

OPINION 6WRESTLERS' FIGHT
FOR JUSTICE**WORLD 9**BLINKEN IN WEST ASIA RENEWS
APPEAL FOR ISRAEL-PALESTINIAN CALM**MONEY 10**MARKETS EKE OUT MODEST GAINS
AHEAD OF BUDGET, FED'S RATE DECISION

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

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

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

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

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

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman tabled the Economic Survey 2022-23 in Parliament a day before she is to present the Union Budget 2023-24. The report is prepared by Chief Economic Adviser V Anantha Nageswaran.

Maintaining that pressure



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

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

Commenting on inflation projection in the survey, Rumki Majumdar, Economist, Deloitte India, said, "The Government must address the supply bottlenecks to contain inflationary pressures and bring it back within its comfort range in a timely manner. Measures such as spending on infrastructure and logistics may go a long way in bringing down costs and

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

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

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

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

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

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

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

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

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

She also spoke of the Government's fight against corruption, which, she said, was the biggest enemy of democracy and social justice. India by 2047, she asserted, has to be a country that is self-reliant and fulfills its humanitarian obligations.



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

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

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

President Murmu underlined its thrust on 'virasat'

(heritage) as well as "vikas" each Parliament session is an account of government's performance.

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

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

Shanti Bhushan passes away

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

CAPSULE

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

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

Adani's FPO fully subscribed; retail response muted

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



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

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

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

Collegium lists 2 HC judges for elevation to SC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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



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

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

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

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

tional.

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

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

Punjab DCs, SSPs in fix over CM's diktat, Governor's protocol

MONIKA MALIK ■ CHANDIGARH

Amritsar on the first day — that is February 1; and Ferozepur and Fazilka on February 2.

Having visited the border districts in the past also and highlighting several important issues, including drugs and illegal mining, the Governor had planned his another visit to the border districts much before. The district-level officers have been asked to be prepared with the status and action taken reports related to the issues raised and orders given by the Governor during his previous visits.

On the other hand, the Chief Minister — only a few days back — convened a meeting of all DCs and SSPs to discuss district-related issues.

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No dearth of funds for development, but need output at any cost: CM

SOREN REVIEWS DEVELOPMENT WORKS IN E SINGHBHUM AND SARAIKELA-KHARSAWAN DISTRICTS

PNS : RANCHI

The officers should perform their duties, responsibilities and obligations with full honesty and integrity. There should be no laxity in the implementation of the schemes. Listen to the problems of the public with full sensitivity and solve them. The government will not hold back from taking strict action against the officers who show negligence and laxity in this," said Chief Minister Hemant Soren reviewing the ongoing development works in East Singhbhum and Seraikela Kharsawan districts in Jamshedpur on Tuesday. He said that the review is being done at the district level. Will come very soon and aggressively to know the ground reality of the schemes. Officers should be fully prepared.

The CM said that in the last 20 years after the formation of a separate state, we have only played "games". In

these years, 24 hours electricity-water facility, proper arrangement of irrigation, rural connectivity, better arrangement of roads should have been made in the state. With this, Jharkhand could have been brought in the category of developed states. But, it is a matter of concern that in reality we are nowhere. We don't have that much time now. The officers will have to act at a fast pace.

The CM said that the government spends a major part of the budget every year on various schemes. But, it is a matter of concern that even after investing lakhs and crores of rupees on the schemes, there is no database for them. What is the reality of the schemes, it is also not possible to get proper information about it. In such a situation, how will we move forward? The officers should take it seriously, so that positive results can be obtained from the investment on the schemes.

Soren told the officers that

you should tell any such scheme, in which we have achieved the best and which has been accepted as ideal at the level of the whole country and has been adopted by any state. But, it is a matter of concern that we are far behind in this matter. We have to understand this. Let us make our schemes so successful that we can set them as an example in front of the whole country.

The CM said that there is no dearth of money with the government for development work. But the investment being made on the schemes is not getting the output. This is because of a flaw in the system. All the officers should implement the schemes related to development in a planned manner and with concrete decisions.

He gave clear instructions to the officers that there should be no confusion regarding any scheme. Schemes should not be shelved because of confusion. Solve it, because keeping the



Chief Minister Hemant Soren holds a review meeting with senior officials in Jamshedpur on Tuesday. PNS

plans pending will increase more problems in future.

The CM said that there are many times more officers and employees than the number of villages and panchayats in these two districts. Even after this, it is a matter of some con-

cern that the needy are not getting the benefits of the schemes. The schemes related to social security are in the topmost priority of the government. Officers should fulfill full responsibility in giving benefits of schemes related to

social security to the people. The Chief Minister asked the officers to work at a fast pace in the direction of giving the benefits of the scholarship scheme to the school students and the Chief Minister's Drought Relief Scheme to the farmers.

The officers on the occasion received instructions that there should be a survey every six months of those who are benefited from the Mukhyamantri Pashudhan Vikas Yojana. Good breed animals should be given to the beneficiaries and its complete information should be uploaded on the official website. Pay special attention to providing loans related to education to the students. Make KCC loans available from banks to maximum needy farmers. Review all the schemes at the district level every month. Achieve the given target. Re-enrol the dropout girls from schools by connecting them with Savitribai Phule Kishori Samridhi Yojana. By running

a campaign in East Singhbhum district, the elderly should be linked to the Sarvajan Pension Yojana. A special team should be formed for this. Complaints are being received continuously that the old people in the family are being destitute. The SDO court should take action in such cases. Along with this, a campaign should be launched to make people aware. For speedy execution of land-related claims, all the concerned officials should regularly set up revenue courts.

In Jamshedpur, due to non-execution of cases related to payment of deep boring for a long time, the land conservation officer of Seraikela Kharsawan district (Additional charge East Singhbhum) Vijay Kujur directed to show-cause. To stop the illegal smuggling of narcotics, the concerned officers should take action in coordination with the office bearers of the headquarters.

During this, many people's representatives apprised the

Chief Minister and higher officials about the public problems of their respective areas - road jams, encroachments, electricity, water, roads. The Chief Minister directed the officials to take immediate action regarding this.

In the review meeting, Ministers Champai Soren, Satyamandir Bhokta and Banna Gupta, MLA Jamshedpur Surya Roy, MLA Ghatshila Ram Das Soren, MLA Ichagarh Savita Mahato, MLA Potka Sanjeev Sardar, MLA Jugsalal Mangal Kalindi, MLA Kharsawan Dashrath Gagarai, Chief Secretary Sukhdev Singh, DGP Neeraj Sinha, Secretary to Chief Minister Vinay Kumar Choubey, Secretary Abu Bakar Siddiqui, Secretary Amitabh Kaushal, Secretary Kripanand Jha, IG Amol Homkar, DIG Kolhan Ajay Linda, Deputy Commissioner, Superintendent of Police of Seraikela Kharsawan and East Singhbhum and many officials of both the districts were present.

BJP slams govt on misleading people on '1932 Khatian' policy

PNS :



RANCHI

BJP Legislator Party leader Babul Marandi on Monday once again targeted the Hemant Soren government over misleading people on 1932 Khatian policy. On Sunday

Governor Ramesh Bais returned the '1932 Khatian Bill' back to the government for reconsideration, underlining that the government needs to review the legality of the bill and frame it as per the constitutional norms and court rulings. The state government at a special session on November 11, 2022, had passed the 'Jharkhand definition of local persons and for extending the consequential, social, cultural and other benefits to such local persons Bill, 2022', popularly known as the 1932 Khatian Bill.

The BJP leader targeting the Soren government said that BJP never opposed the Khatian-based local policy of 1932, but why is the Hemant government firing bullets from gun on other's shoulder. He said that Hemant Soren had toppled Arjun Munda's government by withdrawing support in the name of Khatian based local and

planning policy of 1932. Then he was the Deputy Chief Minister of the state. He said that Hemant Soren will have to answer that after being the Chief Minister of the state for the first time for 18 months, why did not he formulate the local policy and planning policy. At that time UPA was ruling both the country and the state. Manmohan Singh was the Prime Minister, why didn't Hemant Soren remember about the 9th schedule then?

Babul Marandi said that Hemant Soren is fooling the people of Jharkhand. BJP will not allow such a shop of politics to run. Politics is not run by cleverness but by honesty. Hemant Soren is not being honest towards the people of the state. The state government has the full right to make policy. The Hemant government should solve the questions raised by the governor regarding the local poli-

cies. The government should soon give local and planning policy to the people of the state.

As per the bill, only those who have their, or names of their ancestors, in the Khatian (land records) of 1932 or before will be considered as a local inhabitant of Jharkhand and only they would be entitled to grade 3 and 4 jobs in the state.

However, Chief Minister Soren disappointed over Jharkhand Governor Ramesh Bais asking to review the legality of 1932 Khatian-based Local Policy Bill-2022, he said that things will not happen according to the governor; instead things will happen according to what the government wants in this state.

The Governor has rejected the bill when Chief Minister Soren is on tour to address a public meeting as part of his 'Khatiani Johar Yatra'.

Chaibasa Police arrest three hardcore extremists

PNS : RANCHI



Acting on a tip-off, West Singhbhum police arrested three hardcore extremists on Tuesday. West Singhbhum, Superintendent of Police (SP), Ashutosh Shekhar received a secret intelligence that the area commander of PLFI, Tambu, along with his squad members, was roaming in Aamkita under Bandgaon police station area. A raiding team was constituted by Shekhar for verification of the information and necessary action.

The SP informed that during the raid, two suspicious motorcycles were seen coming in village Kita, on being signalled to stop, seeing the police, both the motorcycle riders started running away, which

well. One (01) AK 47 rifle and 33 rounds of live bullets have been recovered at his instance. In this context a case was registered at Bandgaon police station of the district," he added. Police arrested Loki Sandipuri, age about 21 years, son of Gosnar Sandipuri, resident of Kodankel under Bandgaon police station in West Singhbhum district. Birsingh Daga age about 22 years, son of Pantush Daga son of Kununam Maidan Tola under Bandgaon police station in West Singhbhum district and Sukhram Sandipuri, age about 21 years son of Lalu Sandipuri resident of Kita, Munda Toli under Chandanav police station in West Singhbhum district.

DC holds task force meeting on filaria eradication

PNS : RANCHI

The District Task Force meeting was organized on Tuesday under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner, Ranchi, Rahul Kumar Sinha for the success of MDA (filaria eradication) program-2023. It was decided under the meeting that one tablet of DEC and one tablet of Albendazole will be given to children between the age of 2 to 5 years. Two tablets of DEC and one tablet of Albendazole will be given to a child between the age of 6 to 14 years. All people above 15 years will be given three tablets of DEC and one tablet of Albendazole.

Panchayati Raj Officer Ranchi, District VBD Officer, District Superintendent of Education, DPM JSLPS, Block Development Officer Bedo and Budhu, WHO, Dr Manoj, various child development project officers and other concerned officials were present.

Necessary and appropriate guidelines were given by the DC in the meeting of the District Coordination Committee regarding the success of the MDA program.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner was informed by the concerned officer that a booth has been set up to provide medicine for eradication of filariasis to the Anganwadi center. Where from 9 am to 3 pm, the maids will do the work of feeding medicine at their booth. Along with this, Sevika along with Sahiyas will do the work of feeding medicines from house to house.

Sinha was informed by the officer that during the program, the work of feeding medicine and wall marking will be done in at least 20 houses daily. He said that filariasis is a serious disease, its adverse effects are visible after a long time, gradually affect-



ing the body and taking its original form, it works to damage the body. He said that according to the guidelines received, give the required dose to all the people.

During the meeting, Sinha directed village meetings and gatherings to make people aware about the treatment of filariasis and taking medicines. He said that the list of patients should also be given to the nearest health center and health wellness center. He instructed the volunteers of Jal Sahiya and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan to encourage people to take medicines, to do the work of publicizing anti-filarial medicines through sanitation vehicles in a better way.

Motivating children and teachers to take medicine at the time of morning worship in the schools, along with taking oath, instructions were given by the Deputy Commissioner to do necessary publicity for feeding filariasis medicine as per departmental instructions.

The filariasis is spread by Culex mosquitoes which lay eggs in frozen dirty water. Filariasis can be treated with a DEC tablet. If a person is fed a dose of DEC and Albendazole once in a year, then 80 to 90 percent control of this disease is found.

Tirkey writes to Health Minister for regularization of health workers

PNS : RANCHI

Former minister, member of coordination committee of Jharkhand government and working president of Jharkhand Pradesh Congress Committee, Bandhu Tirkey has said that, for regularization of more than 8000 contractual medical workers of Jharkhand, the government should soon constitute a high-level committee and its On the basis of the report, all these health workers should be made permanent without delay. Tirkey said that the contractual health workers are on fast unto death in front of the Raj Bhavan demanding that their service be made permanent and most of them are tribals natives of Jharkhand for whom Jharkhand was formed.

In his letter to the Health Minister Banna Gupta, Tirkey has requested that the agitating health workers, who have been working for more than 10 years, should work in primary health centers established in urban and rural areas of different districts of Jharkhand as well as in hospitals. They are working as ANM, GNM, Lab Technician, X-ray Technician, Pharmacist and other posts and the number of those employees is more than 8000. He said that they have been demanding their regularization for a long time. Tirkey clearly said that if the

rules of reservation roster have been followed in his appointment and he has been appointed according to the rules to fill the declared vacant posts, then his regularization is the need of the hour.

The former minister said that due to the fast unto death, many contractual medical personnel had to be admitted to the hospital after their health deteriorated and this issue needs to be looked into with full sensitivity. Tirkey said that the entire health system of the state is on the strength of medical personnel and the important thing is that according to the information given to him, the contract workers appointed before these contract workers have already been regularized, hence from the logical point of view. These health workers should be regularised.

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In his letter to the Health Minister Banna Gupta, Tirkey has requested that the agitating health workers, who have been working for more than 10 years, should work in primary health centers established in urban and rural areas of different districts of Jharkhand as well as in hospitals. They are working as ANM, GNM, Lab Technician, X-ray Technician, Pharm

Time-bound action plan in C'garh on land records

STAFF REPORTER ■

RAIPUR

Officers of the Revenue, Information and Technology as well as Finance departments in Chhattisgarh will prepare a time-bound action plan for geo-referencing work of land records.

The decision was taken by an Empowered Group of Secretaries (EGS) chaired by Chief Secretary Amitabh Jain on Tuesday at Mantralay in Nava Raipur.

The meeting was to review the progress of the Pradhan Mantri Gati Shakti



Yojana and progress of geo-referencing of land records.

The review found slow progress in the process.

The departments were asked to prepare a

time-bound plan, an official communication said.

The meeting had detailed discussion on various topics to be included in the Master Plan of Chhattisgarh under the scheme. Officials of various departments including the Women and Child Development, Higher and Technical Education, Agriculture, Horticulture, Energy, Sports and Youth Welfare and Commerce and Industry were present. These departments are also uploading Geographic Information System (GIS) data in Gati Shakti portal.

Three killed as fly-ash pit caves in at Raipur's Siltara

STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

A woman and her son were among three persons who died on Tuesday when a pit from where they were collecting fly ash caved in at the Siltara industrial area on

the outskirts of Raipur.

The incident took place at around 11 am in Sankra village and they got trapped, Dharsinwa Station House Officer Shivendra Rajput told The Pioneer.

Mohar Bai, her son Puneet Kumar and Pancho

"The incident took place at around 11 am in Sankra village and the victims got trapped"

Bai Gahre died on the spot. Lalita Kosle (15) was injured, the officer said. The pit was earlier a coal yard.

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel expressed grief over the incident.

PM should fulfill promises in Budget, says Congress

STAFF REPORTER ■

RAIPUR

The Congress in Chhattisgarh on Tuesday asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi to fulfill his election promises made to the people through the Union Budget to be presented on Wednesday.

PCC chief Mohan Markam said that among the four main promises made in 2014 was one for bringing down inflation in 100 days.

The others were for generating 2 crore employment per year, doubling the income of farmers by 2022 and depositing Rs 15 lakh in every one's bank account by bringing back black money



from foreign countries, he said.

"Now, Modi is going to complete his second tenure. If he does not fulfill his promises now, when will he do so?" the Congress leader asked in a statement.

Markam said it was time

"Now, Modi is going to complete his second tenure. If he does not fulfill his promises now, when will he do so?"

now to control the skyrocketing prices and provide relief to common people.

C'garh nursing staff to go on strike today

STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

The Nursing Officers Association in Chhattisgarh will be on a two-hour strike for four days in all hospitals from February 1 in support of four demands including better pay as well as more recruitment.

The strike from 9 to 11 am is expected to disrupt the working of the hospitals. The protest will end on February 4.

Association President Dr Reena Rajput and Secretary Neelima Sharma said their demands including grade-pay, nursing and dress

allowance, change of name of the post as Nursing Officers and increase in number of staff nurses.

A memorandum listing the demands was handed over to the state government.

In 2018, the nursing staff went on strike for 18 days. A spokeswoman said the strikers were jailed for two days.

According to the nurses,

the government set up a committee to consider the demands. A report was readied in three months. But its recommendations were never implemented.

Even the allowance promised during the Covid-19 pandemic when the nursing staff worked without leave has been denied, they added.

Man kills policeman

STAFF REPORTER ■
SARANGGARH

Chhattisgarh Police on Tuesday arrested a 50-year-old man for killing a policeman in Saranggarh-Bilaigarh district.

He killed D.N. Sahu, an Assistant Sub-Inspector in Sariya police station in the district.

The incident took place on Tuesday when the policeman was buying vegetables.

Sidar, in an inebriated condition, suddenly attacked Sahu with a thick wooden stick. The policeman was declared dead at a medical centre.



Young entrepreneur and noted singer Ananya Birla on Tuesday performed her live band at an event organized by the Chhattisgarh Tourism Board in Raipur. The youth icon also spoke on environment conservation at a discussion on climate change.

Saur Sujala saving farmers from monsoon dependency

STAFF REPORTER ■
KANKER

Farmers in Kanker in Chhattisgarh no longer depend on monsoon or electricity to irrigate their farmlands. Thanks to the government's Saur Sujala scheme, irrigation pumps get pumped with solar energy.

An official communication on Tuesday said the farmers are adopting modern farming methods to boost their income and improve their quality of life.

"Farmers living in even remote and inaccessible areas are getting a push to practice agriculture through the assistance provided by the administration and government," it said.

"They are now moving ahead toward a better lifestyle avail-



the benefits of various welfare schemes run by the state government."

Adequate water is necessary for a good crop yield. The farmers of remote villages earlier

faced difficulties in irrigating their fields due to lack of power supply.

To overcome the problem, solar-powered irrigation pumps are being installed in the fields,

the communication said.

Hundreds of farmers now irrigate their fields with solar-powered pumps in the Koyalibeda development block, about 150 km from Kanker town.

Now issues of low voltage, power failure and hefty electricity bills don't bother them.

Priority is given to installing solar pumps in villages where it is not possible to supply electricity through poles. Farmer Parimal Bose said he has built a pond and installed a 5 horse power solar pump in his farm. He practices fish farming, earning an annual income of about Rs 3 lakh. He is also cultivating maize and irrigating his farmland with the help of a solar pump. This fetches him an income of about Rs 4 lakh per annum.

Action against five hospitals for charging extra

STAFF REPORTER ■

RAIPUR

The Health and Family Welfare Department in Chhattisgarh on Tuesday took action against five hospitals in Raipur and Bilaspur districts for charging extra money from patients.

The irregularities were revealed after the hospitals registered under the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (Dr. Khubchand Baghel Swasthya Sahayata Yojana) were audited for patients treated online.

Irregularities were revealed after the hospitals registered under the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (Dr. Khubchand Baghel Swasthya Sahayata Yojana) were audited for patients treated online

hospitals found to have committed irregularities.

The institutions are Anjali Nursing Home, Maher Hospital and Shah Nursing Home of Nawapara

in Raipur as well as Shri Balaji Hospital of Bilaspur and Ramkrishna CARE Hospital of Raipur.

The Health Department suspended the services of Shri Balaji Hospital for one year, Anjali Nursing Home was fined Rs 3 lakh and suspended for one year, Maher Hospital was fined Rs 5 lakh and suspended for a year and Shah Nursing Home was fined Rs 3 lakh and suspended for one year.

A penalty of Rs 6.16 lakh was imposed on Ramkrishna CARE Hospital. The amount has to be reimbursed to the patients from whom extra money was charged.

Maoist with Rs 1 lakh bounty surrenders

DANTEWADA : A Naxalite carrying a bounty of Rs 1 lakh on his head surrendered on Tuesday to security forces in Dantewada district in Chhattisgarh.

Dantewada Superintendent of Police Siddharth Tiwari identified him as Raju Lekam, 35.

Lekam was the Jantana Sarkar President

of Hurrepal Panchayat in the Bhairamgarh Area Committee of the outlawed Maoist outfit.

He was involved in several Naxalite incidents between 2008 and 2020 in the district.

So far, 592 Naxalites have given up violence in Dantewada.

**OFFICE OF PRINCIPAL
Government Lal Chakradhar Shah College
Ambagarh Chowki
Mohla-Manpur-Ambagarh Chowki (C.G.)**

website - www.lcscollege.in

email- principal.lcs@rediffmail.com

Telephone & Fax - 07747 248023

Notice for Tender Invitation for purchase of Laboratory Equipments

Sealed tenders are invited in Two envelop system (Financial bid and Technical bid) for purchase of lab equipments of Estimated Cost Rs. 1500000 (in words rupees Fifteen Lakh) by Government LCS College, Ambagarh Chowki from reputed (holding GST registration) manufacturers / authorized dealer/suppliers with demand draft FDR for Rs. 10,000 =00 (in words rupees Ten thousand) as earnest money by 15 February 2023 (last date) up to 1:00 PM to this office. Detail terms and conditions, list of equipments to be purchased can be seen in our college website- www.lcscollege.in

(Dr. KR Mandavi)
Principal

Government Lal Chakradhar Shah College, Ambagarh Chowki

G-98064/3

**कार्यालय कार्यपालन अभियंता
लोक स्वास्थ्य यात्रिकी खण्ड, दन्तवाड़ा**

(फॉन/फैक्स नं.-07856-252362 ई-मेल cedan-phe-cg@nic.in)

निविदा सूचि/498-503/ले.शा./का.अ./ले.खा.आ./2023 दन्तवाड़ा, दिनांक : 25/01/2023

//रुदीय निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना//

एकीकृत पंजीयन व्यवस्था प्राणीता अंतर्गत साक्षम श्रेणी में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से प्राप्त "ए" प्रतिशत रक्त पर एवं निमालिखित कार्य हेतु (Online) निविदा आमंत्रित की गयी है।

कार्य का नाम :- जल जीवन मिशन के अंतर्गत सिंगल विलेज का कार्य।

क्र. सिस्टम टेंडर क्रमांक

कार्य का विवरण/ग्राम/विकासखण्ड

अनुमानित लाख में

1 122051 सोलर आधारित नलजल प्रदाय योजना फुलपाड़/कुआकोण्डा 194.34

2 122052 सोलर आधारित नलजल प्रदाय योजना जबैरी/कुआकोण्डा 137.31

3 122053 सोलर आधारित नलजल प्रदाय योजना कडमाडा/कुआकोण्डा 139.26

4 122055 नलजल प्रदाय योजना कुर्टरेम/कुआकोण्डा 72.99

5 122056 सोलर आधारित नलजल प्रदाय योजना मुलर/कुआकोण्डा 51.87

6 122057 सोलर आधारित नलजल प्रदाय योजना नीलावाडा /कुआकोण्डा 73.67

कुल योग 669.44

निविदा की सामान्य शर्तें एवं अन्य जानकारी वेबसाइट पोर्टल <http://eproc.cgstate.gov.in> पर दीर्घीत है।

टीप:- निविदा डाउनलोड करने की अंतिम तिथि दिनांक 10.02.2023 है।

G-98087/4

कार्यपालन अभियंता
लोक स्वास्थ्य यात्रिकी दन्तवाड़ा

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

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

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

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

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

The projects pertaining to seven engines (roads, railways,



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

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

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

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

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

current financial year, passenger traffic has seen further strong growth with the number of originating passengers already hitting 414.8 crore (up to November 2022), the survey said.

In the case of revenue-earning, freight traffic was sustained by Indian Railways despite the Covid shock.

"Between FY20-21 and FY21-22, there was a sharp increase in the freight traffic, reflecting the strong revival in the economic activity in the domestic economy."

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

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

The total number of passengers carried in December 2022 stood at 150.1 lakh, which was 6.4 per cent higher than the pre-Covid average for 11 months from April 2019 to February 2020, the Survey said.

In November 2022, total air cargo tonnage stood at 2.5 lakh tonnes, which was 89 percent of the pre-Covid levels.

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



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

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

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

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

"The civil aviation sector in India has great potential owing to growing demand from the middle class, growth in population and tourism, higher disposable incomes, favourable demographics, and greater penetration of aviation infrastructure," the survey said.

With the containment of COVID-19 infections and the lifting of travel restrictions worldwide, the survey said, air travel has rebounded.

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

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

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

In absolute figures, the increase translated into Rs 1,75,272 crore in 2015-2016 to Rs 54,855 crore in 2022-2023. These figures are straying away from the target of increasing the total public expenditure on health to 2.5 percent of GDP by 2025 as mandated by the National Health Policy (NHP) of 2017.

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

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

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

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

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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



one crore children were enrolled in pre-primary, 12.2 crore in primary, 6.7 crore in upper primary, 3.9 crore in secondary and 2.9 crore in higher secondary, it said.

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

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

"During the year, about



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

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

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

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

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

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



Vice Chief of IAF retires

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

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

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

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

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

the National Green Hydrogen Mission.

The mission includes developing green hydrogen production capacity to at least 5 million metric tonne (MMT) per annum by 2030,

cumulative reduction in fossil fuel imports over Rs 1 lakh crore and creation of over 6 lakh jobs by 2030.

Further, renewable ener-

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

As per the economic survey, India declared the Net Zero Pledge to achieve net zero emissions goal by 2070.

At the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) held in Glasgow,

the likely installed capacity from non-fossil fuels will be

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

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

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

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

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

PM CARES Fund not Govt fund, PMO tells HC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

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

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



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

The PMO contended that irrespective of the status of Prime Minister's Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations Fund (PM CARES Fund) under the RTI Act, which is being heard together with this plea.

The affidavit was filed in response to a petition seeking a direction to declare the PM CARES Fund a 'State' under the Constitution to ensure transparency in its functioning.

The same petitioner has also filed another petition to declare PM CARES as a "public authority" under the RTI Act, which is being heard together with this plea.

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

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

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

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

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

The exercise showcased joint application of various ground and aerial assets to include latest generation Fighter Aircraft, Helicopters, Tanks, Infantry Combat Vehicles, Medium and Field Artillery Guns, Infantry Mortars and various New Generation Infantry weapons and equipment in a networked environment. The exercise also witnessed participation of newly inducted weapons and equipment made in India as part of 'Atma Nirbhara Bharat Abhiyan.'

Army conducts exercise to test operational readiness

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

As tension continues on the border with China in the eastern sector, the Indian army has carried a major exercise along with other stakeholders to test its operational readiness.

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The exercise culminated on

India condemns Peshawar fidayeen blast, conveys condolences to bereaved families

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI/UNITED NATIONS

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

Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said here on Tuesday



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

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Doval meets Gen Mark Milley, calls co-op meeting 'fruitful'

PIONEER NEWS
SERVICE/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI/WASHINGTON



National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval met US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Mark Milley in Washington late on Monday evening and held discussions on various aspects of bilateral co-operation, which were termed as "fruitful" by Indian Ambassador to US Tarun Singh Sandhu.

The meeting between Doval and Milley took place late Monday at the India House in Washington, the official residence of India's Ambassador.

The interaction comes in the backdrop of the US emerging as one of the biggest exporters of weapon systems to India in the last two decades with figures crossing the 20 billion dollar mark. Efforts are on to have joint ventures between the defence companies of the two countries in India to propel the local defence industry to world class standards.

"General Mark Milley, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff @thejointstaff called on NSA Ajit Doval today. Fruitful discussion on various aspects of India-US bilateral cooperation," the Indian embassy in

@JakeSullivan46, Commerce Sec @GinaRaimondo, CEOs from India & US and leadership of prominent Universities. Insightful conversations on building bilateral cooperation in critical and emerging tech," Sandhu said in a tweet.

The American side had CEOs of Micron, Lockheed Martin, Applied Materials, Global Foundries, General Atlantic, General Atomics, General Catalyst, America's Frontier Fund in addition to Co-founder of LinkedIn, executive vice president of NASDAQ, Presidents of US India Business Council (USIBC), US India Strategic and Partnership Forum attended the reception.

It was attended by top officials of the Biden administration, including US National Security Advisor (NSA) Jake Sullivan, Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo, Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman, National Science Foundation Director Sethuraman Panchanathan and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Bill Nelson. The reception was also attended by corporate leadership, academics and think tanks. "A unique & special reception in India House! Delighted to host India NSA Ajit Doval, US NSA

Washington said in a tweet. Later in the evening, Sandhu hosted a reception in honour of Doval, who is in Washington leading a high-powered Indian delegation for the inaugural India-US Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies (iCET) dialogue.

It was attended by top officials of the Biden administration, including US National Security Advisor (NSA) Jake Sullivan, Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo, Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman, National Science Foundation Director Sethuraman Panchanathan and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Bill Nelson. The reception was also attended by corporate leadership, academics and think tanks. "A unique & special reception in India House! Delighted to host India NSA Ajit Doval, US NSA

Dogan-tara (space tracking), Pixel (satellite imagery), 3rdi Tec (communication), Q Pi-AI (AI & Quantum) and Saankhya Labs (wireless communication).

Announced during US President Joe Biden and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's bilateral talks in Tokyo in May last year, the iCET is spearheaded by the National Security Councils of both countries.

It focuses on strengthening the US-India partnership on the technologies that will drive global growth, bolster both countries' economic competitiveness, and protect shared national security interests.

Underlining the importance of the iCET, the US NSA said it will accelerate America's technology partnership and strategic convergence and policy alignment with India.

Sullivan and Doval are scheduled to meet at the White House on Tuesday along with their respective high-powered delegations for the inaugural iCET dialogue. Sullivan said the US and Indian governments want to establish a "list of firsts," "firsts in removing barriers—on both sides—to enable greater ambition by all

of you." He highlighted how iCET will accelerate the US' strategic technology partnership with India and advance the two countries' shared democratic values.

He also recognised the pivotal role that businesses, educators, and investors play and urged the attendees to be ambitious in deepening bilateral business and academic ties. Doval highlighted the need to convert intentions and ideas into actions and specific deliverables through focused steps in a time bound manner.

In their remarks, Doval and India's Ambassador to India Tarun Singh Sandhu highlighted India's remarkable capacity for technology development and absorption, and emphasised India's use of technology not only as an enabler of economic growth but as an instrument of social inclusion.

Both Doval and Sandhu commended the launch of the iCET, given the natural complementary strengths of the Indian and American economies and the growing strategic convergence between the two countries. They also emphasised India's growing role as a trusted supply chain partner and contributor in the global technology value chain.

NIA files chargesheet in ISIS Module case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Tuesday filed a chargesheet against an accused in 'Activities of ISIS Module in India' case. The agency filed the charge-sheet against accused Mohammad Mohsin Ahmad before the NIA Special Court here.

The case relates to a conspiracy hatched by ISIS and members of the international terror group, a proscribed terrorist organization, for propagation of ISIS ideology and to raise funds for the outfit.

The case was suo-moto registered by the NIA on June 25 last year. "During investigations, it has been established that the accused, Mohammad Mohsin Ahmad, raised funds for ISIS and sent these funds to his Syria-based ISIS handlers through Cryptocurrency channels," the NIA said in a statement.

The NIA has charged Ahmad under various Sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) relating to criminal conspiracy and destruction of evidence besides provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

The accused is a resident of ITI Women, Digha, Dinapur-cum-Khagaul, Patna, Bihar. Investigations have revealed that the accused Mohammed Mohsin Ahmad conspired with an ISIS Handler and others for propagation of the ISIS ideology, with the ultimate objective to radicalize the Indian youth and recruit them for ISIS.

He was also involved in raising funds for ISIS from the ISIS sympathizers in India and sending the collected funds to his Syria based ISIS handlers through Cryptocurrency channels, thereby supporting the ISIS in furtherance of its terrorist activities," the agency said, adding, further investigations in this case are in progress.

CBI raids 50 locations in 7 States in constable paper leak case in HP

NEW DELHI: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Tuesday conducted searches at around 50 locations across seven States/Union Territories in an ongoing investigation of two cases related to leakage of question papers for the written examinations for the post of constables in Himachal Pradesh Police.

During searches conducted in Himachal Pradesh, Bihar, Uttarakhand, Delhi, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Haryana, the NIA has recovered incriminating documents, the agency said in a statement. The CBI had registered two cases on November 30 last year on the request of Himachal Pradesh Government and further notification of the Centre.

Later, the CBI took over investigation of these cases earlier registered as FIR No. 41 at Police Station, Gaggal and FIR No. 5 of Police Station CID, Bharari (Shimla) by State Police on allegations of leakage of question papers of written examinations for post of constables in Himachal Pradesh Police, held on March 27 last year.

"During investigation and scrutiny of documents, the alleged role of various middlemen based in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Haryana, etc were revealed.

UPSIDA to auction 152 plots for setting up industries in UP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

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

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

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

UP forms team to inform youth about job schemes

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

With an aim to educate youth about employment opportunities in Uttar Pradesh, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has constituted a 48-member team comprising retired IAS, IPS, IFS and educationists who will tell youth about the implementation of CAA as promised by the CM.

Apparently aware of the hard electoral arithmetic the Chief Minister said, "the BJP comes with baskets of false promises during the elections whereas throughout the year we take care of the Matuas."

Addressing a gathering at Gajol block in minority-dominated Malda district the Chief Minister said, "in the name of NRC they (BJP Government) put others (opposition voters) in jail ... in the name of CAA they are misleading the people."

Referring particularly to the refugees of Matua (SC) community — which had migrated to India post Independence and 1971 war and settled

in the border districts, mostly in North 24 Parganas, Nadia and Malda — she said the BJP was giving them false hopes on CAA. "They are confusing the people on CAA telling they will grant citizenship to the Matuas ... but if the Matuas are not citizens the how

they are taking part in elections ... how they are voting ... We have been taking care of the Matuas for a long time, but when polls approach, the BJP goes to them, feigning as their friends... shouting CAA, CAA," Banerjee said.

While the CAA entails the grant of citizenship to migrant Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi and Christians from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan, NRC is about drawing out a list or register of illegal migrants to India. The Muslim population forming

about 30 percent of voters, is particularly sensitive about NRC and the Matua community having sizeable impact in 25-30 Assembly seats is expectant about the implementation of CAA as promised by the BJP.

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Pretty picture

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

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

shocks faded, the structural reforms paid growth dividends from 2003.

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

PIC TALK



Labourers work at a construction site during sunset, in Jalandhar

PTI

All is not well in Ladakh

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

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

the melting of glaciers which might have devastating long-term effects for the country.

Wangchuk is yet another whistle-blower the Government chooses to ignore. Not heading to sane advice has its perils. One of the key solutions which are also his major demand is extending the Sixth Schedule of the constitution to Ladakh which was promised by the government but has not been kept. The sixth schedule allows for forming autonomous administrative areas where the tribal population is more than 50 percent. It permits the creation of independent administrative entities which can enact laws that defend the tribal population's interests and preserve their cultural identity. The Govt's approach to

ignoring Wangchuk's concerns and silencing his voice is not good for the Government or the people of Ladakh. Besides the movement is building up in Ladakh which can snowball into major unrest. Former MP Thupstan Chhewang organized a grand rally against the "failure of the government to protect the identity and culture of Ladakh". So now it is becoming a matter of Ladakhi identity and existential issues that the Government must address. Wangchuk is going to repeat his hunger strike soon. Given the support he is getting it would become a major issue. The safeguards Ladakh enjoyed earlier have been left invalid after the abrogation of Article 370. The government must keep its word and fulfill its promise. What Wangchuk and other protesters are demanding is in the interest of the country at large.



BHARAT JODO YATRA ENDS

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

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

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

TUSSLE ENDS

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

Investigate Adani group



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

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

Phagwan Thadani | Mumbai

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

D. Nagarjuna | Hyderabad

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

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

dream, but where is his 'one can stand one's own feet'?

We are proudly pats in our back as: India is now the fifth largest economy in the world, and the President in her speech said: A Bharat which has no poverty and where the middle class is also prosperous, but in reality 83 crore (nearly two-thirds) of our population covered under free ration and the way unemployment (there was nothing on unemployment in President's address) rises in the country, then what's the value of this education? President Murmu said that women empowerment has been at the core of all schemes introduced by the central government, but may be debatable.

Even that one wants to know from the Modi government that why India ranks 144 out of 193 countries in the representation of women in parliament? Why was The Women's Reservation Bill first introduced in 1996 by the Deve Gowda government, still in the store room in the Parliament? Because they want to prove the country is still dominated by men?

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

Send your feedback to:
letterstopioneer@gmail.com



BRIJENDER SINGH PANWAR

Wrestlers' fight for justice

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



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

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

robery and attempt to mur-

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

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

However, this case is not

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

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

SOUND BITE



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

Andhra Pradesh CM

— YS Jagan Reddy

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

Pakistan Prime Minister

— Shehbaz Sharif



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

Filmmaker

— Ram Gopal Varma

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

Indian cricketer

— Murli Vijay

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

Environment activist

— Sonam Wangchuk



FIRST COLUMN

VILLAGE LIFE IN VEIL IN UTTARAKHAND

Women still have to cover themselves in villages



KUMARI KAVITA

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Wise allocations will boost the economy

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

The total contribution of the manufacturing sector has decreased in the GDP in recent years. The contribution of the manufacturing sector in GVA was 17.4 per cent in FY-2012, which decreased to 14.5 per cent in FY-2021. The government has to step up capital expenditure in this sector. It will help in employment generation as well as more exports can be achieved which will make the target of achieving \$1 trillion of economy true.

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

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

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

Our country is the fifth largest economy in the world. The amount of subsidies provided by the government is very surprising, food and fertilizers subsidies amounting to 1/8th (12 per cent) of GDP. Spending on fertilizer subsidy which is Rs 2.3 lakh crore should be reduced to Rs 1.4 lakh crore and food subsidy to Rs 2.3 lakh crore from Rs 2.7 lakh crore.

If the government wants to reduce the fiscal deficit, then it should reduce subsidies. It will definitely make the fiscal deficit balanced, which is targeted around 6.4 per cent of the GDP in current fiscal years.

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

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

The goal of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' can be achieved by enhancing the defence systems. According to a research institute of Stockholm, India ranks fourth among the Indo-Pacific countries in self-reliant production capabilities of arms but India ranks 2nd largest importer of the arms and defence related equipment.

However, we have defence exports of Rs 14,000 crore and the target is to achieve Rs 25,000 crore of exports by 2025.

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

POINT COUNTER POINT

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

— BJP LEADER RAKESH SINHA



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

— CONGRESS LEADER RAHUL GANDHI



Finance Minister may opt for a prudent Budget

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

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

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

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



KALYANI SHANKAR

(The author is a senior journalist)

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

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

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

However, some economists, as a contrarian view,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The government should address the job crisis. The private sector should also be encouraged to create more jobs. The rising cost of living and falling income has dented the growth of the aspirational middle classes. Senior citizens also demand medical benefits and no tax on their pensions.

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

analysis

07



RAVI KUMAR GUPTA

NATO urges closer ties with Japan to defend democracy

AP ■ TOKYO

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

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

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

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



Prime Minister Fumio Kishida.

"China is substantially building up its military forces including nuclear weapons, bullying its neighbours and threatening Taiwan, trying to control critical infrastructure and spreading misinformation about NATO and the war in Ukraine," Stoltenberg said.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Blinken in West Asia renews appeal for Israel-Palestinian calm

AP ■ JERUSALEM,

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

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

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



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

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

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

10 wounded in drive-by shooting in Florida: Police

AP ■ FLORIDA (US)

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

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

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

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

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

Taylor said investigators believe the shooting was a targeted attack.

Biden to end COVID-19 emergencies on May 11



The White House said Biden plans to extend them both briefly to end on May 11.

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

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

Then-President Donald Trump first declared the COVID-19 pandemic a national emergency on March 13, 2020. The emergencies have been repeatedly extended by Biden since he took office in January 2021, and are set to expire in the coming months.

COVID vaccines and testing. And the \$1.7 trillion spending package passed last year and signed into law by Biden put an end to a rule that barred states from kicking people off Medicaid, a move that is expected to see millions of people lose their coverage after April 1.

Legislators did extend tele-health flexibilities that were introduced as COVID-19 hit, leading health care systems around the country to regularly deliver care by smartphone or computer.

The Biden administration had previously considered ending the emergency last year, but held off amid concerns about a potential "winter surge" in cases and to provide adequate time for providers, insurers and patients to prepare for its end.

cases and to provide adequate time for providers, insurers and patients to prepare for its end.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, CONSTRUCTION DIVISION,
UTTARAKHAND PEYJAL NIGAM, CHAMPAWAT
Phone/Fax : 05965 - 230044 E-Mail : executivechampawat@gmail.com

Bid Notification No : 225 /Nivida / 136, Date: 30.01.2023

E - TENDER NOTICE (Single Bid System)

Name of the works: Bans Baswari Geejubasan (Retro) w/s scheme (JJM).

Date of Publication on e-procurement portal Date. 01.02.2023 at 17.00 hrs.

Note : Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal - www.uktenders.gov.in & contact: 05965-230044.

*जल संवर्धन जीवन संवर्धन हाथां संकल्प, हर घर नल से जल नाम प्रदान हो जाएगा जल दूरी *बायां में हो दूरी दूरी

Executive Engineer

UJVNL Limited
(An Uttarakhand Govt. Enterprises)
H.O.: "UJVNL" - Main Office Bagh Gaon, Rishikesh-248006
Telephone: 0135-230044 & Fax: 0135-2763508
CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025866
Website: www.ujvnl.com

R.O. No.: 96 **Tender Notice** Date: 31.01.2023

Office of the Executive Engineer (M&G) Dhalipur Power House, invites sealed tenders from interested parties. Brief summary of tender is given below:

Tender No: 16/EE/M&G/DLR/2022-23

Name of work: SITC of HV Bushing of 20 MVA , 11/132 KV Generator Transformer of Dhalipur Power Station.

Estimated cost : Rs 24,90,00/- (GST Extra)

Date of availability of bid document on website : 01.02.2023

Last date for submission of tender : 22.02.2023 upto 16 Hrs

For fuller & further details, kindly visit our website. The tender documents can be downloaded from the Nigam's website "www.ujvnl.com"

Executive Engineer

"AVOID WASTEFUL USE OF ELECTRICITY"

NORTHERN RAILWAY G20
E-TENDER NOTICE

Dy. CSTE/GSU/DLI, DIVISIONAL RAILWAY MANAGER OFFICE, 1ST FLOOR, ROOM NO-8, State Entry Road, New Delhi-110055 for & on behalf of 'President of India' invites online OPEN E-tender in single packet system from the experienced & established contractor having sufficient experience in similar work and satisfying minimum eligibility criteria on the prescribed form for the under noted work:

1. Name of work : "S&T works including Supply of Signalling and Telecom Materials i.c.w. Extension of loop lines to full length CSL at Badli, Niliokheri and Dholia Mazra stations of Delhi Division"

2. Approximate Cost of the work : Rs. 1,05,28,362.01 (Rs One crore, Five Lakhs

Three Eight Thousand Three Hundred sixty two and one paisa only).

3. Cost of tender form : Nil.

4. Address from where tender document can be downloaded. : Indian Railways website www.irps.gov.in

5. Bid security Deposit : Rs. 2,02,700/-

6. Completion period : 6 (Six) months.

7. Date and time of submission of tender and opening of tender : Tender to be submitted online on Indian Railways website www.irps.gov.in from 10.02.2023 up to 11:30 hrs. of 24.02.2023. Date of tender Opening: 24.02.2023 at 11:30 hrs.

8. Detailed Tender Notice : Available at Indian Railways website www.irps.gov.in.

No.: GSU_DLI_SNT_01 Dated: 31.01.2023 317/2023

Serving Customers with a Smile

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DISTRICT POLICE HEADQUARTERS JAMMU
0191-2561578 (O), 0191-254780 (F),
email-sspjammu@jkpolice.gov.in

LOOK OUT NOTICE

I/C PP Canal Road intimated that on 26.1.2023, one male dead body was found/recovered from Nikki Tawi, Jammu. To ascertain the actual cause of death Inquest proceedings U.S 174 Cr.P.C., was initiated at PP Canal Road and dead body was shifted to mortuary room of GMCH, Jammu.

For the identification of unidentified Male dead body below description roll is required to be published on daily newspapers for identification / Public in general, having any clue related to the unidentified dead body, kindly communicate the same on the below mentioned contact/Telephone numbers.

Description Roll:-

Age : About 35 years

Height : 5'7"

Colour : Fair

Tattoo : Allah in Arabic (On neck) and Ali on right Arm

Dress : Black T-Shirt and black trouser

Contacts/Telephone Numbers:-

1. DPO, Jammu : 0191-2547807, 0191-2561578

2. SSP Jammu Mail ID : sspjammu@jkpolice.gov.in

3. PCR Jammu : 0191-2542000

4. SP City North : 0191-2547038

5. Dy. SP Hqrs. : 0191-2562259

6. PS Nowabad : 0191-2565274

For Sr. Superintendent of Police Jammu

DIP/J-14853/22

Teen killed, 4 others injured in shooting at Texas lounge

AP ■ TEXAS (US)

The suspect left the scene after the shooting, police said.

The school district in Jarrell, which is about 40 miles north of Austin, said in a statement Monday that the district was "profoundly saddened by the loss of one of our students."

"He was a gifted student and athlete who made a lasting impression on our district," the Jarrell Independent School District said in the statement.

The district said that counselors would be providing support to students and staff. The district said another student from the district was still hospitalized.



the victims." The suspect left the scene after the shooting, police said.

UN: Taliban ban on women aid workers is potential death blow

AP ■ UNITED NATIONS

The UN humanitarian chief warned Monday that the Taliban's ban on women aid workers in Afghanistan is "a potential death blow" to many important humanitarian programmes.

If the Taliban don't make exceptions to their edict "this would be catastrophic," Martin Griffiths said at a news conference.

He said a delegation including international aid

groups made the case that Afghan women are critical to humanitarian operations during meetings last week with nine Taliban officials, including Afghanistan's foreign affairs Griffiths noted that after

Griffiths said the Dec. 24 edict by the Taliban barring aid groups from employing Afghan women, the health minister granted an exception for women in the health field and the education minister granted an exception for those involved in primary education.

He said the humanitarian delegation told the Taliban that if they weren't going to rescind the edict "then we must expand these exceptions to cover all the aspects of humanitarian action."

China accuses Washington of wanting 'tech hegemony'

AP ■ BEIJING

China's government accused Washington on Tuesday of pursuing "technology hegemony" following news reports the United States might step up pressure on tech giant Huawei by blocking all access to American suppliers.

The possible move, reported by Bloomberg News, The Financial Times and The Wall Street Journal, would tighten restrictions imposed in 2019 that limit Huawei's access to processor chips and other technology.

The company, which makes network equipment and smartphones, was allowed to buy some less-advanced components.

Myanmar military is increasing air attacks, says rights group

AP ■ BANGKOK

Myanmar's military is increasingly turning to airstrikes with deadly results to try to crush stiff armed resistance, two years after it seized power and plunged the country into a prolonged civil war, said a report Tuesday by a human rights monitoring group.

The military is heavily reliant on fighter jets and helicopter gunships supplied by its allies Russia and China, according to the non-governmental organisation Myanmar Witness and other experts. The group's compilation of 135 "airwar incidents" from July to mid-Dec says the number of airstrikes has been on an upward trend since September.

"As the Myanmar military struggles to exert control over areas of resistance, airstrikes have become a key part of their offensive," the report says. The military "is putting the population of Myanmar in a precarious position, destroying homes, schools and places of worship — sites which should be safe for civilians," according to a January statement by the National Unity Govt, an underground group that calls itself the country's legitimate government and serves as an umbrella organisation for opponents of military rule, 460 civilians, mostly children, have lost their lives in airstrikes. Myanmar's army has defended its actions as meant to fight

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

"It is befitting that during



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PTI ■ MUMBAI

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

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

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

PTI ■ MUMBAI

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

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

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

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

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

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



omy for FY24."

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

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

'New diversified markets helping India's exports'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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



said.

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

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

ing our exports more competitive worldwide," Sakthivel said.

Gogesh Gupta, Regional Chairman, FIEO (Eastern Region), said the exporter fraternity is expecting fiscal support and affordable credit, from the upcoming budget.

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

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

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

Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) said.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

To pass on this benefit to mutual fund investors,

Association of Mutual Funds on Friday said that all asset management companies will

move to the T+2 redemption

payment cycle for equity schemes, and implement this uniformly with effect from February 1, 2023.

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

PTI ■ HAIFA

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

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

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

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

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

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

PTI ■ MUMBAI

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

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

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

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Goods and Services Tax collection is showing a

higher buoyancy than the pre-GST system, auguring well for future resource mobilisation in the economy, the Economic Survey 2022-23 presented in Parliament said on Tuesday.

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

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

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

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

extent of digitisation of payments across the country.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

According to the industry body, the total exports of electronic goods from India from April to December 2022 grew to ₹1,33,313 crore against ₹81,780 crore in 2021.

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

"The growth in mobile phone exports during April-

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

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

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REAL EXPECTED TO CONTINUE EUROPEAN DOMINANCE OF CWC

AP ■ RABAT

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

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

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

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

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



European winners.

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

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

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

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

MOROCCAN HOPES

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

Widely dismissed as an irrelevance in Europe, the com-

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Man Utd lose Eriksen until May

AP ■ MANCHESTER

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

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

have been invited to take part as well.

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

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

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

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

West Ham ease past Derby to earn Man Utd clash

AP ■ LONDON

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

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

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

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

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

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

"There's nothing bigger than



since 1986.

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

been revitalised this term.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

India in Group B of Asia Mixed Team Championships 2023

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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



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

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

each tie shall be stopped when the tie is decided.

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

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

INDIA SQUAD:

Men's singles: Lakshya Sen, HS Prannoy

Women's singles: PV Sindhu, Akashrak Kashyap

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

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

Mixed doubles: Ishaan Bhatnagar/Tanisha Crasto

involved with the ATP tour.

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

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

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

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

AP ■ LONDON

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

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

Zverev had denied all of the allegations.

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

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

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

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



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

Bayern sign Cancelo on loan from Man City

AP ■ MUNICH

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

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

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

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

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

"So it's been a little while," he said. "But I'll be preparing well, I'll head out to Ethiopia and put in a lot of solid training and see what I can do when it comes to April."

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

Cancelo could make his Bayern debut in the club's German Cup match away against Mainz on Wednesday, or in their away Bundesliga clash with Wolfsburg on Sunday.

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

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

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

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

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

Farah says 2023 London Marathon will be his last

AP ■ LONDON

British athletics great Mo Farah has said this year's London Marathon will likely be his last as he contemplates the end of a brilliant career.

The 40-year-old is best known for his success on the track winning gold in the 5,000 and 10,000 metres at both the London 2012 and Rio 2016 Olympic Games, as well as several world titles across both distances.

And while his marathon career has reached nothing like the same heights, Farah is keen to run in London again after missing last year's edition even though he will be 40 by the time of the April 23 race.

"It's been an amazing career and taking part in the London Marathon is a very big deal," he said in a statement issued by event organisers. "I was gutted not to race last year and I just want to give it one more shot."

"It depends on my body. I

just want to get to the start line and see what I can manage. I'm just taking one race at a time."

He added: "I'm not a spring chicken any more. You can't keep coming back in the right shape and, for me, I'd love to be able to finish it at home."

Farah has ruled out competing at the 2024 Olympics in Paris, but may yet try to finish his time as a British international at this year's World Championships in Budapest.

"I'm not going to go to the Olympics and I think 2023 will be my last year," he added.

"But if it came down to it towards the end of the year and you did get picked for your country, I'd never turn that down," Farah last ran in London in 2019, coming fifth, having finished third the year before.

"So it's been a little while," he said. "But I'll be preparing well, I'll head out to Ethiopia and put in a lot of solid training and see what I can do when it comes to April."

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



There's still enough pull to play for NZ: Ferguson

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

New Zealand pacer Lockie Ferguson empathised with his fellow players giving up central contracts for lucrative T20 league deals but said there is still enough "pull" to represent the country in big-ticket events, such as the World Cup.

Three New Zealand players -- Trent Boult, Martin Guptill and Jimmy Neesham -- gave up their central contracts last year to play in different T20 leagues across the world.

Asked if it would affect the future of T20 cricket in New Zealand, Ferguson said: "I don't think I have the answer. And it's certainly above my pay grade but, from our point of view, you can understand players when they're at the sort of back end of their careers."

"But at the same time, I know they will still want to play for New Zealand. So finding the balance, I'm not sure what that might be. Certainly, as I said, people above the chain to me, will work that out. But I think, from a player's point of view, we love playing for the Black Caps."

"Certainly since I've been playing such a rich history of being very successful, and that's enjoyable to play and seeing the young talent come through and do well as well is very rewarding."

"So, I think, from a player's point of view, we want to play for New Zealand in World Cups. That's sort of what kids dream of, and I think there's still a lot of pull for that."

The 31-year-old, who played under Hardik Pandya as part of Gujarat Titans side in IPL last year, heaped praise on the India T20 skipper.

"Hardik, I have very high regard certainly from day one, playing underneath him in Gujarat (Titans), he is a clear leader within the group and demands the audience very quickly."

"But, at the same time, I guess, similar to Kane (Williamson) he has time for everyone in the group," Ferguson said.

"He's done well with India. You can see his body language has been fantastic with the group and I think, he is an exceptional leader for the country. But certainly, I enjoyed my time playing under him."

New Zealand suffered a 3-0 loss against India in the ODI series and are currently tied 1-1 in the three-match T20 rubber after losing the second game in Lucknow by six wickets.

"Look, the one-day series was challenging, certainly the first ODI we had our chance to win it. And then, outplayed in the second one, and in the third one, we were sort of lined out well too. So although on paper it's 3-0, I thought it was a pretty competitive series," he said.

"And then, in the T20s, it's been pretty even throughout. So always nice to come to a decider, particularly in a lovely stadium like this."

The pitches used for the two T20 games favoured the spinners a lot with India skipper Pandya criticising the Lucknow track, which saw New Zealand post just 99 in 20 overs.

Ferguson, however, said low-scoring games are good for cricket since T20 is mostly dominated by batters.

"I bowled my four (overs) in the first game and I actually enjoyed bowling the cross seamers, sort of sped a little bit, got a bit of an extra pace and carry. To be honest, even Arshdeep bowling to me in the last game, there was a little bit of pace and carry, but clearly spin was the right option."

"We play a lot of T20s here in India, and around the world and we have those high-scoring games. And as a bowler, I think sometimes those sort of lower scores, probably not the 100, but lower score games actually are just as exciting and brings a good battle between bat and ball."

"So I think for the game, it's great. Certainly I'm sure fans prefer the big, high-scoring matches but, as a cricket player, that can be pretty exciting."

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

India's young top order will be under pressure to deliver in the series-deciding third T20 International against New Zealand here on Wednesday.

It would be fair to say the trio of Shubman Gill, Ishan Kishan and Rahul Tripathi has not made their opportunities count in the absence of Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli and K L Rahul.

After the game on Wednesday, India don't play a T20I for a long time, leaving the younger crop to make a statement before the focus shifts to the five-day format.

Kishan has not been able to find rhythm in his batting since his double hundred in Bangladesh while the turning ball has troubled Gill, who has not been able to replicate his ODI form in the shortest format. Tripathi, too, has wasted chances that have come his way in the absence of regular number three Kohli.

If it hadn't been for Suryakumar Yadav and Hardik Pandya, India would have struggled to chase down 100 on Sunday.

The surfaces in the series have attracted a lot of attention and it remains to be seen if the players get to negotiate another turning track at the Narendra Modi Stadium.

In the bowling department, Yuzvendra Chahal and Kuldeep Yadav playing together has helped India build the pressure on the opposition. With the pitch offering a huge amount of turn, it was surprising that Chahal was used for this series.

New Zealand, on the other hand, will be expecting more from their middle order. Sensing an opportunity to win a rare series in India. The Blackcaps will be highly motivated for the challenge.



missed opener Finn Allen.

After struggling with no-balls, Arshdeep Singh was back to his frugal best in Lucknow and that should give him a lot of confidence going into the decider.

With the series on the line, Pandya is unlikely to change the playing eleven despite clamour for inclusion of Prithvi Shaw, who made a national comeback with this series.

New Zealand used as many as eight bowling options in the previous game with four spinners bowling their full quota of overs.

More than 200 runs were scored in the last T20 played here almost two years ago and, after the low-scoring affair in Lucknow, fans would be hoping that normal service is restored.

TEAMS (FROM)

India: Hardik Pandya (captain), Suryakumar Yadav (vice-captain), Ishan Kishan (wicketkeeper), Shubman Gill, Prithvi Shaw, Deepak Hooda, Rahul Tripathi, Jitesh Sharma (wk), Washington Sundar, Kuldeep Yadav, Yuzvendra Chahal, Arshdeep Singh, Umran Malik, Shivam Mavi and Mukesh Kumar.

New Zealand: Mitchell Santner (captain), Finn Allen, Michael Bracewell, Mark Chapman, Devon Conway (wk), Dane Cleaver (wk), Jacob Duffy, Lockie Ferguson, Benjamin Lister, Daryl Mitchell, Glenn Phillips (wk), Michael Rippon, Henry Shipley, Ish Sodhi and Blair Tickner.

Deepti climbs to 2nd spot in T20I bowlers rankings

PTI ■ DUBAI

India all-rounder Deepti Sharma has climbed to second spot and has the top position -- currently occupied by England's Sophie Ecclestone -- in her sights in the latest ICC T20I bowling rankings announced on Tuesday.

The 25-year-old off-spinner, who is leading the wicket-taker's list in the ongoing Women's T20I Tri-series in South Africa with nine scalps, has reduced the England left-arm spinner's lead to just 26 rating points.

Deepti (737 points) moved up one spot, while South African left-arm spinner Nonkululeko Mlaibha, who has picked four wickets in the Tri-series, also climbed a spot to occupy the third place with 732 points.

If the duo continue their form, they could take Sophie's top spot ahead of the Women's T20 World Cup, scheduled in South Africa from February 10.

India and South Africa



will square off in the T20I Tri-series final in East London on Thursday.

India left-arm spinner Rajeshwari Gayakwad also improved her rank four places and is currently 14th on the list of T20I bowlers.

There was a lot of move-

ment inside the top-10 among bowlers this week, with Australia pacer Megan Schutt (up six places to fifth) and England seamer Katherine Sciver-Brunt (up two spots to sixth) also gaining spots.

Australia right-hander Tahilia McGrath maintained a healthy buffer at the top in the T20I batting rankings, with classy South Africa top-order performer Laura Wolvaardt among the biggest movers behind her.

Laura improved four places to ninth on the back of her strong start to the Tri-series against India and the West Indies, while teammate Tazmin Brits jumped 10 spots to 18th after an impressive half-century last week.

West Indies skipper Hayley Matthews moved four places to 22nd overall on the updated T20I rankings for batters.

The only change inside the top-10 in the list for all-rounders saw Australia veteran Elyse Perry take the 10th spot from Tahilia following a half-century against Pakistan.

Playing tour games on Indian pitches is irrelevant: Smith

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Former Australia skipper Steve Smith says his team is better off training on its own rather than playing tour games on "irrelevant" Indian pitches ahead of the four-Test Border-Gavaskar series.

Australia have decided not to play a single tour game in India during the month-long Test series, primarily due

to the hosts serving up green tops for practice matches and spinning tracks for the actual games.

Smith, who won the country's best men's player award for the fourth time in his career on Monday, said nets sessions would benefit his side more than the tour games.

The 18-member squad, led by Pat Cummins, had a pre-series camp on spin-

friendly tracks in Sydney and will have a week-long stint in Bengaluru before the first Test in Nagpur from February 9.

"We normally have two tour games over in England. This time we don't have a tour game in India," Smith was quoted as saying by news.com.au on Monday ahead of the team's departure to India.

PUBLIC NOTICE



Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, Landmark Building, 4th Floor, 228A, AJC Bose Road, Kolkata - 700020 CIN No: L65190GJ1994PLC021012, www.icicibank.com

The following borrower/s have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from the Bank and the loans have been classified as Non-Performing Assets (NPA). A notice was issued to them under Section 13 (2) of Securitisation and Re-Construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act-2002 on their last known addresses, however it was not served and hence they are hereby notified by way of this public notice.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor (Loan Account Number) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset / Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice	NPA Date
1.	Manjot Singh/ Mamta Kour/ S/o Balbir Singh, Hno 60 Ward No. 12, Sunder Nagar Supela Bhilai, Vaishali Nagar Durg Chhattisgarh Bhilai-490023 LBLL000005299435	Plot No.06, Khesra No.4579/66, (Internal Part From Hanuman Mandir Upto Kurud Road Nala), P.H.N. 19, R.N.M. Durg 1, Mouza Kohka, Purani Basti, Ward No. 09, Property Undertaking N.P.N Bhilai, Tehsil And District- Durg, Chattisgarh, (Admeasuring an area of Land Measuring 1144 Square Feet (106.32 Sq Mtr.)	December 20, 2022 Rs. 22,83,760/-	03/10/2022

The steps are being taken for substituted service of notice. The above borrower/s and/or their guarantors (as applicable) are advised to make the payments of outstanding within period of 60 days from the date of publication of this notice else further steps will be taken as per the provisions of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.

Date : February 01, 2023

Place : Bhilai

Authorized Officer
IDFC FIRST Bank Limited

IDFC FIRST Bank Limited

(Formerly known as IDFC Bank Limited) | CIN : L65110TN2014PLC097792

Registered Office : KRM Towers, 7th Floor, Harrington Road, Chetpet, Chennai - 600031.

Tel : +91 44 4564 4000 | Fax : +91 44 4564 4022

Authorized Officer – Swapnil Pandey | Contact Number - 7776067773

Authorized Officer – Debjyoti Roy | Contact Number - 9874702021

APPENDIX- IV-A [See proviso to rule 8 (6)]

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Co-Borrower(s) as per column (ii) that the below described immovable properties as per column (iii) mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (formerly known as IDFC Bank Limited), will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on 17th Feb 2023 as described hereunder, for the recovery of amount due from Borrower(s) and Co-Borrower(s) as per column (i), due to IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (Formerly known as IDFC Bank Limited).

(i) Demand Notice Date and Amount	(ii) Name Borrower(s) and Co-Borrower(s)	(iii) PROPERTY ADDRESS	(iv) Reserve Price Amount	(v) EMD Amount	(vi) Date and Time of Auction	(vii) Date and Time of EMD Auction
1 INR 14,39,317.22- Demand Notice Dated: 15-04-2019	Mr. Shiv Patel & Mrs. Anikita Singh	Plot No.-20, K.H.No. - 477/19, Behind Rungta College, P. H. No. 14/19, Khurd, Bhilai & District-Durg, Chhattisgarh-491001	INR 4,11,640/-	INR 41,164/-	17th Feb 2023 11.00 TO 1.00 PM	16th Feb 2023
2 INR 10,37,228.83- Demand Notice Dated: 04-09-2019	Leena Shinde, S.B Shinde & Sharda Shinde	Plot No 214 & 215, KH No 501/29, Ph No.2, Bhilai-3, Mouja-Soman, Teh Palan, Dist. Durg, Chhattisgarh-491001	INR 4,00,950/-	INR 40,095/-	17th Feb 2023 11.00 TO 1.00 PM	16th Feb 2023
3 INR 30,46,191.62- Demand Notice Dated: 11-04-2021	Mr. Mohammed Asif Qureshi & Mr. Mohd Javed Qureshi	All That Piece And Parcel Of Property Part Of Kh.No.501/26, Plot No. 19, Kh. No-44/19, P.H.No. 14/19A, Mouja Kurud, Bhilai, Tehsil & Dist(C.G)-491001 Admeasuring 257.18 Sq Mtrs	INR 9,04,370/-	INR 90,437/-	17th Feb 2023 11.00 TO 1.00 PM	16th Feb 2023
4 INR 24,93,529.93- Demand Notice Dated: 25-09-2021	Santosh Kumar Sahu & Sarojne Sahu	All That Piece And Parcel Of Plot No.18, Kh. No-44/19, P.H.No. 14/19A, Mouja Kurud, Bhilai, Tehsil & Dist(C.G)-491001 Admeasuring 257.18 Sq Mtrs	INR 7,84,440/-	INR 78,444/-	17th Feb 2023 11.00 TO 1.00 PM	16th Feb 2023
5 INR 20,71,622.74- Demand Notice Date: 12th Jun 2019	Joga Rao & Sushila Sushila	All That Piece And Parcel Of Property Bearing Of Part Of KH No. 501/26, Plot No. 19, Kh. No-44/19, P.H.No. 14/19A, Mouja Kurud, Bhilai, Tehsil & Dist-Durg, Chhattisgarh-491001	INR 8,10,000/-	INR 81,000/-	17th Feb 2023 11.0	