Jeevan Mission' including the inauguration of one multi-village scheme for Gowthamapura and 127 other villages and laying the foundation stone for three other multi-village schemes to be developed at a total cost of more than Rs 860 crore.

The four schemes are estimated to provide functional household piped water connections and benefit a total of more than 4.4 lakh people. Prime Minister will also inaugurate 44 Smart City Projects worth more than Rs 895 Crores in Shivamogga city.

At Belagavi, Prime Minister will dedicate number of projects worth Rs 2700 crore including the redeveloped Belagavi Railway Station building at an approximate cost of about Rs 190 Crore and another railway doubling project at the cost of Rs 930 crore.

Foundation stone of six multi village scheme projects under Jal Jeevan Mission will also be laid by PM in Belagavi, at the cost of about Rs 1585, said the PMO.

# Cooperatives, agriculture sectors can make country atmanirbhar, says PM

sector are eliminated and private innovation and investment have kept a distance from this sector which leads to low participation of India's youth in the agricultural sector compared to the other sectors.

Taking a dig at the previous regime for ignoring the country's agricultural sector which remained distressed for a long time since independence, the Prime Minister highlighted how India's farmers transformed the situation by not only making the nation 'atmanirbhar' (self-sufficient) but also capable of exporting food grains.

"Today India is exporting many types of agricultural products", the Prime Minister said as he enlisted various measures taken by the government to make domestic and international markets accessible to the farmers.

The Prime Minister also highlighted that the Budget focuses on agri-tech startups and an accelerator fund too has been proposed to create new

funding avenues for them and observed that the number of startups in the agriculture sector has increased to more than 3,000 from almost negligible nine year ago.

The government is not only creating digital infrastructure but also preparing funding avenues. He urged the youth and young entrepreneurs to move forward and achieve their goals.

Today, India is home to more than 3000 agri-startups today compared to next to nothing 9 years ago, he said. Highlighting the imports in the agricultural sector, the Prime Minister gave examples of expenditures of Rs 17,000 crores in 2021-22 for the import of pulses, 25,000 crores for the import of value added food products, and Rs 1.5 lakh crore spent on the import of edible oils in 2021-22. The Prime Minister informed that the government has been working on a mission mode to boost domestic production of pulses and oilseeds.

Increase in MSP, promotion of pulse production, increase in the number of food processing parks, and work in mission mode to become completely self-sufficient in terms of edible oil to name a few are some of the measures taken to boost the sector.

Stating that a revolution is taking place in the cooperative sector as unlike before, he dwelled in detail about measures taken to boost cooperative sector such as tax-related reliefs in this year's budget which, he said, will benefit new cooperative societies engaged in manufacturing.

He further added that TDS will not be levied on cash withdrawals up to Rs 3 crore for cooperative societies while tax exemption has been given to the payment made by the sugar cooperative before 2016-17. The Prime Minister also emphasized that sectors such as dairy and fisheries which did not have cooperatives earlier will greatly benefit the farmers today.

# Kashmiri Pandits on strike set to resume duties

**MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU**

After celebrating the festival of Shivaratri with their loved ones the majority of PM Package Kashmiri pandit employees, who were camping in Jammu and sitting on a dharna since May 12, are all set to resume their duties in the Kashmir valley next week.

A section of the PM package employees, working in the education department, have already resumed their duties with the beginning of the new academic session on February 20.

Meanwhile, a large number of employees who were sitting on a dharna and demanding release of salaries on the eve of Shivratri, have also stopped protesting in Jammu since February 19, 2023.

The twitter handle of All Migrants (Displaced) Employees Association Kashmir has not uploaded any fresh pictures and videos related to their daily protests after February 19. The dharna continued for 290 long days in support of their one point demand of relocation to safer areas outside the Kashmir valley.

Speaking to The Pioneer, a senior school teacher posted in Kupwara said, I will be resuming my duties from March 1. My only worry is I am not staying in a secured government accommodation so I will have to look for a decent and safe accommodation immediately to avoid further hardships. The school teacher said High Schools are already working since Feb 20 and middle and



primary schools are going to start their session from March first week. "I have already informed my school principal about my travel plans".

Another Srinagar based school teacher told The Pioneer, "I received a call from my Principal on Shivaratri and after wishing me he inquired about my travel plans. I informed him I will be joining in the first week of March".

The Kashmiri pandit school teacher said, "the core committee of the PM Package Kashmiri pandit employees is receiving several calls from migrant employees about their future course of action".

The Jammu and Kashmir government had earlier directed the UT administration to release salaries of PM Package employees who have resumed their duties in the Kashmir division in the second week of February.

As per government diktat, "the salary of other PM Package employees shall also be released after their resumption of duties and absent period shall be adjusted from leave account". The UT administration has also assured elaborate security arrangements for migrant employees to prevent any targeted killing of members belonging to minority community.

# PM gifts Meghalaya stoles, Nagaland shawls to German Chancellor

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday gifted Meghalaya stoles and Nagaland shawls to German Chancellor Olaf Scholz who is on a visit to India. Officials sources noted that these items have traditionally symbolised the culture and craftsmanship of the two northeastern states, home to different tribes.

Meghalaya stoles carry a rich history and a royal lineage that dates back centuries. Their weaving is an ancient tradition that has been passed down through generations, they added. Meghalaya stoles were originally woven for the Khasi and Jaintia royalty, who considered them a symbol of their power and status.

The stoles were worn during ceremonial occasions and festivals, and their intricate designs and vibrant colours were a reflection of the royal family's wealth and prestige, they said. The Khasi and Jaintia kings would often present these stoles to other rulers as a symbol of goodwill and respect, officials said.

The stoles require great skill and creativity and weavers are mostly women who spend hours in intricate designs and patterns using traditional weaving techniques. The stoles are made using locally sourced wool, and natural dyes.

The stoles have also gained international recognition and are sought after by textile enthusiasts worldwide. Officials said Naga shawls are an exquisite form of textile art that has been woven for centuries by tribes in Nagaland.

# Intra-familial child sexual abuse deplorable violation of minor's trust: SC judge

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

Intra-familial child sexual abuse is a deplorable violation of a child's trust and an "unpardonable betrayal" of the family bond, Supreme Court judge Justice Hima Kohli said on Saturday while emphasising that such victims deserve complete support and understanding.

Justice Kohli said this form of abuse has a long-lasting effect on the victim and the unfortunate part is that many a time, in the name of family honour, such incidents are brushed under the carpet and

go unreported. She was speaking as chief guest on the occasion of the release of the third issue of journal 'Children First' at a function organised by the Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights.

Justice Kohli also spoke about the plight of children owing to the Covid-19 pandemic and how the apex court and different high courts had issued a slew of directions to safeguard the interest of minors. She said it is imperative for all stake holders to join hands for creating conducive circumstances for the betterment of children.

**ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI**

Several alien invasive plants such as Lantana Camara, Parthenium hysterophorus, Prosopis juliflora, etc which have made Indian forests including tiger reserves their homes threaten existence of original occupants including predators like big royal cats and leopards, a team of wildlife researchers have warned after conducting a study in Madhya Pradesh's Kanha Tiger Reserve. Lantana has occupied more than 40 per cent of Indian forests and is amongst high concern invasive species for India. Its invasion is associated with widespread loss of native plant diversity and altered ecosystem functioning of forests.

However, this is for first time, any study has compared



un-invaded native forests with old-growth invasions of single and multiple alien plants in any tiger reserve.

Published in latest edition of journal Forest Ecology and Management, the study narrates how the invasive plants are depleting native plant populations resulting into reduced forage availability for herbivores like sambar and chital, thus threatening sustenance of felines like striped cats, leopard

# Manual scavengers: SC asks Centre to apprise it about status of implementation of 2013 Act

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

The Supreme Court has asked the Centre to apprise it about the status of implementation of a 2013 law that prohibits manual scavenging and the steps taken to rehabilitated people falling within the definition of manual scavengers.

The apex court has also sought state-wise details about the steps taken towards abolition of dry latrines, the status of dry latrines, and 'safai karamcharis' in cantonment boards and the railways.

A bench of justices S R Bhat and Dipankar Datta passed the order while hearing a petition seeking issuing of



directions to implement provisions of the Employment of Manual Scavengers and Their Rehabilitation Act 2013, Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act, 1993, and the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and Their Rehabilitation Act, 2013.

In its order passed on February 22, the bench noted that the top court had the occasion to deal with the subject matter earlier and it had then dealt with the provisions of the 2013 Act and had issued several directions.

"... the respondent – Union shall place on record the steps taken pursuant to the judgment of this court, viz-a-viz the status of implementation of the 2013 Act i.E. Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and Their Rehabilitation Act 2013, including the steps towards rehabilitation of such persons falling within the definition of 'manual scavengers', the bench said.

# Alien plants threaten existence of big cats: Study

**ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI**

Several alien invasive plants such as Lantana Camara, Parthenium hysterophorus, Prosopis juliflora, etc which have made Indian forests including tiger reserves their homes threaten existence of original occupants including predators like big royal cats and leopards, a team of wildlife researchers have warned after conducting a study in Madhya Pradesh's Kanha Tiger Reserve. Lantana has occupied more than 40 per cent of Indian forests and is amongst high concern invasive species for India. Its invasion is associated with widespread loss of native plant diversity and altered ecosystem functioning of forests.

However, this is for first time, any study has compared



un-invaded native forests with old-growth invasions of single and multiple alien plants in any tiger reserve.

Published in latest edition of journal Forest Ecology and Management, the study narrates how the invasive plants are depleting native plant populations resulting into reduced forage availability for herbivores like sambar and chital, thus threatening sustenance of felines like striped cats, leopard

researchers evaluated differences in soil parameters, native grasses, herbs, shrubs, tree regeneration, habitat use by mammals, herbivory, bird occurrence, etc. Rajat Rastogi, the lead author of the study said that, "Native forests are packed with biodiversity, particularly with rare species and interactions. Contrastingly, invaded areas only sustain a few commonly found species".

Co-occurring invasive plants like Lantana, Ageratum conyzoides, Pogostemon benghalensis, etc, have a magnified cumulative impact than their individual impacts, causing ecological homogenisation in invaded regions, he added. Multiple alien species together affected soil nutrients, which may have depleted richness of diverse plants. "The abundance

of rich grasses and herbs, signature component of these ecosystems, was most affected. There was hardly any regeneration of important plants like amla or even most common tree — the sal," pointed out Rastogi. Native wild herbivores like chital and sambar did not prefer commonly found plants in invaded areas.

They preferred rare forage plants, which were already depleted in infested areas.

"Although wild herbivores consumed a limited portion of alien plants, with monotonous invasion stands, their dependence on native forage increases", Rastogi said. An elevated herbivory pressure on native plants and reduced habitat use in areas with a pervasive long-term invasion of multiple alien plants was noted by research.



# European Union imposes fresh sanctions against Russia

AP ■ BRUSSELS

The European Union agreed on Saturday to impose new sanctions on Russia over its invasion of Ukraine targeting more officials and organisations accused of supporting the war, spreading propaganda or supplying drones, as well as restricting trade on products that could be used by the armed forces.

The EU's Swedish presidency said the sanctions "are directed at military and political decision-makers, companies supporting or working within the Russian military industry, and commanders in the Wagner Group. Transactions with some of Russia's largest banks are also prohibited."

Asset freezes were slapped on three more Russian banks and seven Iranian "entities" — companies, agencies, political parties or other organisations

— that manufacture military drones, which the EU suspects have been used by Russia during the war.

The new measures, proposed by the EU's executive branch three weeks ago, were only adopted after much internal wrangling over their exact make-up, and made public one day after the first anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine — the intended target date.

The delay, which was minor but symbolically important, is yet more evidence of how difficult it has become for the 27-nation bloc to identify new targets for restrictive measures that are acceptable to all member nations.

The sanctions are meant to undermine Russia's economy and drain funds for its war effort, but they are also increasingly inflicting pain on European economies already hit by high inflation and energy prices and still suffering

from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Before this latest round of measures, the EU had already targeted almost 1,400 Russian officials, including President Vladimir Putin, government ministers, lawmakers and oligarchs believed loyal to the Kremlin, but also officers believed responsible for war crimes or targeting civilian infrastructure.

The bloc had also frozen the assets of more than 170 organisations, ranging from political parties and paramilitary groups to banks, private companies and media outlets accused of spreading pro-Kremlin propaganda.

Russia's energy sector was hit, too — notably oil and coal — and the bloc, through its own measures and political decisions combined with retaliation from Moscow, was rapidly weaned off its dependence on Russian natural gas.

# Paudel set to become Nepal's next president

## PM Prachanda dumps Oli, four RPP ministers resign

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

Ram Chandra Paudel is set to become Nepal's next president after he was backed by eight political parties on Saturday but the development may bring down the fragile two-month-old government of Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', which could plunge the Himalayan nation once again into political turmoil.

Principal opposition party Nepali Congress senior leader Paudel was endorsed by eight political parties, including the CPN-Maoist Centre of Prime Minister Prachanda, who sided with his coalition partner KP Sharma Oli's nominee to support his candidacy.

Paudel will vie against CPN-UMML's Subas Nembang in the March 9 presidential election, which may change the power equation in the country.

Paudel, 78, and Nembang,

69, filed their candidacies on Saturday.

Poudel's candidacy was proposed by Congress President Sher Bahadur Deuba, CPN (Unified Socialist) Chairman Madhav Kumar Nepal, Maoist Centre's Senior vice-chair Narayan Kaji Shrestha, Federal Council Chairman of Janata Samajbadi Party Ashok Rai and Abdul Khan of Janamat Party.

His candidacy was seconded by President of Loktantrik Samajbadi Party Mahanta Thakur, Congress vice-president Purna Bahadur Khadka, Nagarik Unmukti Party Chairperson Ranjita Shrestha, Chairman of the Rastriya Janamorchha Chitra Bahadur KC and Maoist Centre's Hitraj Pande.

With the support from eight political parties, Poudyal's victory in the presidential election is almost certain.

The tenure of the current



Ram Chandra Paudel

president, Bidya Devi Bhandari, will end on March 12. The presidential election has put a serious question mark on the future of the seven-party ruling alliance.

Parliamentary elections were held in November last year but no party won a majority, leading to the formation of a coalition government headed by Prachanda.

Nepal has seen political turmoil for years now as no party has succeeded in providing a stable government.

Prachanda, the 68-year-old CPN-Maoist Centre leader was sworn in as the Prime Minister for the third time on December 26 last year after he dramatically walked out of the pre-poll alliance led by the Nepali Congress and joined hands with opposition leader Oli.

Prime Minister Prachanda's party, which contested the November 20 parliamentary and provincial elections as a partner of the five-party alliance led by the Nepali Congress, left the alliance after refusing to give Prachanda any of the two key posts --- the president or the prime minister.

Prachanda then forged an alliance with CPN-UMML to form the government.

Oli has claimed that while backing Prachanda's bid for prime minister last year, it was agreed upon that the post of President would go to the member of his Communist

Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) party.

But when the Nepali Congress, the largest party in the general election with 89 seats, voted for Prachanda during the trust vote on January 10, the new prime minister changed his tone and called for electing the President based on national consensus, something Oli rejected outright, the Kathmandu Post newspaper reported.

Prime Minister Prachanda received another jolt on Saturday after the National Democratic Party announced on Saturday it would withdraw from the government because of Prachanda's support for Poudel.

Four ministers from the Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP), including the party's Chairman and Deputy Prime Minister and Energy Minister Rajendra Lingden who was part of the coalition government, also resigned.

# California hit by heavy snow, rain; Michigan faces power outages



People through the parking area of the Alpine Base Area at Palisades Tahoe during a winter storm Friday

AP ■ LOS ANGELES

Heavy snow and rain pounded California and other parts of the West in the nation's latest winter storm, while thousands of people in Michigan suffered in freezing temperatures through extended power outages wrought by one of the worst ice storms in decades.

The storms have blacked

out nearly 1 million homes and businesses from coast to coast, closed major roads, caused pileups and snarled air travel. More than 300 flights were cancelled and over 5,000 were delayed Friday across the US, according to FlightAware.com.

The National Weather Service warned of a "cold and dangerous winter storm" that would last through Saturday in California. Blizzard warnings

were posted in the Sierra Nevada and Southern California mountain ranges, where as much as 5 feet (1.5 meters) of snow was expected.

"Simply put, this will be a historic event for the amount of snow over the higher peaks and lower elevation snow," according to the regional weather office. Interstate 5, the West Coast's major north-south highway, was closed south of the Oregon border as snow fell to the floor of the Sacramento Valley and in a high mountain pass north of Los Angeles, where blizzard warnings were in effect.

Avalanche warnings were posted in some areas, and flash flood warnings were issued for Los Angeles and nearby coastal areas until Friday night.

In Michigan, hundreds of thousands of people remained without power Friday after a storm earlier this week coated power lines, utility poles and branches with ice as thick as three-quarters of an inch.

# No evidence that China is arming Russia: Biden



PTI ■ WASHINGTON

There is no evidence that China would side with Russia in its war against Ukraine, US President Joe Biden has said.

"There's no evidence of that so far," Biden told reporters on Friday when asked if he is worried that China will side with Russia in the ongoing war.

Biden said that he had a long conversation with his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping about this in the summer.

"There's no evidence he's done it yet," said the US President.

The Pentagon told reporters that it has not seen China supplying lethal aid to Russia.

Pentagon's Press Secretary Air Force Brigadier General Pat Ryder said that China, which clearly has advanced capabilities, munitions, has publicly declared its neutrality, to now take a side and essentially say "we want to be in the camp that's looking to extinguish Ukraine as a nation".

US Ambassador to the United Nations Linda Thomas-Greenfield told MSNBC in an interview that the Biden Administration has made it clear to the Chinese that it should not get involved in this war in the sense of providing lethal weapons to the Russians.

They have been told that it would be a game changer and it would be something the US would have serious concerns about.

"They've not done that so far, and we hope that the message to them gets through," she said.

# Amid growing economic woes, Pak stops clearance of bills, salaries

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

The cash-strapped Pakistan government has directed the accountant general to cease the clearing of bills, including salaries, owing to the current economic crisis, according to a media report on Saturday.

The Ministry of Finance and Revenue also instructed the Accountant General of Pakistan Revenues (AGPR) to halt the clearing of all the bills of the federal ministries/divisions and attached departments until further notice, The News International quoted official sources as saying.

The newspaper reported that the operational cost-related releases faced difficulties mainly due to the economic hardship facing the country.

Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves, which fell to a critically low level of USD 2.9 billion a few weeks ago, have now risen closer to USD 4 billion, even as the country eagerly waits for the USD 1.1 billion tranches of funding from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Minister for Finance Ishaq Dar, who was contacted for a comment by the newspaper, said it might be untrue but promised to get back after

confirmation.

Sources said that they went to the AGPR office for clearance of their outstanding bills but were informed that the Ministry of Finance had directed them to stop clearing all the bills, including the salaries, because of the prevailing difficult financial positions.

The exact reasons could not be ascertained why the clearance of bills was stopped on an immediate basis.

The sources said the salaries and pensions of defence-related institutions had already been cleared for next month.

Finance Minister Dar while meeting on February 22 with a delegation of Rothschild and Co had said "the government was steering the economy towards stability and growth".

He added that "the government is committed to completing the IMF programme and fulfilling all international obligations".

Dar's commitment to unlocking the IMF tranche was visible on February 20 when the national assembly had unanimously approved the Finance (Supplementary) Bill 2023 or "mini-budget" - a move mandatory for seeking funding.

# Nigerians begin vote for new Prez

AP ■ ABUJA

Polling stations opened late across parts of Nigeria on Saturday as Africa's most populous country held presidential and parliamentary elections amid a nationwide bank note shortage that left many without transport to their voting centres. The elections come amid fears of violence, from Islamic militants in the north to separatists in the south, though officials did not postpone the vote as the last two presidential elections were.

In the northeastern Borno state, policemen deployed to protect voting units were seen trekking long distances to get to their posts.

The delays concerns raised about whether voters would be disenfranchised. There were no electoral officials in more than 70 per cent of voting units an hour before the vote was due to start, Samson Itodo, head of YIAGA Africa, Nigeria's largest election observer group, told The Associated Press.

# Afghan Taliban asks Pak to 'bear cost' of disarming TTP

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

The Taliban-led government in Afghanistan has for the first time proposed to Pakistan that it should bear the cost of disarming and rehabilitating the outlawed Tehreek-e-Taliban (TTP) members and their families numbering more than 30,000 from the Pak-Afghan border areas, according to a media report.

This was revealed during the National Apex Committee meeting chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday to formulate a strategy to deal with the rising incidents of terror attacks in Pakistan, according to The Express Tribune newspaper.

The Afghan Taliban has said it is willing to disarm and relocate the outlawed Tehreek-e-Taliban (TTP) militants and their families across the border but wants Islamabad to bear the cost of the proposed rehabilitation, the report said.

Friday's meeting comes after Defence Minister Khawaja Asif and the Director General of the country's spy agency Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) Lt. General Nadeem Anjum met the top brass of the Afghanistan Taliban regime in Kabul to share "irrefutable evidence" with them about the presence of TTP in the neighbouring country.

The Afghan interim government's proposal includes disarming the TTP members and relocation of their families from the Pak-Afghan border, the report said. However, the Afghan government has asked Pakistan to fund the proposal and bear the cost of rehabilitation of the TTP members, it said.

The meeting was informed that the Afghan Taliban made a similar proposal to China to address its concerns about the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM) in the restive Xinjiang province, the

report said. However, Pakistan is yet to respond to the Afghan Taliban's idea as there is scepticism within the top brass that this proposal might not be feasible, the report said.

This is the first time that the Afghan Taliban has pitched this idea to Islamabad, the report said. There are around 12,000 TTP militants in Afghanistan and with their families, that number surges to well beyond 30,000, it added.

Pakistan has been hit by a wave of terrorism, mostly in the country's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, but also in Balochistan, the Punjab town of Mianwali, which borders the restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and also in the Sindh province. During the Apex Committee meeting held last month, Pakistan's civil and military leadership decided to seek Afghan Taliban chief Haibatullah Akhundzada's intervention to control the TTP.



# FM discusses debt restructuring with IMF, WB

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday held a roundtable with the heads of the World Bank and the IMF and discussed the issue of debt restructuring faced by some of the countries.

The roundtable with World Bank President David Malpass and IMF managing director Kristalina Georgieva held on the sidelines of the first G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors meeting here discussed the issue of debt restructuring challenges and debt vulnerabilities.

"Finance Minister Sitharaman flagged the need to acknowledge today's diverse creditor landscape and build a common understanding of challenges and ways to address them," a tweet from the Finance Ministry said.

She called for the voices of the vulnerable and under-represented debtor countries to be heard through the G20.

"@KGeorgieva, MD, IMF@IMFNews and Mr@DavidMalpassWBG, President @WorldBank called for faster debt restructuring



processes and noted the debt forum was an opportunity to work together and help vulnerable countries," another tweet said.

Following the outbreak of COVID-19, many countries were pushed into debt distress. There have been small steps on debt restructuring since.

Creditor committees have

been established for some of the worst-off debtors—Zambia, Chad, and Ethiopia—with varied results. Committees for Ghana and Sri Lanka are likely to follow suit.

The scale and depth of debt issues faced in particular by many African countries require a multilateral approach from all classes of creditors, experts said.

# G20 ends without communique after no consensus on war in Ukraine

PTI ■ BENGALURU

A meeting of finance leaders of the world's 20 biggest economies, referred to as the group of 20 or G20, ended on Saturday without a joint communique after Russia and China opposed any reference to the war in Ukraine.

Instead, a G20 Chair's Summary and Outcome Document were released after the two-day meeting of finance ministers and central bank governors here. It carried two paragraphs on the war but added that this was not agreed to by Russia and China.

Coinciding with the first anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, leaders from countries such as the US and France wanted a condemnation of Moscow for the invasion while host India initially felt G20 was not the forum to address such an issue and wanted a more



neutral term like "crisis" or a "challenge" to describe the "geopolitical situation".

But eventually, it did agree to include the impact the war has had on the global economy. Russia and China were upset at the use of the G20 platform for discussing political matters.

India's Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is the chair.

The Summary stated that the G20 nations "reiterated" their national positions on the Ukraine war.

"Most members strongly condemned the war in Ukraine and stressed that it is causing immense human suffering and exacerbating existing fragilities in the global economy - constraining growth, increasing inflation, disrupting supply chains, heightening energy and food insecurity, and elevating financial stability risk."

"There were other views and different assessments of the situation and sanctions. Recognising that the G20 is not the forum to resolve security issues, we acknowledge that security issues can have significant consequences for the global economy, the Summary said, adding this particular paragraph of the statement was not agreed to by Russia and China.

# WhatsApp may bring 'schedule group calls' to future update

IANIS ■ SAN FRANCISCO

Meta-owned WhatsApp is reportedly working on a new feature called "schedule group calls", which it may bring in a future update to Android and iOS users.

According to WABetaInfo, the feature is under development, so it is not ready to be released to beta testers.

The feature will make it easier for users to plan a call with other members of the group.

The feature will include a

new context menu that introduces a scheduling option when the feature is enabled for users' accounts in the future, according to the report.

Moreover, users can choose when the group call starts and assign a name to the scheduled call.

The report further mentioned that the group call scheduling feature is compatible with both audio and video calls. Also, when the call starts, all group members will be notified so they can quickly join it.

# SIDBI sets up office in Hosur to serve MSMEs

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has strengthened its footprint in the region with the opening of a new branch office in Hosur to serve micro, small and medium enterprises, the bank said on Saturday.

SIDBI with support from the Reserve Bank of India also set up a SIDBI Cluster Development Fund with a view to support creation of hard infrastructure for MSMEs in the clusters.

Under this programme,

financial support is extended in the form of term loan at concessional rates to the state governments for covering the projects involved in the development of MSME eco-system, SIDBI chairman and managing director Sivasubramanian Ramann said after the inauguration of the new office.

SIDBI has taken new initiatives to increase the flow of credit to MSMEs, he said and added the bank has recently launched fully automated straight through process to sanction loans upto ₹50 lakh online within couple of hours.

# SpiceJet Delhi-Shillong flight service launched

PTI ■ SHILLONG

SpiceJet has launched a direct flight service from Delhi to the Shillong, officials said on Saturday.

The airline said the Delhi-Shillong flight would operate on Monday and Friday.

"The inaugural flight landed from Delhi at the airport here with 18 passengers on Friday. The same flight took off with 12 outbound passengers," an Airport official told PTI.

He said senior government officials including transport department secretary H Kharmalki and MTC MD KL



Nongbri were present.

SpiceJet is the third airline to start scheduled flights from Shillong after Indigo and Alliance Air.

SpiceJet had entered into an MoU with the Meghalaya government in January to connect the Meghalaya capital with the national capital.

Earlier, Fly Big airlines had operated the Shillong-Delhi route but an MoU with them was withdrawn last year.

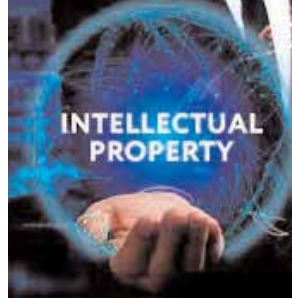
# India 42 in 55 global economies on IP Index

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

India ranks 42nd among 55 leading global economies on the International IP Index released by the US Chambers of Commerce, according to which India is ripe to become a leader for emerging markets seeking to transform their economy through IP-driven innovation.

"As India's size and economic influence grows on the world stage, India is ripe to become a leader for emerging markets seeking to transform their economy through IP-driven innovation," Patrick Kilbride, senior vice president of the US Chamber of Commerce Global Innovation Policy Center who publishes the annual report said Friday.

According to the report, which covers everything from patent and copyright laws to the ability to monetize IP assets and the ratification of international agreements, India has maintained continued strong efforts in copyright piracy through the issuing of "dynamic" injunction orders. India not only has



generous R&D and IP-based tax incentives, but also has a strong awareness-raising efforts regarding the negative impact of piracy and counterfeiting. It is a global leader on targeted administrative incentives for the creation and use of IP assets for SMEs, it said.

"India has taken steps to improve enforcement against copyright-infringing content and provides a best-in-class framework to promote better understanding and utilisation of IP assets. However, addressing long-standing gaps in its IP framework will be critical to India's ability to create a new model for the region and India's continued economic growth," Kilbride said.

# Google may add AI text-to-image generator to Gboard

IANIS ■ SAN FRANCISCO

Google is expected to introduce a host of AI features for its products in the near future, and among them, Gboard for Android is working to integrate the Imagen text-to-image generator, the media reported.

In a recent APK (Android Package Kit) teardown, conducted by 9to5Google, the latest beta version of Gboard -- contains lines of code that mention an "Imagen Keyboard".

This Imagen feature will appear in the shortcuts strip/page, like Clipboard,

Translate, and One-handed.

For people who are unfamiliar with Imagen, it is similar to the popular text-to-image generator DALL-E 2 -- which is owned by ChatGPT creator OpenAI.

It is capable of creating images based on the request users submit to it, according to the report.

However, Google's research found that more people preferred Imagen's results over DALL-E's.

Imagen is also said to be better at spatial relations, long-form text, rare words, and challenging prompts, said the report.

# New tea auction process to start from March in north India

PTI ■ KOLKATA

The Bharat Auction model for tea, which is already functional in south India, will be introduced in north India from end of March, an official in the industry said on Saturday.

The pilot project will be conducted on March one so that all the features get tested by the stakeholders, following which the Bharat Auction model will be introduced in Kolkata, Guwahati and Siliguri from March 22, 2023.

"The auction system will shift from the existing English system to the Bharat Auction model from March 22. The pilot auction will be done on March one so that all the features are tested by the stakeholders", secretary of Calcutta Tea Traders Association J KalyanaSundaram said.

CTTA conducts the auctions in Kolkata, while Tea Auction Committee does both in Siliguri and Guwahati.

He said the new auction has been already functioning in south India, adding that the volume of tea transacted there is much lower than in north India."Out of odd 600 million kg sold in the country through the auctions, north India accounts for 70 per cent while the balance is in the south", he said.

# Buffett touts benefits of buybacks

AP ■ OMAHA

Billionaire Warren Buffett said critics of stock buybacks are "either an economic illiterate or a silver-tongued demagogue" or both, and all investors benefit from them as long as they are made at the right prices.

Buffett used part of his annual letter to Berkshire Hathaway shareholders Saturday to tout the benefits of repurchases that fiery Wall Street critics like Sens. Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders and many other Democrats love to criticize.

The federal government even added a 1 per cent tax on buybacks this year after they ballooned to roughly USD 1 trillion in 2022.

"When you are told that all repurchases are harmful to shareholders or to the country, or particularly beneficial to CEOs, you are listening to either an economic illiterate or a silver-tongued demagogue (characters that are not mutually exclusive)," wrote Buffett, who himself is a long-time Democrat.

Investor Cole Smead said Washington D.C. Should take note of Buffett's view on buybacks.

# India should lead in adopting AI technology with open arms, says Ola Cabs CEO

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a massive technology tool for increasing productivity and India should take a lead in adopting such technologies, Bhavish Aggarwal, the co-founder and Chief Executive Officer of Ola Cabs, said on Saturday.

Speaking at the ABP Network's Idea of India Summit here, Aggarwal also discounted the notion that embracing such technology would result in job losses.

Technology trends like AI

are so disruptive. While one can think that it (the adoption of AI) threatens jobs,"I see it as a massive technology tool for increasing productivity", he said.

"And we in India, as an economy and as stakeholders of the economy, should all adopt AI with open arms," Aggarwal said.

He emphasised that the use of this technology could enhance productivity by 10 times, he said,"We should be the first adopter of AI and become the most productive in the world."

**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, CONSTRUCTION CIRCLE, UTTARAKHAND PEYAL NIGAM, PITHORAGARH**  
Phone/Fax : 05965 - 230044 E-Mail:- executivechamapawat@gmail.com

Bid Notification No : 520 / Nivda / 106, Date: 24.02.2023

**E - TENDER NOTICE (Two Bid System)**

**Name of the works: Majhera Khoona Pumping W/S Scheme(JJM).**

**Date of Publication on e-procurement portal Date. 25.02.2023 at 17.00 hrs.**

**Note : Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal - [www.uktenders.gov.in](http://www.uktenders.gov.in) & contact 05965-230044.**

‘‘तत् सर्वं जीवनं सर्वं ‘‘निरा करेला, हर घर नर ने जय‘‘  
‘‘मरक पारना हे पल्लो ‘‘ ‘‘कारवा ये हो नो नदो ‘‘

**Superintending Engineer**

**UJVN LIMITED**  
H.O.: "UJJWAL", Maharani Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun-248006  
Telephone.: 0135-2763808, Fax- 0135- 2763508,  
CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025866, Website: [www.ujvn.com](http://www.ujvn.com)

पत्रांक सं. 186 दिनांक 25.02.2023

**TENDER NOTICE**

Office of the Executive Engineer (Civil), UJVN Ltd., Kalagarh, Pauri Garhwal, invites sealed tenders from interested parties. Brief summary of tender is given below:  
Tender No:23/EE(Civil)/Kalagarh/Pauri Garhwal/2022-23. & 24/EE (Civil)/Kalagarh/Pauri Garhwal/2022-23  
Name of Work 1- "Exterior painting work of Type-II Residences at Hydai Colony Kalagarh."  
2- "Interior painting work of Type-II Residences at Hydai Colony Kalagarh".  
Estimated Cost : Rs. 24,93,472.40 and Rs. 24,96,497.92 Respectively (GST extra)  
Date of availability of bid Document on website: From 17:00 hrs of 25.02.2023  
Last Date for submission of Tender: Up to 15:00 hrs of 20.03.2023.  
For fuller & further details, kindly visit our website, the tender document can be downloaded from the Nigam's website [www.ujvn.com](http://www.ujvn.com)  
**Executive Engineer (Civil)**

**"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"**

**CH. CHARAN SINGH UNIVERSITY, MEERUT (U.P.)**

**RECRUITMENT NOTICE**

Online Applications are invited from eligible candidates (As per UGC notification 18 July 2018 and subsequent UP Government order No. 1190/सत्स-1-2019-16(114)/2010, dated 15 October 2019 and first Statutes of University as amended from time to time) for the appointment to the following posts in the University:

S.NO.	Advertisement No.	Post	Number of Posts & Department	Level
01	Acad./02/2022	Professor	Zoology (UR-1), Mathematics (SC-1)	14
02	Acad./03/2022	Associate Professor	English (SC-1), Psychology (UR-1, SC-1), Botany (UR-1), Statistics (UR-1), Education (SC-1)	13A
03	Acad./04/2022	Assistant Professor	Political Science (OBC-1),  Sanskrit (UR-02 & OBC-02) (Temporary posts upto 28.02.2023 but likely continue	10  10
04	SFS/04/2022 (Constituent Government College, Jewar (G.B. Nagar purely on contractual basis on a fixed salary under self-finance scheme	Assistant Professor (Contractual)	English (SC-01), Home Science (SC-01) Zoology (UR-01)	Fix Salary Rs. 35000/- (PM)

The Last date for online submission of application form is **02.03.2023**

Last date of submission of the printout of online filled form (downloaded) is **08.03.2023**

Link for the form and other details:  
<http://www.ccsuniversity.ac.in/ccsu/recruitment> in for further details and eligibility conditions.

**Registrar**

**PIRAMAL CAPITAL AND HOUSING FINANCE LTD**  
(Formerly Known as Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Ltd.) CIN: L65910MH1984PLC032639  
Registered Office: Unit No.-801, 6th Floor, Piramal Amit Building, Piramal Agastya Corporate Park, Kamani Junction, Opp. Fire Station, LBS Marg, Kurla (west), Mumbai-400070 -T +91 22 3902 4000  
Branch Office: Plot No-6, Block A, Sector-2, Noida, U.P-201 301  
Contact Person: 1. Nishant Gautam:- 9899216466 2. Naveen Kapoor:- 9810854841 3. Rohan Sawant:- 9833143013

**E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE - FRESH SALE**

Pursuant to taking possession of the secured asset mentioned hereunder by the Authorized Officer of Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited (Formerly Known as DHFL) under the **Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002** for the recovery of amount due from borrower/s, offers are invited by the undersigned for purchase of immovable property, as described hereunder, which is in the physical possession, on "As Is Where Is Basis", "As Is What Is Basis" and "Whatever Is There Is Basis", Particulars of which are given below:

Loan Code/Branch/ Borrower (s) / Co-Borrower (s) / Guarantor (s)	Demand Notice Date and Amount	Property Address _final	Reserve Price	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) (10% of RP)	Outstanding Amount (15-02-2023)
Loan Code No. 09600001035, New Delhi-west (Branch), Rajender Gupta (Borrower), Sumitra Gupta (Co Borrower 1)	Dt: 12-05-2021, Rs. 1126350/-, (Rs. Eleven lakh Twenty Six Thousand Three Hundred Fifty Only)	All The piece and Parcel of the Property having an extent :- Flat No. 32, 3rd Floor Block - C3, Pocket - 2 Sector G 2, Narela Delhi New Delhi Delhi :- 110040	Rs. 1230000/-, (Rs. Twelve lakh Thirty Thousand Only)	Rs. 123000/-, (Rs. One lakh Twenty Three Thousand Only)	Rs. 1158011.44/-, (Rs. Eleven lakh Fifty Eight Thousand Eleven Only and Forty Four Paise)
Loan Code No. 27300000096, Dwarka (Branch), Imran Alam (Borrower), Aisya Praveen (Co Borrower 1)	Dt: 12-05-2021, Rs. 1362079/-, (Rs. Thirteen lakh Sixty Two Thousand Seventy Nine Only)	All The piece and Parcel of the Property having an extent :- Flat No. 47, First Floor Block- E-6, Pocket-03 Sector G-8, Narela Delhi New Delhi Delhi :- 110040	Rs. 990000/-, (Rs. Nine lakh Ninety Thousand Only)	Rs. 99000/-, (Rs. Ninety Nine Thousand Only)	Rs. 1373771.14/-, (Rs. Thirteen lakh Seventy Three Thousand Seven Hundred Seventy One Only and Fourteen Paise)
Loan Code No. 26600001133, Delhi Rajouri Garden (Branch), Anuj Kumar (Borrower), Putli Kumari (Co Borrower 1)	Dt: 28-06-2021, Rs. 2102252/-, (Rs. Twenty One lakh Two Thousand Two Hundred Fifty Two Only)	All The piece and Parcel of the Property having an extent :- Rz-13 Na. 2nd Flr (back Rhs) Kharsa No. 619, village Nasir Pur Kailash Puri, Palam Colony Delhi New Delhi Delhi :- 110059,Delhi. Boundaries As: North : Gali 14 ft Wide South : Part of property thereafter Other's Prop East : Part of property thereafter Road 20 ft West : Other's Property	Rs. 1510000/-, (Rs. Fifteen lakh Ten Thousand Only)	Rs. 151000/-, (Rs. One lakh Fifty One Thousand Only)	Rs. 2124070.14/-, (Rs. Twenty One lakh Twenty Four Thousand Seventy Only and Fourteen Paise)
Loan Code No. 26600000690, Delhi Rajouri Garden (Branch), Sunil Nagar (Borrower), Ritu Devi (Co Borrower 1)	Dt: 20-02-2020, Rs. 1948348/-, (Rs. Nineteen lakh Forty Eight Thousand Three Hundred Forty Eight Only)	All The piece and Parcel of the Property having an extent :- C-10 & 10-a third Floor With Roof Front Side, Kharsa No.836 block-h Anand Vihar,uttam Nagar,Delhi,New Delhi-110059,Delhi. Boundaries As: North : Gali-10 ft Wide South : Road-20 ft East : Plot No.C-11 West : Other	Rs. 1490000/-, (Rs. Fourteen lakh Ninety Thousand Only)	Rs. 149000/-, (Rs. One lakh Forty Nine Thousand Only)	Rs. 2158889.48/-, (Rs. Twenty One lakh Fifty Eight Thousand Eight Hundred Eighty Nine Only and Forty Eight Paise)
Loan Code No. 24900001380, Delhi Janakpuri (Branch), Narendra Kumar Chaurasia (Borrower), Deepak Kumar Chaurasia (Co Borrower 1)	Dt: 21-10-2021, Rs. 1434068/-, (Rs. Fourteen lakh Thirty Four Thousand Sixty Eight Only)	All The piece and Parcel of the Property having an extent :- Wz-1-a, Second Floor Without Roof Plot No. 33, Gali No. 1, Kharsa No-16/24 Village Keshpur, New Sahib Pura, Delhi New Delhi Delhi :- 110018 Boundaries As: North : Other Property South : Gali & Entry East : Property no. WZ-1-E West : Part of plot	Rs. 1320000/-, (Rs. Thirteen lakh Twenty Thousand Only)	Rs. 132000/-, (Rs. One lakh Twenty Two Thousand Only)	Rs. 1464292.38/-, (Rs. Fourteen lakh Sixty Four Thousand Two Hundred Ninety Two Only and Thirty Eight Paise)

**DATE OF E-AUCTION: 29-03-2023, FROM 11.00 A.M. TO 2.00 P.M (WITH UNLIMITED EXTENSION OF 5 MINUTES EACH), LAST DATE OF SUBMISSION OF BID: 28-03-2023, BEFORE 4.00 P.M.**  
**TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE AUCTION:**  
The sale shall be subject to the terms & conditions as described below:-  
1. The asset will not be sold below the reserve price.  
2. In case of single bidder, the bidder/purchaser has to bid with an minimum increment amount of Rs. 10,000/- for property upto 3cr RP & More than 3 Cr (Property Reserve Price (RP) bid increment amount will be Rs. 1,00,000/-).  
3. Auction/bidding shall only by "online electronic mode" through the website of the service provider i.e Company Name: Company Name: C1 India Private Limited, Name of Representative : Mr. Dharam Krishna; Contact Number : 9948182222; Site : <https://www.bankauctions.com>.  
4. Care has been taken to include adequate particulars of Secured Assets in the Schedule herein above. The Authorized Officer shall not be answerable for any error, misstatement or omission in this proclamation.  
5. The intending bidders are advised to go through the portal <https://www.bankauctions.com> for detailed terms and conditions for e-Auction sale before submitting their bids and taking part in the e-Auction sale proceedings and contact the respective Authorized Officer for the concerned property as mentioned herein above against the property.  
6. Auction shall commence at one increment above the Reserve Price and bidders shall be free to bid among themselves by improving their offer with minimum incremental amount stated herein above.  
7. 10% Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) DD shall be deposited on or before 28-03-2023, before 4.00 P.M. to the designated Branch in favour of "Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited" along with fully filled bid form and Tender/Sealed Bid/offer in the prescribed tender forms along KYC. a) Self attested true copy of Identity Card containing Photograph and Residential Address and PAN card of the intending bidder, issued by Govt. of India. Original of the document should be made available for verification by the concerned Authorized Officer. b) Intending Bidder's Mobile Number and E-Mail address.  
8. The intended bidders who require assistance in creating Login ID & Password, uploading data, submitting bid, training on e-bidding process etc., may contact Mr. Dharami Krishna; Contact Number : 9948182222. Help Line E-mail ID: <https://www.bankauctions.com> and For any property related query may contact PCHFL Authorised Officer - Nishant Gautam:- 9899216466 during the office hours on any working days.  
9. In case of stay of sale or Recovery proceeding by any superior court of competent jurisdiction, the auction may either be postponed/cancelled in compliance of such order, without any further notice and the persons participating in the sale shall have no right to claim damages, compensation or cost for such postponement/cancellation etc.  
10. Only those bidders holding valid user ID and Password and confirmed payment of EMD through Demand Draft shall be permitted to participate in the online e-auction. The Authorized Officer reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids. Further, the Authorized Officer reserves the right to postpone or cancel or adjourn or discontinue the Auction or vary the terms of the Auction at any time before conclusion of the Auction process, without assigning any reason whatsoever and his decision in this regard shall be final.  
11. The successful bidder shall have to pay 25% of the purchase amount immediately within 24 hours (including Earnest Money Already paid) from knocking down of bid in his/her favor, in the same mode as stipulated in clause 7 above. The balance of the purchase price shall have to be paid in the same mode as stipulated in clause 7 above within 15 days of acceptance/confirmation of sale conveyed to them. In case of default, all amounts deposited till then shall be forfeited including earnest money deposit.  
12. Meagre deposit of 25% of the Sale Price shall not entitle the successful bidder to get the sale confirmed in his favour. Sale shall be subject to terms and conditions applicable to this e-auction notice and confirmation by the secured creditor to that effect.  
13. The EMD (without interest) of the unsuccessful bidder will be returned on 3rd day of the closure of the e-auction sale proceedings.  
14. During e-auction, in case any bid is placed in the last 5 minutes of the closing time of the Auction, the closing time shall automatically get extended for another 5 minutes.  
15. The sale is subject to final confirmation by the PCHFL. In case if the borrower/guarantors pays the total Outstanding due to the PCHFL before the Date of Auction, then auction sale may be cancelled at the discretion of PCHFL.  
16. All statutory dues/attendant charges/other dues including registration charges, stamp duty, taxes etc. shall have to be borne by the purchaser.  
17. The Sale Certificate shall be issued to the highest successful bidder and in the same name in which the Bid is submitted.  
18. The property is sold on "As is where" and "As is what is" basis and the Authorized Officer or the PCHFL shall not be responsible for any charge, lien, encumbrances, or any other dues to the government or anyone else in respect of properties E-Auctioned. The Intending Bidder is advised to make their own independent inquiries regarding the encumbrances, search results and other revenue records relating to the property including statutory liabilities arrears of property tax, electricity dues etc. and shall satisfy themselves before submitting the Bid.  
19. Properties as mentioned above can be inspected by the prospective bidders at the site with the prior appointment of concerned Branch Manager or Authorized Officer or any other officer identified for the purpose, from 11 A.M. to 3 P.M. on any working day before 28-03-2023.  
20. PCHFL reserves its right to accept/reject any or all of the offer(s) or bid(s) so received or cancel the sale without assigning any reason thereof.  
21. In case there is any discrepancy found in Publication of Vernacular Version or English Version then in such case English Version will be considered for the purpose of interpretation. Bidding in the final minutes and seconds should be avoided in the bidders own interest. Neither PCHFL nor Service Provider will be responsible for any failure/lapse (Power failure, Internet failure etc.) on the part of the vendor. In order to prevent such situation bidders are requested to make all the necessary arrangements/alternatives such as backup power supply etc required so that they are able to prevent such situation and continue to participate in the auction successfully.  
22. It shall be the responsibility of the successful bidder to remit the TDS @ 1% as applicable u/s 194 I-A if the aggregate of the sums credited or paid for such consideration is Rs. 50 Lakhs or more. TDS should be filed online by filing form 26QB & TDS certificate to be issued in form 16B. The purchaser has to produce the proof of having deposited the income tax into the government account within 15 days of e-auction.  
**STATUTORY 30 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER SARFAESI ACT TO THE BORROWER/GUARANTOR / MORTGAGOR**  
The above mentioned Borrower/Guarantor are hereby notified to pay the sum as mentioned in section 13(2) notice in full with accrued interest till date before the date of auction, failing which property will be auctioned/sold and balance dues if any will be recovered with interest and cost from borrower/guarantor.  
**Date : 26.02.2023**  
**Place : Delhi**  
**Sd/- (Authorised Officer)**  
**Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited**



# MAN UTD, NEWCASTLE BID TO END TROPHY DROUGHTS

AP ■ LONDON

Manchester United will aim to end their six-year trophy drought when Erik ten Hag's resurgent side face Newcastle in Sunday's League Cup final, while the Magpies' Saudi-funded revolution could produce the club's first major prize since 1969.

As underachieving members of English football's aristocracy in recent years, United hope the showpiece at Wembley can serve as a long-awaited rebirth. However, revelling in their role as nouveau riche irritants to the Premier League's established powers, Newcastle believe the final can serve as concrete proof they are now a force to be reckoned with.

United haven't won a major trophy since the 2017 Europa League, a prize they claimed just weeks after beating Southampton in their most recent League Cup final appearance.

As if their longest trophy drought for 40 years wasn't bad enough, United also suffered the indignity of watching bitter rivals Manchester City surpass them as England's preeminent football force.

United, who last won the title in 2013, finished a dismal sixth in the Premier League last

term.

But after a decade in the wilderness, they have been revived by Ten Hag since his arrival from Ajax last year.

Crucially, Ten Hag's handling of Cristiano Ronaldo showed he would not be intimidated by player power, bringing an end to the Portugal star's second spell at United.

"He first arrived and the training sessions we had, he demands you do it or you're out. You don't play," United midfielder Bruno Fernandes said.

"Everyone was a little bit like 'If a big player doesn't do what he wants will he pull him apart or not?' And he did that many times, he did it with Cristiano, with Jadon (Sancho), with Marcus (Rashford)."

There is no more tangible sign of Ten Hag's impact than the blistering form of revitalised United forward Rashford, who is battling to be fit for Wembley after suffering an injury in Thursday's Europa League win against Barcelona.

Ten Hag has tried to temper expectations in his first season but he knows victory this weekend would be a meaningful moment for a club climbing out of the doldrums.

"It's a great opportunity to get the silverware. The fans are



really waiting for it and so we do everything we can to give them their honour," Ten Hag said.

**'REWRITE THE STORY'**  
Fuelled by the astute man-

agement of Eddie Howe and the financial muscle of their Saudi-backed owners, Newcastle are unlikely to be a pushover.

Once regarded as the laughing stock of the Premier League,

Newcastle are emerging as a genuine force for the first time since Kevin Keegan's 'entertainers' came close to winning the title in the 1990s.

It is an astonishingly rapid

rise for a team who were mired in the relegation zone when Howe was hired soon after the £305 million (\$376 million) takeover from unpopular former owner Mike Ashley in late 2021.

Saudi's Public Investment Fund holds an 80 percent stake in the club, but Howe is the public face of Newcastle's renaissance.

Despite a recent dip in form,

Newcastle are fifth in the Premier League, just two places behind United.

For this weekend, they are focused on winning the club's first major trophy since the 1969 Inter-Cities Fairs Cup.

Newcastle's last major domestic prize came in 1955 when they lifted the FA Cup.

For such a football-obsessed city to go decades without a trophy has been cruel punishment for the long-suffering 'Toon Army', who will be watching Newcastle's first domestic final appearance since losing to United in the 1999 FA Cup.

Fittingly for a final offering potential catharsis to both clubs, Newcastle are set to start much-maligned goalkeeper Loris Karius.

Nick Pope's suspension has given Karius a chance at redemption in his first competitive match in almost two years.

Karius is best known for his costly howlers in Liverpool's 2018 Champions League final defeat against Real Madrid.

"It would be a magnificent chance for him to rewrite the story of his career," Howe said.

"That's the beauty of football. We never know what is going to happen. This unpredictability is what makes it such an amazing thing to watch."



## Murray saves five match points to reach Qatar Open decider

AP ■ DOHA

Former world number one Andy Murray was at a loss to explain how he saved five match points Friday to overcome Czech challenger Jiri Lehecka and reach the Qatar Open final.

The 35-year-old launched into a roar of delight after the 6-0, 3-6, 7-6 (8/6) triumph that took him into his first ATP tour final for eight months.

Murray now has to take on Russian world number eight Daniil Medvedev who beat Canadian Felix Auger-Aliassime 6-4, 7-6 (9/7) in the second semi-final.

"That was one of the most amazing turnarounds of my career," said Murray, a two-time winner in Qatar.

"I don't know how I managed to turn that match around."

Murray saved two match points on his own serve and three as his 21-year-old opponent tried to complete victory with his own big serve.

The British veteran, who had a hip replacement in 2019, has now come back from eight match points in four matches at the Doha tournament.

He has fought two tie-breaks and been taken to three sets in every match this week.

"I have never experienced this in my whole career," he said.

After he took the first set without losing a game in just 32 minutes, Murray had believed this would be an easier encounter -- "and then it turned into something completely different".

Murray had the best of a nervy start by both players. Considered one of the hottest prospects on the tour, Lehecka, who beat top seed Andrey Rublev in the quarter-final, served first, went 15-40 down, had two advantage points and then let Murray take over.

The Czech rediscovered his big serve and powerful returns for the second set when he broke Murray's serve in straight games. Murray reclaimed two match points on his serve in the deciding set and Lehecka had three more when serving at 5-4. Murray took the game and held his nerve in the tie break.

"This week could have ended very differently," admitted the former two-time Wimbledon champion.

"But the way that I have played in the really important moments, the critical moments, has shown that there is a confidence and a belief in my game that has been missing for a while."

Murray last reached an ATP final in Stuttgart last June. He has not won a tournament since Antwerp in 2019 and has lost to Medvedev in straight sets in each of their two meetings.

Medvedev said Murray's performance in Doha has been "unbelievable".

"I will have to be at my best from the first to the last point," said the Russian.

"He is a legend," Medvedev added. "He is playing better and better, not only here but in general. He is fighting, it is amazing to see."

## Milan goalkeeper Maignan back after five months: Pioli

AP ■ MILAN

Mike Maignan will return as AC Milan goalkeeper for this weekend's Serie A clash with Atalanta after five months out injured, coach Stefano Pioli said on Saturday.

France international Maignan suffered a calf injury in Les Bleus' 2-0 win over Austria in the Nations League in September, causing him to miss out on the World Cup as Hugo Lloris' deputy.

His last match for Milan was the champions' home defeat to league leaders Napoli a few days before.

"Tomorrow Mike will play in goal," Pioli told reporters ahead of Sunday's match.

"He was the best goalkeeper last season, he has given us so much in all sorts of sit-



uations. He hasn't played for five months but he's doing well both physically and mentally.

"He's been like a caged lion, he's very motivated."

Maignan, 27, was one of the stars of Milan's charge to a first Serie A title since 2011 last season and had been performing well before his injury.

He will have two matches to return to his best form before Milan travel to London next month for the second leg of their Champions League last 16 tie with Tottenham Hotspur.

Pioli has already conceded that Milan's title defence is over as they sit 18 points behind Napoli in fourth, with a fight on their hands for a place in next season's Champions League.

## Rudisha open to coaching Indian athletes; not easy for Neeraj to defend Olympic gold



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Two-time Olympic Games gold medallist in 800m, Kenya's David Rudisha, is keen to train Indian sprinters and middle-distance runners when he calls time on his illustrious career.

The 34-year-old two-time world champion in 800m, who defended his 2012 London Olympics gold in Rio four years later, also said winning back-to-back gold medals at the quadrennial games is not easy but India's ace javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra can achieve the feat if he continues to train the way he was before the 2020 Tokyo Games.

Rudisha, who is reaching the "end of my professional career", added his retirement could open up opportunities for him to coach aspiring runners.

Asked if he would be keen to train Indian sprinters and middle-distance runners after calling time on his professional career, Rudisha, 34, said, "Well, after I am done with some level 1 and 2 coaching programmes, yes I can have a fresh start and that (coaching) could be an option. There are no boundaries for coaches. You are like a teacher and whoever wants to learn is most welcome."

Rudisha, who is here as the brand ambassador of Sunday's Apollo Tyres New Delhi Marathon, is one of the few track athletes to have won back-

to-back Olympic gold and says that contrary to belief, it's not an easy task to retain the crown.

On whether Chopra will be able to defend his Tokyo crown, Rudisha said, "It's a tough eight-year journey performing in consecutive Olympics. So many new athletes are coming in."

"My experience says it's not easy to defend (gold) and there are no guarantees, given that so many other things like physical fitness, preparation etc too play a major role. But, yes, it's still achievable."

The celebrated athlete also indicated he is not happy with the way Kenya's reputation has been tarnished by runners taking the easy route of doping to achieve success.

Three top Kenyan athletes were banned for a collective period of eight years by the Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU) for breaking anti-doping rules in December last year, thus adding to the growing list of runners bringing shame to the country.

In fact, the country faces the prospect of being banned by World Athletics because of the dope menace having reached crisis levels.

The soft-spoken Rudisha, belonging to the Masai tribe, used very harsh words to describe how the runners were tarring the country's image.

"Doping is a big problem in our country. It's damaging the sport there. If I am right, Kenya has been topping the (doping) list for 10 years now. Some athletes take shortcuts, which is bad."

"I fail to understand when they have the talent, why do they resort to such practices. They are spoiling the name of the country, and by doing so are robbing those who have worked hard to get there. They are ignorant that they are harming the prospects of their own brothers and sisters."

The AIU had banned marathon runners Alice Jepkemboi Kimutai and Johnstone Kibet Maiyo for three years, and sprinter Mark Otieno for two in December.

Even though Kenya is planning to criminalise doping in athletics, there seems to be little to deter athletes from taking the short cut.

## Zinchenko captains Arsenal as mark of respect to Ukraine



AP ■ LONDON

Oleksandr Zinchenko was named captain of Premier League leaders Arsenal for their trip to Leicester on Saturday to mark the first anniversary of the war in Ukraine.

The Ukrainian international replaced Martin Odegaard as the Gunners' normal skipper at the King Power stadium and wore an armband in the colours of the Ukrainian flag. "Zinchenko will wear our captain's armband today, as a mark of respect and love on the first anniversary of the conflict in Ukraine," Arsenal posted on Twitter.

The 26-year-old joined Arsenal last summer from Manchester City, where he won four league titles in the past five seasons. One of his country's most talented players, Zinchenko has played 52 times for Ukraine.

## Purcell, Duckworth reach Bengaluru Open final

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Max Purcell placed himself in line to win a second ATP Challenger title within a week when he marched into the final of the Bengaluru Open with a victory over Hamad Medjedovic here on Saturday.

In the semi-final, Purcell, who had won the trophy in Chennai last Sunday, defeated Serbia's Medjedovic 6-2, 5-7, 7-6 (4). Purcell of Australia will face No. 2 seed and countryman James Duckworth in the summit clash on Sunday. Duckworth defeated compatriot James McCabe 6-3, 6-3 in the other last-four clash.



## Prannoy knocked out, bad day for seeded players

PTI ■ PUNE

Top seed and India No. 9 HS Prannoy suffered a shock second round defeat at the hands of Kiran George on a day several other seeded players fell by the wayside in the 84th Senior National Badminton Tournament here.

While George of Airport Authority of India (AAI) stunned Prannoy 21-12, 21-15 in the day's most sensational result, Aakarshi Kashyap knocked out second seed Tanya Hemant at the Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex. In another men's singles match, second seed Kidambi Srikanth also struggled before getting his act together against Manipur's Maisnam Meiraba, who went down 19-21, 21-18, 17-21 after giving a good fight.

Srikanth managed to win a game point in the first game, but Meiraba bounced back in the second. The decider was no different, as both shuttlers were tied 13-13.

Srikanth put himself in a comfortable lead by winning the next four points in a row, but Meiraba didn't let his opponent have an easy way out and again levelled the scores at 17-17. At that crucial juncture, Srikanth's experience gave him the edge as he pocketed the game by winning the next four points.

In the women's singles, Aakarshi impressed with her performance in the seniors.

All eyes were on Tanya, who had won the women's singles title in the 31st Iran Fajr International Challenge in Tehran earlier this month. She started well with an 11-7 lead in the first game, but Aakarshi soon found the momentum and put Tanya in a tight corner with a 14-12 lead.

In other matches, Aditi Bhat knocked out seventh seed Saad Dharmadhikari 21-11, 21-5, while 14th seed Deepshikha Singh went down to Surya Charishma Tamiri 14-21, 21-10, 11-21.

# Alcaraz reaches Rio Open semifinals

AP ■ RIO DE JANEIRO

World number two Carlos Alcaraz clawed back a break in both sets and dominated the tiebreaker to beat Dusan Lajovic 6-4, 7-6 (7/0) on Friday in the ATP Rio Open quarter-finals.

The 19-year-old Spaniard notched his third win in three matches against 32-year-old Lajovic, including a quarterfinal win over the 80th-ranked Serbian in the quarterfinals at the Argentina Open last week.

Alcaraz went on to win that title to cement his return from a four-month injury layoff that saw him miss the Australian Open.

In semifinals Saturday, Alcaraz will face Chilean Qualifier Nicolas Jarry, who toppled sixth-seeded Sebastian Baez of Argentina 6-3, 7-6 (7/3).

Alcaraz is seeking to defend the title that made him the youngest ever winner of an ATP 500 tournament last year.

Second-seeded Briton Cameron Norrie booked his semifinal berth with a 4-6, 6-1, 6-4 victory over Bolivian Hugo Dellian.

Norrie, trying to reach his third final of the year, will face Spain's Bernabe Zapata Miralles, who beat compatriot Albert Ramos Vinolas 6-4, 2-6, 6-4.

Alcaraz improved his perfect record in 2023 to 7-0, but he



had to figure some things out along the way.

"It was a very complicated match," Alcaraz said. "Dusan has a great forehand, a great backhand, a great serve, very good shots, and today he has shown it, he has given a recital."

"But I was solid. In the end, I was very happy to have solved those problems."

Alcaraz trailed 2-4 in both sets, reeling off the last four games of the first before finding himself in another battle in the second.

He belted 32 winners to Lajovic's 13 and won 16 of 17 points at the net.

But 25 unforced errors contributed to the difficulties that saw him go down an early break

in both sets.

In the second, he broke back with a stinging backhand winner to level the set at 4-4.

He led 40-0 in the 11th game only to surrender his serve and saved a set point on the way to a break in the next game that forced the tiebreaker.

"Those moments are where the very good players differ from the rest of the players, and I try to play at my highest level," Alcaraz said.

Alcaraz, whose five titles last year included the US Open and made him the youngest-ever world number one, was dominant throughout the decider, putting it away on his first match point with a forehand passing winner.



# ‘I was considered as failed captain’

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Former India skipper Virat Kohli says he was labelled a "failed" captain by a section of experts and fans for not winning an ICC trophy.

Under Kohli's captaincy, India failed to win the 2017 Champions Trophy, the 2019 World Cup, the 2021 World Test Championship final against New Zealand, besides suffering a premature exit from the 2021 T20 World Cup in the UAE.

But Kohli said a lot was made out of the losses, given that he was part of the 2011 World Cup-winning side, the 2013 Champions Trophy-winning unit under MS Dhoni and also a member of the team that won five Test matches.

Asked if he ever felt the pinch of not lifting an ICC trophy while leading the side, Kohli said, "Look you play to win tournaments. A lot was made of it (not lifting an ICC trophy as skipper). I captained in the 2017 Champions Trophy, I captained the 2019 World Cup side, I captained India in the (inaugural) World Test Championship final.

"So, after three ICC tournaments... We lost the last (2021) T20 World Cup. We didn't qualify. We reached the finals of 2017 Champions Trophy, semi-finals of the (2019) World Cup, final of (World) Test Championship, and I was considered as a failed captain."

Kohli was speaking at the Season 2 of the RCB Podcast.

The former captain said he prided himself for the "cultural changes" he was able to bring into the team.

"I never judged myself from that point of view (defeats in ICC tournaments). What we ended up achieving as a team and as a cultural change for me, that's always going to be a mat-



ter of pride because a tournament happens for a certain period of time, but a culture happens over a long period of time, and for that you need consistency," Kohli said on Royal Challengers Bangalore's podcast.

"For that (bringing about

cultural change), you need more character than just winning a tournament. So, I won the (2011) World Cup as a player, I won the (2013) Champions Trophy as a player, I've been part of a team that has won five Test matches.

"If you look at it from that point of view, there have been people who have never won a World Cup. I'm always grateful for what I have."

He drew comparison with Sachin Tendulkar, saying the legend won a World Cup in his

sixth attempt, while he was part of the team that won the global trophy in his very first appearance.

"Sachin Tendulkar was playing his sixth World Cup if I am not wrong, and that was the one he won. I was able to be a part of the team first time and I ended up being part of a winning side.

"So, if I have to look at what has gone wrong in my career, it's very easy to do that. But I have to look at what's gone right in my career and I'm grateful for that."

"I'm not mad for my trophy cabinet to be full. To me that's always been a byproduct of how you conduct yourself, (the) kind of discipline you have and how you are striving towards excellence on a daily basis. I feel I have been very honest to that aspect."

Kohli said Dhoni was the only person who reached out to him when he was going through a lean patch. The Delhi cricketer has overcome that phase and last month scored his third hundred in four ODIs.

The Indian superstar had ended a long wait for his first hundred in close to three years with a ton in the Asia Cup T20 tournament last September.

Kohli shares a strong bond with Dhoni and that reflects in the manner in which he talks about India's World Cup-winning skipper.

"What is interesting is that throughout this phase apart from (wife) Anushka, who has been the biggest source of strength for me because she has been with me throughout this whole time and she has seen me very closely as how have I felt, things that I have gone through, the kind of things that have happened.

"The only person who, apart

from my childhood coach and family, genuinely reached out to me has been MS Dhoni," Kohli said.

Kohli shared the dressing room with Dhoni for 11 years between 2008 and 2019 and calls the charismatic cricketer from Ranchi his 'captain forever'.

"He reached out to me and you can rarely get in touch with him. If I call him on any random day, 99 percent he will not pick up (the phone), because he just does not look at the phone."

"So, for him to reach out to me, twice it has happened now and one of the things that he'd mentioned in the message while reaching out to me was that: 'when you are expected to be strong and looked at as a strong individual people forget to ask how are you doing?'"

"So, it (Dhoni's words) hit home for me because I have always been looked at as someone who is very confident, mentally very strong, who can endure any circumstances and find a way and show us the way."

"Sometimes, what you realise is that at any given point of time in life as a human being you need to take a couple of steps backwards, understand how you are doing, how your wellbeing is placed. He knows exactly what is going on. He understand it because he's been there himself and he experience what I experienced right now."

"So it is only out of experience and feeling those feelings in that moment is the only way you can truly be compassionate towards another individual who is going through the same thing," Kohli added.

When Kohli abruptly quit Test captaincy following the tour of South Africa in January 2022, he had revealed that Dhoni was the only one who had messaged him.



## Poms take control of 2nd Test against NZ

AP ■ WELLINGTON

James Anderson validated his elevation to top spot in the world Test bowling rankings with a lethal opening spell as England took full control of the second Test against New Zealand on Saturday.

Veteran seamer Anderson snared 3-37, sending the Black Caps crashing to 138-7 when rain forced an early end to day two in Wellington, after England declared their first innings at 435-8.

Spinner Jack Leach also took three scalps, leaving New Zealand staring at a 297-run deficit with three days remaining.

Red-hot England are on course for a sweep of the two-match series, having won the first Test by 267 runs at Mount Maunganui with the same mix of aggressive batting and potent new-ball bowling.

Joe Root was unbeaten on 153 when captain Ben Stokes made his assertive declaration, leaving the tourists half an hour to attack the Black Caps top order before lunch. Anderson answered the call, removing Devon Conway (0) and Kane Williamson (4) to have the hosts

languishing at 12-2.

The exacting paceman removed Will Young (2) after the break to underscore why he'd been reinstated to No 1 in the ICC player rankings released this week - the oldest player to hold the perch, at 40.

All three batsmen feathered edges to gloveman Ben Foakes, extending the number of Test victims caught by a wicket-keeper off Anderson to 188 - 36 more than any other bowler.

Left-handers Tom Latham (35) and Henry Nicholls (30) launched a rearguard but both fell when attempting to reverse-sweep Leach (3-45), offering catches to fielders around the bat.

First-Test centurion Tom Blundell head reached 25 not out before play was called off at 5.45 pm (0445 GMT), and his free-wheeling captain Tim Southee was unbeaten on 23 — in an innings featuring two sixes.

About 25 overs were lost to the late rain, mirroring the premature finish to day one when the clouds opened.

However, England still have ample time to push for a seventh straight Test win and consign New Zealand to an eighth successive winless Test.



## Barring one session in Delhi, Oz have been outstanding: Maxwell

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Glenn Maxwell feels Australia were "outstanding" in the first two Tests against India barring the one self-destructing session in Delhi on day three.

Australia lost nine wickets for 52 runs in their second innings to squander the slight advantage they had at the start of day three. "I think they've showed a lot of fight. Bar that one session I thought they were outstanding. It's bloody difficult over there - it's not an easy place to play, it's so foreign for us."

"But I feel like, apart from a couple of little moments, we've been in the fight, we've been matching India at different times and they've shown a lot of fight," he was quoted as saying by the Sydney Morning Herald.

Among the current lot, Maxwell is the only one to have scored a Test century in India alongside Steve Smith.

"It's just sticking it out for a little bit longer and I'm sure that'll be the message, to keep trying to stay up with India and take a hold of those key moments in the game."

"At the start of day three [in Delhi] I thought we were well

ahead in the game, and to be ahead of India at any stage of a Test match over there is a sign we're doing the right things, it's just doing it for a little bit longer," he said.

Maxwell has been named in the ODI squad for the three games in India beginning March 17. He has not played international cricket since breaking his leg at a birthday party in a freak accident last November.

"I've been in constant touch with the selectors for a while now, and it probably hasn't happened as fast as I'd like," he said. "I probably would've liked to be playing a little bit earlier, but the fact I knew the timeline for the one day side and the realistic goal, I was able to manipulate my rehab program to fit that timeline I was racing against."

"After the World Cup last year I was pretty cooked, and it's never nice to have a break of this magnitude, but it's also not the worst timing to have a little bit of time away from the game and I did spend most of it in rehab, physio and gym sessions, but it was a nice little refresher. Hopefully this will extend a little bit of time at the back end of my career."

## Australia aim to spoil South Africa's T20 WC party

AP ■ CAPE TOWN

South Africa's women cricketers will go where none of their male counterparts have gone when they contest their very first World Cup final at Newlands in Cape Town on Sunday.

The hosts reached the final of the women's T20 World Cup with a thrilling six-run win over England but now they will be up against Australia, a team of proven World Cup winners, who have won five of the previous six T20 finals.

The Aussies also had a tight semi-final when they edged past India by just five runs but they are loaded with experience which their captain Meg Lanning believes will help them in the pressure moments.

"Having been in pressure situations before helps a lot," said Lanning on Saturday.

"We're not going to be the team

that everyone's cheering for.

"We're expecting South Africa to come out to play to their full strength and they're riding a wave of emotion as well."

"I expect an incredible atmosphere and an incredible game at an amazing venue. It's a World Cup final and there's nowhere to hide."

Lanning said there would be pressure on both teams.

"It comes down to holding your nerve under pressure," she said.

Following South Africa's dramatic upset of England in Friday's semi-final, there were queues outside the ground on Saturday as new-found followers of the women's game sought to buy tickets.

That win was accompanied by scenes of unbridled joy as 7500 spectators inside the ground cheered them on.

Sunday's crowd is expected to be



considerably bigger with the game marking a watershed moment at an iconic venue that hosted its first men's Test match in 1889.

No South African team, men or women, had previously gone beyond the semi-finals of either a 50-overs or T20 World Cup.

"We've always known we had the ability to get to a final, I think it was just to get through that semi-final," said South African captain Sune Luus.

While Australia stormed through the group stages before being pushed all the way by India in the semi-finals, South Africa lost two of their first three games.

They looked anything but championship contenders when they lost the tournament opening match against Sri Lanka and they went down by six wickets in a group match against Australia in Gqeberha.

## MI begin WPL camp ahead of inaugural season

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Mumbai Indians began their camp for the inaugural season of the Women's Premier League here on Saturday.

The team started its first practice session under the watchful eyes of the support team, headed by chief coach Charlotte Edwards. "It's been brilliant. It's been great to get the team out here. Obviously, our own venue and to see the players, it's been brilliant for me. Heard a lot about these players and to finally get them into the nets and watch them in action it's been fantastic," Edwards said in a release.

Mumbai Indians will play their first match against Gujarat Giants on March 4 at the DY Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai.

## Richa lone Indian in Women's T20 WC Player of Tournament shortlist

PTI ■ DUBAI

Young wicketkeeper-batter Richa Ghosh was the lone Indian among nine players shortlisted for the Women's T20 World Cup Player of the Tournament. India made a semi-final exit with a heartbreaking five-run loss against five-time champions Australia in Cape Town on Thursday.

The 19-year-old's shone in her role as a finisher in South Africa.

She smashed two scores in the 40s including an unbeaten 47 against England that took her side to within sight of victory.

Richa was only dismissed twice from five innings at the tournament and scored at a

strike-rate greater than 130 that further displayed her attacking prowess.

Overall she finished with 168 runs at an average of 68. Behind the stumps also she impressed with her agility and took a screamer to dismiss English opener Danni Wyatt.

Players from Australia dominate the ICC shortlist with three from the reigning champions, followed by two from England and South Africa. India and the West Indies have one each.

Skipper Meg Lanning (139 runs, average 69.50), wicket-keeper batter Alyssa Healy (171 runs, average 57) and all-rounder Ash Gardner (81 runs and nine wickets) were the



Australians in the list.

All-rounder Nat Sciver-Brunt (216 runs. Average 72) and spinner Sophie Ecclestone, who finished with 11 wickets with a tidy economy of 4.15 were picked from England.

The two from South Africa were Laura, Wolvaardt, who played a key role in taking the team to the final, and opener Tazmin Brits.

Brits saved her best performance for when it mattered most with a stylish 68 against England in the semi-final on Friday.

West Indies skipper Hayley Matthews, who dished out a sensational all-round show with 130 runs and four wickets, completed the list.

## Deepti Sharma named UP Warriorz vice-captain

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

Ace Indian all-rounder Deepti Sharma was on Saturday announced as the vice-captain of UP Warriorz in the upcoming Women's Premier League.

The 25-year-old, who was bought by the franchise for Rs 2.6 crore, is a key member of the Indian women's team set-up and is one of the few players from the country to have turned out in franchise tournaments outside the country.

"Along with captain Alyssa Healy, and the other senior players, we hope we can make the team function well and play some fantastic cricket," Deepti said in a statement.

## Sharath, Sathiyam, Manika to lead Indian challenge

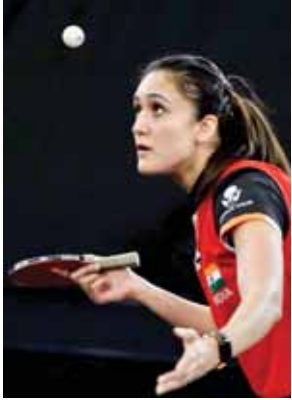
PTI ■ PANJIM

The likes of Sharath Kamal, Sathiyam Gnanasekaran and Manika Batra will spearhead the Indian challenge in the World Table Tennis (WTT) Star Contender, scheduled to be held here from February 27 to March 5.

This is the first time Goa is hosting the tournament.

Sharath along with Sathiyam, Payas Jain and Wesley Do Rosario will lead the charge in the men's singles draw for India, while the women's singles will see Manika spearhead the challenge with Sreeja Akula and Suhana Saini.

The main draw of the event will start from March 1, after two



days of qualifications.

"The WTT Star Contender Goa marks a special moment for table tennis in India and I am thrilled to be a part of this land-

mark event.

"I strongly believe that this event will offer a unique platform for India to demonstrate its ability to host more world-class table tennis events and drive growth and development of the sport within the country," said Sharath.

Leading the international challenge at the WTT Star Contender Goa will be reigning Olympic champion from China, Ma Long, world No.1 Fan Zhendong, Wang Chuqin, Tomokazu Harimoto and Truls Moregardh in the men's singles draw while the women's singles will see four of the top 5 paddlers in action including world No. 1 Sun Yingsha and reigning Olympic champion Chen Meng.

PTI ■ SOFIA

Reigning national championships silver medallist duo of Anamika and Anupama secured monumental victories to storm into the finals of the Strandja Memorial International Boxing Tournament here on Saturday.

Going up against Wassila Lkhadiri of France in the 50kg category, Anamika had a cautious start to the bout but showcased immense grit to make a fightback in the second round.

The Indian utilised her quick movement to dodge the two-time EUBC Championships bronze medallist's punches while attacking smartly to gain control of the contest.

Dishing out a dominating per-

formance in the third round, Anamika defeated her French opponent 4-1 to advance to the finals. She will face Hu Meiyi of China in the final on Sunday.

Like her national teammate, Anupama had to be at her razor-sharp best in her clash against the 2022 World Championships bronze medallist Jessica Bagley of Australia.

In what was a closely-contested bout between two pugilists of supreme technical ability, it was the Indian who got the better of her opponent with her attacking intent and confident approach.

Displaying stellar strength and landing accurate punches, Anupama managed to keep the Australian at bay and eked out an impressive 3-2 victory by split decision. She will take on Emma-Sue



Greentree of Australia in the final of the 81kg category.

In the other semi-final bouts, S Kalaivani, Shruti Yadav, and Monika suffered identical 0-5 defeats and bowed out of the competition.

While Kalaivani lost to 2022 Asian Youth silver medallist Saïdakhon Rakhmonova of Uzbekistan in the 48kg category, Shruti went down fighting against 2022 European silver medallist Christina Desmond of Ireland in the 70kg category.

Monika was beaten by Aynur Rzaeva of Azerbaijan in the +81kg category.

The tournament is witnessing participation of 398 pugilists, including 256 men and 142 women, the highest ever in the competition's history.



“Smoking kills. If you’re killed, you’ve lost a very important part of your life”  
— Michelle Yeoh



On a day of commemorations, reflection and tears, Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy’s defiant tone captured the national mood of resilience in the face of Europe’s biggest and deadliest war since World War II, write JOHN LLEICESTER, HANNA AARHIROVA and SAMYA KULLAB.

Ukraine’s leader pledged Friday to push for victory in 2023 as he and other Ukrainians marked the somber anniversary of the Russian invasion that upended their lives and Europe’s security.

It was Ukraine’s “longest day,” President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said, but the country’s dogged resistance a year on has proven that “every tomorrow is worth fighting for.”

On a day of commemorations, reflection and tears, the Ukrainian president’s defiant tone captured the national mood of resilience in the face of Europe’s biggest and deadliest war since World War II. Zelenskyy, who has himself become a symbol of Ukraine’s refusal to bow to Moscow, said Ukrainians proved themselves to be invincible during “a year of pain, sorrow, faith and unity.”

“We have been standing for exactly one year,” Zelenskyy said. Feb. 24, 2022, he said, was “the longest day of our lives. The hardest day of our modern history. We woke up early and haven’t fallen asleep since.”

Ukrainians wept at memorials for their tens of thousands of dead — a toll growing inexorably as fighting rages in eastern Ukraine in particular. Although Friday marked the anniversary of the full-scale invasion, combat between Russian-backed forces and Ukrainian troops has raged in the country’s east since 2014. New video from there shot with a drone for The Associated Press showed how the town of Marinka has been razed, along with others.

The killing continued: Russian shelling killed another three civilians and wounded 19 others in the most recent 24-hour spell, Ukraine’s presidential office said.

Around the country, Ukrainians looked back at a year that changed their lives and at the clouded future.

“I can sum up the last year in three words: Fear, love, hope,” Oleksandr Hrynyk, a school director in Kharkiv, Ukraine’s second-largest city, said.

Lining up in the capital, Kyiv, to buy anniversary commemorative

postage stamps, Tetiana Klimkova described her heart as “falling and hurting.”

Still, “this day has become a symbol for me that we have survived for a whole year and will continue to live,” she said. “On this day, our children and grandchildren will remember how strong Ukrainians are mentally, physically, and spiritually.”

Although China on Friday called for a cease-fire, peace was nowhere in sight. Ukraine previously rejected a pause in the fighting for fear it would allow Russia to regroup militarily after bruising battlefield setbacks.

Zelenskyy gave qualified support to China’s apparent new interest in playing a diplomatic role, saying: “The fact that China started talking about Ukraine is not bad.”

“But the question is what follows the words,” he said during a wide-ranging news conference. “The question is in the steps and where they will lead to.”

A 12-point paper issued by China’s Foreign Ministry also urged an end to sanctions that aim to squeeze Russia’s economy.

That suggestion also looked like a non-starter, given that Western nations are working to further tighten the sanctions noose, not loosen it. Both the UK and US imposed more sanctions Friday.

Ukraine is readying another military push to roll back Russian forces with the help of weaponry that has poured in from the West. NATO member Poland said Friday that it had delivered four advanced Leopard 2A4 tanks, making it the first country to hand the German-made armor to Ukraine.

The prime minister of Poland said on a visit to Kyiv that more Leopards are coming. Poland’s defense minister said contributions from other countries would help form Ukraine’s first Leopard battalion of 31 tanks.

“Ukraine is entering a new period, with a new task — to win,” Ukrainian Defense Minister Oleksiy Reznikov said.

“It will not be easy. But we will

manage,” he added. “There is rage and a desire to avenge the fallen.”

Air raid alarms didn’t sound Friday in Kyiv, alleviating concerns that Russia might unleash another barrage of missiles to pile yet more sadness on Ukraine on the anniversary.

Still, the government recommended that schools move classes online, and office employees were asked to work from home. And even as they rode Kyiv’s subway to work, bought coffee and got busy, Ukrainians were unavoidably haunted by thoughts of loss and memories of when missiles struck, troops rolled across Ukraine’s borders and a refugee exodus began a year ago.

Back then, there were fears the country might fall within weeks. Zelenskyy referred to those dark moments in a video address.

“We fiercely fought for every day. And we endured the second day. And then, the third,” he said. “And we still know: Every tomorrow is worth fighting for.”

The anniversary was also poignant for the parents of children born exactly a year ago as bombs began killing and maiming.

“It’s a tragedy for the whole country, for every Ukrainian,” said Alina Mustafaieva, who gave birth to daughter Yeva that day.

“My family was lucky. We didn’t lose anyone or anything. But many did, and we have to share this loss together,” she said.

Tributes to Ukraine’s resilience took place in other countries. The Eiffel Tower in Paris and the Colosseum in Rome were among monuments illuminated in Ukraine’s colors — yellow and blue. In Berlin, a wrecked Russian tank was put on display.

Anti-war activists in Belgrade, Serbia, left a cake covered with red icing representing blood and a skull on top on a pavement near the Russian Embassy, which police stopped them from approaching.

In Russia, media and rights groups reported more police arrests of



WE FIERCELY  
FOUGHT FOR  
EVERY DAY. AND  
WE ENDURED THE  
SECOND DAY. AND  
THEN, THE  
THIRD,” HE SAID.  
“AND WE STILL  
KNOW: EVERY  
TOMORROW IS  
WORTH FIGHTING  
FOR



protesters who took to streets with antiwar slogans and flowers in various parts of the country.

The war’s one-year mark kept Zelenskyy’s schedule exceptionally busy. Zelenskyy kicked off the day with an early morning tweet that promised: “We know that 2023 will be the year of our victory!”

He followed that up with his video address, in which he also pledged not to abandon Ukrainians living under Russian occupation. “One way or another, we will liberate all our lands,” he vowed. He also addressed troops on a Kyiv square and handed out honors, including to the widow and daughter of a fallen soldier, telling them: “We will never forget.” In a Kyiv hospital, he decorated wounded fighters.

Unable to fly by plane from Ukraine while its airspace is closed because of the war, Zelenskyy did the next best thing at his news conference, spending nearly 2 1/2 hours with journalists from around the world. He thanked country after country for its support.

Emotional at times and playful at others, the president offered a glimpse of the people-skills he has used in corralling world leaders to back him and his country’s cause. He pushed again for more Western weaponry, including combat aircraft flown by the

Royal Air Force in Britain that its government, led by Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, isn’t for the moment willing to send.

“Where (are) our aircraft, Typhoon?” Zelenskyy said, switching to speaking in English. “Please ask my friend Rishi.”

The news conference was televised live, which was unusual. Generally during the war, Zelenskyy’s speeches and comments are broadcast with a delay until he has left a location, to protect him from a possible attack.

Zelenskyy argued that Ukraine cannot negotiate with Russia while its aggression continues. “Leave our territory. Stop bombing us,” he said. He also argued that Russian President Vladimir Putin should be held responsible for war crimes.

“This is not a child who broke something and can be forgiven,” he said.

Zelenskyy said one of his biggest disappointments in the invasion was seeing people who could have fought leave the country, a reference to officials who fled. He said a low point was when Russian atrocities were discovered in the recaptured town of Bucha near Kyiv.

“It was very scary,” he said. “We saw that the devil is not somewhere out there, but on Earth.”

A year on, casualty figures are horrific on both sides, although Moscow and Kyiv keep precise numbers under wraps. Western estimates suggest hundreds of thousands of killed and wounded.

In Kharkiv, Ukrainian serviceman Dmytro Kovalenko was buried Friday in the city’s main cemetery for soldiers, which has added 15 new rows of graves this past year. Kovalenko was killed Monday in the fiercely contested eastern city of Bakhmut. Those saying final goodbyes included Andrii Zatsorenko, a friend who lay red carnations on the grave.

“I never thought I’d be giving him flowers,” Zatsorenko said.

“The war will not end soon,” he added. “We have a powerful enemy.” (AP)



# HYSTERECTOMY & EMOTIONAL TOLL

Not all women or their families are aware that hysterectomy (uterus removal) can have mental health issues like depression, mood change and anxiety. For some, it can be minor and short-lived while for others it can be a chronic state. Many doctors too say several treatments for benign gynecological conditions are available that would allow a woman to avoid the surgery. In fact, the Federation of Obstetric and Gynecological Societies of India in its campaign ‘Save the Uterus’ advocates and trains doctors for non-invasive procedures to treat uterine and related issues rather than simply removing the uterus. THE HEALTH PIONEER reports



After the Caesarean section, hysterectomy is the most commonly performed surgery amongst women globally. Several countries that used to have high record of hysterectomy surgeries are reporting a decline, however, cases in India are on the rise. This warrants an analysis of the prevalence, causes, and consequences of the procedure in the country. As for women above the age of 45, the Longitudinal Ageing Study in India (2017–18) found that around 11 percent of them have undergone hysterectomy operations. It is most prevalent in Andhra Pradesh and Punjab with 23.1 percent and 21.2 percent respectively, implying that at least one in every five elderly women underwent a hysterectomy. The prevalence of hysterectomies amongst women above 45 years of age was lowest in states in Northeast India. The most commonly reported reasons include menstrual bleeding or pain, having fibroids or cysts, cervical dysplasia—a precancerous condition, pelvic inflammatory disease, an abnormal thickening

of the uterine lining (endometrial hyperplasia), and sometimes cancer and postpartum haemorrhage. However, there are various researches that suggest that doctors in private hospitals sometimes prescribe the procedure even when a hysterectomy is not a necessity to gain profits. There are also cases of women, who are poor and illiterate, that are being conned into getting surgery by frauds posing as doctors or hospitals claiming treatment compensation from the state's funds reserved for those hailing from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. But Hysterectomy has its pitfalls such as raising the risk of women developing long-term mental health issues like depression and anxiety. According to a study published in the journal Menopause which used data from the Rochester Epidemiology Project, found an absolute risk increase of 6.6% for depression and 4.7% for anxiety over 30 years. Senior author Shannon Laughlin-Tommaso, a Mayo Clinic OB-GYN said that for women who underwent hys-

## HEALTH TIPS

- Get enough sleep. Stick to a sleep schedule. Have regular times to go to bed and wake up. Keep your room dark and cool. Limit alcohol, caffeine, large meals, and physical activity several hours before bed.
- Exercise. Be active for at least 30 minutes on most days of the week.
- Try to relax. Find ways to ease your stress. Relaxation techniques or reading can help. So can spending quiet time outdoors.
- Find support. Besides your partner and doctor, you may also want to confide in a friend. Or, consider joining a support group for women who've had a hysterectomy.
- Ask about treatment. Some women need medication to ease symptoms of menopause and depression. Talk therapy helps some women, too. Ask your doctor about what might work for you.
- Get to know your body. Knowledge is the antidote for anxiety. Ask your doctor to explain any physical changes you might feel or see. Sometimes all it takes is a little health education to ease your fears.

terectomy between the ages of 18 and 35, the risk of depression was higher, with absolute risk increase over 30 years of 12%. "Our study shows that removing the uterus may have more effect on physical and mental health than previously thought," said Dr. Laughlin-Tommaso. "Because women often get a hysterectomy at a young age, knowing the risks associated with the procedure even years later is important." She said several treatments for benign gynecological conditions are available that would allow a woman to avoid hysterectomy. In India, a study conducted by the Maharashtra Legislative Council revealed that out of the 13,861 women in Beed who had undergone the operation, more than 45 percent of them experienced aching joints, back pain, depression, insomnia etc. Other studies suggest that post-operation, side effects like ovarian reserve reduction, increased incidence of heart disease, and early onset of osteoporosis, amongst several others, can be witnessed. Considerable weight gain

after the surgery is also common, which impedes the agility of women and their capacity to work. Increased risk of diabetes has also been found to be linked to hysterectomy. These perilous effects raise questions about policy and legislation around operating in India. Generally, patients who undergo hysterectomy believe that the surgery would relieve them from gynecological problems, but it can also cause new health issues. "The women are not informed about the long-term consequences of this surgery. Women after the surgery can suffer from many musculoskeletal disorders like back pain, muscle pain, and joint pain. A recent study published in the National Library of Medicine too has concluded that women who have undergone a hysterectomy removing only the uterus and leaving the ovaries, have an increased risk for long-term anxiety and depression. The study excluded any participants who may previously have had issues with depression or anxiety to obtain unbiased results. Similarly, a peer-reviewed publication written by mental health experts stated that when the rats studied were put into a medically induced menopause (which is the result of a hysterectomy where the ovaries are also removed) there were also several changes in their brains that raised anxiety-driven behavior and despair. It is understandable that young women who have undergone a hysterectomy that wanted to have children may afterward suffer from depression and sadness. But the aforementioned study revealed that it went even beyond this particular age group. Healthcare professionals and those who are there to facilitate women's reproductive health need to be made more aware of the connections between women's reproductive

## Exercise more effective than medicines to manage mental health, says study

University of South Australia researchers are calling for exercise to be a mainstay approach for managing depression as a new study shows that physical activity is 1.5 times more effective than counselling or the leading medications. Published in the British Journal of Sports Medicine, the review is the most comprehensive to date, encompassing 97 reviews, 1039 trials and 128,119 participants. It shows that physical activity is extremely beneficial for improving symptoms of depression, anxiety, and distress.

Specifically, the review showed that exercise interventions that were 12 weeks or shorter were most effective at reducing mental health symptoms, highlighting the speed at which physical activity can make a change. The largest benefits were seen among people with depression, pregnant and postpartum women, healthy individuals, and people diagnosed with HIV or kidney disease. According to the World Health Organization, one in every eight people worldwide (970 million people) live with a mental disorder. Poor mental health costs the world economy approximately \$2.5 trillion each year, a cost projected to rise to \$6 trillion by 2030. In Australia, an estimated one in five people (aged 16–85) have experienced a mental disorder in the past 12 months.



Lead UniSA researcher, Dr Ben Singh, says physical activity must be prioritised to better manage the growing cases of mental health conditions. "Physical activity is known to help improve mental health. Yet despite the evidence, it has not been widely adopted as a first-choice treatment," Dr Singh says. "Our review shows that physical activity interventions can significantly reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety in all clinical populations, with some groups showing even greater signs of improvement. "Higher intensity exercise had greater improvements for depression and anxiety, while longer durations had smaller effects when compared to short and mid-duration bursts. "We also found that all types of physical activity and

exercise were beneficial, including aerobic exercise such as walking, resistance training, Pilates, and yoga. "Importantly, the research shows that it doesn't take much for exercise to make a positive change to your mental health." Senior researcher, UniSA's Prof Carol Maher, says the study is the first to evaluate the effects of all types of physical activity on depression, anxiety, and psychological distress in all adult populations. "Examining these studies as a whole is an effective way to for clinicians to easily understand the body of evidence that supports physical activity in managing mental health disorders. "We hope this review will underscore the need for physical activity, including structured exercise interventions, as a mainstay approach for managing depression and anxiety."

organs and their wide range of influence over a woman's overall health, say the doctors. In turn, women need to understand these correlations and take control of their

reproductive health. It is always a good idea to research and understand all treatment options available and the associated pros and cons of each. Numerous studies have shown

that most gynecologists fail to mention nonsurgical treatment options like Uterine Fibroid Embolization (UFE) to their patients that have symptomatic uterine fibroids.

## HEALTH BRIEFS



From left to right: Dr Vivek Mahajan, Orthopedic & Joint Replacement Surgeon, ISIC, Naveen Kumar, a Judo Player and Dr Nishith Mittal, Medical Superintendent, ISIC

**STATE-OF-THE-ART ISIC HELPING SPORTS PROFESSIONALS BOUNCE BACK** Advanced rehabilitation, state-of-the-art equipment and treatments like joint preservation at the Indian Spinal Injuries Centre (ISIC), Delhi, are helping sportspersons recover way faster than they used to in days gone by and take to the field again far quicker than expected. These are also coming in handy despite cases of sports injuries, particularly anterior or cruciate ligament (ACL), being on the rise in the country. National-level football player from Manipur, Madhabhi Devi is a case in point. She suffered severe injuries in her right knee and her ligaments were torn badly at an event. But with proper rehabilitation, she is now back on the field in the "quickest possible time of six weeks". Ditto is the case with Naveen Kumar from Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), an international Judo player. He had also undergone a successful ACL surgery at the ISIC. Another Judo player from the SSB Sarabjit Singh also had a similar experience. For their part, national Taekwondo player Ankit and bodybuilder Manthan are also among those who underwent ACL surgeries in the last 6-9 months.

### AIIA DELHI STARTS FIRST BATCH OF BAMS AT ITS GOA BRANCH

The Central Government-run All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) in Delhi is gradually spreading its wings. It recently held the induction programme of the first batch of 100 BAMS (Bachelor of Ayurvedic Medicine and Surgery) students at its satellite institute in Goa. Shripad Yesso Naik, MoS for Tourism and Ports, Shipping and Waterways said that under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Ayurveda has received a boost while Harilal B Menon, Vice Chancellor of Goa University, exhorted the students to conduct Goa-centric research. "Research is something that has been lacking in India. It is time that we adopt the formula of 're' plus 'search' for research. Being in Goa you should do Goa-centric research....One of the kidney diseases in North Goa is much



talked about and the cause behind it has not been identified. We should look forward to solving these issues," he added. "With time Ayurveda and its concepts have spread to as many as 40 countries including Japan, the Netherlands, USA, Brazil and has been curing patients from diseases," Dr. Manoj Nesari, Advisor, Ministry of Ayush, said. AIIA Director, Professor (Dr) Tanuja Manoj Nesari informed that within five years of its inception, the AIIA has treated as many as 15 lakh patients.

essay. Also at our best-in-class rehabilitation, our trained physiotherapists help patients recover quickly," Dr Mahajan pointed out. He further said that they performed high-end surgeries not only on Indian sportspersons, but also on professional players from Nigeria and Somalia who suffered severe sports injuries and needed early recovery to get back to their sporting arena. Sugandh Ahluwalia, Chief Strategy Officer, ISIC chipped in saying: "Young sports persons getting injured is disappointing. But with precision and expertise, our highly trained and qualified surgeons have been reconstructing ACL. It is a bone/joint preserving procedure. Post surgeries, systematic rehabilitation is carried out to resolve all complications."

## Electrodes grown in the brain: A ray of hope for neuro patients

The boundaries between biology and technology are becoming blurred. Researchers have successfully grown electrodes in living tissue using the body's molecules as triggers. The result, published in the journal *Science*, paves the way for the formation of fully integrated electronic circuits in living organisms. A report

For several decades, we have tried to create electronics that mimic biology. Now we let biology create the electronics for us," says Professor Magnus Berggren at the Laboratory for Organic Electronics, LOE, at Linköping University. Linking electronics to biological tissue is important to understand complex biological functions, combat diseases in the brain, and develop future interfaces between man and machine. However, conventional bioelectronics, developed in parallel with the semiconductor industry, have a fixed and static design that is difficult, if not impossible, to combine with living biological signal systems. To bridge this gap between biology and technology, researchers have developed a method for creating soft, substrate-free, electronically conductive materials in living tissue. By injecting a gel containing enzymes as the "assembly molecules", the researchers were able to grow electrodes in the tissue of zebrafish and medicinal leeches. "Contact with the body's substances changes the structure of the gel and makes it electrically conductive, which isn't before injection. Depending on the tissue, we can also adjust the composition of the gel to get the electrical process going," says Xenophon Strakos, researcher at LOE and Lund University and one of the study's main authors. The body's endogenous molecules are enough to trigger the formation of electrodes. There is no need for genetic modification or external signals, such as



light or electrical energy, which has been necessary in previous experiments. The Swedish researchers are the first in the world to succeed in this. Their study paves the way for a new paradigm in bioelectronics. Where it previously took implanted physical objects to start electronic processes in the body, injection of a viscous gel will be enough in the future. In their study, the researchers further show that the method can target the electronically conducting material to specific biological substructures and thereby create suitable interfaces for nerve stimulation. In the long term, the fabrication of fully integrated electronic circuits in living organisms may be possible. In experiments conducted at Lund University, the team successfully

achieved electrode formation in the brain, heart, and tail fins of zebrafish and around the nervous tissue of medicinal leeches. The animals were not harmed by the injected gel and were otherwise not affected by the electrode formation. One of the many challenges in these trials was to take the animals' immune system into account. "By making smart changes to the chemistry, we were able to develop electrodes that were accepted by the brain tissue and immune system. The zebrafish is an excellent model for the study of organic electrodes in brains," says Professor Roger Olsson at the Medical Faculty at Lund University, who also has a chemistry laboratory at the University of Gothenburg. It was Professor Roger Olsson who took the initiative for the study, after he read about the electronic rose developed by researchers at Linköping University in 2015. One research problem, and an important difference between plants and animals, was the difference in cell structure. Whereas plants have rigid cell walls which allow for the formation of electrodes, animal cells are more like a soft mass. Creating a gel with enough structure and the right combination of substances to form electrodes in such surroundings was a challenge that took many years to solve. "Our results open up for completely new ways of thinking about biology and electronics. We still have a range of problems to solve, but this study is a good starting point for future research," says Hanne Biesmans, PhD student at LOE and one of the main authors.



DEEPAK BALUTIA



