

OPINION 6
MYRIAD THREATS TO
NATIONAL SECURITY

WORLD 9
TO TACKLE FORCED MARRIAGES, ENGLAND
AND WALES RAISE LEGAL AGE TO 18

MONEY 10
'INDIA INC'S PROFIT MARGIN
NARROWS BY 2.37% IN DEC'

NEW DELHI, TUESDAY FEBRUARY 28, 2023; PAGES 12-13

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Published From
DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR
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Sisodia sent to CBI custody till March 4

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A designated Central Bureau of Investigation court here on Monday remanded Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia to five-day custody of the agency till March 4.

Sisodia was produced by the CBI before the court during the day. Special judge MK Nagpal allowed the CBI's plea for the custodial interrogation of Sisodia.

Earlier in the day, the court had reserved its order on the agency's plea for five-day custody of the arrested accused after hearing arguments from the CBI and Sisodia's counsel.

On Sunday, the CBI had arrested Sisodia in connection with alleged corruption in the formulation and implementation of the now-scrapped liquor policy for 2021-22.

During the hearing for over an hour, Sisodia's counsel stressed that it was the Lieutenant Governor of Delhi who had approved the changes in the excise policy and that the Central probe agency was going after the elected government. Sisodia claimed that there was no evidence against him and opposed the CBI's plea for his remand.

"I am the Finance Minister. I've to present the Budget.... What changed yesterday that the Finance Minister was to be placed under custody? Was he not available for next [few] days? Or was this arrest done for [an] ulterior motive? This case is an assault on an indi-



Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia being taken to the CBI headquarters in New Delhi on Monday

vidual as well as the institution. Remand will send a message, this is a fit case for declining remand," Sisodia's counsel told the court.

The counsel further submitted that Sisodia acted as a member of the Delhi Government and hence the decision can neither be attributed to him nor questioned.

"I can't do anything. It has to be approved by appropriate authority," he said.

The CBI's counsel submitted that the arrested Minister's custody was required for effective interrogation in the case. Sisodia claimed that he had no role in the case but the probe showed he personally took

decisions, the CBI asserted. Sisodia's counsel, while opposing the CBI's plea for custody, submitted that the CBI says he changed his cell phones, but that is not a crime.

Continued on Page 2

TIMELINE

■ Nov 17, 2021: Delhi Govt implements Excise Policy 2021-22

■ July 31, 2022: Policy comes under scanner, Delhi Government scraps it

■ Aug 17: CBI registers case in connection with alleged irregularities in the implementation and formulation of the policy against 15 accused, including Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia

■ Aug 19: CBI conducts search at Sisodia's premises in Delhi

■ Aug 22: ED registers a separate money laundering case arising out of the CBI FIR

■ Oct 17: Sisodia quizzed by CBI sleuths for around eight hours

■ Nov 25: CBI files chargesheet against seven accused in the case

■ Dec 15: Court takes cognisance of CBI chargesheet.

■ Feb 18, 2023: CBI summons Sisodia

■ Feb 26: CBI arrests Sisodia after several hours of questioning

BJP spreads in N-E: Exit polls

BJP alliance to get big majority in Tripura, Nagaland; but close fight in Meghalaya

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI/GUWAHATI

It is advantage the BJP in the North-East, with the party expected to comfortably retain Tripura and Nagaland and get more seats in Meghalaya.

As per several exit polls for the Assembly elections which were conducted early this month, the BJP will win in Tripura though not as impressively as it did in 2018. In alliance with the Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party, the saffron party is also likely to succeed in Nagaland.

Exit polls also indicate the Congress could be heading for its biggest setback in the North-East, winning only one seat in Nagaland and six in Meghalaya, where it was the single-largest party last time.

Setting aside all speculation and analysis of a loss in the high-stakes Tripura for the BJP, exit polls predicted BJP will get around 33 seats in the 60-seat Tripura Assembly. While the Left is likely to get only 14 seats as per an average prediction of the exit polls, the Congress and the TMC, which went full throttle to wrest power, will be restrained to single digits.

The dark horse, Tipra Motha, the new party floated by the erstwhile royal Pradyot



Voters show their identification cards as they wait for their turn at a polling booth during the Meghalaya Assembly elections, in Ri Bhoi district on Monday

Kishore Debbarma, is set to bag around 12 seats, as per the average of all the exit polls.

Pollsters predicted 45 per cent of the popular vote for the BJP and allies, whereas the Left-Congress combine would get 32 per cent of the popular vote, which is a huge dip from its 43 per cent vote share in 2018. Tipra Motha is estimated to get 20 per cent of the vote share.

With one exception, the ETG-Times Now poll, other exit polls have indicated that the BJP would remain the largest party but with a substantial drawdown from its earlier tally of 36 to just 24 seats, while Left-Congress would get 21 seats with Tipra Motha snatching 14 seats in the tribal areas.

In Meghalaya, Conrad Sangma's NPP is likely to emerge as the single-largest

party with 21-26 seats. The BJP, which won only two seats in the State in 2018, will increase its footprint with 6-11 seats. The Trinamool Congress may win 8-13 seats while the Congress may win around 6 seats as per the exit poll average predictions.

Times Now ETG Exit poll predicted Sangma's NPP would get 18-26 seats, the Trinamool Congress, led by former chief minister Mukul Sangma, would take 8-14 seats, the UDP 8-14 seats, and the BJP would improve its tally from two to anything between 3-6 seats.

India Today-My Axis predicted that NPP would bag 18-24 seats, short of majority, forcing it to look towards other parties to shore up figures. It also gave the UDP 8-12 seats, the Congress 6-12 seats, the TMC 5-9 seats, and the BJP 4-8 seats.

CAPSULE

MAY-3 DEADLINE SET TO OPT FOR HIGHER PENSION

New Delhi: The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) on Monday set May 3 as the deadline for subscribers to opt for a higher pension. The Supreme Court on November 4 allowed another change for employees who were existing EPS members as on September 1, 2014, to contribute up to 8.33 per cent of their actual salaries — as against 8.33 per cent of pensionable salary capped at ₹15,000 a month — towards pension. **P10**

SC REJECTS PLEA TO PUT OFF NEET-PG '23 EXAMS

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday refused to entertain pleas seeking postponement of the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET)-PG 2023, which is scheduled for March 5, saying there is nothing in this world to prevent somebody who has not made it to try again.

MINOR BOY SODOMISED, KILLED; ACCUSED HELD

Gurugram: A 24-year-old man has been arrested here for allegedly kidnapping, sodomising and killing a 10-year-old boy, the police said on Monday.

UML PULLS OUT OF NEPAL GOVERNMENT

Kathmandu: The CPN-UML has decided to quit the Pushpa Kamal Dahal-led Government in Nepal. A secretariat meeting of the party held on Monday morning decided to quit the Government after withdrawing its support.

'RAILWAYS FREE TO WORK ON FOREST LAND AREAS'

New Delhi: The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has clarified that the railways does not need to seek permission to develop infrastructure on its land in forest areas. **P4**

G20 to discuss ways to speed up eco offenders' extradition: Minister

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Union Minister of State for Personnel Jitendra Singh on Monday said G20 nations will deliberate on ways to trace and extradite fugitive economic offenders faster besides recovery of stolen assets during a meeting of the anti-corruption working group beginning Wednesday. He said India will also reaffirm unified action to ensure zero tolerance against corruption and deepen commitments towards countering graft globally during the meet being held in Gurugram.

In a statement issued ahead of the first Anti-Corruption Working Group (ACWG) meeting of the G20 scheduled from March 1 to 3, Singh said India's G20 presidency is marked by unprecedented economic, geopolitical and climate challenges.

Under India's chairpersonship, G20 nations will deliberate on areas of future action like



bringing in processes, where fugitive economic offenders can be traced and extradited faster, and their properties situated abroad brought within the reach of the law of the land from which such offenders escape, it said.

Dwelling on the subject of the working group, Singh emphasised that corruption is a scourge that impacts effective utilisation of resources and overall governance and affects the poorest and marginalised most acutely.

"India's presidency aims to strengthen international cooperation for action against corruption and economic crimes, and recovery of stolen assets," he said.

Singh said the G20 ACWG will explore proactive sharing of information, improving existing mutual legal assistance framework and simplifying mechanisms for sharing of information between domestic law enforcement authorities in criminal matters.

"India's chairpersonship will support G20 countries in prioritising recovery and return of stolen assets in their broad strategy against corruption."

"Enhancing the effectiveness of asset-tracing and identification mechanisms, developing mechanisms for rapid restraint of illicit assets, and promoting effective use of open-source information and asset recovery networks will be key focal areas," the minister said.

Continued on Page 2

Modi praises BSY to nip in bud bids to upset BJP's apple cart in K'taka

DEEPAK K UPRETI ■ NEW DELHI

BJP stalwart and former Karnataka Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa seems to be back with a bang in the poll-bound Karnataka with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's unusually lavish praise, on Monday, on the four-time CM who is an influential Lingayat caste leader of the State.

Modi's backing to BSY came after it was reported in earlier months that the former CM had "missed" meetings and public rallies of top party leaders, including that of Modi and Union Minister Amit Shah.

Yediyurappa, 80, has now suggested that the Chief Ministerial nominee in the State would be decided by the Central BJP leadership after the elections even as Union Home Minister and Karnataka-in-charge and BJP General Secretary Arun Singh have publicly backed Chief Minister



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai and former chief minister B.S. Yediyurappa during the inauguration and foundation stone laying ceremony of various projects, in Shivamogga on Monday

Basavaraj Bommai.

Given BSY's huge hold over the Lingayat community, the BJP can ill afford to ignore BSY who has otherwise declared that he has retired from the "active politics" and not to contest Assembly polls.

At the inauguration of the Shivamogga airport, Modi lavishly praised the four-time Chief Minister on his 80th birthday and termed his contributions to public life inspirational.

Continued on Page 2



Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the inauguration of the Shivamogga Airport on Monday

Small farmers our Govt priority: PM

Belagavi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday held a massive road show in poll-bound Karnataka's Belagavi, and said small farmers are the BJP Government's priority. **P5**

Umesh Pal's killer shot in encounter

PNS ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The police on Monday gunned down in an encounter one of the criminals involved in the sensational killing of Umesh Pal, the prime witness in the 2005 murder of then Bahujan Samaj Party MLA Raju Pal.

Arbaaz, the accused, was gunned down in retaliatory fire by the police after he opened fire on the cops. The exchange of fire continued for about 10 minutes. Arbaaz received police bullets on his chest and leg and succumbed to injuries at hospital. A constable too sustained injury in the encounter. Two associates of Arbaaz, however, managed to escape.

Continued on Page 2

SC warns Def Min over defying order on OROP arrears

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Expressing displeasure at not sticking to its orders, the Supreme Court on Monday pulled up the Ministry of Defence over the delay in payment of arrears of One Rank-One Pension (OROP) to eligible pensioners of the armed forces and sought an explanation from the secretary concerned for issuing a communication extending the timeline for payments fixed by the court. On January 9, the Supreme Court granted time till March 15 to the Centre for payment of total arrears of OROP.

But on January 20, the Ministry issued a communica-

tion that the arrears shall be paid in four yearly installments which has been challenged by a group of ex-servicemen.

Observing that the sanctity of the judicial process has to be maintained, a bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud asked the Ministry to "set its house in order" and directed the secretary to file a personal affidavit explaining his position.

"We gave you an extension till March 15 for payment of arrears. Now in the face of our orders of January 9, how can you issue a communication that you will pay the amount in four equal installments?"

Continued on Page 2

SC extends Kherra's interim bail till Friday

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday extended till March 3 the interim bail granted to Congress leader Pawan Kherra in a case related to his alleged objectionable remarks against Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The Assam Police had last week arrested Kherra in the case.

A three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud took note of the submissions of solicitor general Tushar Mehta, appearing for Assam, that the State police wanted to file its reply.

Continued on Page 2

Don't belittle greatness of Hinduism, SC rejects plea for renaming panel

PTI ■ IANS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday dismissed a plea seeking direction to the Central Government to appoint a renaming commission to rechristen cities and places named after foreign invaders, saying that the demand will only belittle the greatness of Hinduism.

A bench of Justices KM Joseph and BV Nagarathna also observed that there is no bigotry in Hinduism as it told petitioner-advocate Ashwini Upadhyay: "Don't dig up the past which will only create disharmony... Can't have the country on the boil."

"I am a Christian but still I am very fond of Hinduism, which is a great religion and



should not be belittled. The heights which Hinduism has reached and is mentioned in Upanishads, Vedas and Bhagavad Gita is unequal in any system. Hinduism has reached great heights in metaphysics. We should be proud of this great religion and not

belittle it. We should be proud of our greatness and our greatness makes us magnanimous. I am trying to study it. You should also read the book of Dr S Radhakrishnan on the philosophies of Hinduism. In Kerala, there were several rajas who had donated land for churches and other religious places," Justices KM Joseph.

During the hearing, the bench stressed that India is a secular country and the history of the past cannot be allowed to haunt the present generation. "India is a secular country, this is a secular forum. We are supposed to protect the Constitution and all sections," it said.

"What are you trying to achieve by all this... see our country has so many other

problems to attend to and you want the Home Ministry to constitute a renaming commission, to go on renaming places and roads in the country... it is a historical fact that this country has been invaded..." it added.

As Upadhyay argued that it is a matter of dignity for Indians, Justice Joseph replied: "You are revisiting the past selectively and India today, after the adoption of the Constitution, is a secular country and you are pointing fingers at a particular community and you call them barbaric..."

"You run down a certain section of the community which is completely against secularism, India is secular and this is a secular forum."

Continued on Page 2

Delhi HC upholds Agnipath, says it's in national interest

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday upheld the Centre's Agnipath scheme for recruitment in the armed forces, saying it was made in national interest and to ensure that the armed forces are better equipped. A bench of Chief Justice Satish Chandra Sharma and Justice Subramonium Prasad dismissed a batch of petitions assailing the scheme, and said there was no reason to interfere with it.

Besides pleas challenging the Agnipath scheme, the court also dismissed a bunch of petitions relating to recruitment process for the armed forces under certain previous advertisements while clarifying that such candidates do not have a right to seek recruitment. The court had reserved its verdict on the batch of pleas on December 15 last year.

Continued on Page 2

NCR-PULSE

UNDP, NITI AAYOG HOST ‘LIFEATHON’
New Delhi: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the NITI Aayog hosted ‘LIFEathon’, a hybrid hackathon with young people from across the world to contribute ideas and innovations to promote sustainable living and climate positive behaviour – as part of the Government of India’s Mission LIFE. The LIFE campaign aims to bring individual action to the forefront of climate action. These nudges are as small as encouraging individuals to consume less plastic, waste less food, and prefer public transport. Mission LIFE was launched by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and UN Secretary-General Mr. Antonio Guterres in Gujarat last year. The hackathon was inaugurated by UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner and NITI Aayog Vice Chairperson Suman Bery in the presence of UNDP India Resident Representative Shoko Noda and Mission Director LIFE, NITI Aayog Yugal Joshi.

PREPARATIONS FOR G-20 MEETING IN GURUGRAM
Gurugram: The preparations for organising the G-20 Summit meeting of the anti-corruption working group from March 1 to 4, 2023 in Gurugram are gaining momentum. Arrangements have been made for displaying Haryanvi Culture from IGI Airport, Delhi to Leela Hotel Gurugram to welcome the delegates, officials said on Monday. The Chief Secretary, Sanjeev Kaushal along with Director General of Police Haryana, P. K Agrawal on Monday reviewed the preparations for the G-20 meeting of the Anti Corruption Working Group. The necessary directions have also been given to officers. Kaushal said that the foreign delegates would experience India’s warm welcome tradition of ‘Atithi Devo Bhava’ and the spirit of Haryana’s rich cultural heritage.

HP GOVERNOR UNDERGOES ANGIOPLASTY
Noida: Himachal Pradesh Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla on Monday underwent an angioplasty for an artery blockage at a hospital. Shukla (70) was admitted to privately-run Kailash Hospital around midnight following complaint of chest pain, hospital spokesperson V B Joshi said. He is in Delhi-NCR since Saturday on a visit during which he paid courtesy calls on President Droupadi Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Vice President Jagdeep Thakkar, Home Minister Amit Shah, and others.

Modi praises...

From Page 1
This is the fifth visit of Modi to the election-bound State this year.
The Prime Minister felicitated Yediyurappa on his special day and surprised the ex-CM as he made an appeal to the people attending the public meeting to flash their mobile phone lights in a gesture of honour, and there was an enthusiastic response from the large gathering.
As the Lingayat strongman concluded his speech, Modi stood up and applauded him.
Modi’s gestures have suggested that the BJP wants to bring Yediyurappa into the centre-stage of its campaign plank leveraging his mass appeal for the Assembly elections, due by May and help the party beat anti-incum-

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CORRIGENDUM
This is regarding the advertisement published in The Pioneer Delhi-NCR newspaper on 21.02.2023 & 27.02.2023, the information regarding booking date, read as 20.02.2023 to 10.03.2023 instead of 20.02.2023 to 30.03.2023. All other details remain the same.

न्यायालय किराया प्राधिकरण/अपर जिला मजिस्ट्रेट (नगर), प्रयागराज।
बनक संख्या-7186 वर्ष-2022 श्रीमती गीता सागर पत्नी जी नरेश चरण, निवासी-ठसी रुईसी रोड, सिविल लाइन्स, प्रयागराज।
—आवेदक भू-स्वामी

बनाम
श्री अमन राणा पार्दर प्रुसेन् कोथिंग सेक्टर हेड आफिस 641 ग्राउन्ड फ्लोर, मुखर्जी नगर, दिल्ली।
किरोथी प्रकार/किरोथीय कारण बताओ नोटिस

श्री अमन राणा पार्दर प्रुसेन् कोथिंग सेक्टर हेड आफिस 641 ग्राउन्ड फ्लोर, मुखर्जी नगर, दिल्ली।
चुकि करम अतिरिक्त आवेदक जो अपने को भू-स्वामी अतिक्रान्त करता है, ने उत्तर प्रेक्ष नगरीय परिवार किरायेदारी विनियमन अध्यादेश, 2021 की धारा 21(2) के अन्तर्गत आवेदन प्रस्तुत किया है।
सूचना दी जाती है कि उपर्युक्त आवेदन में अंतिम तिथि 15.03.2023 को 10.30 बजे पूर्वानुगत निवास प्राधिकरण के सम्म उक्तके न्यायालय में निगल, किया गया है, अतएव उपर्युक्त दिनांक को कारण बलाने के लिए, कि क्यों न उपर्युक्त आवेदन को कारण प्रामिक्त किया जाय, आप खर्च या अपने प्राधिकृत व्यक्ति या कारसेल के माध्यम से उपस्थित हो। आप या आपके प्राधिकृत व्यक्ति या कारसेल के उक्त दिनांक और समय पर कारण बलाने के लिए उपस्थित न होने की दशा में आवेदन पर आपकी अनुपस्थिति में विनिश्चय किया जायेगा।
आज दिनांक 22.02.2023 को मेरे हस्ताक्षर और मुहर से दी गयी।
किरोथी प्राधिकरण/प्रतिष्ठान अतिरिक्त अवर जिला मजिस्ट्रेट (नगर) प्रयागराज।
कहने के-9/9/481 सत्तर सत्तर प्लॉट नं०

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कार्यालय, नगर पालिका निगम, भिलाई (छ.ग.)
निविदा सूचना
क्रमांक/लो.क्र./जोन-4/2023/1267/487 भिलाई, दिनांक 27/02/2023 एकीकृत पंचायत प्रणाली अंतर्गत सखम श्रेणी में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से निम्नलिखित निगमों कार्य हेतु निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है :-

क्र.	सिस्टम क्र.	कार्य का नाम	निविदा लागत (राशि रु. लाख में)	निविदा दाखल की जाने की अंतिम तिथि
1	129982	जोन क्र 4 अंतर्गत छावनी चौक से हथखोज बुनियाद तक कार्य का नवीनीकरण कार्य। (एविलिय बार)	196.53	10.03.2023

निविदा स्पष्टीकरण/क्लिअरेंस डाक से स्वीकार किया जायेगा। उपरोक्त निर्माण कार्य की निविदा की सामान्य शर्तें, चर्चद शर्तें, विस्तृत निविदा शिर्षाविका, निविदा दस्तावेज व अन्य जानकारी संचालनालय की वेबसाइट oproc.cgstate.gov.in में भी देखी जा सकती है। (पर से निकलने वाले गैले एवं बुला कर्चों को अलग कर सड़क मित्र (रिक्सा) को देंगे।)

हस्ता/-
जोन आगुपुर्न
जोन - 4 शिवाजी नगर,
नगर पालिका निगम, भिलाई

FSL report confirms charred bodies those of Junaid, Nasir: Raj Police

‘Blood stains in SUV found in Jind gaushala belong to duo’
PTI ■ JAIPUR

The report of forensic science laboratory has confirmed that the charred bodies and the blood stains found in the SUV recovered from a cow shelter in Haryana’s Jind were of Junaid and Nasir, a Rajasthan police officer said.
The bodies of Rajasthan’s Bharatpur-based men, who were abducted, were found inside a vehicle in Haryana’s Bhiwani district on February 16. The families of the deceased alleged that they were beaten and murdered by members of the Bajrang Dal.
“The FSL (forensic science laboratory) report confirms that the charred bodies and the blood stains in the SUV

recovered from a Gau-shala in Jind (Haryana) were of Nasir and Junaid,” Bharatpur range IG Gaurav Srivastav said.
He said the burnt vehicle matched the chassis number, but the bodies left inside could not be identified.
The officer said that FSL samples were collected from the spot. Blood samples of the family members of Nasir and Junaid were also collected so that the blood stains found in the SUV and the bones found in the burnt vehicle can be matched.
He said the report has now confirmed the identity of both bodies.
During the probe, the SUV was found in Jind in which the victims were abducted and beaten.
The Rajasthan Police had last Wednesday released a list of eight accused in the case, besides the one arrested Rinku Saini. This list of eight did not include Monu Manesar, a cow vigilante based out of Haryana’s



Manesar, against whom there have been massive protests by locals and family members of the deceased in Bharatpur as well as in Haryana’s Nuh. There also have been multiple mahapanchayats in support of Monu in the last few weeks.
Speaking about the eight, Srivastav said that they “all identify as gau-rakshaks.”
“The one common denominator among all eight is that they are self-appointed gau-rakshaks. We have released the names and images of these eight because their role is confirmed beyond reasonable doubt,” Srivastav said.
Asked if Monu is still a suspect, Srivastav said, “There

are a dozen more people being probed which involves Monu Manesar as well Lokesh Singla (both present in the FIR). And a bunch of others. But their names will be released separately when we have enough evidence to arrest them,” he said.
Junaid and Nasir were an uncle-nephew duo in Rajasthan’s Bharatpur’s Ghatmeeka village, who were abducted on 15 February and allegedly killed by Bajrang Dal members. Their burnt bodies were found in Haryana’s Bhiwani’s Loharu region, in their charred Bolero. The Rajasthan police has since been investigating the case to nab the accused.

Don't belittle greatness...

From Page 1
Justice Nagarathna said: “Hinduism is a way of life and it is not really a religion and because Hinduism is a way of life, India has assimilated everybody, whether an invader or a friend... and because of that we are able to live together... the divide and rule started only with the Britishers and that has brought about the chasm in the society...”
She emphasised that let us not break it up again by such kind of petitions.
Justice Joseph said, “Your concern is about the past. You want to dig it up and place it on the plate of the present generation... to look at what had happened in the past and re-agitate things which should be buried. Don’t bring disharmony into society.”
The petitioner sought a direction to the Union Home Ministry to set up a “renaming commission” to find out original names of ancient historical cultural religious places, called after “foreign invaders”

Delhi HC upholds Agnipath, says it's in national...

From Page 1
The Agnipath scheme, unveiled on June 14, 2022, lays out rules for the recruitment of youth in the armed forces. According to these rules, those between 17-and-a-half and 21 years of age are eligible to apply and they would be inducted for a four-year tenure. The scheme allows 25 per cent of them to be granted regular service subsequently. After the scheme was unveiled, protests erupted in several states against the scheme. Later, the Government extended the upper age limit to 23 years for recruitment in 2022.
Earlier during the arguments, additional solicitor general (ASG) Aishwarya Bhati and Central Government standing counsel Harish Vaidyanathan, representing the Centre, had said the Agnipath scheme is one of the biggest policy changes in defence recruitment and was going to bring a paradigm shift in the way the armed forces recruit personnel. “More than 10 lakh

aspirants have taken advantage of the two-year age relaxation given by us... A lot of things we cannot say on affidavit, but we have acted in bona fide manner,” the ASG has said.
Advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for the petitioners in a petition concerning cancellation of the recruitment processes for the armed forces under certain previous advertisements, had said the Government did not stop all recruitments in June 2021 and some of the recruitment processes were held even in August 2021 and in the beginning of 2022.
The High Court had also asked the Centre to justify different pay scales of Agniveers and regular sepoy in the Indian Army if their job profile is same. Defending its Agnipath scheme, the Centre has said a large amount of study has gone into this policy and it was not a decision which was taken lightly and the Union of India was mindful and cognisant of the situation.

AYUSH Min: Work on evidence-based scientific research

PNS ■ NEW DELHI
Union Minister of Ayush, Sarbananda Sonowal on Monday exhorted young researchers and scientists to work on evidence-based scientific research and explain the benefits and research of Ayush system of medicine in native languages so that it reaches larger masses.
He was speaking after inaugurating the two-day Chintan Shivir held in Kaziranga National Park in Assam which is being organised to build the road-map for the upgradation of Ayush institutions and their integration with the technological advancements, and the identification of ways to integrate Ayush with the New Education Policy, while also identifying current services with potential of improvements to take advantage of Ayush, according to a statement here.

Umesh Pal's killer shot in...


From Page 1
“Arbaaz was accompanied by two to three other people who managed to escape from the spot. We are trying to track them,” Deputy Commissioner of Police Navendu Kumar said.
He opened fire on the police and was injured in the ensuing encounter in Nehru Park under Dhoomanganj police station at around 3 pm on Monday, Kumar said, adding that he was taken to SRN Hospital where doctors pronounced him dead.
This is being termed as the beginning of police action in the Umesh Pal murder case.
Umesh Pal and his police security guard Sandeep Nishad were gunned down on February 24 near his house by over half a dozen shooters armed with automatic pistols and bombs. Another security personnel, Raghendra Singh, who was injured in the attack, was admitted to SRN Hospital in a critical condition and was referred to Lucknow on Sunday.

Sisodia sent to CBI...

From Page 1
The counsel said the policy was implemented after taking suggestions even from the Delhi Lieutenant Governor and that since it required consultations, there was no chance of conspiracy. “I have tried to keep everything open,” he said.
Earlier, the CBI brought

Sisodia to the Rouse Avenue court amid high security presence. Following Sisodia’s arrest, the CBI had said, “...he gave evasive replies and did not cooperate with the investigation despite being confronted with evidence to the contrary. Therefore, he has been arrested.” The instant case was registered

against the Deputy Chief Minister, who also held the Excise portfolio, and 14 others for investigation into the matter of alleged irregularities in framing and implementation of Excise Policy for the year 2021-22 and extending post-termer benefits to private persons.

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Jabalpur, dtd:14.02.2023

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S. No.	TS No. (For e-Tendering) Discum-EZ/Pur	NAME OF ITEMS	APPROX. VALUE (Rs. in Lakhs)	TENDER FEE (in Rs)	Due date & time of opening of tender online from 14.00 Hrs (*)
1	1305 (e-Tender No. 2023_PKVVV_251898_1)	Strain Hardware Fittings (T&C Type)	11.42	1180	01.03.2023
2	1307 (e-Tender No. 2023_PKVVV_252359_1)	Various Steel Sections	598.92	11800	06.03.2023

* For updated/extended due dates for opening of tender (EMD in cover-1 & Techno-commercial bid in cover-2) please refer to the online key dates.

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क्र.	ऑनलाईन निविदा क्र.	विवरण	लागत राशि	अमानत राशि	निविदा प्रपत्र मूल्य
1	2023_UAD_255293_1	कायाकल्प अभियान अंतर्गत धार शहर के विभिन्न बाड़ों में 12 सड़कों का डामरीकरण कार्य।	2,11,46,300/-	1,05,731/-	15,000/-

समय सारणी - निविदा ऑनलाईन क्रय/बीड सबमिशन की अंतिम तिथि 10.03.2023 समय 17:30 बजे नोट :- 1. निविदाकार को संचालनालय नगरीय प्रशासन एवं विकास म.प्र. भोपाल के पत्र क्र. यो.प्र./7/2022/15213 भोपाल दिनांक 15.12.2022 एवं पत्र क्र. यो.प्र./7/2022/15422 भोपाल दि. 16.12.2022 में दी गई शर्तें तथा कायाकल्प अभियान अंतर्गत सड़कों को मरम्मत/शुद्धीकरण हेतु शासन द्वारा समय-समय पर जारी दिशा-निर्देशों का पालन किया जाना अनिवार्य होगा। 2. ठेकेदार को प्रत्येक कार्य के प्रांथम करने के पूर्व एवं कार्य को समाप्त उपरांत पर्याप्त जियो टेग फोटो का संभारण का संबंधित यंत्रों को उपलब्ध कराया जायेगा। 3. निकाय क्षेत्र के आसपास उपलब्ध शासकीय लेब अथवा संभागीय स्तर से स्थापित की जाने वाली मोबाइल टेस्टिंग लेब के माध्यम से टेस्टिंग इत्यादि का कार्य निष्पादित किया जायेगा। 4. डामरीकरणकृत सड़कों के नवीनीकरण कार्य में यदि केवल Wearing Course (मोबई,30 एम.एम. या कम) का कार्य किया जाना है तो Defect Liability Period 03 वर्ष रहेगी तथा जिन् सड़कों के लिये Base Course एवं Wearing Course दोनों का कार्य शामिल किया जायेगा, उनके लिये Defect Liability Period 05 वर्ष रहेगी। 5. व्हाईट टारिंग या सी.सी. रोड निर्माण की स्थिति में Defect Liability Period 05 वर्ष रहेगी। 6. गुणवत्ता के उन्मयन एवं सुनिश्चित के लिये टेस्टिंग हेतु निर्धारित Frequency से दुगुनी Frequency से टेस्टिंग का कार्य कराया जावेगा, जिस पर होने वाली राशि का वहन भी ठेकेदार को किया जाना होगा।

(श्रीमती नेहा महेश वोडाणे) अध्यक्ष नगर पालिका परिषद् धार

(निशिकान्त शुक्ला) मुख्य नगर पालिका अधिकारी नगर पालिका परिषद् धार

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AAP LEADERS PROTEST AGAINST SISODIA’S ARREST



Aam Admi Party (AAP) leaders and supporters stage a protest against the arrest of Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia by THE CBI in the excise policy case, in New Delhi on Monday



Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

AAP observes Black Day, slams ‘dictatorship’

Police detain several leaders, party workers

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) staged a protest against the arrest of Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia in connection with the Delhi excise policy case amid tight security, which led to massive traffic jams in surrounding areas. The party has also observed Monday as a black day.

The AAP leaders have claimed that massive protests were held across various districts of Delhi, Punjab, UP, Haryana, Maharashtra, Assam, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Mizoram, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Goa, Jammu & Kashmir, Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand, Telangana, Bihar and Odisha against Sisodia's arrest. Delhi Police erected barricades on several roads leading to DDU Marg where



both, the BJP headquarters (HQ) and the AAP's office, are located.

As the protesters led by senior AAP leaders Saurabh Bhardwaj and Atishi tried to march towards the BJP HQ police stopped them by deploying personnel and erecting barricades. However, when they tried to jump over the barricades, police swung into action and detained several of them, officials said.

While pushing protesters back, some police personnel briefly entered the AAP's office, said party leaders who also raised slogans against the cops. AAP leaders, including Bhardwaj and MLA Rituraj

Jha, were seen wearing handcuffs to register their protest.

They were also seen carrying AAP flags and placards that read "We salute Manish Sisodia". They also raised slogans like "Ladenge jeetenge, Manish Sisodia zindabad (Will fight and win, long live Manish Sisodia)." After the protesters were not allowed to move from the AAP's office, several of them sat on the road, but were removed by the police.

An AAP functionary said that all MLAs have been asked to bring 200 people from their respective constituencies for the protest.

"This is the height of the BJP's dictatorship. They are now barging into our party office and trying to detain our leaders," party leaders Adil Ahmad Khan and Atishi said, addressing the crowd.

As the AAP workers started gathering at the party office at around 12 PM, police told them that Section 144 of the CrPC was in place in the area and no one was allowed to hold a protest. The police also confiscated the loudspeaker used by the AAP leaders. DCP

Sanjay Sain asked protesters to leave the premises as they would start detention.

However, AAP workers continued the protest. Later, scores of AAP workers and leaders were detained and taken to a police station in north district in around 10 buses.

"Every day false cases are being filed against our leaders. If they are not finding evidence, they are putting people in jails," said Bhardwaj. Meanwhile, traffic was affected near the ITO intersection here on Monday as DDU Marg was closed for vehicular movement in view of the protest. The Delhi Police informed the commuters about it through its official Twitter handle.

"Traffic will remain affected on DDU Marg in the carriageway from Minto Road towards ITO and vice-versa due to special traffic arrangements. Commuters are advised to avoid this stretch," it tweeted. Commuters also took to Twitter complaining about traffic issues. One of them said there was very heavy traffic on Vikas Marg.

CBI officers were against Sisodia’s arrest: Kejriwal

Sleuths probing excise policy case had to obey their political masters because of immense pressure, alleges CM

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A day after Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia was arrested by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday claimed that officers of the CBI probing the excise policy case were against Sisodia's arrest but had to "obey their political masters" because of immense pressure.

Sisodia's arrest, one of the high-profile actions against an Opposition leader, came after that of Satyendar Jain, Delhi's then Health Minister, in June



last year. Both Ministers have led what the AAP describes as the successful transformation of Delhi's education and health services, contributing to the party's popularity and continued electoral success.

"I am told that most CBI officers were against Manish's arrest. All of them have huge respect for him and there is no evidence against him. But the political pressure to arrest him was so high that they had to obey their political masters," Kejriwal said in a tweet. Reacting to his tweet, BJP IT

cell chief Amit Malviya advised Kejriwal not to listen these Intelligence Bureau and CBI officers. "Don't listen to these IB and CBI officers. Didn't IB officers tell that AAP was winning Gujarat? We all know what happened.

Besides, it seems CBI officers know that you are the kingpin of Liquor Excise scam and want to arrest you. But for now the noose is around Sisodia's neck..." Malviya said in a tweet. BJP MP Manoj Tiwari hit back at Kejriwal, saying everyone knew what the AAP national convener wrote or said was "fabricated".

Quote-tweeting Kejriwal, BJP MP Tiwari accused him of fabricating facts regarding Sisodia's arrest and alleged that the Delhi Chief Minister had even lied about an IB report at the time of the Gujarat Assembly elections.

Probe ex-LG Baijal as he approved excise policy: AAP

'Bid to divert attention from Adani issue'

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The AAP on Monday lashed out at the BJP and the Centre and said that Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia's arrest was "nothing but the BJP's dictatorship" and that it was done to divert public attention from the Adani-Hindenburg issue.

AAP leaders have accused the BJP and the Union Government of hatching a conspiracy to trap Sisodia and demanded that former L-G Anil Baijal also be probed since he had approved the excise policy. The party has also said that 80 per cent of its leaders were arrested by Delhi Police since Sunday, and questioned whether anyone can be detained for more than 24 hours.

Later addressing a Press conference, Rajya Sabha MP and AAP leader Sanjay Singh lashed out at the BJP and the Centre and alleged that Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia's arrest was "nothing but the BJP's dictatorship" and that it was done to divert the public attention from the Adani-Hindenburg issue.

"The leader who has been working hard for the development of poor children has been arrested by the CBI. Manish Sisodia's house was thoroughly raided but nothing was found. This is happening to divert public attention from the outrage over Adani," Singh said. AAP national spokesperson Saurabh Bhardwaj said the long detention was illegal and drew a parallel between late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's Emergency era and the present.

"Since yesterday, the AAP has been repeatedly saying that not only has Manish Sisodia ji been arrested, but almost 80 per cent of the leadership of the party has been arrested by the police. When asked, the Central Government is saying that they have only been detained," he said.

Noting that it is 'illegal' to detain someone for such a long duration, he said by now, the leaders should have been presented in court. "By now you should have presented them in the court and told under which Sections and for what reason you have arrested a Rajya Sabha MP? Delhi's senior leader Gopal Rai has been detained.

Adil Ahmed Khan who looks after the work of the organization has also been arrested. Dozens of MLAs and elected councilors have been arrested by the police since yesterday. They spent the whole night in the police station.

The police hasn't released them," he said. Bhardwaj said these are "signs of Emergency" and the Narendra Modi Government at the Centre is doing what Indira Gandhi did when she imposed Emergency in 1975. The AAP's Delhi convener Gopal Rai said that it was then L-G Baijal who had approved the now-scrapped excise policy for 2021-22 and he should be probed and interrogated too.

AAP doesn’t believe in law: BJP slams protests

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Monday hit out at the AAP over its street protests against Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia's arrest, asserting that the CBI is acting lawfully against the "corrupt" but the city's ruling party does not seem to believe in law, Constitution and people.

Meanwhile, the BJP leaders also criticised the AAP for comparing Sisodia with Shahid Bhagat Singh. Delhi BJP leaders also demanded sacking of Sisodia and Jain from the cabinet.

With its "drama" and show of "anarchy", the AAP has signalled that it will not let probe agencies do their work which amounts to obstructing the



process of justice and contempt of court, BJP spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia told reporters after Sisodia was sent to the CBI remand till March 4 in the case of alleged irregularities and corruption in excise policy, now withdrawn. The BJP leader described the AAP as "Arajak Apradh Party" (anarchic, criminal party) and said Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal seems to have taken oath on the

Constitution to destroy it, he alleged. Neither does Kejriwal abide by law nor he sacks his ministers involved in corruption, he said, noting that Satyendar Jain is behind bars for months in a money laundering case. Jain has not received bail yet because courts believe that the charges against him are serious, the BJP leader said.

Union minister Meenakshi Lekhi on Monday slammed arrested Delhi deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia for allegedly trying to hide his "sins" by using freedom fighter Bhagat Singh's name. She alleged that the children of Delhi have suffered because of the Aam Aadmi Party government and earlier governments. Leader of Opposition in

Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri has advised Kejriwal to immediately drop his two ministers Manish Sisodia and Satyendar Jain, from the cabinet. "The Delhi cabinet should be reshuffled immediately as it is not in the interest of Delhi that almost half the ministers do not work. Constitutionally and morally, it is also necessary that there should be an immediate change in the Delhi cabinet,"

Bidhuri has said that Jain is in jail since May last year. All his portfolios were handed over to Deputy Sisodia and now Sisodia is also under CBI custody. Kejriwal is the only Chief Minister in the whole country who has not kept any portfolio with him. In this way, three out of seven minis-

ters do not have any portfolio now. "It is not right to leave the whole of Delhi on the trust of the remaining four ministers. He said that it would not be fair to the people of Delhi that the party which has 62 MLAs out of 70, is not even able to give a full government to Delhi," he said.

Former Delhi BJP president and MLA, Vijendra Gupta accused that the AAP is employing its anarchic elements to create disturbances and disorder, impeding investigations into grave accusations.

Gupta added that the entire spectacle is a ploy to divert attention away from the corrupt activities and safeguard the Chief Minister, who is next in line to face the law.

Dy CM’s arrest to hit dev projects for G-20 summit



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Uncertainty looms over several critical Delhi Government projects, including street-scaping and traffic decongestion plans, ahead of

the G20 summit after the arrest of Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia in the excise policy scam case. Sisodia, who held 18 of the 33 Delhi government departments, was the administrative face of the AP-led dispensation, and was also handling crucial departments like education, health, PWD, among others. Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has yet to announce Sisodia's replacement in the cabinet.

Departments like health and home were handed over to him following his cabinet colleague Satyendar Jain's arrest in an alleged money laundering case in May last year.

A special CBI court on Monday remanded Sisodia to five-day custody of the central probe agency till March 4. The CBI on Sunday evening arrested Sisodia in connection with alleged corruption in the formulation and implementation of the now-scrapped liquor policy for 2021-22.

In the health sector, the Delhi government approved 25 major projects at the cost of Rs 4,452.72 crore which includes the construction of various new hospitals and Intensive Care Units.

These projects will increase the number of hospital beds up to 20,000 in the National Capital. These hospitals and ICUs with state-of-the-art facilities will make quality health-care services more accessible to people of Delhi. Most of these projects have either been completed or are currently ongoing.

IAF officer’s son runs car over 3.5-yr old, arrested

New Delhi: A three-and-half-year-old girl was killed after being allegedly hit by a car driven by a senior Indian Air Force officer's son in southwest Delhi's Cantonment area, police said on Monday.

The accused is a first year college student in a private college and has been arrested, they said, adding that the accident took place on Sunday.

Police reached the Ram Manohar Lohia hospital after receiving information about the accident of the girl, a resident of Arjun Vihar in Delhi Cantt, a senior police officer said. He added that the girl was declared dead on reaching the health facility.

Preliminary investigation revealed that the car was travelling at a high speed and hit the girl who came in the middle of the road, an official said. **SR**

CBSE cautions students against paper leak canards

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) on Monday cautioned students and parents against rumours about question papers for board exams being leaked. The board has also warned students against indulging in rumour-mongering and has stated that action will be taken against them as per "unfair means" rules, if any involvement is found. Classes 10 and 12 CBSE board exams are currently underway and will conclude on April 5.

"It has come to the notice of the board that certain unscrupulous elements are regularly spreading rumours on YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and other social media platforms about paper leak or claiming to have access to question papers of 2023 exams," a senior board official said. "These persons, groups



and agencies intend to fleece the gullible students and parents as they demand money in return. Such irresponsible activities create confusion and panic among the students and public. The board is vigilant and active in identifying and taking action against those spreading fake news and rumours," he added.

According to officials, CBSE is regularly intimidating the Delhi Police to take stern action against persons involved

in circulating fake news using social media platforms under various provisions of the IPC and the IT Act. "CBSE will take action against a student under 'unfair means' rules and various sections of IPC if found indulging in spreading fake news.

Parents are also requested to guide their wards not to believe such rumours and not indulge in any such activity which hampers smooth conduct of board examinations.

ED arrests teacher, middleman for duping man on bail promise

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has arrested a schoolteacher and a middleman who allegedly duped a person on the pretext of bailing him out in a money laundering probe related to a Chinese-linked mobile phone loan app fraud.

Middleman Jeetendra Prasad and Hindi language school teacher in Delhi government school, Dinesh Singh Kushwaha were taken into custody by the agency on February 25 and a court in Delhi later sent them to ED custody till March 3 and March 2 respectively, the agency said in a statement.

"These persons had taken Rs 2.6 crore from an accused named Vaibhav Dipak Shah in the Powerbank app case, through the hawala channel

on the pretext of getting his work done from ED," it said. The ED first filed a complaint with the Special Cell of the Delhi Police and later filed its own case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) against the two.

"The Enforcement Directorate took serious note of the incident and conducted searches at the premises of the two persons and later arrested them in the matter after finding them involved in dealing with proceeds of crime," it said.

The searches led to the recovery of Rs 47.5 lakh cash, forged summons/notices, duplicate official stamps, and digital data pertaining to huge cash transactions relating to cheating and fraud from the residence of Prasad, the ED said.

Cong slams Govt for fall in LIC holdings in Adani firms

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Monday attacked the Central Government over the fall in the value of LIC's holdings in the Adani Group and asked who "forced this pillar of India's financial system" to take such a "risky exposure" to the conglomerate.

Congress chief spokesman Jairam Ramesh raised the issue as part of the opposition party's 'Hum Adani ke Hain Kaun' posters for the Prime Minister posted daily on Twitter. He claimed that with the continuing sell-off in Adani Group stocks, the value of LIC's holdings in the Group has fallen by a "shocking" ₹52,000 crore since December 31, 2022.

"It is now worth ₹32,000 crore and the entire profit made by the LIC and its crores



of policyholders, which we now know was due to stock market manipulation and money laundering, has been wiped out and caused a major loss for LIC," Ramesh alleged. "Who forced this pillar of India's financial system to take such a risky exposure to your favourite businessman," Ramesh asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his statement. "When will you be held accountable for this gambling with the savings of India's cit-

izens?" he said. The Adani Group's stocks had taken a beating on the bourses after US-based short seller Hindenburg Research made a litany of allegations, including fraudulent transactions and share-price manipulation, against it. The group has dismissed the charges as lies, saying it complies with all laws and disclosure requirements.

Ramesh alleged that even as the leading market index providers MSCI, S&P Dow Jones and FTSE Russell review the weighting of Adani Group firms, the National Stock Exchange (NSE) has "failed" to take any serious action to protect investors. Instead, the NSE announced on February 17, 2023 that an additional five Adani Group companies currently crashing in the stock markets would be included in no less than 14 indices, he said.

"This has caused many financial advisers to advise their clients not to invest in funds that use those indices as benchmarks. But lakhs of hapless investors are still at risk of being forced to bail out collapsing Adani companies with their hard-earned savings," the Congress general secretary said.

Why is SEBI not being allowed to take action to ensure that lakhs of investors are not duped into investing in a "collapsing business group", he also asked.

Ramesh also raised questions on the tender to redevelop Mumbai's Dharavi area won by the Adani Group. He urged the PM to break his "silence" on the issue. Congress and several Opposition parties have been demanding a joint parliamentary committee probe over the Adani issue.

Foreign Mins to flock to Delhi in Mar for G20 meet

New Delhi: Early March will see high-profile visits by some Foreign Ministers including those of Australia, US, Russia, China and Japan besides others to take part in the G-20 Foreign Ministers' conclave in New Delhi. Later, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese will hold summit with Prime Minister Narendra Modi here on March 8.

Later, both the leaders will travel to Ahmedabad to witness the fourth cricket test match between Australia and India there. The national capital will also host the Raisina Dialogue from March 2-4 where several foreign dignitaries are expected to take part including Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong. Moreover, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will host a breakfast meeting on March 3 of the foreign ministers of Quad combine. It includes India, Australia, Japan and the US.

Announcing her schedule,

Wong said on Monday, "this will be my first visit to India as Foreign Minister, and I look forward to meeting my counterparts at G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in New Delhi. Australia strongly supports India's G20 Presidency and welcomes India's ambitious, action oriented G20 agenda, under the theme 'One Earth, One Family, One Future'.

She said "I look forward to working with my counterparts on how we can address contemporary international challenges, including strengthening multilateral system, food and energy security, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

While in New Delhi, I will also attend the 2023 Raisina Dialogue, India's premier forum for addressing most challenging issues facing our regional and global community. This year is an important milestone in Australia's bilateral relationship with India, with

many high-level Ministerial visits between our two countries. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, Minister for Trade and Tourism Don Farrell and Minister for Resources Madeleine King will travel to India over the next month, and later this year Australia looks forward to hosting Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi when he attends the Quad Leaders' meeting," she said.

Prime Minister Modi is likely to address the foreign ministers of the member countries of G20 and he will talk about India's growing influence globally. This meeting is one of the biggest events ahead of the final summit which is slated to take place on September 9-10 here when the presidency will be handed over to Brazil.

As regards talks between Modi and his Australian counterpart, both the leaders will review the whole gamut of their ties and discuss ways to enhance strategic relations.

Maha, 19 cos ink MOUs of ₹1.4 L-Crore

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Maharashtra's new Governor Ramesh Bais said on Monday that the state government had signed Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with 19 companies for an investment of Rs. 1.37 lakh crore at the Davos World Investment Conference held in January 2023.

Bias made this announcement while delivering his joint address to both the Houses of Maharashtra Legislature on the first day of the budget session.

The Governor said that State Government would organize 600 job fairs in the financial year 2022-23. "Memoranda of Understanding were signed with 45 companies to create 1 lakh 25 thousand jobs". "Twenty-four project proposals have been approved which amount to an investment of Rs. 87 thousand 774 crore, creating 61 thousand jobs," he said.

Modi, Meloni to mull ties during Italian PM visit to India in March

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

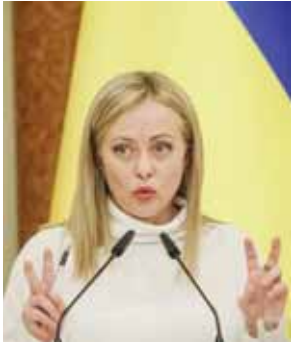
India and Italy will discuss the entire gamut of their bilateral ties during talks here between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Giorgia Meloni. She is visiting New Delhi from March 2-3 and is also the chief guest and keynote speaker at the prestigious Raisina Dialogue from March 2-4.

Giving details of her schedule, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said here on Monday, the Italian Prime Minister will be accompanied by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani and a high powered business delegation.

This will also be the first bilateral VVIP visit from Italy to India after five years. The last Prime Ministerial visit from Italy to India took place in October 2018, the MEA said. Meloni will be accorded a ceremonial welcome at the forecourt of Rashtrapati Bhawan.

Prime Minister Modi and Prime Minister Meloni will hold discussions on bilateral, regional and global issues. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar will call on Meloni. The visiting dignitary will call on President Droupadi Murmu in the afternoon of March 2.

India and Italy are celebrating 75 years of establishment of diplomatic relations this year. The multifaceted bilateral relationship is based on shared cultural values, commitment to foster eco-



nomomic growth, collaboration in the fields of green energy, science and technology, defence and marked by convergence on regional and global issues. The two countries have also been cooperating closely in various multilateral forums, the MEA said.

During the visit, a business roundtable will be organised on March 2 co-chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Antonio Tajani and Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal.

Prime Minister Meloni's visit is expected to further strengthen and deepen the long-standing relationship between India and Italy. Both sides will take stock of the progress on the key outcomes of the November 2020 Summit, strengthen security and defence cooperation, work towards closer economic ties, enhance opportunity for mobility of talent and give strategic guidance to ongoing collaboration in Science and Technology, the MEA said.

Trials of INS Vikramaditya begin; may be in action in April

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Sea trials of aircraft carrier SINS Vikramaditya have commenced after it underwent major refits and maintenance for nearly 15 months at Karwar naval base in Karnataka. The Russian-made warship is likely to be handed over to the Indian Navy on March 31. The ship is likely to be fully operational for active deployment by April end.

Giving details here on Monday, navy officials said the sea trials have commenced off Karwar after it had to undergo refit starting December 2021. The ship was inducted into service in 2014. While sea trials are on, fighter jet flying will take place in mid-April to test the readiness of the



aircraft carrier for landing and take-offs of the planes, sources said. MIG-29Ks operate from the 45,000 ton ship. Once fully operational, India will have two aircraft carriers including the indigenously designed and

built INS Vikrant and INS Vikramaditya. Prime Minister Narendra Modi inducted INS Vikrant into the Navy in September last year. It will be based at Visakhapatnam.

While the test air opera-

tions of INS Vikramaditya will begin in April, various checks of armaments and surface-to-air missile systems onboard will begin in March itself. The warship carries a maximum of 36 aircraft including 26 MiG-29K fighters and 10 Kamov Ka-31 advance electronic warning (AEW) and Ka-28 anti-submarine warfare (ASW) helicopters.

The two aircraft carriers will add muscle to the Indian Navy's operational capabilities to counter China which has adopted an aggressive stance in the strategically crucial Indo-Pacific region.

Moreover, China has increased its maritime presence in the crucial Indian Ocean region since 2008 and India is taking all measures to counter this emerging challenge.

House committee to seek explanation from Opp, suspended RS MPs

New Delhi: A parliamentary panel on privilege notices has decided to seek an explanation from 13 Opposition Rajya Sabha MPs, including a suspended member, for disrupting proceedings of the Upper House during the first leg of the budget session, sources said on Monday.

A privilege notice against 12 of these MPs was referred to the committee by Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar. The Rajya Sabha's committee of privileges chaired by Deputy Chairman Harivansh unanimously decided on Monday to seek an explanation from 13 MPs, including nine from the Congress and three from the

AAP, on the notices moved against them. Of these parliamentarians, Congress' Rajni Patil was suspended on February 10 for the remainder of the Budget Session for videographing the proceedings of the Upper House.

The others from the party are Shaktisinh Gohil, Naranbhai J Rathwa, Syed Nasir Hussain, Kumar Ketkar, Imran Prattapgarhi, L Hanumanthaiah, Phulo Devi Netam, Jebi Mather Hisham and Ranjeet Ranjan.

The AAP members are Sanjay Singh, Sushil Kumar Gupta and Sandeep Kumar Pathak. A Rajya Sabha bulletin dated February 18 stated that

Dhankhar has asked privilege committee to investigate alleged breach of privilege by 12 MPs for repeatedly entering the well of House, shouting slogans and obstructing its proceedings.

The Rajya Sabha saw repeated disruptions due to protests by the opposition MPs over various issues during the first leg of Budget Session which concluded earlier this month.

As members cannot directly make complaints to privilege committee, the matter came before Chair, who referred it to panel to examine, investigate and report, sources said. PNS

Ensure medical tools, drugs made in India are of highest quality: Min

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In the backdrop of role of ICDSCO, the country's top drug regulator coming under the scanner in the wake of quality of drugs manufactured by three Indian pharma firms—Maiden Pharmaceuticals, Global Healthcare Pharma and Noida-based Marion Biotech—coming in question, Union Health Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya on Monday stressed on ensuring medicines and medical products produced in India are of the highest quality for both domestic and export



markets. "Within the federal democratic structure of the country, both the Centre and States are required to work together in harmony and synergy to ensure that we establish robust regulatory systems," he said at the concluding session of the two-days brainstorming conclave on "Drugs: Quality

Regulations & Enforcement", in Hyderabad, Telangana. The discussions highlighted how to make the country's drug regulatory systems transparent, predictable and verifiable through principles of uniform standards, sturdy structures for compliance and enforcement, and capacity enhancement.

It was also presented that technology can play the role of a facilitator and enabler for uniformity, transparency and accountability. The need for a uniform portal with a national database with integrated legacy systems was also discussed.

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

ICICI Bank

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

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

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	M/s. Om Prakash Mittal Promoters & Builders Pvt Ltd/ Sanjay Mittal/ shruti Mittal/ 114605000665/ 114655000006	Plot No.122 Block D, South City 1, Gurgaon, Haryana-122001/ February 23,2023	11-11-2022 Rs. 93,29,032.00/-	Gurgaon

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

Date : February 28, 2023
Place : Gurgaon

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

ICICI Bank

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

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Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Kiran Udyog/ Vivek Kumar Jain/ Arvind Kumar Jain/ Rajiv Kumar Jain/ LBDEL00002021880	Plot No-7, Block-27-B, Western Extension Area, Karol Bagh, New Rohtak Road, New Delhi, Delhi- 110005/ February 23, 2023	October 20,2022 Rs. 3,77,79,950/-	Delhi

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

Date : February 28, 2023
Place : Delhi/ NCR

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

ICMR reveals formalin vax 'ineffective' against KFD

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has revealed that the current formalin inactivated vaccine against Kyasanur Forest Disease (KFD) has no approval from the World Health Organisation (WHO) and has been found to be "ineffective" against the deadly disease which is not only on the rise but also spreading in new areas in the country.

It has now floated the expression of interest (EoI) asking pharma firms and research organizations to come forward to develop new vaccines to wipe out the deadly disease that inflicts mainly forest and agricultural workers.

The KFD is a highly infectious viral illness transmitted by infected ticks through contact with monkeys and other wild animals. While till date there is no definite treatment available for KFD, the current vaccine potency too seems to be failing as has also been noted by the ICMR.

In a latest circular inviting expression of interest (EoI), the research body said, "... recent data show recurrence of KFD cases even in the vacci-

nated subjects, which may probably be due to the suboptimal efficacy of the current vaccine or vaccination protocol.

Additionally, the vaccine associated side effects, such as pain, and administration of booster doses for five years are also believed to be some of the potential discouraging factors that might affect the vaccine acceptability."

To overcome this problem, the ICMR has taken "initiative for development of a new vaccine candidate which is intended to have higher efficacy and safety of the recipients. ICMR NIV Pune has isolated and characterized KFDV isolates from the recent outbreaks of KFDV held in Karnataka State..."

It further pointed out that KFDV outbreaks are very common in recent years highlighting the need for more potent countermeasures including more effective vaccines.

"The seed virus used for the current KFD vaccine P9605 was isolated in 1965 and has undergone several passages in mice. The current vaccine is formalin inactivated and does not have WHO approval. Also the current

vaccine that was developed based on the strain isolated in early 1970s and not seem effective against the current circulating strain of KFD. There are reports of 2.24% diversity in the currently circulating strains of KFD virus in contrast to the strain used for vaccine preparation which was isolated in 1957.

Therefore, it may be appropriate to develop a new and future ready KFD vaccine candidate using new isolates and advanced technologies, said the ICMR.

Infact, a study "A live-attenuated viral vector vaccine protects mice against lethal challenge with Kyasanur Forest disease virus," by scientists from Laboratory of Virology, Division of Intramural Research, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, National Institutes of Health, Hamilton, MT, USA has warned that recent expansion of the KFDV endemic region with increasing KFD case numbers are of alarming public health concern and call out for urgently needed countermeasures including more efficient second-generation vaccines. The study is published in journal Nature in 2021.

No permission needed to develop infra on forest areas: Green Min to Rlys

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has clarified that the railways does not need to seek permission to develop infrastructure on its land in forest areas, after its contradictory orders on the issue created confusion in many states. Quoting an order dated March 10 last year, the ministry has stated that the Forest (Conservation) Act will not be applicable on railway owned land for execution or maintaining of railway works. This paves the way for the national transporter to execute infrastructure projects even in sensitive forest areas without seeking permission from the Centre. "It has been brought to the notice of the ministry that in some states/UTs there is ambiguity regarding interpretation of the term "RoW", mentioned in the guidelines dated 10.03.2022. Several states have asked the railway to explain the term "RoW". "The matter was examined in the ministry and it is clarified that RoW mentioned in the guidelines...May be understood

as the area falling within the limits of railway owned land for execution or maintaining of railway works," the ministry has said in a letter to the additional chief secretaries and principal secretaries of forests of all states and Union territories on February 22. The confusion of the state governments is understandable with "contrarian orders" being issued by the ministry since 2016 on the issue, it stated. In November 2016, the ministry said that if conversion of metre gauge to broad gauge lines is allowed within forest land in the right of way (RoW) of the railway line, which is already under non-forest use before October 25, 1980, then the Forest Conservation Act may not be applicable. However, if additional land beyond the existing alignment of metre gauge railway track is required for any non-forestry activities, then FCA clearance would be required. However, a year later in December 2017, it said that even "forest land" owned by the railways is "forest" and cannot be used for anything else without the consent of the central government.

Small farmers Govt priority: PM

Modi releases 13th instalment of PM-KISAN worth over ₹16,800 cr, lays foundation stone for projects

PTI ■ BELAGAVI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday held a massive road show in poll-bound Karnataka's Belagavi, with a large number of enthusiastic crowds turning up to have a glimpse of the country's top leader.

Standing on the 'running board' of his moving car, Modi waved at the crowd, which had gathered on either side of the road and on nearby buildings, many of whom were seen chanting 'Modi, Modi' slogans and shouting loud cheers. Modi said small farmers are the BJP Government's priority.

The PM was in the city to lay the foundation stone and dedicate multiple development initiatives, and also to release



the 13th instalment of PM-KISAN worth more than Rs 16,800 crores.

Under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme launched by the Centre in 2019, all landholding farmer families in the country are provided income support of Rs 6,000 in three instalments of Rs 2,000 each, every four months.

About 10.5-km-long road show to Malini City (venue of the stage event) was painted with saffron hues, as BJP flags, posters and banners dotted

the route.

At many places, people showered flower petals as his cavalcade passed through the stretch slowly.

Over 10,000 women clad in saree and saffron peta (traditional headgear) accorded a 'purnakumbha' (ceremonial) welcome to Modi.

There were a number of stage shows, some also equipped with LEDs, put up along the route, depicting the culture and traditions of various regions of the country and

historic personalities, as also programmes of the BJP government.

Karnataka, a BJP governed state, goes to Assembly polls by May.

After Bengaluru Urban with 27 Assembly segments (28 including Anekal), Belagavi, bordering Maharashtra, is the second biggest district in the State with 18 seats.

In 2018, BJP won 13 seats in Belagavi, and emerged as the single largest party with 105 seats in the State.

Mumbai cops on high alert after NIA's terror threat tip-off



TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Mumbai police went into a "high alert" mode on Monday after a tip-off they received from the National Investigation Agency (NIA) that the country's commercial capital faced a threat from a terrorist trained in Pakistan, China and Hong Kong.

The NIA had sent out an advisory of caution to the Mumbai Police after it received an email that one Sarfaraz Memon of Indore (Madhya Pradesh) who had terrorist training in Pakistan, China and Hong Kong was planning terror strikes in the metropolis.

Taking serious cognisance of the NIA's alert, the Mumbai police resorted to drills of strategic roadblocks and random checks of vehicles. They also began to keep tabs on the movement of suspicious persons and unusual activities. They also asked their informers to remain alert.

The NIA is on the look-out for Sarfaraz Memon, whom the central agency as a "dangerous suspect" and an "enemy of the state". Memon has reportedly landed in the metropolis.

Among other things, the NIA has passed crucial details about Memon like his driving licence, Aadhar Card, Passport and other documents to the Mumbai Police.

No demand for re-poll from Meghalaya, Nagaland: EC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Election Commission (EC) on Monday said that there was no demand for a re-poll from the two northeastern States — Meghalaya and Nagaland — as the Assembly polls went off peacefully. While both States have 60 Assembly seats, polling was held on 59 seats each, the EC pointed out.

Polling for the Sohiong seat in Meghalaya was adjourned due to the death of one of the candidates. Since the Akuluto seat in Nagaland remained uncontested with only one candidate, no election was required there.

"Polling across 3,419 polling stations in Meghalaya and 2,291 in Nagaland went off peacefully today.... Advance planning and extensive monitoring by the commission led by Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar...Ensured smooth conduct of elections in the two states with no re-poll reported in any of the 5,710 polling stations," the EC said. In 2018, 11



re-polls were held in Nagaland and one was held in Meghalaya.

Polling was also held in the Erode (East) Assembly seat in Tamil Nadu and the Sagardighi seat in West Bengal, where bypolls had to be scheduled to fill up the vacancies due to the death of the incumbent MLAs, as also in the Ramgarh Assembly seat in Jharkhand due to the disqualification of the incumbent legislator.

Voting in the Kasba Peth and Chinchwad Assembly seats in Maharashtra was held on Sunday. No voting was required in the Lumla Assembly seat in Arunachal Pradesh with the seat declared uncontested. The EC said there was meticulous planning on its part for the hilly regions of Meghalaya, involving travelling through a mountainous terrain, crossing rivers and inaccessible areas.

TMC, Raj Bhavan engage in war of words

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Hours after Bengal Governor CV Ananda Bose pulled up the State Government for its handling of the Coochbehar violence — where the convoy of Union Minister Nishit Pramanik's vehicle was attacked by alleged Trinamool Congress men — TMC mouthpiece 'Jago Bangla' on Monday hit back strongly criticising Raj Bhavan for allegedly towing the lines of his predecessor Jagdeep Dhankhar who had a turbulent relationship with Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee before being elevated as the Vice-President of India.

The TMC mouthpiece said that the statement issued by the Governor not only proved that he was following in the footsteps of Dhankhar but also underscored the fact that he had come to imple-



ment the "hidden agenda" of the BJP in Bengal.

Accusing the Governor of acting unilaterally without listening to the both sides and after listening to the BJP's side of the story only, Jago Bangla wondered as to why Bose was silent on the issue of the BSF gunning down a local Raj Bangshi youth on mere suspicion that he was a smuggler.

Curiosity when Bose had assumed charge post Dhankhar era by heaping praises on the Chief Minister, all and sundry had thought

that the chemistry between Raj Bhavan and Nabanna (State secretariat) would improve.

However, things tended to take turn to a different direction with the Governor in a strongly worded statement to the media warned that he would act and not sir silent if situations like the attack on Pramanik's convoy were repeated.

He said that the "Governor will not be a mute witness to any deterioration of Law and Order anywhere, anytime in the State, and strong and effective intervention will follow to ensure that the rot is stemmed in the root effectively, and peace and harmony restored."

He also said that, as Governor, it was his duty "to ensure that West Bengal does not slip into a 'soft state'. Rule of law will be established with an iron fist in a velvet glove. Democracy will not be allowed to degenerate into mobocracy."

AAP stir against Sisodia's arrest in Mumbai

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The AAP staged a protest in the metropolis for the second day on Monday against the arrest of Delhi's Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia by the CBI in an alleged corruption case Addressing party workers near Churchgate, AAP's Mumbai unit president Preeti Menon said: "We are witnessing an 'undeclared emergency' in the country. Sisodia is being targeted by the CBI without evidence. We will not be cowed down by the intimidation tactics of central investigating agencies. We are a party born on the streets of the country and have been protesting against corruption and injustice. If one Manish Sisodiya is arrested, lakhs of people more like him will emerge."

Saddam joins dad Azad's party DPAP



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

The Democratic Progressive Azad Party on Monday welcomed Saddam Nabi Azad for actively joining politics at Srinagar.

Saddam, the son of former Chief minister Gulam Nabi Azad and DPAP Chairman, formally joined politics during a Youth interaction programme

held at Srinagar.

The 41-year-old Saddam is a businessman and has pursued his studies from England.

"We welcome Saddam Nabi Azad for deciding to join active politics. Given his exposure and vision, he will be a guiding force for our youth. "We are welcoming him and looking forward to his contribution," said RS Chib, General Secretary.

Uddhav dubs EC bogus, calls Shinde faction creepers, thieves

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Uddhav Thackeray on Monday attacked the Election Commission for declaring the party faction led by Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde as the real Shiv Sena and allotting it the 'bow and arrow' symbol.

Thackeray said he no longer had trust in the apex poll body, adding it should be called "Election Chuna Lagao Aayog". "Chuna lagana" is street lingo for defrauding somebody.

"The Election Commission is bogus. It should be called the Election Chuna Lagao Aayog. We have lost trust in it," Thackeray said at a party event on the occasion of Marathi Language Day.

He claimed the Election



Commission should not have given its decision on the party name and symbol when hearings connected to it were underway in the Supreme Court.

The former CM said the EC had given a symbol each to Rashtriya Lok Janshakti Party factions headed by party founder late Ram Vilas Paswan's son Chirag and Paswan's brother Pashupati Kumar Paras in a dispute similar to the one in the Sena.

PUBLIC NOTICE					
		Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005			
The following borrower/s have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from the Bank and the loans have been classified as Non-Performing Assets (NPA). A notice was issued to them under Section 13 (2) of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act-2002 on their last known addresses, however it was not served and hence they are hereby notified by way of this public notice.					
Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ (Loan Account Number) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset / Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice	NPA Date	
1.	Sunil Kumar, Anil Kumar House No.8, Jhenda Colony, Asola South Delhi Fateh Pur Beri, Delhi 110074. A/c No.:- LBNOD00005209871.	Plot No.367, Block S, Uppal'S Southend Sector 48 49, Village Fazilpur Jharsa, and Ghansola, Gurgaon	09-Jan-2023 Rs. 3,39,40,603/-	11/10/2022	
2.	Parveen, Saijan Arora, 10524 Bagichi Peer Ji, Opposite Metro Pillar 100, Vikrant Nagar, Sadar Bazar New Delhi Delhi 110007. A/c No.:- LBNOD00004133251.	House No.38/9, Ground Floor (Without Roof Rights), Shakti Nagar, Delhi 110007	09-Jan-2023 Rs. 74,02,842/-	11/10/2022	
3.	Shashank Atom, Preeti Sharma, House No H-38 D Arjun Appts Vikas Puri New Delhi Delhi 110018. A/c No.:- LBNOD00001940668.	Pebble Court Apartment No. PB00020002, Wishtown, Sec-128, Pebble Court, Noida	09-Jan-2023 Rs. 3,17,86,906/-	11/10/2022	
4.	Nagendra Kumar, Kumari Reena, Vaidji Farm Plot No.28 Surajpur Greater Noida Noida 201306. A/c No.:- LBNOD00004964354.	Flat No- D-1505, Floor 15th, The Melia, Tower-d Sector-35 Sohna Gurgaon	09-Jan-2023 Rs.57,24,952/-	03/10/2022	
5.	Vishnu Babu, Sindhu Babu, 222 A. Nyay Khand 2, Indrapuram, Ghaziabad 201014. A/c No.:- LBGHZ00005462689.	Flat No.507, 5th Floor, Paras Pearls 2, Khasra No.540 541 Property No.1, Mauja Khatena, Lohamndi Ward, Agra- 282002	09-Jan-2023 Rs. 67,06,168/-	06/10/2022	
6.	Neetu Sanan, Gautam Sanan, Surinder Kumar Sanan, S-360 1st Floor Block-S, Greater Kailash- 1C Block Market Delhi 110048. A/c No.:- LBDEL00001866993.	UNIT No 1401, Level-14, Tower No.03, Sector-96, 97, and 98, The "Burgundy" Uitech Golf Country Club, Noida-201301	09-Jan-2023 Rs. 1,35,49,169/-	31/10/2022	
7.	Sharif Imam, Farhat Imam., 37A Chats Worth Crescent Noun Slow United Kingdom Tw3 2 Pe United Kingdom 50200 Nx. A/c No.:- LBNOD00002148909.	Apartment No. KBA0191504, Kensington Boulevard, Wishtown Noida, Jaypeegreens, Uttar Pradesh, Noida	06-Jan-2023 Rs. 15,15,517/-	03/10/2022	
8.	Pramod Kumar Jain, Madhu Jain, A-242 1st Floor Pandara Rd N Delhi- 110003. A/c No.:- LBNOD00002393443.	Apartment No- 304, 3rd Floor, Block-A 7th Avenue (GC-7), Plot No- Gh-01, Gaur City, Sector-04 Greater Noida	06-Jan-2023 Rs. 7,18,123/-	03/10/2022	
9.	Rajesh Kumar, Sangeeta Devi, Mahavir Singh Rawat, H No.04 Vishnu Garden, Opp Chirag Hospital, Rajendra Park Gurugram Gurgaon 122001. A/c No.:- LBGUR00005966320.	Double Storey Villa No.45, Khata No 791, (Fasli Year 1422 To 1427) Khasra No.793 Min Situated at Mauza Raiwala Ashtam, Pargana Parwa Doon, Tehsil Rishikesh Distt Dehradun	06-Jan-2023 Rs. 30,68,859/-	06/10/2022	
10.	Vishal Modi, Lalita Modi, Ankur Modi, Shiv Kumar Modi, Sea Buck Carec-73, Sf, South Delhi Part-1 Greater Kailash- Delhi 110048. A/c No.:- LBDEL00001809109.	Plot No- C-73, 2nd Floor, Greater Kailash, Part- I, Delhi	06-Jan-2023 Rs. 5,02,234/-	11/10/2022	
11.	Kulwinder Singh, Bharti, C-348A Block C 3 Keshav Puram Delhi- 110035. A/c No.:- LBNOD00002357381.	Lig Flat No-45, 1st Floor, Pocket- 3, Block- B 12 Sector- G 8 Narela Delhi	06-Jan-2023 Rs.62,75,326/-	03/10/2022	
12.	Nikhil Seth, Nanchan Sethi, D-99, 1st Floor Sec-40 Uttar Pradesh Noida- 201301. A/C No.:- LBNOD00001921425.	Apartment No-1502, 15th Floor, Tower No-16, Lotus Boulevard, Sector-100, Plot No-GH03, Uttar Pradesh, Noida	06-Jan-2023 Rs.13,74,219/-	31/10/2022	
13.	Sangeeta Rawat, Sunaina Devi, H No- A-326, Second Floor, Durga Vihar Devli Deoli South Delhi Delhi- 110062. A/c No.:- LBGUR00004838188.	Flat No-2101, 21th Floor Aspen, Sports Home, Sports City, Sector- Adjoining Tech Zone- 4, Plot No Gh-02, Uttar Pradesh, Noida	06-Jan-2023 Rs. 36,30,328/-	03/10/2022	
14.	Rachana Sekhri, Anil Kumar Sekhri, A-84 Preet Vihar Delhi- 110092. A/c No.:- LBNOD00002886933.	Flat No.2519, 25th Floor, Tower Vidhi, Mahagun Mantra 1, Plot No Gh-01, B, Sector-10 Greater Noida (West) Uttar Pradesh- 201307	06-Jan-2023 Rs. 38,86,897/-	29/09/2022	
15.	Anish Kumar, Ruchika Mendhiratta, A 1/60B Janta Flats Maa Shakti Apartments Paschim Vihar Delhi 110063. A/c No.:- LBDEL0000379069.	Flat No L347C, 3rd Floor Officer's Enclave (Hill Crest) In Hill Town, Situated at Sec-02, Block-L, Sohna Road, Gurgaon	06-Jan-2023 Rs. 38,49,866/-	31/10/2022	
16.	Ankita Gupta, Shikhar Gupta, M-1705, Grand Ajnara Heritage Sector-74 Uttar Pradesh Noida- 201301. A/c No.:- LBNOD00004837756.	Flat No.215, Ground Floor Sector 7, Rosewood Enclave, Wawe City, Nh-24, Uttar Pradesh, Ghaziabad	06-Jan-2023 Rs.21,37,366/-	03/10/2022	
17.	Raukshana Begum, Naushad, Alih No.104 Sector 3 Near Sirohi Nursing Home Ballabgarh Faridabad- 121004. A/c No.:- LBFDB00003112033.	Plot No-1442 P, Situated In Sec-7E, Urban Estate, Faridabad	06-Jan-2023 Rs. 41,65,801/-	03/10/2022	
18.	Moumita Bagchi, Manoj Kumar, H 5B Street-6, Block-D, Dayalpur North East Delhi- 110094. A/c No.:- LBDEL00004858033.	Flat No E 204, The Roselia, 2nd Floor, Tower E, Sector 95A, Haryana, Gurgaon	06-Jan-2023 Rs.17,26,333/-	03/10/2022	
19.	Rajeev Sharma, Vidushi Sharma, 9 Loseley Court Great Holm Milton Keynes Bucks Milton Keynes Bucks MK89dy. A/c No.:- LBNOD00002027140.	Unit No-TVM K2- FPH- PH02, The Views, Situated In Sec-105, 7th Floor, Mohali Hills Mohali	06-Jan-2023 Rs. 38,19,782/-	11/10/2022	
20.	Jaya Bhatura, Shashi Sharma, H No D 78 Main Road Near Value Bazar, Malviya Nagar Hauz Khas South Delhi Delhi 110017. A/c No.:- LBNOD00004879139.	Flat No- 506, 5th Floor, Tower- T7 Arawali Homes, Village Kaika Sector- 4 Sohna Gurgaon	06-Jan-2023 Rs. 8,45,302/-	03/10/2022	
21.	Hemender Kumar Chandolia, Subita Chandolia, F-25/735, Sector-7, Mig-Flat, Rohini, DELHI, 110085. A/c No.:- LBDEL00000384017.	Flat No-57, Second Floor, Multan C. G. H. S Ltd Plot No-38 Chardham Apartments, Sector No-9 Rohini New Delhi	06-Jan-2023 Rs. 4,59,375/-	07/04/2022	
22.	Priyanka Singh, Pratigya Singh, C 206, Left Side 4th Floor, Prakash, Mohalla East of Kailash, Delhi- 110065. A/c No.:- LBNOD0000238139.	Flat No.2508, 25th Floor, Tower Ganga, Mahagun Mantra II, Plot No- Gh 01, Sector 10, Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh	06-Jan-2023 Rs. 23,83,263/-	29/09/2022	
23.	Sanjay Kumar, Prerana, H No F 100 Sector Alpha 2 Greater Noida Rampur Jagir Gautam Budh Nagar Noida- 201306. A/C No.:- LBDEL00004408225.	Shop/ Office No-01, Ground Floor, Satyam Shopping Complex, Plot No Cs-06, Sector Alpha-2, Greater Noida Gautam Buddha Nagar	06-Jan-2023 Rs. 47,14,079/-	10/10/2022	
24.	Kamal Singh Bisht, Kheema Bisht, H. No-J-101, Vijay Nagar, Sector-9, Block-J, Uttar Pradesh, Ghaziabad- 201009. A/c No.:- LBDEL00001947909.	Plot No-10A/150, First Floor, Sector- 10 A, Vasundhara, Ghaziabad	06-Jan-2023 Rs. 23,48,814/-	24/10/2022	
25.	Sachin Sharma, Mothersonsumi Infotech and Designs Ltd, C 26 Sec 62 Uttar Pradesh Noida 201306. A/c No.:- LBGHZ00006052088.	Flat No T9-037, Ground Floor, Tower-9, Dream Homes, Plot No- Gh-06A, Sector-05, Wawe City, Nh-24, Uttar Pradesh, Ghaziabad	06-Jan-2023 Rs. 19,05,048/-	06/10/2022	
26.	Praveen Rao, Elizabeth Rao, 1875/4 Sector-4 Haryana Gurgaon- 122001. A/c No.:- LBGUR00002060309.	Flat No-104, Tower- B, Sky View Apartment, Plot No Gh-2, Vasundhara Nagar, Alwar, Bhiwadi	06-Jan-2023 Rs.17,88,202/-	16/09/2022	
27.	Gaurav Aggarwal, Madhu Aggarwal, 146, Savita Vihar, Delhi- 110092. A/c No.:- LBNOD00001972238.	Flat No-1114, 11th Floor, Tower- F, Up Country Supertech , TS- 01 Sector 17A Yea Noida	08-Dec-2022 Rs.20,39,114/-	30/07/2022	
28.	Geeta, Kamlesh. Flat No.12021 Floor 1st Tower 12, Zara Awaas Sector 104 Gurgaon- 122001. A/c No.:- LBGUR00005922022.	Apartment No-01, 2nd Floor, Tower- 12 Zara Aavaas, Sector- 104 Gurgaon Haryana	08-Dec-2022 Rs.15,52,437/-	03/09/2022	
29.	Jacky Kumar Srivastva, Vill Po Pachrukhi Siwan Siwan, Near Gayatri Sha Tipith Siwan 841241. A/c No.:- LBDEL00005369466.	Flat No-225, 2nd Floor, Tower- C Galaxy Royale, Phase 2-vrindavan Plot No- GC03J/GH-03, Gaur City- 2 Sector- 16C, Noida	08-Dec-2022 Rs. 23,84,110/-	01/09/2022	
30.	Jaatin Mishra, Indu Mishra, D-1 1st Floor Manohar Park, East Punjabi Baghwest Delhi- 110026. A/c No.:- LBGHZ00004398214.	Flat No-F-1505, Floor 15, Tower- F, Star Rameshwaram, Noor Nagar, Raj Nagar Ext Ghaziabad	08-Dec-2022 Rs. 20,11,535/-	03/08/2022	
31.	Manisha Sharma, Shashi Bhushan Dutt Sharma, At Fci Road Phulwari Sharif, Patna Patna Patna 801505. A/c No.:- LBGUR00002120813.	Flat No- D6, First Floor, Piyyush Rosette, Bhiwadi Alwar Rajasthan	08-Dec-2022 Rs. 23,48,902/-	16/08/2022	
32.	Mohit., Roshni Gulathil-804 Princess Park Sector-86 Old Faridabad Faridabad- 121002. A/c No.:- LBFDB00004364371.	Flat No- 2201, Floor 22, Tower-B, Ajnara Le Garden, Plot No- Gh 02 Sector- 16 Greater Noida	08-Dec-2022 Rs.28,05,680/-	04/10/2021	
33.	Neeraj Jaiswal, Mulchand Jayaswal House No.112 B Boniha Patel Nagar Ghaziabad Ghaziabad- 201002. A/c No. :- LBGHZ00003603575.	Flat No- D/ 1008, 10th Floor, Moti Residency Tower - D, Khasra No- 238 Village Morta Near Nh-38 Ghaziabad	08-Dec-2022 Rs. 14,77,003/-	03/09/2022	
34.	Naveen Chauhan, Isha Rani, I-203 Rail Vihar, Alpha-1 Ggreater 201306 Noida- 201306. A/C No.:- LBGHZ00004874257.	Flat No-603, Floor- 6, Tower- Sun 3, Migsun Vilaasa, Sector E-2 Plot No- Gh- 1B(2) Greater Noida	08-Dec-2022 Rs. 5,14,287/-	03/05/2022	
35.	Pratap Chandra Khilar, Monika Routh, No.2780, Sector 7 Agreen Park, Faridabad Ncr, Faridabad Faridabad Haryana 121006. A/c No.:- LBGUR00003521531.	Flat No-077, Ground Floor, Rof Galleria Sector 102 Gurgaon Haryana .	08-Dec-2022 Rs. 13,32,069/-	03/09/2022	
36.	Pratap Chandra Khilar, Monika Routh, No.2780, Sector 7a Green Park, Faridabad Ncr Faridabad Faridabad Haryana 121006. A/c No.:- LBGUR00002973642.	Flat No-907, Tower-D, 9th Floor, Aalayas Tower, Sec-102 Gurgaon Haryana .	08-Dec-2022 Rs. 21,30,730/-	03/09/2022	
37.	Rahul Sharma, Ramesh Chander Sharma, Shikha Sharma, E 402 E Block West Vinodnagar Delhi, Delhi, Delhi, 110092. A/c No.:- LBDEL00002888089.	Flat No- Sat3 1112A, 11th Floor, Blossom Zest Block- Sat3, Plot No- Gh 02 Sec- 143 Noida Gautam Buddha Nagar	08-Dec-2022 Rs. 16,94,597/-	03/09/2022	
38.	Ram Nath Gandhi, Bhanu Gandhi, Sumit Gandhi, 13/443 Sunder Vihar Delhi Delhi 110087. A/c No.:- LBDEL00003632309.	Plot No-235, Ground Floor, Block-A-5 Paschim Vihar Delhi	08-Dec-2022 Rs.25,02,062/-	06/05/2022	
39.	Rohit Chandell, Poonam, Hno 4070 1st Floor Sainik Colony Sec-49 Faridabad Ip Ext-Zfaridabad Faridabad 121001 Faridabad 121001. A/c No.:- LBFDB00004907261.	Flat No-301, Floor 3rd, Tower-R, Happy Homes Exclusive Budena Sector-86 Faridabad	08-Dec-2022 Rs. 3,29,641/-	03/06/2022	
40.	Subhash Chand Yadav, Sunita Devi, House No.81 Near Metro Pillar No.538 A Mundka Delhi Delhi110041. A/c No.:- LBDEL00002943978.	Flat No-0208, 2nd Floor, Tower- 15 Supertech Basera Manesar Complex Village Naurangpur, Sector-79 and 79B Gurgaon	08-Dec-2022 Rs. 9,96,015/-	03/08/2022	
41.	Sujeet Kumar Jha, Savita Devi, F-430 Delta-1 Greater Noida G B Nagar Noida 201306. A/c No.:- LBNOD00001883296.	Flat No-445, Block- F, Sec- Delta- 1, Greater Noida	08-Dec-2022 Rs.7,45,314/-	08/09/2022	
42.	Shrawan Kumar Mishra, Deepanshi Mishra, Flat No Ff 1 Plot No A 48 Shalimar Garden Main Sahibabad Ghaziabad 201005. A/C No.:- LBNOD00004969353.	Flat No-407, 4th Floor, Block-g, SpIs Aawasiya Yojna, Jal Nigam Road Govind Puram Extension Nh-24 Ghaziabad	08-Dec-2022 Rs. 4,10,167/-	04/11/2021	
43.	Vasudha Govila, Dheeraj, Flat No.344 Sec 3 Pushp Vihar Delhi Delhi 110017. A/c No.:- LBNOD00002382490.	Flat No-315, 3rd Floor, Tower- Sat8, Blossom Zest Plot No- Gh-02 Sector-143 Noida	08-Dec-2022 Rs.17,20,302/-	03/09/2022	
44.	Vipin Kumar, Pranjal Chaudhari, B 31/32 Ganesh Nagar Complex Pandav Nagar Delhi 110092. A/c No.:- LBNOD00002402722.	Flat No-1212A, 12th Floor, Tower-sat9, Blossom Zest Plot No-02 Sector- 143 Noida	08-Dec-2022 Rs.18,72,683/-	03/09/2022	
45.	Ziauddin Malik, Nasreen Malik161/20 Main Road Joga Bai Jamia Nagar New Delhi Delhi 110025. A/c No.:- LBNOD00002045722.	Flat No-0516, 4th Floor, Tower- Socrates3, Supertech Czar Suits, Plot No-Gh-02, Sector- Omicron I Noida	08-Dec-2022 Rs.16,31,635/-	08/09/2022	
46.	Mohammed Usman, Alnaved Exports Private Limited, Mohd Meharban, Rehana Babi, Shabista, 8975 Naya Mohalla Pul Bangash, Azad Market DELHI- 110006. A/C :- LBDEL00002443561.	Plot No. 8 & 9, Being Part of Property No. 4, Known as 4/8 & 4/9, Situated At Racquet Court Road, Civil Lines, Consisting of Basement & Ground Floor With Its Open Terrace/ Roof Rights, Delhi- 110054	19-Jan-2023 Rs. 6,02,44,963/-	03/11/2022	
47.	Abhishek Dixit, Urmila, 227/3 Laxman Vihar Gurgaon 122001. A/c:- LBGUR00003784514, LBGUR00003776554.	Flat No-1701, 17th Floor, Tower- T 6, Hill Town, Sector-2, Sohna Gurgaon	10-Jan-2023 Rs.1,50,935/- Rs.40,32,951/-	30/08/2022	
48.	Arjun Dixit, Rupesh Dixit, Sandhya Dixit, H No-C-13/F Dda Flats Munirka J.N.U South West Delhi New Delhi 110067. A/c:- LBDEL00004350148, LBDEL00004857771, LBDEL00003260576.	Hno- C13/F, S F Dda Mig Flats, Block-C, Munirka, Delhi	10-Jan-2023 Rs.17,41,512,89/- Rs.17,79,622,89/- Rs.38,57,994,99/-	03/10/2022	
49.	Avdhesh Kumar Mourya, Pushpa Devi, B-120 B Block New Ashok Nagar Delhi 110096. A/c:- LBDEL000003601625, LBNOD0000511986 .	Flat No Sc 224, 2nd Floor, Galaxy Diamond Plaza,plot No C 01A, Sector 4, Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh	10-Jan-2023 Rs.14,51,230/- Rs.1,27,251/-	03/09/2022	
50.	Dinesh Kumar, Darshana, E-198, Dr Ambedkar Nagar Sector-5, Dakshin Puri New Delhi- 110062. A/c:- LBDEL00001974043, LBDEL00001895530.	Plot No.31, Ground Floor, Block-5, Eros Garden Colony, Charmwood Village, Haryana, Faridabad	10-Jan-2023 Rs.19,855,633/- Rs.35,27,369,7/-	30/07/2022	
51.	Devender Singh, Sushma Raj, W2-13 Upper Ground Floor Block-B Om Vihar Phase-3 Unnati Chemist Unit Nagar West Delhi-110059. A/c :- LBGUR00004856664, LBGUR00004828894.	Unit No-0098, Ground Floor, Tower- Tristaar, Spaze Tristaar Sec-92 Gurgaon	10-Jan-2023 Rs.1,29,137,37/- Rs.18,10,114,77/-	31/01/2022	
52.	Mohit Khanna, Rohit Khanna, 59 Sedgewick Avenue, Uxbridge Middlesex London Cro.thu. A/c:- LBDEL00002071616, LBDEL00002077700 .	Flat No- C-1001, 10th Floor, Tower- C, Pristine Avenue, Plot No- GC 03F/gh-03 Gaur City- 2, Sector- 16C Greater Noida Gautam Budh Nagar	10-Jan-2023 Rs.5,38,116,23/- Rs.33,83,83/-	10/10/2022	
53.	Neeraj Chadda, Bhavna Chadha, F 39 3rd Floor, Plot No-45a Kh No-88/19 Gali No.5, Vijay Vihar I Rohini Sec 4 Vll Ritlala Delhi 110085. A/c:- LBDEL00002087250, A/c No.:- LBDEL0000116865 .	Unit No.005, Ground Floor, Block F, Delhi 99, Opp Avas Vikas Bhopura, Tilla More Road, Village Bhametla, Hajipur, Tehsil Loni, Ghaziabad	10-Jan-2023 Rs.12,89,199,87/- Rs.1,01,956,87/-	11/10/2022	
54.	Abhishek Sharma, Anshika Sharma, F2-46, Bptp Villas Sector-88, Haryana Faridabad 121001. A/c:- LBNOD00004971152, LBNOD00004980525.	Flat No-103, G, Block-I In London Square (ajnara Panorama) Plot No-Gh-04 Sector-22A, Yamuna Expressway, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Noida	09-Jan-2023 Rs.97,70,826/- Rs.3,35,147/-	01/12/2021	
55.	Abhishek Sharma, Kanika Sharma, House No.2292, Ground Floor G F, Sector 16, Escorts Nagar, Faridabad- 121007. A/c:- LBGUR00005834391, LBGUR00005878699.	Plot No E 17, Block E, sector 89, Situated In "The Retreat", Faridabad	09-Jan-2023 Rs.88,03,361/- Rs.2,24,324/-	02/10/2022	
56.	Sunil Kumar, Raj Rani, Darpan, House No.8 Jhenda Colony, Anula Fatehpur Beri, Old Ramesh Restaurant, Delhi- 110074. A/c:- LBFDB00005124493, LBFDB00005124494 .	Flat No- K 1 P0040503, Floor-5th, Sec-128, Kalypto Court Tower-4, Jaypee Greens, Wish Town, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Noida	09-Jan-2023 Rs.44,04,371/- Rs.29,31,369/-	11/10/2022	
The steps are being taken for substituted service of notice. The above borrower/s and/or their guarantors (as applicable) are advised to make the payments of outstanding within period of 60 days from the date of publication of this notice else further steps will be taken as per the provisions of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.					
Date : February 28, 2023					
Place : Delhi/NCR					
				Authorized Officer ICICI Bank Limited	

Sensitivity needed

Yogi and Akhilesh Yadav exchange barbs in the Assembly over a broad daylight murder

The verbal duel between Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Samajwadi Party leader Akhilesh Yadav in the Assembly on Saturday was quite acrimonious. The acrimony got expressed in a language that doesn't cover democracy in glory. As the session began, Opposition leaders, including Yadav, attacked the Bharatiya Janata Party Government in the state over the broad daylight murder of the prime eyewitness, Umesh Pal, in the 2005 murder of a Bahujan Samaj Party MLA. This incensed Adityanath who launched a counter-attack: "It was the Samajwadi Party which nurtured and protected the mafia [don] Atiq Ahmed and now, they are raising fingers at us. Mafia ko mitti mein mila dunga (I will eliminate mafias). The Prayagraj incident is very disturbing, but the guilty will not be spared." He also asserted that his government has a "zero-tolerance policy" against mafia and crime: "Those who are involved in the incident, were they not nurtured and protected by the Samajwadi Party? The Samajwadi Party had made him an MP [Atiq Ahmed]." It may be mentioned here that Pal's widow has lodged a police case against Atiq's family members, including his two sons. The UP CM's assertions were not without substance but these could have been made in a more temperate language—and, of course, without the histrionics of mitti mein

mila dunga. Should our politicians indulge in rhetorical excesses all the time?

It is true that Adityanath has largely succeeded in improving the law and order situation. Not that the state has become a Garden of Eden—or to use the phraseology Adityanath would prefer—Ramraja; but there has been perceptible improvement. A report by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), which was released in August last year, showed a dip in serious crimes such as rape and murder in the state in 2021, though the pandemic and the ensuing lockdowns might have played a role in that. Then there are also reports that industrialists from other parts of the country are exploring the possibilities of investing in UP. There was also a global investors meeting recently in which big corporations showed considerable interest. This is not surprising because, as we mentioned earlier, a good law and order situation is the sine qua non of attracting industry. Prime Minister Narendra Modi lauded the performance of UP by saying that it is driving the growth of New India. However, CM Adityanath should also ensure that law enforcement should not be a ham-handed affair in which cops are given enormous powers and innocents also suffer because of the rough behaviour of police. As Modi said on Sunday, policing should be done not just using the strong arm of the law but also with sensitivity. While the guilty should be brought to justice, others should not be made to suffer in any possible manner. Only with such an approach will CM Adityanath be able to eliminate the mafia.

PICTALK



A 'Saras' crane at Mandaka Village in Amethi, Uttar Pradesh

Myriad threats to national security

A complex political reality of the Middle East makes the national security of UAE a daunting task, but it has met the challenge rather well

A nation's national security may be threatened by a variety of internal, external, or overlapping causes. These difficulties may often be grouped according to several factors. In general, conventional threats take the form of armed conflicts, but unconventional threats manifest as cyberwars, also known as digital warfare. Instability on a regional and global scale poses significant threats to the UAE's national security. The conflicting interests of local, regional, and international parties have contributed to the escalation and complexity of several wars. The following are the biggest threats to UAE national security at the moment:

REGIONAL CONFLICTS

A nation's national security may be threatened by a variety of internal, external, or overlapping causes. These difficulties may often be grouped according to several factors. In general, conventional threats take the form of armed conflicts, but unconventional threats manifest as cyberwars, also known as digital warfare. Instability on a regional and global scale poses significant threats to the UAE's national security. The conflicting interests of local, regional, and international parties have contributed to the escalation and complexity of several wars. The following are the biggest threats to UAE national security at the moment:

FOREIGN INTERVENTIONS

The national security of Arab nations, especially the UAE, has been negatively affected by regional interventions in domestic issues, which can sometimes be dangerous.

However, historically, these interventions were regulated by rules and had distinct bounds and deterrent measures. The circumstance, though, has altered. Regional powers have seized control of certain Arab nations. In actuality, these elements currently play a sizable role in the stoking of certain local disputes. For more than five years, there hasn't been a political solution in Yemen, where Iranian meddling and its continued support of the Houthis rebels have exacerbated



the issue and contributed to its continuation.

The same is true of Turkey's involvement, namely in Libya, where it intensified and made the nation's situation worse since 2011. There are valid concerns that the conflict's expansion might ignite a regional conflict because the interests of the two parties overlap. Other countries have made it plain that Russian intervention poses a threat to the stability and security of the Mediterranean and the entire region. This poses a severe threat to the nation's security.

EXTREMISM AND TERRORISM

One of the biggest threats to regional, national, and even international security and stability in the UAE continues to be extremism and terrorism. Although there have been concerns about the resurrection of Da'esh or other groups, or even the development of additional radical and violent organisations, this phenomenon has been largely in decline since the terrorist group Da'esh was defeated in Iraq and Syria.

Political considerations, such as the repression of liberties and likely despotism; economic ones, such as poverty and unemployment, especially in light of the coronavirus epidemic, which is predicted to have a significant impact on economic circum-

“
REGIONAL POWERS HAVE SEIZED CONTROL OF CERTAIN ARAB NATIONS. IN ACTUALITY, THESE ELEMENTS CURRENTLY PLAY A SIZABLE ROLE IN THE STOKING OF CERTAIN LOCAL DISPUTES

stances; or intellectual factors, such as the persistence of extremist ideas and their distribution through social media, which has evolved into a platform for the propagation of hatred & extreme ideology.

ELECTRONIC ATTACKS

Cyber warfare, often known as threats to computer networks, is a major source of worry. Attacks on the internet are among the most serious problems that every nation's national security has to deal with. The difficulty in foreseeing, regulating, or avoiding them is merely one aspect of the issue; another is the catastrophic consequences they have on national economies. Cyberattacks have the potential to shut down entire services and disrupt entire industries. Additionally, they have the potential to seriously escalate international tensions and even spark a war. This is especially true if incorrect information was released to imply that a nation was in immediate danger, setting off a strong reaction that would lead to warfare. The situation is made worse by the internet and rapid technological advancement. The threat is constant despite the development of cybersecurity measures and the existence of strong legislative frame-

works. The threat is increased when nations establish digital or cyber warfare units as part of their offensive tactics since methods of infiltration and assault are constantly changing. As a result, countries rather than people or businesses become the source of the threat. This might result in official services from countries attacking critical sites of other nations, perhaps going beyond the bounds of espionage or information collection, to destroy crucial material at crucial institutions.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Undoubtedly, the population structure is greatly unbalanced as a result of the development seen in the UAE. It poses a serious threat to national security since this imbalance hurts deploying the government resources required to sustain the growth of the UAE, as well as on the issue of employment and the potential for labour unrest. Rival nations and foreign powers may take advantage of the current context of escalating human rights demands.

(The writer is an advisor to Cyber/Aerospace Security and an eminent expert for Counter Terrorism & Cyber Security, in West Asia & Middle East. The views expressed are personal)
Concluded

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

MENSTRUAL PAIN LEAVE

Sir — The Supreme Court concluded that there are different “dimensions” to menstrual pain leave, which though being a biological process, may also act as a “disincentive” for employers from engaging women in their establishments.

The court was seeking a direction to States to frame rules for granting menstrual pain leave for students and working women in workplaces. However, a law student opines that if you compel employers to grant menstrual pain leave, it may operate as a de facto disincentive for employers to engage women in their establishments. There are different dimensions to the issue, we will leave it to the policymakers. Let them first formulate a policy. Having regard to the policy dimensions involved in the matter, we are of the considered view that the petitioner makes a representation to the Ministry of Women and Child Development, which may take an appropriate decision on the grievance of the petitioner. The Supreme Court is now asking the Centre to decide whether women should be entitled to menstrual leave.

Jayanthi Subramaniam | Mumbai

ASHOK VAJPEYI DARES TO SAY NO

Sir — No kudos is enough for the poet Ashok Vajpeyi for refusing to participate in a cultural festival because of the insistence of the organisers not to read poems critical of the Government. It is well-known what repercussion awaits a person who desires to swim opposite the “safron mainstream” or refuse to tow the Government line in these times of “Good Days”(yes, a performer can be arrested even before an event on the presumption that he may take a dig at the Government or safron ecosystem; remember Munawar Faruqui's fate for the joke he didn't tell!); yet Vajpeyi openly expressed his reluctance to obey any pro-govt diktat and preferred non-participation in the festival! This is called remaining accountable to one's conscience and possession of the

Tackling global debt



Prime Minister Narendra Modi, while addressing the G-20 meeting of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors said that unsustainable debt levels are threatening many nations across the world and that the G-20 nations, along with multilateral institutions,

needed to find solutions to the issue. In this piquant situation, Prime Minister has forgotten that the Indian government is already under heavy debt (expected to reach Rs. 1.55 lakh crore by March 2023) and another Rs. 19 lakh crore sourced this year is going to make the going tough for the government to have more than 1,70,000 crore.

Mounting interest and principal repayments compelled the government to prune the public expenditure. Under this extenuating situation, Mr Modi, the Indian government first needs to be free from borrowings as the government is already reeling under heavy debt and then sermons to others as “charity begins at home.”

SK Khosla | Chandigarh

spine! Had all persons of the society been as upright and conscientious as them; the immoral brigade would have been uprooted from the country long ago. Vajpeyi deserve special thanks for unique mode of protest through such non-violent ways.

Kajal Chatterjee | Kolkata

CONGRESS PLENARY SESSION

Sir — The Congress party is the best example of responsibility without authority and authority without responsibility. It happened when Dr Manmohan Singh was Prime Minister. Now it is happening in the case of Mallikarjuna Kharge. When the election to the party's presidency was held, there was a hope that Congress was making a significant departure from its tradition of holding overall control of the party with Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi holding the post of President one after the other most of the time. The hopes have now been belied with the party's steering committee deciding against holding internal elections to Congress Working Committee (CWC) but authorizing the party President Kharge to nominate the members to the working committee.

The dissenting leaders for nomina-

tions in the Friday meeting are Ajay Maken, P. Chidambaram, Digvijaya Singh and Abhishek Singhvi. The absence of Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi in the meeting is to obviate a possible impression that the decision to authorize Kharge for nominating the members to CWC was not at their behest. The steering committee meeting held on the first day of the Congress party's 85th plenary session in Raipur has decided to give more teeth to anti-defection law if Congress comes to power. There are no two opinions that anti-defection laws should be more effective than now.

Democratically elected governments have been toppled not just by defections. Article 356 to impose the President's rule has been misused by Congress 93 times.

The Lok Sabha election is still over one year away. In the remaining time, the NDA government must restore statehood to J & K, and bring Uniform Civil Code if it has to cement its position to continue in power and do more good work under the leadership of Modi.

KV Seetharamaiah | Bengaluru

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

The G20 Presidency is an opportunity

G20 gives India an excellent opportunity to become a global player in world politics and resolve world conflicts

The G-20 Presidency of India is a huge Platform to showcase its multidimensional role and inner prowess across the globe. There have been a lot of conceptual and scholastic discussions about India's leading role, new opportunities and emerging challenges which may create a new vision for an international order based on mutual cooperation and coordination. Who knows a couple of years hence, a plethora of literature appearing on International Politics and changing Paradigms: Post-2022.

As the theme, Vasudhaiva Kutumba-Kam (One Earth, One Family, One Future) and its close ties with Lifestyle for Environment reflect India's penchant towards democratic values and excellent harmony with nature. It is a welcome sign that India has got an opportunity to draw a framework for key demands of the new economic cooperation while maintaining a synergy between international actors. The post-pandemic phase has been marked by a period of substantial change in the contents and nature of IR in the backdrop of myri-



ad challenges on account of economic slowdown and security crisis of unprecedented magnitude due to Geo-Political skirmishes in different parts of the world. Whereas the increasing liberalization has provided a link deeply interwoven in a comprehensive view of society, market, freedom, choice, empowerment, and peace and its bad impact has created a bit of a confusing situation. There has been a lot of concern about the high rising debt of nations across the globe including the neighbourhood of India Pakistan and Sri Lanka has virtually been engulfed in an economic quagmire. The International Monetary Fund and World Bank are gradually seeing increasing

demands for loans which may gradually become unsustainable if the economic crisis is not dealt with head-on. This can only be done through collective efforts (Multilateral Coordination) by member states. The partnership among myriad institutions through equity and access to all shows the level of insight in empowering even the least economically developed countries is another area to be handled by the G20 group. The pursuit of India to enhance the area of aggrandizement and attain the goal of Sustainable Development through multilateralism exhibits tremendous effort towards accelerating the overall cooperation scenario. Lucy Larcom once said, "If the world seems cold

to you, kindle fire to warm it." How true it is about our traditional values and ethics which are deeply interwoven in a solid backup system. The slogan of a self-reliant India (Atmanirbhar Bharat) has always remained reliable and withstood the toughest period of crisis even during deadly spikes of the pandemic. G20's Presidency is an opportunity for India to showcase its inner prowess driven by its strength from the value of labour, honesty, truth, non-violence, dedication, determination, loyalty and above all trust creation. Even as major economies of the world witnessed a slowdown, economic growth has remained resilient in India. However, the major challenge is to create more employment during a global economic slowdown period. Rapid globalization has brought forward a new syndrome of “perform or perish”. Surely the syndrome is affecting public sector enterprises and businesses the world around.

(The writer is a recipient of the Bharat Gaurav Award and an expert on strategic affairs)

To be concluded...



SUDHIR HINDWAN

FIRST COLUMN

REVERSE TRENDS OF GLOBALISATION

There is a marked shift in the global order; the US influence is on the ebb



INDRANIL DE

The global economy is shifting away from globalisation, which the United States has led since the Second World War, and toward protectionism. Through the Second Industrial Revolution, the USA's dominance in technology and the economy allowed them to control the world's order. The USSR, however, posed a formidable challenge to the USA. Despite earlier rising to prominence with a share of 21.32% of the global economy in 1980, its economic power has waned, reaching a proportion of 15.47% in 2022 and possibly will decline further. Policies of both Donald Trump and Joe Biden endorse protectionism, while globalization was once promoted as virtuous and irreversible by previous US presidents. The global political economy has transformed drastically. China has emerged as the United States' principal opponent, with a larger share of the global economy (18.58% in 2022) than the United States. To counter China's high-tech ambitions, the United States has enacted the Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors (CHIPS) and Science Act, 2022, which incentivizes domestic semiconductor production. The recipients of incentives cannot build facilities in China and other countries of concern.




In addition, the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (IRA) was enacted to curb inflation through a variety of measures, including investments in domestic energy production and the promotion of sustainable energy. This will minimise electric vehicle batteries' reliance on China. All these actions against China form an economic cold war. The United States suspects that due to the Chinese government's control over the country's commercial sector, US-made cutting-edge technology may leak into the Chinese military.

From 1947 until 1991, the United States and its former rival, the Soviet Union, were engaged in a cold war. India had to bear its unforeseen effects. Since its independence, India has maintained close ties with the USSR in research, technology, and economic growth. Father of Modern Statistics in India, Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis, was one of the principal architects of the Second Five-Year Plan. However, his proximity to the USSR came at a price. In the 1950s, despite years of Mahalanobis's persuasion, ISI was unable to get a UNIVAC computer produced in the United States. UNIVAC's capabilities differed from those of Soviet machines. UNIVAC was more effective at processing massive volumes of numeric data, whereas Ural was best suited for solving mathematical problems. ISI had a direct stake in the former because it needed to process NSS data for planning purposes. The cause for the failure of getting UNIVAC is extremely unexpected; it was Mahalanobis' image to the United States as a Soviet sympathizer during the Cold War. In actuality, what fascinated Mahalanobis was its planning exercise, not its political ideology. The rules established by CHIPS and IRA are a sad reminder of the United States fear regarding its nearest foe and its quest for supremacy. However, the United States' current opponent China has no positive relations with India. Therefore, it is unlikely that these rules will harm India's interests. The economic cost of industrialisation for all strategic items in a country can be prohibitive. Therefore, the US would prefer to diversify its supply chain with friendly nations such as India. Only if other nations restrict their trade connections with China, the only United States will gain from these actions. If smaller trading groupings are formed as opposed to the former free trade regime, it might be possible. India should become a prominent member of such groups. However, falling out of favour with major powers would spoil the plot. India's military and economic relations with Russia may antagonise the United States as it did before.


(The writer is an Associate Professor Institute of Rural Management Anand. The views expressed are personal)

Upgrade collegium to resolve the deadlock

The conflict between the judiciary and the executive seems to be getting loopy, and this isn't good



KISHLAYA MISHRA



TRISHA SHREYASHI



Earlier in the 1970s, the two limbs of the government got into a tussle which acted as a catalyst outlining the independence of the judiciary. Now the central issue is the appointment of judges. Presently, the appointment of Supreme Court judges is done by the collegium. The meetings of the collegium are confidential and are only published after a final resolution has been passed by consensus. This practice is often subject to criticism because of lingering vacancies, infrastructural handicaps and most important appointment of Judges - the debate of an efficiently functioning judiciary is getting noisier by the day.

It was the Hon'ble SC who redefined the meaning of 'consultation' under Article 124 as 'concurrence', thereby securing the appointment of judges to the extant lobby of justiceship lineage of judges' chambers and family legacies of the court halls (exceptions do prevail). Article 124(2) of the Constitution prior to the 99th amendment provides for "consultation". It is pertinent to mention that this provision was held unconstitutional but the text remains intact. The word "consultation" implies discussion and seeking opinions prior to making a decision.

Volume VII of the Constituent Assembly debate makes mention of Mahboob Ali Baig who moved an amendment to article 103(2) of the draft constitution, now article 124(2). It dealt with the appointment of judges to the Supreme Court other than the Chief Justice. The amend-

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THE FRAMERS OF THE CONSTITUTION DID NOT INTEND TO CONFER PRIMACY TO THE OPINION OF JUDGES IN THE MATTER OF JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS

ment moved, spoke — "It shall be made with the concurrence of the Chief Justice of India". Additionally, two similar amendments were moved by two of the members and all three amendments were negated.

Dr Ambedkar had responded to this proposal of amendment in the following words "...those advocating this proposition seem to rely implicitly both on the impartiality of the Chief Justice and the soundness of his judgement. I personally feel no doubt that the Chief Justice is a very eminent person but after all, the Chief Justice is a man with all the failings, all the sentiments and all the prejudices which we as common people have. And, I think that to allow the Chief Justice practically a veto upon the appointment of judges is really to transfer the authority to him which we are not prepared to vest in the President or the Government of the day. I thus think that is also a dangerous proposition."

However, the second judge's case interpreted "consultation" in a way to give "primacy" to the opinion of CJI thus watering down the role of the President as originally conceived by the constituent assembly. The Second Judges case and subsequent judgements in the Third Judges and Fourth Judges case interpreted the consti-

tution with respect to the appointment of judges in a manner opposite to what Ambedkar suggested.

Article 74(1) of the Constitution makes it obligatory for the president to act upon the "Aid and Advise" of the council of ministers headed by the Prime Minister. There is a very obvious reason for this. The Council of Ministers is the elected executive who is accountable to the house of people. So, the aid and advice being tendered represents the will of the people and is the most important tenet of representative democracy.

One can thus infer that the framers of the constitution did not intend to confer primacy to the opinion of Judges in the matter of judicial appointments. Had they intended to give primacy to CJI, they would have conveniently used the phrase "Aid and Advice" instead of "Consultation".


However, the judiciary in this context has adjudicated the dispute between itself and the executive. Our Hon'ble Judges need to realize that the interpretation of laws in the judiciary's own favour has created a perception of bias thereby undermining the rule of law. The rule of law requires that law be applied consistently & impartially. It has in the second and the fourth judges case delivered a judgment that ultimately serves its interests or as others might say 'some dynastic interests'. These actions of the judiciary are eventually eroding public trust in the system.

There is a need for a reformed mechanism for the appointment of judges to the constitutional courts where the judiciary and executive could amicably come to the conclusion. The collegium, though law of the land as of now, should reform itself and upgrade from time to time like the other organs of government. The judicial system ought not to enjoy unfettered freedom in the name of the independence of the judiciary. Adding a caveat, any such reform has to give a fatal blow to the practice of nepotism as practised while appointing judges to the constitutional courts. However, one must not overlook that the judges, the police, the executive and the legislative, all of them come from the same society and are a part of the same system. It would be delusional to expect only one arm of the system to single out sub-optimal behaviour and performance to rise above the rest.

(Kishlaya Mishra is a Delhi-based advocate. Trisha Shreyashi is an Odisha-based advocate and an honorary member of the Harvard Business Review Advisory Council. The views expressed are personal)

Life and times of India's science Nobel Laureate

February 28 is celebrated as Science Day, as today, 95 years ago, CV Raman had completed his research work



PRITAM SINGH

(The author, who was with IndianInstitute of Petroleum, Dehradun, delivers lectures on science)

ber 7, 1888, Tiruchchirappalli, Madras). His father Chandrasekhara Ramanathan Iyer was a teacher of mathematics and physics and mother Pravathi Ammal was a homemaker. Second in eight brother/sisters, Raman immersed in an academic atmosphere with remarkable IQ, and at ages of just 11 and 13 years, he completed High School and FA (10+2) respectively with high distinctions in Science and English; and left for Presidency College, Madras (now Chennai) where he completed Master's Degree in 1907 in physics.

Recognising his devotion, dedication and potential in science, the university management offered him unlimited access to the laboratory of the college to pursue his

research work. Raman earned great appreciation in the scientific community during studies of his master's degree. His first academic paper titled 'Unsymmetrical-bands due to a Rectangular Aperture' regarding the behaviour of light-scattering was published in 'Philosophical Magazine' in 1906 and subsequently another paper in 1907 in the same magazine. His work was impressive; it encouraged him to do more qualitative research work. He received a letter from the eminent British Scientist, Lord Rayleigh (Nobel Prize Winner, 1904 in Physics for explaining why the sky is blue) addressing his as "Professor Raman," unaware as Rayleigh was that Raman was just a teenage student,

In 1922, Raman published

his work on the 'Molecular Diffraction of Light' which was the first of a series of investigations bearing his name, the Raman Effect.

Despite Raman's devotion and dedication for science, the family circumstances pulled him for civil services and he joined as a civil servant in the Indian Finance Department in Calcutta where he served there for almost 10 years. During free time, Raman chose to vent out his mind-boggling scientific thoughts through free scientific lectures to students.

Raman's 'part-time' research activities and his lectures to students were highly impressive. He was a highly talented physicist at the age of just 28 years. The University of

Calcutta sought his services and offered him the Palit Chair in the Physics Department.

The University deputed Raman to Oxford to attend the Congress of Universities in 1921 where his reputation in the study of 'optics and especially acoustics' bestowed him a warm welcome reception by the world renowned physicists JJ Thomson and Lord Rutherford and other distinguished personalities.

It was the turning point where he met with distinguished scientific fraternity and discussed various aspects of light scattering, including Lord Rayleigh's theory of light scattering.

On his return voyage to India, during experimentation on the deck, he observed that

'sea was scattering light', which was not in consonance with Rayleigh's theory—that 'sea reflects the light of the sky's colour'.

After returning to India, his intensive experimentation started. In 1927, during the course of experimenting with the pure glycerin, it was observed that blue light approaches the molecule and low energy green light leaves the molecule which is "inelastic". The effect was very small—say, one in ten million photons—and came to be known as Raman Effect.

The event of this breakthrough was announced by Raman in a simple ceremony with his friends on February 28 morning, 1928, making this day a landmark in Indian history, with full confidence

that 'in future the research work would be recognised throughout the world'.

The research work was reported in the 'Journal of Physics' in 1928. In 1930 when he brought honour for the whole of British India under the British Flag, becoming 'Sir Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman' at an age of 42 years.

In 1933, Raman had the honour of being the first Indian Director of the Indian Institute of Science (Bangalore) and became the first independent National Professor. A year in 1948, he founded Raman Research Institute and worked there for furtherance of his objectives till the curtains of his life came down at the age of 82 years, on November 21, 1970.

Human rights violated in Ukraine: Guterres

Russian invasion has unleashed widespread death, destruction and displacement, says UN Secy-General

AP ■ GENEVA

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine has triggered "the most massive violations of human rights" in the world today, the head of the United Nations said on Monday, as the war pushed into its second year with no end in sight.

The Russian invasion "has unleashed widespread death, destruction and displacement," UN Secretary-General António Guterres said in a speech to the UN-backed Human Rights Council in Geneva.

After failing to capture the Ukrainian capital in the opening weeks of the invasion and suffering a series of humiliating setbacks in the east and the south during the fall, Russia has stabilised the front and is concentrating its efforts on a slow push to capture the rest of the Ukraine's eastern industrial heartland of the Donbas.

Ukraine, meanwhile, hopes

to use battle tanks and other new weapons pledged by the West to launch new counteroffensives and reclaim more of the occupied territory.

He said "attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure have caused many casualties and terrible suffering."

His remarks came as the Ukrainian military said that Russia launched attacks with exploding drones on several regions of the country that lasted from late Sunday until Monday morning, killing two.

Guterres cited cases of sexual violence, enforced disappearances, arbitrary detention and violations of the rights of prisoners of war documented by the UN human rights office.

Guterres decried how the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, now 75 years old, has been "too often misused and abused."

"It is exploited for political gain and it is ignored, often, by the very same people," Guterres



said. "Some governments chip away at it. Others use a wrecking ball." "This is a moment to stand on the right side of history," he told the council, the UN's top human rights body. Russia withdrew from its seat last year amid a surge in international pressure over the war in Ukraine.

Russian officials have shown little sign they may be reconsidering their attack on

their neighbour, however.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Monday, "We aren't seeing any conditions for a peaceful settlement now."

Dmitry Medvedev, the deputy head of Russia's Security Council that is chaired by President Vladimir Putin, went a step further, once again raising the specter of nuclear war and a nightmare outcome to

Europe's biggest and deadliest conflict since World War II.

He chided the US and its allies for providing Ukraine with military and other support to help push back the Kremlin's forces. Their longer-term aim, he claimed, is to break up Russia.

"They have crazy illusions that after finishing off the Soviet Union without a single shot they could bury today's Russia without any significant problems for themselves simply by disposing thousands of lives in the conflict," he said.

"It's a very dangerous mistake, it won't work like it did with the Soviet Union."

Putin has also framed the war in those terms, saying it's an existential risk to Russia.

In the Sunday-Monday attacks, Ukraine's General Staff said Kyiv's forces shot down 11 out of 14 Iranian-made Shahed drones. Ukraine's presidential office said on Monday that at least two civilians were killed

and nine others were wounded by Russian attacks over the previous 24 hours.

It said that intense fighting has continued around Bakhmut, Avdiivka and Vuhledar in the Donetsk region, which have come under relentless Russian shelling.

Donetsk Gov. Pavlo Kyrylenko said Russia is using aircraft and heavy artillery there. In the south, the city of Kherson also came under Russian shelling, killing one and wounding two civilians.

The city of Nikopol across the Dnieper from the Russia-occupied Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant also was struck by the Russian shelling, which damaged residential buildings, power lines and a gas pipeline.

Odesa and the surrounding region suffered a complete blackout Monday. The authorities didn't give the reason for it, but said that repair crews will start work to restore the energy supply.

India's role on global stage growing: US

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

India's role on the global stage continues to grow and the India-US ties are one of the consequential relationships, a senior State Department official has said.

Speaking to community leaders and local ethnic Indian media reporters during a trip to the Silicon Valley last week, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia, Nancy Izzo Jackson also said that India's presidency of the G20 will help the country intensify its growth in every sphere.

India has taken over the Presidency of the G20 on December 1, last year.

"As we look at India's Presidency of G-20, we know that India's role on the global stage continues to grow. And so

does the US-India relationship," Jackson said

The interaction was organised by Ajay Jain Bhutoria, a member of President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders, wherein a visiting team of senior State Department officials met eminent Indian American community members to brief them on the status of India-US ties, the importance of the Diaspora in this and address their questions.

During the interaction, Jackson highlighted the role that India is playing at the international level especially in its capacity as president of G-20 nations and the steps being taken by the State Department in reducing the visa wait time in India.

Sunak unveils deal ending trade dispute with N Ireland

AP ■ LONDON

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on Monday unveiled a "decisive breakthrough" in achieving a new deal with the European Union (EU) to resolve the post-Brexit trade dispute related to Northern Ireland.

After weeks of intensive negotiations, Sunak was joined by European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen for a final set of in-person talks in Windsor, south east England, after which the duo addressed the media to confirm a new "Windsor Framework".

It replaces the previous Northern Ireland Protocol, agreed by Sunak's former boss Boris Johnson to prevent a hard border between UK territory Northern Ireland and EU member-state Ireland but eventually

proving unworkable and causing much tension between the UK and EU. "I'm pleased to report that we have now made a decisive breakthrough. Together we have changed the original protocol and are today announcing the new Windsor framework," Sunak told reporters.

"Today's agreement delivers smooth-flowing trade within the whole United Kingdom, protects Northern Ireland's place in our union and safeguards sovereignty for the people of Northern Ireland... and [removes] any sense of a border in the Irish Sea," he said. Von der Leyen echoed Sunak's optimism to say that the UK and EU can now open a new chapter in their post-Brexit relationship. They detailed "big steps forward" to deliver trade flow with goods destined for Northern Ireland travelling through a new



"green lane" with a separate "red lane" reserved for items expected to move on to the EU.

"We will end the situation where food made to UK rules could not be sent to and sold in Northern Ireland. This means that if food is available on super-

market shelves in Great Britain, then it will be available on supermarket in Northern Ireland," said Sunak.

The legal text of the Northern Ireland Protocol has been amended to ensure critical VAT and excise changes for the

whole of the UK can be made and the devolved Northern

Irish parliament in Stormont would have a say on the changes. "These negotiations have not always been easy, but I'd like to pay an enormous personal tribute to Ursula for her vision in recognising the possibility of a new way forward... Today's agreement is about preserving that delicate balance and charting a new way forward for the people of Northern Ireland," added Sunak.

The British Indian leader now faces the uphill task of getting Northern Ireland's Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) on board with the new Windsor Framework.

The DUP had been strongly opposed to the earlier protocol, which meant goods arriving from England, Scotland and Wales within the United

Kingdom were checked when they arrived at Northern Irish ports. This was seen as undermining the region's position within the rest of the UK, besides severely impacting trade.

The other group likely to make things difficult for Sunak in the House of Commons include the hard Brexiters within the Conservative Party, including backbencher Johnson, who had warned against backing down over Northern Ireland Protocol Bill - which would have given the UK Parliament a chance to unilaterally change parts of the protocol.

However, Sunak had indicated that a fresh negotiated agreement with the EU was preferable over the controversial Bill that would have put the UK on a legal collision course with its European neighbours.

Indian-origin student dies in UK road collision

London (PTI): A 28-year-old Indian-origin female student was pronounced dead at the scene when a car smashed into a bus stop and hit pedestrians in Leeds, northern England, according to British police.

Athira Anilkumar Laly Kumari has been identified as the victim of the crash by West Yorkshire Police as it appealed for witnesses.

According to the local Leeds Malayalee Association, Athira was from Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala and had started her studies at Leeds Beckett University last month.

"Athira was one of two pedestrians that suffered serious injuries in the collision, which involved a black Volkswagen Golf and caused damage to a bus stop," West Yorkshire Police said in a statement on Friday.

"The second pedestrian, a man in his forties, is continuing to recover in the hospital. The [Volkswagen] Golf driver, a 25-year-old woman, was arrested on suspicion of causing death by dangerous driving and has since been released on bail as enquiries continue into the collision," the police said, appealing for footage from car cameras in the area on the day of the crash on February 22.

The case is now reportedly being handled by the Indian Consulate in Birmingham to offer assistance to the victim's family in India.

3 parties claim early leads in Nigeria's presidential vote

AP ■ ABUJA (NIGERIA)

Each of the three frontrunners in Nigeria's hotly contested presidential election claimed they are on the path to victory on Monday, as preliminary results trickled in two days after Africa's most populous nation went to the polls.

Only one of Nigeria's 36 states has officially announced results, with the ruling party's Bola Tinubu winning by a wide margin in Ekiti state, yet each party said it was on track to winning.

On Monday there were three front-runners in the 18-party race: Tinubu, the main opposition party's Atiku Abubakar and Peter Obi with the Labour Party.

A winner is not expected to be announced until at least Tuesday. After the previous presidential election, it took four days for officials to declare a victor.

A runoff election will be held if no candidate secures at least one-quarter of the votes from two-thirds of Nigeria's 36 states and the capital city, in

addition to receiving the highest number of votes.

There were fears of violence on Election Day, from Islamic militants in the north to separatists in the south, but voting was largely peaceful Saturday.

However, observers said there were at least 135 critical incidents, including eight reports of ballot-snatching, that undermined the legitimacy of the election.

There were also widespread delays, blamed by officials and observers on logistical issues as well as the upheaval created by a redesigned currency that has left many residents unable to obtain bank notes.

After Tinubu's victory in Ekiti state, the incumbent party said it was on course to stay in power. "If the information we are beginning to receive from various parts of the country is anything to go by, one has every reason to be optimistic that our candidate will win," Abdullahi Adamu, the party chairman, told the state-run News Agency of Nigeria.

CIA chief: China has some doubt on ability to invade Taiwan

AP ■ WASHINGTON

US intelligence shows that China's President Xi Jinping has instructed his country's military to "be ready by 2027" to invade Taiwan though he may be currently harboring doubts about his ability to do so given Russia's experience in its war with Ukraine, CIA Director William Burns said.

Burns, in a television interview that aired Sunday, stressed that the United States must take "very seriously" Xi's desire to ultimately control Taiwan even if military conflict is not inevitable.

"We do know, as has been made public, that President Xi has instructed the PLA, the Chinese military leadership, to be ready by 2027 to invade Taiwan, but that doesn't mean that he's decided to invade in 2027 or any other year as well," Burns told CBS "Face the Nation."

"I think our judgment at least is that President Xi and his military leadership have doubts today about whether they could accomplish that invasion," he said.

Taiwan and China split in 1949 after a civil war that ended with the Communist Party in control of the mainland. The self-governing island acts like a sovereign nation yet is not recognized by the United Nations or any major country. In 1979, President Jimmy Carter formally recognized the

government in Beijing and cut nation-to-nation ties with Taiwan. In response, Congress passed the Taiwan Relations Act, creating a benchmark for a continuing relationship.

Taiwan has received numerous displays of official American support for the island democracy in the face of growing shows of force by Beijing, which claims Taiwan as part of its territory. President Joe Biden has said that American forces would defend Taiwan if China tries to invade. The White House says US policy has not changed in making clear that Washington wants to see Taiwan's status resolved peacefully. It is silent as to whether US forces might be sent in response to a Chinese attack.

In Sunday's interview, Burns said the support from the US and European allies for Ukraine following Russian President Vladimir Putin's invasion of that country may be acting as a potential deterrent to Chinese officials for now but said the risks of a possible attack on Taiwan will only grow stronger.

"I think, as they've looked at Putin's experience in Ukraine, that's probably reinforced some of those doubts," Burns said. "So, all I would say is that I think the risks of, you know, a potential use of force probably grow the further into this decade you get and beyond it, into the following decade as well.

Beijing monitors US plane over Strait

AP ■ BEIJING

China said it closely monitored the flight of a US surveillance plane through the Taiwan Strait on Monday, accusing the US of having "deliberately disrupted and undermined the regional situation."

Chinese forces organised to keep an eye on the passage of the P-8A Poseidon anti-submarine patrol plane and "all matters were in hand," the People's Liberation Army's Eastern Theatre Command said in a social media posting.

China regards self-ruled Taiwan as its own territory to be brought under its control by force if necessary, and views the passage of foreign military ships and aircraft through the 160-kilometre (100-mile)-wide strait as deliberate snubs and provocations.

While US warships regularly transit the strait, one of the world's busiest shipping lanes, it is more rare for US military aircraft to do so.

The PLA command accused the US of having "played up" the flight, which it said "endangered peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait."

"We firmly oppose this. Theatre troops maintain a high level of alert at all times and will resolutely defend national sovereignty and territorial integrity," it said.

In a brief statement, the US 7th Fleet said a Navy P-8A Poseidon transited the Taiwan Strait in international airspace on Monday.

China accuses US of 'bullying' with 'illegal' sanctions

AP ■ BEIJING

China on Monday accused the US of "outright bullying and double standards" in leveling what it called "illegal" sanctions on Chinese companies as part of US actions against Russia's Wagner Group and related companies and individuals. The entities were targeted for their role in the war in Ukraine and mercenary activities, including human rights abuses, in Africa.

The sanctions "have no basis in international law or authorization from the Security Council, and are typical illegal unilateral sanctions and long-arm jurisdiction," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said at a daily briefing. The punitive measures were "seriously harming China's interests" and China "strongly rejects and deplores that and has lodged solemn complaints with the US side," Mao said.

"While the US has intensified its efforts to send weapons to one of the parties to the conflict, resulting in an endless war, it has frequently spread false

information about China's supply of weapons to Russia, taking the opportunity to sanction Chinese companies for no reason," she said. "This is outright bullying and double standards."

The Treasury and State departments announced the moves in coordinated statements that targeted dozens of Wagner Group affiliates, including some in the Central African Republic and the United Arab Emirates, as well as the president of Russia's Kalashnikov Concern, the original manufacturer of the AK-47 assault rifle. Wagner, a private Russian military company, has been involved in heavy fighting in the east of Ukraine.

The sanctions also hit the Chinese company Changsha Tianyi Space Science and Technology Research Institute Co. Ltd., also known as Spacety China, which has supplied Wagner Group affiliates with satellite imagery of Ukraine that support Wagner's military operations there. A Luxembourg-based subsidiary of Spacety China was also targeted.

Serbia, Kosovo weigh EU proposals to improve ties

AP ■ BRUSSELS

The leaders of Serbia and Kosovo are holding talks on Monday on European Union proposals aimed at ending a long series of political crises and setting the two on the path to better relations and ultimately mutual recognition. Tensions have simmered between Serbia and its former territory since Kosovo unilaterally broke away in 2008; a move recognised by many Western countries but opposed by Serbia, with the backing of Russia and China.

Recently, those tensions flared over seemingly trivial matters like vehicle license plate formats, or the arrest of an ethnic Serb police officer, triggering renewed concern

among Western leaders that a new Balkan conflict might break out just as Russia's war in Ukraine enters its second year. At meetings in Brussels, Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic and Kosovo Prime Minister Albin Kurti are expected to discuss ways to put the European proposals into action.

Both leaders have already discussed the plan, which hasn't been made public, and EU officials are confident of progress.

A senior EU official said before the talks that "we need to break the vicious circle of crisis."

He said the proposals are "not the end of the road" when it comes to normalising ties between Belgrade and

Pristina, but that given recent tensions, the EU plan is the "maximum achievable at this point."

The official briefed reporters on the condition that he not be named because of the highly sensitive nature of the meetings.

Previous talks between Vucic and Kurti have degenerated into arguments and mutual recrimination, but this time both leaders have already endorsed the proposals "in principle," he said.

Vucic said Sunday, before the meetings supervised by EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell, that he's "ready to work on the concept and implementation of the proposed plan with clearly defined limitations."

N Korea holds rare meet on farming amid food shortage

AP ■ SEOUL

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un opened a major political conference dedicated to agriculture, state media reported Monday, as outside assessments suggest the country is facing a serious shortfall of food.

South Korean experts estimate that North Korea is short around 1 million tons of grain, nearly 20 per cent of its annual demand, after the pandemic likely disrupted unofficial grain imports from China and the government has restricted food sales at markets.

Recent, unconfirmed reports in South Korean media have said that some North Koreans have died of hunger. But most experts have seen no indication of mass deaths or famine in North Korea.

During a high-level meeting of the ruling Workers' Party that began Sunday, senior

party officials reviewed last year's work on state goals to accomplish "rural revolution in the new era," the official Korean Central News Agency reported.

The report said that the plenary meeting of the party's Central Committee will identify "immediate, important" tasks on agricultural issues and "urgent tasks arising at the present stage of the national economic development."

KCNA didn't say whether Kim spoke during the meeting or how long it would last. Senior officials such as Cabinet Premier Kim Tok Hun and Jo Yong Won, one of Kim's closest aides who handles the Central Committee's organisational affairs, also attended.

Plenary meetings are key decision-making venues for the Workers' Party. In recent years, Kim has held a plenary meeting two to four times a year to formulate major poli-



cies.

It is the first time the party has convened a plenary session only to discuss agriculture. Monday's report didn't elaborate on its agenda, but the party's Politburo said earlier this month that "a turning point is needed to dynamicaly promote radical change in agricultural development."

decades of mismanagement and crippling US-led sanctions imposed over Kim's nuclear programme.

Russia's war on Ukraine possibly worsened the situation by driving up global prices of food, energy and fertiliser.

It's unclear whether North Korea will take any significant steps to address food shortages. The impoverished country devotes much of its scarce resources to its nuclear programme.

"To produce more grains, they should increase inputs such as fertilisers, pesticides and agricultural machines. But North Korea rarely comes up with such measures," said Nam Sung-wook, a professor at Korea University in South Korea. "They have a limited budget. They can still take such steps (to produce more grain) with the money they're spending on its missile development programme."

To tackle forced marriages, England & Wales raise legal age to 18

PTI ■ LONDON

A new law raising the legal age for marriage in England and Wales to 18 years has come into force on Monday, aimed at protecting vulnerable young people from being forced into weddings against their will.

Until now, those aged 16 or 17 could get married with parental consent as there was no law against ceremonies for younger children not registered as vulnerable with their local councils.

The new law was welcomed by charities campaigning against forced marriages, an issue largely affecting some sections of the South Asian and African communities in the UK.

"This law will better protect vulnerable young people, by cracking down on forced marriage in our society," said Dominic Raab, UK Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Justice.

"Those who act to manipulate children into marrying under-age

will now rightly face the full force of the law," he said.

Those found guilty of arranging child marriages face sentences of up to seven years in prison.

So called "traditional" and non-legally binding ceremonies viewed as marriages by the parties and their families conducted within some minority communities will also be covered under the new legislation.

The UK government said the age of 18 is widely recognised as the age at which one becomes an adult and gains full citizenship rights.

Previously forced marriage was only an offence if the person used a type of coercion, for example threats, to cause someone to marry.

It is now an offence to cause a child under the age of 18 to enter a marriage in any circumstances, without the need to prove that a form of coercion was used.

"The change to legislation on child marriage is a huge victory for survivors. It is a huge leap forward to tackling this usually hidden abuse



and will provide a greater degree of protection to those at risk," said Natasha Rattu, Director of the Karma Nirvana charity, which supports forced marriage victims.

"Last year, the national Honour Based Abuse helpline supported 64 cases of child marriage, representing only a small picture of a much bigger problem. We hope that the new law will help to increase identification and reporting, affording greater

protection to children at risk," she said.

Child marriage is often associated with domestic abuse towards girls, leaving education early, limited career opportunities, and serious physical and mental health problems.

The UK government said the legal change honours its commitment to the pledge made to the United Nations to end child marriage by 2030.

The new Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022, which gained Royal Assent in April last year and comes into force this week, was the result of a Private Member's Bill brought to Parliament by Conservative Party MP Pauline Latham and was supported by campaign organisations within the Girls Not Brides Coalition, which work to end child marriage and so-called honour-based abuse.

"This is a landmark day for the campaigners who have worked relentlessly for over five years to ban child marriage in this country. Child marriage destroys lives and through this legislation we will protect millions of boys and girls over the coming years from this scourge," said Latham.

UK Minister for Safeguarding, Sarah Dines added: "Forced marriage is an abuse of human rights, which denies vulnerable children the freedom to learn, grow and thrive. Like all other forms of abuse, I'm committed to stamping out this exploitative

practice.

"In addition to this welcome new legislation, we are also continuing to provide training and guidance to equip the police, social workers and other frontline professionals to support and safeguard victims."

According to official data from 2021, the UK government's Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) provided advice or support in 118 cases involving victims below 18 years of age.

The courts have also issued 3,343 Forced Marriage Protection Orders between their introduction in 2008 and September 2022, which prevents someone from using threats, violence or emotional abuse as a way to force a person into marriage.

The new Act does not change the age of marriage in Scotland or Northern Ireland as marriage is a devolved matter.

It is hoped that raising the legal age to 18 in England and Wales may eventually be replicated in other parts of the United Kingdom.

Taliban forces kill 2 ISIS men in Kabul raid

AP ■ ISLAMABAD

Taliban security forces killed two militants from the Islamic State group and detained a third in an overnight raid in the Afghan capital of Kabul, the spokesman for the Taliban government said Monday. The regional affiliate of the Islamic State group — known as the Islamic State in Khorasan Province — is a key rival of the Taliban. The militant group has increased its attacks in Afghanistan since the Taliban takeover of the country in August 2021. Targets have included Taliban patrols and members of Afghanistan's Shiite minority.

According to Zabihullah Mujahid, the main Taliban government spokesman in Kabul, the operation took place in a residential neighbourhood, targeting IS militants who were planning to organise attacks in the Afghan capital. He said the Kher Khana neighbourhood is an important IS hideout. There was no immediate comment from the IS.

Mujahid said two IS members were killed and one was arrested, and ammunition and military equipment were seized in the raid. There were no casualties among the Taliban forces during in the operation, he added.

In a separate operation this month, Taliban intelligence forces killed three IS militants and arrested one in an overnight operation in eastern part of Kabul, in Karti Naw neighbourhood. The Taliban had claimed that IS was behind organised recent attacks in the capital.

Overnight, posts on social media reported several explosions and small-arms fire in the area of Kher Khana.

The Taliban swept across the country in mid-August 2021, seizing power as US and NATO forces were in the last weeks of their final withdrawal from Afghanistan after 20 years of war.

Oli's party withdraws support to Prachanda-led Nepal Govt

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

Former Nepal Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli-led CPN-UML party on Monday decided to withdraw its support to the Pushpa Kamal Dahal "Prachanda"-led government, citing changes in the political equation, dealing a jolt to the fragile two-month-old ruling coalition in the country.

The prime reason for the break-up of the alliance between Prachanda and Oli was because the Maoist leader decided to support senior Nepali Congress leader Ram Chandra Paudel for the President's post.

Paudel is from the Nepali Congress, an opposition party, and from outside the ruling alliance. Nepal's Presidential election will be held on March 9.

The Communist Party of Nepal-(Unified Marxist-

Leninist) (CPN-UML), made the formal announcement after top leaders of the party met on Monday, according to The Kathmandu Post newspaper.

"We decided to withdraw from the government after the Nepal Prime Minister started working in a different fashion and due to the changed political equation in the run-up to the presidential election," Bishnu Prasad Paudel, UML's vice-chairman said.

The exit of CPN-UML may not immediately affect the Prachanda-led government as the Nepali Congress (NC) has 89 lawmakers in Parliament.

In the 275-member House, the UML has 79 lawmakers.

Similarly, CPN (Maoist Center), CPN (Unified Socialist) and Rashtriya Swatantra Party have 32, 10 and 20 members, respectively.

Janamat Party has 6 members, Loktantrik Samajbadi

Party 4 and Nagarik Unmukti Party 3 members in the parliament.

Prachanda needs only 138 votes in parliament to continue his term as the prime minister.

Paudel claimed Prime Minister Prachanda of using pressure tactics on the UML ministers to quit the government, which forced them to withdraw support, according to My Republica newspaper.

He alleged that Prime Minister Dahal demonstrated immaturity by stopping Foreign Minister Bimala Rai Paudyal, who was about to visit Geneva, at the eleventh hour.

Paudyal, who is from the UML party, was scheduled to fly to Geneva to attend a high-level session of the UN Human Rights Council.

However, Prime Minister Prachanda asked her to cancel the visit.

Retired Pak general held for inciting hatred against national institutions

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

A high-ranking retired Pakistan Army general was arrested early Monday morning on charges of inciting the public against national institutions.

Lt General (ret.) Amjad Shoaib, a prominent supporter of former prime minister Imran Khan, was detained by the Islamabad police from his residence in the federal capital after a first information report (FIR) was registered against him at the Ramna police station on Sunday by Magistrate Owais Khan.

He was produced before an Islamabad court which remanded him to police custody for three days. The police had sought his custody for seven days to investigate the charges.

The FIR is based on section 153A (promoting enmity between different groups, etc) and 505 (statements conducing

to public mischief) of the Pakistan Penal Code.

According to the FIR, the retired general incited people to revolt against institutions during a television interview.

In the complaint, it was said that the retired general — in an interview on BOL TV show 'Imran Khan Bol Kay Saath' aired on Saturday — passed statements that "incited the government officials and opposition from performing their government and legal duties".

The FIR quoted Shoaib as saying that the 'Jail Bhari Tehreek' (court arrest movement) could not produce the desired outcomes because it was only the people who were bearing pain and agony in it,



while "narcissist and shameless rulers sitting atop didn't care the least about it". The magistrate stated that the retired army officer had advised the PTI to "work out a strategy".

"For example, you can stop people from going to government offices in Islamabad," the FIR quoted Shoaib as saying. Shoaib has been a regular face of Pakistan TV talk-shows for the last many years and better known for his controversial remarks. He was previously summoned by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) to appear on September 7 last year after he claimed a meeting held between the Pakistani prime minister and an Israeli team. However, he didn't appear before

the FIA's Cybercrimes Wing.

Over 80 workers, including six senior leaders, of Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party were arrested on Wednesday following its mass court arrest movement over what it called the violation of fundamental rights, abuse of the Constitution and the economic meltdown.

The party, however, claimed that between 500 and 700 workers and leaders have been picked up by the Lahore police.

Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz chief Shehbaz Sharif replaced Khan as prime minister after the former cricketer-turned politician was ousted in a no-confidence motion in Parliament in April 2022.

Since then, Khan has been seeking early elections. The government has rejected calls for early elections, saying the vote would be held as planned later this year.

Williamson first Democrat party challenger to Biden

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Bestselling self-help author Marianne Williamson, who brought quirky spiritualism to the 2020 presidential race, has announced she's running for president again, becoming the first major Democrat to challenge President Joe Biden for his party's nomination in 2024.

Williamson is formally kicking off her campaign with an event in Washington on Saturday. Without mentioning former President Donald Trump, she noted in a weekend Facebook post that his unconventional White House win makes it "odd for anyone to think they can know who can win the presidency".

"I'm not putting myself through this again just to add to the conversation," Williamson wrote. "I'm running for president to help bring an aberrational chapter of our history to a close, and to help bring forth a new beginning."

Williamson, 70, says she plans to follow her Washington announcement with travel to states voting early in the Democratic primary. That includes New Hampshire, where she's suggested she'd



participate in the state's primary if it defies Democratic National Committee rules and holds the nation's first presidential nominating contest despite the party making South Carolina its leadoff state for 2024. "I feel my forty years being up close and personal with the trauma of so many thousands of individuals gives me a unique perspective on what is needed to help repair America," Williamson wrote. "We need a politics that treats not just symptoms, but cause. That does not base itself on the crass imperatives of endless corporate profit, but on the eternal imperatives of our principles and values."

Williamson is the only Democrat in the race — for now. Biden hasn't yet announced a formal reelection

bid that aides say is likely coming in April.

Her primary challenge of a sitting president from her own party would be the longest of long shots under any circumstances. But that's especially true this cycle, as the Democratic establishment — and even potential presidential hopefuls who could have competed with Biden from the left or middle — has closed ranks with remarkable uniformity behind the president.

A spiritual adviser to Oprah Winfrey and purveyor of physic memorabilia online, Williamson spent about a year seeking the Democratic presidential nomination in 2020.

One of her signature proposals was a plan to create a US Department of Peace. She also advocated that the federal government pay massive financial reparations to Black Americans as atonement for centuries of slavery and discrimination.

She suspended her campaign in the weeks before 2020's leadoff Iowa caucus and later endorsed Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders' 2020 bid. He finished second in the Democratic primary against Biden.

Israel beefs up troops after settler rampage

AP ■ HAWARA (WEST BANK)

Israel sent hundreds more troops to the occupied West Bank on Monday, a day after a Palestinian gunman killed two Israelis and settlers rampaged through a Palestinian town, torching homes and vehicles in the worst such violence in decades.

The responses to the rampage laid bare some rifts in Israel's new right-wing government, with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu appealing for calm while a member of his ruling coalition praised the rampage as deterrence against Palestinian attacks.

The events also underscored the limitations of the traditional US approach to the long-running Israeli-Palestinian conflict: Washington has been trying to prevent escalation while staying away from the politically costly task of pushing for a resolution of the core disputes.

As the violence raged in the West Bank, such an attempt at conflict management was taking place Sunday in Jordan, with the US bringing together Israeli and Palestinian officials to work out a plan for de-escalation.

Sunday's events kicked off

when a Palestinian gunman shot and killed brothers Hillel and Yagel Yaniv, ages 21 and 19, from the Jewish settlement of Har Bracha, in a shooting ambush in the Palestinian town of Hawara in the northern West Bank. The gunman fled.

Following the shooting, groups of settlers rampaged along the main thoroughfare in Hawara, which is used by both Palestinians and Israeli settlers.

In one video, a crowd of settlers stood in prayer as they stared at a building in flames.

Late Sunday, a 37-year-old Palestinian was shot and killed by Israeli fire, two Palestinians were shot and wounded and another was beaten with an iron bar, Palestinian health officials said. Some 95 Palestinians were being treated for tear gas inhalation, according to medics.

On Monday morning, the Hawara thoroughfare was lined with rows of burned-out cars and smoke-blackened buildings. Normally bustling shops remained shuttered. Palestinian media said some 30 homes and cars were torched.

Lt Col Richard Hecht, an Israeli military spokesman, described the situation as "a tense quiet."

Pak Army 'ready to fight back'

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's civil and military leadership said on Monday that the armed forces were ready to take the "fight back to the enemy" if a war was imposed on the "peace-loving nation".

In a statement on the anniversary of an aerial skirmish between the air forces of India and Pakistan, the army said that Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, three services chiefs and the armed forces "pay tribute to the resilience of the nation and resolve of armed forces displayed during Operation Swift Retort". "Let this day be a reminder that while being a peace-loving nation, Pakistan Armed Forces are ever ready, not only to defend every inch of motherland but to take the fight back to the enemy, if ever, aggression is imposed on us," it said.

The army further stated: "Any delusion resulting into a misadventure will always be met with full might of Pak AFs backed by a resilient nation."

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said that Pakistan was a peace-loving nation but also mindful of its obligation of defence. "Today the nation pays rich tribute to PAF for a befitting response to the Indian violation of Pakistan's air space on the pretext of false flag

Pulwama attack. While we aim for peace with all, we are mindful of our duty to defend the country. Let no one make any mistake about it," he said.

Imran Khan, who was the prime minister at the time of the incident, said that his "government ordered response to Indian air strike on Balakot with PAF air strikes on Indian military targets" and the PAF downed an IAF plane over Pakistan air space capturing an

Indian pilot. "We were successful in choosing a limited military response signalling a clear message to India," he added.

In the early hours of February 26, 2019, the Indian Air Force (IAF) jets bombed the Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) terror camps in Balakot in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa of Pakistan and avenged the Pulwama terrorist attack that claimed the lives of 40 CRPF personnel.

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Tender Enquiry No.:1492/O&M/PC-2336

Dated: 27-02-2023

Chief Engineer / O&M (P&P Cell-II), GHTP, Lehra Mohabbat, invites E-tender for the Procurement of 182 KVAR, 6.99KV Capacitor Units, Quantity as per NIT. For detailed NIT & tender specification please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> from **27-02-2023 from 17:00 hrs.** onwards.

Note: Corrigendum and addendum, if any will be published online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>

76155/12/1453/2022/21634

GHTP-12/23

Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar

Tender Notice Reference No.411/ DR

The Department of Director of Research invites online bids for the following

Sr. No.	Item	Quantity
1	Cycling Equipments	3 Nos.
2	Fencing Equipments	1 No.
3	Gel Documentation System	1 No.
4	Rotary Evaporator	1 No.
5	Interactive Flat Panels	3 Nos.
6	Virtual Reality System	1 No.

Closing Date & Time : **14-03-2023 at 4:00 PM**

For details log onto: www.eproc.punjab.gov.in

Note:- Any corrigendum(s) to the Tender Notice shall be published on the above website only.

Director of Research

Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar

NA/12/14726/2022/21617 Dt.2/27/2023

कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता
चतुर्थ वृत्त, लोक निर्माण विभाग, रुद्रपुर (उधम सिंह नगर)
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पत्रांक-558 / 23 एम-04 / 2023

दिनांक 27 / 02 / 2023

राष्ट्रीय प्रतिस्पर्धात्मक निविदा (e-tendering)

महामहिम राज्यपाल उत्तराखण्ड की ओर से अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, चतुर्थ वृत्त, लॉन्गोवि० रुद्रपुर (उधम सिंह नगर) द्वारा निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु ई-टेंडरिंग द्वारा टू-बिड विड सिस्टम के अन्तर्गत निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। निविदा से सम्बन्धित सभी सूचनायें वेबसाईट <http://www.uktenders.gov.in> पर दिनांक 06.03.2023 से उपलब्ध होंगी।

क्र० सं०	कार्य का नाम	घरोहर घनराशि (लाख में)	निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य (₹ में)	निविदा की वैधता (दिन)	कार्य पूर्ण करने की समय (माह में)	ठेकेदार की श्रेणी
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1	जनपद उधम सिंह नगर में राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग संख्या-74 (काशीपुर-सितारगंज अनुभाग) किमी० 175.00 से किमी० 252.200 तक के चार लेन चौड़ीकरण के कार्य के अन्तर्गत राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग संख्या-74 में गदरपुर बाईपास प्रभाग में वर्तमान मार्ग का One Time Improvement के अन्तर्गत मरम्मत का कार्य।	11.06	5000.00 + 18% GST	120 दिन	03 माह	केन्द्र / राज्य सरकार के विभाग / उपक्रम में मार्ग कार्यों हेतु प्रेमी A / A+ में प्रंजीकृत

अधीक्षण अभियन्ता

China rejects US report's lab-leak theory on Covid

PTI ■ BEIJING

China on Monday rejected a new US report that claims the Covid-19 virus may have leaked from a bio laboratory in Wuhan, saying the origins-tracing of the pandemic "is about science and should not be politicised".

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said the international experts have considered the theory that the pandemic might have leaked from a Chinese laboratory as "extremely unlikely".

She said it is a science-based, authoritative conclusion reached by the experts of the WHO-China joint mission after field trips to the lab in Wuhan and in-depth communication with researchers.

Mao's remarks came in response to the US Department of Energy's (USDE) latest assess-

ment that the coronavirus mostly likely leaked from a bio laboratory in Wuhan.

"It was accurately recorded in the mission's report and has received extensive recognition from the international community," she said. "The origins-tracing of SARS-CoV-2 is about science and should not be politicised. China has always supported and participated in global science-based origins-tracing," Mao said.

The USDE has assessed in the intelligence report that it had "low confidence" that the Covid-19 virus accidentally escaped from a lab in Wuhan, CNN reported on Sunday.

A low confidence assessment generally means that the information obtained is not reliable enough or is too fragmented to make a more definitive analytic judgment or that there is not enough information avail-

able to draw a more robust conclusion, it said.

The Huanan market in central China's Wuhan city was the epicentre of the pandemic. From its origin there, the SARS-CoV-2 virus rapidly spread to other locations in Wuhan in late 2019 and then to the rest of the world, killing nearly seven million people. A WHO team of experts who visited Wuhan in 2021 amid the raging controversy over the lab-leak theory, which China vehemently denied, stated in its report that the leak from the Wuhan bio lab was the "least likely hypothesis".

But WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, who received the report, said the Wuhan lab leak allegation required further probe. "As far as the WHO is concerned, all hypotheses remain on the table," Ghebreyesus said.

Over two years since Covid-19 was first detected in Wuhan, the question of how the virus first emerged remains a mystery.

It is suspected that the coronavirus may have escaped, accidentally or otherwise, from a laboratory in the central Chinese city of Wuhan where the virus was first recorded. The Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) has been studying coronaviruses in bats for over a decade.

The USDE assessment further adds to the divide in the US government over whether the Covid-19 pandemic began in China in 2019 as the result of a lab leak or whether it emerged naturally. The various intelligence agencies have been split on the matter for years.

In 2021, the intelligence community declassified a report that showed four agencies in the intelligence community had assessed with low confidence

that the virus likely jumped from animals to humans naturally in the wild, while one assessed with moderate confidence that the pandemic was the result of a laboratory accident, the CNN report said.

A USDE spokesperson in a statement to CNN said, "the Department of Energy continues to support the thorough, careful, and objective work of our intelligence professionals in investigating the origins of COVID-19, as the President directed."

The Department of Energy's Office of Intelligence and Counterintelligence is one of the 18 government agencies that make up the intelligence community, which is under the umbrella of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

The Office of the Director of National Intelligence declined to comment.

‘India Inc’s profit margin narrows by 2.37% in Dec’

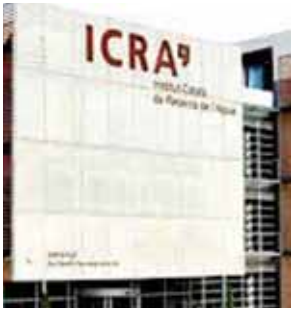
Operating margin reaches 16.3% on annual basis due to inflation: ICRA

PTI ■ MUMBAI

India Inc’s operating profit margin narrowed by a sharp 2.37 per cent in the December quarter to 16.3 per cent on an annual basis due to inflation and rising energy costs, a domestic ratings agency said on Monday.

When viewed sequentially, the operating profit margin for the December quarter expanded by 1.80 per cent over the preceding September quarter, IcrA Ratings said, attributing the same to the easing in input costs and also price hikes by many companies.

Going forward, while price hikes and sequential input cost reductions can boost margins in the near term, geopolitical tensions, recessionary concerns, and forex volatility continue to pose risks, the agency said. The revenue of companies, excluding those in the financial sector, grew 17.2 per cent, which was as per expectations, the agency said, adding



that hotels, oil and gas, auto, airlines, and power sectors led the way. However, the revenue growth was a muted 1.4 per cent from a sequential perspective due to inflationary headwinds weighing on consumer sentiments.

“India Inc’s ability to improve earnings will be dependent on headwinds such as energy cost inflation, evolving recessionary trends in the developed markets, and impact of fluctuations in foreign exchange on both imports as well as export-oriented sectors,” its sector head Sruthi Thomas said.

The interest coverage ratio for the agency’s sample adjusted for sectors with relatively low debt levels like IT, FMCG and pharma witnessed a moderation in Q3FY23 to 4.3 times from 5.1 times on a sequential basis.

Sensex, Nifty fall for 7th day on trot on global equity losses

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty slid for a seventh straight session on Monday, logging their longest losing run in the past five months, following a bearish trend in global markets amid concerns over aggressive rate hikes by developed economies.

The BSE Sensex declined by 175.58 points or 0.30 per cent to close at a month’s low of 59,288.35 with 17 of its shares posting losses. During the day, it tanked 526.29 points or 0.88 per cent to 58,937.64.

The NSE Nifty fell 73.10 points or 0.42 per cent to end at a four-month low of 17,392.70 as 33 of its stocks ended in the red.

Sensex and Nifty fell for a seventh straight session, matching the seven-session losing run in the last week of September last year. In the seven sessions, Sensex tanked 2,031 points or 3.4 per cent while Nifty shed 643 points or 4.1 per cent to close below the 17,400 level.

In seven days, the market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms eroded by ₹10,36,307.34 crore to ₹2,57,94,678.26 crore.

From the Sensex pack, Tata Steel, Infosys, Tata Consultancy Services, Tata Motors, Mahindra & Mahindra, HCL Technologies, Larsen & Toubro,



Bharti Airtel, Wipro and Bajaj Finance were the biggest laggards.

Power Grid, ICICI Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank and State Bank of India were among the gainers.

“Bears continued to wreak havoc in the domestic market as the latest data releases from the US heightened the existing worries of aggressive rate hikes. The personal consumption expenditure in the US, which is Fed’s key monitorable of inflation, increased in January, pressuring investors to stay away from equities markets,” said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

Pressure in IT, metal and auto majors kept the tone negative but resilience in the banking pack capped the damage, said Ajit Mishra, VP - Technical Research, Religare Broking Ltd. A fresh fall in the broader indices further deteriorated the sentiment.

Investors’ wealth plunges ₹10.42 L cr in 7 trading sessions

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Seven consecutive sessions of decline in the equity market has eroded the wealth of investors by a whopping Rs 10.42 lakh crore and the benchmark Sensex has tumbled more than 2,000 points during this period.

Concerns over more rate hikes by developed economies, weak global equity markets and fresh foreign fund outflows from the domestic market have dented investor sentiments.

On Monday, the BSE Sensex dropped 175.58 points or 0.30 per cent to end at 59,288.35 points, marking a decline for seven straight trading sessions.

The Sensex has tumbled 2,031.16 points or 3.31 per cent since February 16. During this period, the combined market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms has eroded by ₹10,42,790.03 crore to ₹2,57,88,195.57 crore.

Shrikant Chouhan, Head of Equity Research (Retail) at Kotak Securities Ltd, said weak Asian markets cues and worsening global macro economic indicators like higher inflation level, rising interest rates and volatile commodity prices are forcing investors to slash



their equity exposure.

Besides, currency fluctuation coupled with concerns of slowing growth and FII outflows are also keeping the mood bearish, he noted.

“After trading in red for most part of the trading session, the bulls were seen regrouping helped by mild US dollar selling, and also as European stock markets opened higher.

“Sentiment remained weak on the back of headwinds such as expectations of higher rates and geopolitical risks,” Prashanth Tapse - Research Analyst, Senior VP (Research) at Mehta Equities Ltd, said.

On Monday, Tata Steel, Infosys, Tata Motors, Tata Consultancy Services, Mahindra & Mahindra, HCL Technologies, Larsen & Toubro, Bharti Airtel, Wipro and Bajaj Finance were the biggest laggards in the Sensex pack.

Rupee falls 10 paise to close at 82.85 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee depreciated by 10 paise to close at 82.85 (provisional) against the US currency on Monday as a stronger dollar in the overseas market and a muted trend in domestic equities weighed on investor sentiments.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 82.87 against the greenback and closed at 82.85 (provisional), registering a fall of 10 paise over its previous close of 82.75.

During the session, the domestic unit witnessed an intra-day high of 82.82 and a low of 82.94 against the American dollar.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback’s strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading marginally lower at 105.15.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude futures advanced 0.46 per cent to \$83.54 per barrel.

The Indian rupee depreciated on weak domestic markets and a strong greenback. Surge in crude oil prices and FII outflows also weighed on rupee, said Anuj Choudhary - Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas.

Dollar strengthened on concerns over higher interest rates for longer amid higher inflation and upbeat econom-



ic data from the US, Choudhary added.

“We expect the rupee to trade with a negative bias on risk aversion in global markets and positive greenback. Month-end Dollar demand from importers may weigh on Rupee. However, any intervention by the Reserve Bank of India may prevent sharp fall in Rupee,” Choudhary said.

The 30-share BSE Sensex ended 175.58 points or 0.30 per cent lower at 59,288.35, while the broader NSE Nifty declined 73.10 points or 0.42 per cent to 17,392.70.

Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) were net sellers in the capital markets on Friday as they offloaded shares worth Rs 1,470.34 crore, according to exchange data.

On the domestic macro-economic front, India’s forex reserves dropped by USD 5.681 billion to USD 561.267 billion in the week ended February 17, the RBI said on Friday.

Sebi cancels Way2Wealth Commodities registration in NSEL case

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Capital markets regulator Sebi on Monday cancelled the registration of Way2Wealth Commodities for facilitating its clients to trade on the platform of the now defunct National Spot Exchange Ltd (NSEL) in illegal ‘paired contracts.

By providing such a facility of taking exposure to ‘paired contracts’, the broker exposed its clients to the risk involved in trading in a product that did not have regulatory approval, Sebi said in an order.

“The noticee (Way2Wealth Commodities) provided a platform for its clients to access a product which raised serious questions on the ability of the noticee to conduct proper and effective due diligence regarding the product itself.

PACL case: Sebi panel asks certain investors to submit original documents for refund

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A high-powered Sebi committee on Monday asked investors in illegal schemes of PACL group, with claims of up to ₹17,000, to produce original documents by March 20 for receiving refunds.

The panel has asked only those investors, whose applications have been successfully verified, to submit their original certificates.

The committee, headed by former Chief Justice of India RM Lodha, is overseeing the process of disposing of properties to refund investors after verifying their genuineness. It has already initiated the process of refund in phases. The panel was set up by Sebi in 2016 following a Supreme Court order.

The committee has decided to call for original PACL registration certificates from eligible investors with claims between ₹15,001 and ₹17,000, whose applications have been



successfully verified, according to a statement published on Sebi’s website on Monday.

Accordingly, intimation through SMS will be sent to all eligible investors, requiring them to submit original PACL registration certificates.

“The window for accepting original certificates shall remain open from February 27, 2023 to March 20, 2023,” the statement added.

Further, investors have been cautioned against parting with their original PACL registration certificates unless SMS is received from the Committee, requiring submission of original certificates.

EPFO sets May 3 as deadline for subscribers to opt for higher pension

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Employees’ Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) on Monday set May 3 as the deadline for subscribers to opt for a higher pension.

The Supreme Court on November 4 allowed another change for employees who were existing EPS members as on September 1, 2024, to contribute up to 8.33 per cent of their actual salaries - as against 8.33 per cent of pensionable salary capped at ₹15,000 a month - towards pension.

The apex court gave a four-month window to enable opting for higher pensions. The deadline accordingly should have been around March 3, 2023, but EPFO only last week came out with the procedure for opting for higher pension under the Employees’ Pension Scheme (EPS).

“The joint option for employees who were in service prior to September 1, 2014, and



continued to be in service on or after September 1, 2014, but could not exercise joint option under the Employees’ Pension Scheme can do so now on or before May 3, 2023,” the EPFO said on its website.

At present, both employees and employers contribute 12 per cent of the employee’s basic salary, dearness allowance and retaining allowance, if any, to the employee provident fund or EPF.

The employee’s entire contribution goes to EPF, while the 12 per cent contribution by the employer is split as 3.67 per cent to EPF and 8.33 per cent to EPS.

The Government of India contributes 1.16 per cent to an employee’s pension, while employees do not contribute to the pension scheme.

Retail mutual fund assets base grows 9.3% to over ₹23 lakh crore in January

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Retail investors’ interest in the Indian mutual fund industry has seen an uptick with the value of assets held by them witnessing a rise of 9.3 per cent to ₹23.4 lakh crore in January this year.

In comparison, the value of assets held by retail investors in mutual funds stood at ₹21.40 lakh crore in January 2022, latest data with the Association of Mutual Funds in India (Amfi) showed. However, the value of institutional assets has marginally decreased to ₹17.42 lakh crore in January 2023, from ₹17.49 lakh crore in January 2022.

Industry insiders believe the increase in asset base is mostly the result of advanced SIP (Systematic Investment Plan) flows, which touched ₹13,000-crore for the fourth time in a row in January this year. In addition, industry body Amfi has played an important



role in driving awareness towards mutual funds among retail investors.

As per the data, flows through SIP rose to ₹13,856 crore in January from ₹13,573 crore in December. This was the fourth consecutive month when SIP flows remained above the ₹13,000-crore mark.

Overall, assets managed by the mutual fund industry increased to ₹40.8 lakh crore in January 2023 from ₹38.89 lakh crore a year earlier, representing 4.93 per cent growth in assets. Apart from the asset base, the share of retail investors in the industry assets has also increased to 57.3 per cent during the period under review compared to 55 per cent in January last year.

Gold plunge ₹185; silver plummets ₹798

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices declined by Rs 185 to ₹55,520 per 10 grams in the national capital on Monday amid weak global trends, according to HDFC Securities.

The yellow metal had ended at ₹55,705 per 10 grams in the previous trade.

Silver also plummeted by ₹798 to ₹63,227 per kg.

“Spot gold prices in the Delhi markets traded at ₹55,520 per 10 grams, down ₹185 per 10 grams,” said Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst - Commodities at HDFC Securities. In the overseas market, gold and silver were trading lower at \$1,811 per ounce and \$20.75 per ounce, respectively.

“COMEX gold prices fell in the Asian trading hours on Monday to their weakest levels in nearly two months after recent hot inflation reinforced expectations that the US Fed will continue to hike rate in the first half of the year,” Sriram Iyer, Senior Research Analyst at Reliance Securities, said.

AISTA cuts sugar production estimate down to 33.5 mn tns in 2022-23 season

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India’s sugar production is projected to decline by 1 million tonne to 33.5 million tonnes in the ongoing 2022-23 season on account of lower sugarcane yields and sugar recovery, trade body AISTA said on Monday.

Earlier, the All India Sugar Trade Association (AISTA) estimated sugar production at 34.5 million tonnes for the 2022-23 season (October-September).

Based on revised figures, the country’s sugar production, however, is likely to remain down by 2.3 million tonnes than the actual output of 35.8 million tonnes achieved in the 2021-22 season.

Releasing the second estimate, AISTA said the revised estimate of sugar production excludes diversion of sucrose for ethanol making.

Consequently, sugar production in Maharashtra is estimated to be lower at 11.3 million tonnes in the current season as against 13.7 million tonnes in 2021-22 season. The output in Karnataka is likely to be drop slightly to 5.5 million tonnes as against 6.2 million tonnes in the said period.

In Uttar Pradesh, sugar output is estimated to be slightly higher at 10.8 million tonnes in 2022-23 season as against 10.2 million tonnes in the previous season.

Decide on attaching DMRC's assets to pay Rlnfra: HC to Govt

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court Monday asked the Centre to take a decision on whether it proposes to grant sanction for the attachment of movable and immovable assets of Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) for paying the arbitral award to the Reliance Infrastructure-owned Delhi Metro Express Private Limited (DAMEPL).

The high court granted time to the competent authorities in the Central Government to take the decision in this regard and place it on record while listing the matter for further hearing on March 2. The High Court said it would be expedient to take



decision on the issue before it proceeds further to deal with the objections taken by both the Centre and the Delhi Government and which pertain to the limited liability principle.

“...Before the court proceeds to rule on the issue of whether the circumstances warrant the corporate veil of the corporation (DMRC) be lifted, it would appear expedi-

ent to call upon the Union Government to take a decision on whether it proposes to accord sanction for the attachment of the movable and immovable assets of the corporation for the purpose of the satisfaction of the amount payable under the award,” Justice Yashwant Varma said.

The High Court said, “In order to enable the competent authorities in the Union Government to take that decision and place the same on the record of the proceedings, let the matter be called again on March 2.” The High Court was hearing the execution petition filed by DAMEPL against the DMRC over the arbitration award passed in its favour on May 11, 2017.

Fabindia scraps IPO plans considering present market situation

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Leading retailer of artisan products and lifestyle items Fabindia on Monday said it has shelved its plans to launch an initial public offering of around ₹4,000 crore size due to present volatile market conditions.

The company has withdrawn its Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP) filed with



market watchdog Sebi for a public listing, a Fabindia spokesperson said.

When asked about the reason for scrapping the IPO plan, the spokesperson said, “The decision to withdraw was taken as the current market conditions were not seen to be conducive for listing of our size.”

The validity of Fabindia’s DRHP, which proposed an Offer for Sale (OFS) of up to 2.50 crore shares, was ending in April 2023.

IIFL launches ‘Sapna Aapka Loan Hamara’ campaign

New Delhi: Retail-focussed non-banking financial company IIFL Finance has launched ‘Sapna Aapka Loan Hamara Campaign’ with top actress Tamannaah Bhatia as part of its pan-India marketing outreach. IIFL aims to reach 350 million plus consumers with it offerings over the next six months through the campaign and improve its leadership position in gold loan,



home loan, business loan and microfinance loan segments.

DIAL commissions disabled aircraft recovery kit

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi airport operator DIAL on Monday said it has commissioned the Disabled Aircraft Recovery (DAR) kit that can fully recover a narrow-body aircraft, including A320 and B737. The kit, having a capacity of 90 tonne, can also do one-sided recovery of wide-body aircraft.

In a release, DIAL said the mobile mobile Disabled Aircraft Recovery Kit has been procured from Germany-based M/S Kunz and is capable of fully recovering narrow-body aircraft, including the A320 and 737, as well as carrying out one-sided recovery of wide-body aircraft within a short span of time. With a maximum capac-



ity of 90 tonnes, the DAR kit can recover Code F-compliant aircraft during an aircraft incident on the runway, ensuring minimal runway closure.

Besides, the Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL) has trained a team of 36 personnel to handle any disabled aircraft situation.

A DAR kit is used to recover an aircraft which is unable to move under its own power or through the normal use of an appropriate tow tractor and tow bar.

Zee Entertainment shares fall 6%

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Shares of Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd (ZEEL) declined more than 6 per cent on Monday even as NCLAT stayed the insolvency proceedings against the media house last week.

The stock ended 6.65 per cent lower at ₹182.55 apiece on the NSE. On the BSE, it settled at ₹183 each share, lower by 6.44 per cent.

Scholarship for women engineers

New Delhi: TalentSprint, a global edtech company offering transformational deeptech programs, has announced the fifth edition of its women engineers program. This year the program aims to identify, select, train, and nurture 200 first-year women engineering students to become globally competitive software engineers. The program offers 100 per cent fee scholarship and ₹100,000 cash scholarship.

200 UP FOR MBAPPE

AP ■ PARIS

Kylian Mbappe reached 200 goals for Paris Saint-Germain to become the club's joint all-time top scorer as the France superstar netted twice in his side's 3-0 win over Ligue 1 title rivals Marseille on Sunday.

Mbappe scored both his goals at the Velodrome from Lionel Messi assists and in between he set up the Argentine for PSG's other goal as they moved eight points clear at the top of the table.

It was a result and a performance that will erase many of the doubts about a team that had been in stuttering form in recent weeks as they outclassed their most credible domestic challengers.

Mbappe's brace took him to a double century of goals for PSG in just short of 250 appearances since signing from Monaco in 2017.

The 24-year-old therefore equals his former teammate Edinson Cavani as the club's record marksman.

"He is obviously fast but it's not just about his legs — the speed at which he does things is out of the ordinary," PSG coach Christophe Galtier told broadcaster Amazon Prime.

"Players like him are clearly motivated by stats and records. Tonight he has equalled Edinson Cavani's magnificent record and he will obviously go on to beat it."

Mbappe is now out on his own as Ligue 1's leading scorer this season with 17 goals and has 29 in 29 games in all competitions since the campaign began.

Messi, meanwhile, now has 12 league goals this season and has set up 12 more, and PSG did not miss the absent Neymar.

The Brazilian was sidelined after being stretchered off with an ankle injury in last week's 4-3 defeat of Lille.

The Qatar-owned club saw their injury problems continue as centre-back Presnel Kimpembe — whose season has been plagued by fitness issues — was carried off early on after crumpling to the turf in agony. "Unfortunately he seriously injured himself and will obviously be out until the end of the season," said Galtier, who added that it looked like an Achilles tendon injury.

PSG overcame that setback to take the



lead in the 25th minute. Mbappe darted infield from the left and broke away from the unaware Eric Bailly to latch onto a Messi pass before running through to score.

Four minutes later it was 2-0 as Mbappe combined with Nuno Mendes down the left before playing a glorious ball through the legs of Bailly for Messi to finish from close in.

Messi should have scored again from a Mendes assist soon after while both Mbappe and Marquinhos came close to making it 3-0 before the interval.

In the end the third goal arrived 10 minutes into the second half as Messi's flighted assist was met first-time on the volley by Mbappe and his shot found the far corner of the net.

MONACO LOSE DERBY

Gianluigi Donnarumma then produced a superb save from an Alexis Sanchez header and also denied Vitinha as Marseille slumped to a second successive home defeat in the league.

"I am not disappointed with what my team did. Today it was the better team who won," said Marseille coach Igor Tudor, who admitted Mbappe was too hot to handle.

"They have this number seven who is very difficult to mark. When they come and play in this way there is nothing you can do."

Monaco remain two points behind Marseille in third after going down to a 3-0 defeat at home to a resurgent Nice in the Cote d'Azur derby earlier.

Nigerian striker Terem Moffi scored twice for Nice before setting up Khephren Thuram for the third.

Nice remain unbeaten since 36-year-old Didier Digard replaced the sacked Lucien Favre as coach last month, with six wins and two draws in eight matches seeing them creep into European contention.

Monaco's defeat comes just three days after they were knocked out of the Europa League on penalties by Bayer Leverkusen and leaves them still third in the table but above Lens only on goal difference.

Elsewhere, Jeremy Doku's goal gave Rennes a 1-0 win away to near neighbours Nantes to move back above Lille into fifth.

Reims, coached by Belgian-born Englishman Will Still, are now unbeaten in 17 league games after beating Toulouse 3-0.



Milan up to third with Atalanta win

AP ■ MILAN

AC Milan moved up to third in Serie A after Sunday's 2-0 win over Atalanta, drawing level on points with Inter Milan, who fell further behind runaway leaders Napoli with a 1-0 defeat at Bologna.

Stefano Pioli's side are five points ahead of fifth-placed Lazio in the race for the Champions League thanks in part to Theo Hernandez's volley crashing off the post and into the goal via Juan Musso's back in the 26th minute.

A late dinked finish from Junior Messias at a soaking San Siro ensured Milan had their third league victory in a row.

"I'm counting the goal as mine. Oli (Giroud) did well to knock it down for me, I think it was a good goal," said Hernandez to DAZN.

Milan could have had more in the second half of a underwhelming encounter, Rafael Leo and Messias both wasting golden chances from close range before the latter sealed the points from Leao's pass with four minutes remain-

ing. The hosts were also cheered by the return of France goalkeeper Mike Maignan after five months out and Zlatan Ibrahimovic, who came on as a second-half substitute.

Veteran forward Ibrahimovic had been sidelined since May last year after having the anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee reconstructed.

"Mike and Zlatan aren't only great players, they're leaders with so much experience and having them available makes a big difference," said Pioli.

Atalanta stay sixth, three points behind Roma in fourth who can join Milan and Inter on 47 points with a win at bottom side Cremonese on Tuesday.

Gian Piero Gasperini's side cannot complain about the result as they didn't trouble Maignan once and have now lost three of their last four league matches.

The Milan giants are a whopping 18 points behind Napoli after Bologna beat Inter 1-0 in Sunday's early match.

Ten Hag urges Man Utd to build on League Cup

AP ■ LONDON

Erik ten Hag urged Manchester United to use their League Cup final victory against Newcastle on Sunday as a springboard for sustained success. United clinched their first major trophy in six years as Casemiro's header and an own goal from Sven Botman sealed their mature 2-0 win at Wembley.

Ten Hag's first season as United manager has proved transformative for a club in turmoil when he arrived from Ajax last year.

The Dutch coach has steered United to third place in the Premier League, and they remain in contention to add the FA Cup and Europa League to the first trophy of his reign.

United's composed performance against a Newcastle team desperate to win a first trophy in 54 years showed the impact Ten Hag has made.

But the demanding Ten Hag has no intention of letting his players rest on their laurels.



"Silverware shows something, that you are on a good pathway. It is one cup and it is February but it shows we are in the right direction," Ten Hag said.

"We have to continue on this pathway and not be satisfied, because satisfaction leads to laziness, and then you don't win any trophies."

United haven't won the

Premier League since Alex Ferguson's final season in 2013, and they have watched bitter rivals Manchester City establish themselves as England's preeminent force in the meantime.

Winning the League Cup would have been a minor feat in the Ferguson era, but Ten Hag insisted it was essential to his Old Trafford revolution as it provides tangible proof to his play-

ers that they can thrive if they follow his methods.

"This moment you have to celebrate. It is not a common day. We won a trophy. This trophy means something. That is the feeling I get," Ten Hag said.

"It will help, it will bring even more confidence as long as we don't go over the top."

"We can give even more, to be better and to be more of a col-

lective. Don't be satisfied."

Ten Hag and his players were joined in the post-match dressing room celebrations by United co-owner Avram Glazer.

The American was attending his first game since the November announcement that his family was considering selling the club.

The Glazers have received offers from British billionaire Jim Ratcliffe and a consortium led by Qatari banker Sheikh Jassim Bin Hamad Al Thani.

United's long-awaited silverware and the rapid improvement under Ten Hag might make the Glazers reconsider ending their unpopular reign at the start of what could be a golden era.

Asked about Glazer's interactions with him, Ten Hag said: "He was really happy. He wants to be part of it as an owner, you feel that."

"The way he is here shows he is committed. But about the process, that is not for me. Others in the club are involved in decisions about the ownership."

Barca shocked by lowly Almeria

AP ■ ALMERIA

La Liga leaders Barcelona tumbled to an embarrassing 1-0 defeat at Almeria on Sunday, failing to capitalise on Real Madrid's derby draw with Atletico to extend their advantage.

El Bilal Toure's fine first half strike split the teams and earned Almeria their first ever victory over Barca, inflicting only the second defeat of the league campaign on the Catalans.

Xavi Hernandez's side still have a seven-point lead over champions Madrid, but their morale took a further blow following their midweek Europa League exit against Manchester United.

Barca face Madrid in a Clasico Copa del Rey semi-final first leg on Thursday at the Santiago Bernabeu, with their vulnerabilities starting to show.

Victory would have stretched their advantage in the title race to double figures, as they bid to win La Liga for the first time since 2019.



Madrid beat Barcelona in the league in October in their first defeat and Almeria ended Barca's subsequent 13-game unbeaten league run.

"I'm very angry because I think we played our worst game of the season," Xavi told Movistar. "Above all in the first half, we couldn't move the ball around, we lacked intensity,

speed, on a day where we couldn't mess up."

"We did not show the passion (we needed) to win the game. In the second half, yes, but they defended well."

Xavi, already without injured trio Pedri, Ousmane Dembele and Ansu Fati, took a risk and rotated heavily and his team paid the price.

Newcastle's work 'starts again': Howe

AP ■ LONDON

Newcastle manager Eddie Howe said "the work starts again" after his side suffered a painful 2-0 defeat against Manchester United in the League Cup final on Sunday, extending their decades-long trophy drought. Newcastle have not won a major trophy since the 1969 Inter-Cities Fairs Cup and have not lifted major domestic silverware since 1955.

But Eddie Howe has transformed the club's fortunes since taking over as manager in November 2021, a month after a Saudi-led consortium made the club from northeast England one of the richest in the world.

Howe, 45, whose team are pushing to finish in the top four of the Premier League, said the defeat "hurts immensely".

"I thought we were really good between both boxes today but in the boxes is where games are won and lost," he said.

"I think today we didn't get the big moments right defensively and with the chances we did have we weren't clinical enough and probably didn't create enough for all the ball we had around their box."

"The work starts again but I hope we're a different Newcastle," he said.

Bayern sink Union Berlin, reclaim 1st place

AP ■ MUNICH

Birthday boy Jamal Musiala scored his 11th of the season as Bayern Munich returned to the Bundesliga summit with a dominant 3-0 home win over Union Berlin on Sunday.

Bayern and Borussia Dortmund now lead the Bundesliga by three points from Union. First-half goals from Eric Maxim Choupo-Moting, Kingsley Coman and Musiala, on his 20th birthday, put Bayern into a comfortable position against the overachieving Berliners.

A pre-match blizzard failed to cool Bayern's fluency, with the home side forcing Union into several last-ditch saves in the opening minutes.

Bayern striker Eric Maxim Choupo-Moting got the home side on the scoreboard after 31 minutes, heading in a lofted pass from Kingsley Coman.

Union almost hit back five minutes later when Tunisia international Aissa Laidouni blasted just past the upright after a nice pass from Sheraldo Becker. Bayern doubled up immediately afterwards, Thomas Mueller chipping the Union defence with his back to goal to send Coman one-on-one with Union goalie Frederik Ronnow.

The France forward rounded Ronnow and slid the ball into the net.

Mueller was the provider again in first-half injury time, setting up Musiala to give Bayern a 3-0 halftime lead.



Bayern took the sting out of the match after halftime in pursuit of just their third league win from seven matches in 2023, giving away few chances to the out-classed visitors.

Senegal forward Sadio Mane came off the bench in the 65th minute for Coman, his first appearance since sustaining a leg injury which saw him miss the Qatar World Cup.

Mane put Mueller through

on goal just five minutes later, but goalkeeper Ronnow headed the veteran forward's shot over the bar.

The victory means Bayern overtake Borussia Dortmund who went three points clear with a 1-0 win at Hoffenheim on Saturday. The Bavarians now sit ahead of the Westfalians on goal difference.

Union finish the round in third, one point ahead of fourth-

placed RB Leipzig.

A second-half goal from Iran striker Sardar Azmoun helped Bayer Leverkusen grab a 1-1 draw at Freiburg on Sunday.

A goal from free-kick specialist Vincenzo Grifo had put Freiburg into a first-half lead and on course for a valuable three points in their top-four bid, but Azmoun's first goal in Leverkusen colours meant the honours were shared.

Klinsmann named coach of South Korea

AP ■ SEOUL

Jurgen Klinsmann, who won the World Cup as a player and led Germany to the semi-finals as coach, has been appointed head coach of South Korea, the country's football association said on Monday.

The 58-year-old will arrive in Seoul next week and be in charge for a friendly against Colombia on March 24, the KFA said, adding he had a contract until 2026. The former Germany, Bayern Munich and United States coach succeeds Paulo Bento, who took the Koreans to the last 16 of the World Cup in Qatar, where they were beaten 4-1 by Brazil.

"I am very happy and honoured to be the head coach of South Korea's national football team," Klinsmann said, according to a Korea Football Association statement.

"I am well aware that the Korean national team has been constantly improving and producing results over a long period of time," he said.

He added that he was "honoured to be following in the footsteps" of former South Korea coaches, including Guus Hiddink and Bento.

"We will do our best to achieve successful results in the upcoming Asian Cup and 2026 World Cup," Klinsmann said.



Norrie downs ailing Alcaraz to win Rio crown

AP ■ RIO DE JANEIRO

Britain's Cameron Norrie took advantage of an ailing Carlos Alcaraz to win the ATP Tour Rio Open on Sunday.

Second seed Norrie came from behind to claim the fifth tournament win of his career, winning 5-7, 6-4, 7-5 in 2hrs 40mins.

Norrie's victory came exactly seven days after the British world number 13 had lost to Spain's second-ranked Alcaraz in the final of the Argentina Open in Buenos Aires.

"It's so special to win this one, especially after losing a couple of finals this year," said Norrie, who was also beaten in the final in Auckland in January.

But while Norrie celebrated, Alcaraz was left with fresh fitness concerns after an energy-sapping duel that saw him require repeated visits from the physio.

The 19-year-old, who only returned to tennis at last week's tournament in Argentina after a four-month injury layoff, was clearly struggling with a sore hamstring during the latter stages of Sunday's final.

He needed heavy strapping on his right thigh midway through the second set, when he collapsed from a 3-0 lead to allow Norrie to take the set and level the match.

Alcaraz is due to play at the Mexican Open in Acapulco next week and after that has the Indian Wells Masters looming.

New Zealand set England 258 to win second Test

AP ■ WELLINGTON

Record-breaker Kane Williamson stroked a superb century on Monday to steer New Zealand to 483 all out in their second innings and set England a target of 258 runs to win the second Test in Wellington.

Former captain Williamson hit 132 and Tom Blundell was last man out for 90 as the hosts fought back after being asked to follow on at the Basin Reserve.

England were 48-1 in their second innings at stumps after opener Zak Crawley, on 24, was bowled by a delivery that nipped back from New Zealand skipper Tim Southee.

Ben Duckett was unbeaten on 23 and nightwatchman Ollie Robinson on one, leaving England needing 210 more runs on Tuesday's final day for a 2-0 series sweep. The tourists won the first Test by 267 runs.

"We're excited about chasing that (target) down tomorrow," said England spinner Jack Leach, who took 5-157.

"We know how we want to go about it and it's a case of us sticking to that process. We're confident." New Zealand need nine wickets to pull off only the fourth victory by a side following on in the history of Test cricket and square the two-match series.

"It would be pretty special," Williamson said of New Zealand's historic bid.

"It's pretty exciting going into day five and we want to make sure our bowling is on. There's all to play for."

The hosts resumed their



second innings on Monday at 202-3, still trailing by 24, but Williamson led the charge with his 26th Test century.

It fell to England's new batting star and part-time seam bowler Harry Brook to claim Williamson's prized wicket.

After grinding down England's bowlers, Williamson was finally caught down the leg side by wicketkeeper Ben Foakes off a fine edge after a sixth-wicket partnership of 158 with Blundell.

Williamson trudged off to hearty applause from the Wellington crowd after dragging

New Zealand back into the match. It was his second standing ovation of the day, having eclipsed Ross Taylor in the morning session to become New Zealand's most prolific Test batsman with 7,787 runs.

His partnership with Blundell helped New Zealand fight back after England declared their first innings at 435-8 then scuttled New Zealand for 209, before inviting the hosts to bat again.

New Zealand can join an elite club if they win — only England, twice, and India have won a Test after following on.

IF YOU DON'T SCORE IN INDIA, YOU WILL GET FLAK: GANGULY

PTI ■ KOLKATA

It will be difficult for KL Rahul to avoid scathing criticism for his protracted poor run because of the enormous expectations attached with the job, especially when past cricketers have set high standards, says former India skipper Sourav Ganguly.

Stripped of vice captaincy, Rahul hasn't crossed 25-run mark in his last 10 Test knocks. An average of less than 35 in 47 Tests isn't an actual realisation of his real potential.

"When you don't score runs in India, obviously you will get flak. KL Rahul hasn't been the only one. There have been players in the past also," Ganguly said.

Ganguly tried to put things in perspective as to why the Bengaluru man is being persisted with despite repeated failures.

"There's so much focus and attention with lot of pressure on players. The team management thinks he is an important player for the team. At the end of the day, what coach and captain thinks is important," the veteran of 113 Tests and 311 ODIs said.

While Rahul has played some quality knocks in England and Australia, Ganguly said it's obvious that people will expect way more from a talented player like Rahul, who has managed just five Test hundreds in nine years.

"He has performed but obvi-



ously you expect a lot more from a top order batter playing for India because the standards set by others are so high.

"When you fail for a while, obviously there will be criticism. I am sure Rahul has ability and

I am sure as and when he gets more opportunities, he will have to find ways to score," he explained. So is Rahul's problem technical or mental? "Both," pat comes the reply.

But the former BCCI

President also gave an interesting insight into Rahul's lack of runs as he is getting out to pacers as well as spinners in all conditions in recent times.

"It also makes it hard if you are playing on these sort of pitches as the balls are turning and bouncing. There's uneven bounce and when you are not in form, it makes it even more harder."

GILL HAS TO WAIT

There has been a clamour to include Shubman Gill in the playing XI but Ganguly feels that the Punjab man will get his share of chances and there's no harm if he has to wait a little bit.

But what do you tell a Shubman, who has to cool his heels when he is in red hot form?

"I am sure when his time comes, he will also get a lot of opportunities. I think the selectors, the captain and the coach think of him and rate him very highly. That's why he is playing ODIs and T20Is, and he has performed as well."

"But at the present moment, perhaps message from team management is that he has to wait."

While India have cantered to victories in both the Tests, the top order batters except Rohit Sharma have flattered to deceive with none getting a fifty.

Is the concept of dominant batters against spinners sounding too alien nowadays?

"I don't think so. These are very tough wickets. I saw in the

first two Tests and it's not easy boss. Playing Ashwin, Jadeja, Lyon and the new guy Todd Murphy, it is never easy with odd ball turning square. There is unevenness, there is everything happening for spinners."

NOT WAUGH'S TEAM

India have won two Test matches in a cumulative duration of five days of cricket and Ganguly isn't surprised. "India is a different beast in India. They are a pretty good team all around but in India they are pretty hard to beat. When it starts turning, they are a better side than anyone," he was sharp in his response. Is the scoreline of 4-0 a real possibility for India?

"I think so. I don't know how Australia can stop it," he was practical while assessing Australia's performance.

"The problem is, we keep comparing this Australian team from the teams of the past and it's not the same. You don't have a Matthew Hayden, Justin Langer, Ricky Ponting, Steve and Mark Waugh, (Adam) Gilchrist, you name them. You don't have that quality."

"Steve Smith is a great player. (David) Warner hasn't got going, (Marnus) Labuschagne is a good player but these are tough conditions for him as well."

"The mistake we make with Australian teams is that we think they are Steve Waugh's Australia but that's not the case. Different players get tested differently in different conditions."



Starc says still not 100% fit but good enough for 3rd Test

PTI ■ INDORE

Senior Australian pacer Mitchell Starc has still not '100 per cent' recovered from his injury but is ready to make an impact in the third Test against India beginning here on Wednesday.

With skipper Pat Cummins back home to be with his unwell mother, Australia will rely on Starc to provide the odd breakthrough and support the spinners.

Indian pacers have already made a substantial contribution in the series with Mohammed Shami being the standout fast bowler.

"I am feeling fine. There's going to be a level of discomfort for a while. I don't think it's going to be a 100 per cent for a fair while, but it's good enough."

"The ball is coming out quite nicely and I am bowling at full tilt. It won't be the first Test that I will play with some sort of discomfort. If I only played when I was 100 per cent, I would have only played 5-10 Tests," said Starc ahead of Australia's opening practice session here.

Like the Indian pacers have done for their team, Starc too



ing practice session here.

Like the Indian pacers have done for their team, Starc too

wants to make a significant contribution. He bowled full tilt for an hour to Cameron Green

in the nets.

"Yeah, it's been a challenge for the Australian seamers. We do see spin obviously playing a huge part, but the Indian quicks have still played a particular role with the new ball. And if it does reverse, they have brought the stumps into play. No doubt that spin will play a huge role again, but I will have to play an important role with the spinners to take those 20 wickets," said the left-arm quick.

Starc and Green are the likely pace options for Australia in the game. In Delhi, Cummins was the only fast-bowling option at the team's disposal with the visitors going with three specialist spinners.

The 33-year-old, who has played 75 Tests, hopes the experience of playing in the sub-continent helps him here. He is also feeling good about his body.

"There is no concern at all. I had 8-10 days off after the injury. Since then, I have been bowling. Workload or body-wise, no concerns. I am happy with where my body is at. It's now about executing the skills."

Richa only Indian in T20 WC's 'Most Valuable Team'

PTI ■ CAPE TOWN

India's wicket-keeper batter Richa Ghosh's exploits during the side's run to the semi-finals of the Women's T20 World Cup here have earned her a place in ICC's Most Valuable Team of the tournament announced on Monday.

The 19-year-old wicket-keeper and middle-order batter had a couple of below-par scores against Ireland in the group stages and Australia in the semi-finals, but three unbeaten knocks — 31 not out vs Pakistan, 44 not out vs West Indies and 47 not out vs England — saw her end the tournament with 136 runs.

Four players from Australia, who lifted the trophy for a record-extending sixth time, figure in the XI.

The team was chosen by a panel of experts, including commentator and former West Indies player Ian Bishop and ex-Australian woman crick-

eter Melanie Jones, among others.

Most Valuable Team of the Women's T20 World Cup (in batting order):

Tazmin Brits (South Africa) 186 runs at 37.20; Alyssa Healy (wk) (Australia) 189 runs at 47.25 and four dismissals; Laura Wolvaardt (South Africa) 230 runs at 46.00; Nat Sciver-Brunt (c) (England) 216 runs at 72.00; Ashleigh Gardner (Australia) 110 runs at 36.66 and 10 wickets at 12.50; Richa Ghosh (India) 136 runs at 68.00; Sophie Ecclestone (England) 11 wickets at 7.54; Karishma Ramharack (West Indies) 5 wickets at 10.00; Shabnim Ismail (South Africa) 8 wickets at 16.12; Darcie Brown (Australia) 7 wickets at 15.00; Megan Schutt (Australia) 10 wickets at 12.50; 12th player: Orla Prendergast (Ireland) 109 runs at 27.25 and 3 wickets at 26.00.

Rahul, Gill grind it out simultaneously in nets

PTI ■ INDORE

There were no definite cues but it seemed like an audition when the struggling K L Rahul and the much younger Shubam Gill batted simultaneously during a training session on Monday ahead of the third Test against Australia.

Stripped of India vice-captaincy following his prolonged lean patch in the five-day format, Rahul put in the hard yards in what could possibly be the final training session before the game, beginning Wednesday.

The selection of Rahul, who averages an ordinary 33.44 after 47 Tests, at the expense of Gill, who is a superstar in the making, has divided opinions in the cricketing fraternity.

Both batted in adjacent nets for around 30 minutes under the supervision of head coach Rahul Dravid. Rahul has got an extended run as the team management has immense faith in his abilities but with every failure, the pressure is mounting on the stylish opener.

Gill, on the other hand, has had a coming-of-age season across formats and his supporters, which include former crick-

eters, believe there is no better time to draft him into the playing eleven.

While Gill was more attacking in his approach, Rahul bided his time and focused on his defence.

Rahul left and blocked the first 18 balls he faced before practicing the aerial hits down the ground off spinners. He then traded places with Gill to face R Ashwin and there also, he looked to play everything with a straight bat. Before batting alongside Rahul, Gill was the first member of the team to hit the nets as other underwent warm-up and fielding drills.

After their stint in the main nets, both Gill and Rahul moved to the other side of the ground to face a few throwdowns.

Both Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli looked in fine touch in the Delhi Test but were not able to convert starts.

Walking into the nets has displayed an aggressive approach against the spinners. While Kohli targetted the straight boundaries against left-arm spinners, Rohit played strokes all over including the pull, sweep and reverse sweep.

Southern Stars hailed as among greatest ever

AP ■ SYDNEY

Australia's all-conquering women cricketers were hailed on Monday as among the greatest sporting teams the country has ever produced after winning yet another T20 World Cup.

Meg Lanning's side beat hosts South Africa by 19 runs at Newlands in Cape Town on Sunday to lift the trophy for a sixth time in the last seven tournaments.

"Don Bradman had the Invincibles. Meg Lanning has the Immortals," said The Australian newspaper.

"Where Bradman's legendary team was labelled as such just for one tour of England after the war, the Australian women's team is now an era of unprecedented world domination."

Australia were already reigning 50-over World Cup champions and they won the inaugural Commonwealth Games gold medal last year.

"It's a spectacular achievement and one that has been criminally underappreciated in recent weeks," the broadsheet added.

"For this Australian team not to be nominated for the



Laureus World Sports Awards is a disgrace and makes a mockery of the once-prestigious awards."

The England women's football side has been nominated for this year's Laureus team award, along with five others, including the French men's rugby team and Formula One's Red Bull. But Lanning's world-beaters were overlooked.

The Sydney Morning Herald lauded them as one of the all-time greats.

"They've played in a way that has changed the status and perception of women's cricket forever and made some of them

household names," it said.

"It's almost impossible to deny that when everything that matters is taken into account — achievement, grace, inspiration to a generation and social impact — they've put more stakes in the ground than any other."

Lanning has now led the team to five titles at ICC tournaments, with Sunday's triumph adding to her previous wins as skipper in 2014, 2018 and 2020, and the 2022 one-day World Cup victory in New Zealand.

Overall, she has been part of seven World Cup-winning teams.

SA aim to launch new era in Test series against Windies

AP ■ CENTURION

South Africa's Test series against the West Indies, which starts at SuperSport Park on Tuesday, could hardly be more low-key but it has the potential to launch a new era for the country's Test team.

New coach Shukri Conrad has already stamped his authority on the team, appointing Temba Bavuma as the new captain -- the first Black African to skipper the Test team — and clearing out several players who were found wanting in losing series in England and Australia.

The Test series has had minimal build-up in a South African season which has been dominated by T20 cricket.

There was the first SA20 franchise tournament, which was a crowd-pulling success, and the

Women's T20 World Cup in which South Africa reached the final, hugely lifting the profile of women's cricket.

The two matches against the West Indies are the only two Tests scheduled for the South African summer after Cricket South Africa took a decision to prioritise the SA20.

The series is part of the World Test championship but South Africa are no longer in contention for a place in the final after being heavily beaten in Australia, which in turn was followed by India climbing up the standings in their home series against the Australians.

Unlike the white ball games, the series is not expected to pack the grounds in Centurion and Johannesburg.

With the first Test starting on a Tuesday and the second on a

Wednesday — and given the trend for matches to end in three or four days — there are no guarantees that there will be any significant action over the weekends.

Nor does the prospect of a series against the West Indies stir the blood as it did in the days of the teams led by Clive Lloyd and Viv Richards.

Since falling victim to the pace duo of Courtney Walsh and Curtly Ambrose in 1992, in their first Test after 22 years of political isolation, South Africa have dominated against the players from the Caribbean.

South Africa have won 20 and lost only two of 29 Tests against West Indies since the capitulation at the Kensington Oval in Barbados.

The current tour of South Africa is the first by the West Indies since 2014/15.

