

CITY 3
UP GOVT GEARED
UP FOR GIS**OPINION 6**
INVEST IN DEFENCE
MODERNISATION**WORLD 10**
WILL SAFEGUARD INTERESTS OVER
BALLOON SHOOTDOWN: CHINA

LUCKNOW, WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 8, 2023; PAGES 12 ₹3



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11 SPORT

Rahul cries Adani link; BJP retorts 'deal' Cong culture

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Leading the Opposition Lattack over the Adani-Hindenburg issue in Parliament, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi made a barrage of allegations, including that Prime Minister Narendra Modi helped Adani bag overseas contracts in various sectors propelling him to attain the second spot from 609th on global rich list within a span of nine years.

Later the BJP accused Rahul of making baseless, shameless and reckless allegations against Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and charged that the Congress and the Gandhi family were involved in "big scams" which "tarnished" the image of the country. "Deal and commission" have been part of the Congress' working culture and the party has been in distress as the Modi Government eliminated these corrupt practices, BJP leader and former Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad told reporters.

After three days of Budget session without over the Adani row, the Congress and most of the Opposition parties resolved to participate in the debate on the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address. The Opposition has been demanding a joint parliamentary committee (JPC) probe or a Supreme Court-monitored investigation into the Hindenburg Research report against Adani's companies that



View of the Lok Sabha during Budget Session of Parliament in New Delhi on Tuesday

PTI

triggered an unprecedented stock crash. The Adani Group has denied the charges.

Being the first Opposition Speaker in the Lok Sabha, Rahul linked Gautam Adani's meteoric rise to Modi's coming to power and said "magic" happened after 2014 drawing sharp response from the treasury benches, with Law Minister Kiren Rijiju and several BJP leaders asking him not to level "wild allegations" and furnish proof of his claims.

The BJP hit back at Rahul, with Ravi Shankar Prasad told the media, "The Congress and its leaders were involved in all big scams which tarnished the image of India. Rahul, his mother Sonia Gandhi and her son-in-law Robert Vadera are on bail. It's time to revive the memory of Rahul Gandhi on

corruption. Corruption and giving protection to the corrupt have been the history of Rahul Gandhi and his family."

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla disapproved of Rahul displaying two pictures of Modi: One in which he can be seen with Adani inside a plane and the other in which he is getting down from a plane which has an Adani logo on it. Reacting to Rahul displaying pictures of Modi with Adani during his speech, Prasad said the photographs of the Congress leader's presence in the events of Nirav Modi and with Mehul Choksi, both fugitives, are also doing the rounds.

The Rajya Sabha after two brief adjournments in morning hours took up the proceedings post lunch. Congress MP Digvijay Singh said 'Amrit Kaal'

has benefitted only a bunch of people and 21 people hold assets equal to 70 crore people to which Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankar intervened and said he may be called to authenticate some documents. The Congress member agreed.

"How many times did Adani ji join you later on a visit? How many times has Adani ji travelled to a country immediately after you visited the country? How many times did Adaniji bag a contract in a foreign country after your visit there?" Rahul said in an attacking mode earning ire of the ruling BJP.

He asked how much money Adani has given to the BJP in the last 20 years, including through electoral bonds.

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Voices crying out from quake rubble fall silent

Turkey-Syria quake: Toll 6,200, over 8K pulled out from debris, 13m affected

AP ■ NURDAGI (TURKEY)

Search teams and international aid poured into Turkey and Syria on Tuesday as rescuers working in freezing temperatures and sometimes using their bare hands dug through the remains of buildings flattened by a powerful earthquake. The death toll soared above 6,200 even as 8,000 have been pulled out from rubble in Turkey alone. About 13 million people have been affected, said officials.

With the damage spread over a wide area, the massive relief operation often struggled to reach devastated towns as voices that had been crying out from the rubble fell silent.

"We could hear their voices, they were calling for help," said Ali Silo, whose two relatives could not be saved in the Turkish town of Nurdagi.

In the end, it was left to Silo, a Syrian who arrived a decade ago, and other residents to recover the bodies and those of two other victims.

Monday's magnitude 7.8 quake and a cascade of strong aftershocks cut a swath of destruction that stretched hundreds of kilometres (miles) across southeastern Turkey and Syria. The quakes heaped more misery on a region shaped by Syria's 12-year civil war and refugee crisis.

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A woman sits on the rubble as emergency rescue teams search for people under the remains of destroyed buildings in Nurdagi town on the outskirts of Osmaniye city southern Turkey on Tuesday

AP/PTI

Turkey thanks 'dost' India

A friend in need is a friend indeed, says Turkish envoy to India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Turkiye on Tuesday thanked "dost" India for immediately dispatching rescue teams and relief material within 24 hours of the earthquake there. Syria, which also suffered the

tragedy, also thanked India for help.

Appreciating New Delhi's gesture in this hour of crisis, Turkish Ambassador to India Firat Sunel also said "a friend in need is a friend indeed."

"Dost" is a common word in Turkish and Hindi... We have a Turkish proverb, "Dost kara gunde belli olur" (a friend in need is a friend indeed). Thank you very much India," he said in a tweet message.

"We really appreciate the help extended by India to Turkey within hours of the

earthquake. We too use the word 'dost' for a friend. I would say a friend in need is a friend indeed. Friends help each other," he said.

"India is among the countries that sent teams for search and rescue operations. After the first earthquake India's NDRF held a coordination meeting on the instruction of Prime Minister Narendra," Sunel said. Earlier, Minister of State for External Affairs V Muraleedharan visited Turkish and Syrian Embassies and expressed condolences. He also conveyed Modi's sympathy and humanitarian support.

Offering condolences to the Turkish and Syrian leadership for loss of lives, Modi on Monday offered all possible assistance. An emergency meeting was also held on Monday chaired by PK Mishra, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister.

"Anghusht by the loss of lives and damage of property due to the earthquake in Turkey. Condolences to the bereaved families. May the injured recover soon," Modi said in a tweet.

"India stands in solidarity with the people of Turkey and is ready to offer all possible assistance to cope with this tragedy," the Prime Minister said tagging a tweet by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on the quake. Meanwhile, the Turkish envoy said here, "Yesterday, India sent carriers to Turkey carrying rescue and search teams along with equipment. It arrived in the morning in Adana."

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CAPSULE

₹8L OBC NON-CREAMY INCOME CAP INTACT: GOVT

New Delhi: The existing annual income ceiling of ₹8 lakh is "sufficient" to determine the OBC non-creamy layer status of community members, the Centre told the Lok Sabha on Tuesday, clarifying that there is no proposal to increase the cap.

AUGUSTA MIDDLEMAN MICHEL DENIED BAIL

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday denied bail to Christian Michel James, accused middleman in AugustaWestland chopper scam cases, who was deported from Dubai and being probed by both the CBI and the Enforcement Directorate.

PHOTO JOURNALIST BEATEN TO DEATH

Kanpur: A cameraperson for a national Hindi news channel died after an alleged brawl with a catering staff at a wedding, police said on Tuesday.

TENSION IN NORTH-DELHI OVER COW SLAUGHTERING

New Delhi: Tension gripped North Delhi's Gulabi Bagh area after dismembered parts of a cow were found in north Delhi's Gulabi Bagh area on Tuesday, police said.

Gowri sworn in as Madras HC judge; SC junks plea challenging appointment

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday refused to entertain pleas seeking to restrain lawyer Lekshmana Chandra Victoria Gowri from taking oath as an additional judge of the Madras High Court, saying a "consultative process" had taken place before her name was recommended by the Collegium for the appointment.

Gowri took oath as additional judge of the Madras High Court on Tuesday, minutes before the Supreme Court rejected a petition challenging her appointment. Gowri, in her address, after being sworn in as additional judge by Acting Chief Justice T Raja asserted that she would dispense justice in realising the dreams of the makers of the Constitution.

She was administered the oath of office around 10.45 am while the top court was hearing arguments on why Gowri



should not be elevated.

While the Supreme Court refused to entertain the plea seeking to restrain Gowri from taking oath as Additional Judge, sources close to the petitioners said the apex court's ruling signalled the end of the matter and there appeared to be no scope to take the legal fight forward.

The sources said the petitioners are not activists and taking up the matter to SC to oppose Gowri's appointment was an act of duty to safeguard, preserve and protect the independence of judiciary and the values of the Constitution.

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India rushes relief for quake victims

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India on Tuesday rushed two plane-loads of relief materials, two teams of the National Disaster Relief Force (NDRF), comprising 101 personnel with specially trained dog squads and necessary equipment for aiding search and rescue efforts besides mobilising a 99-member medical team of the Army to set up field hospitals in earthquake-hit Turkiye and Syria.

The NDRF teams, including five women personnel and canine squad, reached quake-hit Turkey early on Tuesday to help in the rescue operations after a 7.8 magnitude quake killed thousands of people in the country. The teams have been accompanied by two search dogs, four-wheeled vehicles, chipping hammers, cutting tools, first aid medicines and communication setup, officials said. The rescuers are drawn from teams based in Ghaziabad and Kolkata.

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IAF's C-17 Globemaster III heavy lift aircraft carrying NDRF rescue teams and relief material arrives in Adana to support rescue and search efforts in earthquake-hit Turkey

PTI

SC to hear MCD mayoral poll plea today

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court agreed to hear on Wednesday a plea filed by Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) mayoral candidate Shelly Oberoi and others seeking early holding of the mayoral election for the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD).

A bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices PS Narasimha and JB Pardiwala took note of the submissions of a lawyer, appearing for the AAP, seeking urgent hearing of the plea. "We will list it tomorrow," the CJ said. The MCD House failed to elect a Mayor for the third time on Monday.

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Banks' exposure to Adani not very big to hit credit quality: Rating agencies

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Global rating agencies Fitch and Moody's on Tuesday said banks' exposure to Adani Group is not large enough to affect their credit quality, and bank ratings are driven by expectations that they would receive 'extraordinary' sovereign support, if needed.

"Fitch Ratings believes that Indian banks' exposure to the Adani group is insufficient in itself to present a substantial risk to the banks' standalone credit profiles," the rating agency said in a note.

"Risks for banks can increase if Adani becomes more reliant on bank loans," Moody's said.

India hits out at Pak for raking up Kashmir at UN

PTI ■ UNITED NATIONS

India has slammed Pakistan for raking up the Kashmir issue in the United Nations, saying Islamabad harbours a deep sense of insecurity and orchestrated hatred for its neighbouring country and its secular credentials.

Responding to Pakistan's raising of a UN General Assembly (UNGA) meeting, Counsellor in India's Permanent Mission to the UN, Rajesh Parihar, said on Monday that Islamabad repeatedly utters falsehoods about India.

"I'm constrained to take the floor to respond to the frivolous



remarks made by the representative of Pakistan against my country. While such a statement deserves our sympathy for a mindset, which repeatedly utters falsehood, it is important for me to set the record straight," he said in the UNGA.

Parihar said irrespective of what the representative of Pakistan believes or covets, the Union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh were,

are and will always be an "integral and inalienable" part of India.

"We expect nothing new from this delegation that harbours a deep sense of insecurity and orchestrated hatred for India and our secular credentials and values that my country stands for," he said.

Tensions between India and Pakistan spiked after New Delhi abrogated Article 370 of the Constitution to revoke the special status of Jammu and Kashmir on August 5, 2019. India's decision evoked strong reactions from Pakistan, which downgraded diplomatic ties and expelled the Indian envoy.

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Virginity test unconstitutional, sexist: Delhi HC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court ruled on Tuesday that conducting a "virginity test" on a female accused is unconstitutional, sexist and in violation of her right to dignity, calling it a form of inhuman treatment.

The court also observed that there is no legal procedure that provides for a "virginity test".

The order was passed by Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma on a plea moved by Sister Sephy, who sought to declare the conduct of a "virginity test" on her in connection with a criminal case over Sister Abhaya's death in Kerala in 1992 as unconstitutional.

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20, all males, score 100 in JEE-Main

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Twenty candidates have scored perfect 100 in engineering entrance exam JEE-Main's January edition, the National Testing Agency (NTA) announced on Tuesday.

All the candidates with 100 NTA score in the Joint Entrance Exam (JEE)-Main are males. The 20 toppers include 14 from the general category, four from the OBC category and one each from gen-EWS and SC category.

While Md Sahil Akhtar is the PwD topper with 99.9848042 NTA score, the SC topper is Deshank Pratap Singh with 100 NTA score and ST topper is Dheeravath Thanuj with 99.99041. The candidates who scored 100 NTA scores are

Abhineet Majety, Amogh Jalan, Apurva Samota, Ashik Stenny, Bikkina Abhinav Chowdary, Deshank Pratap Singh, Dhruv Sanjay Jain, Dnyanesh Hemendra Shinde, Duggineni Venkata Yugesh, Gulshan Kumar, Guthikonda Abhiram, Kaushal Vijayvergiya, Krish Gupta, Mayank Son, N K Vishwaajith, Nipun Goel, Rishi Kalra, Soham Das, Suthar Harshul Sanjaybhai and Vavilala Chidvilas Reddy.

"The NTA scores of 50 candidates have been withheld as they are under scrutiny with cases being placed before a committee separately. Their NTA scores will be declared once the committee finalises its report," a senior NTA official said.

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Another armyman held for involvement in job racket

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A team of STF claimed to have nabbed another serving soldier for his alleged involvement in the recruitment racket that fleeced job-seekers looking for an opportunity to serve the armed forces. The arrest was made in Ashiyana on Tuesday.

The accused arrested was identified as Yogendra Singh of Devi Khera in Ashiyana. He is a native of Ballia district. Earlier, the STF had nabbed four accused from a house in PGI police station area. Yogendra's name surfaced during the interrogation of the accused arrested earlier.

"An informer tipped us off about Yogendra's location and

we nabbed him," the police said. The police said they recovered Rs 3.7 lakh in cash, a motorcycle, academic documents of several examinees, three mobile phones, seven admit cards and other documents related to recruitment in the armed forces.

In his confession, Yogendra said he was presently posted in Leh, Ladakh. He said he was in the city on a leave and his job was to trap those applying for 'Agniveer'. He would take their High School and Intermediate mark sheets. He used to take Rs 2 lakh each from candidates who passed the physical test to help them get through written and medical tests. He used to pressure the selected candidates by not giving them back their

documents. To trap the job-seekers, Yogendra visited the Agniveer recruitment centres and had a good rapport with them. He promised to get them recruited in the armed forces and took money from them.

In another case, a man was duped of over Rs 32,000 by a cyber thief in Cantonment police station area on Tuesday. Reports said Ajitesh Raghuvanshi of Vikas Nagar had got his bike registered in a company for work and got a call from the company office in Cantonment. He said he dialled the mobile number he had got at the time of registration and was asked to send Re 1 if he wanted to double the money. He was sent a QR code and got Rs 2. He was then asked to pay

499 and he paid Rs 500. He was told that he had paid in excess, so he would have to pay more to make it an odd figure. He was lured into paying Rs 1,603, Rs 3,231 and Rs 7,251. He ended up paying over Rs 32,000. However, he did not get any refund. When he asked for the same, he was abused and threatened.

Meanwhile, thieves made off with ornaments worth several lakh, a television set and a set-up box from a house in Jankipuram. Vivek Mani Upadhyaya said he, along with his family, had gone to his native house in Bahraich and the house was locked. He said he returned to the city on February 6 and found the house burgled.

Earphones plugged in, girl mowed down by train

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A 22-year-old girl with earphones plugged in was fatally mowed down by a speeding train in Jankipuram on Monday night. She was identified as Ruby of Sandna in Sitapur district. She worked at RS Hospital and was unmarried.

As per reports, Ruby was crossing the railway tracks near Sewa Hospital and had earphones plugged in. Eyewitnesses told police that the mishap took place between 8:30 pm and 9 pm on Monday.

The police said they reached the scene on being informed by the station master of Mohibullapur. An Aadhaar card was recovered from the deceased's handbag and her identity was ascertained later.

Meanwhile, an employee of Ambedkar Park in Ashiyana was found dead under mysterious circumstances. The body was recovered near a culvert in PGI police station area on Tuesday. The deceased was identified as Ramashanker (34) of Vikas Nagar (sector 4). He was reported missing on January 29 and a case was registered at the Vikas Nagar police station.

Reports said fruit vendor Sanjay Chaurasia of PGI said he spotted the body around 7

am on Tuesday after he reached there. The police said they recovered an identity card from the victim and ascertained her identity. However, the police could not explain where the victim had been for over a week. The body was sent for autopsy.

In another case, a man attacked his wife after he returned home in a drunken state on Monday night. The woman suffered a deep cut wound on the left hand. Reports said Reva Rani of Vrindavan Yojana Colony confronted her husband Vishal Pal for being tipsy. It led to a verbal spat between them. Vishal attacked his wife with a knife. As the woman took evasive action, she sustained injuries in her hand.

Meanwhile, an official of Indian Standard Bureau (ISB) was thrashed and bullied by a jewellery shop-owner and his staff in Chowk area when he told them that he had been sent for market surveillance. The authority letter was also snatched from him.

As per reports, Shamsul Khan of Kheri reached the shop of Haji Ashraf Ali in Chowk and introduced himself. The shop-owner asked his staff to frisk him. They thrashed him and shooed him away. Police registered a case in this connection.

Youth immolates self inside police station, critical

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A youth immolated himself inside a police station in Badaun and was rushed to hospital with more than 80 percent burns. His family alleged that the police first arrested him over a petty dispute and later demanded money to set him free. However, the cops denied the allegation and said they were just initiating legal proceedings when the victim sud-

denly took the extreme step. Identified as Shree Pal (35), he was allegedly booked by the police following a spat with his cousin.

Shree Pal's brother Kunwar Pal said, "Police had beaten my brother earlier and had taken money from us to release him. They were continuously torturing us and demanding more money. I even met a senior police officer but no action was taken against the local cops who are responsible for my

brother's critical condition. Strict action should be taken against them."

According to Kunwar Pal, though both the parties were booked, the police slapped stringent sections against Shree Pal. On Monday evening, Shree Pal poured kerosene on himself and entered the Sahaswan police station before setting himself on fire. He was rescued and rushed to the medical college where doctors said that the condition of the victim was

critical as he received more than 80 per cent burns.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) OP Singh met Shree Pal at the hospital and spoke to him. The SSP later said, "A man, who had a fight with his cousin over a land related dispute, set himself on fire inside the Sahaswan police station to put pressure on police as he was named in a cross-FIR. We are carrying out further investigation in this regard."

the pioneer

CLASSIFIEDS

NOTICE

I have to changed my name from Vishal to Vishal Kumar S/o Ram Kumar for future purpose. Add-Aimakheda Makur Unnao.

NOTICE

I have Changed My Name from Manmeet Kaur Buta to Manmeet Kaur. Manmeet Kaur W/o Vicky Grover R/o 120/247, Lajpat Nagar, Kanpur.

सूचना

मेरा प्लॉट संख्या 336, 337 कटका झुंसी, इलाहाबाद आराजी संख्या 336, 337 बही संख्या 598 जिल्द संख्या 3691 पृष्ठ संख्या 167/200 खंड 3695 दस्तावेज नंबर 5981 की मूल रजिस्ट्री वास्तव में खो गई है। उमिला यादव पत्नी-वासुदेव यादव निवासी- 19A अमरनाथ झा मार्ग, जार्जटाउन, इलाहाबाद

NOTICE

It is informed to the general public that my name is VIJAY KUMAR KHARWAR mentioned in my original certificate and my name is mentioned as VIJAY KUMAR in my high school mark sheet which is completely correct. VIJAY KUMAR AND VIJAY MUMAR KHARWAR BOTH ARE ONE AND SAME PERSON In all future purpose. R/o gram kataya, post shishuapar Katya Ghazipur Uttar Pradesh

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GANDHI FAIZ-E-AAM COLLEGE, SHAHJAHANPUR A Muslim Minority Institution Affiliated to M.J.P. Rohilkhand University, Bareilly)

Application on prescribed proforma (Can be obtained from the College on payment of Rs.1000/- in cash or by Registered post on payment of Rs. 1050/-) alongwith attested photocopies of mark sheets and testimonials for the following clear posts of Assistant Professor must reach the Under Signed within three weeks from the date of this publication. **Chemistry-01** (Preference will be given to inorganic specialization). Qualifications and pay scale for Assistant Professor as prescribed by U.G.C., U.P. Government and M.J.P. Rohilkhand University, Bareilly.

SYED MOIN-UDDIN President Managing Committee G.F. College, Shahjahanpur

NOTICE

I have to changed my name from Zeeshan Khan to Mohd Zeeshan Khan S/o Mohd Wasiq Khan for future purpose. Add-307 A.B. Nagar Unnao.

NOTICE

Notify that I have changed my name from Lavlesh Kumar to Lavlesh Kumar Pandey for all purposes. Lavlesh Kumar Pandey S/o Late Hari Mohan R/o H.No. 100, Vill-Tomaria Bujurg, Po- Argupur, Distt. Unnao.

NOTICE

I have to changed my name from Lal Mohammad Ansari to Lal Mohammad S/o Late Jaan Mohammad for future purpose. Add-182/252 Roshan Bagh Allahabad.

NOTICE

I have to changed my name from Vaseek Khan to Mohd Wasiq Khan S/o Mohammad Rafiq Khan for future purpose. Add-260/13 Atal Bihari Nagar Unnao.

NOTICE

I have Changed My Name from Jagpreet Chhatwal to Jagpreet Kaur. In future I shall be known as Jagpreet Kaur. W/o Harpreet Singh Chhatwal Address: 120/903, Ranjeet Nagar, Kanpur. U.P.

NOTICE

सर्व साधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि मेरे मकान नं.-503/67/1, बरौलिया आशिक, मनकाेश्वर मंदिर मार्ग, डालीगंज, लखनऊ का मूल बैनामा संख्या- 219/1971 वास्तव में कही खो/गिर गया है। प्रमोद कुमार श्रीवास्तव, पुत्र स्व. श्री एच. एन. श्रीवास्तव, निवासी-503/67/1 बरौलिया आशिक, मनकाेश्वर मंदिर मार्ग, डालीगंज, लखनऊ।

NOTICE

This is to notify that I Devendra Kumar Mandhyan S/o late Shri Chunniall Mandhyan, Resident of A-2146-C, Vijay Khand, Gomti Nagar, Lucknow 226010, changing my name to Devendra Mandhyan from today. Now on my identity should be known and acknowledged as Devendra Mandhyan. Name on my AADHAR Card number 720162290506 and my PAN Card number AEQPM8163 has been already changed to Devendra Mandhyan.

KGMU gets A+ by NAAC

Lucknow (PNS): Adding another feather to its cap, the King George's Medical University received NAAC A+ grading on Tuesday. A senior doctor from KGMU said the institution had NAAC A rating till now.

Officials of the medical university conducted several mock inspections and the campus was cleaned, services checked for the visit by the NAAC team members.

NAAC accreditation is done to give ranking based upon the quality of services and level of activities on the campus. NAAC helps raise standards or services and also helps attract students. The team also considered the self-assessment report that was submitted to the NAAC. Focus during the inspection was upon quality of service and the number of people taking benefit on the campus. The team had eight members and they first held a meeting at the vice-chancellor's office and then moved to departments.

The foundation stone of this grand medical institution was laid by the Prince of Wales in 1906 during his second visit to India. Since then, the institution has been dedicated to excellent medical education, unparalleled medical ethics, groundbreaking research, and exceptional patient care.

Many from city get high percentile in JEE Main

Lucknow (PNS): Several students who got high percentile made the city proud in the JEE Main-2023, results of which were declared late on Monday night.

Jaskaran Singh of CMS, Gomti Nagar Extension, got 99.95 percentile in his first attempt. Son of an engineer, Jaskaran admitted that it took him some time to let that sink in. However, he said he is still looking forward to taking the second JEE Main in April. Jaskaran said he carried out an in-depth study of some of the topics but there was no success mantra to be frank. Jaskaran said it was a challenging task studying both for the board examinations and JEE Main simultaneously.

Ishan Srivastava of MG Convent School (Ashiyana), who achieved 99.61 percentile, said one must follow whatever is taught to get good marks. Son of a government official, he said he wants to become a computer engineer. Videh, who got 99.58 percentile, said he was not satisfied and that he would like to improve his score in the next

exams. Aspiring for getting admission to IIT-Bombay, he said he wants to work in a multinational company. A class XII student of CMS, Gomti Nagar, Videh said his success mantra was consistency. Yash Upadhyaya, who scored 99.55 percentile, said he was not happy with the marks. He said he wants to study either at IIT-Kanpur or IIT-Delhi. Yash said after engineering, he wants to give civil services exams a shot.

Nishant Tewari of MG Convent School, who got 99.48 percentile, said he was concerned because he had made silly mistakes. "I am looking to go into either computer science or electrical engineering. Besides, I also want to appear for UPSC examinations after engineering," he added.

Ishan Kumar of CMS, Kanpur Road, who scored 99.88 percentile said his success mantra was to study smart. Aryashi Tripathi, who cracked the examination in the first attempt with 99.30 percentile, said she studied with equal focus on all the subjects. She said she is keen on becoming a space scientist.

Mystery shrouds death of former village head

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A former village pradhan sitting inside a car succumbed to bullet injuries which sustained under mysterious circumstances in the Kotwali area of Ghazipur district. The incident raised several questions as he was not carrying any weapon with him and no one heard any gunshot. Police sent the body for autopsy, suspecting that he might have been hit by a stray bullet.

According to reports, Manoj Singh, former pradhan of Basuchak village in the Kotwali area of Ghazipur, was going to a attend a wedding with his family on Monday evening. He stopped at RKKB petrol pump in Banshi Bazar and all of a sudden, the family members saw Manoj slump on the seat with blood stains all over his clothes. They raised an alarm and the victim was

rushed to a nearby hospital where doctors pronounced him dead upon arrival.

SP (City) Gopinath Soni said the victim suffered bullet injuries under mysterious circumstances near RKKB petrol pump. "Action will be taken after investigation on the basis of complaints by his family members," he said.

According to the police, Manoj Singh was taken to the Gorabazar district hospital where doctors pronounced him dead.

Meanwhile, a businessman was found dead with his head smashed with a brick in a field near Maharajganj, police said on Tuesday. The police said that the man was killed after a booze session as they also recovered a liquor bottle and glasses from the scene. The deceased was identified as Akhilanand Pandey (55), who was a resident of Dhaneva.

Hike in bus fares condemned

Lucknow (PNS) The Communist Party of India (Marxists) and the Communist Party of India (Marxists-Leninists) on Tuesday condemned the hike in UPSRTC bus fares and demanded that it be withdrawn. CPIML state secretary Sudhakar Yadav said the UPSRTC had increased the bus fares by 25 paise per km. "UPSRTC buses are the only mode of transport for the poor in far-flung areas in UP. The bus fares were already high and now it has gone beyond the reach of the poor," Yadav said. He added

that the state government's decision to hike the fare was anti people.

On the other hand, CPIM leader and state general secretary of UP Khet Mazdoor Union Brij Lal Bharti said that the UP government was making the poor people poorer. "The highest number of poor people reside in UP and most of them travel by buses as they cannot afford other modes of transport. By increasing the fare of buses, the government will obviously make poor people spend more on travel," he said.

Body found stuck under moving car

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The body of a man was found stuck at the other end of a car moving towards Noida on the Yamuna Expressway, police said on Tuesday. As per reports, the car was heading towards Noida from Agra when the body caught the attention of security personnel at a toll booth in Mathura's Mant.

The car was being driven by Virendra Singh (of Delhi), who is currently being interrogated by the police. "There was a thick fog cover on the expressway on Monday night and the visibility was low due to which the man might have been met the accident and his body got stuck in the car," Virendra Singh was quoted as saying by Superintendent of Police (Dehat) Trigun Bisen.

Meanwhile, a speeding car going from Fatehpur in Prayagraj towards Kanpur hit a youth standing on the highway. The youth, dragged for about three kilometres, died later. Reports said that the man in his late 20s was standing on the side of the highway in Rewari village of Kalyanpur police station in Fatehpur district late Monday evening. At the same time, a car going from Prayagraj towards Kanpur hit him. He got stuck in the vehicle which car dragged him for about three kilometres.

All this while, people kept trying to stop the car but the driver did not stop due to which the man died. The errant driver fled the spot. The police made efforts to ascertain the identity of the deceased, but to no avail.

आरंगबाद नगर निगम, भिलाई

कार्यालय,नगर निगम, भिलाई

E-Procurement Tender Notice

Main Portal: <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>

Project cell./N.P.N/620/440

Bhilai/Dated: 06/02/2023

Online tender are invited on behalf of the Municipal Corporation, Bhilai for the following work in Form "A" for Contract from the contractors e-Procurement System portal (<https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>)

Sr.	Tender no	Name of work	Probable amount of contract (in lacs)	निविदा जारी दिनांक	निविदा डाउनलोड की अंतिम दिनांक
1	123514	जोन 03 के मुख्य मार्ग का सधारण कार्य	196.08 Lacs	04.02.2023	25.02.2023
2	123528	नगर पालिक निगम, भिलाई के जोन 01, 02 एवं 04 में 15वें विल आयोग अंतर्गत सार्वजनिक मार्ग का पथ विस्तार कार्य।	137.52 Lacs	04.02.2023	25.02.2023

Note:

1. For other details visit Goc e-Procurement System portal website <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>

2. Corrigendum Amendment if any, will be displayed on above website <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in> only and it shall be part of tender document.

3. For more details please download NIT details.

Sd/-

Executive Engineer



Municipal Corporation

Aurangabad (M.H).

(Mechanical Section)

Tel No : (0240)2333536-40

Fax No. : (0240)2331213

Add : Aurangabad Municipal Corporation Aurangabad.

Executive Engineer (Mechanical)

Head Office : Town Hall

Aurangabad - 431001

E-Tender (Contact)

Cell:- 9764999565

No./AMC/Mech/02/2023

Date : 03 /02/2023

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Bid Submission End Date
01.	Supply of Bio Mining Machine with Test & Trial-01 No. Capacity : 100 TPH (+/-10%) (Tender Amount: 1,75,00,000/-)	17.02.2023

Note : Detail Information available at Website www.mahatenders.gov.in

Sd/-

Executive Engineer (Mech)

Municipal Corporation Aurangabad.

आ.क्र./मनपा/सा/ 02 / 2023



लखनऊ विकास प्राधिकरण

(1986-1990) (1991-2004) (2005-2008) प्रमाणित संस्था

प्राधिकरण सभन, सिटिन, खण्ड, नौसेनी नगर, लखनऊ, (2080)

फोन नं०:- 0522-2302588, वेबसाइट: www.ldaonline.co.in

संख्या : 146/ई-निविदा/मु030/2022-23

दिनांक: 07 / 02 / 2023

निविदा सूचना

लखनऊ विकास क्षेत्र में निम्नलिखित कार्यो हेतु लखनऊ विकास प्राधिकरण या अन्य विकास प्राधिकरणों में पंजीकृत अथवा आवास एवं विकास परिषद में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। कार्य से सम्बन्धित विस्तृत निविदा-नोटिस तथा निविदा-प्रपत्र लखनऊ विकास प्राधिकरण की वेबसाइट "<http://www.ldaonline.co.in>" पर देखा जा सकता है तथा अपलोड किया जा सकता है, जिसमें धरोहर धनराशि, निविदा डालने की तिथि, श्रेणी, कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि एवं निविदा लागत तथा अन्य नियम व शर्तों का उल्लेख है।

क्र. सं.	कार्य का नाम	कर्म की लागत (₹00 लाख)	अविशेष जोन/ मोबाइल नगर	ई-निविदा प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि
1.	जी-20 सम्मेलन के दृष्टिगत शहीद पथ एल.एच.एस. पर हरिहरपुर अण्डरपास से गोमती नदी बंधा रोड तक सिंचाई हेतु बोरिंग लगाने का कार्य।	8.44	उद्यान 9918001695	10-02-2023
2.	जी-20 समिट के अन्तर्गत लखनऊ शहर के विभिन्न स्थानों पर फ्लैग जी-20 नेशन फ्लैग आदि को लगाये जाने का कार्य (पार्ट-डी)	8.44	जोन-7 9918001590	10-02-2023
3.	जी-20 समिट के अन्तर्गत लखनऊ शहर के विभिन्न स्थानों पर फ्लैग जी-20 नेशन फ्लैग आदि को लगाये जाने का कार्य (पार्ट-सी)	8.44	जोन-7 9918001590	10-02-2023
4.	जी-20 सम्मेलन के दृष्टिगत शहीद पथ मीडियन पर लगाये जाने हेतु फाईकस बेन्जायना के पौधों की आपूर्ति का कार्य।	8.42	उद्यान 9918001695	10-02-2023
5.	जी-20 सम्मेलन के दृष्टिगत शहीद पथ मीडियन पर लगाये जाने हेतु वॉशिंगटोनिया पाम के पौधों की आपूर्ति का कार्य।	8.42	उद्यान 9918001695	10-02-2023
6.	जी-20 सम्मेलन के दृष्टिगत जी-20 मार्ग (बंधा रोड) पर सौन्दर्यीकरण हेतु कैजरीना के पौधों की आपूर्ति का कार्य।	8.40	उद्यान 9918001695	10-02-2023
7.	जी-20 सम्मेलन के दृष्टिगत शहीद पथ पर एल.एच. एस. साइड स्लोप पर अर्जुनगंज अण्डरपास से गोमती नदी बंधा रोड तक कार्पेट घास लगाने का कार्य (पार्ट-2 650.00 से 1220.00 मी०)।	8.37	उद्यान 9918001695	10-02-2023
8.	जी-20 सम्मेलन के दृष्टिगत जी-20 मार्ग (बंधा रोड) पर सजावट हेतु सीजनल पौधों की आपूर्ति व लगाने का कार्य।	8.36	उद्यान 9918001695	10-02-2023
9.	जी-20 सम्मेलन के दृष्टिगत शहीद पथ एल.एच.एस. साइड स्लोप पर अर्जुनगंज अण्डरपास से गोमती नदी बंधा रोड तक कार्पेट घास लगाने का कार्य (पार्ट-1 0.00 से 650.00 मी०)।	8.36	उद्यान 9918001695	10-02-2023
10.	जी-20 कार्यक्रम स्थल के पहुंच मार्ग (एल.एच.एस.) पर सौन्दर्यीकरण हेतु सीजनल पौधों की आपूर्ति व लगाने का कार्य।	8.35	उद्यान 9918001695	10-02-2023
11.	जी-20 कार्यक्रम स्थल के पहुंच मार्ग (आर.एच.एस.) पर प्लावर बेड बनाने का कार्य।	8.34	उद्यान 9918001695	10-02-2023
12.	जी-20 सम्मेलन के दृष्टिगत जी-20 मार्ग (बंधा रोड) पर सौन्दर्यीकरण हेतु साइप्रस गोल्डन के पौधों की आपूर्ति का कार्य।	8.34	उद्यान 9918001695	10-02-2023
13.	जी-20 सम्मेलन के दृष्टिगत शहीद पथ एल.एच.एस. साइड स्लोप पर ट्रू वैल्यू से पेट्रोल पम्प तक कार्पेट घास लगाने का कार्य।	8.24	उद्यान 9918001695	10-02-2023
14.	जी-20 सम्मेलन के दृष्टिगत शहीद पथ पर एयरपोर्ट प्लाई ओवर के नीचे से कारगिल स्मारक के मध्य कार्पेट घास लगाने एवं सिंचाई हेतु बोरिंग का कार्य।	8.18	उद्यान 9918001695	10-02-2023
15.	जी-20 समिट के अन्तर्गत लखनऊ शहर के विभिन्न स्थानों पर फ्लैग जी-20 नेशन फ्लैग आदि को लगाये जाने का कार्य (पार्ट-ए)	8.15	जोन-7 9918001590	10-02-2023
16.	जी-20 समिट के अन्तर्गत लखनऊ शहर के विभिन्न स्थानों पर फ्लैग जी-20 नेशन फ्लैग आदि को लगाये जाने का कार्य (पार्ट-बी)	8.15	जोन-7 9918001590	10-02-2023
17.	सुल्तानपुर अण्डरपास से नीलमत्था अण्डरपास तक पाकड़ वृक्षों के चारों तरफ प्लापर का निर्माण कार्य (92 नग)।	8.00	जोन-2 7309555111	10-02-2023
18.	जी-20 सम्मेलन के दृष्टिगत शहीद पथ एल.एच.एस. साइड स्लोप पर अर्जुनगंज अण्डरपास से गोमती नदी बंधा रोड तक कार्पेट घास लगाने का कार्य (पार्ट-3 1220.00 से 1727.00 मी०)।	7.09	उद्यान 9918001695	10-02-2023
19.	कानपुर रोड योजना के अंतर्गत ज्योतिबा फुले पार्क में स्थित योगा हटों के सम्पर्क मार्ग के सुदृढीकरण का कार्य।	5.56	जोन-2 7309555111	17-02-2023
20.	कारगिल शहीद स्मृतिका स्थल, अमर शहीद पथ पर रिटेनिंग वाल एवं पहाड़नुमा आकृति की सीमेन्ट-कांक्रिट से कार्टिंग तथा दीवार की पेन्टिंग आदि का कार्य।	4.22	उद्यान 9918001695	10-02-2023

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मुख्य अभियन्ता

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UP govt geared up for GIS

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government is all geared up for the UP Global Investors' Summit-2023 from February 10. President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi are likely to attend the three-day mega event.

The state government, led by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, is all set to host the event which is likely to see the participation of global investors and around 20 Union ministers, including Home Minister Amit Shah, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. The prime minister and the president are likely to attend the opening and closing ceremonies respectively.

The Yogi Adityanath government has set a target of Rs 21-lakh crore investments through the summit. To attract investment from across the globe, the UP cabinet ministers visited 16 countries and held roadshows in different cities where 108 MoUs worth over Rs 7 lakh crore were signed.

Potential foreign investors evinced interest in the top five sectors of the economy, including data centres, logistic parks, renewable energy, apparel & textiles and film city. Most of the investors are keen on investing in data centres with a potential of over Rs 17,000 crore. The second priority sector is logistics park where the investors are likely to

invest over Rs 16,000 crore.

A data centre is already working at Greater Noida. The robust institutional framework created by the UP government has attracted interest from overseas investors. During the roadshows in Singapore and Australia, MoUs worth Rs 8,260 crore and 1,000 crore, respectively, were signed.

During the roadshows in the UK and the USA, MoUs for an investment of Rs 8,300 crore were signed. The total worth of the MoUs for the data centre is Rs 17,560 crore. The investments will go a long way in helping Greater Noida emerge as a data centre hub.

The second priority sector for the global investors is logistics park where MoUs worth Rs 16,810 crore have been signed. During the roadshow in the United Arab Emirates, MoUs worth Rs 1,300 crore were signed while in Canada and the USA, the investors pledged to invest Rs 8,200 crore. MoUs worth Rs 1,000 crore for investment in logistic service were signed during the roadshows in Singapore and Australia.

The third priority sector for the foreign investors is renewable energy. During the roadshow in the UAE, Green Energy Ventures signed MoUs for investing Rs 4,480 crore while Siddharth InfoTech pledged to invest Rs 8,000 crore. During the roadshows in Germany, Belgium and Sweden, companies signed Rs 1,000-crore MoUs.

Lucknow at its aesthetic best for UPGIS

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Preparations for the Global Investors' Summit, which will be held at Vrindavan Yojana from February 10 to 12, is in top gear. Various government departments, including LMC, LDA, Awas Vikas and Irrigation department, are busy in making preparations.

The city has been beautified with vertical gardens at Kalidas crossing, Vikramaditya crossing and Raj Bhawan. Wall paintings have also come up along roads while façade lighting has been installed at prominent monuments such as the Asafi Imambada, Chhattar Manzil and Residency. Other attractions include a statue of Lord Laxman near the airport and a Lord Buddha statue at Buddha Park in the old city.

Municipal Commissioner Inderjit Singh said preparations would be completed by Tuesday night. He said that it was a challenging process getting all the agencies to work together. He added that they were appealing to people to not



Students of Arts college making beautiful designs on the walls, opposite Commissioner in Lucknow on Tuesday

Pioneer

deface the walls.

"We have got several new innovations in terms of horticulture,

including landscaping. In the city beautification, all the facades have been painted. Murals in kathak

poses have been made from scrap iron on the bandha road," he pointed out. He said they have restored all

Chief secretary calls for alternative routes for VIPs

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Secretary Durga Shankar Mishra asked officials to look for alternative routes for the VIPs during the Global Investors' Summit so that there should not be any inconvenience to the common man.

"Along with the main route, alternative routes should also be decided for the VVIPs. Adequate number of police personnel should be deployed on the routes. The guests should

reach the site on time and for that, the time taken to reach the venue from the place of their stay and the route should be displayed at the reception of the hotel," Mishra said while reviewing the arrangements for the GIS.

He said drivers should also be properly briefed about which route they have to use to reach the venue and where they have to park their vehicles. Special priority should be given to ambulances and firefighting vehicles. In the event of an emergency, an alternative

route should also be decided for the ambulance, he said.

"Adequate number of cranes should be kept ready, as should mechanics to fix minor problems in vehicles so as to prevent traffic jams in case of breakdowns," he said.

Additional Chief Secretary, MSME, Amit Mohan Prasad spoke about the preparations for the exhibition in the GIS. He said all the stalls and halls would be ready in time.

Lucknow Municipal Commissioner Inderjit Singh said it would be a 'zero waste'

event. The entire zone is ODF as 250 toilets have been installed at the venue and over 1,000 sweepers have been pressed into service for cleaning. Vehicles have also been deployed for road washing and dust removal.

The work of tent city has almost been completed while the work of arranging accommodation and allotment is in progress. Arrangements have been made in 45 hotels and three tent cities for the guests to stay. The chief secretary said branding of the state should be done in the tent city.

Congress, Communist parties two sides of same coin: CM Yogi

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday said that the Congress and the Communist parties are two sides of the same coin as they stand up for the corrupt, criminals, infiltrators and divisive forces instead of the public.

Addressing Vijay Sankalp rallies in two assembly constituencies (Bagbasa and Kalyanpur-Pramod Nagar) and a roadshow in another constituency of poll-bound Tripura, Yogi appealed to people to elect a BJP government in the state for the second time on the basis of the government's performance in carrying out development works in the last five years and reject those that cheated them, not allowing welfare schemes to reach the poor and the needy, denying the state development for several decades while allowing infiltrations from across borders in the state.

"Both the Congress and

Communist parties are here to make a dent in your security. Beware of them!," the BJP's star campaigner remarked.

People of Tripura welcomed the UP CM with the same warmth and enthusiasm with which he was greeted in Gujarat and other poll-bound states in the past. The people greeted the UP CM with songs like 'Yogi ji aayo re-Yogi ji aayo re', and chants of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas' in Bagbasa. Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha was also present along with Yogi in Bagbasa.

Speaking at his first public meeting in favour of BJP candidate Jadab Lal Nath, who is contesting from Bagbasa, Yogi said, "The works of the double-engine government in the last five years have given Tripura a different identity. The real form of PM Modi's original mantra, 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas' is visible on the ground in Tripura. Three lakh families have been provided housing under the PM Awas Yojana whereas toilets under Swachh Bharat



Mission and free cooking gas connections under PM Ujjwala Yojana have been given to all the deserving and needy families. The government has also ensured provision of pure drinking water in most villages

through Har Ghar Nal Yojana while benefiting farmers from Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi and people from Ayushman Bharat scheme and MNREGA without any discrimination."

Yogi said that unlike the Congress and Communist parties, the BJP respects people's faith also. "Congressis" and the communists denied the very existence of Lord Ram and Lord Krishna. Today, the

Vishwanath Corridor has been renovated in Kashi and a grand Ram temple is being built in Ayodhya," Yogi said, adding that Congress has a history of cheating the country and that it compromised the security of the country in connivance with the communists.

Speaking at his second rally in the Kalyanpur-Pramod Nagar assembly constituency of Khowai district, Yogi sought votes for sitting BJP MLA and candidate Pinaki Das Chowdhary. He said that in 2018, the BJP had sought support for Tripura's prosperity and overall development.

"For 35 years, people of the Communist and Congress parties kept the state deprived of development as they looted the money meant for development in Tripura. They left the youth unemployed, farmers in distress, and put the safety of mothers and sisters at risk. The benefits of the schemes were also not extended to people. There was an atmosphere of chaos and insecurity," he remarked.

The CM added: "For the first time, the double-engine government of the BJP provided development at the speed of a bullet train in the state and the benefits of the welfare schemes reached the poor without discrimination. Giving 33 per cent job reservation to women is a miracle," CM Yogi said.

Continuing his attack on the Congress and the communists, Yogi said that during the UPA regime, there was a new scam almost every day. Referring to the coal scam, 2G scam and Commonwealth scam, he said that scams had become the identity of the Congress.

"Today when the youth are getting employment, development is taking place and faith is being respected, the Congress wants to conspire with the communists to sabotage the process," Yogi alleged. "Now, ministers camp in the north-east and report to PM Modi after ensuring the benefits of the schemes," he added.

BJP defends Yogi, seeks apology from Rahul

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A day after Congress leader Rahul Gandhi accused the BJP of indulging in 'adharma' in UP and said Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath could not be a religious leader for the language he uses, the saffron party leaders said the Congress does not believe in the existence of Lord Ram or Lord Krishna and plays with people's faith.

The BJP leaders said Rahul Gandhi should apologise for his statement and learn how to respect political rivals.

BJP UP president Bhopendra Singh Chaudhary said Yogi Adityanath has established the rule of law in the state while development works were being done and benefits were reaching all the people without any bias.

"Rahul Gandhi lives in a fool's paradise. He is not aware of the construction of the expressways and development being carried out across the state. Rahul Gandhi's com-

ments on CM Yogi are cheap and condemnable, and proof enough that he is neither aware of history nor UP's culture," Chaudhary said.

The BJP state chief said that there is no discrimination against any community, caste, and class. "Rahul Gandhi should also know the history of Gorakshpeeth. Saints do not have any caste," he said.

Chaudhary said that a large number of saints, yogis, and priests in the Gorakhnath temple belong to Dalit and backward castes, as does the media in charge of the temple.

"There are two Muslims who look after the construction and property in the Gorakhnath temple. Those who distribute prasad in bhandara are also from every caste," he added.

Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya also asked Rahul Gandhi to withdraw his remarks. "The language used by Rahul Gandhi is condemnable," he said.

ADJ dies in road mishap

Lucknow (PNS): Additional District Judge of POCSO Court in Mainpuri, Poonam Tyagi, died in a road mishap near Milestone-65 under Nagla Khargar police station area on Agra-Lucknow Expressway in Shikohabad (Firozabad), on Tuesday morning.

The station in-charge reached the spot and rushed the ADJ and her driver to Saifai PGI where doctors pronounced the ADJ brought dead, while the driver was said to be battling for his life.

Tyagi was returning to Mainpuri in her car after a two-day leave. When she reached near Milestone-65 on the Agra-Lucknow Expressway, the driver fell asleep due to which the car rammmed into a truck from behind. The driver was identified as Sachin, a resident of Kastala police station in Incholi, Meerut.

Officials said that Tyagi's husband was also a judicial officer and posted in the Meerut court. SP, Rural, Ranvijay Singh said the post-mortem examination was conducted at the Saifai PGI.

Meanwhile, a scooter-borne man was run over by a truck in front of ISBT in Agra. He youth died on the spot. The identity of the deceased could not be ascertained even as police sent the dead for autopsy. The police made efforts to ascertain the identity of the deceased, but in vain.

AAP demands probe into Adani issue



PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Workers and leaders of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Tuesday staged demonstrations across Uttar Pradesh, demanding either a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) investigation or a Supreme Court-monitored probe into the alleged scam unearthed by the Hindenburg Research. They also demanded that the passport of industrialist Gautam Adani be confiscated. In Lucknow, the party leaders demanded that the passports of all the key office-bearers of Adani Group be confiscated. AAP leader Sooraj Pradhan said a total of Rs 11.5 lakh crore of public money was

lost in the Adani's companies even as the PM was mum on the issue.

"The industrialist termed the report an attack on the country, but the same entity has also exposed the scams by the US and Japan-based companies. They never said that the reports were an attack on their countries," Pradhan said.

"Adani is not India and India is not Adani. He is an industrialist like others. The only difference is that he (Adani) has a special friendship with the PM," Pradhan alleged. Senior AAP leaders, including Brij Kumar Singh, Neelam Yadav, Vanshraj Dueby and Isma Zahir, were also present on the occasion.

Yogi govt set to expedite efforts to improve rail connectivity

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Bolstering the Uttar Pradesh government's efforts to improve connectivity in the state, the Central government has allocated UP 16 times more money in the rail budget compared to what the state received between 2009 and 2014.

The Modi government has granted Uttar Pradesh a rail budget of Rs 17,507 crore in 2022-2023 alone, compared to Rs 1,109 crore between 2009-14.

It is noteworthy that the Central government has announced the highest railway budget of Rs 2.4 lakh crore this time.

According to the Railway

Ministry, this budget is nine times more than the budget for 2013-14.

The Yogi government of Uttar Pradesh is working fast in the direction of infrastructure and connectivity.

At present, work is going on in the state on new lines covering a distance of 7,143 km under 83 projects, on which about Rs 94,000 crore are being spent. Besides, 55 surveys are to be done for the long railway lines of 3,831 km.

Among the projects related to the new lines connecting Uttar Pradesh with other states, one is Lalitpur-Satna, Rewa-Singrauli and Mahoba-Khajuraho, on which Rs 700 crore will be spent.

Similarly, Rs 390 crore will be spent on Bahraich-Shrawasti and Balrampur-Tulsipur lines.

Besides, Rs 284 crore will be spent on building the new Energy Corridor line in 2023-2024, Rs 284 crore on the Janjatiya Gaurav Corridor (Umbrella 23-24), Rs 205 crore on Sahjanwa-Dohrighat line, Rs 200 crore on Deoband (Muzaffarnagar)-Roorkee and Rs 150 crore on Mau-Ghaziipur-Tarighat lines, Rs 20 crore on the Umbrella Project, Rs 20 crore on Anand Nagar-Ghughli, Rs 10 crore on Padrauna-Kushinagar via Gorakhpur and Rs 30 lakh on Meerut-Panipat line.

There is a lot of work being done on gauge conversions in the state. This has allowed for the

conversion of narrow gauge lines into broad gauge.

A total of Rs 100 crore each will be spent on the Mathura-Vrindavan and Lucknow-Pilibhit lines via Sitapur and Lakhimpur route, Rs 50 crore on the Bahraich-Mailani bypass, Rs 35 crore on the Indara-Dohrighat route, Rs 3 crore on the Pilibhit-Shahjahanpur route, and Rs 50 lakh on the Kanpur-Kasganj-Mathura line.

The state has recently made significant progress in the area of rapid connectivity. In 2017, the state had only two airports. As of now, nine airports are operational, and construction is ongoing on 10 more. Both the Purvanchal Expressway in Eastern

UP and the Bundelkhand Expressway in the Bundelkhand region provide improved connectivity.

The Ganga Expressway will link eastern and western UP. The Yamuna and Agra Expressway links Uttar Pradesh with the national capital. Besides, there is a 4-four lane road connectivity between Uttar Pradesh and its neighbouring states as well as Nepal.

There is metro rail connectivity in five cities and the trial of rapid rail has also taken place recently.

Being a landlocked state no longer poses a problem and the country's first waterway has started from Varanasi to Haldia.

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1. Mr. Sunil Singh R/o 125/15, Yogendra vihar, Khadepur, Kanpur, U.P. (Borrower)
2. Mrs. Anju Singh R/o 125/15, Yogendra vihar, Khadepur, Kanpur, U.P. (Co-Borrower)
No. 1 & 2 amongst you have availed a housing loan from our branch against the security of mortgage of the following asset belonging to No.1 Amongst you. An amount of Rs.16,55,187/- is due from you, to Can Fin Homes Ltd. as on 30.01.2023 together with future interest at the contracted rate.
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Man commits suicide

PNS ■ KANPUR

A man committed suicide under mysterious circumstances in a guava garden in Jallapur village under Rajpur police station of Kanpur Dehat. He was found hanging from a tree late on Monday evening. The police rushed to the spot and sent the body for an autopsy. Ram Pal (32) of Madiyapur village was a farmer. On Monday morning he had left for Rajpur. Around 5 pm he was found hanging from a tree in the guava garden of Vinod in Jallapur village. On hearing about the incident his wife Rajeshwari became unconscious while sons Raunaq, Saurabh and daughter Sangita became upset. The elder brother Chandra Pal informed the police and sub-inspector Shiv Shanker rushed to the village and after prima facie investigations, sent the body for autopsy. SO Rajpur Anurag Pandey said during primary investigation the exact cause of incident could not be ascertained. On receipt of the autopsy report, further action will be taken in the matter, he said.

Meanwhile in a dispute for dance on DJ, a scribe was battered to death in Bilhaur police station area late on Monday night. He was identified as Muni Kushwaha of Rawatpur police station area. He had gone to attend a marriage ceremony organised at a guest house in Rahmatpur village of Bilhaur. Suddenly members of bride and groom's sides



clashed and they battered Muni Kushwaha to death. The police rushed to the spot and carried out investigation. The body was sent for autopsy. ADCP (West) Lakhan Yadav said some suspects had been taken into custody for quizzing. The kin of the deceased had not lodged any complaint against anybody in the matter so far, he said.

LAWYERS DEMONSTRATE

The members of The Lawyers Association and Kanpur Bar Association organised a demonstration and handed over a memorandum, addressed to the chief minister (CM), to the district magistrate (DM) demanding early settlement of their demands on Tuesday. ADM (City) Atul Kumar received the memorandum on behalf of the DM and assured to send it to the CM. Their demands included

the enforcement of health insurance of Rs 5 lakh of lawyers and linking them with the Ayushman Yojana, advocates pension scheme for elderly lawyers, early payment of death claims, construction of chambers, payment of similar amount of compensation on the deaths of lawyer and scribe etc. President of The Lawyers Association Pt Ravindra Sharma addressed the gathering.

The member of UP Bar Council Ankaj Mishra, president of Kanpur Bar Association Naresh Tripathi, general secretary Anurag Srivastava, Sarvendra Yadav, Brij Narain Nishad, Anoop Shukla, Hemant Tewari, treasurer Pawan Awasthi, Sachin Awasthi, Madhur Sahu (joint secretaries), Ayush Shukla, Rakesh, Mohit Shukla, Taulhid and Sanjiv Kapoor were present in the delegation.

Solanki's properties to be attached from today

PNS ■ KANPUR

The process of seizing the properties of Samajwadi Party Irfan Solanki will start from Wednesday. City Police Commissioner BP Jogdand said as many as 27 properties belonging to the legislator and his aides were identified so far. These were worth over Rs150 crore and situated in different police areas of the city, includ-

ing Kotwali, Gwaltoli, Chamanganji, Jajmau, Chakeri and adjoining districts. The process for attaching these properties under the Gangster Act would start from Wednesday. The nodal officer of the drive was the inspector Pheelkhana Sunil Kumar, he said.

Meanwhile, wife of a retired Air Force employee has accused the MLA Irfan Solanki

of unauthorisedly securing possession on her lime factory with his accomplices. Victim Sarita Singh of Shiv Shankerpuram, Ahirwa, Chakeri, in her complaint submitted to the City Police Commissioner BP Jogdand on Monday said her husband had died of prolonged illness a few years ago. Her ancestral land is situated near the railway track in Deputy Ka Parao. On 1,477 yards of this

land, she had a lime factory, which was a patrimonial trade of her family.

It is alleged that in 2021 MLA Irfan Solanki along with his partner Ankit Jain and others had unauthorisedly secured possession of her factory. On the basis of fake documents, he had put up a lock on the factory gate and also sold out its machinery worth Rs 60 lakh. On protest he had

threatened to kidnap all family members and kill them. Since then she had been approaching the local and senior police officials but nothing was done so far, she claimed.

City Police Commissioner BP Jogdand immediately directed the ACP Chakeri Amarnath for a probe and initiating action against the guilty in the matter.

Annapurna Millets Mahotsav inaugurated

PNS ■ KANPUR

Vice-Chancellor (V-C) of Chandra Shekhar Azad University of Agriculture and Technology, Dr Vijendra Singh while inaugurating the Annapurna Millets Mahotsav at Eco Garden on Tuesday said millets were rich sources of minerals like calcium, iron, zinc, phosphorus, magnesium, and potassium. He said it also contained appreciable amounts of dietary fibre and vitamins such as folic acid, vitamin B6 and niacin. He said availability of high amounts of lecithin was highly useful for strengthening the nervous system of the human body.

Informing about International Year of Millets 2023 he said the objective was to create awareness and increase production and consumption of millets.

He said millets are primarily grown during the kharif season in rainfed areas as these crops require less water and agricultural inputs than other cereals. He said millets production had great potential to generate livelihoods, increase farmers' income and ensure food and nutritional security, not only

in India but also in other parts of the world. He said unless consumption was increased, the demand will not be generated to motivate farmers for shifting to millets.

Dr Singh said increasing consumption in India will help improve people's health since millets contain many nutrients and minerals crucial for human body. He said it was cultivated both as food and fodder, thus providing food and livelihood security to millions of households and contributing to the economic efficiency of farming. He said millets contribute to mitigating climate change as it helped reduce the atmospheric carbon pressure CO2.

The V-C said for the last few years, millets have dominated urban consumption baskets through either direct-cooked consumption or more popularly via the fast-moving consumer goods penetration.

He said cookies biscuits, namkeen and many other millet-delicacies had inundated the Indian market and the craze was catching on especially for the health conscious people. He said indigenous crops must be lent more sup-

port and focus. He said a sustainable way to pursue this was to empower women farmers and self-help groups by equipping them with advanced packaging techniques, agro-marketing, financial literacy and other entrepreneurial skills.

Director Extension Dr RK Yadav said in the absence of proper market linkages for forest and agricultural produce, millet consumption was restricted to rural haats, bazaars, tourist spots and festivals.

He said for self-help groups engaged in making traditional khichri, rice and papads usually participate in fairs and events that provide them limited exposure to visitors and tourists.

He said in the post-Covid era 'immunity foods' had gained traction and in this context, micro-nutrient-rich millets were suitable substitutes for reviving the traditional food systems and maintaining ecological harmony with nature. Later farmers visited the exhibition and took a feedback from varsity scientists. Dr Mithilesh Verma, Sr Arun Kumar Singh and Dr Vinod Prakash were present.

DC reviews works of various depts

Kanpur (PNS): Kanpur Divisional Commissioner Dr Raj Shekhar carried out a review of various works of different departments at the Commissionerate. He took up issues point wise and from the scratch. He first took up all the audit work of pending milestone year 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14 which were picked up for discussion in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly and also before the Panchayati Raj Samiti. He said in a month's time all pending issues must be completed 100 per cent and the Commissionerate needs to be informed about the progress.

He said pending issues in the three years of Kanpur Dehat totalled 16 milestone while Kanpur Nagar stood the highest at 21 milestones. He said panchayat issues of Kanpur Nagar that were pending were 106 while in gram panchayat it was 205. He said during the review of gram panchayat secretariat directives had been issued that all the panchayat bhawans should be made functional and with proper availability of furniture, electricity supply, toilets, computer and internet connectivity.

Shekhar said the presence of the staff like panchayat sahayak, safai workers, Asha, secretary, lekhpal and ANM must be mentioned in register both daily and weekly. He said the meetings of gram panchayat and its six permanent committees should be mandatorily held every month and each participant should be given Rs 100 as meeting allowance.

He said in the entire division 3,249 Jan Seva Kendras had to be set up but only 146 were functional. He directed that a meeting should be held with the nominated agency and all the Jan Seva Kendra should be made functional by March. He said under Swachh Bharat Mission(rural) phase-2 all villages identified during 2021-22 and 2022-23 their model ODF plus solid and liquid waste management should be verified physically and special teams be set up so that by the end of February all verification work should be completed so that it can be sent for final report in the first week of March.

DM gives directions for preparation of futsal court

PNS ■ KANPUR

Kanpur Nagar District Magistrate Viaskh G Iyer while inspecting the DPS ground, Nawabganj, gave necessary directions for the preparation of futsal court where an elevated platform for the audience can be developed as well. He said futsal was the FIFA-recognised form of small-sided indoor football (the word is a contraction of the Spanish 'futbol sala').

He said this was played between two teams having five players each on the pitch at any one time, with rolling substitutes and a smaller ball than soccer that was harder and less bouncy. He said as per global standards futsal is normally played on a rectangular shaped pitch and football regulation stated that the field measurements can be a minimum of 25 metre long by 15 metre wide (82 by 49 ft) maximum 42 metre long by 25 metre wide (138 by 82 ft).

Out of the five one was a goalkeeper and if a team had or was reduced to fewer than three players remaining, the match was abandoned and counted as a loss for the team with lack of players. The match was controlled by referee who enforced



Kanpur Nagar District Magistrate Visakh G Iyer along with his team inspecting the DPS ground for the upcoming futsal stadium.

the rules and the first referee was the only one who can legally abandon the match because of interference from outside the field. There was a provision of a third referee and a timekeeper who were provided with equipment to keep a record of fouls in the match.

Sport expert Mayank Yadav accompanying the inspection team informed that futsal court was made up of wood or artificial material or similar surface, although any flat, smooth and

non-abrasive material can be used. He said a rectangular goal was positioned at the middle of each goal line and inner edges of the vertical goal posts must be 3 m apart and the lower edge of the horizontal crossbar supported by the goal posts must be two metre above the ground. He said nets were made of hemp, jute or nylon attached to the back of goalposts and crossbar. He said in front of each goal was an area known as the penalty area and this area was created

by drawing quarter-circles with a six metre radius from the goal line, centered on goalposts. The penalty area marked where the goalkeeper was allowed to touch the ball with hands. He said on both the sides single high mast lights will be set up. He said the work will be given momentum so that it was ready well in time. Kanpur Municipal

Commissioner, Shivsharanappa GN, Diwakar Bhasker, Dr VK Singh and several other officials were present.

Dental health camp held

PNS ■ KANPUR

Noted paediatric dentist Dr Garima Mehrotra while addressing a dental health camp at Tiny Toes Pre-School, Cantonment, on Tuesday said the onus of good set of teeth rested on parents and they need to inculcate a habit in children to brush teeth twice a day once in the morning and before going to bed. She said with the consumption of junk food increasing among children cavities surface very soon which affected the gums as well.

She said misaligned teeth may have a variety of causes, ranging from malnutrition and oral habits to dental cancer and poor dental hygiene. However, there are many treatments available to correct teeth alignment and improve patient's self-confidence and smiles. She said crooked teeth were incredibly common and many of us dealt with this problem in our youth. She said there were untimely reasons for wanting to avoid crooked teeth beyond just giving oneself a more beautiful smile. She said by making sure one's teeth stayed straight one can improve self-esteem, prevent gum disease and cavities and make it easier

to articulate.

Informing about the causes of crooked teeth Dr Garima said both baby teeth and permanent teeth can be crowded or crooked. She said baby teeth sometimes move into crooked positions because they were too small to fill the allotted amount of gum space. She said if trauma to the mouth or tooth decay caused one or more baby teeth to fall out earlier than they would naturally the permanent teeth that follow may grow out of sloping rather than straight gums.

She said other problems that affect baby teeth that can also affect permanent teeth included jaw size. She said the modern diet of soft and processed foods that many people consume required less chewing than the foods consumed by our earliest ancestors. She said this change had altered the size of our collective jaw making it smaller.

She said experts believe that our shorter, more strengthened jaw may be responsible for crowded, crooked and misaligned teeth.

Dr Garima said crooked teeth provide an opportunity for bacteria to proliferate and form plaque in areas where the gums did not fit securely

around the teeth and this led to periodontal disorder, which can also lead to dental failure. She said parents need to meet an orthodontic surgeon. She said special cephalometry or panoramic x-rays showed the relationship of the teeth to the jaw and the jaw to the head. He said two most effective methods for fixing crooked teeth were braces and prevention.

JUDO: NIDHI KANAUIJA TO REPRESENT UP TEAM

Nidhi Kanauija of The Sportz Hub (TSH) has been selected to represent UP team in the National Judo Championship to be held at the Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium, Chennai, from February 17 to 22. She will represent the state team in 32 kg weight category.

She is the only player selected in UP team from Kanpur.

The selection trials for UP team were recently held in Indian Para Judo Academy, Lucknow.

Meanwhile, two other judokas of TSH - Swati Singh and Pragati Singh - won the second and third place in 32 kg and 57 kg weight categories respectively in the State Judo Tournament.

Training programme for docs begins

PNS ■ VARANASI

The Health department has started programme to impart training to doctors and paramedical staff for the medical test of electrocardiography (ECG) and thrombolysis. The Chief Medical Officer Dr Sandeep Chowdhary on Tuesday reviewed the preparations regarding this with the medical officers and superintendents.

It is learnt that the Health department has decided to make available the facility of electrocardiography (ECG) and thrombolysis at the government hospitals and health centres to facilitate the heart patients. Varanasi has been selected as the first district in the state to start this facility as a pilot project. With the availability of these medical facilities, the heart patients could avail the facility of the medical test at their nearest health centre.

The training programme to impart training to the doctors and paramedical staff has been started for the purpose. The CMO held a meeting with the medical officers and superintendents to review the preparations for it.

In view of the rise in the number of the heart patients in the hospitals, the facility of ECG and thrombolysis at the government hospital and health centres under the pilot project will give a big relief to the patients suffering from diseases related to the heart, informed the

CMO, adding that this medical facility is being started at the health centres of 19 districts of various states and Varanasi has been selected as the first district in UP as a pilot project.

This medical facility will be started in three phases under which the government district hospital will be included first and thereafter the community health centre of rural areas and the community health centre of urban areas will be included under the third phase, informed the CMO, adding that the the expert of heart diseases of the Banaras Hindu University (BHU) will give their advice through tele-consultancy. The heart related diseases are the main factors behind about 27 per cent death in the country, informed he hoping that the facility of this medical test would benefit the heart patients. After conducting the medical test under this facility, the report will be sent to the heart experts through tele-consultancy and the serious patients will also be referred to advanced hospitals for the better treatment, the CMO informed.

TB DAY PREPS REVIEWED

Preparations are in full swing for the international level programme to be held in the district on World Tuberculosis (TB) Day (March 24). In this direction, to review the preparations, a Central TB Division team visited various places on Monday. The team was led by Deputy District Tuberculosis

Officer Dr Amit Singh. The Central TB Division and Event Management team, which came on a one-day tour, first reached the Rudraksh Convention Centre where the programme would be organised on World TB Day.

During this, the team thoroughly inspected all the arrangements at the Rudraksh Centre and took complete information about security arrangements and other facilities. After this, the team reached Ayushman Bharat-Kurita and Wellness Centre Kurita under Kashi Vidyapeeth block. Under Pradhan Mantri TB Mukh Bharat Abhiyan and National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP), the team took complete information about sputum collection for identification and confirmation of potential TB patients from the community health officers (CHOs) and ASHA workers posted there.

The team members also took detailed information about how the sputum will reach the testing centres and what is the process of the sample transportation. Joint Director Dr Nishant Kumar, Dr Bhavin Vadra from USAID, WHO Consultant Dr Sandeep Chauhan and Dr Sriram Subramanian Swamy, representatives of programme funding agencies, STLS Kamlesh Rai and Satchidanand Upadhyay, DPTC Vinay Mishra, STS Abhishek and others were present in the team.

Parliament of Religion from tomorrow

Varanasi (PNS): The 9th World Parliament of Science, Religion / Spirituality and Philosophy will be held from February 9 to 11 at Shri Kashi Vishwanath Dham (Corridor) here under the auspices of MIT World Peace University, Pune. Giving this information while talking to the reporters here on Tuesday, the president of the university Prof Dr Vishwanath D Karad, along with chairman of organising committee Dr Vijay P Bhatkar, said that the newly constructed corridor in this holy city is the cherished project of the 'visionary' Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"It is a source of inspiration for the entire country and it is perhaps a divine outcome of this inspiration that this 9th World Parliament is being organised at this sacred place," he said.

According to him, the university, under the aegis of MAEER's MIT Group of Institutions, has undertaken a number of initiatives for the promotion and propagation of culture of peace in the world for the establishment of a peace loving holistic global society. "The said 9th World Parliament is one more step in this direction as we believe that a clarion call will emanate from here to herald the march of the country being a Vishwaguru as prophesied by

Swami Vivekanand," he said.

According to him, the 1st World Parliament of Science, Religion and Philosophy was held in 1996 to commemorate the 700th Sanjeevan Samadhi here under the auspices of Saint Shri Dnyaneshwar. Thereafter, the 2nd World Parliament was held in Geneva, Switzerland in 1998, followed by six more World Parliaments in the subsequent years. "These were unique conferences where saints, scientists and philosophers came together on a common platform for world peace," he said, citing the reference of Swami Vivekanand who while addressing the 1st Parliament of World Religions in Chicago (USA) on 11th September in 1893 had asserted that, "Union of Science and Religion / Spirituality alone will bring peace and harmony to mankind".

The upcoming three-day long parliament which will be held in this spiritual capital of India is perhaps the pinnacle of the 45 years of unceasing efforts done by us to network the pilgrim centres of the country like Alandi, Amritsar, Ayodhya, Badrinath, etc and transform them into divine knowledge centres.

"It is well-known that since ancient times, India has never invaded or encroached upon any foreign land.

Swami Vivekananda's statue unveiled

PNS ■ KANPUR

Director of National Sugar Institute (NSI) Prof Narendra Mohan unveiled the statue of Swami Vivekananda on Tuesday along with Swami Atmashradhananda, Ramkrishna Mission Ashram, Kanpur. Teachings of Swami Vivekananda had also been displayed around the statue to spread the message and principles among the students and staff of the institute. Addressing the session Prof Mohan recalled Swami Vivekananda's groundbreaking speech to the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions in which he introduced Hinduism to America and called for religious tolerance and an end to fanaticism. He said each student should study Swami Vivekananda's books especially on 'Karma Yoga' and 'How to become a leader' for stress-free and successful life.

Swami Atmashradhananda said in this materialistic world the philosophy and teachings of Swami Vivekananda had become all the more important and added that a man was not poor without a rupee but a man was really poor without a dream and ambition. He said the mind and energy of the youth was to be trained and harnessed adequately and properly to live together with so many diversities and achieve the desired goal. He called upon the younger generation and students in particular to study the vision depicted by Swami



The students of MMV, Kidwai Nagar, taking part in yoga competition on Tuesday.

Vivekananda and adopt his principle wherein he linked morality with control of the mind, seeing truth, purity and unselfishness. He said Swami Vivekananda's vision covered the entire gamut of human existence, be it at the individual level or at the societal or national level. He said it is a common knowledge that quality of a nation depends on the quality of its inhabitants. He said it was a group of individuals who made a society and a group of society made a nation. He advised the students that Swami Vivekananda's principle was that the end of all education, all training, should be man-making. He said the end and aim of all training was to make the man grow.

PROGRAMMES ORGANISED

Under the directives of the Higher Education Department to publicise the G-20 event, the cultural committee of Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Kidwai Nagar,

organised different programmes on Tuesday. In her inaugural address principal Prof Anju Chaudhary said the G-20 Summit aimed at systematising the global economy and holding discussions on various important issues. On the occasion, various competitions, including oration, essay writing, vocal, folk dance, rangoli and yoga were organised in which students took part in large number.

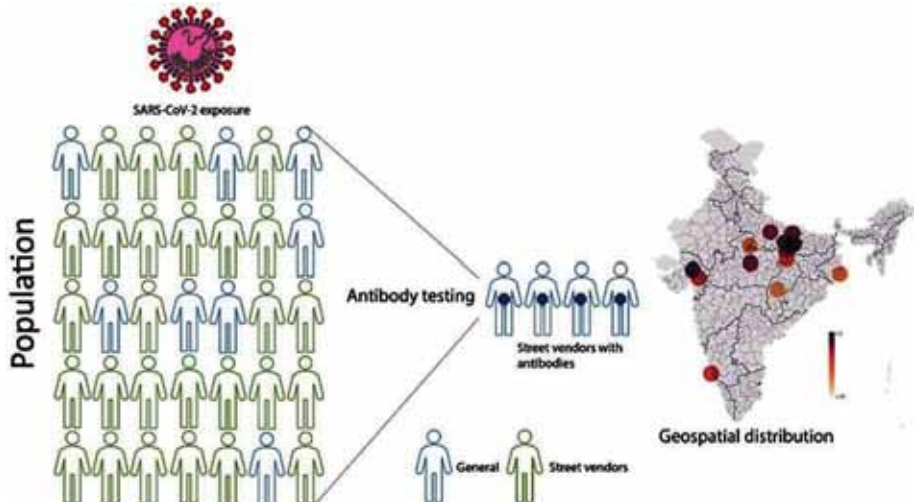
RESULTS: Yoga - Neha Singh Suryavanshi (first), Jyoti Singh Suryavanshi (second), Disha Pandey (third), Essay writing - Maithili Bhatnagar (first), Sapna Yadav (second), Shreya Tripathi (third), Oration - Khushi Prapatti (first), Khushnuma (second), Shreya Tripathi (third), Kashish (consolation), Dance (solo BA) - Vinamrita, Arpita (first), BEd. - Harshita Shukla (first), group dance - Uttar Pradesh team (first), Rajasthan team (second) and Chhattisgarh team (third).

Corona infection 17 times higher than official data, claims study

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Official data suggest that in India about 4.5 crore people have been infected with COVID-19 so far. However, a scientific study by scientists from Banaras Hindu University (BHU) and involving those from several institutes across India has claimed that the actual corona infection in India was possibly 17 times higher. The study led by BHU geneticist professor Gyaneshwer Chaubey, Department of Zoology, Institute of Science, also involved 88 scientists from 34 research institutes across the country. This team of scientists conducted serosurvey (antibody testing) among 2301 individuals in urban areas of 14 districts in six states during the month of September-December 2020.

The most striking aspect of this study was that a large proportion of the Indian population was asymptomatic for Covid infection and the age group 26-35 had the maximum number of asymptomatic people. The study has been published in the prestigious science journal International Journal of Infectious Diseases



A study claims that actual corona infection was 17 times higher than official figures.

(IJJID). Researchers suggested that antibody test in people after any corona wave accurately assesses the actual infection. Thus, adopting the same process, the team conducted this research among a large number of people (street vendors) living in urban areas from 14 Indian districts who were most at risk of corona infection.

Samples were taken of only

those people who self-reported that they never had any Covid symptoms or positive RT PCR test. The minimum proportion of antibody-positive people was observed in Raipur district of Chhattisgarh state (2%), while the maximum proportion of antibody-positive persons was found in Ghazipur district (47%) of Uttar Pradesh. The research suggests that the difference

between the official numbers of infection and the actual possible infections, could be due to the high number of asymptomatic cases. The study relied on mathematical modelling to arrive at the assessment. Prof Gyaneshwer Chaubey said the value should be viewed with caution, keeping in mind the limited geographical coverage of the study.

AAP workers protest against Adani Group

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The workers of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) staged a demonstration at the Prime Minister's parliamentary office here on Tuesday, in response to the call given by party's Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh, protesting against the Adani Group episode and asked the PM to make it clear whether the money of the general public invested in Adani Group is safe or not. They were also demanding the constitution of a joint parliamentary committee (JPC) to look into the 'mega-scam'. During the protest, the police used mild force to stop AAP workers from proceeding towards the PM's parliamentary office.

The party workers said that it is the biggest scam in the country so far, in which lakhs of crores of investors have been cheated and institutions like banks and LIC have also been badly affected. They alleged that the silence of the government and the PM against the country's biggest economic scam indicates that somewhere the government had prior knowledge about this scam. Such demonstrations were held in all the divisional



AAP workers protesting against Adani Group in Varanasi on Tuesday.

Pioneer

headquarters in the state and here it was led by regional chief (Kashi unit) Pawan Tiwari.

While leading the protest, Tiwari said that the PM should tell the people whether their money is safe in banks and institutions or not but the way the government is running away from the debate in the Parliament, it seems that government institutions are engaged in saving Adani Group and asked why is ED not inves-

tigating this scam taking. Purvanchal provincial in-charge Abhinav Rai and Buddhist province in-charge Dr Anurag Mishra jointly levelled charges on Adani Group chief Gautam Adani. They said that the AAP would continue its protest till the government did not agree to conduct a debate on the matter relating to Adani Group.

Important among others who were also present were

party's district chief Ramashankar Patel, city president Akhilesh Pandey, Manoj Gupta, Kailash Patel, Ghanshyam Pandey, Pallavi Verma, Rekha Jaiswal, Arvind Patel, Om Prakash Patel, Abhishek Singh, Sharda Tandon, Ranji Singh Patel, Maya Shankar Patel, Amar Singh Patel, Vinod Verma, Kamla Prasad, Dinesh Yadav, Pravesh Verma and Abdul Rakib.

RBSK proves boon for a child girl

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK) has proved to be a boon for a three-year-old girl in getting rid of her congenital heart defects (CHD). Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr Sandeep Chowdhary said that the free treatment of a girl from Harahua area, who was suffering from CHD, was successfully completed at the identified Aligarh Medical College (AMC). The team of specialist doctors took about two hours to perform her surgery.

According to him, the father of the little girl was worried about his daughter's illness and her treatment for a long time as he was unable to afford it due to financial constraints but now when she has been treated, he is very happy and expressed his thanks to the RBSK Harahua team apart from CMO, ACMO and doctors of AMC. "Free treatment for 40 diseases and congenital malformations is being provided under RBSK and this is the first achievement of this year for CHD, which has been successfully treated. Five such children are in the process of treatment which will be completed soon," CMO said.

RBSK nodal officer and ACMO Dr AK Maurya said that the girl was identified for CHD during the screening at Lamhi's Madhwa Anganwadi Centre about four months ago by the team of RBSK Harahua. After this, permission was taken by the government for free treatment from AMC marked for CHD operation. The process of free operation of



A girl child successfully operated for CHD under RBSK.

Pioneer

the patient girl was completed on Monday. Apart from this, the process of treatment of five children is going on which will be completed soon. Dr Maurya said that under RBSK, serious efforts are being made by the government for the treatment of children from birth to 19 years by identifying various congenital defects. CHD is a serious congenital defect of the heart. Normally, its treatment costs Rs four to five lakh, which is done free of cost under the RBSK scheme. Under RBSK, 16 teams are working in the rural areas of the district, which visit each village to identify congenital defects and try to cure them.

"In CHD, the most common symptoms in children are blue colour of hands, feet

and tongue, not being able to breathe and drink mother's milk properly and getting tired early in sports. Utmost care should be taken during pregnancy to save children from these congenital defects," he said, adding that iron folic acid tablets should be given daily from the beginning of the fourth month of pregnancy till delivery and along with this, special attention should be paid to healthy and balanced diet.

WOMAN KILLED IN ROAD MISHAP: In a road accident that took place in Chamaraha market, under the Chopalpur police station on Tuesday, a married woman was killed, while her about one-and-half year-old daughter suffered serious injuries while

crossing the road on Varanasi-Azamgarh highway. The police sent the body for postmortem examination and the baby was admitted to the hospital. According to the information, the deceased identified as Sadhana Rajbhar (28), resident of Ramrepur, had gone to Gopalpur village with her mother Prabhavati Devi to see her ailing maternal grandfather. It was said that in the morning on Tuesday when she was crossing the road with her about one-and-half year-old daughter in lap in Chamaraha market, under the Chopalpur police station on Varanasi-Azamgarh highway to return to her maternal home, she came under the wheels of a speeding vehicle while the baby suffered serious injuries.

No recipients of Covid booster shot, doses expiring soon

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The officials of district health department are finding it difficult to take up precautionary dose vaccine campaigns due to poor response among eligible recipients. With the vaccine stock provided by the union government expiring on February 9, officials of the health department are running from pillar to post to get all the doses administered among eligible recipients.

The health department had set up a total of 24 vaccination centres in city, including three government hospitals and 21 community health centres (CHCs) in trans-Ganga and trans-Yamuna pockets, to

administer the shots but all centres received tepid response. Moreover, to utilize the precautionary doses, the health department has carried out two special mega vaccination camps among eligible recipients in city and rural areas on Saturday and Sunday.

District immunization officer and additional CMO, Dr Teerath Lal admitted that "There was tepid response from the eligible recipients to get the precautionary doses and we have to engage additional health teams to take the eligible recipients to vac centres". He added "As the expiry of precautionary dose date nearing (February 9), plans are afoot to maximise use of

doses available at the department.

Ironically, neither urban nor rural recipients were seen interested in taking precautionary doses and after witnessing slow take up of precautionary doses, health department personnel are finding it difficult to locate eligible recipients and administer them booster doses.

The startling fact was that eligible recipients were spotted arguing with ground health workers i.e. ASHA and ANMs when they approached them to get vaccinated. The department has set up three hospitals including Beli (TB Sapru) Hospital, district women hospital (Dufferin) and Daraganj

urban primary health centre in urban and all 21 Community health centres in trans-Ganga and trans-Yamuna pockets of the district for precautionary dose vaccination centres.

As per data of district health department, around 43% eligible beneficiaries in all age groups (13,59,379) have taken their precautionary doses in the district till February 5. On Saturday itself, as many as 13,225 eligible recipients were given precautionary doses across the district. Health officials, meanwhile, pointed out, "As there was no fear among eligible recipients regarding covid 19, they were least interested in booster dose vaccination".

Mela campus wears a deserted look after Maghi Purnima Snan

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

After Maghi Purnima snan, most of the prominent seers and saints started leaving the mela campus leaving it deserted. Activists and workers from various religious, social and spiritual organisations have also started packing their bags and disassembling their tents on the banks of river Ganga in sector three, four and five.

Police officials claimed that after the snan, most of kalpwasis (a term used for those who live at the bank of Ganga during the Magh month) left and about 40 percent of tents have been disassembled. However, some kalpwasis are still there for the Trijata snan, which is scheduled for Wednesday.

Apart from the five main sans- Pausb Purnima, Makar Sankranti, Mauni Amavasya, Basant Panchmi, and Maghi Purnima- that draw devotees from all over the country to the Magh Mela, there is one more snan, which very few know about- the Trijata snan.

Ram Naam bank convenor Ashutosh Varshney said, "Majority of kalpwasis leave after Maghi Purnima snan. However, some wait for the right muhurat (auspicious period) for returning after a special snan called the Trijata snan." He said that Trijata was a demoness who was assigned duty of guarding Goddess Sita in Ashok Vatika, where she was kept after being abducted by Ravana.

"As per Hindu mythology, before returning to Ayodhya, Lord Ram and Goddess Sita

had blessed Trijata and said that anyone who takes three dips in Ganga in the name of Trijata at the end of Magh month will gain punya (good karma) equivalent to a month of kalp-was," said Varshney.

It is also believed that kalpwasis can atone for all mistakes and sins committed during their stay by taking a dip in Ganga during Trijata snan, he added.

The 44-day-long Magh mela will culminate on February 18 after the Maha Shivratri snan.

Ashok Singh elected president of Allahabad HC Bar Assn

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Ashok Kumar Singh has won the post of President in the Allahabad High Court Bar Association elections the results of which were declared here on Tuesday. Nitin Sharma has won the post of General Secretary. Anil Tiwari has been second on the post of president, while Vikrant Pandey has been second on the post of general secretary.

Ashok Singh got a total 2710 votes. He defeated his nearest rival Anil Tiwari by 312 votes, while for the post of general secretary, Nitin Sharma defeated his nearest rival Vikrant Pandey by 367 votes.

Similarly Amit Kumar Srivastava was elected as the Senior Vice President while Sarvesh Kumar Dubey was elected Joint Secretary (Administration) and Bindu Kumari bagged the post of Joint Secretary Women. After the announcement of the election results, the advocates of the High Court have congratulated the elected members for the post of president and general secretary. There was an influx of people congratulating Ashok Singh and Nitin Sharma, who won the post of President and General Secretary. Ashok Singh has bagged a total of 2710, Anil Tiwari-2398, LK Chaturvedi-996

Chandra Prakash Upadhyay-663, Ram Avtar Verma-243, Divya Shankar Mishra-134, Avinash Chandra Tiwari-124, Atul Kumar Pandey-60, invalid-16, Blank-12

Similarly, for the post of General Secretary, Nitin



Sharma received a total of 1695 votes, Vikrant Pandey-1338, Akhilesh Kumar Sharma-1311, Shashi Prakash Singh-709, Ram Saheb Yadav-665, Santosh Kumar Mishra-482, Abhishek Chauhan-373, Nanhe Lal Tripathi-250, Raj Kumar Gautam-146, Achyuta Nand Pandey-123, Rakesh Kumar Gupta-96, LD Rajbhar-56, Prashant Singh-42, Akhilesh Kumar Dwivedi-18, invalid-37, Blank-17, Total votes counted-7356

In the presence of Chief Electoral Officer Senior Advocate Anil Bhushan, Deputy Electoral Officer Advocate Vashisht Tiwari and Advocate Mahendra Bahadur Singh, the counting of votes for the post of president started at 10 am on Tuesday in the Library Hall. In the new study, counting of votes for the posts of Senior Vice President, Joint Secretary Administration, Joint Secretary Women was being done till filing the last report. The final election results were expected to be declared by late

evening.

For the post of senior vice president -- Amit Kumar Srivastava received a total of 655, Kamlesh Kumar Tiwari-429, Rajesh Kumar Dubey-259 For the post of Joint Secretary Administration-- Sarvesh Kumar Dubey-759, Sumit Kumar Srivastava-415, Barrister Singh --388

For the post of Joint Secretary Women-- Bindu Kumari-702, Anjana Chaturvedi-700 and Aanchal Ojha-600.

TRIVENI EXPRESS TO OPERATE TILL CHOPAN: Triveni Express going to Singrauli and Shaktinagar will operate till Chopan only from Wednesday. Due to the non-interlocking work being done by the Dhanbad division, this decision has been taken by the Railways.

This train will go to Triveni Tanakpur (Uttarakhand) from Chopan itself. It has been informed by the Railways that the Triveni Express will remain canceled between Chopan to Singrauli and Shaktinagar.

Train number 15074 Tanakpur-Singrauli will run from Chopan every Monday, Wednesday, Friday from February 8 to 27 and train number 15073 Singrauli Tanakpur will run every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday from February 9 to February 28.

It may be pointed out here that this train operates via Prayagraj Junction and Phaphamau. In such a situation, the passengers of Prayagraj will also be inconvenienced by this.

Train number 15076 Tanakpur-Shaktinagar will run on every Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday from February 7 to February 28. Similarly, train number 15075 Shaktinagar-Tanakpur will run from Chopan on every Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday from February 8 to March 1. However, due to changes in the operation of Triveni Express, a large number of passengers will have to face problems. Some passengers who have already booked tickets are also having to cancel the tickets.

Officials told to submit progress report regularly

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

DM Divya Mittal made it clear to working agencies that it is not time to tell about problems but to complete the works within the month of March. While presiding over the meeting of Jal Jeevan Mission at Collectorate on Monday, she said after March the prime minister at any time will decide the date for the inauguration of the scheme so completion should be given priority.

About the work at Lahuriyadah she asked to complete it within the month of March at any cost so that the

area could get the potable water before the summer season. She asked the officials to conduct weekly monitoring about Lahuriyadah project taking it as most challenging work of the district. The officials related to Jal Jeevan Mission project were directed to submit the progress report regularly through ADM (Namami Gangey) about laying of remaining pipeline, house connections and potable water supply along with reports of hydro testing too. The officials related to the scheme, including electricity, jal nigam, irrigation and others were directed to cooperate actively. The meet-

ing was attended by officials of Jal Nigam, irrigation, Electricity and others.

SCHEME PRAISED: "A family becomes complete only with the birth of a girl baby". These views were expressed by chief guest Neha Shukla on the occasion of Kanya Janmotsav Karyakram at women's hospital on Monday. She praised the scheme of the government "Beti Bachao Beti Padhao" under which special attention was being given to girls. She exhorted the people to take proper care of girls and provide them all possible facilities to go forward. Throwing light over Kanya Sumangala Yojana

Probation Officer Shakti Tripathi said the programme was being organised that under the scheme. As per government guidelines Kanya Janmotsav programme was fixed for the first and third Monday of the month. She said to get benefit of the scheme provisions had been fixed and the benefit was available to all eligible parents. She said for eligible girls Rs 15,000 were provided in six phases. Cakes and fruits were distributed to parents. Shalini, Divya Jaiswal, Kamini Singh, Seeta Singh, Radhika Singh Savita Singh, Kalawati and others participated in the programme.

FIRST COLUMN

AFTER COVID, NURSING MOVES CENTRE-STAGE

Upskilling of nursing can prove to be transformative




DEEPAK SHARMA

Nursing has become an important part of the healthcare industry post-Covid. As technology takes center stage in nursing after the pandemic outbreak, the profession has gone through significant changes. The transformation in nursing care calls for upskilling of healthcare workers across the world.

Right from monitoring patients remotely to using tools to understand a patient's needs, hospitals need to train their nurses following huge technological intervention in the post-Covid era.

Nurses account for more than half of all the world's health workers, providing vital services throughout the health system, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO). Not only in the past, but today as well, nurses are at the forefront of fighting epidemics and pandemics that threaten health and human life across the globe. As they responded to an unprecedented crisis with bravery and courage, never has their value been more clearly demonstrated.



Nurses are the backbone of any health system, and they were on the frontline in battle against the pandemic. Today, there are just under 28 million nurses worldwide. Nursing numbers increased by 4.7 million worldwide between 2013 and 2018, but this still leaves a global shortfall of 5.9 million. The greatest gaps have been found in countries in Africa, Southeast Asia, and the WHO Eastern Mediterranean region as well as some parts of Latin America.

Well trained nurses with certifications in basic life support and advanced cardiovascular life support can make a huge difference in a hospital's ability to successfully deal with critical care and emergencies. While imparting such skills has been a time-taking and costly process for hospitals, including training and equipment, technology disruption has enabled digital learning solutions for healthcare professionals.

Today, there are complete online resuscitation and cardiac training modules for hospital staff that have made upskilling faster and better. Upskilling nurses can also solve the care home crisis due with an increase in elderly population. Also, upskilling is imminent in the era of telehealth, when nurses should be able to monitor and analyse the body parameters of a distant patient and raise an alarm by quickly informing doctors in case of emergency. The nurses will be able to handle a critical situation only if they are aware of new technologies such as wearable bands, computers, tablets, or smartphones.

While the upskilling or reskilling concept is relatively new to the US healthcare industry, other countries like India have been using upskilling with great success. During the pandemic, an online upskilling initiative had prepared over one lakh Indian nurses to fight Covid-19.

From recording audios to translating them using tools to understand a patient's needs, nurses are using as many tools as possible today. This rapid use of technology began after the pandemic outbreak. Hospitals can also invest in such tools to upskill their nurses, to take the patient care at a new level. For instance, if a patient is from another country or state, nurses can be trained in using specific tools or software that can translate what they are saying and then cater to their needs.

Similarly, virtual reality and Artificial Intelligence enabled tools can be used by nurses to transform the patient care. Recently, IIT Madras had joined hands with the state unit of the National Health Mission (NHM) to prevent maternal and neonatal deaths and improve the overall health of newborn babies and their mothers by upskilling healthcare workers.

According to a report, nursing makes up 50 per cent of the healthcare workforce and by 2022, it will be the most in demand profession in the US. Upskilling nurses by harnessing technology and developing new care models will help hospitals and for this they will need to invest in training and tools to empower their healthcare staff.

(The author is Co-founder & CEO of MedLern)

‘PARKINGson’s law of mobility, and us



SANJAY CHADHA

PRIYANKA NAVLE

Since the demand for parking is insatiable, new mobility services and mass transit must complement each other

As we celebrate hosting this year's G-20 annual forum, our resolve to organise over 200 meetings in 50 cities across 32 different work streams spotlighting LIFE (Lifestyle for Environment) may put to test the rigours of urban mobility. The congestion on roads and pressure for parking already make for a stressful experience as is evident from the frequent road rage incidents in India.

Though new technologies and business models have helped to improve transportation systems and services in the direction of a more sustainable mobility approach, it is shared mobility that has emerged as a possible answer to the rising number of vehicles. Shared mobility or shared transportation—where commuters can share resources such as vehicles, bikes, and parking space—has the potential to emerge as the most practical solution to meet a city's urban transportation needs without unduly adding to the parking pressures. It can help cities maximise the use of public spaces and symbiotically aid ride hailing firms to generate revenue, and consequently employment.

Yet, it remains a concept well resonated but seldom seeded in our policy initiatives on the ground. Shared mobility must be principally enabled as a commercial choice rather than a regulatory one.

On its part, the Central Government has expressed a larger intent of promoting shared mobility. The enabling provisions of the 'Cab Aggregators Guidelines' of the Ministry of Road Transport allow for bikes, scooters, motorcycles, three wheelers, and cars to be on a single tech platform to be used throughout the day by several people for different trips.

However, hailabids do not necessarily get incubated into a single aggregators' license issued by the state government. This is due to narrow interpretations driven by local political imperatives. Only a few states have shown the progressive intent to issue a single licence to aggregate 'Bike Taxis, Autorickshaws and Cabs'. Most, on the other hand, have not adopted this universal interpretation but instead choose to promote a multiple licensing regime, almost reminiscent of the pre-1991 license era.

This selective interpretation leads to suboptimal regulations. For instance, the 'Bike Taxis', which are extremely popular in Goa do not find an expression in the regulations of some of the large congested cities, despite their growing popularity despite being quick and light and best suited to avoid traffic snarls.

A larger auto or cab gets thus deployed for a single passenger leading to a bigger than necessary carbon footprint. The other aspect of alleviating parking pressure and the attendant congestion and pollution lies in the larger outlook of States towards land required to park vehicles. Most cities are still trying to fulfill the insatiable



CARS OR TWO-WHEELERS ACCOUNT FOR 85 PER CENT OF PARKING SPACE USAGE BUT PROVIDE FOR ONLY 4-5 PER CENT OF TRAVEL DEMAND. IN CONTRAST, CABS ACCOUNT FOR 4-5 PER CENT OF PARKING AND ON AN AVERAGE CARRY 15-20 TIMES MORE PASSENGERS THAN A PRIVATE CAR



able demand for parking, using up large tracts of the scarce land, even as real estate development has gone vertical.

Lessons from global experience are instructive. Globally, the governing principles of parking policy are changing. Instead of promoting unlimited supply of parking, parking demand is sought to be reduced by discouraging personal vehicle usage in congested areas. Such a move towards shared mobility is being encouraged in cities like Paris, Madrid, Barcelona, Portland, etc., where fiscal disincentives have been put in place on use of personal vehicles, making public transport or a commercial hire a more lucrative financial choice. This frees up street spaces and parking lots, converting them into cycle lanes and recreational areas.

Since India faces similar challenges, it is only natural that India's response should also resonate with action taken across the globe. According to a study by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), a car in India on an average is parked for over 95 per cent of the time and is driven for less than five per cent of its life. The survey concluded that on an average, a car spends 8,360 hours parked and is only driven for 400 hours in a year.

Cars or two-wheelers account for 85 per cent of parking space usage but provide for only 4-5 per cent of travel demand. In contrast, cabs account for 4-5 per cent of parking and on an average carry 15-20 times more passengers than a private car.

The study also highlighted the vast land usage committed to this

ever-rising parking demand in urban areas. It estimated that the annual additional demand for parking spaces can be equivalent to as much as 471 football fields in Delhi, 100 in Chennai, 58 in Chandigarh, and 179 in Gurgaon.

The Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA), has gone on record to state that provisions of parking for personal vehicles cannot be considered a matter of public good. Land is a limited resource, so there is a limit to the additional parking spaces that can be created in a city. Decades of experience in India and across the world bear testimony to the fact that the demand for parking is insatiable. New mobility services and established mass transit must complement each other to build systems that serve consumers regardless of where they live within the cities or their circumstance.

Already, for many of the millennials and Gen Z in India, the car has gone from being seen as a property asset to becoming a service that young people pay for only when they need it. It is expected that by the end of the decade, more apps, shared services, and electrification will significantly expand mobility's scope and modes. New mobility services have the potential to carve out a meaningful role in future mobility for themselves. These are cues for policymakers to get more actively involved in envisioning these new services in the urban transportation system. One of the most powerful outcomes of shared mobility is the impact on the environment. The ability of states to garner revenues to com-

bat the environment lies in innovative regulations. A commercial vehicle contributes substantially higher taxes, tolls and GST—a part of which needs to be channelised right to get this segment to grow. Despite the Green fund subsidies for manufacture of EVs through the FAME schemes, the current sales of electric vehicles (EV) is less than five per cent of the total vehicle sales against an ambitious target of a complete switch over for all new vehicles by 2030.

Due to a higher initial capital cost, a loan for purchasing an EV entails higher EMIs than its fossil fuelled equivalent, offsetting some of the advantage of the lower running cost. A targeted interest subvention scheme for purchase of EVs by the marginal earners of commercial vehicles would create excellent self-employment opportunities. Further, Priority Sector Lending (PSL) for green mobility can be expanded to the last mile to cover purchase loans, especially for women drivers which would enable more women to earn their livelihood with complete flexibility in working hours.

The tech platforms could also provide enhanced safety for women riders by mapping them to women drivers as a preference. The possibilities to convert this into an opportunity are endless.

However, state governments must be exhorted to bring out the attendant rules and regulations to enable the tech platforms to aggregate all vehicles without an exception—through a single licence. The road to success need not be lined with many tempting parking spaces.

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

ALLOWING NOMINATED COUNCILLORS TO VOTE (IN THE MAYORAL ELECTION) IS ILLEGAL AND UNCONSTITUTIONAL. THIS IS OPEN HOOLIGANISM.
— DELHI DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER
MANISH SISODIA



IF THE AAP DECIDES TO MOVE COURT, IT SHOULD FIRST GIVE A COMMITMENT TO ABIDE BY THE COURT'S DECISION.
— DELHI BJP SPOKESPERSON
PRAVEEN SHANKAR KAPOOR

Mother tongue is a medium for higher studies

The disadvantaged sections will gain from the adoption of mother tongue in higher education institutes

The Budget is a carefully crafted document aiming to cultivate voters of nine states going to polls this year with largess showered on agriculture and infrastructure projects. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is right in believing that the voter wants the glitz of infra in every field. It is a politically paying proposition.

Mother tongue is the ideal medium for expressing one's thoughts and feelings because language is such a potent tool. It is the language that a child picks up without his or her conscious effort while interacting with members of his or her own social group.

From the very first years of school, UNESCO has been setting the example and promoting multilingual education



SASHWATI BANERJEE

(The author is Founder, Top Parent)

tion based on the mother tongue. According to research, mother tongue education is essential for inclusivity and high-quality learning. It also enhances learning outcomes and academic achievement. Most importantly, mother tongue-based multilingual education gives all students the ability to participate fully in the society. Moreover, in India, the promotion of Indian languages in higher education is in sync with one of the focal points of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. About 95 per cent of students, who receive primary education in their mother tongue, face difficulty during their Higher education and should not be left out in their pursuit of higher studies.

NEP provides for higher education institutions and programmes in higher education to use the mother tongue or local language as a medium of instruction, besides offering programs bilingually. According to research, having a strong mother tongue foundation leads to a much better understanding of the curriculum as well as a more positive attitude toward school. It simultaneously fosters a whole host of other essential skills, such as critical thinking and literacy skills. Thus, it is critical that children keep their first language when they start school in a different language, as it also equips children with the skills they need to learn additional languages, allowing them to transfer their understanding of the

structure of language to several new languages.

Moreover, research by Yared Seid showed that when children were taught in their primary schools with their mother tongue as the medium of instruction, it did improve their education outcome.

It also enhances the attributes of learning for students such as emotional development, besides having a very powerful impact on the formation of the individual. Mother language has such an important role in framing one's thinking, emotions, and spiritual world, because the most important stage of one's life, childhood, is spent in its imprints.

This is especially relevant for students who are first-generation learners (the first ones

in their entire generation to go to school and receive an education) or the ones coming from rural areas, who may feel intimidated by unfamiliar concepts in an alien language.

In terms of education, the mother tongue, home language, or first language refers to the language that a child uses to communicate with others, interact with the outside world, and make sense of their surroundings.

There is an impending challenge to ensuring the availability of 'Quality Material in Regional Languages' such as textbooks and scholarly literature. Along with availability, ensuring quality control of the translations has become pivotal. Attracting and retaining quality teachers who are willing and able to teach in regional

languages is a challenge. Language diversity is important for the balance of cultures, whereas focusing on one language can restrict exposure to different places and cultures due to language barriers. We may lose our advantage of being multilingual, for which ensuring a balance of languages is important. Moreover, a strict focus on regional languages can slow down the capacity of competing at global levels of education. Delivering technical courses in regional languages may prevent students from competing in global labor and education markets, where fluency in English yields a distinct edge. It is important to create a strong and successful bilingual/multilingual programme in the early years of

schooling in a multilingual nation like India. The goal of teaching English in the early years should be to achieve basic conversational ability. However, when using the mother tongue as a medium of instruction, the accessibility barrier is removed because it accepts prospective students and their parents.

For multilingual children, there isn't a single model that fits all of their learning needs and contexts. Each school and community should determine what works best for them in terms of multilingual and mother tongue education. However, in general, the educational benefits that can be predicted are larger the longer a child can learn in and through his or her native languages.

Budget has something for all sections: PM

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said the recent Union Budget has something for every section of the society and asserted that the interests of the poor have been at the centre of every budget presented by his Government.

Addressing the first BJP parliamentary party meeting after the Budget was presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on February 1, Modi said no one is calling it a "chunavi budget" (budget influenced by polls) even though it was the last full-fledged one before next year's Lok Sabha election. Overall development and the interests of every section of the society

have driven the budget proposals, he added.

Even those who are ideologically opposed to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) have welcomed the budget, Union minister Pralhad Joshi told reporters, quoting Modi's speech to the MPs.

Asking the MPs to inform their constituents, including the poor and middle class, about the relevant aspects of the budget, Modi recalled his electoral experiences as the chief minister of Gujarat to say that when work is recognised by people, there is nothing like anti-incumbency, sources said.

Underscoring the wide acceptance of the budget, the prime minister said it is at

times difficult to cater to everyone's taste at a family function of merely 25 guests, but the budget proposals have managed to meet the expectations of different sections of the society in a country of more than 130 crore people.

Modi highlighted his involvement with budgets over the years, noting that he has been associated with about 25 of them, including as the Gujarat chief minister between 2001 and 2014, and 10 of them, including interim budgets, at the Centre.

The prime minister also asked the MPs, especially those from cities, to organise sports meets, noting that there is a view that youngsters in urban centres are not much involved



in sports. Modi has repeatedly asked lawmakers to organise sports meets.

In his address, Modi said India has organised about 20 G20-related meets at different places so far and foreign guests have appreciated their conduct. He also spoke about a

devastating earthquake that hit Türkiye and Syria and noted that India is providing all possible assistance. Modi also recalled a 2001 earthquake in Gujarat, noting the scale of the tragedy and how he can relate to the situation in these countries.

Prez Address did not dwell upon vital women's quota Bill: Opp

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Some Opposition members Sin Lok Sabha on Tuesday criticised the President's address to the joint session of Parliament, saying it contained "some half-truths" and did not talk about important issues like the Women's Reservation Bill.

Participating in the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, BJD's Pinaki Misra said it was "some-what a untrustworthy document," and it "suppressed" several truths.

The address talked about women empowerment, but it did not mention the Women's Reservation Bill, which is pend-



ing for long, he said. "We are deeply unhappy that Women Reservation Bill does not find mention in the address."

He also said the address talked about the poor, but in the Budget, the government slashed allocation to the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 (MGNREGA).

The finance minister needs to reconsider this, he added.

The BJD member also said that "some half-truths crept into the statement" on medical colleges also. Most colleges lack good infrastructure and equipment, he said.

However, Misra added that government policies on mines, minerals and air connectivity have worked well.

JD (U) member Kaushalendra Kumar said that the government is talking about amrit kal, but there is nothing like that.

Kumar alleged that the Modi-government has failed to provide jobs to people and also failed to bring back black money.

He also demanded special status for Bihar.

IN THE SUPREME COURT

Bilkis assured her plea will be heard after new Bench is set up

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday assured Bilkis Bano, who was gang-raped and seven members of her family killed during the 2002 Gujarat riots, that her plea against the remission of the sentence of 11 convicts will be heard soon after the constitution of a new Bench. A Bench of Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices PS Narasimha and JB Pardiwala assured Bano, represented through her lawyer Shobha Gupta, that the new Bench will be formed at the earliest.

Shobha Gupta mentioned the matter for urgent hearingand said that a new bench needs to be constituted by the Chief Justice of India as Justice Bela M Trivedi recused from hearing the plea. CJI Chandrachud said, "I



will do so at the earliest. The matter will be listed soon".

Bano had moved the apex court on November 30, 2022 challenging the "premature" release of 11 lifers by the state government, saying it has 'shaken the conscience of society'. The top court is already seized of PILs filed by CPI(M) leader Subhashini Ali, Revati Laul, an independent journalist, Roop Rekha Verma, who is a former vice chancellor of the Lucknow University, and TMC MP Mahua Moitra against the release of the convicts.

SC nixes Ayyub's plea to quash summons by court in PMLA case

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday dismissed journalist Rana Ayyub's plea challenging summons by the Ghaziabad special court in a money laundering case, leaving it open for her to raise the issues before the trial court. A Bench of Justices V Ramasubramanian and JB Pardiwala allowed Ayyub to raise the issue of jurisdiction before the trial court, saying it is a question of evidence.

Justice V Ramasubramanian, who pronounced the verdict on behalf of the Bench referred to Section 3 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) and said Navi Mumbai, where the account is, is said to be the place where the proceeds of crime have reached. In her writ petition, Ayyub has sought quashing of the proceedings initiated by the ED in



Ghaziabad citing lack of jurisdiction as the alleged offence of money laundering occurred in Mumbai.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, who has appeared for the ED had contended that the prosecution complaint has been filed in the Ghaziabad court by the probe agency as part of the cause of action had arisen in Uttar Pradesh, where a lot of people, including from Ghaziabad, contributed to her crowdfunding campaign.

On November 29 last year, the special PMLA court in Ghaziabad had taken cognisance of the prosecution complaint (charge sheet) filed by

the ED and summoned Ayyub. The special court had said Ayyub's alleged crime involves taking money illegally from the general public in the name of charity via Ketto -- an online crowdfunding platform -- in three campaigns, without any approval, raising a huge sum in the bank account of her sister and father, and transferring it into her own bank account which was not used for the intended purpose.

On October 12 last year, the ED had filed a charge sheet against Ayyub, accusing her of cheating the public and using Rs 2.69 crore she got in charity for creating personal assets, and also violating the foreign contribution law. "Ayyub utilised these funds to create a fixed deposit of Rs 50 lakh for herself and also transferred Rs 50 lakh to a new bank account. Investigations found that only about Rs 29 lakh was used for relief work," said the ED.

Agusta chopper middleman Christian Michel denied bail

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday denied bail to Christian Michel James, accused middleman in AgustaWestland chopper scam cases, who was deported from Dubai and being probed by both the CBI and the Enforcement Directorate. A bench of Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices PS Narasimha and JB Pardiwala said that argument of James that he be released on bail on ground that he has completed half of maximum sentence in the cases cannot be accepted. It, however, said that James may pursue his remedy of regular bail before trial court in the case.

The Rs 3,600-crore scam relates to the purchase of 12 VVIP helicopters from AgustaWestland. James has



sought bail under section 436A of Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) which says that a person can be released on bail if he has completed half of the maximum sentence prescribed for the offence. Advocate Aljo K Joseph submitted that after his extradition from Dubai in 2018, James has spent more than four years in jail, while the maximum sentence prescribed for the offences he was extradited for is seven years.

Additional Solicitor General Sanjay Jain, appearing

for the CBI and the ED, said the investigation in the cases is still under progress and letters rogatory, which are formal requests from a court to a foreign court for judicial assistance, have been sent to the UAE, the United Kingdom and Hong Kong. The bench then questioned Jain as to how long can he be kept in custody keeping in mind the investigation is still going on even as chargesheet and supplementary chargesheet have been filed in the case.

Def Min's Conclave to be held on sidelines of Aero India show

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI/BENGALURU

Speeding up joint ventures in Defence production and research and development in this sector will figure prominently during the Defence Ministers' Conclave on February 14 on the sidelines of the 14th edition of prestigious Aero India air show in Bengaluru. Defence Minister Rajnath will host the conclave.

The biennial airshow will be held at the Air Force Station in Yelahanka here from February 13-17. The conclave will see participation of Defence Ministers of foreign friendly countries, who would also be attending the Aero India, officials said on Tuesday.

The conclave will address aspects related to deepening cooperation for capacity building (through investments, Research and Development, joint venture, co-development, co-production and provisioning of defence equipment), training, space, Artificial Intelligence(AI) and maritime security to grow together with the broad theme 'Shared Prosperity through Enhanced



Engagements in Defence' (SPEED).

The conclave is an opportunity for Defence Ministers of all foreign friendly countries and India to engage with each other to carry forward the Prime Minister's vision of 'Make in India, Make for the World' for a secure and prosperous future for generations to come.

According to officials, Aero India has carved a niche for itself globally as one of the premier aerospace exhibitions with 13 successful editions organised in Bengaluru since 1996. A total 731 exhibitors have registered -- 633 Indian and 98 foreign for Aero India this time.

Noting that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched a campaign for 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' (self-reliant India), in Defence sector, officials said it aims to increasing indigenous defence manufacturing and production capability to develop a self-sufficient defence ecosystem; involving like-minded nations in developing a reliable supply chain free of exploitation and disruptions by certain players.

While the domestic requirements are large enough to sustain the indigenous industry, India would like to partner with friendly countries to take the Defence production to next level and share the ben-

efits to ensure shared prosperity, they said.

The aerospace industry is also gearing up majorly to cater to the demand of aircraft (fixed and rotary wings), UAVs and communication systems, according to officials, the opportunities in the aerospace for the Indian industries will enhance with favorable defence policies with the other countries by creating an ecosystem in India.

Satellite enabled technologies such as information technology, Artificial Intelligence (AI), chip manufacturing and communication technology are areas where massive scope for jointness exists, they said.

Workshop on management of biological, nuclear exigencies being held for AFMS staff

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Medical Branch of Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff is conducting 11th Workshop on medical management of Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) exigencies for medical and nursing officers of the Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS) and National Disaster Relief Force (NDRF) from February 7 to 10 at the Army Hospital (Research and Referral) here.

Sixty medical and nursing officers from the Indian Army, Indian Navy, Indian Air Force and NDRF are participating in the workshop.

It aims to train young services medical professionals to operate in CBRN environment and render first aid and long term management of the CBRN exposures, officials said here on Tuesday.

Lectures, demonstrations of CBRN exercises and hands-on training on use of CBRN equipment will be imparted by the experts and scientists from Armed Forces Medical



College, Institute of Nuclear Medicine and Allied Sciences, NDRF, Indian Army and Indian Air Force units, they said.

Air Marshal BR Krishna, Chief of the Integrated Defence Staff inaugurated the Workshop. Lt General AK Jindal, Commandant, Army Hospital (R&R); Air Marshal Rajesh Vaidya, Deputy Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (Medical), senior officers from the Medical Directorates of the three Services and senior professionals from institutes of national repute like National Center for Disease Control and National Disaster Management Authority were also present during the event.

Shortage of specialists, doctors, paramedical staff plagues top hospitals

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

While the Government is on a spree to strengthen the country's health infrastructure by setting up new medical and nursing colleges, there is an acute shortage of specialists, doctors and paramedical staff in many hospitals including top ones like AIIMS, Delhi and Safdarjung Hospitals, thus impacting public health care.

On Tuesday, the Government shared the data with the Parliament, which shows that its major hospitals across the country are facing shortage of doctors with at least 3028 posts yet to be filled. Of these, 1,867 vacant posts are from 18 new AIIMS like hospitals itself from across the country. Most of these hospitals are visited by patients from the poor and rural sector. At least 21,464 posts at the non-faculty positions including nurses and support staff are yet to be filled as of January 2023 across the States.

The query regarding the specialists and paramedical and non faculty staff shortage



was raised by Member of Parliament Amar Patnaik. In her written reply, the Minister of State for Health Dr Bharati Pravin Pawar said that recruitment is carried out as per functional needs.

An analysis of the data tabled in the Lok Sabha indicates that acute shortage of paramedical staff is also a cause of worry.

In Delhi, the national capital of the country, the situation is not encouraging. In Dr RML Hospital, there is a shortage of 113 doctors and 469 vacant non-faculty positions including nurses and support staff) while Lady Hardinge Medical College is yet to fill 81 posts (162). Similarly, Safdarjung Hospital which sees a large number of patient footfalls everyday is plagued by 220 vacant posts for doctors and 789 vacant posts for supporting staff.

Unite Raj Cong leaders first: BJP MP's dig at Rahul's Yatra

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

BJP member C P Joshi on Tuesday hit out at Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra, saying he should first bring together the warring Congress factions in Rajasthan before thinking of uniting the nation.

Initiating a debate in Lok Sabha on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, Joshi lashed out at the Congress.

"You have embarked on Bharat Jodo (uniting India). But first at least unite the two leaders in Rajasthan. One says the other is a magician who leaks question papers without opening the vault, the other says the party is infected with corona, calls him 'naalayak' (worthless)," Joshi, a Lok Sabha



member from Rajasthan's Chittorgarh, said.

The BJP member was referring to the rivalry between Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and his bete noire and chief ministerial aspirant Sachin Pilot.

Joshi also wondered how one can talk of uniting the country by standing alongside

those who raised "anti-national" slogans in the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) and talked of separating Kashmir from India. "For the prime minister's chair, you partitioned my country. There were dead bodies from Lahore to Delhi. But those running after power were celebrating in Lahore and Delhi," Joshi said.

Process to set up national seed co-op begins

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Following approval from the Cabinet, the Union Cooperation Ministry has initiated the process to set up a national-level multi-State seed cooperative society which will act as an apex organisation for production, procurement, processing, branding, labelling, packaging, storage, marketing and distribution of quality seeds in the country.

A few weeks ago, the Cabinet had given the nod for setting up of such a central entity and also for strategic research and development; and to develop a system for preservation and promotion of indigenous natural seeds; through various cooperative societies in an array of sectors.

A senior official from the Ministry said that the proposed central level multi-State

seed cooperative also aims to help increase the seed replacement rate, varietal replacement rate, ensuring the role of farmers in quality seed cultivation and seed variety trials, production and distribution of certified seeds with a single brand name, by utilizing the network of all levels of cooperatives.

Increasing the productivity per unit of cultivated land in India to increase agriculture production, help farmers in production, procurement, branding, packaging and selling of quality seeds and to increase the capacity of cooperative societies will be its major task.

Besides, it will incorporate all types of cooperative structures to ensure cultivation of quality seeds and increasing the role of farmers in seed variety testing, production and distri-



bution of certified seeds.

Last but not the least; Multi State Cooperative Seed Society will help develop a system for conservation and promotion of indigenous natural seeds as well as help in new research and development, added the official.

The country's three leading cooperatives, including IFFCO, KRIBHCO and NAFED along with NDDB and NCDC have come forward to jointly help set up the central body in the seed sec-

tor with an authorized share capital of Rs 500 crore.

The Ministry feels that 29 crore members of 8.54 lakh cooperative societies who are largely from the farming communities, marginalised and lower income groups in the rural areas in all likelihood join the new society to boost their income, thus helping achieve the Government's vision of "Sahakaar se Samridhi Tak."

As per reports, the direct contribution of quality seeds to production in India is about

15-20% which can be increased up to 45% with efficient management of other inputs.

It is felt that if farmers get high quality seeds through Multi State Cooperative Seed Society, then agricultural productivity will also improve while processing, buying and selling of quality seeds will help generate additional employment in these sectors, thus boosting rural economy, promoting "Make in India" and leading to Atmanirbhar Bharat, noted the official.

Big test is filing chargesheet on time, says DGP on Assam child marriages

PTI ■ AMINGAON

As arrests in child marriage cases in Assam crossed 2,500, the biggest challenge is now to file chargesheets within the time frame, Director-General of Police (DGP) GP Singh said on Tuesday.

Speaking to PTI, he said the police have no aim of harassing anyone, but its objective is to stop child marriage altogether in the state within two-three years.

"We have registered 4,074 cases and over 2,500 people have been arrested till this morning. All the accused in these cases have been identified and they will be arrested and charge sheets filed against them," Singh said on the sidelines of the Y20 Summit here. "The biggest challenge now is to file the charge sheets within the 60 to 90 days time frame," he added. The Assam Police launched a crackdown on child marriages on Friday, making over 2,000 arrests with-



in the first two days. On the 65 accused procuring bail, the police chief said the focus is on ensuring charge sheets are filed within the stipulated time-frame. "Bail is okay. To me, it is not important who stays in jail for how long. It is important that they have to be charge-sheeted and they face the music of law," he asserted.

Singh said the basic idea behind the operation is to minimise child marriages this year, and stop it completely in the state within two-three years.

"Addressing the issue on basis of law is one thing. This is also a kind of awakening that this (child marriages) will not be tolerated. "While the arrests

are good and we will take lawful action, the basic idea is to stop child marriages. Harassment is not our aim, our aim is that child marriage is stopped," he said. Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma had earlier asserted that the drive will continue till the 2026 assembly elections and justified the crackdown, pointing out

that nearly 17 per cent of over 6.2 lakh pregnant women last year were teenagers in the state. The opposition has criticised the manner in which it is being carried out, equating the police action with "terrorising people". Family members of those arrested have also been protesting against the operation.

The state cabinet recently approved a proposal to book men who have married girls below 14 years under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (POCSO). Cases under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 will be registered against those who have married girls in the age group of 14-18, the cabinet had decided. The offenders will be arrested and the marriages declared illegal. Assam has a high rate of maternal and infant mortality, with child marriage being identified as the primary cause, according to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS).

Didi promises 'Bengal model' in Tripura

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday offered to transport Bengal model of development in Tripura claiming under the BJP Government Agartala had witnessed all-round deterioration.

Launching a scathing attack on the BJP Government at the end of a mega road show in poll-bound Tripura Banerjee said the BJP's double-engine model had failed to fulfil people's aspirations.

However, Bengal Opposition leader Suwendu Adhikari said on Tuesday that, "Her party will get less votes than NOTA ... let her come and organize hundreds of road-shows."

Earlier, Banerjee while wondering whether reforms promised and brought about by the BJP Government had mitigated the odds, said, "Under the BJP's double engine rule India has witnessed 40 percent rise in

unemployment whereas in the corresponding period Bengal has seen 40 per cent rise in employment which is a record."

Claiming that the social welfare schemes like Swasthya Saathi (health insurance) Kanyashri (girls' empowerment) and Duare Sarkar (government at the doorsteps) etc launched by her government had earned worldwide accolades the Bengal Chief Minister said a TMC Government in Tripura would help people get benefits of good governance at their door steps.

"In Bengal we provide Swasthya Sathi cards for health insurance ... but there is no credibility of the Ayushman Bharat card offered by the central government," she said.

Banerjee on Tuesday launched her party's campaign for the Tripura elections. Taking a dig at the saffron outfit that ruled both Delhi and Agartala

Banerjee asked "have they (BJP) fulfilled the promises

that they made? Has Rs 15 lakh come into your account? Has the black money come back after demonetisation?"

Launching a circuitous attack on the Centre regarding its stance on the top Gujarat-based businessman Gautam Adani, she asked, "if Life Insurance Corporation of India and State Bank of India sink, will we get our money back? If you people are thinking that with the help of ED and CBI, we will be wiped out, that is not easy."

Chief Minister's nephew Abhishek Banerjee who is also the national general secretary of the BJP and who too joined the road show was equally stringent in his attack on the Centre questioning the double-engine model. "the double engine referred to by the BJP are Enforcement Directorate and Central Bureau of Investigation," he said adding "when the BJP fails to take on its opposition politically it lets loose the agencies like ED and CBI to harass the leaders ... as is the case in Bengal."

FROM PAGE 1

VOICES CRYING OUT FROM QUAKE RUBBLE FALL SILENT

One temblor that followed the first registered at magnitude 7.5, powerful in its own right. Unstable piles of metal and concrete made the search efforts perilous, while freezing temperatures made them ever more urgent, as worries grew about how long trapped survivors could last in the cold. The scale of the suffering — and the accompanying rescue effort — were staggering. More than 8,000 people have been pulled from the debris in Turkey alone, and some 380,000 have taken refuge in Government shelters or hotels, said Turkish Vice President Fuat Oktay. They huddled in shopping malls, stadiums, mosques and community centers, while others spent the night outside in blankets gathering around fires.

Many took to social media to plead for assistance for loved ones believed to be trapped under the rubble. Turkey's state-run Anadolu Agency quoted Interior Ministry officials as saying all calls were being "collected meticulously" and the information relayed to search teams.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said 13 million of the country's 85 million people were affected, and he declared a state of emergency in 10 provinces. For the entire quake-hit area, that number could be as high as 23 million people, according to Adelheid Marschang, a senior emergencies officer with the World Health Organization.

"This is a crisis on top of multiple crises in the affected region," Marschang said in Geneva.

Turkey is home to millions of refugees from the Syrian civil war. The affected area in Syria is divided between government-controlled territory and the country's last opposition-held enclave, where millions live in extreme poverty and rely on humanitarian aid to survive.

The Palestinian Authority said that 57 Palestinian refugees were among the dead — 14 in Turkey and 43 in Syria, a country that for decades has hosted nearly a half-million Palestinians in large refugee camps.

Teams from nearly 30 countries around the world headed for Turkey or Syria.

As promises of help flooded in, Turkey sought to accelerate the effort by allowing only vehicles carrying aid to enter the worst-hit provinces of Kahramanmaraş, Adiyaman and Hatay. The United Nations said it was "exploring all avenues" to get supplies to rebel-held northwestern Syria. Sebastian Gay, the head of mission in the country for Doctors Without Borders, said health facilities were overwhelmed, and medical personnel were working around around the clock to help the wounded.

Nurgul Atay told The Associated Press she could hear her mother's voice beneath the rubble of a collapsed building in the Turkish city of Antakya, the capital of Hatay province. But efforts to get into the ruins had been futile without any heavy equipment to help.

"If only we could lift the concrete slab, we'd be able to reach her," she said. "My mother is 70 years old, she won't be able to withstand this for long." But help did reach some. Several dramatic rescues were reported across the region as survivors, including small children, were pulled from the rubble more than 30 hours after the earthquake.

Residents in a Syrian town discovered a crying infant whose mother apparently gave birth to her while buried in the rubble of a five-story apartment building, relatives and a doctor said. The newborn was found buried under the debris with her umbilical cord still connected to her mother, Afraa Abu Hadiya, who was found dead, they said.

The baby was the only member of her family to survive from the building collapse in the small town of Jinderis, next to the Turkish border, Ramadan Sleiman, a relative, told The Associated Press. In the city of Aleppo, a Maronite Christian convent opened its doors to hundreds of residents who fled their shaking homes.

"Based on our principles and ideas of receiving the most needy, we wanted to make sure that everybody who was scared or lost their house or was on the streets could find shelter here," said Brother George Sabah. "We opened every part of the convent. There isn't a space in the convent that isn't being used by people, including the elderly, children, men, women."

Turkey has large numbers of troops in the border region and has tasked the military with aiding in the rescue efforts, including setting up tents for the homeless and a field hospital in Hatay province. A navy ship docked on Tuesday at the province's port of Iskenderun, where a hospital collapsed, to transport survivors in need of medical care to a nearby city. Thick, black smoke rose from another area of the port, where firefighters have not yet been able to douse a fire that broke out among shipping containers toppled by the earthquake.

Turkey's emergency management agency said the total number of deaths in the country had passed 4,500, with some 26,000 people injured. The death toll in government-held areas of Syria climbed over 800, with some 1,400 injured, according to the Health Ministry. At least 900 people have died in the rebel-held northwest, according to the White Helmets, the emergency organization leading rescue operations, with more than 2,300 injured.

The region sits on top of major fault lines and is frequently shaken by earthquakes. Some 18,000 were killed in similarly powerful earthquakes that hit northwestern Turkey in 1999.

RAHUL CRIES ADANI LINK; BJP RETORTS 'DEAL' CONG CULTURE

Rahul also hit out at Modi for slamming the Opposition over its criticism of the Rafale deal by allegedly overlooking the capabilities of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL).

"The (Adani-Modi) relationship began many years ago when Narendra Modi was Gujarat CM. When most of India was asking questions of the prime minister, and was against the PM (then CM Narendra Modi), one man stood shoulder to shoulder with PM Modi, he was loyal to the prime minister and helped Mr Modi construct the idea of a resurgent Gujarat," Rahul said.

Pointing out that Adani works in strategic sectors, he said the government must find out about these shell companies as to who controls them as this is a national security issue.

In June 2022, the chairman of Sri Lanka's Ceylon electricity board informed a parliamentary hearing that President Rajapaksa told him that PM Modi "pressured" him to give the wind power contract to Adani, Gandhi alleged. This is not India's foreign policy but a policy to enhance Adani's businesses, the Congress leader said.

TURKEY THANKS 'DOST INDIA'

Also, a second plane went to Turkey and will land before evening." "What we need most in the initial hours after the earthquake is search and rescue teams with specially trained dog squads. We really appreciate the sincere and kind help of India.

"The first 48-72 hours are very important and Indian rescue teams are in the field," he said.

On the possibility of Indian affected by the temblor, the envoy said "So far, we have not received any requests from Indians for rescue after the earthquake in Turkey. The Indian mission in Ankara may have received some requests."

On the magnitude of the disaster, he said earthquake of magnitude of 7.7 hit Turkey, after couple of hours another earthquake of magnitude 7.6 hit Turkey. More than 14 million people affected in southeastern Turkey, it is a big disaster. 21,103 injured, almost 6,000 buildings collapsed, three airports damaged, the envoy said.

Syrian ambassador to India Bassam Al-Khatib said, "When I started getting calls from Damascus, I started coordinating with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and they soon responded. It was only a question of some hours and the MEA told me that they are ready, have plan to help Syria and to send the relief and equipments fast." He also said India from the moment the disaster struck expressed the wish to be with Syria."

GOWRI SWORN IN AS MADRAS HC JUDGE; SC JUNKS PLEA CHALLENGING APPOINTMENT

The petitioner-lawyers are Anna Mathew, Sudha Ramalingam and D Nagasaila who in their plea referred to the alleged hate speeches made by Gowri against Muslims and Christians.

Gowri, in her speech, cited a quote of Swami Vivekananda and said she is conscious that she is handed over the 'greatest responsibility of being a judge' to work for the cause of the 'unheard and the oppressed voices of the poorest of the poor', to liberate the marginalised, 'scuttle' inequalities of society and nurture fraternity in the diverse country.

"With all humility, I undertake to dispense justice in realising the dreams of the makers of our Constitution. Thank You. Jai Hind." She expressed gratitude and thanked former Chief Justice of Madras High Court, Justice Munishwar Nath Bhandari, former Acting Chief Justice, Justice M Duraiswami (Retired) and Acting Chief Justice, T Raja for reposing faith in her and for recommending her name for the post of judge.

She thanked the Supreme Court judges including the Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud. Gowri said she hailed from a very remote village (West Neyiur) in Kanyakumari district of Tamil Nadu and is a first generation lawyer from a 'very ordinary family'. She thanked all her senior advocates, including Maniraj and Jacob Fletcher. She is an alumnus of Madurai Law College. "I bow to the noble feet of all the elder brother and sister judges who are on the dais and who are watching from my beloved Madurai Bench," she said. She also thanked members of the Bar and sought their blessings. Born on May 21, 1973 in Kanyakumari district, Gowri has served as the Assistant Solicitor General at the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court from 2022. In 1995, she enrolled as a lawyer and has a rich experience in the practice of civil, criminal, taxation and labour matters. On the row over her elevation, BJP sources declined to comment since it involved 'legalities'. However, requesting anonymity, a leader said 'past political activity' is no bar to become a judge. Her elevation comes against the background of staunch opposition from a section of legal fraternity and political parties. Congress leader Peter Alphonse, MDMK general secretary Vaiko, the Left leaders, VCK chief Thol Thirumavalavan were among those who opposed Gowri's elevation.

They wrote to President Droupadi Murmu and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court D Y Chandrachud against appointing her as judge. Lawyers led by senior counsel N G R Prasad on February 6 made a representation to Madras High Court Acting CJ T Raja to not administer oath of office to Gowri until the top court heard the matter. A section of lawyers had staged a protest close to the High Court campus against the elevation of Gowri. Days ago, in separate letters addressed to President Murmu and the SC collegium, a group of advocates objected to the collegium's recommendation saying her appointment would undermine the independence of the judiciary.

Gowri, by her own admission, was the general secretary of the Bharatiya Janata Party Mahila Morch, the memorandum signed by 22 lawyers including senior advocates N G R Prasad, R Vaigai, Anna Mathew, D Nagasaila and Sudha Ramalingam, said.

"We write with a sense of foreboding, in these troubled times, when the judiciary is facing unprecedented and unwarranted crit-

icism from the executive, as we are apprehensive that appointments such as these may pave the way for undermining the independence of the judiciary," the memorandum said. It is extremely critical, at this juncture, to safeguard the institution from being weakened by its own administrative action, it added. The Collegium, comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud, Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul and K M Joseph had on January 17 proposed the names of Gowri and four others for elevation to the High Court.

INDIA RUSHES RELIEF FOR QUAKE VICTIMS

And they boarded two Indian Air Force (IAF) C-17 aircraft from the Hindon air base in Ghaziabad early morning around 3 am, NDRF officials said. The Indian contingent reached the Adana airport in south Turkey where they will meet a link officer from the Indian Embassy and Turkish Government authorities for further deployment in the affected areas, they said.

The other team comprising 50 personnel also left for Turkey to aid in the Urban Search & Rescue effort there, they added.

"This is part of the humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) measures announced by the Indian Government on Monday for the earthquake-hit Turkiye and neighbouring areas," the NDRF officials said.

The NDRF team will help rescue people trapped under the collapsed structures and render all assistance as required by local authorities and rescuers from other nations. Meanwhile, the Indian Army has also sent a team of 99-member medical teams, mobilised from the Agra based "Field Hospital" medical support to the affected people in the region.

This team will have critical care specialists, including orthopedic surgical team, general surgical specialist team apart from the medical specialist teams. They are equipped with X-ray machines, ventilators, oxygen generation plant, cardiac monitors and associated equipment to establish a 30-bedded medical facility.

Two additional IAF's C-17 aircraft with medical supplies are also being dispatched later on Tuesday, officials said.

The NDRF has been part of two similar international operations — the 2011 Japan triple disaster (earthquake, tsunami and nuclear meltdown) and the 2015 Nepal earthquake.

The Government on Monday decided to rush NDRF teams along with medical aid and relief material to Turkiye following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's instructions to offer all possible assistance to the disaster-hit country.

The massive earthquake that struck on Monday has killed about 5,000 people and flattened thousands of buildings in Turkiye and neighbouring Syria. The epicenter of the quake was centred in Turkiye's southeastern province of Kahramanmaraş and was felt as far away as Cairo.

Further, India has also despatched various equipment, tools and vehicles to search for survivors of the two powerful quakes that badly hit various parts of Turkiye and Syria. Besides India, several other countries around the world have extended help to both the countries in their rescue and recovery efforts. "India expresses its solidarity at this challenging moment," External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar tweeted. The first C-17 military transport aircraft of the Indian Air Force, carrying a group of search and rescue personnel, specially trained dog squads, drilling machines, relief material, medicines landed in Adana in the quake-hit country in the morning.

A second IAF plane with similar consignments left for Turkiye around noon. "First Indian C17 flight with more than 50 @NDRFHQ Search & Rescue personnel, specially trained dog squads, drilling machines, relief material, medicines and other necessary utilities & equipment reaches Adana, Türkiye," Jaishankar said on Twitter. Both the first and the second aircraft carried search and rescue personnel including from the (NDRF). "Second @IAF_MCC C-17 with self-contained @NDRFHQ teams including dog squads, search & rescue equipment, extrication tools and vehicles leaves for Türkiye. India continues to support the people of Türkiye in their hour of need," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi tweeted.

"First batch of earthquake relief material along with NDRF's special search & rescue teams and trained dog squads just arrived in Türkiye. Thank you India for your support and solidarity," the Turkish embassy in India tweeted.

One of the most devastating earthquakes to hit Turkiye in more than a century, caused vibrations throughout the area, caused buildings to collapse, and forced people to flee to the streets. The United States Geological Survey has recorded 24 aftershocks in Turkiye. Effects of the earthquake were felt in Syria, Lebanon, Cyprus, Greece, Jordan, Iraq and as far away as Romania, Georgia and Egypt, according to the European Mediterranean Seismological Centre, as reported by the Times of Israel. Condolences poured in from worldwide after reports of the massive quakes in Turkiye claiming thousands of lives.

VIRGINITY TEST UNCONSTITUTIONAL, SEXIST: DELHI HC

"It is declared that the virginity test conducted on a female detainee, accused under investigation or in custody, whether judicial or police, is unconstitutional and in violation of Article 21 of the Constitution, which includes the right to dignity," Justice Sharma said. "This court, therefore, holds that this test is sexist and in violation of the human right to dignity even of a female accused if she is subjected to such a test while being in custody," the judge said.

The petitioner had alleged before the high court that she was

forcibly subjected to a "virginity test" in 2008 by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) under the pretext of the agency's investigation to substantiate its case and the results were leaked.

The court asserted that conducting the "two-finger test" or "virginity test" on female sexual assault victims has already been held by the Supreme Court to be violative of their right to dignity, integrity and privacy, and there "cannot be two sets of views" on the issue.

The court emphasised that the concept of "custodial dignity" of a female includes her right to live with dignity even while in police custody and conducting a virginity test on her not only amounts to an investigating agency's interference with her bodily integrity, but also with her psychological integrity.

"Strangely, though the word 'virginity' may not have a definite scientific and medical definition, it has become a mark of purity of a woman. The intrusive testing procedure, as has been held in several judgments of the Hon'ble apex court, does not have a medical standing," the court observed.

"It will be difficult for this court to hold, being guided by the constitutional principles of fundamental rights, that a person in custody of authorities surrenders the right to bodily integrity and submits to bodily intrusion for the prosecution to find evidence through his body.

"The feeling of being demeaned by such treatment in custody by bodily invasion through conducting a virginity test also brings forth the undesirable and abhorrent notion of differentiation on the basis of gender and stereotypes," it said.

INDIA HITS OUT AT PAK FOR RAKING UP KASHMIR AT UN

India has categorically told the international community that the scrapping of Article 370 was its internal matter. It also advised Pakistan to accept the reality and stop all anti-India propaganda. India has told Pakistan that it desires normal neighbourly relations with Islamabad in an environment free of terror, hostility and violence. At the outset, Parihar, in his remarks, conveyed India's condolences to the families in Syria and Turkiye, who have suffered loss of lives and destruction due to the devastating earthquakes. A 7.8 magnitude earthquake and multiple aftershocks struck eastern Turkiye and neighbouring Syria on Monday, Killing more than 5,000 people. "India stands in solidarity with the people of Syria and Turkiye, and is ready to offer all possible assistance to cope with this tragedy," Parihar said.

20 SCORE PERFECT 100 IN JEE-MAIN

NTA score is not the same as percentage of marks obtained but normalised scores. "NTA scores are normalised scores across multi-session papers and are based on the relative performance of all those who appeared for the examination in one session. The marks obtained are converted into a scale ranging from 100 to 0 for each session of examinees," the official explained.

A record 95.80 per cent attendance was recorded in the January edition of the crucial exam with over 8.23 lakh candidates appearing for it.

The examination was held in 13 languages (Assamese, Bengali, English, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu, and Urdu). The examination was also conducted outside India in 17 cities of Manama, Doha, Dubai, Kathmandu, Muscat, Riyadh, Sharjah, Singapore, Kuwait City, Kuala Lumpur, Lagos and Abuja, Colombo, Jakarta, Moscow, Port Louis, Bangkok, Washington DC. The second edition of the exam will be conducted in April. After both sessions of JEE (Main) — 2023 examination, the ranks of the candidates will be released taking into consideration the best of the two NTA scores in accordance with the policy already made. Based on the results of JEE-Mains Paper 1 and Paper 2, the top 2.6 lakh candidates will be eligible to appear for the JEE-Advanced exam, which is a one-stop exam to get admission into the 23 premier Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs).

Last year the qualifying percentile at JEE (Main) to be eligible for JEE (Advanced), the entrance test for admission to IITs, has registered a four-year-low for all the reserved categories and a three-year low for the unreserved category.

SC TO HEAR MCD MAYORAL POLL PLEA TODAY

The poll was postponed following a ruckus after the presiding officer said the aldermen nominated by the LG will vote in the polls, prompting an agitated AAP to announce it will move the Supreme Court. Both the BJP and AAP have accused each other of preventing the mayoral polls, with the bone of contention being the appointment of aldermen and their voting right in the House. The AAP, which has a majority with 134 out of 250 elected members, has alleged that the BJP is trying to steal its mandate by giving voting rights to the nominated members. Oberoi had moved the top court earlier as well seeking directions to ensure mayoral election in Delhi in a time-bound manner but the plea was withdrawn in view of the election being scheduled for February 6. The top court had on February 3 observed that the major grievance of the petitioner was that mayoral election was not held but now the election had been notified and granted her liberty to come back in case of any grievances. The mayoral election in Delhi was stalled last month for the second time as the MCD House was adjourned indefinitely by the LG-appointed presiding officer, following a ruckus created by some councillors. The first meeting of the newly-elected MCD House was also adjourned on January 6 amid a ruckus by the AAP and BJP members.

Will safeguard interests over balloon shutdown: China

AP ■ BEIJING

China said Tuesday it will “resolutely safeguard its legitimate rights and interests” over the shooting down of a suspected Chinese spy balloon by the United States, as relations between the two countries deteriorate further.

The balloon prompted U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken to cancel a highly-anticipated visit to Beijing this week that had offered slight hopes for an improvement in relations.

China claims it was a civilian balloon used for meteorological research but has refused to say to which government department or company it belongs.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning on Tuesday reiterated that the “unmanned airship” posed no threat and entered U.S. airspace accidentally.

Mao again criticised the U.S. for overreacting rather than adopting a “calm, professional” manner, and for using force in bringing the balloon down Saturday in the Atlantic Ocean just off the U.S. Coast.

Asked if China wanted the



debris returned, she only reassured that the balloon “belongs to China.”

“The balloon does not belong to the U.S. The Chinese government will continue to resolutely safeguard its legitimate rights and interests,” Mao said at a daily briefing without giving further details.

Beijing’s attitude has hardened considerably following a surprisingly mild initial response on Friday, in which it described the balloon’s presence as an accident and expressed “regret” for the balloon having entered the

U.S.

Subsequent statements have grown firmer, in the same tone used to confront the U.S. Over issues from Taiwan to trade, technology restrictions and China’s claim to the South China Sea.

China says it lodged a formal complaint with the U.S. Embassy in Beijing, accusing Washington of having “obviously overreacted and seriously violated the spirit of international law and international practice.”

Recent developments have laid bare the extremely fragile

nature of what many had hoped could be a manageable economic, political and military rivalry.

U.S.-China tensions have stirred deep concern in Washington and among many of its allies.

They worry that outright conflict could have a strong negative impact on the global economy, especially since Russia’s invasion of Ukraine last year, on which China has largely sided with Moscow.

Balloons either suspected of or confirmed to be Chinese have been spotted over countries from Japan to Costa Rica.

Taiwanese media have reported that mysterious white balloons had been spotted over the island at least three times in the past two years.

That’s especially concerning because China claims Taiwan as its own territory to be brought under its control by force if necessary and routinely sends warships and military aircraft into the island’s air defence identification zone and across the strait dividing the sides.

Sub-Saharan new epicentre of Islamic extremism: UN

AP ■ NAIROBI (KENYA)

The new global epicentre of violent Islamic extremism is sub-Saharan Africa where people are increasingly joining because of economic factors and less for religious ones, says a new report by the UN’s international development agency.

A significant increase of 92 per cent of new recruits to extremist groups are joining for better livelihoods compared to the motivations of those interviewed in a previous report released in 2017, according to the UNDP report released on Tuesday.

Many Africans’ lives have been badly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, high inflation, and climate change,



said the report.

There has been a 57 per cent decrease in the number of people joining extremist groups for religious reasons, it said.

Nearly 2,200 people were interviewed for the report in eight African countries: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Somalia, and Sudan. More than 1,000 inter-

viewees are former members of violent extremist groups, both voluntary and forced recruits, said the report.

At least 4,155 attacks across Africa were documented since in 2017, said the report. In these attacks, 18,417 deaths were recorded in the continent with Somalia accounting for the largest number of fatalities.

The Somali government is currently carrying out what has been described as the most significant offensive against the al-Shabab extremist group in more than a decade.

Those interviewed were drawn from various extremist groups across the continent including Boko Haram in Nigeria, al-Shabab in Somalia, which pledges allegiance to al-

Qaeda, and in West Africa Jama’at Nusrat al-Islam wal Muslimeen, or JNIM, which is allied to the Islamic State group.

“Sub-Saharan Africa has become the new global epicentre of violent extremism with 48% of global terrorism deaths in 2021,” UNDP administrator Achim Steiner said in a press briefing ahead of the report’s launch. This surge in extremism in Africa “not only adversely impacts lives, security, and peace, but also threatens to reverse hard-won development gains for generations to come,” he said.

Military campaigns to stamp out extremism are not proving to be successful, said Steiner.

2 pilots walk away from Boeing 737 tanker crash in Australia

AP ■ PERTH

Two pilots walked away with minor injuries after a Boeing 737 jet, converted for firefighting, crashed in Australia, officials said Tuesday. The twin-engine tanker owned by Canadian-based Coulson Aviation crashed in Fitzgerald River National Park in southern Western Australia state while fighting wildfires late Monday.

Both pilots received only minor injuries even though the plane was engulfed in flames and smoke upon impact, Emergency Services Minister Stephen Dawson said.

“It’s nothing short of miraculous that they were able to walk away from that plane,” Dawson told reporters. The men, believed to be Canadian citizens,



were released from a hospital on Tuesday, Australian Associated Press reported.

Three American aviators died when a C-130 Hercules tanker, a four-propeller plane also owned by Coulson Aviation, crashed in the east coast state of New South Wales while fighting wildfires in January 2020.

The Australian Transport Safety Bureau, the nation’s crash investigator, said Monday’s crash was the first serious accident involving a Boeing 737 in Australia.

Lanka to charge taxes for scrap metal extraction out of ship wreckage

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lanka on Tuesday said that extraction of scrap metal out of the wreck of X-press Pearl, the Singapore-flagged container ship which went up in flames and sunk in the country’s waters, would be permitted only after the customs levies and a 10 per cent cess tax.

“We had a meeting yesterday and it was decided that anyone wanting to take away scrap metal from the wreck would have to pay taxes after obtaining a licence for import and export. Additionally, the customs duties and a cess tax of 10 per cent must also be paid,” state minister of finance Ranjith Siyambalapitiya said.

Some 48,000 tonnes of scrap metal is to be extracted from the wreckage.

In May 2021, the container vessel carrying hundreds of



tonnes of chemicals and plastic nurdles caught fire while being anchored off the port of Colombo.

It took days to douse the raging fire even with the assistance of the Indian Navy and the fire and its wastage caused the worst environmental marine disaster in the island nation.

Sri Lanka had initially received USD 40 million from the insurer and is currently waiting for the second interim payment, the Marine Environment Pollution Authority officials said.

Report: 146 NYC police committed misconduct in 2020 protests

AP ■ NEW YORK

Nearly 150 New York City police officers committed misconduct, including using excessive force, while responding to the 2020 protests over the killing of George Floyd, according to a report released Monday by a civilian review board.

The city’s Civilian Complaint Review Board, or CCRB, also found that many officers disciplined by the police department received punishment that was less than the panel recommended, and in some cases officers found to have committed misconduct were not disciplined at all.

Investigations into more than 600 complaints about police conduct during the



protests had to be closed because officers could not be identified.

In many cases that was because police purposely wore mourning bands over their badges or refused to provide their names, or because the department failed to track where officers were deployed, the 590-page

report says.

The board received 321 complaints during the protests that were determined to be within its jurisdiction and 226 were investigated.

The document describes, for example, police actions during one protest in Brooklyn on May 30, 2020, that drew numerous complaints.

An officer drove a police vehicle into the crowd and knocked protesters to the ground. Another officer pulled down a demonstrator’s coronavirus-protecting mask and pepper sprayed him in the face. On the Brooklyn Bridge that day, officers tackled protesters and hit them in the head with batons, the report says.

S Korea responsible for Vietnam War massacre: Court

AP ■ SEOUL (SOUTH KOREA)

A South Korean court on Tuesday ordered the government to pay 30 million won (USD 24,000) to a Vietnamese woman who survived a gunshot wound but lost several relatives when South Korean marines rampaged through her village during the Vietnam War in 1968.

In awarding the compensation to 62-year-old Nguyen Thi Thanh, the Seoul Central District Court dismissed the government’s argument that it was unclear whether South Korean troops were responsible for the slaughter in the village of Phong Nhi.

The court also rejected the government’s argument that civilian killings were unavoidable as the Korean troops were dealing with Viet Cong guerrillas who often blended with locals, according to Thanh’s lawyer, Lim Jae-sung.

The ruling marks the first time a South Korean court found the country’s government responsible for mass killings of Vietnamese civilians during the war, and could potentially open the way for similar lawsuits. Then ruled by anti-communist military leaders, South Korea sent more than



320,000 troops to Vietnam, the largest foreign contingent fighting alongside US troops.

South Korea’s Justice Ministry didn’t immediately respond to a query whether the government will appeal.

According to US military documents and survivors, more than 70 people were killed and around 20 others injured after South Korean marines allegedly fired at unarmed civilians during search operations at Phong Nhi and the nearby village of Phong Nhut in February 1968.

Thanh, then 7 years old, was treated for gunshot wounds in

her stomach while five of her family members died, including her mother, sister and brother. She filed the lawsuit against the South Korean government in 2020 and testified at the Seoul court last August.

The trial also included the testimonies of other Vietnamese villagers and South Korean war veteran Ryu Jin-seong, a member of the marine unit linked to the attacks in Phong Nhi and Phong Nhut. He provided a first-hand account of how the Korean soldiers shot at unarmed civilians, many of them children and women.

Russia hits more civilian targets amid doubts over offensive

AP ■ KYIV, UKRAINE

Russian shelling damaged a R hospital and apartment buildings in Ukraine, local officials said Tuesday, while military analysts expressed skepticism about the potential impact of what Kyiv says is a brewing Moscow offensive around the anniversary of its invasion.

The shelling in the north-eastern town of Vovchansk caused multiple fires late Monday, including at its two-story municipal hospital, the regional State Emergency Service said in an online statement. Emergency crews evacuated eight civilians from the site before putting out the blaze, which caused no casualties, authorities said.

Vovchansk is in the Kharkiv region, which was occupied by Russia after its full-scale invasion began on Feb. 24 and subsequently retaken by Ukraine during a



late summer counteroffensive.

The anticipated Russian push may seek to recapture territory Moscow lost in that counteroffensive. Battlefield setbacks in Ukraine have embarrassed the Kremlin, and Russian President Vladimir Putin is keen to cement public support for the war. Ukrainian officials say they

expect Russian forces to make a new drive in eastern and southern Ukraine, as the Kremlin strives to secure territory it illegally annexed in late September and where it claims its rule is welcomed.

Some Western military analysts were skeptical, however, of Russia’s ability to mount a large new offensive in

coming weeks, particularly in time for the Feb. 24 anniversary, that might alter the course of the war. Ukraine and Russia are both still training their new troops and amassing weapons.

The U.K. Ministry of Defense said in an assessment Tuesday that Russia is “requiring undermanned, inexperienced units to achieve unrealistic objectives

due to political and professional pressure.”

“Russian leaders will likely continue to demand sweeping advances,” it added. “It remains unlikely that Russia can build up the forces needed to substantially affect the outcome of the war within the coming weeks.”

Michael Kofman, an American military analyst and director of Russia Studies at the CAN research organization in Arlington, Virginia, tweeted on Monday it was unclear how big an offensive Russia is able to mount.

He added, “but I suspect it may prove underwhelming, focused largely on the Donbas.”

Michael Clarke, visiting professor of war studies at King’s College London, said he would be “amazed, I mean, truly amazed, if (the Russians) are in any shape to launch a strategic offensive on the 24th.”

Australian, NZ leaders’ talk focuses on China

AP ■ CANBERRA (AUSTRALIA)

Australian and New Zealand prime ministers met Tuesday to talk about China’s importance to their national economies, resolving to voice their disagreements with their most important trading partner that is becoming more assertive in their region.

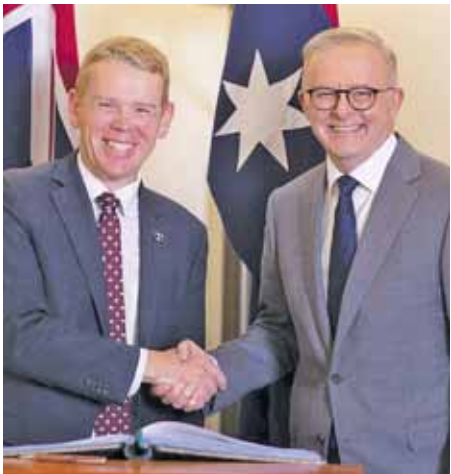
New Zealand Prime Minister Chris Hipkins made Australia the destination of his first overseas trip as his government’s leader since his predecessor Jacinda Ardern announced her surprise resignation in January.

The visit to Australia’s Parliament House comes two weeks after Hipkins assumed office on Jan. 25. He used a joint press conference with his Australian counterpart Anthony Albanese to give an assurance that he was keeping New Zealand’s foreign policy direction.

“Our foreign policy position hasn’t changed just because there’s a change of prime minister,” Hipkins said. “The government foreign policy is the same as it was under Prime Minister Ardern.”

A reporter put to Hipkins that Ardern had been reluctant to stand up against “bad behaviour by China” and asked if he was concerned about Chinese coercion in the South Pacific.

“China is an incredibly important partner for



New Zealand, a very important trading partner, and a partner in other areas as well,” Hipkins replied. “That doesn’t mean there aren’t going to be areas where we disagree from time to time, and we’ll continue to voice our disagreements with China when that happens and we’ll always continue to strive to strengthen that ongoing relationship.”

Paris mayor: No Russian team to be invited at 2024 Games if war continues

AP ■ PARIS

Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo says there should be no Russian delegation allowed at the Paris Olympics next year if Moscow continues its war against Ukraine.

Hidalgo previously said Russian competitors could take part under a neutral flag but she backpedaled on Tuesday in an interview with French media France Info.

Acknowledging that a final decision belongs to the International Olympic Committee, Hidalgo said she wishes Russian athletes will be banned “as long as there is this war, this Russian aggression on Ukraine.”

“It is not possible to parade as if nothing had happened, to have a delegation that comes to Paris while the bombs continue to rain down on Ukraine,” Hidalgo’s comments came after Ukraine’s sports minister last week renewed a threat to boycott the games if Russia and

Belarus are allowed to compete and said Kyiv would lobby others to join.

No nation has so far declared it will boycott the 2024 Summer Games. But Ukraine won support from Poland, the Baltic nations and Denmark, who pushed back against an IOC plan to allow delegations from Russia and ally Belarus to compete in Paris as “neutral athletes” without flags or anthems.

Hidalgo said she would find it “totally indecent” if Russian athletes competed in the French capital under those terms. But she left the door open for Russian dissidents who don’t support President Vladimir Putin’s actions to parade in Paris “under a refugee banner.”

Russia has cautiously welcomed the IOC’s decision to give it a path to the Olympics but demands it drop a condition that would leave out those athletes deemed to be “actively supporting war in Ukraine.”

Russian court upholds shutting top independent newspaper

AP ■ MOSCOW

A court in Moscow on Tuesday upheld an earlier verdict to revoke the license of a top independent newspaper that has been critical of the Kremlin for years, part of the authorities’ relentless crackdown on dissent.

The ruling by the Moscow City Court against Novaya Gazeta, which was Russia’s most renowned independent newspaper until the authorities ordered it shut last year, comes as Russia’s grinding military campaign in Ukraine approaches its one-year mark.

The court rejected Novaya Gazeta’s appeal against September’s ruling by a district court in Moscow that approved a petition by Russia’s media regulator to revoke Novaya Gazeta’s license. The regulator accused the newspaper of failing to submit its newsroom charter to authorities on time, the claim that Novaya Gazeta rejected as a cover for what it described as the authorities’ effort to muzzle an independent voice.

Dmitry Muratov, Nobel



Peace Prize-winning editor-in-chief of the newspaper, denounced Tuesday’s ruling, saying that it “serves a bunch of people who want to leave the nation facing only propaganda.”

Days after Russian President Vladimir Putin sent troops into Ukraine on February 24, the Kremlin-controlled parliament approved legislation that outlawed alleged disparaging of the Russian military or the spread of “false information” about the country’s military campaign in Ukraine.

Dozens of Russian inde-

pendent media outlets were banned as a result, while others announced that they were halting any reporting related to Ukraine.

Novaya Gazeta announced March 28 that it was suspending its operations for the duration of what the Kremlin called the “special military operation” in Ukraine. But Novaya Gazeta’s staff who moved abroad launched a new project, Novaya Gazeta Europe, that has been strongly critical of the military campaign in Russia’s ex-Soviet neighbour.

Sports saved me from becoming insurgent, SAYS Boxer Devi

PTI ■ AMINGAON (ASSAM)

I was influenced by militants to move towards insurgency and transport weapons for them, but sports changed me and motivated me to work for the glory of my country," champion boxer Laishram Sarita Devi said on Tuesday.

Speaking at the ongoing Y20 summit here, Devi recollected the horror of insurgency during its peak in early 90s in her home state Manipur and said only sports saved her from becoming an insurgent.

"I lived in a small village and I used to see the militants everyday when I was 12-13 years. At home, around 50 insurgents visited daily. I used to see their guns and wanted to be like them. I moved towards insurgency," she added. The former world lightweight boxing champion confessed that she used to transport weapons from



one place to another for the insurgents and she got influenced by the underground extremists.

"I dreamt of becoming like them and I loved playing with guns. I had no idea what to do with sports and did not even know that sports could bring name and fame to me as well as

my country. I survived insurgency through sports," she added. Then one day, Devi's brother beat her up for aiming to become an insurgent and that incident changed her life afterwards, the pugilist said.

"I took up sports and then represented India for the first time in 2001 at the Asian Boxing

Championships in Bangkok and won a silver medal. I saw China receiving the gold medal, their National Anthem was played and everyone paid respect to it. That is the moment, when I got emotional," she added.

Devi then determined to bring glory to India by winning the gold, ensuring playing of the

Indian National Anthem at the award ceremony.

"After that, I worked hard and played a number of games from 2001 to 2020 winning a number of medals. I continued to play for my country. Sports changed me. I want to see the same change with the youths of my country," she added.

She advocated making sports compulsory for youths in schools as it has a positive impact on health.

Talking about drug abuse, Devi said, "Nowadays, children are taking drugs and it is a big problem in my state. They can be changed by sports. These children can also bring glory to the nation with the help of sports."

Appealing to sports authorities to motivate the youths to join sports, the boxer pointed out that many young lives have been lost due to the drug menace in Manipur as well as other states of India.

India's football 'factory' Manipur thrilled at its first date with Blue Tigers



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A tiny state of Manipur in the Northeast India, better known as the 'football factory' of the country, is anxiously waiting to host the senior national team.

On Monday, Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh announced that the state for the first time will host the senior India team when the Blue Tigers compete in a Tri-Nation Friendly Football Tournament in Imphal from March 22-26. Kyrgyz Republic and Myanmar are the other teams in fray. As the news trickled in, the state, which has been the supply line for India by producing quality players, is thrilled at the opportunity.

"I was thrilled, happy that at last Manipur is getting something it deserved," said former India footballer Kiren Khongsai, the first player from the state to don India colours way back in 1989.

Since then, Manipur has contributed over 50 players to the Indian men and women senior national teams.

"I was lucky to play for India when I did... It

is an honour and I am glad that I share this honour with many more Manipur players," said Khongsai who has scored one goal in six appearances for India.

Oinam Bembem Devi, one of the game's greatest female players, believes that hosting an international at the Khuman Lampak will inspire more young players to keep their heads down and work hard to earn their stripes.

"I can tell you from personal experience that hosting these sort of prestigious events goes a long way to providing motivation for players. When the Women's Nationals was hosted in Imphal in 1991-92, I was very young, and I remember watching the games, seeing such big players and hoping to emulate them.

"Watching Sunil Chhetri and others in the flesh will be a massive morale booster for today's youngsters who have heard of them, seen them on TV but never otherwise," she added.

The decision is part of the All India Football Federation's Vision 2047 programme to spread the game far and wide.

AIFF executive member, and former India women international Thongam Tababi Devi was keen to add that while the men had the honour of passing through Imphal first, it also sowed hope for the women. "Many girls in the Women's team are from Manipur and many in the past also have been from the state," she said.

"It's good that they are bringing the Men's team here in March. Hopefully after this the women will also get to turn out in front of their home fans, friends and family."

Ancelotti: Attacks on Vinícius problem of Spanish soccer

AP ■ MADRID

The hate attacks against Vinícius Júnior are a problem of Spanish soccer and must be dealt with, his Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti said on Tuesday. Vinícius, the Brazilian forward who is Black, has been subjected to hate attacks since he arrived in Spain in 2018. The most recent were on Sunday at a Spanish league game in Mallorca. Last month, his effigy hung off a bridge in Madrid before the derby against Atletico Madrid.

"The question I ask is this: What does Vinícius have to defend himself against? What do his teammates have to defend themselves against?" Ancelotti said on Tuesday on the eve of Madrid's debut at the Club World Cup in Morocco.

"Is Vinícius the problem? It seems like the problem is Vinícius, but the problem is what happens around him. Period. "It is a problem of Spanish football. I am a part of Spanish football and I think it's a problem that we have to solve. Because it seems that Vinícius is the culprit, but he is being the victim of something that I don't understand." Vinícius has been outspoken about the insults and often complained on social media of how he's been treated.

He was also targeted because of his dances while celebrating goals, and recently his teammates called attention to the high number of fouls he was receiving in games. Last week, Valencia defender Gabriel Paulista was sent off after a vicious foul on Vinícius in a league game.



"Vinícius is an incredible person, with great values," teammate Federico Valverde said. "He is different than most on the field, he enjoys soccer in his own way, in a happy way. I don't think the rival fans are thinking about the person, they don't realize that he could be the son of anyone who is in the stands. People need to be responsible for what they do, they shouldn't take it out on a 22-year-old. You need to have respect."

Racism in Spanish soccer has attracted more attention recently but little has been done to punish anyone. The Spanish league was investigating the attacks on Sunday at Mallorca after TV images showed someone calling him a monkey. Vinícius was also insulted after the match when he stopped to pose for photos and

sign autographs for fans. Authorities have yet to find those responsible for hanging Vinícius' effigy last month, and so far teams have not been punished for the racist insults inside their stadiums.

The first trial against a fan who racially insulted a player in Spain is expected to begin this year following remarks by an Espanyol supporter against Athletic Bilbao forward Iñaki Williams a few years ago.

Mallorca defender Antonio Roldán said last year that Vinícius was using the card of racism when accused of provoking opponents. Other players have complained of the Brazilian's attitude on the field as well.

Madrid will face Egyptian club Al Ahly on Wednesday in the semifinals of the Club World Cup. Madrid has won the world club title a record seven times, including three times when the competition was called the Intercontinental Cup.

Former Chelsea forward Atsu rescued after Turkey earthquake

AP ■ LONDON

Former Chelsea and Newcastle forward Christian Atsu was rescued from the rubble of a collapsed building following the deadly earthquake that struck Turkey, the Ghana Football Association said in its official post Tuesday.

The Ghana international plays for Turkish club Hatayspor. A club spokesman on Monday told Turkish media that Atsu was thought to be in a building that was brought down by the 7.8 magnitude earthquake and aftershocks that struck southeastern Turkey and neighbouring Syria and has killed more than 5,000 people.

Atsu's whereabouts and condition were unconfirmed overnight until the Ghana FA posted an update on its official Twitter site on Tuesday saying:



"We've received some positive news that Christian Atsu has been successfully rescued."

Atsu was receiving treatment but the GFA didn't give details of any injuries.

The 31-year-old Atsu joined Hatayspor, which is based in the southern city of Antakya, last year.

The quake hit early Monday and was centered in Turkey's southeastern province of Kahramanmaraş. It was felt as far away as Cairo in Egypt. Multiple aftershocks caused more destruction.

Ma Long leads star-studded field for WTT star contender Goa

PTI ■ PANAJI

Reigning Olympic champions Ma Long and Chen Meng from China will be among a galaxy of stars to visit India for the World Table Tennis (WTT) Star Contender Goa from February 27 to March 5.

The 34-year-old Ma, widely regarded as the best to have ever played the game, is a two-time Olympic champion and will also have his countryman and rival Fan Zhendong, the current world champion and world number one, for company in the men's singles.

Veteran Sharath Kamal and Sathiyan Gnansekaran will lead the Indian challenge.

Among other leading lights of the men's game, world number four Tomokazu Harimoto of Japan and world number six Truls Mørregard of Sweden, world number eight Lin Yun-Ju from Chinese Taipei and world



number nine Darko Jorgic from Slovenia will also be seen in action.

In the women's section, besides Chen, her countrywoman and world number one Sun Yingsha has also confirmed participation along with world number five Hina Hayata of Japan, world number eight Kasumi Ishikawa from Japan, world number nine Doo Hoi Kem from Hong Kong, China and world number 10 Ying Han from Germany.

Also trying to give them a run for their money on home turf will be the India number one and world number 34 Manika Batra.

Expressing her views on the WTT Star Contender Goa, Manika said, "Playing my first World Table Tennis event in Goa is going to be a great experience. It is always a great honour to play in front of a home crowd, and I can't wait to hear them cheering us all on. We hope to make them proud."

Defeat against Nepal dents India's chances at SAFF U20 Women's C'ship

PTI ■ DHAKA

India were staring at an early elimination from the SAFF U-20 Women's Championship after suffering a 1-3 defeat against Nepal at the Mostafa Kamal Stadium here on Tuesday.

Apurna Narzary handed India lead with her 21st-minute

stroke but Nepal bounced back with a goal each from Anjali Chand (48th), Preeti Rai (69th, penalty) and Amisha Karki (89th) and secured their final berth.

India now have four points from three games after the group stage, while Nepal have six.

Hosts Bangladesh just (four

points) need to draw against Bhutan later in the day to seal their spot in the final.

"It's quite sad that we started well, but we went slower and slower. Nepal got a penalty, which was of course not good for us, and then the girls started slowing down," India head coach Maymol Rocky said.

How Manchester City came to face Premier League charges

AP ■ GENEVA

The English Premier League vs. Manchester City: a legal fixture for the ages. Soccer's richest and most watched league challenged its defending champion on Monday with more than 100 charges of alleged financial wrongdoing and failures to cooperate with an investigation that took more than four years.

Dozens of charges allege breaches of the league's financial monitoring rules dating from 2009, or the first full season Man City was owned by the ruling family of Abu Dhabi. Thirty more charges relate to Man City's lack of cooperation in the past five seasons with a Premier League investigation that opened after leaked, and likely hacked, club internal communications were published in 2018.

That leaked evidence led UEFA investigators to examine likely breaches of financial rules designed to create stability in an often-volatile European soccer industry. UEFA-appointed judges imposed a two-year

ban from the Champions League in 2020, which the club overturned on appeal at the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

Man City seems more at risk from the English case, which does not involve a statute of limitations on evidence that was a problem for UEFA lawyers.

The Premier League rule book — signed off by member clubs like Man City — gives its disciplinary commissions sweeping powers to punish teams if charges are proven. That could range from imposing a fine to taking away a title or even ejecting Man City from England's top division.

Here's a closer look at the case: **WHAT ARE THE FINANCIAL RULES?**

Known as Financial Fair Play, the regulations are aimed at preventing clubs from spending more than they earn. FFP was established in the aftermath of the 2008 global financial crisis, which deepened worries in European soccer that clubs could go out of business if the cost of player



transfers and wages kept rising.

Critics believed they would favor storied clubs with established global appeal, such as Bayern Munich, Real Madrid and Manchester United. They said FFP would be used to thwart emerging clubs who had wealthy owners ready to spend heavily and accelerate growth.

At the same time, historically underachieving Manchester City was

bought in September 2008 with sovereign wealth from the United Arab Emirates. When UEFA in 2011 began monitoring finances of clubs who qualified for European competition, City had made progress by spending big on players.

The first round of FFP judgments in 2014 saw the heaviest penalties for Man City and Paris Saint-Germain — each lost 20 million euros (\$21.4 mil-

lion) in Champions League prize money.

Both were suspected of booking inflated revenue in their accounts through sponsor deals at above market rates with companies from Abu Dhabi and Qatar.

"If clubs use unrealistic deals as a way to get around Financial Fair Play," Arsène Wenger had warned in 2012 when coach at Arsenal, "it will make a mockery of the rules."

The English Premier League later adopted a version of UEFA FFP rules. **WHAT WAS THE LEAKED EVIDENCE?**

In November 2018, Man City was the Premier League champion with three titles in the first decade of its Abu Dhabi era, and a talented squad coached by Pep Guardiola.

Yet skepticism remained about the club's commercial results.

German magazine Der Spiegel then published the "Football Leaks" series of articles based on the club's internal documents and communications.

They suggested Man City had broken FFP rules in financial relationships with "related-party" sponsors from Abu Dhabi, its use of image rights payments to players and the contract of Roberto Mancini, who was manager from 2009-13. He allegedly doubled his base salary for advising a club in Abu Dhabi.

Man City did not deny the documents were authentic but said they were illegally obtained by a Portuguese man, Rui Pinto. He later went on trial in Lisbon. A verdict is scheduled in April.

WHAT HAPPENED WITH THE UEFA CASE?

After the Football Leaks publication, UEFA's club investigators revisited their case and asked the judging chamber to ban Man City from European competitions.

In February 2020, those judges banned Man City for two seasons for "serious breaches" of rules from 2012-16, including overstating sponsor revenue and failing to cooperate with investigators.



India's Anuj in FIFA's working group for agents

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's Anuj Kichlu, who facilitated star players like Bala Devi and Sandesh Jhingan in their European club transfers, has been named as the lone Asian member of the prestigious FIFA Football Agent Working Group to advise on how football agents operate in the region.

The 18-member Working Group was set up by the FIFA on Monday after the FIFA Football Agent Regulations (FFAR) came into force.

The Working Group consists of representatives of professional stakeholders and agent organisations from across the world that will act as a permanent consultative body in relation to football agent matters, including practical implementation of the new framework, as well as possible future amendments or changes to the FFAR.

The Working Group is dominated by the Europeans and Latin Americans.

Kichlu, who operates from Kolkata and is a part of the Spanish agency Best of You (BOY), has been a football player agent since 2012. He was instrumental in Bala Devi joining the Rangers Women's Football Club in Scotland in 2020 to become the first Indian female player to sign with a top European side, besides men's national team defender Sandesh Jhingan joining HNK Sibenik in Croatia in 2021 for a brief period.

Kichlu was also involved in Indian women players Jyoti Chauhan and Soumya Guguloth joining Dinamo Zagreb last year.

WPL AUCTION: 409 PLAYERS TO GO UNDER HAMMER

PTI ■ MUMBAI

A total of 409 cricketers will go under the hammer at the inaugural Women's Premier League auction with the likes of Harmanpreet Kaur, Smriti Mandhana, Alyssa Healy and Sophie Ecclestone keeping themselves in the highest base price bracket of Rs 50 lakh.

IPL chairman Arun Dhumal had told PTI on Monday that the entire 22 matches of the league will be held in Mumbai from March 4-26. The auction will be held in Mumbai on February 13.

Out of 409 players, 246 are Indians and 163 are overseas of which eight are from the associate nations.

The total capped players are 202, while 199 are uncapped and eight are from the associate nations.

A maximum of 90 slots are available with the five teams of which 30 are for overseas players.

Twenty-four players have put themselves in the Rs 50 lakh base price category. Thirty players are in the auction list with a base price of Rs 40 lakh.

Besides India captain



Harmanpreet, Mandhana and Australian star Healy and number one England spinner Ecclestone, the others in the highest base price bracket include U-19 World Cup

winning captain Shafali Verma, Deepti Sharma, Sneha Rana, Jemimah Rodrigues, England's Nat Sciver, Australia captain Meg Lanning among others.

India's U-19 stars, who won the World Cup in South Africa, will also be part of the action. They include uncapped Parshavi Chopra, Archana Devi, Titas Sadhu, Shweta

Sehrawat and Mannat Kashyap (Rs 10 lakh base price for all).

"The Women's Premier League Player Auction list is out with a total of 409 cricketers set to go under the hammer at the Jio World Convention Centre in Mumbai on February 13, 2023," said the BCCI in a release.

"A total of 1525 players registered for the inaugural Women's Premier League Player Auction & the final list was pruned to 409 players."

With the five teams sold for Rs 4669.99 crore and the BCCI selling the media rights for Rs 951 crore, the WPL is the second biggest T20 League in the world behind the Indian Premier League.

Apart from three IPL team owners -- Mumbai Indians, Royal Challengers Bangalore and Delhi Capitals -- Capri Global Holdings (Lucknow) and the Adani Sportsline have bought the five franchises.

Each team will have a purse of Rs 12 crore at the players' auction and will need to buy a minimum of 15 players and maximum of 18. Up to five overseas players, including one from associate member country, will be allowed in the playing eleven.

Ashwin quality bowler but we have tools to counter him, says Smith

PTI ■ NAGPUR



Australia vice-captain Steve Smith may have done a week's simulation of Ravichandran Ashwin's doppelganger Mahesh Pithiya but he is not overthinking about the star India spinner's impact in the Border Gavaskar Trophy beginning here on Thursday.

Australian batters have been focussed on tackling the spin threat and there is a team of Indian net bowlers who is helping the visitors prepare for the four Test series.

Is Australia over-thinking about Ashwin?

"There has been many off-spinners we played and Mahesh is one of them. He bowls a similar style (to that) of Ashwin. We are not overthinking things. Ash is a quality bowler but we have the tools in our kit bag to counter that," Smith told reporters during a media conference.

He has had a look at the pitch and good length spot at the far end looks pretty dry.

"Pretty dry, particularly one end. I think it will take a bit of spin, particularly the left-arm spinner taking it into our left-handers. There's a section there that's quite

dry," he added.

But Smith also said that he won't be over reading the track.

"Other than that, I can't really get a good gauge on it. I don't think there will be a heap of bounce in the wicket. I think it will be quite skiddy for the seamers and maybe a bit of up-and-down movement as the game goes on."

"The cracks felt quite loose. I'm not entirely sure -- we'll wait and see."

Smith seemed pretty happy with the preparation.

"We had a few good sessions in Bangalore and now here as well. The boys are shaping up well. I think it will be a bit skiddy, slow but not entirely sure," Smith said.

However, he did also confirm that Cameron Green isn't in a position to play.



Oz will play Green as pure batter in 1st Test against India: Gilchrist

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Legendary wicketkeeper-batter Adam Gilchrist feels Australia will play all-rounder Cameron Green as a pure batter at the number six spot in the first Test against India beginning on Thursday.

The 23-year-old is recovering from a surgery on the index finger of his right hand, which he had broken during the Boxing Day Test against South Africa last December.

Australia coach Andrew McDonald has already confirmed that Green is currently unable to bowl.

"Such is the way of this psyche of the selectors and this team, I think they'll start with Green at six, assuming he's fully fit and not hindered by that finger injury at all," Gilchrist told 'Sen Radio'.

"I think that's the nature of this group, they're pretty trusting of each other and really keen to back each other in every situation."

Green, who has played 18 Tests, has an average of 35.04 with the bat and impressed in the three innings in Sri Lanka last year. He has also taken 23 wickets with his seam bowling, with 5/27 as his best so far.

"The way he played in Sri Lanka, it almost looks like Green develops before our eyes every time he plays a game of cricket... I reckon the steps forward he took in Sri Lanka, they'll be hoping he can keep that process going."

Australia will be without quicks Mitchell Starc and Josh Hazlewood due to injuries in the opening Test, starting in Nagpur on Thursday.

With Green unable to bowl, Scott Boland, who boasts of an impressive 12.21 average with the red ball in national colours, is expected to get his first overseas Test.

Dravid's sweep tips for Gill, domestic offies dominate nets

PTI ■ NAGPUR

There is every possibility that the strategy to prepare rank turners for demolishing Australia could backfire and that is the reason most of the Indian batters committed themselves to doubles shift in the nets against slow bowlers ahead of the series-opener.

Steve O'Keefe, the forgotten man of Australian cricket, had one good show against India in Pune six summers back when a snake pit of a 22-yard boomeranged badly on the hosts, giving the left-arm spinner 12 of his 35 Test wickets in a single game.

If that wasn't enough, Lyon asked a lot of questions in next Test in Bengaluru.

On Tuesday, the Indian team had as many nine specialist spinners -- four in main squad and five from domestic and India A fringes helping the batters out.

While Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel and Kuldeep Yadav would like to conserve energies for the big five days, there were off-spinners Pulkit Narang and Jayant Yadav along with leg-spinner Rahul Chahar and left-arm orthodox Ravishrinivas Sai Kishore and Saurabh Kumar who did bulk of the job.

The paucity of good off-break bowlers in domestic cricket is pretty evident that Narang and India international Jayant, both of whom aren't even in top 10 domestic wicket-takers, being called for simulation.

While Jalaj Saxena continues being ignored, Jayant's presence shows that Lyon is very much in India's head.

"The things that, obviously, we have worked on is playing spin, and we know the pitches are going to play here in India and what to expect. Keeping that in mind, we have practiced playing spin," vice captain KL Rahul gave a sneak peek into team's preparation in the lead up.



While Shubman Gill and Virat Kohli did play the sweep shot, Cheteshwar Pujara was more intent on negating the off-breaks with a big forward stride.

"Each person has his own individual plans. Everybody wants to play a certain way, or everyone has their own set way which has been discussed with the coaches. We have discussed this as a battling group in an attempt to try and play spin better," said the Indian vice captain.

In fact, head coach Rahul Dravid devoted considerable amount of time with Gill and was explaining the various methods to

keep the sweep down with some shadow batting. He was seen showing Gill as to how he can avoid offering catch to forward short leg or leg gully if there is big turn on offer. Gill was later seen himself standing at forward short leg wit fielding coach T Dileep giving him close in catching practice. The team combination isn't being spelt out but it seems that Gill, who is in the midst of a purple patch, will have to make way for Rahul at the top.

However with a dry patch on one side of the track, the ball will do its bit from day one itself and a good wicketkeeper will be need of the hour.



Siraj, Shubman nominated for ICC Player of Month Award

PTI ■ DUBAI

India pacer Mohammed Siraj and opener Shubman Gill were on Tuesday nominated for the ICC Player of the Month Award for their stellar show in January.

New Zealand opener Devon Conway, who has had a fine start to the year with three hundreds and two fifties across formats, is the third contender for the award.

Following a fruitful 2022, Gill displayed his batting prowess in both the white-ball formats last month while Siraj led India's fast-bowling attack with distinction in ODIs in recent times, showcasing his brilliance consistently, especially with the new ball in the absence of Jasprit Bumrah.

Gill was handed his maiden T20I cap in the first match against Sri Lanka in Mumbai, where he managed just seven, before another single-digit score in the second game. He made a steady 46 in the third T20I in Rajkot.

Gill then registered scores of 70, 21 and 116 in the three ODIs against the island nation, but it was his breath-taking display in the first ODI against New Zealand in Hyderabad that stole the show.

The 23-year-old struck 208 off 149 balls in an incredible knock on a day when none of his teammates crossed 28.

Gill got to 200 with three consecutive sixes off Lockie Ferguson, and with it, became the youngest player to the milestone in ODIs.

Sneh Rana jumps to career-best sixth in ICC T20I bowlers' ranking

PTI ■ DUBAI

India's Sneh Rana jumped four spots to a career-best sixth place while compatriot Deepti Sharma slipped a place down to third among bowlers in the latest ICC Women's T20I Player Rankings issued on Tuesday.

Off-spinner Rana advanced four places after taking two for 21 in the Tri-Series final against South Africa, which also featured the West Indies.

South Africa left-arm spinner Nonkululeko Mlaba dislodged Deepti from the earlier second position after a fine performance against India in the final of the Tri-series.

Mlaba grabbed two for 16 in the final in East London to finish with six wickets in the Tri-Series which came at just 8.66 runs apiece and she conceded just 3.25 runs per over to move to a career-best 753 rating points, just 10 points behind England's Sophie Ecclestone, another left-arm spinner.

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Playing at home, India will go into the Border-Gavaskar Trophy as favourites but former South African JP Duminy says Australia could trump the hosts 2-1 in the much anticipated Test rubber.

India will be without two of its key players in Rishabh Pant and Jasprit Bumrah, but premier all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja will be back to the action after a knee surgery.

The Test series will begin on Thursday in Nagpur.

"I see it as a very close series, but I genuinely think that Australia stand a good chance. They certainly have been the team to beat," Duminy said during a virtual interaction, facilitated by SA T20, where he coaches Paarl Royals team.

"I feel it would be 2-1 to Australia and for me the Player-of-The-Series would be Usman Khawaja," he said of the Australian left-hander, who hit a career-best unbeaten 195 against South Africa in Sydney Test in January.

Duminy was quick to add that one can never "write off" India in their home conditions. "You think about (Ravichandran) Ashwin who has a prolific Test record in India, he's probably going to be the key for them."

"When it comes to Test

Australia could win Border-Gavaskar Trophy 2-1: Duminy



cricket, you have got to utilise your resources. Guys like (Cheteshwar) Pujara, Virat Kohli who are prolific in Test cricket. They churn out runs after runs. It's an opportunity for those guys to step up.

India's '360', Suryakumar Yadav has been in sensational form in T20 format and is part of the Test squad.

Asked whether he's primed for a Test debut, Duminy said: "Probably he's one of the most exciting players for India right now. From the way Test cricket is going, as a country you need to decide what is the line of

cricket you would be playing. And if it's of the attacking mindset, then he becomes an option, certainly."

There has already been a debate over whether India play to their strength and prepare rank-turners for the upcoming four-Test series. Duminy feels it's absolutely fair to play to your advantage.

"That's the beauty of having a home series. You have the opportunity to play to your advantage. Why would you not. It would be silly to think that you would not want to utilise that (rank-turners) in your favour."

There's temptation to play three spinners but you never know with Nagpur pitch: Rahul

PTI ■ NAGPUR

India's Test vice-captain KL Rahul feels it's never easy to predict the nature of a track but there is a "temptation" to play three spinners in the first Test against Australia, beginning here on Thursday.

With less than 48 hours left for the Border Gavaskar Trophy to begin, Rahul didn't provide any definitive answers about three key slots in the team -- the wicketkeeper, the third spinner and the number five in the batting order.

Asked if Shubman Gill will bat in the middle-order, Rahul said: "We still haven't decided

on the final XI. It's going to be a tough decision to make. There are guys who have performed exceedingly well and there are a few spots open so there are a few discussions going on and the players are being spoken to."

The VCA track is expected to assist spinners from day one itself but Rahul doesn't want to be a soothsayer when it comes to reading the 22-yard strip.

"Yes, we did see it (the pitch), but it's still too early to really know what the pitch is going to do. We need to come here on the day of the match to know how it's really going to play," he told reporters.

"We can only look at it and



assume it's going to play a certain way, but you never know with pitches. Yes, there is the temptation to play three spinners because we're playing in

India. We'll take that call on the day of the game or the day before the game," the stylish right-hander said.

With skipper Rohit Sharma

back in the mix, Rahul was asked if he would like to bat in the middle-order where he had started his Test career back in 2014.

"If it arises, then I'm more than happy to do that. Whatever little cricket I've played for the country, I've always done that."

"Whatever the team has asked me to do, I try and prepare that way and try and do my best for the team, and if that is something that the team wants me to do here, I'll be more than happy to do it," Rahul said, although it is unlikely that he would come down the order.

So does he find it unique that there is no straightforward choice for picking the playing eleven this time around?

"I don't know if it has happened before but, yes, this time is going to be tough. Tough decision to select an eleven. All the 15 guys in the side are top quality, and that's why they're here. Anyone of them on any given day can be a match winner..."

"The playing XI, we always try and make a decision based on what's best for the team and for that particular Test match. We have done that over the last two years," that was his response to a PTI query.

Australia's Finch retires from international cricket

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Australia's most successful AT20 International batter and captain Aaron Finch, who led the country to its maiden shortest format World Cup triumph in 2021, announced his retirement from international cricket on Tuesday.

The 36-year-old will, however, continue to play for the Renegades in the Big Bash League and would consider domestic T20 opportunities in other countries.

"Our World Cup winning, longest serving men's T20I captain has called time on a remarkable career. Thanks for everything @AaronFinch5," Cricket Australia (CA) said on its official Twitter handle.

Finch's retirement from international cricket was on expected lines. He played just five Tests, the last one being in 2018, and retired from the ODIs last year after a much-publicised struggle for form as captain of the Australian team.

He captained the team to their first T20 World Cup title when they defeated New Zealand in Dubai in 2021 and is one of only four male Australians to captain a World Cup winning side.

But, the Australian team under him failed to qualify for the semifinals T20 World Cup at home last year. His last international match came in the T20 showcase when he top-scored with 63 as Australia beat Ireland by 42 runs.