

OPINION 6
UNEARTHING THE ROOT
OF THE DISASTER**WORLD 9**
UK HOME SECY MULLS CUT IN
POST-STUDY STUDENT VISA STAY**MONEY 10**
AI OFFERS NEARLY 98 CRORE
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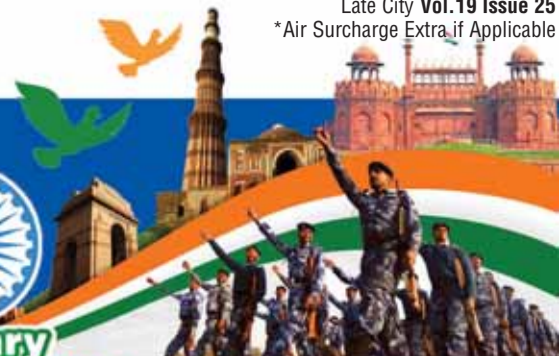


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BBC's docu fuels unrest in varsities

Police, admins of univs crack down as students of Jamia, Punjab univ, JNU try to see banned film

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The proposed screening of the controversial BBC documentary 'India: The Modi Question' became a major flashpoint between students and the police at Jamia Millia Islamia University in the national Capital on Wednesday. The police first detained four students and later many more when the students led a protest to demand their release, the Students' Federation of India (SFI) claimed.

The students of the Punjab University also organised the screening of the BBC documentary which was stalled midway after authorities intervened. In a tweet, the Congress-affiliated students wing NSUI said "@NSUICHandigarh organised a screenplay of the BBC Modi documentary at Panjab University. The state president and many students watched the truth about



Security personnel at the Jamia Millia Islamia campus during the SFI's protest against the detention of four activists over the proposed screening of a BBC documentary on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in New Delhi, Wednesday. PTI

democracy killers."

The SFI's bid to screen the documentary at the Jamia campus comes a day after a similar event was organised at the Jawaharlal Nehru University during which students claimed that power and Internet were suspended and stones hurled at them. The campus witnessed heavy deployment of police and the anti-riot units Rapid Action Force (RAF) personnel.

Secretary of SFI Delhi State committee, Pritish Menon said the police detained the protesters who had gathered there.

"We were about to begin the demonstration but they were taken to the police station," Menon said.

The SFI's Jamia unit had released a poster announcing that the documentary would be screened at the MCRC lawn Gate Number 8 at 6 PM.

The police said it detained four students after the SFI announced its plan.

The university administration said the screening of the controversial documentary would not be allowed.

EAM slams Pompeo over slight to Sushma

PNS/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI / WASHINGTON

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has deplored the derisive remarks made by former US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo against Sushma Swaraj when she headed the Foreign Ministry.

Jaishankar's sharp reaction came a day after Tuesday's launch of Mike Pompeo's book in which he made disparaging references about the late Swaraj.

Writing about Swaraj, Pompeo said he never saw his counterpart Swaraj as an "important political player" but got along famously with S Jaishankar. "I have seen a passage in Secretary Pompeo's book refer-



ring to Smt Sushma Swaraj ji. I always held her in great esteem and had an exceptionally close and warm relationship with her. I deplore the disrespectful colloquialism used for her," Jaishankar said. In his latest book 'Never Give an Inch: Fighting for the America I Love' that hit the

stores on Tuesday, Pompeo describes Swaraj somewhat disparagingly, using the American slang words 'goof-ball' and 'heartland political hack' for her. Swaraj served as the External Affairs Minister from May 2014 to May 2019. She died in August 2019.

‘India seen with new respect on global stage’

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In her maiden Address to the Nation on the eve of Republic Day, President Droupadi Murmu on Wednesday said India is now being seen with "new respect" on the global stage.

She lauded the linguistic diversity of the country, founders of the Constitution for giving a moral framework, and commended the roles of farmers, workers, scientists and engineers whose



combined strength enables India to live up to the spirit of "Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan, Jai Vigyan, Jai Anusandhan".

Asserting that the world looked at India now with a "new respect", she pointed to the country's leadership

of G20 and said it was an ideal platform to discuss and find solutions to "most pressing" problems such as global warming and climate change that were affecting the poor the most. The President said after a series of initiatives in recent years to transform all aspects of governance and unleash the creative energies of the people, the world has started to look at India with a new sense of respect.

Padma Vibhushan for MSY, SM Krishna, Zakir Hussain

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Samajwadi Party founder late SMulayam Singh Yadav, former External Affairs Minister SM Krishna, and tabla maestro Zakir Hussain are among the six people listed for this year's Padma Vibhushan awards.

Others who will be bestowed the highest civilian honor are: Balkishna Doshi from Gujarat (posthumously), Dilip Mahalanabis (posthumously) who worked in relief camps during the Bangladesh war and US-based scientist and engineer Srinivas Varadhan.

No one has been named for the Bharat Ratna, the country's highest civilian award.

In the Padma Awards announced ahead of Republic Day 2023, President Droupadi Murmu also listed out nine names for Padma Bhushan and 91 for Padma Shri Awards.

The nine Padma Bhushan awardees include: Industrialist Kumar Mangalam Birla, Infosys founder Narayana Murthy's wife and writer Sudha Murthy, Kannada writer SL Bhyrappa, and singer Vani Jayaram. Telangana's spiritual gurus Swami Chinna Jeeyar Kamlesh D Patel and writer and educationist Kapil Kapoor from Delhi as well, and singer Suman Kalyapur from Maharashtra were also awarded Padma Bhushan.

74th Republic Day

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Swadeshi Resolution: On Republic Day, take a pledge of Swadeshi to save the country from economic loot; educational, medical and cultural slavery; and poverty.

Shri Jagannath Yatra train

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan along with Minister of Railways Ashwini Vaishnaw from Delhi on Wednesday.

Pioneer photo

State to set up SWIC for water resources data

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The State Government is taking steps to constitute a State Water Informatics Centre (SWIC) dedicated to the handling of State-level water resources data.

The Department of Water Resources (DoWR) has been given the task for establishment and operationalisation of the SWIC.

The SWIC will be set up to act as a dedicated organisation for coordination, collection and dissemination of water resources data of the State with the support and guidance from the National Water Informatics Centre (NWIC), sources said here on Monday.

And, the SWIC will include a domain expert from each stake holder department/organisation that is dealing

with water and sharing of data thereof.

In fact, the management of water resources is a highly complex and tedious task that involves expertise of multidisciplinary domains and depends on historical and real time reliable data and information.

Hence, the DoWR has sought views from the Departments of Planning and Convergence, Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water along with Odish State Pollution Control Board and Odisha Computer Application Centre (OCAC) on the framework for setting of the SWIC.

Sources said that a memorandum of agreement will be signed between the NWIC and the SWIC in due course.

Kutey gets President's Police Medal

11 cops to get medals for meritorious service

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

As many as 13 police officials from Odisha have been awarded police medals on the occasion of Republic Day

2023, said a notification by the Ministry of Home Affairs on Wednesday.

Two police officials from the State have been conferred with President's Police Medal for Distinguished Service while 11 cops received Police Medal for Meritorious Service.

Special Secretary in the Chief Minister's Office Dharendra Sambhaji Kutey and Vigilance Constable Prahallad Kumar Rout have been conferred with

President's Police Medal for Distinguished Service.

Bhadrak ASPs Jatindra Kumar Panda and Pradyumna Kumar Mishra, Sundargarh Vigilance DSP Sudhanshu Sekhar Pujari, Bhubaneswar ACP Himansu Bhusan Swain, Biju Patnaik State Police Academy Deputy Commandant

Gyanendra Kumar Das, Bhubaneswar Security Wing Inspector Arun Baliarsingh, Brahmapur Vigilance Sub Inspector Jugul Kishore Pradhan, Cuttack Nuapatna

Constable Sarwordin Khan, ASI of police (computer) Bijnyan Bhusan Mohanty, Drill Inspector of police (Bhubaneswar) Anil Kumar Minz and Rourkela 4th Battalion Sepoy Pradeep Kumar Behera have been conferred with Police Medal for Meritorious Service.



Protest against 'Pathaan' movie in BBSR

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A local outfit on Wednesday held a protest against Shah Rukh Khan-starrer 'Pathaan' here alleging that the movie was vulgar and would have an adverse impact on the society.

Members of the Kalinga Sena staged a demonstration in front of cinema halls to protest against the film. They appealed to people not to watch

the movie and even tore the posters of the controversial film at the Keshari Hall.

"The the vulgarity in the film by the actors including Deepika Padukone and Shah Rukh Khan is having a bad influence on youths. Everybody is aware of the way obscenity was promoted through Besharam Rang's release," said an activist of Kalinga Sena.

Another activist said people



of different strata of society should come forward to boycott the film.

Not only in Bhubaneswar, in different parts of the coun-

try several religious organisations also staged demonstrations against the screening of the movie on the first day of its release.

BJP-BJD slugfest on PMAY BJP conspiring to stop rural housing: BJD

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The BJD on Wednesday accused the BJP of conspiring against people of Odisha and depriving lakhs of poor beneficiaries of rural housing under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) in the State. At a Press conference here, BJD MP Sasmit Patra and spokesperson Shreemayee Mishra lashed out at the Centre and held BJP MPs from

Odisha responsible for halting PMAY housing just to derive political mileage.

This was in reaction to BJP state general secretary Prithviraj Harichandan's allegation on Tuesday that about 2 lakh eligible people have been excluded from beneficiaries' list while names of BJD supporters have been included through a conspiracy.

"Nowhere is it seen that people's representatives would

conspire to stop benefits for the very people who have elected them. But it has been seen in the case of the BJP MPs of Odisha," the BJD leaders said, adding that Odisha was awarded by the Central Government for best performance in rural housing, but the State BJP MPs put so much pressure to stop sanction of houses here.

Odisha needs more than 15 lakh houses, but the Centre

has sanctioned only 8 lakh houses and is going to stop the rural housing scheme from this year. "So, where will these 7 lakh homeless people go, the BJD leaders asked.

"Even if you stop rural housing PMAY, the BJD Government will provide houses and take care of our poor people and also expose the role played by the BJP in depriving houses to eligible poor," they stated.

Leopard found dead in Dhenkanal

PNS ■ DHENKANAL

A decomposed carcass of a leopard was recovered from the Dudurkote forest under the Hindol Range in Dhenkanal district on Wednesday.

Though the exact reason behind the death of the leopard was yet to be ascertained, it was suspected that the animal might have died a couple of days back.

With this, the forest range has recorded two leopard deaths within a year. Earlier on



May 20, 2022, a leopard had died in the forest range, sources said.

Meanwhile, a team of the Forest Department reached the spot and launched an investigation to ascertain the circumstances leading to the death of the leopard.

"The exact reason behind the death is still unknown and no traps were also found at the spot. An investigation into the matter is on," said Dhenkanal DFO Prakash Chand Gogineni.

'Marfatare Mu', 'Bayasara Nandini Go' released



Written by poet Saroj Mohapatra

AK SAHOO ■ BHUBANESWAR

'Marfatare Mu' and 'Bayasara Nandini Go,' twin poetry collections by noted Odia poet engineer Saroj Mohapatra, were released at a ceremony at the Odisha State Museum auditorium here on Sunday. The meeting was presided over by Kendra Sahitya Akademi Awardee Dr Phani Mohanty.

Dr Mohanty called upon litterateurs to be more creative and produce wonderful creations with elements of ethics and aesthetics.

Eminent poet Prof Prafulla Mohanty, a Sahitya Akademi Awardee who was chief guest, threw lights on the themes of modern poetry and hoped that the treasures of Odia literature would in the coming days get translated into other Indian and foreign languages so that the world can know about its vibes and vivacity. Senior journalist Akshaya Kumar Sahoo and lyric poet Dhananjaya Swain attended the function as guests of honour. Saroj Bal of Time Pass Publication gave a brief introduction on both the books. While Dr Sonali Sahu anchored the programme, Sudam Bandhu Bhatta Mishra gave a vote of thanks.

'In Modi Govt, it is Sab Ke Sath Biswasghat'



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Modi Government's often-parroted slogan 'Sab Ka Sath, Sab Kas Bikash, Sab Ka Biswas' has turned into a smokescreen. In reality, a feeling of 'Kucch Ka Sath, Khudka Bikash and Sab Sath Biswasghat' is being felt, said senior Congress Subodhkant Sahay in a

Press meet here on Wednesday justifying about his party holding a two-month-long Bharat Jodo Yatra in the country.

Sahay said Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra in 12 States has created a sensation with lakhs of people joining it voluntarily.

He said the prices of essential commodities have

increased by 60-100%. LPG cylinder price has reached Rs 1,100 from Rs 410. Due to demonetisation and faulty GST policy, 50 lakh people have lost their jobs. Unemployment has reached 8%, the highest in 45 years. Total 79,0184 farmers have committed suicide and atrocities against women have risen by 26%.

Sahay urged the people of Odisha to join the Congress' 'Haath Se Haath Jodo' Yatra and protest against the BJP and BJD Governments.

PCC Media Cell chairman Ganeshwar Behera, former Minister Panchanan Kanungo and senior leaders Shibananda Ray, Manoranjan Das and Rajani Mohanty were present.

Pay disparity with 488-group 662-group college employees submit memo

Stir at Lower PMG from Feb 3

DINESH DAS ■ CUTTACK

The employees of 662- category Block Grant colleges on Wednesday submitted memorandums for the Chief Minister through the Collectors of respective districts for reconsideration of a Cabinet decision hiking the salary of a section of college employees while ignoring another under the grant system.

The move has brought disparity in the salaries among Block Grant employees work-



ing in 662-category and 488-category colleges, they alleged.

Secretary of State 662- category colleges association Dr Gagan Beura before submitting the memorandum to Cuttack DM, in a Press brief,

expressed his displeasure over the Cabinet decision of hiking the salary of employees of 488 category colleges. "As a result, besides Lecturers, even the demonstrators, PET and Librarians of 488-group would

get higher salary than the Lecturers of 662-group," he lamented.

He alleged that bureaucratic soft corner for 488 category colleges led them to get higher salary than their counterparts in 662-category colleges.

"If the decision is not withdrawn soon, the employees of 662- category will resume stir at the State capital from February 3 next," said 662-category association, Cuttack district president Ashok Parija.

Deputy Collector Somnath Majhi on behalf of Cuttack DM received the memorandum.

Strategy to combat heat wave discussed in city conf

BIJAY MISHRA
BHUBANESWAR

In a conference here on Tuesday, organised by CSE and Piloo Mody College of Architecture (PMCA), the participants discussed on the issue of rising heat waves and strategies needed to combat it through better urban planning and designing.

"Lack of climate-responsive planning and design has caused our cities to spiral into public health concerns and poor livability with compromised thermal comfort and deteriorating air quality," told programme director, CSE, Rajneesh Sareen.



Several experts, including Prof Dharitri Das, Dr Kajri Mishra, Dr Sudha Panda, Dr Jayant Routray, Rahu Das, Prof Raj Kunwar Nayak and Sanghamitra Rath shared their knowledge and experience to develop a strategy to combat heat wave and draw a roadmap for its implementation.

Notably, heat wave is the biggest killer in Asia out of all hazards that affected public health in 2010-2020 according to the sixth assessment report of the International Panel for Climate Change. Furthermore, India recorded 280 heat wave days across 16 States in the summer of 2022 accord-

ing to an analysis by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE).

Two CSE publications titled 'Mass Housing and Liveability: Mapping of the Ground Reality' and 'How Accessible are Low-income Settlements?' were released by the experts.

HITTING THE BULL'S EYE

Heart-warming Biju myths be not demolished

Legendary hockey wizard Major Dhyan Chand spent a good half year in the Bhubaneswar Sainik School as coach. Around that time, no one really cared much about his celebrity status because he did not have enough money even to buy fairly upper-class clothes or shoes. He was seen in extremely ordinary clothes and footwear as he lived with the boys in the hostel, ate with them and when no work was expected, looked for people for a gossip to kill boredom. One fine evening after dinner, only two boys reached him only to know if the Queen of Britain had really forced him to play hockey with her umbrella stick because she suspected he had scored innumerable goals with his stick that had magical powers. Further, if truly Hitler had offered him citizenship in Germany to teach hockey there! Major was hugely embarrassed at the queries. "When people become prominently known for some achievement or skills, legends and myths follow them," he had quipped. "I have been answering these amusing questions for years. Lately, I have chosen to smile away only to keep them guessing," he said.



BISWARAJ PATNAIK

Folktales, myths and legends are all stories which usually take the form of an allegorical tale featuring famous, iconic people only when they become popular because of daredevilry and risk-taking acts to help the distressed.

Both historical facts and imaginative stories are shared by word of mouth; and so the two sometimes intertwine to create the myths and legends that make people happy about their adored characters. They would enjoy hyperbolic eulogies thereby basking in the glory earned by their heroes. They would not care if elemental

truths are missing.

Legends are stories thought to be based on true events but have developed fictional dimensions which have deep significance to the culture from which they originate. Biju Patnaik figures hugely in such situations and settings. He turned a legend only because of his acts of unusual valour and skills, particularly when the intention is to making the needy and distressed people happy. Similarly, myths are stories derived from cultural traditions that do have a deep symbolic meaning.

That Biju Patnaik is a matchless global icon is an indisputable fact. There could be many others scoring over him, but the uniqueness he displayed in his approach to handling tough situations is considered class apart even today. Besides, he was a true legend in his own lifetime because he had proven his unparalleled skills in multiple fields, flying planes, entrepreneurship, statesmanship and above all philanthropy.

In 1947, he was in the Royal Indian Air Force as a transport plane pilot. His role in the World War II is unforgettable because he did

perform quite a bit differently not to impress anyone but to please himself. Believably he flew Spitfire and Douglas planes to carry soldiers and essential goods. He had heroically transported into Kashmir Indian soldiers in the wake of invasion by Pakistani tribal militants a few days after King Hari Singh signed the instrument of accession under pressure.

Kalinga Airlines, the company he had promoted, had DC planes in its fleet mainly to drop supplies across the North Eastern India. Biju owned some planes and hired a few on lease. Google search shows that in 1953, the airline, along with other seven independent domestic airlines including Deccan Airways, Airways India, Bharat Airways, Himalayan Aviation, Indian National Airways, Air India and Air Services of India with whom he had partnered an entrepreneurial outfit, was nationalised and merged into the Indian Airlines Corporation. But the insatiable pilot that Biju was, he restarted the Kalinga Airways operations in December 1957 by the merging with five other airlines, namely, Assam Airways, Indamer Airways, Jamair, Kalinga and

Darbhanga Aviations with a fleet of 15 DC-3s called popularly 'Dakota' meaning 'friend or ally'. By May 1960, Kalinga Airlines specialised in supply dropping operations in the north-east regions of India. Non-scheduled operations from Bombay to Dubai were also taken up but stopped in October 1962 to shift focus on 'supply dropping' only. The air-drop operations were taken over by the Indian Air Force in June 1967 and the airline reverted to passenger and cargo charters until February 1972.

Some of the researchers on Bijubabu, particularly with regard to his plane flying history, have come up with a hell of a set of corrections with the nitty-gritty of 'Biju flying chronology' pointing out errors mostly in the sentimental components of the flying adventures. One of the frontline researchers has been pleasing himself saying Bijubabu was asked by Nehru to pick Indonesians while he was incidentally camping in relatively nearby Singapore. So, picking the Indonesian Vice-President and Prime Minister was no great feat. Further, he points out that Biju never dropped leaflets to ignite potential

freedom fighters. Most shockingly further, he says Biju was never a good pilot as indicated by the number of Dakota planes that had crashed due to pilot error as if all crashed planes were being flown only by Biju because there was no other pilot in the entire outfit. Lastly, he says the shambles of the iconic Dakota being recovered from the Kolkata airport is not the one that airlifted Indonesian politicians kept under house arrest as if that would matter. What is critically important is whether or not this Dakota had connections with Biju.

The researcher may have done a grand job, but what he has missed out is the sentimental mythical components which keep icons live forever. It is also not exactly clear if his research methodology is foolproof and findings are based on absolute truth.

As explained in the previous lines, a legend lives on with innumerable mythical components attached to him or her. That to have legends and myths attached or attributed to a character means he or she is much larger than life. It has been true of Socrates, Plato, Alexander, Napoleon, Abraham Lincoln and

Mahatma Gandhi. The ordinary simple people feel great, particularly the youth, to have their icons portrayed on a mythical front as their hearts warm up and they feel enormously called upon to follow the path guided by the footprints left behind by characters they consider fit enough to be deified.

The aggressive interviews, mostly on the visual media, indicate researchers are only keen to show superior knowledge though not to belittle the icons. These researchers should realise that the faultfinding was pretty badly-timed. This could have found place in a text rather than spoken out on talk shows with kind of vengeance. At the Indonesian Embassy in New Delhi, there is a room named after aviator, entrepreneur, freedom fighter and former Odisha Chief Minister 'Bijayanand Patnaik'. For sure, just for an ordinary plane pickup, Indonesia would not have decorated a foreigner Hindu so prominently! Incidentally, on personal request by Sukarno, the head of the largest Muslim country in the world, named their national airlines 'Garuda' the celestial mount of Lord Vishnu!!!

Ponzi scam: 3 K'jhar accused get RI

PNS ■ BALESWAR
Special Judge, OPID (Odisha Protection of Interest of Depositors) Court Biswajit Das here on Wednesday convicted three persons involved in a multi-crore ponzi scam and awarded

them three years' rigorous imprisonment besides slapping Rs 43,000 penalty each, in default another nine months' jail term.
The convicts are Himansu Bhusan Behera of Jharpokharia, Antaryami Behera of Telkoi and Subrat

Sethy of Patna under Keonjhar district. The accused in different capacities were associated with a multi-level marketing company named GAH Multi Trade Private Limited. "The trio was arrested by the Keonjhar police in 2019 following complaints that they

duped investors promising high returns and other incentives. They were charge-sheeted following investigation by police. They were accused of cheating the investors to the tune of Rs 26 crore," said Special Public Prosecutor, OPID, Pranab Kumar Panda.

INBRIEF

ACTOR MIHIR'S YOUNGER SON AKLANT PASSES AWAY

Bhubaneswar: Aklant Das, younger son of late Bollywood actor Mihir Das, passed away during treatment at the AIIMS here on Tuesday night. He was suffering from liver-related ailments. His last rites were performed at the Satichaura cremation ground in Cuttack.



SHARMA NEW GM OF EAST COAST RLY

Bhubaneswar: Manoj Sharma, an officer of the Indian Railway Service of Engineering (IRSE) of 1985 batch, has joined the East Coast Railway as its General Manager. Earlier, he was working as Chief Administrative Officer (Construction) of the Central Railway, Mumbai.



TRIDENT ACADEMY HOLDS UDAYAN-2K23

Bhubaneswar: The Trident Academy of Technology here organised UDAYAN-2K23, an Inter-College Annual Technical Festival that aimed to bring out the creativity and technical skills of participants through various technical and non-technical events from January 23 to 25. The festival was held under the guidance of Dr Sakuntala Mahapatra, Dean (School of Engineering), Chairperson, UDAYAN-2K23. It was inaugurated by Subroto Mukherjee, Dy. General Manager HR, Gannon Dunkerley & Co. and Principal of Trident Academy Dr DN Pattanayak. About 1600 participants from in and outside the college took part in various events.



MAN GETS 25-YR JAIL FOR RAPING PWD MINOR GIRL

Phulbani: The POCSO Court Judge here has sentenced one Babuli Kudei to 25 years in jail and a fine of Rs 25,000 after convicting him in the case of rape of a physically-challenged minor girl. In 2019, the accused had raped the girl when nobody else was in her house. The family member of the girl lodged an FIR at the Sadar PS. Police arrested the accused and forwarded him to court.

GIRL CHILD DAY CELEBRATED IN JAGATSingHPUR

Jagatsinghpur: The National Girl Child Day was celebrated here, the event being inaugurated by CDMO Dr Khetrabasi Dash. Dr Dash said the aim of the celebration was to promote



awareness about the rights of girl children and promote their education, health and nutrition and proper caring. District Programme Manager Chakradhar Jena informed that the girl child ratio in Jagatsinghpur against male counterparts is comparatively more satisfactory than other districts of the State. He urged people to desist from sex determination tests. Swaha Mohanty was felicitated for her success in the Odisha Civil Service Examinations.

PPA LAUNCHES DRAIN CONNECTIVITY SYSTEM

Paradip: Paradip Port Authority (PPA) Chairman PL Haranadh on Wednesday inaugurated the SCADA system which would operate the drain connectivity and septic tanks of JB, JC, CHA and GJAI colonies with sewerage treatment plant No 3 at Bhima Bhoi colony with no engagement of manpower. The waste water would be collected from drain and treated in the treatment plant and reused in sprinkling to suppress the dust and gardening purpose only. During the short supply of water, it would be helpful for sprinkling and gardening and, thus, would reduce the wastage of water.

ADANI FOUNDATION OBSERVES GIRL CHILD DAY

Dhamra: The Adani Foundation observed the 15th National Girl Child Day on Tuesday in its nearby villages. The day was observed giving emphasis on this year's theme "Digital Gen-



eration, Our Generation". A school-specific public rally, with the participation of students, teachers, and Anganwadi Workers was conducted with the slogan "Beti Bachao: Beti Padhao". Community-level awareness on health and hygiene practices among girl children was created by Sanginis of the SuPoshan project.



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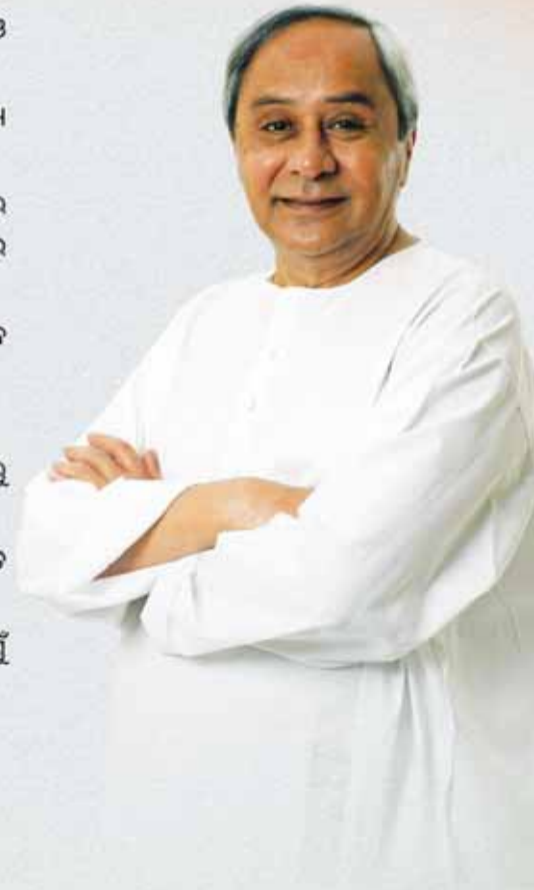
ନୂଆ ସୋପାନରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶା



ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସରକାର

- ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ୭୦ ଲକ୍ଷରୁ ଉର୍ଦ୍ଧ୍ୱ ସ୍ୱାବଲମ୍ବୀ ମହିଳାମାନଙ୍କ ମିଶନ 'ମିଶନ ଶକ୍ତି'କୁ ସଶକ୍ତ କରିବା ପାଇଁ ଆରାମୀ ୫ବର୍ଷ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ୫୦ ହଜାର କୋଟି ଟଙ୍କାର ରଣ ଓ ୧୨୦୦ କୋଟି ଟଙ୍କାର ପୁଅ ରିହାତି ।
- ବିଜୁ ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ କଲ୍ୟାଣ ଯୋଜନାରେ ରାଜ୍ୟ ଭିତରେ ଏବଂ ରାଜ୍ୟ ବାହାରେ ଚିକିତ୍ସିତ ୫୦୦ ପ୍ରମୁଖ ବେଦରକାରୀ ଚିକିତ୍ସାଳୟରେ ପ୍ରତି ମାସରେ ହାରାହାରି ୧୬୫ କୋଟି ଟଙ୍କା ବ୍ୟୟରେ ୭୩ ହଜାର ରୋଗୀ ଉପକୃତ ।
- କ୍ରୀଡ଼ା ଭିତ୍ତିଭୂମିରେ ବ୍ୟାପକ ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ ତଥା କ୍ରୀଡ଼ା ଓ କ୍ରୀଡ଼ାବିତ୍ତୁ ପ୍ରୋତ୍ସାହିତ କରିବାରେ ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଶ୍ରୀଯୁକ୍ତ ନବୀନ ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକଙ୍କ ଆନ୍ତରିକ ଉଦ୍ୟମ ଯୋଗୁଁ ବିଭିନ୍ନ କ୍ରୀଡ଼ା ପାଇଁ ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠା ହୋଇଛି ଅତ୍ୟାଧୁନିକ କ୍ରୀଡ଼ା ଓ ଉତ୍କର୍ଷ କେନ୍ଦ୍ର ।
- 5-T ବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ ରୂପାନ୍ତରଣ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମରେ ରାଜ୍ୟର ପ୍ରାୟ ୪ ହଜାର ହାଇସ୍କୁଲ ରୂପାନ୍ତରିତ । ରୂପାନ୍ତରିତ ବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ ପରିବେଶରେ ନାମଲେଖା ୯୨.୧%କୁ ବୃଦ୍ଧି ।
- ରାଜ୍ୟର ୩୧୩ ବ୍ଲକ୍ରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଆଦର୍ଶ ବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ ଏବଂ କୁଳନେଶ୍ୱରରେ ଉତ୍କର୍ଷ ଆଦର୍ଶ ବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ ସ୍ଥାପନ, ୧ ଲକ୍ଷରୁ ଅଧିକ ଛାତ୍ରଛାତ୍ରୀଙ୍କୁ ଗୁଣାତ୍ମକ ଇଂରାଜୀ ମାଧ୍ୟମ ଶିକ୍ଷା ପ୍ରାପ୍ତ ।
- ଗତ ଦୁଇ ବର୍ଷ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ୧୩ ହଜାରରୁ ଅଧିକ ଶିକ୍ଷକ ପଦବୀ ପୂରଣ ହୋଇଥିବା ବେଳେ ଆଜି ୭୫୪୦ ଶିକ୍ଷକ ପଦବୀ ପୂରଣ ପାଇଁ ପ୍ରସ୍ତୁତ । ଆରମ୍ଭ ।
- ମେକ୍ ଇନ୍ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସମ୍ମିଳନୀ-୨୦୨୨, ନୂଆ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ପାଇଁ ୧୦.୫ ଲକ୍ଷ କୋଟିରୁ ଅଧିକ ପୁଞ୍ଜି ନିବେଶ ପ୍ରସ୍ତାବ, ୧୦.୩୮ ଲକ୍ଷରୁ ଅଧିକ ନିଯୁକ୍ତି ପ୍ରାପ୍ତ ।
- ରାଜ୍ୟର ୧୯ଟି ସହରରେ ୨୪ ଘଣ୍ଟା 'ଡ୍ରିଙ୍କ୍ ଫ୍ରମ୍ ଟ୍ୟାପ୍' ପାନୀୟ ଜଳଯୋଗାଣ ସୁବିଧାର ଶୁଭାରମ୍ଭ ।
- ୨୦୨୪ ସୁଦ୍ଧା ସମସ୍ତ ଗ୍ରାମୀଣ ପରିବାରକୁ ପାଇପ୍ ଯୋଗେ ବିଶୁଦ୍ଧ ପାନୀୟ ଜଳ ଯୋଗାଣ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ।

- ଓଡ଼ିଶାକୁ ଏକ ଅଗ୍ରଣୀ ଏମ୍ଆଇସିଏ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ, ଇକୋ-ଟୁରିଜିମ୍ ଏବଂ କ୍ରୀଡ଼ା ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ ସ୍ଥଳ ଭାବେ ସ୍ଥାନୀୟ କରିବା ପାଇଁ ପ୍ରଣୀତ ହେଲା ନୂଆ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ପର୍ଯ୍ୟଟନ ନୀତି-୨୦୨୨ ।
- ମିଲେଟ୍ ଲୋକପ୍ରିୟତା ପାଇଁ ମିଲେଟ୍ ମିଶନ । ରାଜ୍ୟର ଜନଜାତି ବହୁଳ ୧୫ଟି ଜିଲ୍ଲାର ୮୫ଟି ବ୍ଲକ୍ରେ ମାଣ୍ଡିଆ ଜାତୀୟ ଶସ୍ୟ ଉତ୍ପାଦନ ଏବଂ ରାଜ୍ୟ ଭିତରେ ଓ ବାହାରେ ଏହାର ବ୍ୟବହାରକୁ ଅଗ୍ରାଧିକାର ।
- ମିଲେଟ୍ ପାଇଁ ସର୍ବନିମ୍ନ ସହାୟକ ମୂଲ୍ୟ ନିର୍ଦ୍ଧାରଣ କରିବାରେ ଦେଶର ପ୍ରଥମ ରାଜ୍ୟ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ।
- ଏମ୍.ଏସ୍.ଏମ୍.ଇ ବିକାଶ ନୀତି ୨୦୨୨ ପ୍ରଣୟନ ଫଳରେ ରାଜ୍ୟରେ ୨୪ ହଜାର ୩୪୧ କୋଟିରୁ ଅଧିକ ପୁଞ୍ଜି ବିନିଯୋଗ ସହିତ ୫ ଲକ୍ଷରୁ ଅଧିକ ଏମ୍.ଏସ୍.ଏମ୍.ଇ ସ୍ଥାପିତ । ସ୍ୱର୍ଚ୍ଚ ଅପ୍ ଶ୍ରେତ୍ତରେ ଅଗ୍ରଣୀ ରାଜ୍ୟ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ।
- ପୂର୍ବ ଭାରତର ନୂତନ ଆଇ.ଟି. ହବ୍ ଓଡ଼ିଶା : ଦକ୍ଷତା ବିକାଶ ଓ ନିଯୁକ୍ତି କ୍ଷେତ୍ରକୁ ମିଳିବ ନୂଆ ଦିଶା ।
- ରାଜ୍ୟରେ ଉନ୍ନେତ ହେଲା ଠିକା ନିଯୁକ୍ତି ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା ।
- ରାଜ୍ୟ ଖାଦ୍ୟ ସୁରକ୍ଷା ଯୋଜନାରେ ୧୮୫ କୋଟି ଟଙ୍କା ବ୍ୟୟରେ ୨୦୨୩ ଜାନୁଆରୀରୁ ଡିସେମ୍ବର ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ହିତାଧିକାରୀଙ୍କୁ ମୁଣ୍ଡ ପିଛା ୫ କେଜି ଚାଉଳ ଯୋଗାଣ ।
- ଶ୍ରୀମନ୍ଦିର ପରିକ୍ରମା ପ୍ରକଳ୍ପ, ଏକାମ୍ର କ୍ଷେତ୍ର ଓ ଚାରାଚାରିଶା ପୀଠର ବିକାଶ ସହିତ ରାଜ୍ୟର ଅନ୍ୟାନ୍ୟ ଐତିହ୍ୟ ସ୍ଥଳର ପୁନରୁଦ୍ଧାରକୁ ଅଗ୍ରାଧିକାର ।
- ରାଜ୍ୟ ସରକାରଙ୍କ 'ବିନା ଜୀବନ ହାନିରେ ବିପର୍ଯ୍ୟୟ ପରିଚାଳନା' ନୀତି ଯୋଗୁଁ ବିପର୍ଯ୍ୟୟ ପରିଚାଳନା କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ମଡେଲ ବିଶ୍ୱ ପାଇଁ ଉଦାହରଣ ।
- ଉପକୂଳ ଅଞ୍ଚଳ ପାଇଁ ସ୍ୱତନ୍ତ୍ର ବିପର୍ଯ୍ୟୟ ସହନଶୀଳ ଯୋଜନା ।
- ଦେଶର ସର୍ବନିମ୍ନ ୦.୯% ବେକାରି ହାର ଓଡ଼ିଶାରେ ।



ସୂଚନା ଓ ଲୋକସମ୍ପର୍କ ବିଭାଗ



SC verdicts to be had in 4 bhashas from today: CJI

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In a first, the Supreme Court has decided to make available judgments into regional languages. To start with , the judgments will be translated into four languages — Hindi, Tamil, Gujarati and Odia.

Speaking at the inauguration of Delhi High Court's Online e- Inspection Software, Chief Justice of India (CJI) Dhananjaya Y Chandrachud said on Tuesday "English is not a comprehensible language to 99.99 per cent of the citizens" in the country.

The CJI said the apex court will operationalise the part of the electronic-Supreme Court Reports (e-SCR) project for making available verdicts in some scheduled languages free of cost.

"We have the e-SCR (PROJECT), which now has nearly 34,000 judgments and an elastic search facility. We also now have 1,091 judgments in regional languages which will be launched tomorrow on the Republic Day," the CJI said.

"We have 21 in Odia, 14 in Marathi, four in Assamese... 17 in Kannada... 29 in Malayalam, three in Nepali, four in Punjabi, 52 already in Tamil, 28 in Telugu, and three in Urdu," he said, adding that the apex court was on "a mission" to provide its judgments in all scheduled languages.

The Chief Justice has constituted a committee headed by Justice AS Oka for translation of top court's judgments into regional languages. .

Besides Justice Oka, the committee consists of Justice Suraj Govindaraj of Karnataka High Court; - Sharmistha from National Informatics Centre; - Mitesh Kapra from IIT Delhi; - Vivek Raghavan from Ek step foundation; - Supriya Shankaran from Agami.

"I have constituted a committee chaired by Justice AS Oka, a dynamic judge of the Supreme Court, and the first step taken is to ensure that the Supreme Court judgments will at least be translated in four languages; Hindi, Tamil, Gujarati and Oriya," the CJI said. There are 22 languages in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution including Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Konkani,



Malayalam, Manipuri, Marathi, Nepali, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, Bodo, Santhali, Maithili and Dogri. The verdicts, as part of the e-SCR project, are available on the apex court website, its mobile app and on the judgment portal of the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG).

The top court, on January 2, had announced the launch of the electronic Supreme Court Reports (e-SCR) project to provide free access to its about 34,000 judgments to lawyers, law students and the common public.

"This is a free service available for lawyers across the country. Young juniors do not have to pay. There is an elastic search facility. We are improving upon the search engine by incorporating the following, distinguished and incorporated judgments in a few weeks...," the CJI had said.

Lawyers, while arguing in courts, refer to the reported judgments supporting their matters by using law journals including the 'Supreme Court Reports'.

The Electronic Supreme Court Reports (e-SCR) project was an initiative to provide the digital version of the apex court's judgments in the manner as they are reported in the official law report — 'Supreme Court Reports'.

The Supreme Court has developed a search engine with the help of the National Informatics Centre comprising elastic search technique in database of e-SCR and the search facility in e-SCR provides for free text search, search within search, case type and case year search, judge search, year and volume search and bench strength search.

901 police, paramilitary personnel bag service medals on R-Day eve

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Wednesday announced service medals to a total of 901 police and paramilitary personnel on the eve of the Republic Day, 2023.

"A total of 901 Police personnel have been awarded Police Medals on the occasion of the Republic Day, 2023. The Police Medal for Gallantry (PMG) has been awarded to 140, the President's Police Medal for Distinguished Service (PPM) to 93 and Police Medal for Meritorious Service (PM) has been awarded to 668," the Union Home Ministry said in a statement.

Among the majority of the 140 gallantry awards, 80 personnel from Left Wing Extremism or Naxal-affected areas and 45 personnel from Jammu and Kashmir region are being awarded for their gallant action, it said.

Among the personnel receiving Gallantry Awards, 48 are from Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), the maximum among all the forces, 31 are from Maharashtra, 25 are from Jammu and Kashmir and Kashmir police, nine from Jharkhand, seven are each from Delhi, Chhattisgarh and BSF and the remaining from the other States/Union Territories and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) of armed forces of the Union.

The Police Medal for Gallantry (PMG) is awarded on the grounds of Conspicuous Gallantry in saving life and property, or in preventing crime or arresting criminals. The President's Police Medal for Distinguished Service (PPM) is awarded for a special distinguished record in Police Service and the Police Medal for Meritorious Service (PM) is awarded for valuable service characterized by resource and devotion to duty. No President's Police Medal for Gallantry (PPMG), the top category of bravery decorations among the police forces, has been awarded.

A Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) jawan who "overpowered" his armed colleague after the latter allegedly killed four personnel at a power plant located in Bihar in 2017 has been awarded the police medal for gallantry on the occasion of 74th Republic Day.

Officials said this is one of the rare times when a PMG has been given to



a personnel who showed courage to end a fragging incident. Head constable (HC) Rajesh Singh was posted at the Nabinagar Power Generation Company Ltd (NPGCL) in Bihar's Aurangabad district on January 12, 2017 when his fellow constable Balveer Singh allegedly opened fire from his rifle and killed four colleagues.

Constable Balveer Singh reached the roof top of the new barracks in the campus and was "challenged" by Rajesh Singh, who was unarmed, the CISF said in a statement.

"Knowing that constable Balveer Singh was in a fit of rage and had a deadly assault weapon with him and it could result in loss of his life, Rajesh Singh with sheer sense of determination and to save human lives, confronted Balveer Singh and snatched the INSAS rifle and threw it, thus disarming him," the force said.

He also overpowered constable Balveer Singh and pinned him to the ground, who was later handed over to the local police, the CISF said. Rajesh Singh's "act of valour and courage" saved many precious lives, at a time when others were running to save their lives, the CISF said.

The PMG, his citation said, is being awarded for his "conspicuous gallant action, courage and devotion to duty during major indiscriminate firing incident while he was posted at CISF unit NPGCL Nabinagar at the time of incident."

The CISF unit is deployed at the NPGCL, a wholly-owned subsidiary of NTPC Limited, to provide it with anti-terror cover from Maoists and similar extremist elements.

Head constable Rajesh Singh is currently posted at the CISF unit that guards the ISRO Telemetry Tracking and Command Network (ISTRAC) in Uttar Pradesh's Lucknow.

Prez gives 6 Kirti Chakras, four conferred posthumously



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu has conferred six Kirti Chakras, including four posthumous and 15 Shaurya Chakras, including two posthumous for gallantry on the occasion of the Republic Day. Kirti Chakra is the second highest peacetime gallantry medal while Shaurya Chakra is the third highest.

Major Shubhang of Dogra Regiment was awarded Kirti Chakra for his gallant action in April last year while fighting terrorists in Budgam, Kashmir. He sustained bullet wounds in his shoulder during the encounter.

Naik Jitendra Singh of Rajput Regiment was awarded Kirti Chakra for his action while in anti-terrorist operation in Pulwama district of Kashmir in April last year. Despite getting injured, he managed to neutralize two ultras.

The seven Shaurya Chakras awardees include Major Aditya Bhadauria, Captain Arun Kumar, Captain Yudhvir Singh, Captain Rakesh T R, Naik Jasbir Singh (posthumous), Lance Naik Vikas Choudhary and Constable Mudasir Ahmed Sheikh (posthumous) of Jammu and Kashmir police. All the medals were awarded for actions in Jammu and Kashmir.

The President in all has approved 412 Gallantry awards and other defence decorations to Armed Forces personnel and others on the eve of 74th Republic Day.

SCO chaired by India invites Pak in FMs' meet; no reply as yet

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Even as relations between the two countries are frosty, India, as the Chair of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), has invited Pakistan Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandial to participate in the SCO Foreign Ministers' and Chief Justices' meetings. However, Pakistan is yet to respond to the invitation extended through the Indian High Commission in Islamabad recently.

The Foreign Ministers' conclave is scheduled to take place on May 4-5 in Goa and if Bilawal Bhutto accepts the invitation it will the first such visit by a Pakistan foreign minister to India since 2011.

Then Foreign Minister Hina Rabbani Khar had then visited India. Incidentally, the last Indian external affairs minister to visit Pakistan was Sushma Swaraj in 2015. Now External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar accompanied her as Foreign Secretary.

India took over the chairmanship of the nine-member grouping last September and will host the key ministerial meetings and summit in Goa in May. New Delhi has also extended the invitation to Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. It will be there second visit to India as both the ministers are expected to take part in G-20 Foreign

Ministers' meet on March 1-2. The invitation to Pakistan comes at a time when its Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif last week called for a dialogue with Prime Minister Narendra Modi to discuss all contentions issues.

However, Prime Minister's Office in Islamabad later said till Article 370 is restored in Jammu and Kashmir talks cannot be held.

Moreover, the Indian invitation came days after Bilawal Bhutto's controversial remarks against Prime Minister Modi in the United Nations session.

The SCO also includes China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Invites have also been sent to the foreign ministers of China and Russia along with the other Central Asian countries.

Iran is the newest member of the organization and, under India's presidency, will, for the first time, attend the grouping's meeting as a full member. Its last meeting was held in Samarkand, Uzbekistan.

While ties are not normal between India and Pakistan, its officials have visited each other's country to participate in the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) meetings under the aegis of the SCO.

However, Pakistan will not participate in the SCO Film Festival to be held in Mumbai later this month.

While all countries have sent entries, Pakistan is the only country that did not send any film for screening in the group's third such film festival.



UP Govt yet to announce State advisory price for sugarcane



PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Even as the current cane crushing season 2022-23 is close to halfway mark, the Uttar Pradesh government is yet to announce the state advisory price (SAP) for sugarcane. The sugar mills are paying the cane farmers as per the SAP fixed for the last cane crushing season 2021-22. "Nothing can be ruled out," said UP Cane Minister Laxmi Narayan Chaudhary, deepening the suspense over the delay in announcement of a revised cane price.

He said that a meeting would be convened soon to take a formal decision on the SAP. The issue has been attracting political colours with the opposition parties including the Samajwadi Party-Rashtriya Lok Dal combine attacking the Bharatiya Janata Party government for not announcing the SAP.

Official sources indicated that SAP for sugarcane was unlikely to be announced in current crushing season. The sources said that a hike was expected in 2023-24 crushing season, ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha election. The SAP for sugarcane in Uttar Pradesh is third highest in country after Haryana and Punjab. Sugar mills started cane crushing in November and are making pay-

ment to farmers according to the SAP decided for 2021-22 season. "If the government still decides to increase SAP over next few days, it will be announced and farmers will also be paid arrears for revised rates," said a Sugar Industry and Cane Development department official.

In 2021, the UP Government had announced a hike in the SAP for sugarcane in September, over a month before the crushing season started and ahead of the Uttar Pradesh assembly elections that were held in March 2022.

The UP government had then announced an increase of Rs 25 per quintal in the SAP. After the hike, the revised SAP was Rs 350 per quintal for the early variety of sugarcane, Rs 340 per quintal for the general variety and Rs 335 per quintal rejected variety.

In December 2022, a delegation of Bharatiya Kisan Union (Apolitical), a farmers' organisation, had met Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in Lucknow and urged him to announce the SAP for sugarcane with a hike of Rs 50 per quintal vis-a-vis the SAP of the previous season.

Rashtriya Lok Dal, which counts west UP's sugarcane farmers among its support base, has launched a 'Kisan Sandesh Abhiyan' to send letters signed by sugarcane farmers to Chief Minister demanding announcement of SAP. "There is a target to send over one lakh letters to Chief Minister and almost 10,000 letters have already been sent. The state government must clarify at which rate it is purchasing the crop from farmers," said RLD spokesperson Anil Dube.

Youth will be biggest beneficiaries of developed India, says Modi

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Wednesday the youth will be the biggest beneficiaries of a developed India and the biggest responsibility to build it also rests on their shoulders.

Addressing National Cadet Corps (NCC) cadets and National Service Scheme (NSS) volunteers who will be part of the Republic Day parade, Modi said they represent the country's aspirations and dreams in the ongoing "amrit kaal".

He said there are a lot of opportunities for youngsters in the country as India is working for the future of the entire world in sectors ranging from space to environment. "The world sees a new future for itself in India's achievements," Modi added.

He said it was encouraging to see youngsters taking part in various programmes in increasing numbers.

Referring to an event on Parakram Diwas to mark Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's birth anniversary, he said it was the first time that many children dressed up as Netaji had come to the prime minister's residence. "The mantra of 'Jai Hind' inspires one and all," he said.

The NCC and NSS link the young generations with national goals and aspirations, he said, adding that his government has been working to encourage and expand their activities. Interacting with the youth is always special for him, he added.

He noted that different challenges come up in border and coastal areas and special training is being given so that



the youth can play the role of "first responders", if needed. The prime minister said his government has been working on making border areas vibrant by boosting development and creating various facilities there.

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Wednesday arrested Deepak Ranga, the main shooter in the attack on Punjab Police Intelligence Headquarters in Mohali in May 2022. Ranga was nabbed from Gorakhpur early on Wednesday. He has been absconding since May.

Ranga of Surakpur village in Jhajjar district of Haryana, is a close associate of Canada-based gangster-turned-terrorist Lakhbir Singh Sandhu alias Landa and Pakistan-based gangster-turned-terrorist Harvinder Singh Sandhu alias Rinda, the NIA said in a statement.

"Apart from his involvement in the May RPG attack, Deepak has been involved in a number of other violent terrorist and criminal

offences, including violent killings. He has been actively receiving terror funds and logistical support from Rinda and Landa," it said.

The NIA had registered the case suo moto on September 20, 2022 after it emerged that the terrorist outfits and terror elements based abroad were operating in tandem with leaders and members of organized criminal gangs operating in northern States of the country to commit targeted killings and violent criminal acts, it said.

It had also emerged that the terror-gangster-drug smuggler network was also engaged in smuggling terrorist hardware, such as arms, ammunition explosives and IEDs across borders through a widespread inter-State network of gun runners, illegal arms and ammunition manufacturers, suppliers and explosive traffickers.

Cong, AAP question Centre's clean chit to China

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Congress and Aam Aadmi Party have questioned the Centre's "clean chit" to China after a new report revealed that India has lost access to 26 of 65 patrolling points in Eastern Ladakh.

"Modi Government's continued denial of illegal occupation and construction of infrastructure by the Chinese has 'endangered' our borders," Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge wrote in a tweet sharing the news report. Attacking the PM, the Congress chief said,

"Your 'clean chit' to China is costing the nation's territorial Integrity."

Kharge further said that PM Modi must take nation and Parliament into confidence over this issue. Congress has been asking the government to take concrete steps over alleged Chinese incursions in various border areas, including in the Northeastern state of Arunachal Pradesh. The party had accused the government of running away from a debate on Chinese issue in the recently concluded Winter Session of the Parliament.

Addressing a Republic Day function organised by the Delhi

government, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal alleged that China is procuring more weapons to use against India with the very money it earns doing trade with us.

"We read about Chinese aggression on our borders as how the Chinese have encroached upon some of our territory near the border. Our soldiers put in all their might to fight the Chinese on the border.

It is now the duty of all citizens and all governments to stand shoulder to shoulder with our soldiers and support them. It is our duty to send a strong message to China against its

aggression. It is our duty to boycott China, look into its eyes and make it clear that we will not compromise on national security," Kejriwal said. He also lamented that over the last few years, the country has seen a rise in trade with China despite its forays on the borders.

Media reports quoting a note PD Nitya, the Superintendent of Police of Leh, Ladakh's main city said out of 65 patrolling points between Parakoram pass to Chumur India's presence is lost in 26 PPs (i.e. PP no. 5-17, 24-32, 37, due to restrictive or no patrolling by the Indian security forces.



People walk during light snowfall on the outskirts of Srinagar on Wednesday. Light to moderate snowfall was recorded at most places of Kashmir while the higher reaches witnessed heavy snowfall

PTI Photo

Flyers entitled to 75% of ticket refund from Feb

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Air passengers will now be entitled to get 75 per cent of the ticket cost refund from the airline whose domestic flight tickets have been downgraded.

For downgrading of international tickets, the reimbursement amount will vary from 30 per cent to 75 per cent of the ticket costs, including taxes, depending on the distance covered by the particular flight. The directive comes at a time when there have been several complaints about airlines such as Air India downgrading



passengers to a lower class than the one they booked because of issues such as unserviceable seats. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Wednesday

informed that it has amended facilities to be provided to passengers by airlines due to denied boarding, cancellation of flights, and delays in flights. "The new norms will be

effective from February 15. This step is taken to strengthen the rights of air travellers affected by the downgrading of their tickets, it said.

"The amendment will allow the passenger, who is downgraded involuntarily and is carried in a class lower than that for which the ticket is purchased, to be reimbursed by the airline.

For the downgrade of a domestic flight ticket, the passenger concerned will get 75 per cent of the cost of ticket, including taxes, from the airline. In the case of a downgrade of an international ticket, a passenger will receive 30 per cent

of the cost of ticket, including taxes, for flights flying 1,500 kilometres or less. Inclusive of taxes, the amount will be 50 per cent if the flight covers a distance between 1,500 and 3,500 kilometres," the DGCA said in a statement. "The reimbursement amount will be 75 per cent of the cost of ticket, including taxes, for flights covering more than 3,500 kilometres," it said. In December last year, DGCA had proposed that airlines should have to refund the full value of such tickets, including taxes, and also that affected passengers will be flown free of cost in the next available class.

K'taka HC okays marriage of bride aged below 18

PTI ■ BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka has held that a marriage under the Hindu Marriage Act cannot be termed void even if the bride is below 18 years of age.

A lower court had declared a marriage void under Section 11 of the Act but the High Court pointed out that this section does not include the condition of the bride being 18.

Overturning the Family Court order, the High Court Bench of Justice Alok Aradhe and Justice S Vishwajith Shetty, in their judgement, on January 12, said, "Section 11 of the Act deals with void marriages. The Act provides that any marriage solemnised after the commencement of the Act shall be void and the court may on the petition presented by either of the parties thereto, declare the same to be nullity if it contravenes the provisions of Clauses (i), (iv) and (v) of Section 5 of the Act. Thus, it is evident that clause (iii) of Section 5 of the Act, which provides that the bride has to be 18 years of age at the time of marriage, has been omitted from the purview of Section 11 of the Act."

Setting aside the trial court order passed on January 8, 2015, the High Court said, "The trial court has, however, failed to appreciate the afore-



said aspect of the matter"

Sheela from Chennapatna Taluk had approached the High Court in 2015 against the order of the Family Court.

She had married Manjunath on June 15, 2012. After the wedding, Manjunath realised that Sheela's date of birth was September 6, 1995 and she was a minor at the time of marriage. So, he filed a petition before the Family Court to declare the marriage null and void under Section 11 of the Hindu Marriage Act.

The Family Court held that on the date of marriage, Sheela was 16 years, 11 months and 8 days old and had not completed 18 years of age as was required under Clause-3 of Section-5 of the HMA. It, therefore, declared the marriage void under Section 11 of the Act.

However, her appeal before the High Court was admitted as it found that Clause-3 of Section-5 was not applicable to Section 11 which deals with void marriages.

MNM will support Congress in Erode East bypoll in TN: Kamal Haasan

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Actor Kamal Haasan-led Makkal Needhi Maiam (MNM) on Wednesday extended unconditional support to Congress candidate EVKS Elangovan for the February 27 Erode East by-poll, saying it was a "moment of national importance" to fight for the common cause of joining hands against "communal forces."

Elangovan, senior Congress leader and former union minister, is the candidate of the DMK-led Secular Progressive Alliance (SPA). The bypoll was necessitated due to the recent death of sitting local legislator and his son Thirumahan Everaa.

DMK President and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin thanked Haasan for extending support to the SPA.

MLA's ₹6K per vote remark: Cong files plaint against BJP prez, Karnataka CM,

PTI ■ BENGALURU

The Congress in Karnataka on Wednesday lodged a complaint with the police against BJP national president J P Nadda, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai and MLA Ramesh Jarkiholi levelling allegations of offering bribes to woo voters in the ensuing assembly polls in the State.

State Congress President D K Shivakumar, legislature party leader Siddaramaiah who are signatories of the complaint have requested the police to register a case and conduct an inquiry.

The complaint comes following an alleged announcement of ₹6,000 per vote in the assembly elections due in May, by Gokak BJP MLA Jarkiholi.

1 killed, 2 injured in group clash in Azamgarh

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

One person was killed and two were critically injured when former village head Shiv Shankar alias Bhurey Singh and his henchmen opened indiscriminate fire on rival Bhim Singh and his supporters at a panchayat in Dakshin ka Pura locality in Azamgarh district.

Azamgarh's Superintendent of Police Anurag Arya said that a dispute between two groups took an ugly turn during a panchayat convened to decide the beneficiaries of a government housing scheme and Bhurey

and his supporters opened indiscriminate fire.

"Himanshu Singh (32), Pradeep Singh Bhim (40) and Tavendra Singh Munna (38) suffered bullet injuries. They were rushed to the district hospital. In view of the critical condition of Himanshu, doctors referred him to a hospital in Varanasi where he died," the district police chief said.

"Five persons have been taken into custody so far. Four teams have been deputed to arrest Bhurey and his accomplices, who managed to escape after opening fire during the panchayat," the SP said.

Man throws his 4 kids into canal over spat with wife

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A man has been arrested for allegedly throwing his four children into a canal following an argument with his wife, sources said on Wednesday.

The 12-year-old daughter, whom the man flung from a 30-foot high bridge, not only managed to swim to safety but also rescued two of her siblings. However, the fourth child, a five-year-old and youngest of the lot, is still missing.

The accused, Pushpendra Kumar, after a domestic dispute, dropped his wife at her father's place. On the way back home, he threw his four kids into the 15-foot-deep canal.

Body of boy missing for 22 days found in sugarcane field

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a suspected case of kidnapping and murder, the body of a 4-year-old boy, missing for the last 22 days, was found lying in a sugarcane field in Gangoh police station area of Saharanpur.

According to a police official, after getting information about a body from the villagers, they rushed to the sugarcane field in Khanpur Gurjar village under Gangoh police station of Saharanpur district on Tuesday evening and recovered the body.

UNNAO RAPE CASE

Victim seeks cancellation of Sengar's interim bail, HC calls for reply

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi High Court on Wednesday sought the response of the CBI and expelled BJP leader Kuldeep Singh Sengar, who is serving a life term for raping a minor girl in Uttar Pradesh's Unnao in 2017, on a plea by the victim seeking cancellation of his interim bail.

Sengar has been granted interim bail to attend his daughter's wedding. His sentence has been suspended from January 27 to February 10 in the rape case and in another for which he is serving 10 years'



imprisonment for the death of the rape victim's father in custody.

The victim, who was present in court, submitted in her application that there is a threat perception to her and her family and she has received information that Sengar is allegedly likely to harm them after being released.

Antony's son quits Cong in Kerala

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The resignation of Anil Antony, son of veteran Congress leader AK Antony from all party positions comes at a time when the CPI(M) and the Indian National Congress were publicly screening the controversial BBC documentary on Gujarat riots across Kerala. Anil Antony, leader of the digital wing of the Congress resigned from all positions except his primary membership of the party.

While the octogenarian Antony, former Chief Minister as well as a Union Minister refused to comment about his son's decision.

Bodies of 7 of family found in Pune river: 5 relatives arrested for murder

PTI ■ PUNE

An investigation into the death of seven members of a family, whose bodies were found in a riverbed in Pune, has indicated they were murdered allegedly by their rela-

tives over a previous incident involving the death of the son of one of the accused, a police official said on Wednesday.

Mohan Pawar (45), his wife Sangita Mohan (40), their daughter Rani Fulware (24), son-in-law Shyam Fulware

(28), and three children aged between three and seven years were found dead in the Bheema riverbed near Pargaon bridge in Duand tehsil of Maharashtra's Pune district between January 18 and January 24.

Police have arrested five

CBI unearths another 153 fake bank accounts in WB's cow smuggling case

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

As a part of its investigation process into the multi-crore cow smuggling case the Central Bureau of Investigation on Wednesday unearthed another lot of 153 fake bank accounts opened in the names of villagers who had no inkling of their presence.

All the accounts opened in the Birbhum district Cooperative Bank were frozen by the agency. Early this month the CBI had grubbed up 177 similar accounts. The Wednesday's expose take the total number of fake accounts to 330 CBI sources said adding there were possibilities of many more fake accounts getting



exposed.

On whether the accounts could be related to cow smuggling case — that has already seen Trinamool Congress national executive member and Birbhum strongman Anubrata Mondal go to jail — sources said most of the fake accounts had transactions with two rice mills linked to Mondal.

Villagers in whose names the accounts were opened and

who were interrogated regarding the transactions said they had no idea of the accounts having existed. Some villagers said that though they had accounts in their names they were so poor that their savings hardly crossed three-figure mark.

When asked as to how the accounts came into existence in their names some villagers said that they had never gone to the banks, neither shared their personal details with anyone save on the occasions when they gave away the copies of their Aadhar and Voter ID cards to local panchayat or ruling party members for the purpose of receiving wages under MNREGA.



Tourists ride a jet ski, fitted with the national flag, on the eve of Republic Day on Wednesday

PTI

Govt committed to uplift of disabled, bringing them in mainstream of society, says Yogi

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath stated that the State Government is working with determination to empower the disabled and bring them into the mainstream of society and development.

On Wednesday, during the Janata Darshan programme organised at the Mahant Digvijaynath Smriti Auditorium of the Gorakhnath Temple in Gorakhpur, the chief minister said, "Divyangjan need encouragement and cooperation more than sympathy. The administration and departmental officers should make sure that the appropriate resources, equipment and cer-



tificates are available on a priority basis to divyangjan."

Over 300 people came to meet the chief minister at the Janata Darshan programme. The chief minister assured them that every problem would be resolved in a quick and satisfactory manner.

Some Divyangjan came to the Janata Darshan to request a tricycle, while Divyang with

mental problems and their family members came to ask for issuance of a certificate.

After learning of their issues, the chief minister gave direction to quickly provide tricycles or motorised tricycles to the needy individuals. Along with this, he gave instructions that no obstacles of any type should stand in the way of giving certificates to people with mental disabilities.

On the requests of several visitors for financial assistance for the treatment of serious diseases, the chief minister said that funds would be provided as soon as the estimates were ready. "No one's treatment will be hampered due to lack of money," Chief Minister Yogi

asserted.

He instructed that all revenue and police-related matters be resolved with complete transparency and fairness, stressing that injustice should not be done to anyone. "If someone is encroaching on another person's property forcibly, then he should be taught a lesson according to the law," he said.

The chief minister stated that victims should be treated with compassion and should be assisted.

Along with blessing the children who had come with some complainants, the chief minister also gave them chocolates as an encouragement to study hard.

SC asks CBI, Guj why they want activist Teesta, her husband back in jail

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday questioned the CBI and the Gujarat government as to why they want to send social activist Teesta Setalvad and her husband Javed Anand back in jail after they have been out for over seven years on anticipatory bail.

A bench of Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul, Abhay S Oka and BV Nagarathna said, "Question is how long can you keep someone in custody. Seven years have passed since anticipatory bail was granted. You want to send her back to custody." Advocate Rajat Nair, appearing for the CBI and the Gujarat government said some additional material needed to be placed before the court with regard to the cases and, therefore, four weeks time may be given.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal and advocate Aparna Bhat, appearing for Setalvad and her



husband Anand, said in one of the proceedings in which the CBI has come in appeal, anticipatory bail was granted following which a charge sheet was filed and after that regular bail was granted to her.

He said since a regular bail was granted, the appeal of the probe agency against anticipatory bail does not survive.

Nair said this had happened in one case but there are more than one case against her and requested the court to grant him four weeks to place additional material on record.

"A bench of two judges has referred this matter to a larger bench and has framed questions which need to be decided by this court," Nair said.



Ajmer Dargah Sharif is illuminated during the urs festival at the shrine of Sufi saint Hazrat Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti, in Ajmer on Wednesday

PTI

Cong begging regional parties for crowds for Bharat Jodo Yatra in J&K: Azad-led DAP

PTI ■ JAMMU

Alleging that the Congress is "begging" for crowds from regional parties for the success of the Bharat Jodo Yatra in Jammu and Kashmir, the Democratic Azad Party (DAP) headed by Ghulam Nabi Azad on Wednesday said the local leadership of the national party are misleading Rahul Gandhi on the ground reality.

The DAP's remarks came a day after Gandhi said 90 per cent of Azad's colleagues have returned to the Congress fold and now he has been left alone.

"The Congress leader is misled by the people sur-

rounding him about the facts and ground situation. The reality is that the DAP has white washed Congress in J-K," DAP general secretary and former minister R S Chib said in a statement here.

Referring to former deputy chief minister Tara Chand and former MLA Balwan Singh who returned to the Congress, Chib said they, along with former minister Manohar Lal Sharma, were expelled from the party by the DAP chairman.

"While one (Sharma) who holds the constituency later re-joined the DAP, the remaining two have no political constituency," he claimed.

Window of opportunity

India has invited Pakistan Foreign Minister for SCO meeting may not result may break the ice

India inviting Pakistan Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Chief Justice Umar Atta Bandial for the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) meeting in Goa has hit the headlines. The SCO Foreign Ministers' meeting is likely to be held in the first week of May. Though officials have made it clear that the invitation sent to Bhutto Zardari is a "routine matter" as India is the current chair of SCO, it has attracted considerable interest. This is mainly because of Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's recent conciliatory remarks vis-à-vis India and his desire to hold talks with India. He said that he had asked the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to facilitate the negotiations. The Pakistan Prime Minister's Office later brought in a caveat—that India must restore Jammu and Kashmir's special status—but it is widely believed that this was the result of the intervention of the deep state. It is a well-known fact that the Pakistani deep state remains wedded to the jihadist ideal of destroying India. A lot many factors ensure that the ideal is poignantly felt and zealously acted upon: revenge for the defeat in the 1971 Indo-Pak War, resulting in an inglorious surrender and dismemberment of the nation; Islamisation, which began under Zia-ul-Haq in the 1980s, and gained depth and breadth in Pakistani society and culture subsequently; birth and development of the terror factory with its various stakeholders entrenched in the Army, government, society, culture, and civil society. Even the

Oxford-educated Imran Khan ended up with the sobriquet 'Taliban Khan.' In such a socio-cultural milieu, it will always be difficult to even find, let alone have dialogue with, people in the Pakistani establishment who are sensible enough to talk sense and courageous enough to walk the talk. Such is the climate of opinion that anything reasonable attracts flak and obnoxious gets applause. Unsurprisingly, Pakistani leaders regularly indulge in loose talk and make deplorable remarks. Last month, for instance, Bilawal Bhutto called Prime Minister Narendra Modi "the butcher of Gujarat." This is not how foreign ministers talk about the heads of governments of other countries. But then in Pakistan politicians are always mindful of the reaction of the all-powerful Army, which carries out coups, installs and deposes governments. Imran Khan's rise and fall are examples of generals' intervention; they ensured that he won the election and, when he became defiant, kicked him out of power. Pakistani politicians' plight is best summarized in an old Hindi film song by Mukesh: Mujhe raat din yeh khyal hai, kahin woh nazar se gira na de... Therefore, to expect that the visit of Bilawal Bhutto (if it happens, for Islamabad may decide to send the junior foreign minister) would result in a thaw in the bilateral relations would be excessive optimism. Yet, the visit does open a window of opportunity for both nations to have meaningful dialogue.

PICTALK



A man walks with sheep during light snowfall on the outskirts of Srinagar

PTI

Kerala govt's U-turn

Despite Centre's rejection the Kerala govt wants to go ahead with the controversial Silver Line project

The Kerala Government which called off the Semi High Speed Silver Line Rail Project connecting Kasaragod in the north and Thiruvananthapuram in the south has made a U-turn from its earlier stance and has decided to approach the Centre for permission for the controversial rail route which generated massive protests across the State. While delivering the customary address to the first session of this year's Legislative Assembly on Monday, Governor Arif Mohammed Khan announced that the Detailed Project Report of Silver Line has been approved by the State Government and submitted to the Ministry of Railways for final approval. But what he did not tell in the speech was the Centre's rejection of the proposal citing issues like ecology, environment and apprehension expressed by the public. The State administration loses nothing if it sees the writing on the wall and calls off the project which has drawn widespread public ire and resistance from thousands of people who would be shunted out of their homes and farm lands for acquisition of land. The Governor's announcement that the State Government would bid seriously for the Angamali-Sabari Rail Project.



The move to go ahead with the Angamali-Sabari Rail Project for the benefit of Lord Ayyappa devotees is a retrograde and regressive measures. Hundreds of people were shocked by the announcement because the State Government has not acquired the land for the implementation of the Railway Line except installing stones along the proposed route and that too without the permission of the land owners. A cabal consisting of railway contractors, land sharks and drug peddlers are reportedly behind the initiative to lay the Sabari rail track to ensure the illegal traffic of high quality marijuana cultivated in the dense forests of the Western Ghats to the outside world, according to B V Kumar, who headed the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence for years and had led many operations against drug traffickers. The Kerala Government has failed time and again to focus on infrastructure projects which are essential for the State's development. Rail journey in the State is a harrowing experience as most of the services between Thiruvananthapuram and Kasaragod are delayed by hours because of outdated signal system and worn-out tracks. The Governor's speech stands out for its rhetoric and absence of concrete proposals. The CPI(M) has disappointed the electorate which re-elected the party to power. People in the State need a better deal.

Unearthing the root of the disaster

If plundering of hill is not stopped, disasters like in Joshimath are bound to happen in the fragile ecosystem of the lower Himalayas.

The fragile Himalayan mountains of Uttarakhand in the town of Joshimath in Chamoli district, located at an altitude of 6,150 feet, is famous as a gateway to Badrinath, one of the holy shrines 'Char Dhams' as well as the Sikh pilgrimage center at Hemkund Sahib, skiing attraction of Auli and the 'Valley of Flowers' UNESCO World Heritage site, is in news for wrong reasons - it is sinking rapidly all due to human-induced causes. On January 11, 2023, 723 houses in all the nine wards of the town had developed major or minor cracks on the floors, ceilings, and walls. Consequently, 145 families have been moved to safer locations. Joshimath has a population of 23,000 and is heavily built, with hotels, resorts, and a busy market catering to tourists, pilgrims, trekkers, and army and Indo-Tibetan border Police (ITBP) personnel. It emerged as a place of strategic importance in 1962 because it leads to villages along the Indo-China border and falls en route to Barahoti, a disputed territory along the border.

As per surveys conducted by experts, Joshimath falls in Zone V, India's highest-risk seismic zonation scheme and situated between two thrusts, the Main Central Thrust (MCT) and the Vaikrita Thrust (VT) and occupies a seismically active terrain. The town is highly active in terms of slope mobility because it is built on the deposits of an old landslide which means that the slopes can be destabilized even by slight triggers. Climatically, it lies in a region that frequently receives high-intensity, focussed rainfall, is prone to extreme weather, and could trigger landslides because the slopes are precariously balanced. Alarm bells in the region had begun ringing about five decades back when it was part of erstwhile Uttar Pradesh when the government constituted a committee led by the then Garhwal Commissioner, Mahesh Chander Mishra to investigate the cause of land subsidence in the area. The committee's report of 1976 warned against heavy and unscientific construction in the town.



It was clearly indicated that "Joshimath is a deposit of sand and stone.....hence was not a suitable place for the coming up of a township. Vibrations produced by blasting and heaving traffic will also lead to disequilibrium in natural factors". Subsequently, several studies flagged similar concerns, but the alarm bells went unheard and timely warnings were ignored.

In fact, on the contrary, Joshimath continued to develop exactly against the way the Mishra committee had advised. Successive governments, however, have sanctioned bigger projects - highways, hydropower, infrastructure development, and haphazard development of townships with no regard for environmental fallout. As normally attributed, the local people and climate change are responsible for the disasters. However, in his case, the policy-led disasters are "Made in Delhi". This is apparent from the decision of sanctioning large hydropower projects by the Centre even after the 2013 Kedarnath tragedy. The armed forces and the state and local authorities, in their overenthusiasm, to have a smoother, faster, all-weather connectivity for pilgrims, and tourists, ignored the government's own recommended "best practices norms" The construction of highways and railway tracks

SUCCESSIVE GOVERNMENTS, HOWEVER, HAVE SANCTIONED BIGGER PROJECTS - HIGHWAYS, HYDROPOWER, INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT, AND HAPHAZARD DEVELOPMENT OF TOWNSHIPS WITH NO REGARD FOR ENVIRONMENTAL FALLOUT

has now become a prime cause for landslides and their occurrences have doubled over the years making the hill slopes extremely unstable. Consequently, recurring landslides have gone up leading to erosions and land shifts.

According to a report published in Current Science in 2010, "Tapovan-Vishnugad hydropower tunnel that passes just below Joshimath, which is sitting on an old glacial deposit, could be contributing factor to this phenomenon. During the construction of the tunnel, a boring machine perforated a water-bearing stratum on the left bank of the Alaknanda river near Shelong village, leading to the discharge of 60-70 million liters per day. This must have led to the gradual depletion of pore pressure within the sediment leading to aquifer compaction and settling of the ground. The role of pore pressure in determining slope stability needs to be studied further in the region. Although the officials of NTPC who are responsible for the construction and maintenance of the 520 MW hydropower project refute these allegations. However, many residents believe that the town would not be facing the current crisis if not for the hollowing of the ground beneath their feet. Moreover, construction along the Helang bypass to build an all-weather road is

also believed to have disturbed the mountain's foundation.

Similar sentiments are echoed by the members of Joshimath Bacho Sangharsh Samiti, which have been protesting against projects detrimental to Joshimath since 2004 and are currently leading protests demanding adequate relief and rehabilitation for Joshimath's residents whose houses have been damaged. They felt that water released in 2009 is a major contributor to the subsistence and the water laden with muck and some volatile chemicals, began surfacing in the town's Marwari from the February 7, 2021 flood that would have entered into the (under construction) tunnel of the Tapovan Vishnugad project and is now surfacing in Joshimath. However, there have been no scientific studies establishing links between the puncture and the subsidence in Joshimath. Refuting these allegations, the NTPC has denied any role in the ongoing crisis. The real cause of this disaster remains a sort of mystery for the authorities as well as the public.

(The writer is a senior journalist and Chairman of the Panwar Group of Institutions, Solan, Himachal Pradesh. The views expressed are personal. This is the first part of two-part series on the Joshimath disaster; to be continued)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

BAN ON BBC DOCUMENTARY

Sir — This ban on BBC documentary deserves criticism from both angles. Let us first take the ban from BJP's perspective. What is the need for banning the documentary when NDA has been elected twice with a comfortable majority in 2014 and 2019 and the riots took place in 2002? People knew pretty well about the riots and yet they voted for Modi for two consecutive terms with an ascending majority. Unnecessarily, by banning, they are advertising something that in the normal course would have fizzled out.

Now coming from the opposition's angle, a good number of voters were born after the riots if you take the segment of 20-22 years youth. Even assuming the ban is lifted, what impact would it have when Modi followed by courts' verdicts has eclipsed the whole issue successfully, albeit under the garb of truth and nothing but the truth? Amplifying the issue will neither reduce the vote bank of the BJP nor will it increase the same for all other opposing parties. The program, if shown may or may not dent the image of Modi per se.

Let us be reconciled to the reality that we are not in an era of 'yatha Raja tatha praja' but rather 'yathaha praja tatha raja'.
D. Nagarjuna | Hyderabad

NAMING OF ISLANDS

Sir — Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi named the 21 largest unnamed islands of Andaman and Nicobar Islands after Param Vir Chakra (PVC) awardees in a ceremony on the occasion of Parakram Diwas (Day of Valor) on the day of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose's birthday. Before this earlier in 2018, Ross Islands was renamed Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Dweep by the prime minister during his visit to the island. Similarly, Neil Island and Havelock Island were also renamed Shaheed Dweep and Swaraj Dweep. No doubt the decision is heartening, even what will happen when in future more and more PVC awardees will be there? They will create islands to be named.

Actually, after Modi became PM his love towards all-time Congress leader

HC's judgement on abortion



The Bombay High court had delivered a landmark decision on termination of pregnancy and allowed a pregnant lady to terminate in 32 weeks treating in violation of individual liberty which has been exercised by every individual. Court had said that it would be a denial of the woman's right to dignity and her reproductive and decisional autonomy if she is not allowed to undergo medical termination of the foetus with serious abnormalities and "the decision is hers and hers alone to make, once the conditions in the statute are met. The right to choose is the mothers'. A medical board was constituted as required by the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act. The medical opinion confirmed the diagnosis of anomalies and added the possibility of intel-

lectual disability to the child but said both conditions were not life-threatening. It denied the request for a medical termination of pregnancy in view of the advanced gestation period.

The woman, however, said she comes from a humble background and will not be able to provide additional care and meet the expenses of an infant born with such conditions and urged the court to intervene. The court then directed a qualified psychiatrist to assess whether a medical termination of the pregnancy at this stage would pose a physical or mental risk to the woman. The report stated that she has no major medical, obstetric, or psychiatric complications at present but considering the advanced gestational age the medical termination of pregnancy is not recommended. However, Advocate in the court pointed out that the Act does not say what is to happen if a fetal abnormality is detected late in the pregnancy and that the writ jurisdiction of the Court may be invoked. The court on January 20 allowed the termination of the pregnancy These important decisions should be highlighted by the concerned general public.

Yashpal Rathin | Jalandhar

Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel, and recent respect towards Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose or other freedom fighters is nothing, but to cover up Rashtriya SwayamSevak Sangh (RSS) which is throughout India's freedom struggle, it was subservient to the British, with its leadership prohibiting participation in mass movements. People are fully aware that RSS is the parent organization of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and without RSS, BJP is nothing on the ground. Netaji's daughter Anita Bose said the BJP and RSS do not reflect the idea of respecting all religions as preached by Netaji, who was a devout Hindu but believed in respecting other faiths.

Even that shrewd and politically minded PM Modi created Netaji Memorial (to be built on Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Dweep) and the 21 newly named islands will be a source of constant

inspiration for the young generations. Though I doubt how much respect Modi's PVC winners have, rather than just playing politics by using their great sacrifice.
Bidyut K Chatterjee | Faridabad

HOCKEY IS THE KEY TO MEDAL TALLY

Sir — Hockey is the key that can open the lock of India's medals tally and bring back golden memories. Government, Media, and Trade-business communities have the power to uplift or pull down anything in the country. We have tremendous sports talent available in small towns and villages. We only have to discover and train them to bring out their true potential. Let us remember India's Sports Talent has immense potential.

TS Karthik | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

If a person is working for the nation, then he may think one day his RAW and IB files can be made public. It is a matter of concern... It is a serious issue.



The Law Minister
— Kiran Rijju



We know the scourge of gun violence across America requires stronger action. I once again urge

both chambers of Congress to act quickly and deliver this Assault Weapons Ban to my desk, and take action to keep American communities, schools, workplaces, and homes safe.
US President
— Joe Biden

I want every film to be a super duper hit. Now Pathaan is releasing and whatever reports we are reading about the advance booking seem fantastic I am very happy about it from the bottom of my heart.



Actor
— Ajay Devgn

India finally committing to playing day cricket the aggressive way makes them Red not favorites to win the men's World Cup this year.
Former England skipper
— Michael Vaughan

Congress does not need any proof from the armed forces.



Congress leader
— Rahul Gandhi

FIRST COLUMN

IT IS EASIER TO LIVE IN DENIAL OF REALITY

But the lesson of Gita is that we should accept reality



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

One must wonder as to why we do not want to accept reality. Why do the majority of us want to live in denial? Because it is difficult; it is easier to live in denial. It wasn't so, it would not have taken Lord Krishna to speak the entire Gita to convince Arjuna, who accepted what the Lord wanted him to do only in verse #18.73.

What was Arjuna's initial position? He didn't want to fight the inevitable war, and he gave many reasons for it. Sample some of his arguments. Arjuna didn't see the opposition Army consisting of persons who were bent upon perpetrating 'adharma' (injustice) as what they were; he saw them as relatives.(1.28) He could see only adverse consequences, nothing favourable in killing them.(1.31) He would rather die than desire either victory, kingdom or pleasures.(1.32) He was strongly of the opinion that it would be sinful to kill his relatives.(1.36) Arjuna even foresaw sacrosanct family values getting destroyed, predominance of immortality, women of the family getting corrupted resulting in illicit progeny, etc. Such an act by him was surely going to result in a long stay of hell for his side. (1.44)

How did Lord Krishna manage to bring Arjuna around to see the reality? The Lord started with the knowledge of soul, while Arjuna was seeing only material bodies. This is what most of us do too. We don't want to accept the reality of previous lives, future lives, etc. For the ignorant mass, the present life is everything. This wrong perception prevents us from seeing the truth of our existence.



We don't believe in the 'Karmaphala Principle', which is crucial for accepting reality, the system of reward and punishment, which is fate. Once we accept the reality of the soul, we begin to accept death – the most painful reality. This is where actual realism comes.

The next reality is being dutiful. Even animals are dutiful towards their progeny. We cannot be worse than them. We must accept to do whatever is necessary according to time, place and circumstances. If we are mentally prepared to do that, life becomes more meaningful. Because as human beings, being dutiful is the foremost requirement. These duties are towards ourselves, our families, our professions, etc.

We, being small, are incomplete in every sense; we need God's help 24x7. A good connection with God makes us complete, we being parts of Him. (15.7) Then nothing is beyond us. We can accept whatever the realities of our lives.

Then, comes mind control. Aren't we dictated to by our minds? Don't they define us? Therefore, God has insisted that we try to control our minds. We have to be in control, not our minds. Then, where will there be any difficulty in accepting what we must?

'Maya' may try to bemuse, confuse, and make us see everything upside down, which is liking what hurts and avoiding what helps. This is where the human species is well placed; it has all the tools to live a quality life. We just have to accept to be good in all respects, which happens by embracing the mode of goodness in all our activities, as detailed by Lord Krishna in the Gita. Gradually, we will become habituated to accept the ups and downs of life. (2.14) Acceptance makes living easy. It shows faith and hope for the future. Will we then be ready to accept what we must and go on steadily ahead? Those who can live their lives in the way explained by Lord Krishna in the Gita can look forward to a quality life, notwithstanding challenges, which loom ahead.

(The author is a spiritual teacher)

Pariksha Pe Charcha deals with anxiety



Making career decisions is a crucial milestone at the secondary level because it helps students build their identities

Adolescence is characterised by significant psychological, physical, and social changes. Traditionally, a coming-of-age period, it should be a celebration of life. However, it is alarming how stressed and in the mental health crisis today's pupils are.

Common sources of stress include interpersonal interactions, learning difficulties, and exam failures. Examinations, in themselves, are a cause of stress as they lead to anxiety about opting for higher education or career. Choosing a higher education and future employment is challenging due to the complex options available. The choice of a career among the many possibilities available is one of the major reasons that might cause stress and worry in youth.

Additionally, empirical data has demonstrated that late teenagers with career choice issues frequently have significant psychological issues. Therefore, it is now more crucial than ever to pinpoint the causes of the stress and worry that young people are experiencing.


The pupils' stress may be influenced by what their parents think about them and their prospects. Additionally, a youngster who is unable to express their thoughts, feelings, and plans to their parents may wind up keeping everything buried deep inside, which could be harmful to their health and wellbeing.

In fact, such questions have been raised in previous editions of 'Pariksha Pe Charcha', wherein one student talked about the "huge competition in each field", how at times "they were not selected in any exam due to high competition and pressure". Questions from a societal perspective as to "what can we do for them so that great talent of our nation will not be just wasted and will be useful for the nation?" have been raised.

The Prime Minister's response has, of course, been well-documented but he has also written, "Aspire not to BECOME something but TO DO something. Normally, the desire to become something is driven by the expectations of the family, fashionable professional trends, peer pressure or fantasies about fame, money and power. It distances you from your true potential and gradually snuffs out the innate passion you are blessed with."

When parents don't approve of their child's choices, such as choosing to major in humanities rather than science, the child may experience shame, disappointment, resentment, and despair. Getting influenced by the choices made by their peers and constantly making comparisons with them could add on to their stress.

While it is good to have focus and many children may be able to decide what they want to become, it is important not to let these choices, whether to become a doctor or pilot or civil servant, define our dreams. Rather let the dreams lead you to



IN EXAM WARRIORS, PM HAS WRITTEN, "CREATE YOUR OWN OPPORTUNITIES. BE THE MASTER OF YOUR DESTINY. TODAY, THERE ARE TREMENDOUS OPPORTUNITIES IN FIELDS WHICH WERE UNIMAGINABLE EVEN A DECADE AGO. WHEN YOU MAKE THESE CHOICES, REMEMBER, YOUR PASSION MAKES FOR THE BEST VOCATION"

(Prachi Pandey is Joint Secretary, Ministry of Education; Tara Naorem is Principal Chief Consultant, SS, MoE)



paths determined by how you can make a difference to your family, to society and to the world at large.

Lacking clarity about one's interest areas, aptitude, work preferences, etc. and having a negative self-image could substantially increase the magnitude of stress and anxiety experienced by the students.

Swami Vivekananda exhorted us, "...each soul is a manifestation of divinity. If you have faith in all the Gods...and still have no faith in yourselves, there is no salvation for you." Thus, self-awareness is crucial, leading to identification of both strengths and weaknesses and resulting in increased confidence. This is why it is critical not simply to have a positive outlook, but rather to consciously weed out the negativity in our lives – negative thoughts, negative friends, negative information, etc. Negativity should not be removed by a false sense of superiority but by acknowledging that even our smallest strengths can help in different situations.

Life is a series of new experiences, environments, people; it is multi-faceted and a journey with many infinite destinations and possibilities. But everyone approaches it in a different way. While some are stifled by choices, others are overwhelmed by choices. At another end of the spectrum, some do not even know enough about the choices at hand. Lack of accurate understanding about numerous career options is another issue that stresses out students. This includes diverse work profiles, pay scales, potential for growth, future of certain industries, etc. One can make an informed choice only when they have all the required information. In such a case, not having access to information or consuming content from unreliable sources (eg. making a career decision based on a random conversation with a friend) could prove to be quite harmful in these circumstances.

In Exam Warriors, PM has written, "Create your own opportunities. Be the master of your destiny. Today, there are tremendous opportunities in fields which were unimaginable even a decade ago. When you make these choices, remember your passion makes for the best vocation."

With these words as a foundation, practically, at the individual level, students can focus more of their time and energy in seeking information, having healthy conversations with friends, family, teachers, and resource persons. The cohort of adults in a child's environment can assist the students by encouraging open communication. They can guide, without being judgmental or forcing their opinions on children, and help children make decisions and become independent while selecting their subjects, colleges and universities.

Having an adult to speak with or discuss their career concerns or to ask questions and have constructive discussions could be significantly important for teenagers deliberating about their future.

Parents and teachers can also help the children by removing the taboo of going to a counselor and seeking professional help, if the need be. Having proper meetings with the parents, teacher and the child present would also be beneficial in discussing the concerns each of them might have, even concerns about resources, and come up with feasible solutions accordingly.

Such discussions could foster an environment of support, and understanding for the student. It is of utmost importance for the students to know that they are not alone in this journey, and that they will be able to figure things out gradually.

Lacking important life skills like time management, goal setting, etc., could further deteriorate their academic situation, and the student might start feeling incompetent leading to a negative self-image.

During PPC, PM Modi counseled students, "Every individual is blessed with unique abilities. These abilities are best channelled through quality time management. So, time management is nothing but ability management."

Life skills are built by taking constant care of yourself, mentally, physically and emotionally. The Prime Minister has said that "practising yoga with full awareness is the most effective way to achieve holistic development of the self.....one who plays, shines." Physical exercise, whether in the form of individual games or team sports, not only keeps us physically fit but also helps us to learn life skills, value of team-work, the art of competing with oneself and achieving a better version of your own self. It instills a sense of discipline and also increases focus.

Making career-related decisions is a crucial milestone at the secondary level because it helps students build their individual identities in society and prepare for the workforce. The process of making these decisions can be both exciting and anxiety-provoking. This is, why, in this journey, Pariksha Pe Charcha has come to play an important role.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

BJP MEANS BHAGTI JANATA PARTY. TODAY WE DEMAND THAT THE MEETING SHOULD BE CALLED AGAIN AND THE MAYOR'S ELECTION SHOULD BE DONE TODAY ITSELF.

— DELHI DEPUTY CM MANISH SISODIA



WE WERE SITTING IN THE HOUSE TO VOTE & WHEN THE TIME CAME, A RUCKUS BEGAN IN THE HOUSE. DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES MUST BE FOLLOWED.

— UNION MINISTER MEENAKSHI LEKHI



India should win war against cervical cancer fast

The necessary tools to stop this preventable disease and eliminate it completely are available

Third Front again! Before every Lok Sabha poll, the Third Front idea is floated, and the 2024 polls are no exception. Political pundits predict that there is space for the entire Opposition against Bharatiya Janata Party but not a Third Front, as it will splinter the anti-BJP votes and help the ruling dispensation. The concept was tried and tested in 1977, 1989, and 1996-98, supported by either Congress or the BJP. But they were all short-lived.

A recent tweet by the Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare highlighted a new milestone achieved by India in securing the health of new mothers in the country. Sustained systemic efforts over a decade and targeted health initiatives have helped India

DR SHALINI RAJARAM

(The author is Professor and Program Lead of the MCh Gynecologic Oncology Program, Dept. of Obstetrics & Gynecology, AIIMS Rishikesh)

bring down the number of maternal deaths per 100,000 live births or the Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) from 130 in 2014-2016 to 97 in 2018-2020.

A decade back, deaths due to cancer of the uterine cervix and maternal deaths were both pegged at around 72,000 per year. However, cancer cervix has rapidly surpassed maternal mortality and has become the second common cause of cancer deaths amongst women in India. This is a distressing sign for a life-threatening disease that is almost entirely preventable. In 2020, over 120,000 women in India were reported to have cancer of the cervix, resulting in more than 77,000 deaths. Human Papilloma virus (HPV) has been established as a cause of cancer of the cervix. More than 90 per cent of cancer cervix cases are due to high-risk HPV type. HPV, much like the influenza virus, is a ubiquitous virus and can enter the body through small abrasions in the skin and mucosa.

While most low-grade infections spontaneously resolve within two years, persistent infection results in cancer of the cervix. Early cancer can be completely asymptomatic. Hence, we may not know when a woman will develop pre-invasive or invasive cancer and a woman could be harboring a cancer for several years only discovering it at an advanced stage. Symptoms usually include irregular vaginal bleeding, post-coital vaginal bleeding and sometimes between menstrual cycles.

Invasive cancer of the cervix can cause a foul-smelling vaginal discharge or pelvic pain and is undeniably the most dreaded form when it invades adjacent organs like the bladder and rectum.

Beyond mortality, the long-term effects of cervical cancer can severely impact the quality of life. In addition to undergoing the harrowing experience of cancer treatment and associated toxicities, cancer survivors also have to battle with long term issues such as menopausal symptoms, severe leg swelling (lower limb lymphedema), sexual dysfunction, infertility, social judgement and rejection, difficulty in social functioning, reduced self-esteem, negative body image, as well as financial issues.

Unfortunately, this cancer is mostly diagnosed in young women between 35 to 45 years of age when they are in the prime years. Only silver line is that the cancer of the cervix is almost entirely preventable. We know that it is caused by a virus and that there are effective vaccines already used globally to help prevent it. Vaccinating young girls long before they are exposed to this virus can aid primary prevention. Regular screening after the age of 30 and effective treatment through surgery or radiation, can eliminate what currently stands as the second most common cancer in women in India. Advocating the vaccine to every young girl between the age of 9-14, that they see in their practice, and advising screening of women between 30-49 years with a high precision HPV DNA test will be the two strongest pillars in this fight against cancer cervix.

As a member of the World Health Assembly, India committed to WHO's Global Cervical Cancer Elimination Initiative to accelerate the elimination of cancer of the cervix by 2030. The 90-70-90 target set by the initiative requires 90 per cent of girls to be fully vaccinated with HPV vaccine before the age of 15, 70 per cent of women to be screened with a high-performance test by the age of 35 and again by the age of 45, and 90 per cent of women identified with cervical cancer to receive treatment. In an endeavour to meet the commitment and protect our girls, the Government of India must consider launching HPV vaccination funded and implemented under the immunization programme. As we celebrate the cervical cancer awareness month this January, each one of us can play a part in helping the country secure the health of its women.

Women represent the cornerstone for a family's overall health and hence investing in their health and ensuring their access to quality care goes a long way in ensuring the wellbeing and future of a society. The necessary tools to stop women from suffering and dying from this preventable disease and eliminating it completely are available; thus our girls will live to see a world free of this deadly disease.

Ukraine forces pull back from Donbas town after onslaught

AP ■ KYIV

Ukrainian forces have conducted an organised retreat from a town in the eastern region of the Donbas, an official said on Wednesday, in what is a rare but modest battlefield triumph for the Kremlin after a series of setbacks in its invasion that began almost 11 months ago.

The Ukrainian army retreated from the salt-mining town of Soledar to "preserve the lives of the personnel", Serhii Cherevatyi, a spokesperson for Ukraine's forces in the east, told The Associated Press.

The soldiers pulled back to previously prepared defensive

positions, he said.

Moscow has portrayed the battle for Soledar, which lies near the city of Bakhmut, as key to capturing the entire Donbas.

The accomplishment takes the Russian forces a step closer to Bakhmut, but military analysts say capturing Soledar is more symbolic than strategic.

Ukraine's military, which has held out in Soledar against a monthslong onslaught of superior Russian forces, has said its fierce defence of the eastern stronghold helped tie up Russian forces.

Russia claimed almost two weeks ago that it had taken Soledar, but Ukraine denied it.

Many of Russia's troops

around Soledar belong to the private Russian military contractor Wagner Group, and the fighting reportedly has been bloody.

Since its invasion of Ukraine, Moscow has prioritised taking full control of the Donbas - a region made up of the Donetsk and Luhansk provinces, where it has backed a separatist insurgency since 2014.

Russia has seized most of Luhansk, but about half of Donetsk remains under Ukraine's control.

Taking control of the town would potentially allow Russian forces to cut supply lines to Ukrainian forces in Bakhmut,

though the strength of Ukraine's new defensive positions was not known.

The Institute for the Study of War, a think tank in Washington, said earlier this month that the fall of Soledar wouldn't mark "an operationally significant development and is unlikely to presage an imminent Russian encirclement of Bakhmut".

The institute said Russian information operations have "overexaggerated the importance of Soledar," which is a small settlement. It also argued that the long and difficult battle has contributed to the exhaustion of Russian forces.

Perhaps more worrying for

Moscow, Western military help for Ukraine is now being stepped up with the delivery of tanks.

Elsewhere, Russian forces have continued to pummel Ukrainian areas, especially in the south and east.

Russian strikes wounded 10 civilians in the eastern Donetsk province on Tuesday, Pavlo Kyrylenko, the provincial governor, said.

Five were wounded when Russian shells slammed into apartment blocks, he said.

The General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine said on Wednesday that over the previous 24 hours Russian forces had launched four missile

strikes, 26 airstrikes and more than 100 attacks from rocket salvo systems.

Russian forces are concentrating their efforts on establishing control over Donetsk province, conducting offensive operations around the embattled cities of Bakhmut, Lyman and Avdiivka, and the village of Novopavlivka, according to spokesperson Oleksandr Shtupun.

In addition to Donetsk, the Russian attacks struck settlements in the country's north-eastern Kharkiv and Sumy, northern Chernihiv, eastern-most Luhansk, southeastern Zaporizhzhia, and southern Kherson provinces.



Meanwhile, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, the Ukraine president who has gone from professional comedian to an internationally recognised wartime leader, turned 45 on Wednesday.

His wife, first lady Olena Zelenska, said that though he is the same person as when they met at 17, "Something has changed: You smile much less now."

New Zealander killed in Ukraine helped hundreds, parents say

AP ■ WELLINGTON

The parents of a New Zealand scientist who was killed in Ukraine said Wednesday he helped save hundreds of people while volunteering in the dangerous Donbas region.

Andrew Bagshaw, 47, a dual New Zealand and British citizen, was killed along with



British colleague Chris Parry, 28, while attempting to rescue an

elderly woman from the town of Soledar when their car was hit by an artillery shell, according to Bagshaw's parents, Dame Sue and Phil Bagshaw.

The Bagshaws said the deaths, which occurred some time this month, had only just been confirmed to them.

They said their son worked independently and wasn't affiliated with an aid agency. They said he helped evacuate people from dangerous areas and bring food, water and medicine to others in need. They said he even fed abandoned pets.

Soledar has seen intense military action and Russia this month claimed it had retaken the salt-mining town in a rare

recent victory in the 11-month conflict.

Bagshaw's parents said Ukrainian authorities were working with officials in New Zealand and Britain, but it could take some time to get their son's body returned from where it was being held at a children's hospital mortuary in the capital, Kyiv.

New Zealand Prime Minister Chris Hipkins said he'd yet to be officially briefed about the death but had received some preliminary information.

"I just want to extend my condolences to the Bagshaw family," Hipkins said. "I haven't had an opportunity to convey that to them personally yet. It's obviously a very tragic situation for them."

Hipkins said that there was very limited consular support available in Ukraine.

Andrew Bagshaw's parents told reporters their son was a humanitarian who had travelled to Ukraine in April with little more than a backpack and a travel guide.

Ukraine corruption scandal claims several top officials

AP ■ KYIV

Several senior Ukrainian Officials, including front-line governors, lost their jobs in a corruption scandal plaguing President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's government as it grapples with the nearly 11-month-old Russian invasion.

Ukraine's biggest government shake-up since the war began came as U.S. Officials said Washington was poised to approve supplying Kyiv with M1 Abrams tanks, with international reluctance eroding toward sending tanks to the battlefield against the Russians. Zelenskyy was elected in 2019 on an anti-establishment and anti-corruption platform in a country long gripped by graft, and the new allegations come as Western allies are channeling billions of dollars to help Kyiv fight against Moscow.

Officials in several countries, including the United States, have demanded more

accountability for the aid, given Ukraine's rampant corruption.

While Zelenskyy and his aides portray the resignations and firings as proof of their efforts to crack down, the wartime scandal could play into Moscow's political attacks on the leadership in Kyiv.

On the capital's streets, Serhii Bochkarev, a 28-year-old translator, welcomed the moves. "Corruption during war is totally unacceptable because people are giving their lives to fight Russians and to defend the motherland," he said.

The shake-up even touched Zelenskyy's office.

Its deputy head, Kyrylo Tymoshenko, prominent for his frequent battlefield updates, quit as the president pledged to address allegations of graft - including some related to military spending - that embarrassed authorities and could slow Ukraine's efforts to join the European



Union and NATO.

Tymoshenko asked to be relieved of his duties. He didn't cite a reason.

Local media said Deputy Defence Minister Viacheslav Shapovalov also resigned, in connection with a scandal involving the purchase of food for Ukraine's armed forces.

Deputy Prosecutor General Oleksiy Symonenko also quit.

In all, four deputy ministers and five governors of front-line provinces were set to leave their posts, the coun-

try's cabinet secretary said on the Telegram messaging app.

Authorities did not announce any criminal charges.

There was no immediate explanation.

The departures thinned government ranks already diminished by the deaths of the interior minister, who oversaw Ukraine's police and emergency services, and others in the ministry's leadership in a helicopter crash last week.

In reversal, US poised to approve M1 Abrams tanks for Ukraine

AP ■ WASHINGTON

In what would be a reversal, the Biden administration is poised to approve sending M1 Abrams tanks to Ukraine, U.S. Officials said Tuesday, as international reluctance to send tanks to the battlefield against the Russians begins to erode.

A decision to send a bit more than 30 tanks could be announced as soon as Wednesday, though it could take months for the tanks to be delivered.

U.S. Officials said details are still being worked out.

One official said the tanks would be bought under an upcoming Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative package, which provides longer-range funding for weapons and equipment to be purchased from commercial vendors.

The U.S. Announcement is expected in coordination with an announcement by Germany that it will approve Poland's request



to transfer German-made Leopard 2 tanks to Ukraine, according to one official.

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because the decision has not yet been made public.

By agreeing to send the Abrams at an as-yet unspecified time under the assistance initiative, the administration is able to meet German Chancellor Olaf Scholz's demand for an American commitment without having to send the tanks immediately.

Much of the aid sent so far in the 11-month-old war has been through a separate program drawing on Pentagon stocks to get weapons more quickly to Ukraine. But even under that programme, it would take months to get tanks to Ukraine and to get Ukrainian forces trained on them.

It wasn't clear Tuesday how soon the U.S. Will start training Ukrainian troops on the Abrams and roughly how soon they can get to the battlefield.

Until now, the U.S. Has resisted providing its own M1 Abrams tanks to Ukraine, citing extensive and complex maintenance and logistical challenges with the high-tech vehi-

cles.

Washington believes it would be more productive to send German Leopards since many allies have them and Ukrainian troops would need less training than on the more difficult Abrams.

Just last week, Under Secretary of Defence for Policy Colin Kahl told reporters that the Abrams is a complicated, expensive, difficult to maintain and hard to train on piece of equipment. One thing Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin has been very focused on, he said, "is that we should not be providing the Ukrainians systems they can't repair, they can't sustain, and that they, over the long term, can't afford, because it's not helpful."

A U.S. Official familiar with White House thinking said the administration's initial hesitancy was based on concerns about the requisite training and the sustainment of the tanks.

The official added that the administration believes that such plans are now in place, but it could take time to implement them.

At the Pentagon, spokesman Brig. Gen. Pat Ryder said he had nothing to announce on any U.S. Decision regarding Abrams tanks.

But he said, "anytime that we've provided Ukraine with a type of system, we've provided the training and sustainment capabilities with that."

After US offer, Germany unleashes Leopard tanks for Ukraine

AP ■ BERLIN

After weeks of hesitation that saw growing impatience among Germany's allies, Chancellor Olaf Scholz announced Wednesday that his government would provide Ukraine with Leopard 2 battle tanks and approve requests by other countries to do the same.

In a statement, the German government said it would initially provide Ukraine with one company of Leopard 2 A6 tanks, which comprises 14 vehicles, from its own stocks.


The goal is for Germany and its allies to provide Ukraine with a total of two battalions, or 88 tanks.

"This decision follows our well-known line of supporting Ukraine to the best of our ability," Scholz said after a Cabinet meeting in Berlin.

Germany was "acting in close coordination" with its international allies, he added.

The long-awaited decision came after US officials said Tuesday that a preliminary agreement had been struck for the United States to send M1 Abrams tanks to help Ukraine's troops push back Russian forces that remain entrenched in the country's east almost a year after Moscow's invasion and war.

Scholz had insisted that any decision to provide Ukraine with powerful Leopard 2 tanks would need to be taken in conjunction with Germany's allies, chiefly the United States. By getting Washington to commit some of its own tanks, Berlin hopes to share the risk of any backlash from Russia.



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NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that Share Certificates pertaining to shares of the Company detailed below have been reported lost and request(s) for issue of duplicate Certificates in lieu thereof have been received by the Company :-

Sl. No.	Folio No.	Name of the Share Holder / Legal Heir (Claimant)	Cert.No.	Dist.No.	Lost Shares
1	J 0000863	JAI PARKASH GOEL	20328	1872501-525	25
			122776	5197374-85	12
			463930-33	24022352-87	36
			1129190	309736302-837	536
			90159020	12078055-079	25
2	A 0003947	ANDREW JOSEPH SIKKANDADAS PAUL (Deceased)	96420-21	4117647-721	75
			975150	18545506-655	150
			32861	2233301-325	25
			71292	3483234-244	11
			102637	4292198-215	18
3	A 0005354	ASHOK MANGALDAS MODY (Deceased)	90152089	10453030-049	20
			1127903	309174334-629	296
			1214	1156531-540	10
			60167	2900179-189	11
			67122	3405436-445	10
4	A 0004499	ARUNA UMMAT	71124	3481059-069	11
			77369	3581480-83	4
			80919	3628040-50	11
			84992	3715623-30	8
			85172	3718576-86	11
5	SRF0121016	SUDHA AMBWANI	92547	1167501-510	10
			93023	3378491-497	7
			96887-88	4133766-852	87
			975165	18546591-661	71
			10078369	3608410-420	11
6	S 0009675	SNEHA PRABHA MITTAL	90191567	14991200-49	50
			90249630-31	9068906-005	100
			90257215-16	9068806-905	100
			17108-09	1786026-75	50
			39509	2414376-425	50
7	M 0005397	MADIPALLI ANNAPURNA DEVI	147960	5883551-600	50
			344085-89	16601837-922	86
			493085-89	24621629-714	86
			1124178	307857234-8521	1288
			28107	2098126-150	25
8	M 0005272	MOSES SUTHANTHIRADAS PAUL (Deceased)	32576	2224601-25	25
			132985	5497708-32	25
			325026-30	16209203-288	86
			474026-30	24228995-9080	86
			90164710-11	12653280-354	75
9	SRF0158562	BHARAT BHUSHAN BHAGAT	1129692	309904002-1689	1288
			132912-13	5495284-358	75
			976244	18579581-730	150
			1125950	308412194-3033	840
			397172-74	17538843-917	75
10	SRF0105575	ASHISH SUKTHANKAR	546172-74	25558635-709	75
			90208410-12	15640665-814	150
			573246-57	26239046-482	437
			20904	1889201-225	25
			140214	5705420-31	12
11	SRF0118613	ARCHANA SARAN	334061-65	16397510-77	68
			483061-65	24417302-69	68
			90034770-71	7409954-10001	48
			90170022	12915325-74	50
			33977	2266151-75	25
12	R 0001868	RACHEL VARGHESE	69298	3449845-52	8
			131490	5462620-35	16
			90027121-22	7111178-257	80
			90163760-61	12613510-64	55
			1128036	309237050-785	736
13	M 0002741	MAHMOOD EBRAHIM LADHABHOY (Deceased)	97475-76	4149086-151	66
			975196	18547297-429	133
			1123910	307752690-3485	796
			69298	3449845-52	8
			131490	5462620-35	16
14	B 0000900	B S RAJPUROHIT	90027121-22	7111178-257	80
			90163760-61	12613510-64	55
			1128036	309237050-785	736
			97475-76	4149086-151	66
			975196	18547297-429	133

Any person having any claim /objection in respect of the above requests should lodge such claim/objection with the company at its Corporate Office within 15 days of the publication of this notice, failing which the company will consider to give effect to the above requests. Public is hereby cautioned against dealing with the aforesaid share certificates.

for SRF LIMITED

Sd/-

RAJAT LAKHANPAL

Sr. VP (Corporate Compliance)

& Company Secretary

Place: Gurugram

Date: 25-01-2023



NORTHERN RAILWAY



E-TENDER NOTICE

SMM/ETD/GZB acting for and on behalf of President of India invites E-Tender against tender no. 44225339. The details are as under:

1	Description of Item	"DRIVER DISPLAY UNIT (DDU) AS PER CLW SPEC."
2	Quantity	10 Nos.
3	Tender due on	21.02.2023 11:00 Hrs
4	Website particulars where complete details of tender documents can be seen:	www.ireps.gov.in

Note: (1) The tenderer/s must be registered on the Indian Railway E-Procurement System (IREPS) site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in for participating in E-tender system. (2) For all terms and conditions please refer tender document. (3) No manual offers are acceptable.

No.: 16/44225339/ETD/GZB Dated: 21.01.2023

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 266/23

SPECIAL TRAIN

For the convenience of rail passengers, Railways have decided to run the following **Special Train** in view of **81st Urs Fair-2023** as per schedule given below:-

09655/09656 Ajmer Jn. - Delhi Sarai Rohilla - Ajmer Jn. Express Special Train				
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PTI man held for public censuring of Pak Govt

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistani authorities on Wednesday arrested Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party senior leader Fawad Chaudhry, hours after he publicly censured the government for scheming to arrest party chairman Imran Khan.

Fawad, a close aide of ousted prime minister Khan, was taken into custody from his residence in Lahore after a case was registered against him at Kohsar Police Station on the complaint of the Secretary Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

"This imported government has gone berserk," PTI leader Farrukh Habib tweeted.

An official PTI Twitter account also posted videos, showing a convoy of police vehicles which the party



claimed was carrying Chaudhry after his arrest.

The arrest of Fawad, 52, came amidst rumours that the government may arrest PTI chief and former premier Khan.

Fawad's arrest comes after he, along with scores of party workers, gathered outside Khan's Zaman Park residence in Lahore, claiming to avert the government's alleged plan to arrest the party chief.

The arrest of Fawad further

deepens political fault lines in Pakistan where the Khan-led opposition is demanding snap polls.

General elections in Pakistan are due after August. However, Khan is demanding snap polls.

"He (Chaudhry) was taken away from outside his house at 5:30 am in four cars that did not have any number plates," Faisal Chaudhry, the PTI leader's brother, was quoted as saying by the Dawn newspaper

PTI ■ LONDON

British Home Secretary Suella Braverman is said to be on a collision course with the country's education department over plans to cut the period of stay allowed for overseas students under a post-study visa route, according to a UK media report on Wednesday.

The new Graduate Visa route, which allows foreign graduates - including Indians - the chance to stay on to job hunt and gain work experience for up to two years without the requirement of a specific job offer, is expected to be cut under Braverman's proposed review.

According to 'The Times', the Indian-origin home secretary has drawn up a plan to "reform" the Graduate Visa route requiring students to



obtain a work visa by getting a skilled job or leave the UK after six months. The newspaper refers to leaked advice to say that the UK Department for Education (DfE) is attempting to block the changes as they fear it would harm the UK's attractiveness to international students.

A government source who backs Braverman's plan said the Graduate Visa was being increasingly used by students on short courses at 'less respectable universities'.

"It's being used as a backdoor immigration route," the newspaper quoted the source as saying.

The DfE, however, argues that the two-year Graduate

Visa, often referred to as the UK's post-study offer, was aligned with most of Britain's main competitors, with only the US offering a one-year

Piramal Capital & Housing Finance

PIRAMAL CAPITAL & HOUSING FINANCE LTD
(Formerly Known as Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Ltd.)
CIN:L65910MH1984PLC032639

Registered Office: Unit No.-601, 6th Floor, Piramal Amiti Building, Piramal Agastya Corporate Park, Kamani Junction, Opp. Fire Station, IBS Marg, Kurla (West), Mumbai-400070. T +91 22 3802 4000
Branch Office: Plot No-6, Block A, Sector-2, Noida, U.P-201 301
Contact Person: 1. Nishant Gautam- 9899216466 2. Naveen Kapoor- 9810854841 3. Rohan Sawant- 9833143013

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

Loan Code/ Branch/ Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)	Demand Notice Date and Amount	Property Address_Final	Reserve Price	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) (10% of RP)	Outstanding Amount (01-12-2022)
Loan Code No. 00004417, New Delhi (Branch), Sanjay Kumar Gupta (Borrower), Poonam Gupta (Co Borrower 1) Himanshu Gupta (Co Borrower 2)	Dt: 19-11-2019, Rs. 2,79,69,719/- (Rs. Two Crore Seventy Nine lakh Sixty Nine Thousand Seven Hundred Nineteen Only)	All The piece and Parcel of the Property having an extent:- Entire Ground Floor of Northern Side Por Tion and Half terrace of FF, W-132 G.K. Part: New Delhi New Delhi Delhi 110065 Boundaries As North: Plot No. W-134 South: Part of plot No-132 East: Road West: Service Road	Rs. 2,00,90,000/- (Rs. Two Crore Ninety Thousand Only)	Rs. 20,09,000/- (Rs. Twenty lakh Ninety Thousand Only)	Rs. 4,26,56,889.38/- (Rs. Four Crore Twenty Six lakh Fifty Six Thousand Eight Hundred Eighty Nine Only and Thirty Eight Paise)
Loan Code No. 00001206, Netaji Subhash Place (Branch), Raman Kumar (Borrower), Radha Devi (Co Borrower 1)	Dt: 24-05-2021, Rs.13,97,389/- (Rs. Thirteen lakh Ninety Seven Thousand Three Hundred Eighty Nine Only)	All The Piece and Parcel of The Property Having an Extent:- Property No T 184 Third Floor Rear Side Kh. No.18 Vill. Bindapur Block T Uttam Nagar New Delhi New Delhi Delhi:- 110059 Boundaries As North:- Road 25 Feet South: Gali:- 10 Feet East: Part Of Plot West: Plot No-T-185	Rs. 12,60,000/- (Rs. Twelve lakh Sixty Thousand Only)	Rs.1,26,000/- (Rs. One lakh Twenty Six Thousand Only)	Rs. 17,26,581.34/- (Rs. Seventeen lakh Twenty Six Thousand Five Hundred Eighty One Only and Thirty Four Paise)
Loan Code No. 00001119, Delhi Rajouri Garden (Branch), Sunny Madan (Borrower), Poonam Madan (Co Borrower 1)	Dt: 14-06-2021, Rs. 24,47,230/- (Rs. Twenty Four lakh Forty Seven Thousand Two Hundred Thirty Only)	All The Piece and Parcel of The Property Having an Extent:- Roof Mahavir Enclave Kh. No.813/97, Gali No-4 Palam Colony Palam Delhi Palam Delhi New Delhi Delhi:- 110045 Boundaries As North:- Gali 15 Feet South: Other's Property East: Other's Property West: Part of Property	Rs. 18,30,000/- (Rs. Eighteen lakh Thirty Thousand Only)	Rs. 1,83,000/- (Rs. One lakh Eighty Three Thousand Only)	Rs. 27,88,012.7/- (Rs. Twenty Seven lakh Eighty Eight Thousand Twelve Only and Seventy Paise)
Loan Code No. 00001430, New Delhi-West (Branch), Mukesh Kumar (Borrower), Mohit (Co Borrower 1)	Dt: 12-05-2021, Rs. 20,70,658/- (Rs. Twenty lakh Seventy Thousand Six Hundred Fifty Eight Only)	All The Piece and Parcel of The Property Having an Extent:- Plot No-4350-4351 & 4352, 2nd Floor Without Roof, Ward No. XII, Gali Tej Ram Arya Pura, Subj Mandi North Delhi, Delhi New Delhi Delhi:- 110007 Boundaries as North: Other Property South: Other Property East: Other Property West: Gali	Rs. 19,00,000/- (Rs. Nineteen lakh Only)	Rs. 1,90,000/- (Rs. One lakh Ninety Thousand Only)	Rs. 8,98,246.96/- (Rs. Eight lakh Ninety Eight Thousand Two Hundred Forty Six Only and Ninety Six Paise)
Loan Code No. 00041688, Delhi- Pitampura (Branch), Gulshan Kumar Arora (Borrower), Sharmila Ahora (Co Borrower 1) Saket Chopra (Co Borrower 2)	Dt: 19-11-2019, Rs. 24,91,694/- (Rs. Twenty Four lakh Ninety One Thousand Six Hundred Ninety Four Only)	All The Piece and Parcel of The Property Having an Extent:- RZ-H-601, 2nd Floor (Front and Back Side) Block-H, Kharsa No-56/21 & 56/22 Street No-16, Raj Nagar-2 Delhi New Delhi Delhi:- 110045 Boundaries as North: Gali 6 Ft South: Other's Property East: Other's Property West: Gali 7 Ft	Rs. 31,80,000/- (Rs. Thirty One lakh Eighty Thousand Only)	Rs. 3,18,000/- (Rs. Three lakh Eighteen Thousand Only)	Rs. 38,75,251.1/- (Rs. Thirty Eight lakh Seventy Five Thousand Two Hundred Fifty One Only and Ten Paise)
Loan Code No. 00001579, Rohini (Branch), Amar Singh (Borrower), Ram Devi (Co Borrower 1)	Dt: 26-07-2019, Rs. 35,93,020/- (Rs. Thirty Five lakh Ninety Three Thousand Twenty Only)	All The Piece and Parcel of The Property Having an Extent:- Plot No-IX/4677, Kharsa No-478/153 Gali No-1, Aji Nagar, Village Seelampur Gandhi Nagar Gandhi Nagar Delhi New Delhi Delhi:- 110031 Boundaries As North: Part of Plot South: Plot No-IX/4676 East: Gali No-1 West: Other Property	Rs. 44,60,000/- (Rs. Forty Four lakh Sixty Thousand Only)	Rs. 4,46,000/- (Rs. Four lakh Sixty Thousand Only)	Rs. 50,33,701.62/- (Rs. Fifty lakh Thirty Three Thousand Seven Hundred One Only and Sixty Two Paise)
Loan Code No. 00000956, Delhi Rajouri Garden (Branch), Harinder Singh (Borrower), Harjeet Kaur (Co Borrower 1) Gurmeet Singh (Co Borrower 2)	Dt: 18-12-2021, Rs. 23,28,730/- (Rs. Twenty Three lakh Twenty Eight Thousand Seven Hundred Thirty Only)	All The Piece and Parcel of The Property Having an Extent:- Southern Eastern Portion Prop No. K-1 T With Roof Block K, Kh. No.18/2 T Village Khyala, Vishnu Garden Portion Plot No.1 Delhi New Delhi Delhi 110018 Boundaries as North: Part of Plot South: Road East: Plot No. K-2 West: Part of Plot	Rs. 26,30,000/- (Rs. Twenty Six lakh Thirty Thousand Only)	Rs. 2,63,000/- (Rs. Two lakh Sixty Three Thousand Only)	Rs. 26,49,301.64/- (Rs. Twenty Six lakh Forty Nine Thousand Three Hundred One Only and Sixty Four Paise)
Loan Code No. CPL30365, Delhi- Cp (Branch), Kevin Randolph Hyams (Borrower),	Dt: 23-03-2018, Rs. 60,07,554/- (Rs. Sixty lakh Seven Thousand Five Hundred Fifty Four Only)	All The Piece and Parcel of The Property Having an Extent:- H/F/ Plot No. A-25, Chuharpar Khadar, Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh- 201308	Rs. 76,80,000/- (Rs. Seventy Six lakh Eighty Thousand Only)	Rs. 7,68,000/- (Rs. Seven lakh Eight Thousand Only)	Rs. 1,28,74,033.28/- (Rs. One Crore Twenty Eight lakh Seventy Four Thousand Thirty Three Only and Twenty Eight Paise)
Loan Code No. 00000490, Greater Noida (Branch), Anju Sachdeva (Borrower), Kamal Sachdeva (Co Borrower 1)	Dt: 23-04-2019, Rs. 10,15,893/- (Rs. Ten lakh Fifteen Thousand Eight Hundred Ninety Three Only)	All The Piece and Parcel of The Property Having an Extent:- Flat No-623, Top Floor Sector: Chi-PHI Greater Noida, Greater Noida, Gautambudh Nagar-201308 Boundaries as North: Open South: Flat No-624 East: Open West: Stair/Flat No-621	Rs. 8,20,000/- (Rs. Eight lakh Twenty Thousand Only)	Rs. 82,000/- (Rs. Eighty Two Thousand Only)	Rs. 16,39,645.66/- (Rs. Sixteen lakh Thirty Nine Thousand Six Hundred Forty Five Only and Sixty Six Paise)

DATE OF E-AUCTION: 27-02-2023, FROM 11.00 A.M. TO 2.00 P.M. (WITH UNLIMITED EXTENSION OF 5 MINUTES EACH).
LAST DATE OF SUBMISSION OF BID: 25-02-2023, BEFORE 4.00 P.M.
TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE AUCTION:
The sale shall be subject to the terms & conditions as described below:-
1. The asset will not be sold below the reserve price.
2. In case of single bidder, the bidder/purchaser has to bid with an minimum increment amount of Rs. 10,000/- for property upto 3cr RP & More than 3 Cr (Property Reserve Price (RP) bid increment amount will be Rs. 1,00,000/-).
3. Auction/bidding shall only by "online electronic mode" through the website of the service provider i.e Company Name: C1 India Private Limited, Name of Representative: **Mr. Dharami Krishna; Contact Number: 9948182222**; Site: <https://www.bankeauctions.com>.
4. Care has been taken to include adequate particulars of Secured Assets in the Schedule herein above. The Authorized Officer shall not be answerable for any error, misstatement or omission in this proclamation.
5. The intending bidders are advised to go through the portal <https://www.bankeauctions.com> for detailed terms and conditions for e-Auction sale before submitting their bids and taking part in the e-Auction sale proceedings and contact the respective Authorized Officer for the concerned property as mentioned herein above regarding the property.
6. Auction shall commence at one increment above the Reserve Price and bidders shall be free to bid among themselves by improving their offer with minimum incremental amount stated herein above.
7. 10% Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) DD shall be deposited on or before 25-02-2023, before 4:00 P.M. to the designated Branch in favour of 'Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited' along with fully filled bid form and Tender/Sealed Bid/offer in the prescribed tender forms along KYC. a) Self attested true copy of Identity Card containing Photograph and Residential Address and PAN card of the intending bidder, issued by Govt. of India. Original of the document should be made available for verification by the concerned Authorized Officer. b) Intending Bidder's Mobile Number and E-Mail address.
8. The intended bidders who require assistance in creating Login ID & Password, uploading data, submitting bid, training on e-bidding process etc., may contact Mr. Dharami Krishna; Contact Number: 9948182222, Help Line E-Mail ID: https://www.bankeauctions.com and For any property related query may contact PCHFL Authorized Officer: **Nishant Gautam-9899216466** during the office hours on any working day.
9. In case of stay of sale or Recovery proceeding by any superior court of competent jurisdiction, the auction may either be postponed/cancelled in compliance of such order, without any further notice and the persons participating in the sale shall have no right to claim damages, compensation or cost for such postponement/cancellation etc.
10. Only those bidders holding valid user ID and Password and confirmed payment of EMD through Demand Draft shall be permitted to participate in the online e-auction. The Authorized Officer reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids. Further, the Authorized Officer reserves the right to postpone or cancel or adjourn or discontinue the Auction or vary the terms of the Auction at any time before conclusion of the Auction process, without assigning any reason whatsoever and his decision in this regard shall be final.
11. The successful bidder shall have to pay 25% of the purchase amount immediately within 24 hours (including Earnest Money Already paid) from knocking down of bid in his/her favor, in the same mode as stipulated in clause 7 above. The balance of the purchase price shall have to be paid in the same mode as stipulated in clause 7 above within 15 days of acceptance/confirmation of sale conveyed to them. In case of default, all amounts deposited till then shall be forfeited including earnest money deposit.
12. Meagre deposit of 25 % of the Sale Price shall not entitle the successful bidder to get the sale confirmed in his favour. Sale shall be subject to terms and conditions applicable to this e-auction notice and confirmation by the secured creditor to that effect.
13. The EMD (without interest) of the unsuccessful bidder will be returned on 3rd day of the closure of the e-auction sale proceedings.
14. During e-auction, in case any bid is placed in the last 5 minutes of the closing time of the Auction, the closing time shall automatically get extended for another 5 minutes.
15. The sale is subject to final confirmation by the PCHFL. In case if the borrower/guarantors pays the total Outstanding due to the PCHFL before the Date of Auction, then auction sale may be cancelled at the discretion of PCHFL.
16. All statutory dues/attend charges/other dues including registration charges, stamp duty, taxes etc. shall have to be borne by the purchaser.
17. The Sale Certificate shall be issued to the highest successful bidder and in the same name in which the Bid is submitted.
18. The property is sold on "As is where" and "As is what is" basis and the Authorized Officer or the PCHFL shall not be responsible for any charge, lien, encumbrances, or any other dues to the government or anyone else in respect of properties E-Auctioned. The intending Bidder is advised to make their own independent inquiries regarding the encumbrances, search results and other revenue records relating to the property including statutory liabilities arrears of property tax, electricity dues etc. and shall satisfy themselves before submitting the Bid.
19. Properties as mentioned above can be inspected by the prospective bidders at the site with the prior appointment of concerned Branch Manager or Authorized Officer or any other officer identified for the purpose, from 11 A.M. to 3 P.M. on any working day before 25-02-2023.
20. PCHFL reserves its right to accept/reject any or all of the offer(s) or bid(s) so received or cancel the sale without assigning any reason therefor.
21. In case there is any discrepancy found in Publication of Vernacular Version or English Version then in such case English Version will be considered for the purpose of interpretation. Bidding in the final minutes and seconds should be avoided in the bidders own interest. Neither PCHFL nor Service Provider will be responsible for any failure/lapse (Power failure, Internet failure etc.) on the part of the vendor. In order to prevent such situation bidders are requested to make all the necessary arrangements/alternatives such as backup power supply etc required so that they are able to prevent such situation and continue to participate in the auction successfully.
22. It shall be the responsibility of the successful bidder to remit the TDS @ 1% as applicable u/s 194 I-A if the aggregate of the sums credited or paid for such consideration is Rs. 50 Lakhs or more. TDS should be filed online by filing form 26QB & TDS certificate to be issued in form 16B. The purchaser has to produce the proof of having deposited the income tax into the government account within 15 days of e-auction.

STATUTORY 30 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER SARFAESI ACT TO THE BORROWER/GUARANTOR / MORTGAGOR
The above mentioned Borrower/Guarantor are hereby notified to pay the sum as mentioned in section 13(2) notice in full with accrued interest till date before the date of auction, failing which property will be auctioned/sold and balance dues if any will be recovered with interest and cost from borrower/guarantor.
Date : January 26, 2023
Place : Delhi

SD/- Authorized Officer
Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited

South Korea, Japan grapple with heavy snow chaos, delays



PTI ■ SEOUL

Frigid winter weather gripped East Asia for the second straight day on Wednesday, causing several deaths and multiple injuries in Japan and a scramble for flights out of South Korea's resort island of Jeju following delays by snowstorms.

Heavy snow and record cold temperatures brought widespread disruptions in Japan.

South Korea's Ministry of the Interior and Safety didn't

immediately report any major damage or injuries from sub-zero temperatures and icy conditions that have affected most of the country since Tuesday.

But at least eight roads and 10 sea routes remained closed as of Wednesday afternoon. About 140 homes in capital Seoul and nearby regions reported busted water pressure pumps or pipes as temperatures dipped to around minus 15 to minus 20 degrees Celsius (5 degrees to minus 4 degrees Fahrenheit) across the main-

Israeli troops kill Palestinian after attempted stabbing

PTI ■ JERUSALEM

Israeli troops shot and killed a Palestinian in the occupied West Bank on Wednesday, Palestinian officials said, the latest death in a surge of violence. The Israeli military said the Palestinian tried to stab a soldier.

The violence comes amid tensions over Israel's new government, it's most right-wing ever. On Wednesday, ultranationalist Cabinet minister Itamar Ben-Gvir promised to continue visits to a flashpoint Jerusalem holy site, despite pleas from neighbouring Jordan that Israel maintain a delicate status quo at the site.

The Palestinian Health Ministry identified the man shot as Aref Abdel Nasser Lahlouh, 20. The Israeli military said the man was carry-



ing a knife and was shot after he attempted to attack a soldier at a military post. Video on social media showed a man running toward soldiers and then falling to the ground.

Tensions have been high for months as Israel has been conducting nightly arrest raids in the West Bank, which were prompted by a spate of Palestinian attacks against Israelis last spring. Some 30 people were killed in Israel by Palestinians in 2022.

US reroutes \$72M in aid for wages for Lebanese army, police

AP ■ BEIRUT

The United States is rerouting USD 72 million of America's assistance to Lebanon to help the country's cash-strapped government boost wages of its soldiers and police officers, the US ambassador said Wednesday.

Washington is a key donor of the Lebanese Army and its 80,000 members, providing over USD 3 billion in military aid since 2006. The announcement Wednesday is the first time the US is allocating funds for wages of security personnel in Lebanon.

Lebanon, a tiny Mediterranean country of 6 million people, is struggling with an unprecedented economic crisis, one that the World Bank says is among the worst worldwide since the 1850s.

UN official: Aid groups press Taliban on ban on women's jobs

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Heads of major aid groups are pressing the Taliban to reverse their decision to ban Afghan women from working for national and international nongovernmental groups, the UN humanitarian chief said on Wednesday.

The Taliban move last month to bar women from NGO work prompted major international aid agencies to suspend operations in



Afghanistan, though some have since resumed their work in parts of the country.

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of IOPC First Bank Ltd. that Mr. Sanjay Batra is the owner of C/S Second Floor without roof/terrace rights with one rezession room between stair case of Second Floor & Third Floor (said floor) built up Property bearing No. EA-24 (Plot No.124, Block-4A) land area measuring 200 Sq. Yds. Situated in the area of Village Kharola, in the area of approved colony now known as Indraprastha, New Delhi. The said property 'by virtue of Partition Deed dated 22.08.2002, Registration No. 4802, executed amongst:- Mr. Sanjay Batra 'First party' and:- Ms. Sumya Kapoor &:- Ms. Nikita Batra as second party, all were owner of the Second and Third floor of the said property by virtue of Relinquishment Deed dated 11.08.2002. All persons are hereby informed that Mr. Sanjay Batra want to sell Entire Second floor of the said property to Mr. Raj Kumar and his nominee who is taking loan for purchase the said floor from IOPC First Bank Ltd., if anybody has any objections upon the ownership of above owner in respect of the said Property/floor, is sale Mortgage Litigation, and any kind of objection kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.
Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants)
200, 1st floor, Sector-23, Shivaji Marg, Vast Nagar, N. Delhi-110 015. Ph: 011-4112227-28 kumar.associates.advocates@gmail.com

THE MAHARAJA BHUPINDER SINGH PUNJAB SPORTS UNIVERSITY, (MBSPSU), PATIALA
Mohindra Kothi, Near Fountain Chowk, Patiala-147001
Advertisement No. 01/2023
1. Online applications are invited for various teaching and non teaching posts for The Maharaja Bhupinder Singh Punjab Sports University and its constituent colleges i.e. Prof. Gursewak Singh Govt College of Physical Education, Patiala and Govt Arts and Sports College, Jalandhar.
2. Online registration of application for these posts will start w.e.f. **25.01.2023** and end on **12.02.2023**. Last date for submitting the hard copy of the online submitted application and supporting documents (6 sets of hardcopies of online application form along with self attested copies of all the certificates by courier or by hand) is 18.02.2023. 3. For further details visit University Website <http://www.mbspus.ac.in>
PATIALA
23.01.2023
REGISTRAR

OFFICE OF THE PROJECT MANAGER, CONSTRUCTION UNIT, UTTARAKHAND PEYJAL NIGAM
GHINGARIKHAL, RANIKHET, DISTT- ALMORA 263645
Letter No.: 01/Camp Dehradun Date : 25-01-2023
E-Tender Notice
1. **Name of the work:- CONSTRUCTION OF REPAIRING WORKS OF TYPE-II RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS FOR REVENUE DEPARTMENT AT TEHSIL RANIKHET, DISTRICT ALMORA.**
2. **Estimated Cost:- Rs. 24.26 Lakh**
3. **Period of Completion:- 04 Month**
4. **Date and time of availability of Bid documents in the portal:- 25-01-2023 (17.00 hrs)**
5. **Online Bid submission: End date :- 08-02-2023 (17.00 hrs)**
6. **Date & Time of Technical bid Opening :- 09-02-2023 (16.30 hrs)**
7. **Name and Address of the Officer inviting bid:- Project Manager, Construction Unit, Uttarakhand Peyjal Nigam, Ranikhet.**
8. For further details, details of subsequent Amendment / correction documentation etc. may be obtained from the e-Procurement portal www.uktenders.gov.in
PROJECT MANAGER

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform public in general that Kotak Mahindra bank Ltd has organized an auction in below mention respect of Vehicles. **VEHICLES FOR SALE**

- 1) **FORCE_FORCETTFB**
REG. NO. HR47D7876-YOM-2017
 - 2) **FORCE_FORCETTFB**
REG. NO. HR47D1286-YOM-2017
 - 3) **TATAMOTORS_SFCA407CHP**
REG. NO. DL1LAA8125-YOM-2018
 - 4) **EICHR_VECV_PRO1049**
REG. NO. DL1LAB0499-YOM-2018
 - 5) **SWRJ_MAZDA_SAMRAT_TA**
REG. NO. DL1MA2499-YOM-2019
 - 6) **TATAMOTORS_TSF407SG**
REG. NO. DL1LAA5567-YOM-2018
- UNDER HYPOTHECATION WITH M/S KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK IS UNDER SALE IN ITS "AS IS WHERE IS CONDITION" INTERESTED PARTIES CAN GIVE THEIR QUOTATIONS WITH IN 7 DAYS AT**
BRANCH ADDRESS:
KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK LTD., 3RD FLOOR, PLOT NO 7, SECTOR 125, NOIDA-201313
OR CONTACT :JAGBIR SIR KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK LTD. CONTACT : 9999996157 EMAIL:jagbir.singh@kotak.com

NORTHERN RAILWAY
CORRIGENDUM
Ref.- Tender Notice No. 78 Dated: 12.01.2023
Tender No. 14221030 due on 13.02.2023
In reference to above tenders, the item description has been modified same has been uploaded. All other terms and conditions remain unchanged. The corrigendum has been published on website www.ireps.gov.in
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 264/23

NORTHERN RAILWAY
TENDER NOTICE
Invitation of Tender through E-Tendering (E-Procurement Systems)

N.I.T. No.	S.N. 37-2022-23-W-V
1 Name of work with its location: 1) Transplantation of trees in connection with construction of EMU stabling line at HN2M yard in the section of SSE/W/HN2M line under ADEN/HN2M	
2 Approx. Cost of work: 1) Rs. 15,10,255.00	
3 Earnest Money Deposit: (It should be in the form of net banking or payment gateway Only. Note: FDR will not be accepted as EMD for tender invited on IREPS as per Railway Boards letter no. 201025/CE-IC/CT/5/1 dated 31.08.2016) 1) Rs. 30,200.00	
4 Completion period of Work 1) 2 Months	
5 Date and time for submission of tender and opening of tender: Upto 15.00 hrs. on 17.02.2023. Opening of tender at 15.00 hrs. On 17.02.2023	
6 Website particulars notice board location complete details of tender can be seen and address of the office from where the tender form can be purchased etc.: Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in	

No.: 128-W/280/OET/2022-23/W-V/NIT-37-2022-23-W-V Date: 24.01.2023 259/2023
Serving Customers with a Smile

NORTHERN RAILWAY
TENDER NOTICE
Invitation of Tender through E-Tendering (E-Procurement Systems)

N.I.T. No.	38-2022-23-W-V
Name of work with its location	Development of landscaping and other horticulture in the section of SSE/W/HN2M under ADEN/HN2M Similar Nature of work : Supply, installation and maintenance of indoor/outdoor will developed ornamental potted plant. Rs. 9039034.97
Earnest Money Deposit	(It should be in the form of net banking or payment gateway Only. Note: FDR will not be accepted as EMD for tender invited in IREPS as per Railway Boards letter No. 201025/CE-IC/CT/5/1 dated 31.08.2016) Rs. 180800.00 24 Months
Date and time for submission of tender and opening of tender	Upto 15.00 hrs on 17.02.2023 Opening of tender at 15.00 hrs. On 17.02.2023
Website particulars notice board location complete details of tender can be seen and address of the office from where the tender form can be purchased etc.	Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in

No. 128-W/280/OET/2022-23/W-V/NIT-38-2022-23-W-V Dated : 25.01.2023
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 271/23

Sensex, Nifty tumble more than 1% on F&O expiry

Bank, financial stocks skid

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty tanked more than 1 per cent on Wednesday due to heavy selling pressure in banking and financial shares amid unabated foreign capital outflows.

The 30-share BSE barometer plunged by 773.69 points or 1.27 per cent to 60,205.06 as 22 of its scrips declined while eight advanced.

The index opened lower and later fell nearly 900 points during the day to touch a low of 60,081.36 as investors closed their positions on the last day of derivatives expiry.

The broader Nifty of the National Stock Exchange declined sharply by 226.35 points or 1.25 per cent to close below the 18,000 level at 17,891.95. As many as 35 of its scrips ended in the red and 15 gained.

"Indian equities witnessed a significant sell-off as the market appeared apprehensive ahead of the upcoming Union Budget and Fed meeting next week," Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services, said.



"Sentiments were dampened by persistent FII selling, where funds are being shifted to other EMs as a result of attractive valuations. Furthermore, a weak economic growth outlook that stoked recession fears pulled down global markets," Nair said.

Analysts said that traders offloaded stocks ahead of the Adani Enterprises Rs 20,000 crore FPO, while migration from T2 to T1 settlement starting on Friday also led to some selling.

"Markets plunged sharply lower on the monthly expiry day and ended with a cut of over a per cent. After the flat start, the Nifty index drifted gradually

lower in the first half and remained in a narrow band thereafter," Ajit Mishra, VP - Technical Research, Religare Broking, said.

Among Sensex stocks, SBI fell the most by 4.3 per cent. IndusInd Bank tanked by 4.26 per cent, HDFC Bank by 2.78 per cent and Axis Bank by 2.02 per cent. HDFC, Tech Mahindra, ICICI Bank, Ultratech Cement, L&T, Bajaj Finserv, Reliance, HCL Tech, Asian Paints, Wipro and M&M were among the major losers.

On the other hand, HUL advanced the most by 1.14 per cent. Maruti, Tata Steel, NTPC and Sun Pharma also posted gains.

In the broader market, BSE Midcap declined by 1.52 per cent while BSE Smallcap by 0.94 per cent.

Among sectoral indices, BSE Power plunged by 2.72 per cent, Utilities by 2.87 per cent, Bankex by 2.42 per cent, Financial Services by 2.11 per cent, Telecommunications by 2.06 per cent, Oil & Gas by 1.76 per cent, Realty 1.92 per cent, and Capital Goods by 1.06 per cent.

Asian markets were mixed after the US stocks finished little changed. Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 gained 0.4 per cent and South Korea's Kospi jumped 1.4 per cent, while markets in Hong Kong and Shanghai were closed for the Lunar New Year holidays.

European shares were also mixed with stock indices trading lower in Germany and France, while Britain's FTSE 100 rose 0.1 per cent.

Brent crude, the international oil benchmark, declined by 0.31 per cent to USD 85.86 per barrel.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were net sellers in the capital market on Wednesday as they sold shares worth Rs 2,393.94 crore, according to exchange data.

Stock and money markets will remain closed on Thursday for the Republic Day holiday.

Microsoft, amid layoffs, says quarterly profit declined 12%

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Microsoft on Tuesday reported a 12% drop in profit for the October-December quarter, reflecting the economic uncertainty it said led to its decision to cut 10,000 workers. The company reported quarterly profit of \$16.43 billion, or \$2.20 per share. Excluding one-time items, the company based in Redmond, Washington, said it earned \$2.32 a share, which topped Wall Street expectation for adjusted earnings of \$2.29 a share.

The software maker posted revenue of \$52.75 billion in the October-December period, its second fiscal quarter, up 2% from the same period a year ago.

Analysts polled by FactSet expected Microsoft to post revenue of \$52.99 billion for the October-December quarter.

Microsoft last week blamed "macroeconomic conditions and changing customer priorities" for its decision to cut nearly 5% of its global workforce. It's one of a number of tech companies, including Google, Amazon, Salesforce and Facebook parent Meta, to announce mass layoffs.

Microsoft's personal computing business, centered on its Windows software, was widely expected to continue a deterioration that began earlier last year due to economic uncertainties and crimped demand.

Govt to sell 30 L tonnes of wheat in open market to control prices of grain, flour

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



January 1 in the buffer stock.

Under the OMSS policy, the government allows FCI to sell food grains, especially wheat and rice, at pre-determined prices in the open market from time to time to bulk consumers and private traders.

The purpose is to boost the supply during the lean season and moderate the general open market prices. Flour millers have been demanding from the government to offload wheat stocks from the FCI.

"We are finding that there is an uptick in the prices of wheat and atta. We are aware of the issue. Various options are being explored by the government and very soon we will come up with our response," Chopra had told reporters last week. The secretary had said that the stocks of wheat and rice in the FCI godowns are comfortable.

The Centre had banned wheat exports in May to control prices, after a slight fall in the domestic production and a sharp decline in the FCI's procurement for the central pool.

India's wheat production fell to 106.84 million tonnes in the 2021-22 crop year (July-June) from 109.59 million tonnes in the previous year due to heat waves in a few growing states.

The procurement fell sharply to 19 million tonnes this year from around 43 million tonnes last year. The area under coverage for wheat crop in the current rabi (winter-sown) season is slightly higher. The procurement of new wheat crop would commence from April 2023.

Sources said that the government will consider lifting the ban on wheat exports after harvesting of new crop.

'Budget to continue social welfare spends as poor consuming less, making eco recovery unsustainable'

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Economic recovery has not yet become broadbased and sustainable as only creamier sections are consuming, India Ratings and Research said on Wednesday and added that the FY24 budget is expected to continue with social sector spending.

The annual budget for the financial year 2023-24 will be presented in parliament on February 1.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will focus on making consumption demand resilient, boosting infrastructure and manufacturing capex, skill development and increasing productivity, fiscal consolidation and climate change in the last budget of this government, the agency said.

It said there is likely to be a "stark

difference" between economic performances of the first and second halves of FY23, which will suggest that it is only the upper layers which are driving the private final consumption, the agency said.

"Anecdotal evidence suggests that the gap between have and have nots has widened. ...Various social welfare schemes such as PM-KISAN and MGNREGA will not only continue but will also get appropriate resource allocation in the FY24 budget," the agency said.

It added that the recently announced measure on the free food grains front under the National Food Security Act for 813.5 million poor from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023 is a step in the same direction.

Spending power of the lower or



middle-income class has been "eroded significantly" due to higher inflation and negligible or negative real wage growth over the past few years, it said, adding some relief on the income tax front in

the FY24 budget will go a long way in alleviating their pain and can provide the much-needed thrust to the consumption demand.

On the infrastructure front, it expected the budget to increase capital expenditure to Rs 8.50 lakh crore in FY24 in order to build and strengthen vital infrastructure which could act as a foundation for a broad-based and sustainable recovery.

With the private sector not keen to come forward to invest, the agency said the budget can look at the customs duty front, saying inverted or distorted duty structures in select areas and sectors have been waiting for a correction for a long.

The agency said the budget would attempt a more gradual approach towards fiscal consolidation and there-

fore the fiscal deficit may get pegged at about 6.0 per cent of the GDP.

On the skill development front, it termed the decline in the contribution of quality of labour to India's GDP growth to 4.5 per cent during FY16-FY19 from 9.5 per cent during FY06-FY10 as a "cause of worry".

This is happening because India is lagging behind in equipping its workforce with the requisite skill set and education to cope up with the technological/business/ managerial changes occurring in the economy, the agency said, expecting an uptick in allocations on this front.

With India announcing climate commitments, the next logical step in this direction is to announce a road map to adopt climate responsive budgeting in the FY24 Union Budget, it said.

Rising cost of data a concern, Meity will reach out to Trai for assessment: MoS IT

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The rising prices of data and devices are a concern for the rapid proliferation of digitisation, Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar said on Wednesday. The comments have come against the backdrop of a recent hike of about 57 per cent in the minimum monthly recharge plan by the country's second-largest telco Bharti Airtel.

"Rise in cost of data or cost of devices is a matter of concern because they are impediments in rapid digitisation. We have a target to bring 120 crore Indians online by 2025. We have 83 crore Indians online today. We certainly see issues in rising cost of data consumption or any rise in the cost of devices," Chandrasekhar said on the sidelines of the India Stack Developer Conference.

The minister said that he has not studied the recent tariff hike in mobile services rates by Airtel and will wait for telecom regulator Trai to examine it.



"We are certainly going to talk to Trai, that's what is it? Is it short-term because of the Russia-Ukraine Global issue? Is it long-term? Is it a trend or more of an episodic issue? These are the questions that we are going to ask," Chandrasekhar said. He also said that there has been an impact on prices across the world due to the Russia-Ukraine war and the impact of data prices needs to be examined.

The minister said the cost of data and devices are barriers to digitisation.

"If an operator is going to take it then that is an issue that

Meity will certainly ask questions why are they taking it up? What are the reasons behind it? Is it because of a supply chain issue? But it is our mission in Meity to ensure that data remains affordable in India because that is the secret sauce of digitisation," he noted.

Bharti Airtel has increased the price of its minimum recharge for the 28-day mobile phone service plan by about 57 per cent to Rs 155 in eight circles, including Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh West.

The company has stopped its minimum recharge plan of Rs 99, under which it offered 200 megabyte of data and calls at the rate of Rs 2.5 paise per second. In Haryana and Odisha, Airtel has now started offering the Rs 155 plan with unlimited calling, 1 GB of data and 300 SMSes. Ministry of Electronics and IT secretary Alkesh Kumar Sharma said people should have access to digital inclusion, talk about digital empowerment and ensure there is no digital divide.

Digital currency to further bolster digital economy: RBI

PTI ■ CHANDIGARH

Digital currency will further bolster the digital economy, make payment system more efficient, reduce cost involved in physical cash management and also contribute to further financial inclusion, RBI Executive Director Ajay Kumar Choudhary said on Wednesday.

Choudhary was addressing an outreach seminar on 'Central Bank Digital Currency: The India Story' organised by the Reserve Bank of India. The event was organised ahead of a two-day International Financial Architecture Working Group meeting of G20 slated to take place on January 30 and 31 here.

The RBI has already launched pilots of CBDC (Central Bank Digital Currency) in wholesale and retail segments last year.

Choudhary said the CBDC is just a digital form of the physical currency and will have all its characteristics.

It is non-remunerative that



is it does not carry any interest like any currency, noted Choudhary, adding, "E-rupee is also expected to offer features of physical cash like safety and settlement of transactions."

Asserting that the digital

currency is aimed to complement rather than replace the current forms of money, he said, "it should not be construed as a step to replace any of the existing bouquet of payment which are already available with

us."

He said the key motivation for exploring the issuance of CBDC in India among others include moving to a digital economy, reduction in production and operation cost involved in physical cash management, which is huge even if suppose 10-15 per cent reduction, fostering financial inclusion, adding efficiency in the settlement system, boosting innovation in a cross-border payment space.

"Supported by the state-of-the-art payment system of India that is affordable and accessible, convenient, efficient, safe and secure, the CBDC can further bolster the digital economy, make the monetary and payment system more efficient and contribute to further financial inclusion," he asserted.

He also said for future considerations, offline functionality forms is one of the fundamental considerations for the design of E-rupee as it is a defining characteristic of the physical currency.



In a stellar show, Indian Bank net soars 102% to ₹1,396 crore in Q3

PTI ■ MUMBAI

All-round improvements in key metrics, especially on provisioning front which nearly halved, helped Indian Bank register a 102 per cent jump in net income at Rs 1,396 crore in the quarter ending December 2022.

The management of the Chennai-based public sector bank, led by managing director and chief executive Shantilal Jain, has guided towards better days ahead especially on the asset generation side, hoping to continue the good run rate on advances which have maintained a steady 13 per cent growth rate throughout the fiscal so far.

"We've been able to maintain our good show for the third quarter as well with all sources of income, be it net interest income, asset quality, or fee and forex income or loan sales, growing in the quarter. There is no one-off item in the numbers at all as all verticals performed well," Jain told PTI from Chennai on Wednesday.

The bank reported a 25 per cent growth in net interest income at Rs 5,499 crore in the quarter and the fee-based income grew 6 per cent to Rs 704 crore led by a 99 per cent spike in forex income at Rs 294 crore. This was driven by a healthy 71 basis points jump in net interest margin at 3.74 per cent from 3.03 per cent in December 2021.

Another key profit driver, Jain said, was the recovery which jumped 53 per cent on year to Rs 426 crore. This also had the bank seeing a 40 per cent reduction in provisioning at Rs 1,474 crore from the year-ago period.

Gross NPAs (Non-Performing Assets) declined by 260 basis points to 6.53 per cent or Rs 29,400 crore from Rs 36,000 crore, helping the bank more than halving net NPAs or by 172 basis points to 1 per cent, or at Rs 1,474 crore from Rs 2,439 crore, Jain said.

This had the provision coverage ratio improving by 810 basis points to 93.59 per cent, Jain said.

He said the recoveries through the NCLTs, one-time settlement and other means stood at Rs 426 crore, which was 53 per cent more than the year-ago period, while slippages declined to Rs 1,300 crore.

Advances increased 13 per cent to Rs 4,51,658 crore from Rs 4,00,432 crore in December 2021, of which the RAM (retail, agriculture & MSMEs) book grew 15, 15 and 6 per cent respectively to Rs 2,62,811 crore from Rs 2,33,738 crore.

The contribution of this book to gross domestic advances is 62 per cent. Home loans grew by 12 per cent, auto loans jumped 27 per cent and personal loan soared 35 per cent.

The bank's gold loan book, which is among the largest (Canara Bank is the largest among banks with around Rs 1 lakh crore of asset under management) grew 17 per cent to Rs 60,000 crore, Jain said, adding deposits rose at a tepid 6 per cent to reach Rs 5,97,114 crore.

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'Surviving very well for over 75 years greatest aspect of Indian democracy'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The greatest aspect of Indian democracy is that the country has survived very well unfactured for over 75 years, Dr. Justice M.Jaichandren, Former Judge of Madras High Court, said on Wednesday.

Delivering the Republic Day Special Address at SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Dr. Justice Jaichandren said.

At the same time, this was a big achievement, the people

had to continue to do even better, considering the diversity — of cultural and traditional values, religions, and languages.

At the Special Lecture, organised by the School of Law of SRM IST on the eve of India's 74th Republic Day, he said there was immense diversity in our language alone — considering there were 22 languages mentioned in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution in addition to hundreds of dialects.

AI offers 98 cr shares to staff under stock option scheme

PTI ■ MUMBAI/NEW DELHI

Air India has offered around 98 crore shares of the company to its permanent employees as part of a stock option scheme. The shares are also being offered to the permanent staff of Air India Express as part of the Employees' Share Benefit (ESB) Scheme 2022, according to a document.

The Tata group took over the control of Air India and Air India Express from the government on January 27, 2022. An airline official told PTI that around 8,000 employees will benefit from the scheme.

"In accordance with the share purchase agreement signed as part of the disinvestment process, Air India has initi-



ated the Employee Share Benefit Scheme for eligible employees who were in service with the airline on the date of privatisation.

"We will be working with the relevant employees to help them understand the long term benefits and avail of the

same," an Air India spokesperson said in a statement.

Those who were permanent employees at the two carriers — Air India and Air India Express — at the time of the takeover will be eligible to participate in the scheme where the share is offered at a price of 27 paise apiece, as per the document sent to the staff.

A source said the price is at a discount compared to the book value of 87-90 paise per share at the time of acquisition. An employee trust has been set up to administer the ESB scheme.

"The company has authorised the trust to offer ESB benefits on no more than three per cent of the shares of the company purchased by Talace i.e., 97,99,56,600 to the eligible employees

from time to time, in one or more tranches, acquired by the trust from Talace for nil monetary consideration.

"The trust shall hold the ESB shares to provide the ESB benefit to the eligible employees upon the payment of the aggregate exercise price together with all applicable taxes and amounts...", the document said.

Talace, a subsidiary of Tata Sons, acquired Air India, Air India Express and the government's 50 per cent stake in Air India SATS Airport Services Pvt Ltd.

"... Any eligible employee retiring on or after January 27, 2022, will be deemed to be an eligible employee and will be entitled to the benefits in accordance with and subject to the terms of this scheme," as per the document.

PFC bags Gold Shield in ICAI Awards

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Power Finance Corporation Limited (PFC), a Maharatna CPSE and country's leading NBFC in power sector, has been conferred with the prestigious Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) Gold Shield being a winner in the category 'Public Sector Entities' of ICAI Awards for Excellence in Financial Reporting for 2021-22.

DJOKOVIC REACHES AUS SEMIS

AP ■ MELBOURNE

Novak Djokovic delivered a masterclass Wednesday to race into the Australian Open semi-finals and edge closer to a 22nd Grand Slam title with a straight-sets thrashing of Andrey Rublev. The Serbian was in the zone to blitz past the Russian 6-1, 6-2, 6-4 on Rod Laver Arena and meets Tommy Paul for a place in Sunday's final.

The unseeded American Paul defeated countryman Ben Shelton 7-6 (8/6), 6-3, 5-7, 6-4.

"I cannot be happier with my tennis, honestly," said Djokovic, after reaching a 10th semi-final at Melbourne Park. Only Roger Federer (15) and Jack Crawford (11) have been there more often.

"I've been playing very solid from the back of the court and I really love playing in these conditions and this court," the 35-year-old told Rod Laver Arena.

"Some really close games that we had," he added. "Andrey is a great opponent, great player. I have tons of respect for him, one of the biggest forehands, the quickest players on the tour."



"I knew what the game plan was and it was important that I found my best tennis."

Djokovic's quest for a record-extending 10th Australian Open title has been far from smooth, plagued by a left hamstring strain suffered en route to the title at Adelaide this month.

He struggled physically in the early rounds but was dominant during his fourth-round demolition of Alex de Minaur, and he showed few problems against Rublev. Victory for the red-hot favourite propelled him into a 44th Grand Slam semi-final to close the gap on Federer's all-time record of 46.

In another astonishing record, he clocked a 26th consecutive match-win at the Australian Open to equal Andre

Agassi's Open-era record for longest streak at the first Grand Slam of the year.

The signs were ominous for Rublev before the match even started. In contrast to Djokovic's outstanding record in Melbourne, Rublev — who was taken to five sets by Holger Rune in the fourth round — came into the clash with a 0-6 record in Grand Slam quarter-finals. After a shaky start when he served double fault to open proceedings, Djokovic quickly settled into a rhythm. The Russian, who also sent down a double fault to start,

struggled early on.

His serving jitters persisted and when the Serb worked a break point at 2-1 he double-faulted again in response. Djokovic was on fire and raced to a 4-1 lead before converting a fifth break point to speed 5-1 clear and clinch the set in 39 minutes. Rublev had no answers to his precision and power.

Djokovic continued in the same vein in the second set, grabbing his opportunity in game four after a 16-shot rally when Rublev blinked first with a backhand error.

TPCØDL

TP CENTRAL ODISHA DISTRIBUTION LIMITED

(A Tata Power and Odisha Government Joint Venture)

Hon'ble Odisha Electricity Regulatory Commission has approved the One-time Settlement (OTS) scheme for payment of Electricity arrear dues outstanding as on 31st May 2020 for the consumers.

Consumers Registered their Name, Consumer No. & Mobile No in the below mentioned.


- Call Center (1912/1800-345-7122)
- Customer Care Centre
- Sub-Division/Division Office/ Section Office
- Gaan Chala Camp
- WhatsApp/SMS (OTS-CA NO/ Customer ID) to 9124998729

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By virtue of an affidavit before Notary public, Bargarh I, Rohita Sahu s/o Lambodar Sahu, At/Po-Bagbadi, P.S-Barpali, Dist-Bargarh, do hereby solemnly affirm and state that my V.I.C. No. ACUO199570 and Aadhar No.8482 7468 8371, But in my Educational Certificate my name has been mentioned as Rohita sahu and in my Aadhar and V.I. Card, my name has been reflected as Rohit sahu. So Rohit Sahu and Rohita Sahu is same and one person and there is no different body living in my family in those different names except me. But in my Aadhar card my address has been Inadvertently mentioned as W.No.7 Bargarh near Jagannath Mandir, Bargarh. But my actual Permanent Address is At/Po.Bagbadi Via/P.S. Barpali. Dist.Bargarh P.I.N. 768029, which is reflected in my V.I.Card. The facts stated above are all true to my knowledge and belief.

Rohita Sahu



GOVT. OF ODISHA

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER

RURAL WORKS DIVISION, NUAPADA

BID IDENTIFICATION NO. **RWNPD-11 (Online) of 2022-23**

"e" PROCUREMENT NOTICE

Bid documents consisting of Work, Estimate Cost, Cost of tender Paper, EMD / BID security, Time of Completion, Class of Contractor and the set of terms and conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen in Govt. website i.e. www.tendersorissa.gov.in

1.Name of the Work : Building work in the District of Nuapada as mentioned in DTCN

2. Total No of Works : 01 No.

3.Estimated Cost : Rs. 77.04 Lakhs

4.Period of Completion : 06 (Six) Calendar Month

5.Other Details:

Procurement officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender online for bidding From To	Last date & time of Seeking tender clarification	Date & Time of Opening of Bid	Financial Bid
Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division, Nuapada	RWNPD-11 / 2022-23 (Online)	06.02.2023 at 10.00 AM	17.02.2023 up to 5.00 PM	16.02.2023 upto 05.00 PM	20.02.2023 at 11.00 AM

Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersorissa.gov.in

OIPR-25050/11/0016/2223

Superintending Engineer
Rural Works Division, Nuapada

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PARADEEP UNIT, ODISHA

Our Vision

To actively contribute to the social and economic development of the communities in which we operate. In doing so, build a better, sustainable way of life for the weaker sections of society and raise the country's human development index.

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Celebrating 74TH REPUBLIC DAY

IN SERVICE TO THE NATION 24x7

WE STOOD FIRM IN TRYING TIMES TO ENSURE ENERGY SECURITY



MCL

MAHANADI COALFIELDS LIMITED

(A Govt. of India Undertaking & Subsidiary of Coal India Limited)

Regd. Office : Jagruti Vihar, Burla, Dist: Sambalpur-768020 (Odisha)

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