

OPINION 6

WRESTLERS' FIGHT FOR JUSTICE

MONEY 9

MARKETS EKE OUT MODEST GAINS AHEAD OF BUDGET, FED'S RATE DECISION

WORLD 10

BLINKEN IN WEST ASIA RENEWS APPEAL FOR ISRAEL-PALESTINIAN CALM

LUCKNOW, WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 1, 2023; PAGES 12 ₹3



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INDIA TO FACE NZ IN THIRD T20I TODAY
12 SPORT

Global turmoil-hit GDP to grow at 6.5%: Eco Survey

6.8 per cent inflation projection not too high to deter private consumption or weaken investment: Economic Survey

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India's economic growth is expected to slow down to 6.5 in the fiscal year 2024 from 7 per cent the previous financial year largely due to global economic turmoil and the Russia-Ukraine war that has badly impacted the country's export, the Economic Survey tabled in Parliament said on Tuesday.

The projection of India's gross domestic product (GDP) growth is higher than the 6.1 per cent estimate of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The country logged 7 per cent growth in the current fiscal year (April 2022 to March 2023) and 8.7 per cent in the previous year.

According to the survey,



Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman during the final touches of Union Budget 2023-24, at Finance Ministry in New Delhi on Tuesday

on Indian Rupee will continue and inflation may be on higher side of comfort, the survey said that India's current account deficit (CAD) was 4.4 per cent of GDP in July-September period, higher than 2.2 per cent a quarter ago and 1.3 per cent a year ago, as rising commodity prices and a weak rupee increased the trade gap.

The survey stated that the inflation projection by RBI at 6.8 per cent for current fiscal (FY23) is above the central bank's tolerance limit but the pace of price increase is not high enough to deter private consumption or low enough to weaken investment.

Maintaining that pressure

improving competitiveness. More importantly, it will help India move up the value chain over the Amrit Kaal of the next 25 years."

Majumdar further said that the global slowdown has already been factored into investment decisions in India. "India should now prepare to bounce back when the global economy recovers. Government must pursue policies to cushion the economy to reduce the vagaries of the global business cycle and focus to a greater degree on building infrastructure, creating an industrial base, and encouraging new business formation, Majumdar said.

On the brighter side, the survey said India's projected growth rate is higher than most of the countries in the world and Goods and Services Tax collection is showing a higher buoyancy than the pre-GST system, auguring well for future resource mobilisation in the economy. Survey 2022-23 presented in Parliament said on Tuesday.

Giving a 5-year analysis of tax collection pre and post-GST, the survey said the taxes which were subsumed in the Goods and Services Tax had a buoyancy of one. However, the buoyancy improved to 1.1 after the GST implementation on July 1, 2017.

Continued on Page 10

Modi Govt has been stable, fearless, decisive, says Prez

'It's giving befitting response to every misadventure on Indian border and keeping national interest supreme'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday showcased the Modi Government as "stable, fearless, decisive", and lauded it for giving befitting response to every misadventure on Indian border and keeping national interest supreme.

"From surgical strike to a firm crackdown on terrorism, from a befitting response to every misadventure from LoC to LAC, from abrogation of Article 370 to triple talaq, my Government has been recognised as a decisive Government," India's first tribal President said in her over hour-long customary speech to joint session of Parliament.

Continued on Page 10



President Droupadi Murmu, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla arrive at Parliament House on the first day of the Budget Session 2023, in New Delhi on Tuesday

"My decisive Government has always kept the country's interest paramount and shown the willpower to completely transform the policies and strategies when required.

In the backdrop of recent challenges on the borders, the President said "befitting response" was given to every "misadventure from LoC (Line of Control) to LAC (Line of Actual Control)" as she said the Government was laying out the Government's vision for building a developed India in the next five years.

President Murmu underlined its thrust on 'virasat

(heritage) as well as "vikas" (development) saying the Government has worked for all without any discrimination.

In a speech which touched on a range of key issues, she affirmed that India has globally emerged as a country that is "connecting" today's "divided world" in some form or the other.

Murmu said the world is acknowledging New Delhi's "tough stand" on terrorism, and described the current phase of India's global relations as the "best" one.

The President's speech before the commencement of

each Parliament session is an account of government's performance.

Congress leader Sonia Gandhi, among other Opposition leaders, sat on the designated front row bench in Parliament's Central Hall during the president's address as senior leaders of her party remained stuck in Srinagar due to bad weather.

Throughout the Murmu's speech, the central hall reverberated with thumping of desks by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his party colleagues and MPs.

Continued on Page 10

Shanti Bhushan passes away

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Former Law Minister (1977-79) and noted lawyer Shanti Bhushan passed away on Tuesday evening after a brief illness. He was the lead lawyer against then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi for poll fraud, leading to her disqualification.

Bhushan, 97, a founding member of the BJP and the AAP, was part of many anti-corruption movements. Father of noted lawyers Prashant Bhushan and Jayant Bhushan, Bhushan founded Centre for Public Interest Litigation.

CAPSULE

14 CHARRD TO DEATH IN DHANBAD INFERNO
DHANBAD: At least 14 people were charred to death in a major fire in a multi-storey building in Dhanbad on Tuesday evening.

AI PEE-GATE: ACCUSED MISHRA GRANTED BAIL
New Delhi: A Delhi court on Tuesday granted bail to Shankar Mishra, accused of urinating on a woman flyer on an Air India flight from New York to Delhi.

Adani's FPO fully subscribed; retail response muted

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Adani Enterprises' ₹20,000 crore FPO was fully subscribed on Tuesday despite muted response from retail investors and Adani group employees. The FPO was saved by non-retail investors who bid in big volumes.

Retail investors, for whom roughly half of the issue was reserved, bid for just 11 per cent of the 2.29 crore shares earmarked. Adani group employees sought 52 per cent of the 1.6 lakh shares reserved for them. As many as 4.62 crore shares were sought as against an offer of 4.55 crore.

Non-institutional investors put in bids for over three times the 96.16 lakh shares reserved for them, while the 1.28 crore shares reserved for qualified



institutional buyers (QIBs) was almost fully subscribed, according to BSE data.

Adani group stocks witnessed heavy volatility on Tuesday. Three of the firm's stock again ended in red but other showed comeback after three days of heavy selling.

Adani Green Energy settled for the day higher by 3.06 per cent, Adani Transmission 3.73 per cent, NDTV 1.35 per cent, Adani Ports 2.67 per cent, Adani Enterprises 3.35 per cent, Ambuja Cements 3.50 per cent and ACC by 3.39 per cent.

Continued on Page 10

Collegium lists 2 HC judges for elevation to SC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid the ongoing standoff with the Modi Government on the appointment of judges, the Supreme Court Collegium on Tuesday recommended to the Centre the names of Allahabad High Court Chief Justice Rajesh Bindal and Gujarat High Court Chief Justice Aravind Kumar for elevation as SC judges.

All the six members of the Collegium, led by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud, were unanimous in recommending the name of Justice Bindal, said the resolution uploaded on the SC website. However, Justice KM Joseph had reservation in recommending the name of Justice Kumar, the resolution said.

"The resolution in regard to the appointment of Justice Rajesh Bindal is unanimous. ...In regard to the appointment of Chief Justice of the High Court of Gujarat Justice Aravind Kumar, Justice KM Joseph has expressed his reservations on the ground that his name can be considered at a later stage," the resolution said.

Continued on Page 10



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath blessing Deputy CM Brajesh Pathak's daughter and her husband at their wedding reception in Lucknow on Tuesday

Adultery decriminalisation verdict of 2018 not valid for armed forces, says SC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday ruled that armed forces can take action against their officers for adulterous acts, as it clarified the landmark 2018 judgment that decriminalised adultery. A five-judge Constitution bench headed by Justice KM Joseph said its 2018 judgment was not concerned with the provisions of the armed forces acts.

The SC, on a plea filed by NRI Joseph Shine, in 2018 had struck down Section 497 of the Indian Penal Code dealing with the offence of adultery, holding it unconstitutional.

The Tuesday order by the bench, also comprising justices Ajay Rastogi, Aniruddha Bose, Hrishikesh Roy, and CT Ravikumar came after Additional Solicitor General Madhavi Divan, appearing for the Centre, submitted a plea seeking clarification of the 2018 judgment.

The Ministry of Defence had moved the SC for an exemption to armed forces from the September 27, 2018 judgment striking down adultery, saying it may hinder action against officers who indulge in such actions and can cause 'instability' within the services.

Continued on Page 10

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Entrance exams for Atal schools in May

Admission process to begin in June

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Aiming to provide free and quality education to children of labourers, the Uttar Pradesh government is going to start Atal residential schools from the upcoming academic year. The entrance exam will be held in May this year while the admission process will begin in June. The applications will be submitted in February or March and the classes will begin in July.

The hiring procedure for teachers and other staff will start soon. In each of the 18 divisional headquarters, construction of these schools is progressing quickly.

As per schedule, applications can be sought anytime between February 15 and 20. Online applications can also be sought. Applications for admission can be submitted from March 20 to 25 while admit cards will be distributed towards the end of April.

At the same time, the

The hiring procedure for teachers and other staff members will start soon. In each of the 18 divisional headquarters, construction of these schools is progressing at rapid pace

exams will take place at the end of May while the merit list will be released in the middle of June. After counselling and admission, the teaching work will start in July. The schools will start with 80 students each in class 6. The entrance exams will be conducted through CBSE. The signing of an MoU for holding the entrance exams for children of construction workers and orphans through the CBSE is currently in process. Children of duly registered construction workers, who have served at least one year (365 days) of the board's membership period following registration, will be eligible for

taking the entrance exams.

A maximum of two children from each family of construction workers will be allowed to attend the schools. Children should be aged 10-12 years (based on Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya). The decision on an orphaned child's eligibility has also been proposed.

Each school will have a principal, an administrative officer, and staff consisting of 11 teachers. A total of 80 students will be accommodated in each school.

In case of delay in the hiring of teachers, six teachers may be arranged for immediate work. For the academic session 2023-24, the appointment of the principal for all schools is proposed to be completed by mid-February (2023) and all other appointments by mid-May (2023).

For the positions of principal, administrative officer, and teachers in Atal residential schools, a permanent appointment process is currently underway. For the teaching and non-teaching positions at these schools, rules have been prepared and the process of approval is underway.

1 killed in massive blaze, 30 rescued

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A major fire broke out at a battery charging centre on the ground floor of SS Tower near Badshah Nagar metro station under Mahanagar police here on Tuesday evening. One of the owners of the shop, Ashwini Pandey, who was present there at that time, sustained burns and succumbed at a private nursing home in the area while 30 others were rescued safely.

Smokes were first seen in the hall which houses a gym on the second floor of the building. The situation turned grim in no time and those pressed into service for the rescue operation failed to find their way back as the staircase and emergency exit were filled with thick layers of smoke. However, those trapped in the gym were rescued and rushed to Civil hospital in Mahanagar. They were discharged after a few hours.

A probe was underway to ascertain the cause of fire outbreak while losses were also being estimated. The battery shop is co-owned by Alok Rathore, who is a resident of Viram Khand, Gomti Nagar. However, he was not in the shop at the time of the incident. The manager of the nearby petrol pump adjacent to the ill-fated building informed police and fire officials about the incident. Those trapped in the gym were rescued by breaking the glass windows from outside. The fire was contained after about an hour by six fire engines.

Officials said Ashwini was brought out from the shop but he had sustained over 90 per cent burns. He succumbed during treatment at the hospital.



(Top) Fire officials at the battery charging shop which reduced to ashes. (Above) People trapped in the gym being rescued

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CLASSIFIEDS

NOTICE
I have changed my name from Abid Rasheed Alias Pappu To Abid Rasheed, Abid Rasheed S/o Abdul Rasheed R/o 44/173, Roti Wali Gali Kanpur.

NOTICE
I, Sunitha Verma spouse of Sachida Nand resident of 120/282A Lajpat Nagar Kanpur Nagar-208005 have changed my name from Sunitha Verma to Manju Verma Vide Affidavit Dated 23/01/2023 at Kanpur Nagar.

NOTICE
I have to changed my name from Noor Bano to Ashiya Bano W/o Mohd Hasim for future purpose. Add- 83 Baripur Shakha Kaushambi.

NOTICE
This is to inform all in my school records and marksheet my father name is mentioned as Vishal Pal by mistake. While his correct name is Vikki Pal. Tanish Pal S/o Vikki Pal R/o M 10-D, Sanjay Gandhi Puram, Faizabad Road, Lucknow.

NOTICE
It is for general information I have changed my name from Aftab Ahmad to Aftab Ahmad Shaikh S/o Alik Ahmed Shaikh R/o North Imamganj Fatehpur U.P (212601)

NOTICE
I, Kalyani Devi spouse of Raj Kumar Pandey resident of H/No-658 Damodar Nagar Kanpur Nagar-208027 have changed my name from Kalyani Devi to Kalyani Pandey vide affidavit dated 23.01.2023 at Kanpur Nagar.

NOTICE
I have changed my name spelling from Nadeem Akhtar to Nadeem Akhtar. Nadeem Akhtar S/o Abdul Kalam Lari R/o 102/188 Wajidpur Jajmau Kanpur 208010.

NOTICE
Be it known to all that earlier my name was Mohammad Idris which is now changed to Mohd Idris Babboo. In future I shall be known as Mohd Idris Babboo. Mohd. Idris Babboo S/o-Mohd Shafi 9-B, Sardar Patel Marg, Civil Lines, Prayagraj.

NOTICE
I, Savitri Devi spouse of late Vishnu Datt Shukla resident of 6 Manohar Vihar Kidwai Nagar Kanpur Nagar-208011 have changed my name from Savitri Devi to Savitri Shukla.

NOTICE
I, Sachinda Nand S/o Late Ram Singh Verma resident of 120/282A Lajpat Nagar Kanpur Nagar-208005 have changed my name from Sachinda Nand to Sachida Nand Verma vide affidavit dated 23.01.2023 at Kanpur Nagar.

NOTICE
I have to changed my name from Mohammad Shahid Ansari to Mohammad Shahid S/o Mohammad Ilyas for future purpose. Add- 59 Pura Manohar Das Akbarpur, Allahabad.

NOTICE
Be it known to all that earlier my name was Sana which is now changed to Sana Idris Siddiqui. In future I shall be known as Sana Idris Siddiqui. Sana Idris Siddiqui W/o- Md. Irfan 9-B, Sardar Patel Marg, Civil Lines, Prayagraj.

NOTICE
My name was written wrongly in my Army Service Corps Records documents as Ram Bilash my correct name spelling is Ram Bilas (राम बिलास). This is to be corrected in Records. Ram Bilas (Army No - JC- 642533F) R/o - Sardar Patel Nagar, Nilmatha, Lucknow -226002.

REQUIRED
Teaching Staff for B.Ed. course in Maharana Pratap College for Teachers Training, Ishwarganj, Kalyanpur, Bithoor Road, Kanpur Nagar. Post Name - H.O.D (head of department), Qualification - B.Ed., M.Ed. & Ph.D. with teaching exp. 15yrs Contact - 9140595462, Email:mpcm2011@gmail.com

NOTICE
I, Kanak Lata spouse of Rajendra Kumar Nagar resident of H/No-127/607 W Block Keshav Nagar Kanpur Nagar-208014 have changed my name from Kanak Lata to Kanak Lata Nagar vide affidavit dated 23.01.2023 at Kanpur Nagar.

Body of rape victim's brother found hanging from tree

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a shocking incident, the body of the 20-year-old brother of a Dalit rape victim was found hanging from a tree in Meerut. Earlier, the victim's family had been threatened to withdraw the case and warned of dire consequences.

The girl was gang-raped by three men, allegedly including the husband of the incumbent pradhan of Aurangabad village in Bhawanpur, six months ago. The victim's father said, "My daughter was raped by three men in August last year. Since then, immense pressure was being put on us to withdraw the case. Two of these men are history-sheeters."

Ravikant, who runs an NGO which fights against Dalit oppression, said: "The accused were pressuring the victim's family to withdraw the case. She was gang-raped on August 27, 2022, but police took almost a month to register the FIR."

The NGO has written to the National Commission for SC/ST, saying police were not taking prompt action in the matter. "First, they took so long to register an FIR in the rape case and now, 24 hours have passed since the brother's

body was found but the police have not registered a complaint in this regard," Ravikant said.

Circle Officer (Civil Lines) Arvind Chaurasia, who has been probing the case, said: "Soon after the FIR was registered, the three accused were booked under IPC, POCSO Act and sections of SC/ST Act. Two of the three accused are already in jail. The third accused had applied for bail from the high court but the plea was rejected a week ago."

He denied any kind of inaction on the part of the police and said that if the autopsy confirmed murder, they would immediately register a case of murder against the above-named accused as well as those who executed the crime.

Meanwhile, the Etah police nabbed a man for his alleged involvement in killing his brother and latter's wife, and also for attempting to murder their son over a property dispute on Monday. The incident took place in Kotwali rural area. Reports said the throats of Jitendra and his wife Pinky were slit in broad daylight in the Srikara village (Etah) on Monday evening. Their 3-year-

old son Tanishk was also found in a critical condition. The police registered a case in this regard and started an investigation on Tuesday morning. They arrested Jitendra's brother Dharmendra alias Pankaj and his accomplice Privendra, who executed the killing.

The cops said that Dharmendra, in connivance with his friend Privendra, who runs a meat shop, murdered his brother and latter's wife. "Dharmendra paid Rs 5 lakh to Privendra even as the plan was made five days back. There is 20 bigha land, half of which on the roadside was in the possession of Jitendra. As it is worth crores of rupees, Dharmendra planned to get Jitendra's family eliminated so that he could grab the land.

The accused first stabbed Pinky to death and later hacked Jitendra. He attempted to kill his nephew Tanishk, who is battling for his life at the SN Medical College in Agra. In order to mislead the police, Dharmendra had lodged a complaint, accusing that it was a case of honour killing by Pinky's family. Pinky and Jitendra had married against the wishes of her family members four years ago.

UPSIDA to hold auction of plots for setting up of industries

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In view of the Uttar Pradesh Global Investors' Summit to be held in Lucknow in February, the Uttar Pradesh State Industrial Development Authority (UPSIDA) will hold an auction of industrial plots to allow setting up of industries by investors.

A total of 152 industrial plots in Jhansi, Hardoi, Mathura, Amethi, Mau, Ghaziabad, Kanpur Dehat, Jalaun and Hamirpur have been identified for auction. Applications have been sought after marking the plots.

UPSIDA CEO Mayur Maheshwari said that the e-auction process started at 10 am on January 31. Those interested can download the form and fill it. The last date for downloading the form, catalogue & processing fees, and EMD payment is February 9 (by 6 pm). The deadline for submitting the application is February 13 (6 pm). The industrial plot e-auction procedure will start at 10 am on February 21.

Two end lives in separate incidents

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Two persons ended their lives in separate incidents in the state capital. In the first incident reported from Chinhat on Tuesday morning, 22-year-old Pramod Kumar, who was a native of Sitapur presently living at a rented house in Herdasi Kheda, hanged himself from a tree in a nearby brick kiln. He was living with his wife and the couple were childless.

As per reports, Pramod told his wife previous night that he was going to attend nature's call. However, he did not come back. His wife and neighbours started searching for him and found him hanging from a tree around 6:30 am on Tuesday. Police were then informed about the incident.

Meanwhile in Rajendra Nagar area under Naka police station, 60-year-old Bahadur Thapa, who lived with his employer, was found hanging. He was a native of Nepal. The body was spotted by his employer's nephew Sanjeev Upadhyay.

He lodged a complaint with the Naka police. Thapa had been working with

Sanjeev's uncle for the past 35 years.

In another incident, a teenager was killed while his father sustained injuries when their bicycle was knocked down by a speeding motorcycle near Madaripur temple under Bakshi-Ka-Talab police station late on Monday evening. The deceased was identified as Anurag (16). Police said he went to a nearby petrol pump to buy diesel for his uncle around 8:30 pm. He met his father while returning and the latter sat on the carrier of the bicycle. On the way, a speeding motorcycle knocked the bicycle. The teenager died on the spot while his father was admitted to a nursing home.

THEFT

Thieves sneaked into the house of Mohammed Nafees, a resident of Ekta Nagar on Rae Bareilly Road under PGI police station, and made off with Rs 40,000 in cash and valuables worth lakhs of rupees. Nafees and his family were in Hardoi to attend a wedding on January 29. When he came back the next evening, he found the house burgled.

CITY BRIEFS



MARTYR'S DAY

The Lucknow Public Collegiate, Sharda Nagar, observed Martyr's Day on Monday. The significance of Martyr's Day, which is observed every year on January 30 to mark the death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, was shared with the students. Joint director/principal Dr Jawaid Alam Khan, officiating principal Kevin A Dacosta and head mistress Ghazala Ahmad presented a thought-provoking act which enthralled the audience. The programme concluded with a bhajan by school's music teacher Rishabh Singh.



CAMP
Career Medical College organised a free medical camp at Allunagar Diguria on Tuesday. Free medical advice and medicines were distributed to patients. Doctors from several faculties, including dental, radiology and cardiology, were present at the camp as were chairman Dr Azmat Ali, Iqbal Ali, Dr Sheetanshu, Dr Iqra Ali, Dr Sankalp and other experts.

while addressing a gathering on the occasion of 'Annual Parents' and Grandparents' Day' organised by City Montessori School, Gomti Nagar Campus I, said children should be given a congenial atmosphere at home and they should be imparted moral values for their all-round development. Earlier, Gangwar inaugurated the function by lighting the lamp of learning. Tiny-tots in colourful dresses won the hearts of their parents and grandparents with educational-cultural items.

PARENTS' DAY
Lucknow District Magistrate Suryapal Gangwar,



ESSAY COMPETITION

Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), UP regional branch, conducted its annual essay competition, 2022, at Jawahar Bhawan. As many as 64 students from 15 educational institutions participated in the competition and wrote essays in both Hindi and English. Six students from four colleges (Dayanand Kanya Inter College, Rani Laxmi Bai Memorial Inter College, The Millennium International School and La Martiniere Girls' College) won prizes. The prizes were given away by former chairman of

IIPA (UP) R Ramani. The first prize (Rs 5,000) in English was bagged by Simargun Kaur from The Millennium International School while the second (Rs 4,000) by Aadya Shankar of the same school. The third prize (Rs 3,000) went to Sanghvi Srivastava of La Martiniere Girls' College. The first prize in Hindi was given away to Suhani Tiwari of Dayanand Kanya Inter College while the second prize was bagged by Pooja Raghuvanshi of the same college. The third prize was won by Pratima Maurya of Rani Laxmi Bai Memorial School.

Stalker lands in police net

Ghaziabad (PTI): A man was arrested on Tuesday for allegedly stalking a woman and sending her a blood-stained letter with a blade enclosed within, police here said. The woman in her complaint said that the man used to bother her and ask her for money to buy a new mobile phone, police said. Later, he sent her a blood-stained letter, with a blade, and stuck it with the handle of her car.

The accused has been identified as Haider Ali Khan of Vishwakarma colony of the city. The woman lives in the same colony. According to the police, when the woman found the letter, she lodged a complaint at the Sihani Gate Police Station. In it she wrote that she was being stalked by a man from her colony for the past many days. She also said that the accused made objectionable gestures towards her and would stare at her, all that made her uneasy.

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Youths will be benefited most from UPGIS: Yogi

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

With an aim to educate youth about employment opportunities in Uttar Pradesh, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has constituted a 48-member team comprising retired IAS, IPS, IFS and educationists who will tell youth about the employment-oriented schemes and policies of the government.

The team includes 12 retired IAS officers, six IPS and IFS officers each and 24 educationists. From February 3 to 5, this team will communicate with youths in different universities, answer their queries related to employment and make them aware of the utility of the Global Investors' Summit.

In this context, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath interacted with the 48-member special team on Tuesday.

"Uttar Pradesh has presented its new identity in front of the country and the world. People's perception towards the state has changed. All of you have been witnesses to this big change, and have been co-travellers. All of you have vast experience in public life, having held important positions. Your cooperation is solicited so that our youths benefit from your experiences," the CM said.

"In 2017, the state's economy was pathetic. When we called bankers to implement the loan waiver scheme for farmers, we got discouraging results. No one received our calls. Recently, when there was a meeting with bankers and CEOs & MDs of financial institutions in Mumbai, people spontaneously expressed their eagerness to help in the development of the state," the chief minister said.



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath addressing retired IAS/IPS/IFS officers and educationists in Lucknow on Tuesday

Pioneer

"Inequality in development was a major problem in Uttar Pradesh. Eastern UP and Bundelkhand had seen very little development as compared to central UP and NCR. We have made special provisions in our policies, focusing on eastern UP and Bundelkhand. We have implemented policies to provide better connectivity, strong law and order and ease of doing business. As a result, industrial units are being established in these backward areas today. We are getting investment proposals worth lakhs of crores," the CM said.

The Uttar Pradesh Global Investors' Summit is being organ-

ised in Lucknow from February 10 to 12 to attract capital investment from the country. "This summit will pave the way for realisation of the possibilities of industrialisation in the state, but will also improve the standard of living of the common citizen of the state, strengthen the economy and create lakhs of new employment opportunities. Our youth will get the biggest benefit of this summit. Our youth will no longer be forced to migrate to other states for jobs and employment," Yogi said.

Regarding preparations for the summit, the CM said roadshows held in India and abroad in the run-up to the GIS have

seen unprecedented enthusiasm among the investors.

"In the roadshows organised in 21 cities of 16 countries, we received investment proposals worth over Rs 7.12 lakh crore. Industrialists from all over the world have expressed enthusiasm to invest in UP. This summit is going to be historic. This time all the districts are joining in organising the GIS. Before the main function on February 10-12, investors' conferences are being held in districts and investment intents worth thousands of crores of rupees are being received directly by the districts. This is unprecedented for the state of Uttar Pradesh," Yogi said.

The GIS will start on February 10. All the districts will be connected with this main function. "This time, there will be investment in all the 75 districts of the state simultaneously on one day. This programme is for the youths from local universities and colleges who will also be invited to the districts," he said.

"Continuous dialogue and interaction between government, industry and academia is vital. For this purpose, the state government is taking the cooperation of all the experienced officers and educationists," the CM said.

"Before the GIS, communi-

cation with all the youths in universities and other educational institutions will be important. While communicating, inform them about the plans for attracting huge capital investment in Uttar Pradesh through various policies of the state government. Introduce them to the schemes run by the Centre and the state government for their welfare. Address their curiosities so that more and more youths can avail the benefits of the schemes. Guide them on how this summit will be useful for their bright future," the CM said, adding students should be made aware of the ambitious plans of the government by visiting universities.

More than 20 Union ministers expected to attend UPGIS

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Lucknow is gearing up to host the UP Global Investors' Summit which will be held from February 10 to 12. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath aims to make the event a grand one and present it as an example for other states. He has set a target to raise investments worth Rs 17 lakh crore through the GIS.

The chief minister is committed to making UP not only a destination for tourists but also the growth engine of the country. More than 20 Union ministers are expected to attend the summit along with investors from around the world.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Droupadi Murmu may attend the opening and closing ceremonies. Union ministers, including Home Minister Amit Shah, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, will be attending the summit.

A roster of participants from both India and abroad is being made along with a session-by-session schedule detailing. There will be eight sessions per day, the first being the inaugural session. The rest of the sessions will be dedicated to various partnerships and industry sectors. A cultural event is also planned for the end of each day.

Union ministers will play a crucial role in the event, with Electronics and IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Irani, Tourism Minister G Kishan Reddy, and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh participating in separate sessions on the first day. Air Chief Marshal (ret'd) RK Singh Bhadauria is also expected to be part of the summit on the first day.

On the second day, many ministers and leaders are expected to attend the GIS, including Textiles Minister Piyush Goyal, Home Minister Amit Shah, and Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya.

The third and final day will be the most important, with programmes for Commerce and Industry Minister Anupriya Patel, Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur, and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, who may lead the session on industrial financing.

Separate sessions will be held for partner countries, including Singapore, the Netherlands, Denmark, Japan, the UK, and Mauritius. The sessions will convey messages to investors and will include participation from ambassadors and delegations of 11 nations.

UP to be major beneficiary of hike in ethanol blending

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh will be a major beneficiary of the hike in ethanol blending to 20 per cent with petrol in the next two years. UP is already emerging as a leader in ethanol production and blending. Presently, UP has 75 distilleries with a production capacity of 249.49 crore litres per annum. The state has become the largest producer of ethanol in the country with 10 per cent blending, the highest among all the states.

"The state government is further establishing 17 new distillery units which are expected to be commissioned in the next two years," Additional Chief Secretary, Excise and Sugar Industries, Sanjay R Bhoosreddy

said.

UP has become the largest ethanol supplier of the country. The total number of distilleries in the state is 75 with a total production capacity of 249.49 crore litres per annum. The total number of ethanol producing distilleries is 55 with a production capacity of 166.17 crore litres per annum.

Establishment of 17 new distillery units is underway and expected to be commissioned in the next two years.

Ethanol production was 42.70 crore litres in the financial year 2016-17, with an installed capacity of 87.05 crore litres of 38 distilleries, which increased to 99.31 crore litres in the year 2020-21. The installed capacity

also increased to 166.17 crore liters of 53 distilleries. Of which, 43.95 crore litres of ethanol is used in the state while 52.60 crore litres is sold outside the state.

At present, a target of 10 per cent ethanol blending has been set by the Government of India and it has to be completed during the current fiscal 2022-23. At present, the actual blending has been accomplished in the country to an average of about 8.1 per cent.

In Uttar Pradesh, the target of 10 per cent blending has already been achieved.

In view of surplus sugar diversion, 47 sugar mills diverted 7 lakh ton sugar by producing B-heavy molasses in the season 2020-21. In the present

crushing season, 58 sugar mills by B-heavy and 10 sugar mills by direct cane juice or sugar syrup are expected to divert about 10-12 lakh ton of sugar in the coming crushing season.

An increase in ethanol production will contribute to the ethanol blending programme and reduce the problem of environmental pollution as well as saving foreign currency on petroleum fuel.

The Cane Development department of Uttar Pradesh is an important department directly linked with farmers and the sugar industry is the single largest industry of the state based on agriculture.

Sugarcane is mainly grown in 45 districts of the state and its area in the state is about 27.60 lakh hectares.

3 held for duping Swiss national in Taj city

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Three persons were arrested in Agra for allegedly duping a Swiss national by selling artefacts at an inflated cost. Those arrested included the owner of an emporium at Taj Mahal eastern gate, a salesman and a tourist guide. They allegedly sold a box and a chess set made of marble for Rs 37,500 to Isabel, who was visiting the Taj Mahal.

The victim realised that she had been fleeced when she found the same artefacts being sold at a much lower price at another store. On her complaint, an FIR was registered against shopowner Haider Ali, salesman Amir and tour guide Furqan Ali under Section 420 (cheating) of IPC.

ACP of Taj security Syed Areeb Ahmed said, "During her visit to Taj Mahal on Sunday, Isabel came in touch with Furqan Ali, who persuaded her to shop at a marble and textile emporium located at the eastern gate of the monument. Salesman Amir calculated the price of the selected items as Rs 80,000. After bargaining with Haider Ali, the items were sold for Rs 37,500."

Isabel made the payment using her Visa credit card and she was informed that the items would be delivered to her address free of cost. Later, on her way to the hotel, she went to another emporium and found the same items available for Rs 4,900. After an FIR was registered in this regard, the trio were arrested and CCTV footage was recovered," the officer said.

Meanwhile, an ASI-approved tourist guide said, "Many tourists who come to Agra to visit the Taj Mahal go back home feeling cheated. Such cases have increased as a majority of tourists do not approach the police."



Administrator of the union territories of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, and Lakshadweep, Prafulla Khoda Patel paid a courtesy call to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in Lucknow on Tuesday

UP creates record by providing over 75 lakh tap water connections

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh has set a record by providing more than 75 lakh tap water connections to houses under the Namami Gange scheme. The announcement to this effect was made by Jal Shakti Minister Swatantra Dev Singh here on Tuesday.

"There was a time when this target seemed difficult but we made it possible through continuous team efforts. The battle is not over yet as we will have to maintain the momentum," he said.

As many as 75 officials, including engineers, were felicitated for their outstanding work. In his address, Agriculture Production Commissioner Manoj Kumar Singh said officials should ensure that tap connections reach inside the houses so that people can claim ownership.

Highlighting the 'Har Ghar Jal Yojana' of Jal Jeevan Mission, Principal Secretary (Namami Gange and Rural Water Supply) Anurag Srivastava said officials have maintained a good speed of providing tap water connections and it should be maintained.

A film titled 'Har Ghar Pani Khud Nigrani', based on the successful journey of two years of Jal Jeevan Mission, was also screened. The Jal Shakti minister also launched a monthly e-booklet listing the real-time success stories from the field.

In-laws booked for abetment, religious conversion bid after man found hanging

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A day after a 25-year-old man allegedly committed suicide at his house in Meerut, police booked his wife, brother-in-law and father-in-law for abetment. The deceased was identified as Dushyant Chaudhary.

Acting on a complaint lodged by the deceased's cousin, who alleged that Dushyant was being forced for religious conversion, police booked wife Farah (21), her brother Amjad (26) and their father Hanif Qureshi on Monday.

However, Farah's family rejected the conversion charge, saying the couple had been living in a rented apartment for the last three years.

"We have registered an FIR at the Nauchandi police station for abetment to suicide (IPC Section 306) against Dushyant's in-laws. The charges of forced conversion are being probed. We will take

action only after a complete inquiry. No one has been arrested so far," Deputy Superintendent of Police (Civil Lines) Arvind Kumar Chaurasia said on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, members of Hindu Jagran Manch staged a demonstration at the Nauchandi police station, demanding the arrest of Farah and her family members.

As per reports, Dushyant, who worked as a DJ, married Farah in 2020 against the wishes of their respective families. After they got married, both started living in a rented apartment and also had a son. According to Johnny Chaudhary, who filed the police complaint, his cousin Dushyant had changed his name to Faiz Qureshi and started wearing a skull cap.

"Dushyant refused to follow Islamic rituals. He was forced to accompany his wife and her family members to Deoband to convert

to Islam, but he only changed his name and started wearing a skull cap. He refused to offer namaz for which he was being tortured physically and mentally by the family members of Farah," Johnny Chaudhary alleged.

Denying the allegations, Farah's brother Amjad Qureshi said: "Three years ago when Farah told us that she was willing to marry a Hindu man, we had strongly objected to their relationship. However, they went for a court marriage in Meerut. For around a year, we had no contact with either Farah or Dushyant. Later, both of them started visiting their families. Why would we have forced him to convert three years after their marriage? Dushyant's family had refused to lodge an FIR on Sunday but his cousin reached the police station the next day."

"Dushyant had changed his name to Faiz on social media. He

used to frequently visit his family's house in Phoolbagh Colony. We are ready for the probe," Amjad added.

According to police, Dushyant had gone to meet his mother in Phoolbagh Colony on Saturday evening.

"Late in the night, he called Farah and the conversation lasted for about 40 minutes. He stayed with his family overnight. The next morning, Dushyant's body was found by his mother," the deputy SP said. Dushyant allegedly hanged himself around 4:30 am, police said, adding that his family members refused to lodge an FIR on Sunday and cremated him.

"On Monday, his cousin reached the Nauchandi police station, demanding that a case be registered for abetment to suicide. He also alleged that Dushyant was being forced to convert," a police officer said.

Indian Bank

ALLAHABAD

Zonal Office: 15/287, Mahatma Gandhi Marg, The Mall, Bada Chauraha, Kanpur U.P.-208001

POSSESSION NOTICE (Rule 8(1) for immovable Property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Indian Bank, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act-2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 12(12) read with rule 8 & 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice (details of which have been mentioned hereunder) calling upon the borrowers to repay the amount mentioned in the respective notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rules 8 & 9 of the said rules. The borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of the Indian Bank for an amount and interest & charges there on as described here in below: We draw attention to the provisions of Section 13(8) of the SARFAESI Act and the Rules framed there under which deals with borrowers rights of redemption or the securities.

S. No.	Name of the Borrowers	Name of Mortgagors	Description of the Immovable properties	Date of Demand Notice
1.	Smt. Laxmi Devi W/o Shri Arvind Kumar alias Arvind Singh	Smt. Laxmi Devi W/o Shri Arvind Kumar alias Arvind Singh	All that part & parcel of land & Building on Plot situated at Dauli Khati, Pargana & Tehsil: Tirwa, Distt. Kannauj. Area of the Property: 91.07 Sq. Mtr. (Length: East to West: 20 Ft. & North to South: 49 Ft.) Owner of the Property: Smt. Laxmi Devi, Boundaries:- North: 14 Ft. Kachcha Raasta, South: Plot of Rajendra, East: Plot of Ram Prakash, West: Plot of Smt. Ramshri	09.02.2022 30.01.2023 Rs. 5,21,644.00 (Rs. Rupees Five Lakhs Twenty One Thousand Six Hundred Forty Four Only) as on dt. 29.01.2023 with further interest wef 30.01.2023 charges and other expenses
2.	M/s Gupta Batteries (Prop. Shri Anoop Kumar Gupta S/o Late Ram Chandra Gupta)	Shri Anoop Kumar Gupta S/o Late Ram Chandra Gupta 1. Smt. Anjali Gupta W/o Shri Anoop Kumar Gupta 2. Shri Anoop Kumar Gupta S/o Late Ram Chandra Gupta	All that Part & Parcel of Land & Building situated at Plot No. 67 A (Part of Kharsa No. 43, 44, 45, 46, 47 & 52), Village: Kodar, Ward: Saadatganj, Distt. Lucknow. Area of Property: 500 Sq. Ft. Owner of Property: Shri Anoop Kumar Boundaries:- North: 15 Feet wide Road, South: Plot No. 16, East: Plot of Other Person, West: Plot No. 66	17.11.2022 27.01.2023 Rs. 15,42,407.00 (Rs. Fifteen Lakhs Forty Two Thousand Four Hundred Seven Only) as on dt. 26.01.2023 with further interest wef 27.01.2023 charges and other expenses

Date : 01.02.2023 Place: Kanpur The Authorized Officer: Indian Bank

SAVEENA ENTERPRISES PRIVATE LIMITED
(In Voluntary Liquidation)

Registered Office: 15/96, Civil Lines, Kanpur – 208001 (U.P.)
(CIN: U18101UP1992PTCO14508)

SALE NOTICE

Sale of Assets under Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016

Sale of undermentioned Assets owned by Saveena Enterprises Private Limited (In Voluntary Liquidation) forming part of Liquidation Estate by the Liquidator appointed by members of the Company at the Extraordinary General Meeting held on 14th May, 2022. The sale will be done by the undersigned through the bidding process and the last date for submission of Bid is 11th February, 2023 by 5.00 PM.

Sl. No.	Assets	Reserve Price (in Rs.)	EMD Amount (in Rs.)
1.	Block Deal of 4,18,000 Equity Shares of Rs. 10/- each of Rosewood Hospitality Private Limited (CIN: U27205UP1983PTCO06115)	Rs. 3,72,02,000/- @ Rs. 89/- per Equity share.	Rs. 37,20,200/-

Terms and conditions of bidding are as under:-

- The intending Bidders are required to deposit Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) amount either through DD / NEFT / RTGS in the Account of Saveena Enterprises Private Limited (In Voluntary Liquidation), Account No. 60420269127, Bank of Maharashtra, Main Branch, 17/3B, Meghdoot Building, The Mall, Kanpur- 208001, IFSC Code MAHB000417 or through DD drawn on any Scheduled Bank in the name of Saveena Enterprises Private Limited (In Voluntary Liquidation).
- The intending bidder should submit the evidence for EMD Deposit and Bid Application on plain paper along with self-attested copy of (1) Proof of Identification (2) Current Address Proof (3) PAN Card (4) Valid e-mail id (5) Landline / Mobile Phone Number so as to reach the office of the Liquidator or by E-mail at the address given below latest by 5.00 PM on 11th February, 2023.
- The EMD of the successful bidder shall be retained towards part sale consideration and the EMD of unsuccessful bidders, who have participated in the bidding process, shall be refunded. The EMD shall not bear any interest. The Liquidator will issue a Letter of Intent (LOI) to the successful bidder and the successful bidder shall have to deposit the balance amount (Successful Bid Amount – EMD Amount) within 10 days on issuance of the LOI by the Liquidator. Default in deposit of the balance amount by the successful bidder within the time limit as mentioned in the LOI would entail forfeiture of the entire amount deposited (EMD + Any other Amount) by the successful bidder.
- The successful bidder shall bear the applicable stamp duty / transfer charge, fees etc. in respect of the Equity shares put on sale.
- The liquidator has the absolute right to accept or reject any or all offer(s) or adjourn / postpone / cancel the bidding or withdraw the asset or any portion thereof from the bidding process at any stage without assigning any reason therefor.
- After payment of the entire sale consideration, the share certificate(s) concerning the Equity shares put on sale will be issued in the name of the successful bidder only and will not be issued in any other name.
- The sale shall be subject to the provisions of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 and regulations made thereunder.

SD/-
(SUSHIL KUMAR GUPTA)
Liquidator, Saveena Enterprises Private Limited
IBBI Regn. No. IBBI / IPA-002/IP-N00822 / 2019-2020 / 12823
Address for correspondence: 1st Floor, SGM Plaza, 8/226, Arya Nagar, Kanpur- 208002 (India)
Email ID: sushilgassociates1@gmail.com
Contact No. Mobile No.: +91 8009993888, +91 9336818408

Man ends life by hanging self

PNS ■ KANPUR

A man committed suicide by hanging himself in his house in Korari village under the Chandra Shekhar Azad University of Agriculture and Technology (CSAU&T) organised a workshop on "How to promote creativity in children" on Monday. The chief speaker Dean Student Welfare Dr Mukta Garg emphasised on role of parents in motivating them in becoming creative. She said creativity not alone led to success in studies, sports and shaping one's career but also instils confidence in children to solve problems faced by them in their daily life.

She said it was a matter of concern that parents get annoyed on constant questioning of children and added there was a great desire in them to know everything.

Garg said one of the main ways of developing creative thinking in children was to urge them to think and ask them questions like why was the sky blue?, why you don't see in dark, why a dead man floats and living man sinks etc. She said by explaining such things to them it would help them in becoming curious, thereby

spot. After primary investigation, police sent the body for an autopsy.

The maternal home of Sajan Kumari (65) of J Block, Gujaini, Kanpur, was in Dashari village under Mangalpur police station area. The marriage of Ashwani, son of Balram, of her family was on January 25 and Sajan Kumari had reached Dashari village from Kanpur on January 22 in order to attend it.

When she was returning home on Tuesday morning and crossing the DFC down track near Jhinhak railway station, she came under the wheels of a goods train going to Kanpur from Etawah which led to her killing on the spot.

On hearing about the incident, her brother Nandram and other family members rushed to the spot. Jhinhak outpost incharge Atul Gautam also reached there and after prima facie investigation sent the body for an autopsy.

He said during investigation it was observed that the woman had accidentally come under the wheels of a goods train and was killed on the spot. On receipt of autopsy report, further action will be taken in the matter, he added.

'Entrepreneurship enables new markets to develop'

PNS ■ KANPUR

Entrepreneurship enabled new markets to develop in the form of goods, services and technology. It also paved way for generating wealth and these higher earnings contributed to increased national income and tax revenues. Besides it also promoted innovation, self-reliance and generated employment opportunities. This was stated by Assistant Director MSME, KP Sheel, while addressing an MSME workshop on 'Entrepreneurship Awareness Programme' at State Leather Institute on Monday.

He said entrepreneurship programmes taught students basic life skills like problem-solving, innovative thinking, teamwork etc. He said these programmes also catered to enhance skills that adhered to contemporary situations. He said students were taught skills to adapt to the unprecedented situations. He said students also learnt about ownership and responsibility and how these concepts improved businesses.

He said entrepreneurship programmes focused on a person's constructive creativity and allowed them to use it in a variety of situations that prepared them for real-world situations. He said one of the biggest benefits of entrepreneurship programme was that they allowed an individual

express oneself freely. He said these programmes encouraged innovative ideas to deal with problematic circumstances.

Sheel said creatively working on modifying the pitch of the business model allowed in coming up with the ideal framework for a prospective business. He said the entrepreneurship programme allowed students the space to pitch their ideas to investors and professionals and work on them to prove their worth and win various awards. He said this emphasised the creativity of the individual.

Addressing the workshop acting manager, UCO Bank, Swapnil Dwivedi while speaking on the topic Mudra Standup India said the objective of Stand-Up India Scheme was to facilitate bank loans between Rs 10 lakh and Rs 1 crore to at least one Scheduled Caste (SC) or Scheduled Tribe (ST) borrower and at least one woman borrower per bank branch for setting up project.

She said the Stand-Up India Scheme provided business opportunities to the minority groups (Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes) and women entrepreneurs.

She said on the other hand, Start-Up India provided business opportunities to companies that fell in the category of start-up and may not generate adequate revenue. She



MSME workshop on 'Entrepreneurship Awareness Programme' being held on Monday.

said Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) is a scheme set up by the Government of India (GoI) through MUDRA (a subsidiary of SIDBI) that helped in facilitating micro credit up to Rs 10 lakh to small business owners.

Dwivedi said the scheme was part of an initiative by the Department of Financial

Services (DFS), Ministry of Finance to promote entrepreneurial projects. She said the scheme stated that each bank branch needed to facilitate two entrepreneurial projects on an average, one for SC/ST and one for a woman entrepreneur.

She said the RuPay debit card would be provided for the withdrawal of credit. She said

credit history of the borrower would be maintained by the bank so that the money was not used for any personal use. Rahul Srivastava, Shishir Kumar, Satyendra Singh, Yogendra Singh, Jaswant Kumar, SD Srivastava and several others were present. Besides, over 100 trainees were present on the occasion.

Dr Poonam Madan felicitated

Kanpur (PNS): The Bharat Utthan Nyas (BUN), on its fourth Foundation Day, felicitated, principal Dr Virendra Swarup Institute of Professional Studies and a prominent philanthropist, Dr Poonam Madan. She received this award for her contribution towards uplift of education among girls. She was felicitated during a function organised at Saraswati Gyan Mandir. She said it was certainly a matter of great honour that BUN had selected her for this outstanding award.

Talking to "The Pioneer", Dr Madan said, "A lot needs to be done for girls, especially in the field of education." She said true women empowerment can be ushered in successfully if women were educated and given an opportunity to serve the nation.

She said since the country was focused on women empowerment it was the duty of every citizen, especially women, to promote and motivate girls in the field of education.

Workshop on promoting creativity in children

PNS ■ KANPUR

The Manav Vikas Mahavidyalaya working under the Chandra Shekhar Azad University of Agriculture and Technology (CSAU&T) organised a workshop on "How to promote creativity in children" on Monday. The chief speaker Dean Student Welfare Dr Mukta Garg emphasised on role of parents in motivating them in becoming creative. She said creativity not alone led to success in studies, sports and shaping one's career but also instils confidence in children to solve problems faced by them in their daily life.

She said it was a matter of concern that parents get annoyed on constant questioning of children and added there was a great desire in them to know everything.

Garg said one of the main ways of developing creative thinking in children was to urge them to think and ask them questions like why was the sky blue?, why you don't see in dark, why a dead man floats and living man sinks etc. She said by explaining such things to them it would help them in becoming curious, thereby



CSAU&T organised a workshop on "How to promote creativity in children" on Monday.

enhancing their imaginative skills and inculcating problem-solving abilities.

She advised that even though there were different types of intelligence, they can be developed over time even if the child was not necessarily exhibiting the characteristics. She advised parents to make children understand there were multiple ways of solving problem. She advised parents to

trigger their creativity and said children were born curious and they wanted to know extra about anything and everything. It was thus responsibility of parents and teachers to provide interesting and relevant indications to further drive their curiosity towards the right direction. Dr Madhulika Sharma, Renu, Dr Sumedha, Suman and others spoke on the occasion.

Research writing workshop begins

PNS ■ KANPUR

Varanasi (PNS): Five-day national level workshop on 'Research Writing and Academic Integrity (RWAI-2023)' was formally inaugurated by chief guest Prof Ramesh Chand, Emeritus Professor and Advisor of University Advancement and Alumni Relations, Banaras Hindu University (BHU), at Dronacharya Karan Singh Hall, Department of Physical Education, BHU here on Tuesday. Prof. Yashwant Singh, Director, Institute of Agricultural Sciences, BHU, was the guest of honour of the inaugural session. Prof Chand highlighted the significance of review of literature process and novelty in research for academic integration. Prof Yashwant Singh also emphasised the role of information and communication networks trends and their application for more precision and accuracy in research. A total of 60 shortlisted delegates from different states of the country reported for this workshop. The dignitaries and participants were welcomed by Prof Rajiv Vyas, Head of Physical Education department, followed by a brief summary of the workshop by Dr Pradeep Singh Chahar, organising secretary of RWAI 2023. After the inaugu-

ration, workshop resource person Dr Arun Kumar Deshmukh from Institute of Management Studies (IMS), BHU delivered the session on research in the context of an existing theory, and developing a publication strategy model.

Dr Pradeep Singh Chahar informed about upcoming sessions which will begin with performing meaningful search and data handling, followed by structure of a quality research paper/thesis and citations and references including tools by Prof Bhaskar Mukherjee, Department of Library and Information Science, BHU. Prof Yogesh Upadhyay (Dean, School of Studies in Management, Jiwaji University Gwalior, MP, will also be taking a session during the workshop.

Prof T Onima Reddy conducted the inaugural programme, while the vote of thanks was delivered by Dr Linet Khakha (workshop treasurer). Prof Dilip Kumar Dureha, Prof Sushma Ghildyal, Prof BC Kapri and Dr Akhil Mehrotra (workshop advisors), Prof Abhimanyu Singh (workshop convener) and Prof Vikram Singh (workshop co-convener) were also present on the occasion.

Man axed to death over poll enmity

PNS ■ KANPUR

Following enmity in gram pradhan elections, a man was axed to death in the jungle of Karmi village of Jajmau under Gangaghat Kotwali police area of Unnao on Monday afternoon. The incident took place when he had gone to cut woods from the jungle. The assailants repeatedly attacked with an axe and killed him on the spot.

Ganeshi (45), son of late Hira Lal of Tribhuwan Kheda, had gone to cut woods from the jungle of Karmi village where the assailants axed him to death. ASP Shashi Shekhar Singh, CO City Ashutosh Kumar and Gangaghat Kotwali incharge Avaneesh Kumar Singh along with force rushed to the spot. Irate kin and villagers staged an agitation for two hours and did not allow police to take the body. On this additional force, including the Quick Response Team (QRT) from Gangaghat Kotwali and Dahi police station were called.

The kin later agreed to send the body for an autopsy on the persuasion of ASP and CO. Elder brother of the deceased Sidhnath and his wife Ram Dulari alleged that in the gram pradhan elections, as their family members did not cast votes to Daddan Singh's



Demanding early arrest of the accused kin of the deceased Ganeshi and villagers agitating along with the body at the Tribhuwan Kheda village turn.

candidate Ram Naresh, enmity cropped up between them which resulted in the killing of Ganeshi.

On the complaint of Sidhnath, police have lodged an FIR against Daddan Singh, son of Havaladar, gram pradhan of Karmi Bijlamau village Ram Naresh son of Laltu, Ankit and Amit, sons of Vishambhar, Shiva son of Pappu, Pintu son of Brijlal, Daddan Singh's nephews Akash and Ranu Singh.

Gangaghat Kotwali incharge Avaneesh Kumar Singh said Shiva had been taken into custody for quizzing while two separate police teams were deputed to nab other accused. ASP Shashi Shekhar

said raids were on to nail the absconding accused.

Late in the evening, SP Sidharth Shanker Meena also rushed to the spot and carried out investigation.

He directed the Kotwali incharge to arrest the accused soon. Villagers informed that following the election enmity, accused had also attacked deceased Ganeshi's nephew Chhotu about a year ago and caused him serious head injury. NCR of the incident was also registered at the Gangaghat Kotwali.

Deceased Ganesh was the youngest of his four brothers and is survived by elder brothers Sidhnath and Baijnath as Shiv Kumar had already died.

Mental health issues highlighted

PNS ■ KANPUR

Varanasi (PNS): Mental health among youth is a very serious problem and we have to show commitment towards bringing change in this direction by abandoning the stereotypical perception of ignoring or underestimating it. These were the views of the experts while they were speaking at the inaugural function of a workshop on mental health and life skills among youth, organised under the aegis of SIF-PSA Q Club at Arya Mahila PG College here on Tuesday.

The workshop was inaugurated by AMPGC Principal Prof Rachna Dubey. In the first session, Dr Anamika Singh introduced the participants to the background and objectives of the workshop. She said that the topic of the workshop is very relevant in today's environment. She also explained how youth and adolescents are being affected by mental health in the current environment and how we can improve their life skills. In the second session, Dr Shweta Singh, while defining health promotion, gave information about the reason for the increasing mental health problem among the youth and its treatment. In the third session, Dr Garima Gupta, the nodal officer of the programme, taught the girl students the methods of mental health promotion, control over emotions and stress management and in the last session of the day, Dr Sunita Yadav highlighted the practical principles given by psychologist Professor Eric.

'Accelerator programme offers support to early stage startups'

PNS ■ KANPUR

Indian Angel Network (IAN) and IIT Kanpur, through its technology business incubator, Startup Incubation & Innovation Centre (SIIC), have come together to launch the 'IAN-IIT Kanpur Future Tech Accelerator Programme'. This Accelerator Programme was launched at IIT Kanpur's Outreach Centre under Prof Amitabha Bandyopadhyay, co-professor-in-charge, Innovation & Incubation, IIT Kanpur.

The eight shortlisted startups for the first cohort of IAN-IIT Kanpur Future Tech Accelerator Programme had been announced — Yantram Meditech, Arthavedika Tech, ProPlant, Workers Union Support, Secure Blink, Starwinglobal Era, Arishti Info Labs, Cyber Nexa.

The 'IAN- IIT Kanpur Future Tech Accelerator Programme' is a four-six month long structured programme that will onboard the shortlisted cohort of eight startups to offer one-on-one mentoring support, investor connect, business connect and perfecting pitch decks for fundraising.

Commenting on the launch of the Accelerator Programme, Prof Bandyopadhyay, said, "This Accelerator Programme offers fundamental support to the early stage startups aimed at

making them revenue-regenerating businesses. I am positive that the shortlisted cohort will do justice to the objectives of this programme and will emerge as successful startups." He said it was a much-required intervention towards strengthening the national startup ecosystem. As a partnering institute, we look forward to its successful execution and the outcomes to achieve through it.

Rajnish Kapur, Managing Partner, IAN Fund, added, "IIT Kanpur and Indian Angel Network (IAN) are excited to announce the launch of the 'IIT Kanpur-IAN Future Tech Accelerator programme'."

He said this programme was designed to help startups understand their target market, shape their product better, improve their storytelling ability for investors and ultimately raise money up to INR 30 crore.

He said in our maiden cohort the accelerator will be working with eight companies from sectors ranging from health tech to social impact.

The partnership between IIT Kanpur and IAN brings together the expertise of one of India's leading technical institutions with the experience and resources of one of the country's most successful angel investment networks.

He said this collaboration will provide startups with

access to cutting-edge technology, industry connections and mentorship from successful entrepreneurs and investors."

Dr Nikhil Agarwal, CEO, FIRST and AIIDE-CoE, said, "I would like to give my warm congratulations to the shortlisted cohort of eight remarkable startups under the 'IAN-IIT Kanpur Accelerator Programme'. The structured programme will grant them exposure to two of the leading ecosystems in the Indian startup landscape, i.e. Indian Angel Network and IIT Kanpur. I believe this will be an amazing opportunity for them. I carry high aspirations from these startups."

Such collaborations can tremendously transform the Indian startups by helping them in their journey towards becoming successful business models."

The programme was launched on National Startup Day 2023 to commemorate the significance of the day in the rapidly evolving national startup ecosystem with the aim to support these indigenous startups towards deploying their innovative technology solutions and making those market ready. Dr Nikhil Agarwal, CEO, FIRST & AIIDE-CoE, Dr Sanchita Chaudhary, VP Business Development, SIIC, Deepak Agarwal, Consultant, SIIC and Pritish Sehgal, AVP, from IAN Fund were present.

Swachhata Pakhwada celebrated

PNS ■ KANPUR

The Swachhata Pakhwada was celebrated by all branches of Bank of India (BOI) between January 16 and 31. The BOI officials and staff took active part in the cleanliness drive in front of the bank. Besides between January 18 and 21 the message of cleanliness was spread in society by bank employees by cleaning and sweeping roads in front of the bank premises and in various streets and localities.

The BOI on January 24 distributed face masks to the poor. On Monday the Bank of India zonal office in association with the Kidwai Nagar Municipal Corporation took out a rally and spread awareness to maintain cleanliness in the surrounding areas. The senior bank officials emphasised the need for the society to be active not only on certain occasions but throughout the year especially towards cleanliness.

On the occasion Zonal Manager of Bank of India, Neeraj Tiwari, Deputy Zonal Manager Manoj Kumar Singh, Pankaj Kumar Singh and senior manager Sarvesh Singh and other officials were also present. The staff and the officials took keen interest in cleaning the area and spreading the message to the masses that it was their duty to keep their surroundings clean.

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The Bank of India observed 'Swachhata Pakhwada'.

AU ex-student develops biosensor to detect Covid-19

Prayagraj (PNS): A former student of Allahabad University (AU) has come out with a biosensor that can detect Covid-19 infection using sweat samples. Amit Dubey, who is currently a senior scientist at Quanta Calculus, Greater Noida, has claimed to have developed the world's first specific, reliable ultra-small gold nanoclusters for biomedical and biosensing applications to detect the presence of Covid-19. Detailing about the study, findings of which have been published in "Luminescence: The Journal of Biological and Chemical Luminescence," a peer-reviewed journal published by Wiley, Dubey said the biosen-

sors would be a one-step identification or sensing technique. In instances where traditional lab techniques are not readily available, biosensors have already shown that they can deliver affordable and accessible diagnoses. Ultra-small gold nanoclusters, with diameters less than 2 nm, are attracting increasing attention due to their unique size-dependent physicochemical properties, which include strong luminescence and excellent biocompatibility.

"The main component of the biosensor is ultra-small gold nanoclusters, as gold is unreactive. It means that when it comes in to contact with a substance the team wishes to

measure — for example, a potential disease biomarker present in sweat — it does not chemically alter that substance. But instead, as the ultra-small gold nanoclusters are so fine, they can provide a large surface for that biomarker to bind to, and this is where the other components of the sensor come in," said Dubey, who did his PhD from department of Bioinformatics, AU in 2016.

As a low-power laser is pointed at the ultra-small gold nanoclusters, some of the laser light is absorbed and some is reflected. Of the light reflected, most have the same energy as the incoming light. However, some incoming light loses energy to the biomarker

or other measurable substance, and the discrepancy in energy is unique to the substance in question. A sensor called a spectrometer can use this unique energy fingerprint to identify the substance. This method is known as Raman spectroscopy.

"Currently, our ultra-small gold nanocluster-based biosensors need to be finely tuned to detect specific substances, and we wish to push both the sensitivity and specificity even further," said Dubey.

"With this, we think applications like cancer target site monitoring, ideal for cancer drug delivery, or even virus detection might be possible," he said.

CS reviews progress of projects

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Chief Secretary (CS) Durga Shankar Mishra reviewed the progress of development projects being conducted in the city here on Monday. He asked the Traffic department to hire a traffic agency expert so that he could suggest a permanent solution to get rid of the traffic problem in the city. In the meeting, ACP (Traffic) gave details about the jam problem through a presentation pinpointing choke points, construction of illegal buildings and running bus stands at many places.

In the review of the ropeway project, Mishra was informed by the concerned organisation that a total of five stations will be built between Varanasi Cantt to Godowlia, which will have 30 towers. A total expenditure of Rs 553 crore is estimated on the project. Varanasi Development Authority (VDA) informed that work is going on for utility shifting of the budget. The CS said that this is a time-bound project, so attention should be paid to complete its work expeditiously.

While reviewing the sewerage system, he was informed by the Chief Engineer (Jal Nigam) that at present the areas of trans-Varuna are also being included and 84 new wards have been added to the new delimitation. It was informed by the Jalkal department that seven Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) are currently working in the city. Mishra directed to increase water supply connection which is low relative to the population by simplifying the process so that people do not face unnecessary problems. The CS also instructed the Electricity department to increase its connections by 25 percent.

Mishra also discussed the proposed bridges for smooth



CS DS Mishra reviewing progress of development works in Varanasi on Monday.

Pioneer

traffic in the city which included four-lane elevated road from Ring Road to Sarnath railway station via Kasturba Gandhi Vidyalaya, two-lane elevated road from Chandpur crossing to Ring Road via Lohta Bazar, construction of Railway Over Bridge (ROB) at Bhullanpur intersection on Cantt-Lahartara-Mohansarai road, two-lane elevated road from Sunderpur to Ravidas Park on Assi river, overhead bridge from Lahartara intersection to Naria tri-junction etc. The Public Works Department (PWS) officers informed that widening of four roads inside the city and two roads outside has been proposed which include Sampurnanand-Maldahiya-Loha Mandi road, Sjgra crossing to Gurdham via Rathayatra-Kamchha Marg and Rathayatra to Mahmoorganj, Manduadih, and Mudhaila Marg.

In the meeting, the District Magistrate (DM) S Rajalingam

informed about the action taken on several points especially relating to the ghats which included proper cleanliness, changing rooms, sign boards and proper arrangements for the security of the devotees etc. He also informed about the progress related to setting up information centres for tourists at Kashi Vishwanath temple and railway station.

In the meeting the CS directed the police to install fire safety equipment in the hotels and fulfill all the standards. Preparations for Sant Ravidas Jayanti, to be celebrated on February 5, were also reviewed. Mishra also saw the presentation on the projects like langar hall, museum, park etc at Sant Ravidas Mandir. He was informed in detail by VDA Vice Chairman Abhishek Goyal about the progress of Buddha Circuit, which is important from the point of view of tourism. Goyal said that

the work of drainage, sewerage and underground cabling is in progress and expressed hope that all the work would be completed by July.

Appreciating the project, the CS directed to complete it on time and review it every week. The VDA VC also informed about the new bus stands to be built outside the city. In reply, the CS suggested that instead of building bus stands all around the city, it should be built only on two sides. Along with this, the new divisional office building was also discussed.

Divisional Commissioner (DC) Kaushal Raj Sharma, ADG Ram Kumar, Additional Police Commissioner Santosh Singh, Municipal Commissioner Pranay Singh and senior officers of Municipal Corporation, Jal Kal, Jal Nigam, PWD, Power, Railways and Traffic Police departments were also present in the meeting.

Woman murdered in Magh Mela township

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

In a shocking incident, a woman was murdered in the Magh Mela area on Monday night. Her face was badly bruised. The killer also gouged out one eye with the stick. The woman was staying in a live-in with her lover, she had come here only 10 days ago. Manish Yadav, who used to live with her, is accused of murder. After committing the crime, he fled from the spot. Daraganj police launched a manhunt but failed to catch hold of the accused.

It is being said that a dispute between the two took place over money. Enraged by this, the lover hit her on the head with a sharp weapon. The witness of the incident is the woman's seven-year-old daughter. She says that the mother's friend beat her to death with a stick.

Sunita Verma (45) was originally a resident of village Dugna Kurmian, Mauganj, Rewa (MP). Sunita's husband Achhelal Verma died in a road accident in 2020. He is

survived by four children. In whom there are two sons and two daughters. The youngest daughter is Damini (7). She was living with her mother. Rest of the children are living in Rewa only.

Sunita had come to Prayagraj with her daughter 10 days back. Here, she was staying at Magh Mela area under Daraganj Kotwali police station. Manish Yadav, a resident of Karari town of Kaushambi district, also lived with her. Both used to work as labourers.

It is being said that on Monday night at around 12.30, Manish came after drinking alcohol and started quarrelling with Sunita. The dispute between the two increased. After this Manish started beating Sunita with a stick. At that time daughter Damini was sleeping. When she woke up after hearing her mother's scream, she too got scared.

Damini ran to save her mother, but Manish pushed her away. Sunita fell on the ground after getting injured. After this Manish crushed

her face. Then burst his eyes. Due to this, Sunita died on the spot.

Chowkidar Ram Kripal told the police that at around two o'clock in the night, the sound of shouting was heard. He then told the policemen posted in the Mela about the quarrel between husband and wife. The police reached within about 10 minutes and saw on the spot that blood was coming out of the woman's head. A baby girl was crying nearby. When the Daraganj police reached the spot, the woman was lying in a pool of blood. Police took the woman to SRN Hospital, where doctors declared her dead.

ACP Daraganj Astha Jaiswal interrogated Damini, the daughter of the deceased. Damini told him that a dispute between her mother and Manish occurred over money. "Mother and Manish uncle used to work as laborers in Neela city. Manish used to snatch whatever money her mother used to bring. Then he used to come home after drinking alcohol with the same money. He used to beat

my mother too. Tomorrow we are going to go to Rewa again. Mummy didn't have money, so she asked Manish uncle for money. But he was not giving. After this he got angry and started beating the mother", she added.

ACP Aastha Jaiswal said that information has been given to all the three children of Sunita living in Rewa. The body has been sent for post-mortem. Her mother was killed in front of her daughter, which is condemnable. It is being investigated. Soon the accused will be arrested.

Police investigation revealed that the accused Manish Yadav used to do private work while living in Surat. On the other hand, after the death of her husband, Sunita also went to Surat to work with her parents. It was there that both of them met.

From there both came closer. Then both started living together. On January 18 itself, Manish had come to Prayagraj with Sunita. Both were working as laborers while staying in the parade in the Magh Mela area.

AIMIM leader summoned for chanting 'Bharat Mata ki Jai'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

All India Majlis Ittehadul Muslimin (AIMIM) party leader Asaduddin Owaisi has been against the slogan of 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai' since the beginning. He has clearly said many times in his speeches that even if someone puts a knife to his neck, then he will not say 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai'. But something strange happened in Prayagraj on the occasion of Republic Day on January 26 that has become a topic for dis-

ussion in Owaisi's party till Hyderabad. AIMIM's City unit President Faisal Warsi started raising slogans of Bharat Mata Ki Jai. Now this video is going viral in social media.

On January 26, the tricolor was hoisted by all political parties including the BJP on Republic Day. Republic Day was being celebrated with pomp and great fanfare. In this episode, the Republic Day program was organized with great pomp in Prayagraj by Owaisi's party. But in the meantime,

after the national anthem, AIMIM's City unit President Faisal Warsi started raising slogans of Bharat Mata Ki Jai.

AIMIM workers present in the program supported Faizal Warsi and raised the slogan of Bharat Mata Ki Jai. During this, someone recorded the whole incident. The whole thing reached the party's biggest leader Asaduddin Owaisi via Prayagraj, after which he became enraged. Strong displeasure has been expressed on this move by him.

AIMIM has summoned City Unit President Faizal Warsi in the matter. He has been asked why he raised the slogan of 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai' by going against what Owaisi and the entire party are against, because it is against the ideology of the party.

There has been a stir in AIMIM regarding the incident. According to party sources, Owaisi can issue an order to remove the city unit President of Prayagraj from the post at any time.

Protect children from worm infection: DM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

For the successful conduct of the National Deworming Campaign, a meeting of the District Task Force was held under the chairmanship of District Magistrate (DM) S Rajalingam here on Monday. The DM directed the Health, Education, Panchayat Raj and Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) departments that under the National Deworming Day campaign running from February 10 to February 15, boys, girls and adolescents aged between one and 19 years should be fed medicines to prevent worm infection.

The DM said that to make the campaign 100 per cent successful, ICDS, Education and Panchayati Raj departments along with the Health department will have to work in coordination with each other. He directed the District Inspector of Schools (DIOS) and Basic Shiksha Adhikari (BSA) to hold a meeting with the headmasters and nodal teachers of government, private and aided schools, giving information about this programme



DM S Rajalingam holding a meeting on deworming campaign in Varanasi on Monday.

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and ensuring the presence of all children on the scheduled dates. All the departments were directed to re-examine the microplan and 100 percent children should be enrolled, he added.

Deputy Chief Medical Officer Dr HC Maurya said that the National Deworming Day campaign will be launched in urban and rural

areas to protect about 16 lakh children aged from one to 19. He informed that on February 10, Albendazole tablets would be administered under the campaign at identified schools and colleges as well as Anganwadi centres in the district. After this, mop-up rounds will be held in schools and Anganwadi centres from July 13 to 15. Special care will be

taken of the Covid-19 guidelines during the campaign, he added.

District programme officer, DIOS, BSA, Deputy CMO and urban nodal officers, superintendents and in-charge medical officers of all block PHCs/CHCs, DHEIO, DCPM, urban health coordinator and other departmental officers were present in this meeting.

Youth stabbed to death in Jhunsi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

In a sensational incident, a 30-year-old youth was stabbed to death with an immersion rod in Prayagraj's Jhunsi police station area. He was a resident of Chowk. For the past several days, due to the jam situation in the city, he was not going home and was staying at his shop near Tiwari Market at night.

On Monday night, Ankit Agarwal had a liquor party with his friends. In the meantime a dispute over some unknown issue took place in the liquor party. After this, a friend killed him by hitting him on the head with an immersion rod. On the receipt of information police reached the spot

and launched the investigation. The accused are absconding.

Shoe trader Ankit Aggarwal had a liquor party with his friends last night at Tiwari Market located on Chhatnag Road in Jhunsi police station area. Neither the police nor the family members know anything about who the friends were and why he was murdered. Police are probing the reason behind the murder of Ankit son of RK Aggarwal, resident of Pan Dariba Chowk.

At present, according to the police, Ankit Agarwal was not going to his home for the last 2 days due to the traffic jam in the city. He was stuck at his shop. On the night of January 30, he had a liquor party with his friends. At the same time,

there was a quarrel among themselves, in which a fight also took place between them. In the fight, a boy hit Ankit Aggarwal on the head with an immersion rod resulting in his head injuries and he slumped on the ground bleeding profusely. Seeing his head bleeding and unconscious, his friends ran away.

In the rush, they forgot to put the latch outside in the shop. The door remained open. In the morning the family members started calling Ankit. His phone was not receiving. When they could not talk to him, the family members got upset. After this, Ravi, the servant working in the shop, was called. Ravi went to the godown from his house. When

Ravi saw the inside scene, he was shell-shocked. Ankit's dead body was lying bleeding on the ground. There were liquor bottles in the room. Used utensils were also lying there. Many used plates and glasses were also lying there. The goods of the shop were also scattered. It is believed that there must have been a scuffle between the attackers and Ankit earlier. It is estimated from this fact that many people were involved in the liquor party.

When Ravi informed the family members, a pall of gloom prevailed over Ankit's house. The family members are inconsolable. Police has sent the dead body for postmortem and are now investigating the matter.

Deworming medicines to be given on Feb 10

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Medicine to remove worms from the stomach will be given from one to 19 years of age on February 10 in Prayagraj. For this, preparations are being made by the Health Department. CMO Dr. Ashu Pandey has given necessary guidelines for the successful operation of the National Deworming Program (medicine to remove worms from the stomach).

Additional Chief Medical Officer and Nodal Officer of RBSK, Dr. Nisha Sonkar said that by running a comprehensive campaign in school-college and Anganwadi centers, it is

The CMO said that February 10 is being celebrated as National Deworming Day in the district. In which all the children and teenagers of one to 19 years of age will be given Albendazole free of cost keeping in mind the Covid protocol.

Children up to 1-2 years will be fed 1/2 tablet and 01

being told by Asha and Anganwadi that the mental and physical development is hindered due to worm infection in children and adolescents. Consumption of worm medicine will increase the child's immunity and improve their health. He informed that the mop-up round will be conducted from February 13 to 15. Those left out in the mop-up round will be given medicine.

Children up to 1-2 years will be fed 1/2 tablet and 01

tablet above 02 years. Small children will be fed by grinding the medicine / making powder. For people of 3 to 19 years of age, the whole tablet is to be chewed and fed. Only after this, water has to be consumed. Keep in mind that Anganwadi, teachers should feed medicine to all the children in their presence. Consume Albendazole tablet only after food. In any adverse situation, immediately inform on 108, added Dr Sonkar.

Pre-Budget discussion organised

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

A pre-budget discussion was organised on Tuesday under the aegis of Sparsh, a student forum of the Commerce department and Voice of Commerce at DAV PG College here on Tuesday. The students openly expressed their expectations and provisions regarding the upcoming General Budget-2023. First prize winner of M Com student Priyanshu Baranwal said that we need such a budget in which ample opportunities for disinvestment are available and the Income Tax slab rate should also be increased. He also said that there is a need to increase the budget in the education sector from 3.1 to 6 per cent.

Second prize winner MCom student Siddharth Shekhar said that the subsidy of 12.5 per cent on food and fertilisers during the corona period should be reduced now so that the fiscal deficit of the government can be reduced. On the other hand, Zaira Khatoun, who stood third, said that the government should increase the budget of the defence sector, apart from



A pre-Budget discussion being held at DAV College in Varanasi on Tuesday.

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this provision should be made in the budget to promote investment in the agriculture sector. Krishna Yaduvanshi, Himanshu Rai and Aniket Kumar received consolation prizes.

Vice Principal Dr Rahul and head of Commerce department Dr Vijay Nath Dubey gave certificates to the winners. Dr Priyanka Behl was the coordinator of the function while jury members

were Dr Siddharth Singh and Dr Shantanu Saurabh. Dr Sanjay Kumar Shah, Dr Anand Singh, Dr Richa Gupta, Dr Rashmi Tripathi, Dr Shruti Agarwal, Mitin Ahuja etc were present.

Meanwhile, under the aegis of the Sanskrit department of the college, a student promotion programme was organised for the newly enrolled students. The chief guest was Dr Vishwanath

Dhital of IIT BHU who said that the students should have a strong will to touch even the moon. This college period of life is a golden opportunity for students in which they can incorporate many positive aspects in their mind," he said, adding that the students should not study only to get success, to get a job, but to become qualified. Students have infinite possibilities in Sanskrit, just need to be patient and persistent, he added. On the occasion, the classes of Vedic Mathematics course conducted by the Sanskrit department were also started. Aditya Raj Pathak apprised the students about Vedic Mathematics. The programme was presided over by the Head of Sanskrit department Prof. Mishrilal. Prof. Poonam Singh introduced the subject while Dr Deepak Kumar Sharma conducted the function and the vote of thanks was proposed by Dr Tripur Sundari. Important among those who were also present were Dr Rakesh Kumar Dwivedi, Dr Habibullah, Dr Sanjay Kumar Singh, Dr Sanjay Singh, Dr Shashikant, Dr Sanjeev and Dr Vishrut.

Legal awareness camp organised

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

Leprosy was not a curse for life but was a disease which was curable with treatment. These views were expressed by secretary District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) and Additional District Judge Lal Babu Yadav in a legal awareness camp organised at Kantit Urs Mela on Monday.

He said it is the need of hour that we make the people aware to get rid of apprehensions and adopt medical methods to get cure. The responsibility of the Health department was more important in that work as medical personnel were spread in every corner.

DLSA secretary appealed to people to become aware of

their rights and facilities provided by the government. He said Lok Adalats are the way to settle cases through mutual understandings between the parties and without any cost. He appealed to parties to take part in Lok Adalat which was going to be held on February 11 at civil court campus. He said through the DLSA lawyers could be made available without any cost to those who were financially weak and were not in a position to engage any lawyer. The camp was formally inaugurated with the lighting of the ceremonial lamp jointly by secretary DLSA and CMO Dr Rajendra Prasad. Haji Amanullah Ansari, Suresh Tripathi, Deepak Srivastava and others worked for the suc-

cess of the camp.

SEIZED: Four tractors and one JCB have been seized under the action against illegal mining of clay on Monday. The DM on receiving a complaint about illegal mining of clay under Chunar tehsil area she asked the officials concerned for action. ADM(F&R) Shiv Pratap Shukla formed a team which raided Visheshapur village under Adalhat police station where illegal mining was being done. The team took the four tractors and one JCB in possession and handed them over to the Adalhat police station. As per Mines Officer Ashish Chaudhary further action was in process and action against illegal mining will continue as per DM's direc-

tion.

SEMINAR: A seminar to mark the death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi was organised at Smart Kids Bal Vani Evam Bal Niketan on Monday. Speaking at the theme 'Doodh Piyo Daru Chhodo' as the chief guest Yoganand Giri Mahant of Burhenath temple said that it will be the real tribute to Gandhi on his death anniversary if we could act on the lessons he taught us. He praised PM Narendra Modi for following the path shown by Gandhi by launching the sanitation drive.

Roshani Khan also spoke on the occasion. The seminar concluded with Santosh Srivastava proposing the vote of thanks.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Pretty picture

Economic Survey 2022-23 is quite bullish on the future, and the optimism is grounded in reality

The GDP growth rate in 2023-24 may be lower than that in the current fiscal but happy days are on the horizon. This is the message that the 400-plus pages of Economic Survey 2022-23 tend to convey. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman tabled the survey in Parliament on Tuesday. It goes on to list the grounds for its upbeat message. Even as the survey pegs the growth rate at 6.5 per cent for 2023-24, as compared to 7 per cent in 2022-23 and 8.7 per cent in the last fiscal, it claims that India's recovery from the pandemic was relatively quick, and growth in the upcoming year will be supported by solid domestic demand and a pickup in capital investment. The current growth trajectory, it correctly says, will be supported by multiple structural changes that have been implemented over the past few years (read since 2014). The survey suggests that the "financial system stress"—as reflected in non-performing assets, low credit growth, and declining growth rates of capital formation—was caused by excessive lending in the pre-2014 period. Those stress years are behind us, just like the period of recovery from the pandemic-induced slowdown. Chief Economic Advisor Venkatraman Anantha Nageswaran sees similarity in the situation in the last few years to the one pertaining in the 1998-2002 period. Over two decades ago, transformative reforms were undertaken by the government, but the growth returns were due to temporary shocks in the economy. Once these shocks faded, the structural reforms paid growth dividends from 2003.

His optimism is grounded not just in history but also in reality. In general, he has presented a rosy picture in the survey: private consumption in the first half of 2022-23 was highest after FY15; capital expenditure by the Central government has crowded in the private capex, thus strengthening the balance sheets of corporations; credit growth in the MSME sector is good; the Indian rupee performed well compared to other emerging market economies in April-December 2022; the urban unemployment rate has declined; retail inflation has been reined in; direct tax collections for the period April-November 2022 were buoyant; with improved and healthier balance sheets, a fresh credit cycle has already begun, apparent from the double-digit growth in bank credit over the past months. The picture, however, doesn't look very pretty when we closely look at manufacturing—the second largest employment generating sector. The survey does admit that foreign direct investment "in the manufacturing sector moderated in the first half of FY23," but then goes on to gloss the dip by saying that "inflows stayed well above the pre-pandemic levels, driven by structural reforms and measures improving the ease of doing business." The fact is that in the January-November 2022 period, actual industrial investment was over 43 per cent lower than that in the same period in 2021. On the whole, however, the survey presents a realistic picture.

PICTALK

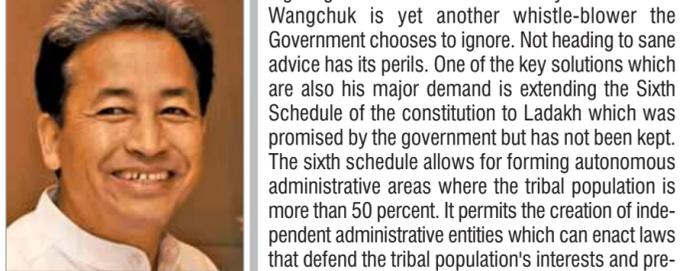


Labourers work at a construction site during sunset, in Jalandhar

All is not well in Ladakh

Unfortunately, Sonam Wangchuk, the man with the mission to save Ladakh was put under house arrest

Sonam Wangchuk, the 57-year-old engineer who inspired the Bollywood blockbuster 'three idiots' was on a five-day fast in Ladakh. He began his fast on January 26 to demand that the Government needs to wake up and stop activities going on in the region and implement the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution as promised. Wangchuk is a man with a mission to save Ladakh from corporate greed. He also sent a message to the Prime Minister saying "all is not well in Ladakh". However, the administration took his hunger strike as a threat and put him under house arrest. What Wangchuk is saying makes a lot of sense as we are seeing catastrophe after catastrophe in the Himalayas and if the mindless construction in the name of development does not stop we may be heading for a calamity sooner than later. Wangchuk contends that the Himalayan environment is fragile and meddling with it would cause the melting of glaciers which might have devastating long-term effects for the country.



Wangchuk is yet another whistle-blower the Government chooses to ignore. Not heading to sane advice has its perils. One of the key solutions which are also his major demand is extending the Sixth Schedule of the constitution to Ladakh which was promised by the government but has not been kept. The sixth schedule allows for forming autonomous administrative areas where the tribal population is more than 50 percent. It permits the creation of independent administrative entities which can enact laws that defend the tribal population's interests and preserve their cultural identity. The Govt's approach to ignoring Wangchuk's concerns and silencing his voice is not good for the Government or the people of Ladakh. Besides the movement is building up in Ladakh which can snowball into major unrest. Former MP Thupstan Chhewang organized a grand rally against the "failure of the government to protect the identity and culture of Ladakh". So now it is becoming a matter of Ladakhi identity and existential issues that the Government must address. Wangchuk is going to repeat his hunger strike soon. Given the support he is getting it would become a major issue. The safeguards Ladakh enjoyed earlier have been left invalid after the abrogation of Article 370. The government must keep its word and fulfill its promise. What Wangchuk and other protesters are demanding is in the interest of the country at large.

Wrestlers' fight for justice

Wrestlers are up in arms against the Wrestling Federation of India for harassment, sexual misconduct and irregularities. The Govt must act.



BRIJENDER SINGH PANWAR

The credit for dissolving the recent controversy, though temporarily, where several top-based World and Olympic medalist wrestlers including Vinesh Phogat, Bajrang Punia, and Sakshi Malik staged a protest at New Delhi to probe the allegations of sexual harassment against the chief of the World Federation of India (WFI), Brij Bhushan Sharan, goes to the Union Sports Minister, Anurag Thakur and his team. As the sequence of incidents indicates on January 18, 2023, the wrestlers began the protest at Jantar Mantar, on the same day, the Sports Ministry took swift action by sending a notice to WFI seeking an explanation, met wrestlers and assured them of a free and fair probe leading to calling off the protest. On January 20, WFI replied to the notice rejecting all allegations, and on January 21, the Sports Ministry asked the Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh and WFI Executive Committee to abstain from attending to the activities of the Federation. Although the tussle is far from over, some top wrestlers are upset with the way dharana ended—neither did their demand of disbanding WFI accepted nor did Singh resign as President but merely "stepped aside"—they have taken the matter to the next level and sought a meeting with the Union Home Minister, Amit Shah. All said and done, the issue which would have boomeranged into a major crisis has been contained at an initial level.

The Sports Minister formulated the Oversight Committee under the chairmanship of six-time world champion and Olympic medalist boxer and head of the Indian Olympic Association, M.C.Mary Kom consists of Olympic medalist wrestler Yogeshwar Dutt, Archer Dola Banerjee, former shuttler Alknanda Ashok, Indian Weightlifting Federation President, Sahdev Yadav, advocates Talish Ray and Shlok Chandra. Till that time, the Committee will carry out the day-to-day affairs of WFI. The Committee will probe the allegations of sexual misconduct,



harassment and intimidation, financial irregularities, and administrative lapses and submit its reports within a month. However, the President of WFI, Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, BJP MP from Kaiserganj, Uttar Pradesh—having criminal cases pending against him refused to resign claiming that the protest was a part of a "larger conspiracy to malign and defame him".

Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh (66), a law graduate, has been a controversial figure in the politics of Uttar Pradesh for more than three decades. He emerged as "bahubali" during the phase of unstable political circumstances in UP during the 1990s. He developed a network of supporters not only from its Rajput community but also from other castes to win the Lok Sabha election from Gonda in 1991 on a BJP ticket. He was named as an accused in the Babri demolition case. He was elected to the Lok Sabha from Balrampur on a BJP ticket in 2004. Atal Bihari Vajpayee was not happy with him, so he left BJP to win the election on an SP ticket in 2009. Again, joined BJP and won the Lok Sabha elections in 2013 and 2019. As per his 2019 election affidavit, the MP faces four criminal cases including serious charges of robbery and attempt to mur-



UNDOUBTEDLY, IT'S COURAGEOUS ON THE PART OF THE WRESTLERS TO CONFRONT A POWERFUL SIX-TERM MP AND PRESIDENT OF WFI WHO HAS BEEN DOMINATING THE GAME OF WRESTLING FOR ALMOST TEN YEARS

der, and was charged under the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Prevention Act for allegedly sheltering shooters of a notorious Uttar Pradesh gang, although later acquitted by the court. In 1993, he was accused of attacking a former State Minister and another strongman Vinod Kumar Singh alias Pandit Singh, his competitor for three decades. In this case, also, he was acquitted by the court. He has been in news for criticizing Swami Ramdev, courting controversies by threatening MNS President, Raj Thackeray if the latter visited Ayodhya.

Undoubtedly, it's courageous on the part of the wrestlers to confront a powerful six-term MP and President of WFI who has been dominating the game of wrestling for almost ten years. Phogat and her wrestler colleagues took up the cause by voicing fear for their lives for taking on "powerful people", speaking on behalf of about 20 girls who have been "exploited in the national camps over the past 10 years" and claiming to have their recordings. She came forward to represent their cause because these upcoming wrestlers come from poor families and are too scared to fight back because they are not "powerful".

However, this case is not

in isolation. At least two recent cases of similar nature come to mind. In June 2021, the sexual misconduct of a Tamil Nadu sports academy coach, P. Nagarajan came to light when a teenage athlete accused him of sexual exploitation from 2013 to 2020 and seven more women who trained under him during his three-decade career accused him of some kind of sexual exploitation. In June last year, the incident of cycling coach R.K. Sharma was in the public domain for sexually harassing a top female cyclist by threatening to derail her career.

It is a matter of pity that India's top-ranking self-made wrestlers come from ordinary families, who have made it big by toiling on the mats and on the ground, following grueling schedules for years to win medals for the country in the Olympics, Commonwealth, and Asian games are forced to sit on dharna in the bitter cold of the national capital. The concerned authorities should act fast to regain the confidence of our "shining stars" who bring pride to our nation before it is too late.

(The writer is a senior journalist and Chairman of the Panwar Group of Institutions, Solan, Himachal Pradesh. The views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

BHARAT JODO YATRA ENDS

Sir — The Bharat Jodo Yatra of Rahul Gandhi finally met the desired end as the Congress leaders successfully unfurl the National Flag at Lal Chowk of Jammu and Kashmir, exactly 75 years after Pt Nehru himself did so. The yatra has finally reached its wrapping point after collecting baggage of experience and understanding about India which is in its Amrit Kaal. The yatra is extremely rigorous to cover the length and breadth of the Indian territory on foot, thanks to the arrangements and technology that is much more popular than what earlier Congress leaders do so far. Of course, this Yatra is full of experiences and will definitely revamp the way people think about Congress in general and Rahul Gandhi in particular.

But now that this journey is over, Congress has surely picked many unimaginable lessons from this journey of discovering New India which had new vigor, we can expect some new changes to be applied in the existing form of Congress for its overhaul. Though it is quite early to say that Congress will change after this Yatra, yes one thing is very sure this yatra will definitely have long-term effects on the Congress' actual image and this yatra will be a part of the golden history of Congress' evolution in Modern India.

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

TUSSLE ENDS

Sir — Since all is well that ends well, it is a happy augury to note that the tussle between the Government and the Governor of Telangana has taken a reprieve through the withdrawal of the case from the High Court by the former. It is always better if the grey relationship between the two remains hassle-free. People expect both to settle any differences diplomatically without both taking any political advantage from their respective sides. The bottom line is that the administration and service to people should not be affected by any skirmish between two constitutional heads.

Investigate Adani group



The Shiv Sena faction led by Uddhav Thackeray, Congress, and all the other opposition parties on Monday demanded a SEBI investigation into alleged stock manipulation by the Adani group and "over exposure" of LIC and SBI funds in shares of the group companies. It also demanded a discussion on the issues relat-

ed to the Adani group flagged in a report of the US-based short seller Hindenburg Research which has accused it of several wrongdoings such as stock manipulation and fraud. At an all-party meeting convened by the government on the eve of the Budget Session of Parliament, SEBI's investigation into charges of stock over-pricing and over-exposure of SBI and LIC must be concluded and discussed. Several opposition parties on Monday raised the Adani issue and the conduct of governors in some states ruled by them at the all-party meeting as the government asserted it was willing to discuss every matter allowed by rules and sought their cooperation. With this, all is not well for the Adani group in the coming days.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

When the Assembly begins as per convention, people would love to see the Governor sharing bonhomie in the public interest as much as they would love the reciprocity from their favorite Chief Minister.

D. Nagarjuna | Hyderabad

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Sir — The Budget session of Parliament begins with the President Droupadi Murmu addressing a joint session, in the Parliament's Central Hall on the first day of the budget session every year. In her speech it's heartening to know that not only a medical college has come up almost every month in India, but also two colleges have been established in the country every day. Side by side one university has been established every week, as a result in the last eight years more than 300 new universities have been added. By this expansion of education in the country one has to recall the great saint Swami Vivekananda, who said: "We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded, and by which one can stand one's own feet." By this way the country is trying to fulfill Vivekananda's

dream, but where is his 'one can stand one's own feet'? We are proudly pats in our back as: India is now the fifth largest economy in the world, and the President in her speech said: A Bharat which has no poverty and where the middle class is also prosperous, but in reality 83 crore (nearly two-thirds) of our population covered under free ration and the way unemployment (there was nothing on unemployment in President's address) rises in the country, then what's the value of this education? President Murmu said that women empowerment has been at the core of all schemes introduced by the central government, but may be debatable. Even that one wants to know from the Modi government that why India ranks 144 out of 193 countries in the representation of women in parliament? Why was The Women's Reservation Bill first introduced in 1996 by the Deve Gowda government, still in the store room in the Parliament? Because they want to prove the country is still dominated by men?

Bidyut kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

SOUND BITE

I invite you to Visakhapatnam, which is going to be our capital in the days to come. I myself will also be shifting to Visakhapatnam in the months to come.



Andhra Pradesh CM — YS Jagan Reddy

This is no less than an attack on Pakistan. I have no doubt terrorism is our foremost national security

challenge. Pakistan Prime Minister — Shehbaz Sharif

If an unknown guy called Yash can do Rs 500 crore business (with KGF Chapter 2), (then) Shah Rukh Khan doing a 500-crore business is not a big deal.



Filmmaker — Ram Gopal Varma

Today, with immense gratitude and humility, I announce my retirement from all forms of international cricket.

Indian cricketer — Murai Vijay

I announced a five-day climate fast to save and safeguard the Himalayas, the glaciers, Ladakh, and its people.



Environment activist — Sonam Wangchuk

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



FIRST COLUMN

VILLAGE LIFE IN VEIL IN UTTARAKHAND

Women still have to cover themselves in villages



KUMARI KAVITA

"To be veiled is a matter of honor, and the girls who follow it are cultured," said Paruli Devi, an elderly woman from Lamchula village in Bageshwar district in Uttarakhand. She believes that for women and girls to remain 'cultured' and maintain 'respect' for themselves, it is significant to practice the purdah system.

Parul is not the only one to affirm this notion, as two-thirds of rural women (42 per cent) practise purdah, either as victims of this age-old practice or as a symbol of respect. On the other hand, Rekha and Nisha, two adolescent girls from the same village, questioned the veil culture in today's world. But they are aware of how it is given utmost importance in rural environments and how far they will be spared from following it.

"The rural society compels women and girls to practice the veil system by relating it to respect. But we believe women will receive respect when there is equality between men and women and the provision of equal opportunities," the duo said.

"Because of the veil system, women cannot express themselves freely. The practice does not provide any respect to women. On the contrary, it affects their mental health, and should be rooted out of society," they further added.



Although several measures have been taken by the government to curb the purdah system, the practice still persists. According to a Lokniti study conducted in 2019 under the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) in 11 states among 6,348 women aged 18 and older, two out of every five Indian women practice purdah.

Focusing on how purdah has been made compulsory for women mostly in rural areas, Sita Devi, the sarpanch of the village, highlighted the difficulties, saying "whenever a woman goes out of the house, it has been made mandatory for her to cover her head. By any chance if she forgets to cover, the society questions her character. The entire dignity and honour of our families are entrusted to our shoulders, and these practices are the means to retain them."

According to her, women need to come out collectively and speak out against these malpractices. Only then, women will be able to get their rights. The purdah system allows men to exert powerful control over women and their bodies. Often, when women revolt against these practices, they are categorised as disrespectful and ill-mannered. This leads to several forms of violence, be they physical or mental.

Bimla Devi, an Anganwadi worker from the village, also spoke on the same lines, explaining how not following the practice often leads to mental harassment and sometimes physical violence. Women are bound to follow it even if they don't want to, Neelam Grundy, a social worker from the area, said, while adding that married women are blamed for not having a cultured upbringing if they believe in doing away with the purdah system.

"Tumhare Ma ne kuch nahi Sikhaya (Your mother did not teach you anything)" is the common phrase used by families to put down their daughters-in-laws. In order to avoid any criticism, women compromise and continue to practice it," shared Neelam. Spreading awareness to eradicate the purdah system is unlikely to work, unless the root cause of patriarchy and its implications are addressed. Clearly, the purdah system and its practice by women, even if they don't want to adhere to it, will follow until these systems are demystified amongst women.

Most importantly, to spark discussions and dialogues within the family system to better understand why women and girls are expected to uphold the family's honour and respect.

(The author is a student of class 12 from Bageshwar, Uttarakhand: Charkha Features)

Wise allocations will boost the economy

It is the Government's responsibility to make allocation in the Budget considering all the expectations



RAVI KUMAR GUPTA

ROHAN GUPTA

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, along with other ministries, has prepared the Budget. Article 112 of the Indian Constitution says that "the receipts and expenditure list of the Government to be laid before the parliament floor" for each financial year (April 1 to March 31).

The Indian economy is showing a high-growth trajectory. It recently crossed the UK and became the fifth largest economy. Healthy and wise allocations in the Budget will boost the economy. The vision that India can become a \$5 trillion economy by 2024-25 can be achieved only when we have the best tenets of the budget and its allocation in various fields.

Many experts and economists believe that the Budget 2023-24 will be balanced. The approach toward the economic growth, focus wisely on every aspect, be it capital expenditure on various infrastructures, education, taxation, provident funds, tax slabs, subsidies, incentives to production linked schemes, push to manufacturing and service sectors, semi-conductor-based industries installations, health, banking, housing, defence, rural need and demands.

The Covid-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukrainian War had created a deep impact on the economy and GDP of the entire globe during 2020-22. India has also been impacted a lot. The overall slowdown in the manufacturing and service sector caused severe employment loss. Hence by a proper budget allocation we can overcome the impacts up to an extent.

Education is an important tool for overall development. The opportunity for education should be given to all. To make education skillful and learning oriented, it needs good books, labs, workshops, infrastructures. The education budget was raised by 11 per cent last year to 3.1 per cent of the total GDP, which is quite less. The expenditure on education is expected to double of the previous year allocation. It should be close to six per cent.

Taxes are the primary sources to the receipts for the consolidated fund of India. Taxes can be direct tax which is collected directly by an individual like income tax, corporate tax, property tax, etc., or indirect taxes like GST, state excise duty etc. In Financial Year 2022, the ratio of tax revenue to GDP was almost 17.11 per cent. We can have a higher expectation in the financial year 2023. GST collection of Rs 1.52 lakh crore has been recorded as of October 2022, indicating a positive output. However, many people still avoid the tax by taking unfair advantages of the shortcomings in the tax rules. A good taxation system consists of five basic conditions --- fairness, simplicity, transparency, adequacy and administrative ease.

Investment in the capital market is important as more infrastructure means more chances for manufacturing, employ-



INDIA HAS CURRENTLY MORE THAN 83,000 STARTUPS AND MORE THAN 100 UNICORNS. DUE TO THE RECESSION AND PANDEMIC EFFECTS WORLDWIDE, THE FUNDING TO STARTUPS HAS DRIED UP. THE BUDGET SHOULD ANNOUNCE FUNDS TO SUPPORT STARTUPS

(Ravi Kumar Gupta and Rohan Gupta teach at Madan Mohan Malaviya University of Technology, Gorakhpur)



ment, tourism and the market. The money for the capital market basically comes from the provident fund, mutual fund, LIC premiums, NSC, bonds and other government authorised investments which have a sure return after a period of time.

According to income tax exemption under 80(C), we get tax deduction. The expectation is to raise the amount by Rs 50,000, presently it is Rs 1.5 lakhs and has not been amended since 2014, while inflation and many other factors have made Rs 1.5 lakh limit a very lesser value. It should be increased.

The total contribution of the manufacturing sector has decreased in the GDP in recent years. The contribution of the manufacturing sector in GVA was 17.4 per cent in FY-2012, which decreased to 14.5 per cent in FY2021. The government has to step up capital expenditure in this sector. It will help in employment generation as well as more exports can be achieved which will make the target of achieving \$1 trillion of economy true.

By the introduction and use of chips in various electronics devices like vehicles, mobile phones and all other appliances, the demand of semiconductor chips has increased manifold, which is met by imports from Japan, Taiwan and China. The expectation is that the government of India should make a proper allocation of budget with the involvement of private partners

to make and produce the chips.

Disinvestment is the selling of invested stakes. The government sells public sector undertakings (PSUs) and PSU stocks. The government announced many disinvestments in the recent three years, but has been unable to complete the target completely. PSUs like BPCL, OIL, etc., are profitable companies so the expectation is that disinvestment of such companies should not be announced. Even if it is done, there should be moderate disinvestment.

High disinvestment provides revenue while lower disinvestment will save the government for future investment. So, it should be done in a very balanced way.

Our country is the fifth largest economy in the world. The amount of subsidies provided by the government is very surprising, food and fertilizers subsidies amounting to 1/8th (12 per cent) of GDP. Spending on fertilizer subsidy which is Rs 2.3 lakh crore should be reduced to Rs 1.4 lakh crore and food subsidy to Rs 2.3 lakh crore from Rs 2.7 lakh crore. If the government wants to reduce the fiscal deficit, then it should reduce subsidies. It will definitely make the fiscal deficit balanced, which is targeted around 6.4 per cent of the GDP in current fiscal years.

India has currently more than 83,000 startups and more than 100 unicorns. Due to the recession and

pandemic effects worldwide, the funding to startups has dried up. The Budget should announce funds to support startups. It is the major provider of jobs and it is going to cross \$500 billion in valuation very soon. Various schemes and regulations are needed for the ease of doing business for the startups.

The goal of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' can be achieved by enhancing the defence systems. According to a research institute of Stockholm, India ranks fourth among the Indo-Pacific countries in self-reliant production capabilities of arms but India ranks 2nd largest importer of the arms and defence related equipment. However, we have defence exports of Rs 14,000 crore and the target is to achieve Rs 25,000 crore of exports by 2025.

The objectives of fiscal policy and Budget are to increase the ratio of savings to incomes, raising the rate of investment, flow of expenditure in productive areas, prudence, stability, and reduce inequality. If inequality is not reduced, there will be clashes among the people which will affect negatively and generate instability in the economy. The introduction of GST has also helped in collecting the taxes easily and rapidly. A country's budget should be balanced. It is also the Government's responsibility to focus on every aspect and allocate the Budget considering all the expectations.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

CONGRESS IS NEITHER HERE NOR THERE. RAHUL GANDHI'S BHARAT JODO YATRA ONLY ADDS TO THE CONFUSION ABOUT WHAT IT STANDS FOR.

— BJP LEADER RAKESH SINHA



I HAVE NOT DONE THIS (YATRA) FOR MYSELF OR FOR THE CONGRESS, BUT FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE COUNTRY.

— CONGRESS LEADER RAHUL GANDHI

Finance Minister may opt for a prudent Budget

Budget will probably have something for everybody as political parties have mastered wooing the electorate

One of the important businesses in Parliament is the annual budget presentation. This year too, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will present the 2023 Budget today.

Why is a Budget important? It gives a bird's eye view of the government's fiscal policy and how it will distribute resources. The 2023 Budget will have revised revenue estimates for the current fiscal and tax collection forecasts for the following year.

The forthcoming Budget is more important as it will be the last full Budget before the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expecting to perform a hat-trick in 2024, and the Budget is bound to have some surprises.



KALYANI SHANKAR

(The author is a senior journalist)

The question is: will it be a dream Budget like in 1997 presented by P Chidambaram, which proposed lower slabs of personal and corporate taxes? Or, given the 2024 polls, will it be a populist one?

As usual, several expectations and predictions are floating around from financial experts to ordinary citizens.

The 2023 Budget will probably have something for everybody as political parties have mastered wooing the electorate. Voters are increasingly getting accustomed to new innovative populist schemes that support welfare spending. The common man is interested in what tax breaks he gets in the Budget.

However, some economists, as a contrarian view,

say the Budget will focus on supporting development and balancing fiscal pressures.

The Finance Minister gave some clues while in the US for the annual IMF-World Bank meeting some time ago and said, "Growth priorities will be kept absolutely on the top for the upcoming Budget." The Minister also said that the Indian economy should not lose momentum. In a recent address to Ficci, she declared that the Budget would follow the spirit of previous budgets to prepare India for the next 25 years.

Since attaining freedom in 1947, the Budget presentation has undergone many changes from its colonial past. For instance, earlier the Budget used to be presented in the evening to coincide

with the London timings. A presentation in the evening gave producers and the tax collecting agencies the night to work out the price change.

During Vajpayee's regime, Parliament shifted it from 5 pm to 11 am in 1999. In 2017, the Railway Budget was merged with the annual Budget. Sitharaman had broken from the tradition of entering Lok Sabha with a black briefcase holding Budget papers. Instead, she carries a tablet wrapped in a traditional pouch in line with the digital concept.

Fortunately, the Modi Government is better positioned to take risks, with considerable tax collections in 2022 despite Covid. The direct tax collection stood at Rs 14.71 lakh crore as of January

10, 2023. There have also been some cutbacks after the Government discontinued the scheme of free food programmes for 800 million people during the pandemic. The sale of Air India was also timely, though privatization might shrink closer to the polls.

Voters expect new welfare schemes. A recent Bloomsburg survey predicts that the Finance Minister could increase expenditure by about 12.5 per cent year-on-year to Rs 44.40 trillion (\$544 billion) beginning April. More importantly, Budget 2023 will focus on capital expenditure as a growth driver. Custom duties on non-essential goods and luxury items might be increased to prevent import dependency and promote the domestic industry.

The Government will focus on providing more impetus to the manufacturing sector, concentrating on capital goods, defence, railways, and public sector banks. The rural sector is also essential.

Price rise is the vital issue people face after the pandemic. There is an urgent need to tackle this. The next critical issue is job creation. Many vulnerable workers lost their jobs during the pandemic and are still on the streets without any permanent livelihood. Go to any market, and you will find that most shops are shut or have moved to a cheaper place. In the absence of social welfare schemes, migrant workers suffer a great deal. The government should address the job crisis. The private sector should also be

encouraged to create more jobs. The rising cost of living and falling income has dented the growth of the aspirational middle classes. Senior citizens also demand medical benefits and no tax on their pensions. The government must reduce some direct and indirect taxes so that more money is available to the people. The pandemic showed the need for enhanced outlays towards the health sector to tackle the emerging new Covid variants and better preparedness. More funds are also required for education, rural development, and social sector schemes like NREGA.

One can go on with all sorts of predictions. Overall, the FM may opt for a prudent 2023 Budget, which could be soft and pragmatic.

'Roads, rlys, waterways infra see unmatched growth in 8 yrs'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Economic Survey on Tuesday listed that roads, railways and waterways infrastructure have seen unprecedented expansion in the last eight years while ports and airports have been substantially upgraded. The survey also pointed out that logistics costs in India have been in the range of 14-18 per cent of GDP against the global benchmark of 8 per cent.

The report tabled by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharama said support for India's economic growth will come from path-breaking measures like PM GatiShakti, National Logistics Policy and Production-Linked Incentives schemes.

The PM Gati Shakti - National Master Plan was announced in 2021 to break departmental silos and bring in more holistic and integrated planning and execution of projects to address the issues of multi-modal and last-mile connectivities.

The projects pertaining to seven engines (roads, railways,



airports, ports, mass transport, waterways and logistic infrastructure) in the National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) will be aligned with PM Gati Shakti framework.

Noting that to bring in further convergence with comprehensive planning across the Centre and states, PM GatiShakti has sectoral complementarity of logistics facilitation through the National Logistics Policy launched in September 2022, the survey said.

Applauding the Railways'

efforts for recovering in both the passenger and freight segments post the Covid pandemic, the Economic Survey for 2022-23 has credited the government for substantial increase in funds that has allowed the national transporter to augment infrastructure at a fast pace.

Passenger traffic originating in the Indian Railway was Rs 809 crore during pre-Covid period (2019-20), but dipped to 125 crore in 2020-21, it said. It has since recovered to Rs 351.9 crore in 2021-22. During the

current financial year, passenger traffic has seen further strong growth with the number of originating passengers already hitting 418.4 crore (up to November 2022), the survey said.

In the case of revenue-earning, freight traffic was sustained by Indian Railways despite the Covid shock. "Between FY20-21 and FY21-22, there was a sharp increase in the freight traffic, reflecting the strong revival in the economic activity in the domestic economy.

Economic Survey records steady decline in school dropout rate & increase in enrollment

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Economic Survey 2022-23 has recorded there has been a steady decline in the school dropout rate and increase in enrollment both in school and higher education and also gender parity has improved.

"The Gross Enrolment Ratios (GER) in the primary-enrolment in Class 1 to 5 as a percentage of the population in age six to 10 years - for girls as well as boys has improved during the financial year (FY)," said the economic survey, tabled by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharama.

This improvement has "reversed the declining trends between FY-17 and FY-19", it stated, adding that "the GER in upper-primary (enrolment in class 6 to 8 as a percent of the population in age 11-13 years), which was stagnant between

FY-17 and FY-19, improved in FY-22".

In corresponding age groups in primary and upper-primary levels, the GER for girls is better than that of boys, the Economic Survey for 2022-23 stated. "In FY-22, school enrolment stood at 26.5 crore children with 19.4 lakh additional children enrolled in primary to higher-secondary levels," it said.

The survey noted that the total enrolment of Children with Special Needs (CWSN) in FY-22 stands at 22.7 lakh as compared to 21.9 lakh in FY-21, an increase of 3.3 per cent. "The enrolments increased across all levels -- primary, upper-primary, secondary, and higher-secondary, except for the pre-primary level. At the pre-primary level, enrolment reduced from 1.1 crore in FY-21 to one crore in FY-22," it said.

"During the year, about



one crore children were enrolled in pre-primary, 12.2 crore in primary, 6.7 crore in upper primary, 3.9 crore in secondary and 2.9 crore in higher secondary," it said. School dropout rates, for both boys and girls, at all levels have witnessed a steady decline in recent years. The availability of teachers, measured by pupil-teacher ratio, an indicator which is inversely related to improvement in quality of education, has improved at all lev-

els continuously from FY-13 to FY-22, the survey said.

From FY-13 to FY-22, it improved from 34.0 to 26.2 at the primary level, 23 to 19.6 at the upper-primary level, 30.0 to 17.6 at the secondary level and 39.0 to 27.1 at the higher-secondary level, it said.

The survey stated that the improvement in the number of schools, teachers' availability and facilities in schools is expected to help improve enrolment and reduce dropout.

Aviation sector reached average pre-Covid level in Dec 2022 with fliers number hitting 150.1 L

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Economic Survey for 2022-23 tabled in Parliament on Tuesday said the Indian aviation sector reached the average pre-Covid level in December 2022. The Survey reviews how the economy performed in this fiscal year and the road ahead for the next year.

The total number of passengers carried in December 2022 stood at 150.1 lakh, which was 6.4 per cent higher than the pre-Covid average for 11 months from April 2019 to February 2020, the Survey said. In November 2022, total air cargo tonnage stood at 2.5 lakh tonnes, which was 89 percent of the pre-Covid levels.

The Survey said the civil aviation market has great potential due to the growing demand from the middle class, growth in population and tourism. It added that higher disposable incomes, favourable demographics, and greater



penetration of aviation infrastructure will help grow the market in India.

The Economic Survey for 2022-23, listed various factors that are helping the civil aviation sector, including the UDAN scheme, which has considerably enhanced regional connectivity through the opening of airports in the hinterland.

Under the UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Naagrik) scheme, which is aimed to facilitate/stimulate regional air connectivity by making it affordable,

the total number of tourism routes has increased to 59 and presently, 51 are operational.

"The civil aviation sector in India has great potential owing to growing demand from the middle class, growth in population and tourism, higher disposable incomes, favourable demographics, and greater penetration of aviation infrastructure," the survey said. With the containment of COVID-19 infections and the lifting of travel restrictions worldwide, the survey said, air travel has rebounded.

States & Central health expenditure dips to 2.1% of GDP from 2.2% last yr

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Government expenditure on health, both State and Central, was 2.1 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) last year, as per the Economic Survey 2022-2023. This is a slight dip from 2.2 per cent of the GDP in the financial year 2021-2022 and an increase from 1.3 per cent of the GDP in 2015-2016. This "highlights the rising importance of public healthcare and social security in ensuring universal health coverage," the report noted.

In absolute figures, the increase translated into Rs 1,75,272 crore in 2015-2016 to Rs 5,48,855 crore in 2022-2023. These figures are straying away from the target of increasing the total public expenditure on health to 2.5 per cent of GDP by 2025 as mandated by the National Health Policy (NHP) of 2017.

The government's share in the total health expenditure has increased from 28.6 per cent in financial year 2014 to 40.6 per cent in 2019 with a significant decline in out-of-pocket expenditure, according to the Survey. It also said that the government is focusing on primary healthcare expenditure which has increased from 51.1 per cent in FY-14 to 55.2 per cent in FY-19.

This not only ensures quality services at the grassroots but also reduces the chances of ailments requiring secondary or tertiary healthcare services, the survey stated.

"The share of government health expenditure in total health expenditure has increased from 28.6 per cent in the financial year 2014 to 40.6 per cent in 2019, with a concomitant decline in out-of-pocket expenditure as a percentage of total health expenditure from 64.2 per cent in 2014 to 48.2 per cent in 2019," the survey stated.

Growing Indian agri sector needs 're-orientation' to meet climate change challenges: Eco Survey

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Observing that the Indian agriculture sector has been growing, the Economic Survey 2022-23 said Tuesday it needs "re-orientation" in view of challenges like adverse impacts of climate change, fragmented landholdings, and rising input costs. The other challenges are fragmented landholdings, sub-optimal farm mechanisation, low productivity, disguised unemployment and rising input costs.

The Economic Survey 2023 presented in Parliament on January 31 said the agriculture credit flow was about 13 per cent more than the target of Rs 16.5 lakh crore in 2021-22. The target for the flow of credit to agriculture for 2022-23 had been fixed at Rs 18.5 lakh crore.

The survey said that as a result of the initiatives and measures taken to strengthen existing policies, there has been a consistent increase in the agriculture credit flow over



the years, exceeding the target every year for the past several years.

As of December 30, 2022, banks issued Kisan Credit Cards (KCC) to 38.9 million eligible farmers with a KCC limit of Rs 4,51,672 crore, the report noted.

"While Indian agriculture has performed well, the sector needs re-orientation in the backdrop of certain challenges...," it said. Stating that the performance of the agriculture sector remains critical to growth and employment in the country, the Survey said investment in the sector must

be encouraged through an affordable, timely and inclusive approach to credit delivery.

It may be noted that more than 75 per cent of rural female workers are employed in the agriculture sector. This implies a need to upskill and create employment for women in agriculture-related sectors such as food processing.

"Here, the self-help groups (SHGs) can play a crucial role in shaping rural women's potential into concrete developmental outcomes of financial inclusion, livelihood diversification, and skill development," the Survey said.

Eco Survey highlights India's plans to be energy independent by 2047

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Noting that India has achieved its target of 40 per cent installed electric capacity from non-fossil fuels ahead of 2030, the Economic Survey has highlighted country's plans to be energy independent by 2047, by relying on green hydrogen through

the National Green Hydrogen Mission.

The mission includes developing green hydrogen production capacity to at least 5 million metric tonne (MMT) per annum by 2030, cumulative reduction in fossil fuel imports over Rs 1 lakh crore and creation of over 6 lakh jobs by 2030.

Further, renewable ener-

gy capacity addition of about 125 GW and abatement of nearly 50 MMT of annual greenhouse gases emissions by 2030.

As per the economic survey, India declared the Net Zero Pledge to achieve net zero emissions goal by 2070. At the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) held in Glasgow,

Scotland, Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared the Net Zero Pledge.

The survey states that about 50 per cent cumulative electric power installed capacity will come from non-fossil fuel-based energy resources by 2030.

According to the survey, the likely installed capacity from non-fossil fuels will be

more than 500 Gigawatts (1 billion watts) by 2030. This will result in a decline in average emission rates by around 29 per cent by 2029-30, compared to 2014-15.

The survey states that India aims to reduce the emissions intensity of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 45 per cent from its 2005 levels by 2030.

The survey mentions the progress on eight missions under the National Action Plan (NAP) on climate change to address climate concerns and promote sustainable development.

As of October 2022, solar power capacity of 61.6 GW has been installed. This is a key metric under the National Solar Mission.



PM CARES Fund not Govt fund, PMO tells HC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) on Tuesday informed the Delhi High Court that the PM CARES Fund is not a Government fund as donations to it do not go to the Consolidated Fund of India and no third party information can be parted with irrespective of its status under the Constitution and the Right to Information (RTI) Act.

An affidavit filed by an Under Secretary at PMO, who is discharging his functions in the PM Cares Trust on honorary basis, has said the trust functions with transparency



and its funds are audited by an auditor -- a chartered accountant drawn from the panel prepared by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India.

The PMO contended that irrespective of the status of Prime Minister's Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations Fund (PM CARES Fund) under the Constitution and the RTI Act, it is not permissible to disclose

third party information.

The affidavit was filed in response to a petition seeking a direction to declare the PM CARES Fund a 'State' under the Constitution to ensure transparency in its functioning. The same petitioner has also filed another petition to declare PM CARES as a "public authority" under the RTI Act, which is being heard together with this plea.

Army conducts exercise to test operational readiness

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

As tension continues on the border with China in the eastern sector, the Indian army has carried a major exercise along with other stakeholders to test its operational readiness. Named "Exercise Trishakti Prahar," it was conducted in North Bengal adjoining the crucial Siliguri corridor. China is ramping up its infrastructure on its side facing Sikkim in the region. Giving details of the drill lasting ten days starting January 21, sources said here on Tuesday the aim was to practice battle preparedness of the Security Forces using latest weapons

and equipment in a networked, integrated environment, involving all arms and services of the Army, the Indian Air Force and central paramilitary forces.

As part of the exercise, swift mobilisation and deployment practices were carried out in various locations across North Bengal. Efforts of all agencies including the Civil Administration, Civil Defence Organisations, Police and paramilitary forces were coordinated to ensure efficient move and quick mobilization.

The exercise culminated on Tuesday with an Integrated Fire Power Exercise in Teesta Field Firing Ranges. The Fire Power Exercise was aimed at



synergising the firepower assets of the Indian Armed Forces and para-military forces to orchestrate an integrated battle.

The exercise showcased joint application of various ground and aerial assets to include latest generation Fighter Aircraft, Helicopters, Tanks, Infantry Combat Vehicles,

Medium and Field Artillery Guns, Infantry Mortars and various New Generation Infantry weapons and equipment in a networked environment. The exercise also witnessed participation of newly inducted weapons and equipment made in India as part of 'Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan'.

Vice Chief of IAF retires

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Vice Chief of IAF Air Marshal Sandeep Singh retired on Tuesday after completion of 39 years of service. The new incumbent is Air Marshal A P Singh.

Air Marshal Sandeep Singh was commissioned in the IAF as a Fighter Pilot on 22 December 1983. He is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy (NDA) and National Defence College (NDC). He is an Experimental Test Pilot and Cat 'A' Qualified Flying Instructor, IAF officials said here.

India condemns Peshawar fdayeen blast, conveys condolences to bereaved families

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI/UNITED NATIONS

With the death toll rising to 93 in the suicide bomb attack in a mosque in Peshawar, Pakistan on Monday, India on Tuesday condemned the act and conveyed condolences to the families of the victims. The United Nations also condemned the attack and said countries must ensure their territories are not used for terror activities.

Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said here on Tuesday



"India extends its deep condolences to the families of the victims of the terror attack in Peshawar yesterday. We strongly condemn this attack, which has taken the lives of so many people."

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and

the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) also condemned the suicide bombing at a mosque in Peshawar city of Pakistan, with a UN spokesperson saying countries must ensure that their territories are not used for terror activities.

Strongly condemning the suicide bombing on Monday that killed at least 90 people and injured over 100 others, Guterres said in a statement that it is particularly abhorrent that the attack occurred at a place of worship. The outlawed Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) terror group has claimed responsibility for the attack.

"Freedom of religion or belief, including the ability to worship in peace and security, is a universal human right," he said.

At the daily press briefing, spokesman for the Secretary-General, Stephane Dujarric, said, "What is clear is that every government or every authority that has control over territory has a responsibility towards the international community to make sure that their territory is not being used for terrorist activities."

He was responding to a question on the attack and promises made by the Taliban

that they would not allow Afghan soil to be used for terror attacks.

The TTP, known as the Pakistani Taliban, claimed responsibility for the suicide attack, saying it was part of a revenge attack for slain TTP commander Umar Khalid Khurasani who was killed in Afghanistan in August last year.

The 15-nation UN Security Council issued a press statement condemning in the "strongest terms" the "heinous and cowardly" suicide terrorist attack, which took place in the Police Lines area of Peshawar

city, where Police Headquarters and counter-terrorism officials are based.

"The members of the Security Council reaffirmed that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security," it said.

The Council underlined the need to hold perpetrators, organisers, financiers and sponsors of these reprehensible acts of terrorism accountable and bring them to justice. They urged all States, by their obligations under international law and relevant Security Council

resolutions, to cooperate actively with the Government of Pakistan and all other relevant authorities.

The members of the Security Council reiterated that any acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivation, wherever, whenever, and by whomsoever committed.

The Secretary-General reiterated the solidarity of the United Nations with the Government and people of Pakistan in their efforts to address terrorism and violent extremism. Pakistan Prime Minister

Shehbaz Sharif, who visited Peshawar shortly after the attack, strongly condemned the attack and took to Twitter to say, "The sheer scale of the human tragedy is unimaginable," adding that the pain of the grieving families cannot be described in words.

"My message to the perpetrators of today's despicable incident is that you can't underestimate the resolve of our people," he said.

"This is no less than an attack on Pakistan," Sharif said, adding that terrorism is the country's "foremost national security challenge".

India's GDP to be \$3.5 tn by March end: Eco Survey

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India has already become the world's fifth largest economy in the 75th year of Independence and will reach the \$3.5 trillion mark by end-March, said the Economic Survey tabled in Parliament on Tuesday.

In real terms, the economy is expected to grow at 7 per cent for the year ending March 2023. This follows an 8.7 per cent growth in the previous financial year.

"For India, 2022 was special. It marked the 75th year of India's Independence. India became the world's fifth largest economy, measured in current dollars. Come March, the nominal GDP of India will be around \$3.5 trillion," the Survey said.

India's economy crossed the \$3 trillion mark last year. It further said the fundamentals of the Indian economy are sound as it enters its Amrit Kaal, the 25-year journey towards its centenary as a modern, independent nation.

"It is befitting that during



India's Amrit Kaal, it assumed the Presidency of G-20 nations in December 2022," the survey said.

Global problems need global solutions, and global solutions require collaboration and cooperation.

Based on the theme of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam: One Earth, One Family, One Future", India's G20 Presidency aims to achieve co-ordinated solutions to key issues of global concern.

As per the survey, economic growth is expected to be brisk in 2023-24 as a vigorous credit disbursement and capital investment cycle are expected to unfold in India with the strengthening of the balance sheets of the corporate and banking sectors.

Ahead of budget, States debt cost rises marginally to 7.68%

PTI ■ MUMBAI

In the second-highest auction so far in FY23, 13 States raised ₹25,800 crore in debt capital from markets on Tuesday, paying a higher price as the cost rose by 4 basis points to 7.68 per cent.

The latest auction is 9 per cent higher on-year basis but was 19 per cent lower than indicated for this week in the auction calendar, according to a note by Icrs Ratings.

The weighted average cut-off or the interest rate payable annually by the states, rose by a further 4 basis points to 7.68 per cent over the past auction, Icrs Ratings chief economist and head of research & outreach Aditi Nayar said in the note.

She said while the weighted average tenor rose to 15 years from 13, the yield curve was inverted at the longer-end.

Accordingly, the spread between the 10-year state bonds also called state development loans and the benchmark G-sec (Government Securities) yield rose to 33 basis points from 30 basis points last week.

Markets eke out modest gains ahead of Budget, Fed's rate decision

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmarks ended Tuesday with marginal gains on Tuesday as investors kept their powder dry ahead of the Union Budget presentation and the US Federal Reserve's interest rate decision.

Fag-end buying helped the 30-share BSE benchmark Sensex settle with a gain of 49.49 points or 0.08 per cent at 59,549.90. During the day, it hit a high of 59,787.63 and a low of 59,104.59.

The broader NSE Nifty inched up 13.20 points or 0.07 per cent to close at 17,662.15.

Mahindra & Mahindra topped the Sensex gainers' chart with a jump of 3.53 per cent, followed by UltraTech Cement, Power Grid, SBI, ITC, Tata Motors, Titan and NTPC.

On the other hand, Tata Consultancy Services, Bajaj Finance, Tech Mahindra, Sun Pharma, Asian Paints, HCL Tech and HDFC were among the major laggards.

"The Indian market has been underperforming compared to the rest of the world because it has been trading at premium valuations, which are in contrast to the moderation forecast in the domestic econ-



omy for FY24.

"The premiumisation has tapered, currently trading in-line with developed markets like the US; however, we continue to trade at a premium to other emerging markets. The Adani saga has prolonged the correction as FII selling has increased. Now the focus is on the outcome of the Budget and Fed policy, on which the market has a mixed view," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

The pre-Budget Economic Survey, tabled in Parliament on Tuesday, said India's economic growth is projected to slow to 6 - 6.8 per cent in the next fiscal, from an estimated 7 per cent in FY23, but the country will remain the fastest growing major economy in the world as it fared better in dealing with the extraordinary set of challenges the globe has faced.

'New diversified markets helping India's exports'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Increasing exports to markets such as Brazil, South Africa and Saudi Arabia are boosting the growth of the country's outbound shipments, FIEO said on Tuesday.

Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) President A Sakthivel said the Economic Survey has rightly highlighted India's growing and diversifying merchandise trade.

"The new diversified markets, including those of Brazil, South Africa and Saudi Arabia, have led to the increase in exports by up to 2 times," he



said.

The ongoing trade negotiations with the UK, EU, Canada, and Israel will also add further impetus to our exports, he added.

"Reducing the cost of logistics in the country, which now to the tune of 14-15 per cent, comparable to the global benchmark, will help in mak-

ing our exports more competitive worldwide," Sakthivel said. Yogesh Gupta, Regional Chairman, FIEO (Eastern Region), said the exporter fraternity is expecting fiscal support and affordable credit, from the upcoming budget.

"A need of the hour is to support exports by reducing lending rates and to restore interest equalisation rates in view of the rising cost of credit will be of great help," Gupta said.

Additional financial support to units generating additional employment in the export sector will also be an incentive for exporters.

CII suggests to set up export panel to widen India's export portfolio



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) said.

When asked about the survey pointing out some global effects of the conflict in Ukraine, he replied, "Those are some of the fair 1 would say negative headwinds that exist for India and it is something that we have to keep in mind because at the end of the day we are part of the global economy."

There are several tailwinds as well for India, Bajaj said, noting India is poised to emerge as one of the fastest-growing insurance markets in the coming decade.

"We believe a large number of sectors have reached that level where they need to invest. We are now starting to see capex come in whether it is in construction or whether it is a commodity like steel and cement chemicals.

"The Government has played a very strong role with public sector capex in the last few years and industry is hoping for a similar growth to be announced in the Budget tomorrow which will continue to provide the necessary tailwinds," he said.

The Union Budget for 2023-24 is scheduled to be tabled in Parliament on Wednesday by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharam.

On the Government's PLI schemes for various sectors, Bajaj said the industry is expecting more sectors to be included in the programme.

Equity mutual fund schemes to shift to T+2 redemption payment cycle



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Asset management companies are set to move to a shorter redemption payment cycle of T+2 for equity schemes from Wednesday.

At present, funds are transferred to investors' bank account within 3 days after the completion of the redemption process.

Moving to the T+2 cycle for equity schemes will benefit mutual fund investors.

Akhil Chaturvedi, Chief Business Officer of Motilal Oswal AMC, termed the move as a positive step that will give quick and easy liquidity, which can be used to plan re-investment or meet any obligations in a more time-bound manner.

From January 27, Indian equity markets moved to a T+1 settlement cycle for all stocks, shortening the settlement cycle by a day and making the availability of funds a day sooner.

To pass on this benefit to mutual fund investors, Association of Mutual Funds on Friday said that all asset management companies will move to the T+2 redemption payment cycle for equity schemes, and implement this uniformly with effect from February 1, 2023.

Adani to set up AI lab in Tel Aviv, develop real estate in Haifa

PTI ■ HAIFA

Indian tycoon Gautam Adani's ports-to-energy conglomerate will set up an artificial intelligence lab in Tel Aviv as it looks to leverage on a \$1.2 billion Haifa port deal to make more investments in Israel.

Adani, whose business empire was rocked by allegations of fraud by US short seller Hindenburg Research, appeared alongside Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for signing of the deal to takeover Haifa Port in Israel, and spoke of investment opportunities.

He did not make any mention of the row that has already wiped out over USD 70 billion in value from his group stocks.

Adani, 60, said his group will also develop real estate at the port to transform the Haifa skyline.

"We have initiated several dozen technology relationships wherein we have offered the entire Adani portfolio of companies to be a giant sandbox for us to learn together," he said in his speech. "We are also in the process of setting up an Artificial Intelligence lab in Tel Aviv which will work in close collaboration with our new AI labs in India and US."

In last six years, Adani group has struck many critical partnerships with companies such as Elbit Systems, Israel Weapon Systems, and Israel Innovation Authority.

Adani Ports & Special Economic Zone Ltd in partnership with local chemicals and logistics group Gadot in July last year won an Israel government's tender to buy the Haifa Port, a major trade hub on Israel's Mediterranean coast, for about \$1.2 billion.

Digital payments record 24% annual growth at end of Sept 2022: RBI

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Digital payments across the country registered a growth of 24.13 per cent in a year through September 2022, as per RBI's index that measures the adoption of online transactions.

The newly-constituted RBI's Digital Payments Index (RBI-DPI) stood at 377.46 in September 2022 against 349.30 in March 2022 and 304.06 in September 2021.

"The RBI-DPI Index has increased across all parameters driven by significant growth in payment infrastructure and payment performance across the country over the period," Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said in a statement on Tuesday.

The central bank had announced the construction of a composite RBI-DPI in March 2018 as a base to capture the



extent of digitisation of payments across the country.

The index comprises five broad parameters that enable the measurement of the deepening and penetration of digital payments in the country over different periods.

These parameters are Payment Enablers (weight 25 per cent); Payment Infrastructure - Demand-side factors (10 per cent); Payment Infrastructure - Supply-side factors (15 per cent); Payment Performance (45 per cent); and Consumer Centricity (5 per cent).

GST led to high tax buoyancy, augurs well for resource mobilisation: Survey

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Goods and Services Tax collection is showing a higher buoyancy than the pre-GST system, auguring well for future resource mobilisation in the economy, the Economic Survey 2022-23 presented in Parliament said on Tuesday.

Giving a 5-year analysis of tax collection pre and post-GST, the survey said the taxes which were subsumed in the Goods and Services Tax had a buoyancy of one.

However, the buoyancy improved to 1.1 after the GST implementation on July 1, 2017.

"Improved tax collection efficiency was one of the main arguments in favour of GST," said the Economic Survey.

Centre's fiscal deficit touches nearly 60% of full-year target at end-Dec

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government's fiscal deficit as of end-December touched 59.8 per cent of the full-year Budget Estimate on subdued growth in revenue collections, according to finance ministry data released on Tuesday.

In actual terms, the fiscal deficit - which is the difference between expenditure and revenue - was ₹9,92,976 crore during the April-December period of 2022-23. In the corresponding period last year, the deficit was 50.4 per cent of the Budget Estimates (BE) of 2021-22.

The Government has budgeted fiscal deficit at ₹16.61 lakh crore or 6.4 per cent of the GDP in the current financial year ending March 2023. The deficit is funded by market borrowing. As per the Controller General of Accounts (CGA)



data, the net tax revenue at ₹15.55 lakh crore was 80.4 per cent of BE 2022-23. During the corresponding period of 2021-22, the net tax revenue was 95.4 per cent of that year's BE.

Non-tax revenue was at ₹2.14 lakh crore or 79.5 per cent of BE. In the last fiscal, the collection by December was 106.7 per cent of BE.

The Central Government's total expenditure during April-December works out to be 71.4 per cent of BE of 2022-23, lower than 72.4 per cent of BE

in the year-ago period.

Capital expenditure stood at ₹4.89 lakh crore or 65.4 per cent of BE at end-December. The capex was 70.7 per cent of BE during the corresponding period last fiscal.

As per the CGA data, the central government's total receipts, including non-tax revenue, stood at ₹18.25 lakh crore or 79.9 per cent of the current year's BE. In the year-ago period, the total receipts had touched 89.1 per cent of BE 2021-22.

Retail inflation for industrial workers rises marginally to 5.5% in Dec

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Retail inflation for industrial workers rose marginally to 5.5 per cent in December 2022 from 5.41 per cent in November due to higher prices of certain food items.

"Year-on-year inflation for the month stood at 5.50 per cent compared to 5.41 per cent for the previous month (November 2022) and 5.56 per cent during the corresponding month (December 2021) a year before," a labour bureau statement said.

Similarly, it stated that the food inflation stood at 4.10 per cent against 4.30 per cent in the previous month and 5.93 per cent during the corresponding month a year ago.

The All-India CPI-IW (consumer price index for industrial workers) for December 2022 decreased by



0.2 points and stood at 132.3 points. It was 132.5 points in November 2022.

On one-month percentage change, it decreased by 0.15 per cent with respect to the previous month compared to a decrease of 0.24 per cent recorded between corresponding months a year ago.

The maximum downward pressure in the current index came from Food and Beverages group, contributing 0.52 percentage points to the total change.

Electronics export likely to grow by 37% to cross ₹1.6 lakh crore this fiscal: ICEA

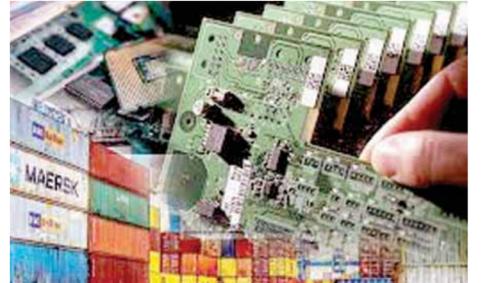
PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Electronic goods export is likely to grow by 36.8 per cent to cross ₹1.6 lakh crore in the current fiscal, with mobile phone export accounting for nearly half of the total pie, industry body ICEA said on Tuesday.

The electronic goods export in 2021-22 was ₹1,16,937 crore, according to India Cellular and Electronics Association (ICEA).

"In financial year (FY) 2021-22, India exported ₹1,16,937 crore worth of electronic goods and is estimated to export more than ₹1,60,000 crore in FY 2022-23. The mobile phone exports in FY 2021-22 were ₹45,000 crore, and is estimated to reach more than ₹75,000 crore in FY 2022-23," ICEA said in a note.

According to the industry body, the total exports of electronic goods from India from



April to December 2022 grew to ₹1,33,313 crore against ₹81,780 crore in 2021.

The growth in electronic goods exports is primarily led by mobile phone exports, which are estimated to have increased over ₹60,000 crore in April-December 2022 from ₹27,288 crore in the same period a year ago.

"The growth in mobile phone exports during April-

December 2022 is as per plan and we are confident that we are on course to achieve USD 9-10 billion exports in FY 2022-23," ICEA Chairman Pankaj Mohindroo said.

The top exporting destinations for mobile phones from India during April-December 2022 include UAE, United States, Netherlands, United Kingdom and Italy, ICEA said.

Tata Motors raises final tranche of ₹3,750 cr from TRG Rise Climate

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Tata Motors on Tuesday said it has raised the second and final tranche of ₹3,750 crore from TPG Rise Climate as per an agreement inked in 2021.

In October 2021, Tata Motors announced that it will raise USD 1 billion in its passenger Electric Vehicle (EV) business from TPG Rise Climate in exchange for compulsorily convertible preference shares to create a portfolio of EVs and dedicated Battery Electric Vehicle (BEV) platforms.

Tata Motors and TPG Rise Climate entered into a binding agreement under which TPG along with its co-investor ADQ to invest in a



subsidiary of Tata Motors.

"...Pursuant to the Agreement, TPG has subscribed to 3,75,00,000 compulsorily convertible preference shares of the face value of ₹1,000 each in the subsidiary on January 31, 2023, for an aggregate consideration of ₹37,50,00,00,000 as the second tranche of the transaction," Tata Motors said in a regulatory filing.

JSPL, NTPC, Vedanta among 59 firms submit bids for 36 coal block

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government on Tuesday said that 59 companies, including JSPL, NTPC and Vedanta, have submitted bids for 36 coal blocks that were put up for sale under the commercial round of coal mines' auction as well.

A total of 96 bids were submitted for the coal blocks.

"A total of 96 bids were received under two tranches of commercial coal mine auctions," the coal ministry said in a statement.

This is the highest ever bids received since the launch of commercial coal mines auction in the year 2020, the ministry said, adding, "a total of six public sector companies had submitted the bids in the ongoing round of commercial coal mines' auction as well."

"Under sixth tranche of auctions, a total of 86 bids both online and offline were received against 32 coal mines and three bids were received only offline but not online, and two or more bids have been



received for 25 coal mines i.e. 79 bids (both online and offline) against 25 coal mines, and 7 coal mines have received single bids (both online and offline)," the minister said.

Of these 32 coal mines, 10 are partially explored blocks

whereas 22 are fully explored mines.

Ambuja Cements, Jindal Power, JSW Steel, Bharat Aluminium Company Ltd, JSW Cement, TANGEDCO and Damodar Valley Corporation are some of the other companies that have submitted their bids.

The auction process of 141 coal, lignite mines for sale of coal was launched by the coal ministry in November, 2022.

The last date for submission of technical bid for all the

NATO urges closer ties with Japan to defend democracy

AP ■ TOKYO

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg sharply criticized China on Tuesday for "bullying its neighbors and threatening Taiwan" and stressed the need for Japan and other democracies to work together with the alliance to defend the international order.

Calling it a "critical moment for NATO and for Japan," Stoltenberg, who is visiting Tokyo, said China and Russia are "leading an authoritarian pushback against international rules-based order."

He said trans-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific security are "deeply interconnected," and a victory by Russian President Vladimir Putin in Ukraine would send a message that authoritarian regimes can achieve their goals through brute force. "This is dangerous," he said.

"China is watching closely and learning lessons that may influence its future decisions," Stoltenberg said at a joint news conference with Japanese



Prime Minister Fumio Kishida.

"China is substantially building up its military forces including nuclear weapons, bullying its neighbours and threatening Taiwan, trying to control critical infrastructure and spreading misinformation about NATO and the war in Ukraine," Stoltenberg said. "China is not our adversary, but we must understand the scale of the challenge and work together to address it."

Stoltenberg's direct criticism of China contrasted with Kishida's more indirect expression of opposition to any one-

sided changes by force to the status quo in the East and South China Seas.

Japan, already a close ally of the United States, has in recent years expanded its military ties with other Indo-Pacific nations as well as with Britain, Europe and NATO amid a growing security threat from China and North Korea.

It was quick to join in U.S.-led economic sanctions against Russia's war in Ukraine and provided humanitarian aid and non-combat defense equipment for Ukrainians. That was mainly because of

Japanese fear that Russian aggression in Europe could be reflected in Asia, where concerns are growing over growing Chinese assertiveness and escalating tensions over its claim to Taiwan.

At the news conference, Kishida welcomed NATO's deepening interest and engagement in the Indo-Pacific region and announced that Japan will open a delegation office at NATO and plans to regularly attend council meetings and chiefs of defense meetings to promote closer communication between Japan and the alliance.

Kishida said he and Stoltenberg agreed to advance ties in areas such as cyberspace, space, disinformation, and critical and emerging technology.

Japan's government issued a new national security strategy in December stating its determination to build up its military and deploy long-range missiles to preempt enemy attacks, in a major break from its post-World War II principle that limited itself to self-defense.

Blinken in West Asia renews appeal for Israel-Palestinian calm

AP ■ JERUSALEM

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken is wrapping up a two-day visit to Israel and the occupied West Bank on Tuesday with renewed appeals for Israeli-Palestinian calm amid an alarming spike of violence.

Blinken was meeting Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas in the West Bank town of Ramallah on Tuesday, a day after seeing Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Standing alongside the Israeli leader, Blinken stressed the importance of the Biden administration places on resolving the long-running conflict with a two-state solution.

However, beyond urging a de-escalation of tensions Blinken offered no new US initiative to do so. There were no signs that Blinken was making progress on even the modest goal of halting the latest wave of violence, much less of addressing the broader issues surrounding peace talks.



Netanyahu's far-right government is dominated by hardliners who oppose Palestinian statehood and are unlikely to make even minimal concessions.

Blinken's visit comes amid one of the deadliest periods of fighting in years in the occupied West Bank and east Jerusalem. The violence has further complicated the administration's already difficult attempts to find common ground with Netanyahu's government. In Ramallah, Blinken

was expected to discuss the Palestinian Authority's decision to halt security coordination with Israel.

The security ties, which in the past are believed to have helped contain violence, are deeply unpopular among everyday Palestinians, who accuse Abbas of acting as a subcontractor for the Israeli military.

Before heading to the West Bank, Blinken met with Israel's opposition leader, former Prime Minister Yair Lapid.

10 wounded in drive-by shooting in Florida: Police

AP ■ FLORIDA (US)

Ten people were injured Monday afternoon during a drive-by shooting in a central Florida neighborhood, police said.

Lakeland Police Chief Sam Taylor said during a news conference that two of the victims were critically injured, while the wounds of the other eight victims weren't considered life-threatening.

Lakeland is located about 30 miles (50 kilometers) east of Tampa.

"I've been here 34 years, and I can tell you I have never worked an event where this many people were shot at one time, ever," Taylor said.

A crowd of people were gathered along a residential street when a dark-blue sedan rolled by, police said. Shooters fired from the windows before the car sped away. Officers were actively searching for the vehicle and the shooters Monday night, officials said.

Taylor said investigators believe the shooting was a targeted attack.

After tank pledges, Ukraine seeks Western fighter jets

AP ■ KYIV

Ukraine is pushing its Western allies to provide it with fighter jets, a week after winning pledges of sophisticated modern tanks to help it beat back Russia's invasion force after almost a year of fighting.

Ukrainian Defence Minister Oleksii Reznikov was due in Paris on Tuesday where discussions about the possible delivery of fighter jets to Ukraine was expected to be on the agenda. After months of haggling, Ukrainian authorities last week persuaded Western allies to send the tanks.

That decision came despite the hesitation and caution of some NATO members, including the United States and Germany. There was no indication that a decision on warplanes to Ukraine might come any time soon and no sign that Western countries have changed their earlier stance on the issue. Some Western leaders have expressed concern

that the move could escalate the nearly year-long conflict and draw them deeper into the war.

The UK government, which has been one of Kyiv's staunchest diplomatic supporters and military suppliers, said that sending its fighter jets is "not practical."

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's spokesman, Max Blain, said "the UK's Typhoon and F-35 fighter jets are extremely sophisticated and take months to learn how to fly." "Given that, we believe it is not practical to send those jets into Ukraine," he said Tuesday, though he didn't say that the UK was opposed to other countries sending planes.

Asked by a reporter Monday if his administration was considering sending Ukraine F-16 fighter jets to Ukraine, US President Joe Biden responded "no." Kyiv officials have repeatedly urged allies to send jets, saying they are essential to challenge Russia's air superiority and to ensure the success

of future counteroffensives that could be spearheaded by tanks recently promised by Western countries.

Ukraine's allies also have ruled out providing Kyiv with long-range missiles able to hit Russian territory, signalling a similarly cautious stance on warplanes.

Asked Tuesday about the supplies of Western weapons to Ukraine, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov repeated the Kremlin's view that "NATO long has been directly involved into a hybrid war against Russia."

He added after the talks in Moscow with Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry that the Russian military will "take all the necessary measures to derail the fulfillment of Western plans."

He said that Shoukry conveyed a message from US Secretary of State Antony Blinken about Ukraine, which repeated the previous calls from Washington for Russia to withdraw.

Pakistan mosque blast toll rises to 100

PTI ■ PESHAWAR

The death toll from the suicide blast rose to at least 100 on Tuesday after rescue workers retrieved more bodies from the debris of the devastated mosque inside a major police facility in Pakistan's north-western Peshawar city.

According to security officials, the suicide bomber who was present in the front row during the Zuhr (afternoon) prayers on Monday blew himself up, causing the roof to collapse on the worshippers. Lady Reading Hospital (LRH) spokesperson Mohammad Asim said that 100 bodies had been brought to the medical facility.

Asim said 53 injured were currently being treated while seven had been admitted to intensive care unit (ICU). He

said that most of the injured were out of danger. Most of the victims were policemen. At least a deputy superintendent of police, five sub-inspectors and the mosque's prayer leader Maulana Sahibzada Noorul Amin were among the dead.



The Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), known as the Pakistani Taliban, claimed responsibility for the suicide attack, saying it was part of a revenge attack for slain TTP commander Umar Khalid Khurasani who was killed in Afghanistan in August last.

Biden to end COVID-19 emergencies on May 11

AP ■ WASHINGTON

President Joe Biden informed Congress on Monday that he will end the twin national emergencies for addressing COVID-19 on May 11, as most of the world has returned closer to normalcy nearly three years after they were first declared.

The move to end the national emergency and public health emergency declarations would formally restructure the federal coronavirus response to treat the virus as an endemic threat to public health that can be managed through agencies' normal authorities.

It comes as lawmakers have already ended elements of the emergencies that kept millions of Americans insured during the pandemic. Combined with the drawdown of most federal COVID-19 relief money, it would also shift the development of vaccines and treatments away from the direct management of the federal government.

Biden's announcement comes in a statement opposing resolutions being brought to the floor this week by House Republicans to bring the emergency to an immediate end. House Republicans are also gearing up to launch investigations on the federal government's response to COVID-19.

Then-President Donald Trump first declared the COVID-19 pandemic a national emergency on March 13, 2020. The emergencies have been repeatedly extended by Biden since he took office in January 2021, and are set to expire in the coming months. The White House said Biden plans to extend them both briefly to end on May 11.

"An abrupt end to the emergency declarations would create wide-ranging chaos and uncertainty throughout the health care system — for states, for hospitals and doctors' offices, and, most importantly, for tens of millions of Americans," the Office of Management and Budget wrote

in a Statement of Administration Policy.

Congress has already blunted the reach of the public health emergency that had the most direct impact on Americans, as political calls to end the declaration intensified.

Lawmakers have refused for months to fulfill the Biden administration's request for billions more dollars to extend free COVID vaccines and testing. And the \$1.7 trillion spending package passed last year and signed into law by Biden put an end to a rule that barred states from kicking people off Medicaid, a move that is expected to see millions of people lose their coverage after April 1.

The costs of COVID-19 vaccines are also expected to skyrocket once the government stops buying them, with Pfizer saying it will charge as much as \$130 per dose. Only 15% of Americans have received the recommended, updated booster that has been offered since last fall.

FROM PAGE 1

GLOBAL TURMOIL-HIT GDP TO GROW AT 6.5%: ECO SURVEY

"Improved tax collection efficiency was one of the main arguments in favour of GST. The evidence so far suggests that GST is indeed showing a higher buoyancy than the pre-GST system. This augurs well for future resource mobilisation in the economy," said the Economic Survey.

Tax buoyancy refers to an increase in tax collections in proportion to a rise in national income. A higher buoyancy reflects the increased efficiency of the tax system.

The report listed at least three shocks that have hit the global economy since 2020 starting with the pandemic-induced contraction of the global output, spike in global inflation due to the Russian-Ukraine conflict, and global interest rate hike to curb inflation.

The rate hike by the US Fed drove capital into the US markets causing the US dollar to appreciate against most currencies. This led to the widening of the Current Account Deficits (CAD) and increased inflationary pressures in net importing economies like India.

"The Indian economy, however, appears to have moved on after its encounter with the pandemic, staging a full recovery in FY22 (April 2021 to March 2022) ahead of many nations and positioning itself to ascend to the pre-pandemic growth path in FY23.

"Yet in the current year, India has also faced the challenge of reining in inflation that the European strife accentuated," the survey said.

However, the challenge of the depreciating rupee, although better performing than most other currencies, persists with the likelihood of further increases in policy rates by the US Fed. The widening of the CAD may also continue as global commodity prices remain elevated and the growth momentum of the Indian economy remains strong, it said.

The survey said there has been an improvement in employment conditions in India due to stronger consumption but a pick-up in private investment is essential to creating more jobs.

"The loss of export stimulus is further possible as the slowing world growth and trade shrinks the global market size in the second half of the current year."

It indicated that while inflation may not be too worrisome, borrowing costs are likely to remain 'higher for longer' as an

entrenched inflation may prolong the tightening cycle.

India's recovery from the pandemic was relatively quick, growth will be supported by solid domestic demand, pick-up in capital investment, the survey said but highlighted the challenge to the rupee with the likelihood of further interest rate hikes by the US Fed.

"The survey projects a baseline GDP growth of 6.5 per cent in real terms in FY24," the report said. "The actual outcome for real GDP growth will probably lie in the range of 6 per cent to 6.8 per cent, depending on the trajectory of economic and political developments globally."

CAD may continue to widen as global commodity prices remain elevated and because of strong economic growth momentum. If CAD widens further, the rupee may come under depreciation pressure, it said, adding the overall external situation will remain manageable.

On exports, it said the growth moderated in the second half of the current fiscal year. Slowing world growth, shrinking global trade led to loss of export stimulus in the second half of the current year.

India's economic growth in FY23 has been principally led by private consumption and capital formation. It has helped generate employment as seen in the declining urban unemployment rate and in the faster net registration in the Employee Provident Fund.

"Still, private capex soon needs to take up the leadership role to put job creation on a fast track," the survey said.

A slowdown in global growth will likely push down global commodity prices and improve India's CAD in FY24. "However, a downside risk to the Current Account Balance stems from a swift recovery driven mainly by domestic demand and, to a lesser extent, by exports," it said. "The CAD needs to be closely monitored as the growth momentum of the current year spills over into the next."

Growth is expected to be brisk in FY24 as a vigorous credit disbursement and capital investment cycle are expected to unfold in India with the strengthening of the balance sheets of the corporate and banking sectors.

Further support to economic growth will come from the expansion of public digital platforms and path-breaking measures such as PM GatiShakti, the National Logistics Policy, and the Production-Linked Incentive schemes to boost manufacturing output.

"Economy has nearly recouped what was lost, renewed what had paused, and

re-energised what had slowed during the pandemic and since the conflict in Europe," it said.

Pegging nominal growth at 11 per cent for 2023-24, the survey said the growth in the financial year beginning April 1 will remain strong relative to most global economies, led by sustained private consumption, a pick-up in lending by banks and improved capital spending by corporations.

The optimistic growth forecasts stem from a number of positives like the rebound of private consumption giving a boost to production activity, higher capital expenditure, and near universal vaccination coverage enabling people to spend on contact-based services such as restaurants, hotels, shopping malls and cinemas.

The return of migrant workers to cities to work on construction sites leading to a significant decline in housing market inventory is also a factor for the optimistic growth projection, it said.

The strengthening of the balance sheets of corporates, well-capitalised public sector banks ready to increase the credit supply and the credit growth to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) sector have also helped.

MODI GOVT HAS BEEN STABLE, FEARLESS, DECISIVE, SAYS PREZ

The President also detailed the number of central welfare schemes which has brought large scale changes in country benefited all, particularly women.

Talking about PM Awas Yojana, the President said women's self-confidence has received a boost after the houses allotted under the scheme have been registered in their names. The Jan Dhan Yojana has led to a parity between men and women in access to banking services in the country for the first time, she said.

She added that there are more than 80 lakh self-help groups functioning in the country in which about 9 crore women are associated.

"Assistance of lakhs of crores of rupees is being given by the government to these women self-help groups," she said.

Murmu also highlighted that about 3 crore women farmers are among the beneficiaries of the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi and they have received about Rs 54,000 crore under this scheme.

She said India today has a Government which is committed to removing every

obstacle faced by women, and mentioned steps like girls being admitted to Sainik Schools and a majority of women beneficiaries under various state-run schemes.

Giving credence to "Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao" campaign, she said the initiative has brought in a consciousness in the society which has led to a "steady increase in the number of daughters."

"For the first time in the country, the female population outnumbers the males and the health of women has also improved considerably. Today India has a government which is committed to removing every obstacle being faced by women," Murmu said.

Murmu said the Government "firmly" believed that lasting peace is possible only when the country is strong politically and strategically, and that is the reason why constant emphasis is being put on the modernisation of the country's military strength.

The President touched upon India's ongoing presidency of the G-20, chairship of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) as well as its role in the Quad with a focus on working for peace, stability and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific.

Without making any direct reference to India's troublesome ties with Pakistan and China, she asserted that "befitting response" was given to every "misadventure from LoC (Line of Control) to LAC (Line of Actual Control)."

"My decisive government has always kept the country's interest paramount and shown the willpower to completely transform the policies and strategies when required," she said.

"From surgical strike to a firm crackdown on terrorism, from a befitting response to every misadventure from LoC to LAC, from abrogation of Article 370 to Triple Talaq, my government has been recognised as a decisive government," Murmu said.

The world is looking towards India with "high hopes" and it is among those countries that are reinforcing the trust in the global supply, Murmu said, noting that the country's identity as a nation was immortal in the past, and will remain so in the future as well.

The President said the goodwill that India has generated benefitted it during the crises in Afghanistan and Ukraine, especially in evacuation of Indian citizens from these countries.

"Today the world is also acknowledging India's tough stand on terrorism. Due to this, India's voice against terrorism is being heard seriously on every global plat-

form," she said.

"In October last year, a special meeting of the UNSC Counter-Terrorism Committee was organised for the first time in India. In this too, India made its position clear against terrorism," Murmu added.

"Under these circumstances, India has emerged as a country that is connecting today's divided world in some form or the other. India is today among those countries that are reinforcing the trust in the global supply chain. Therefore, today, the world is looking towards India with high hopes," she said.

Murmu also listed India's ongoing presidency of influential global grouping G-20, noting that the government does not want to limit it to just one diplomatic programme.

"With the mantra of One Earth, One Family, One Future, India is attempting to find collective solutions to the current global challenges in collaboration with the G-20 member countries.

The President said India has expanded its role keeping its national interests paramount and cited New Delhi's humanitarian aid to Afghanistan and Sri Lanka.

"This is the best phase of India's global relations. We have strengthened our cooperation and friendship with various countries of the world. On the one hand, we are chairing the SCO this year, and on the other, being a member of the Quad, we are working for peace, stability and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific," she said.

The President urged people to discharge their duties to the maximum to build in the next 25 years a developed India connected to its past glory and containing every golden chapter of modernity.

"Amrit kaal", described by the Government as the 25-year period culminating in the centenary of India's independence, is the time to build an India which is 'aatmanirbhar' (self-reliant) and also fulfils its humanitarian obligations, she said.

It will be an India with no poverty and a prosperous middle class and one whose youth and women are at the vanguard of guiding the nation, the president said, amid frequent thumping of desks by lawmakers at the Central Hall of Parliament

ADANI'S FPO FULLY SUBSCRIBED; RETAIL RESPONSE MUTED

But Adani Total Gas closed the day down 10 per cent, Adani Power registered

a fall of 4.99 per cent and Adani Wilmar declined by 5 per cent.

The Adani group stocks (including Ambuja, ACC and NDTV) have lost about Rs 5.5 lakh crore or about 29 per cent of their combined market cap in the last four trading sessions, new agency PTI said quoting Manish Chowdhury, head of research at Stoxbox.

Adani group stocks have taken a beating on the bourses after Hindenburg in a report made a litany of allegations, including fraudulent transactions and share price manipulation, at the Gautam Adani-led group.

Meanwhile, equity benchmarks ended with marginal gains as investors kept their powder dry ahead of the Union Budget presentation and the US Federal Reserve's interest rate decision. Fag-end buying helped the 30-share BSE benchmark Sensex settle with a gain of 49.49 points or 0.08 per cent at 59,549.90. During the day, it hit a high of 59,787.63 and a low of 59,104.59.

ADULTERY VERDICT OF 2018 NOT VALID FOR ARMED FORCES, SAYS SC

"In view of the aforesaid (2018) judgment, there will always be a concern in the minds of the army personnel who are operating far away from their families under challenging conditions about the family indulging in untoward activities," the application said.

COLLEGIUM LISTS 2 HC JUDGES FOR ELEVATION TO SC

"The Supreme Court of India has a sanctioned strength of thirty four judges and is presently functioning with twenty seven judges. Thus, there are seven clear vacancies. On 13 December 2022, the Collegium recommended five names for appointment as Judges of the Supreme Court, namely (i) Justice Pankaj Mithal, (ii) Justice Sanjay Karol, (iii) Justice PV Sanjay Kumar, (iv) Justice Ahsanuddin Amanullah, and (v) Justice Manoj Misra. Their appointment is yet to be notified by the Government. The Collegium resolves to recommend two more names for appointment as judges of the Supreme Court against the two remaining vacancies," said the apex court in a statement.

REAL EXPECTED TO CONTINUE EUROPEAN DOMINANCE OF CWC

AP ■ RABAT

One of the last Club World Cups in its current format begins on Wednesday in Morocco, where Real Madrid will be favourites to continue Europe's dominance of the much-maligned FIFA competition. FIFA president Gianni Infantino announced on the sidelines of the World Cup in Qatar in December that an expanded Club World Cup is planned from 2025.

The bigger competition, which would feature 32 teams, has been a controversial pet project of Infantino's for some time. A 24-team Club World Cup, involving eight European sides, had been due to take place in China in 2021 only to be put on hold due to the coronavirus pandemic.

World football's governing body is yet to reveal any further details of the plans, but global players' union FIFPro has already complained of Infantino making the announcement "unilaterally without seriously consulting...with the players".

For now, the Club World Cup limps on with just seven teams, including the six continental champions.

After five consecutive editions in the Middle East it returns to Morocco, which hosted the tournament in 2013 and 2014, and Real will be expected to become the 10th consecutive



European winners.

Real, the reigning European champions, have claimed the title four times, including in Morocco in 2014.

Real will enter in the semi-finals on February 8 and will play in Rabat against either

CONCACAF champions Seattle Sounders, Egyptian giants Al Ahly or New Zealand's Auckland City, the champions of Oceania.

If they win, Carlo Ancelotti's side will advance to the final on February 11.

MOROCCAN HOPES

The other semi-final will see last year's Copa Libertadores winners Flamengo take on either Al Hilal of Saudi Arabia or home hopes Wydad Casablanca.

Widely dismissed as an irrelevance in Europe, the com-

petition is considered far more prestigious in the rest of the world, a chance for their best sides to pit themselves against giants like Real.

Brazilian clubs have won the Club World Cup four times, most recently through Corin-

thians in 2012. Wydad will be hoping to become the first African club to triumph.

The host nation is always represented, but Wydad also won last year's CAF Champions League, and so Al Ahly — the team they beat in the final —

Man Utd lose Eriksen until May

AP ■ MANCHESTER

Manchester United midfielder Christian Eriksen is likely to be ruled out until early May by an ankle injury he suffered in the FA Cup win over Reading, the club said Tuesday. Eriksen left Old Trafford on crutches on Saturday after being caught by Reading striker Andy Carroll in the fourth-round tie.

The loss of the 30-year-old Danish playmaker is a blow for United who lie fourth in the Premier League and in the Champions League qualification places after a good run of

form that only ended with the 3-2 defeat by leaders Arsenal on January 22.

United said in a statement: "Christian Eriksen is expected to be out of action for an extended period because of an ankle injury sustained in our FA Cup victory over Reading on Saturday."

"While investigations are continuing, initial assessments indicate that Eriksen is likely to be out until late April or early May."

United said "there is hope that Christian can return in time to play a role in the final stages of the campaign".

have been invited to take part as well.

Walid Regragui led Wydad to that continental title before taking Morocco on a historic run to the World Cup semi-finals in Qatar.

"It's nice for Morocco — particularly after the World Cup we had — for people to see that there's football here, there are fans, and there are beautiful stadiums. It's going to be fantastic for our country," Regragui told FIFA.com

The competition kicks off on Wednesday when Al Ahly — the record 10-time African champions who have finished third at the last two Club World Cups — play Auckland City in Tangier.

The tournament will see a refereeing first after the International Football Association Board, the sport's lawmakers, approved a trial that will allow fans in the stadium to hear officials explain decisions taken after VAR reviews.

West Ham ease past Derby to earn Man Utd clash India in Group B of Asia Mixed Team Championships 2023

AP ■ LONDON

David Moyes cannot wait to take on his former club Manchester United in the FA Cup fifth round after goals from Jarrod Bowen and Michail Antonio sealed West Ham's 2-0 victory at third tier Derby on Monday.

Bowen put West Ham ahead early in the first half and Antonio doubled the lead soon after the interval in the fourth round tie.

Moyes' side will head to Old Trafford in late February as they continue their bid to reach the FA Cup final for the first time since 2006.

It will be Moyes' latest return to United, who sacked the Scot in 2014 only 10 months after he succeeded Alex Ferguson.

"I'm really looking forward to the game. It's a really good game for us," Moyes said.

"Maybe at the moment that's the game we need because we've got players who want to play on the big stage."

"There's nothing bigger than

Old Trafford, so I'm saying to the players, 'Come on, let's go and take it on and challenge them!'"

Avoiding an embarrassing defeat against Derby was essential for the under-fire Moyes, but it is Premier League survival that remains his top priority.

The Hammers are languishing in 16th place in the Premier League, just one point above the relegation zone.

"This was a difficult game because Derby had gone 16 unbeaten. In the end, we did a pretty professional job on them," Moyes said.

Moyes made six changes following West Ham's vital 2-0 victory over Premier League relegation rivals Everton in their most recent match nine days ago. Despite the selection gamble, West Ham proved too strong for a Derby side on the up after a turbulent period.

Just 12 months ago, Derby were in turmoil, with the club close to going out of business after they plunged into administration and suffered relegation to the third tier for the first time



since 1986.

Finally rescued in July 2022 when lifelong Derby fan David Clowes bought the club from Mel Morris, the Rams have

been revitalised this term.

Paul Warne's side sit fourth in League One and the FA Cup exit shouldn't detract from their promotion challenge.

West Ham's victory came just hours after the last 16 draw was made.

Wrexham will host Tottenham if the non-league side can beat Sheffield United in a fourth round replay.

Fifth-tier Wrexham, who are owned by Hollywood actors Ryan Reynolds and Rob McElhenney, were seconds away from a shock win against Sheffield United on Sunday before the Championship side snatched a 3-3 draw.

With Reynolds watching at the Racecourse Ground, John Egan scored a late equaliser for United and the teams will meet again at Bramall Lane for the right to face Tottenham.

Manchester City, 1-0 winners over Premier League leaders Arsenal on Friday, travel to second tier Bristol City, for the first meeting of the sides since the League Cup semi-finals in 2018.

Brighton head to second tier Stoke after knocking out holders Liverpool with a dramatic 2-1 victory on Sunday.

AIANS ■ NEW DELHI

India has been placed in Group B alongside Malaysia, UAE, and Kazakhstan in the Asia Mixed Team Championships 2023, which will be held here at the Dubai Exhibition Centre, from February 14 to 19.

The draw for the continental event, which will have 17 teams, took place here at Dubai Sports Council on Tuesday, where Indian ace shuttler PV Sindhu was present as the Guest of Honour.

Group A consists of China, Korea, Singapore and Uzbekistan. Group C includes Indonesia, Thailand, Bahrain, Syria and Lebanon while Japan, Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong and Pakistan are drawn in Group D.

China, Japan, Indonesia, and Malaysia are the top four seeded teams. All 17 teams are divided into four groups of four countries, and one group with five, where they compete in



Round Robin format with the top two teams advancing to the knockout stage.

Each tie group shall be decided by the results of two singles and three doubles matches. In the Group stage, all five matches of each tie shall be played. In the Knockout stage,

each tie shall be stopped when the tie is decided.

A draw of the knockout stage will be made after the completion of the last match of the Group Stage.

The Indian team was knocked out in the quarterfinals of the first edition held in 2017. India could not go past the group stage in the last edition of the Championship, held in 2019. The 2021 edition was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

INDIA SQUAD:

Men's singles: Lakshya Sen, HS Prannoy

Women's singles: PV Sindhu, Aakarshi Kashyap

Men's doubles: Satwiksairaj Ranikreddy/Chirag Shetty, Krishna Prasad Garga/Vishnuvardhan Goud P

Women's doubles: Treesa Jolly/Gayatri Gopichand, Ashwini Bhat/Shikha Gautam

Mixed doubles: Ishaan Bhatnagar/Tanisha Crasto

LOCAL EVENTS



JAGRAN LIFT MPL TROPHY

Dainik Jagran defeated Times of India by eight wickets to lift the SBI Media Premier League at KD Singh 'Babu' Stadium on Tuesday.

Opting to bat, ToI scored in 114 runs in 19 overs with skipper Rajiv Srivastava (32) being the top scorer. Vimlesh was the pick of the bowlers with three wickets to his credit. In reply, Jagran achieved the target in 14.2 overs for the loss of two wickets. Prahalad Mawri and Saurabh Gangwar scored 43 and 34 runs respectively.

Prahalad was adjudged man of the series while Ashu Bajpai and Vimlesh walked away with best batsman and best bowler trophies respectively. Gulshan Dwivedi bagged the best fielder award. SBI CGM Sharad S Chandak and director (sports) RP Singh gave away the awards.

BRIEF SCORES:

TOI: 114 (Rajiv 32, Anil 15, Anish 13; Vimlesh 3/28, Ankur 2/11, Vinod 2/18)
DJ: 117 (Prahalad 43, Saurabh 34; Abbas 1/12, Prem 1/23).

ABHAY, SHASHWAT SHINE

Abhay Dwivedi's all-round effort (59 runs, three wickets) and Shashwat Pandey's 65-run knock helped REPL Crusaders beat Akhil Infra Cricket Club by nine wickets in G20 BBD Senior Division Cricket League at Chowk Stadium on Tuesday.

Batting first, Akhil Infra scored 158 runs in 34 overs which REPL Crusaders chased down in 32.1 overs for the loss of one wicket.

ASTER PUBLIC SCHOOL ENTER SEMIS

Aster Public School, Noida defeated DAV Senior Secondary School, Amritsar to enter the semi-finals of International School Cricket Premier League at the CMS Kanpur Road cricket ground on Tuesday.

Batting first, APS Noida scored 221 runs for the loss of 6 wickets in the stipulated 20 overs with, Saksham Sharma hammering 50 runs off just 18 balls while Mohammad Aman and Abhishek Bhati also scoring half-centuries. In reply, DAV Punjab could only score 191 runs in 19.1 overs. Gyan Ganga Public School, Patna, and Ammenity Public School, Uttarakhnad also won their respective quarter-final matches to book the semis spot.

INTER-SCHOOL TENNIS

Sarojini Nagar MLA Rajeshwar Singh and former Team India pacer RP Singh inaugurated the 2nd Inter-school Tennis Tournament organised by Delhi Public School Eldeco on Tuesday.

No ATP action against Zverev after 'insufficient evidence' of abuse

AP ■ LONDON

Former world number two Alexander Zverev will face no disciplinary action from the ATP after an independent investigation found "insufficient evidence" to substantiate allegations of domestic abuse, it was announced Tuesday.

The German player became the subject of an ATP-commissioned probe in October 2021 following allegations made by his former girlfriend, Olya Sharypova.

Zverev had denied all of the allegations.

But the ATP said in a statement: "A major independent investigation into Alexander Zverev has found insufficient

evidence to substantiate published allegations of abuse. As a result, no disciplinary action will be taken by ATP."

The ATP, the governing body for the men's professional tour, said while the primary focus of the investigation related to alleged abuses at the ATP Masters 1000 event in Shanghai in 2019, its scope also included purported misconduct in other locations, including Monaco, New York and Geneva, as referenced in public reporting.

An inquiry led by the Lake Forest Group (LFG), a third-party investigator, conducted what the statement said were "extensive interviews" with both Sharypova and Zverev, and 24 other individuals including family and friends, players, and other parties



involved with the ATP tour.

It also reviewed submissions by both Sharypova and Zverev, including text messages, audio files, and photos.

Following a 15-month process, LFG submitted its full report to the ATP, which said that "based on a lack of reliable evidence and eyewitness reports, in addition to conflicting statements by Sharypova, Zverev and other interviewees, the investigation was unable to substantiate the allegations of abuse" or determine that violations of the ATP's rules had taken place.

The statement added that the findings "may however be reevaluated should new evidence come to light, or should any legal proceedings reveal violations of ATP rules"

Bayern sign Cancelo on loan from Man City

AP ■ MUNICH

Bayern Munich have signed Portugal wing-back Joao Cancelo on loan until the end of the season from Manchester City, the German club confirmed on Tuesday.

Bayern have an option to buy the Portuguese defender for a reported 70 million euros (\$75 million) at the end of the season.

Cancelo, who has scored seven times in 41 appearances for Portugal, arrived in Munich on Monday and completed a medical on Tuesday for a move that could spell the end of France international Benjamin Pavard's time at Bayern.

The 28-year-old Portuguese defender joined City from Juventus for 65 million euros (\$70 million) in 2019 and has a contract with the English champions until 2027.

"FC Bayern is a great club, one of the best in the world, and it's enormous motivation for me to now play alongside these extraordinary players in a team," Cancelo said in a statement released by the club on Tuesday.

"I know that this club, this team lives for titles and wins titles every year. I'm also driven by the hunger for success."



Cancelo has won multiple titles throughout his career, including league titles with Benfica, Juventus and Man City.

Bayern sporting director Hasan Salihamidzic said the club "had been thinking about (Cancelo) for a while" before making its move.

"He's the optimal fit in our system with his attacking style of play and dynamism, and his mentality and experience fit very well in our team."

"I'm convinced Joao will help us in the coming weeks and months where we want to win titles."

Bayern secured the deadline-day signing after Cancelo, who has been named in the Premier League Team of the Year for the past two seasons, has fallen out of the Man City first team in recent weeks.

Manager Pep Guardiola has left Cancelo out of the starting line-up in each of the team's last three games, with academy graduate Rico Lewis, alongside Nathan Ake, Kyle Walker and John Stones all preferred to Cancelo.

MANE RETURNS TO TRAINING WITH BALL IN MUNICH

AP ■ MUNICH

Bayern Munich forward Sadio Mane trained with the ball for the first time in three months on Wednesday, two weeks ahead of the club's crucial Paris Saint Germain clash.

Mane, 30, took part in the Tuesday morning session, one week after his return to the training pitch.

Mane injured a tendon in his leg during his side's 6-1 win over Werder Bremen in November and required surgery that forced him to miss Senegal's World Cup campaign in Qatar.

Bayern travel to Paris for the first leg of the Champions League last 16 tie on February 14, with the return fixture in Munich on March 8.



Bayern manager Julian Nagelsmann previously said he "would not count on" the reigning African Player of the Year to be available for the first leg.

Mane, who arrived in Bayern from Liverpool in the summer of 2022, has scored 11 goals in 23 games in all competitions this year.

