

**CITY 3**  
INDIA HOSTING SEVENTH  
BATCH OF YOUNG LEADERS**OPINION 6**  
INDIAN AVIATION IS  
BECOMING CHAOTIC**WORLD 10**  
LANKA COPS INVESTIGATE  
THREATS ON EC

LUCKNOW, MONDAY JANUARY 30, 2023; PAGES 12 ₹3



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# Odisha Health Min shot dead by policeman

Naba Das who was shot by 'mentally disturbed' ASI succumbed to his injuries in hospital

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
BHUBANESWAR

Odisha's Health and Family Welfare Minister Naba Kishore Das on Sunday succumbed to bullet injuries inflicted by a police officer.

The incident took place in Brajrajnagar town in Jharsuguda district around 1 PM when the Minister was on his way to attend a public programme.

An Assistant Sub Inspector (ASI) of police fired four to five rounds at the Minister when he got out of his car. The ASI was nabbed by local people, who then handed him over to the police. Reports suggested that the accused ASI was suffering from mental illness for the past seven-eight years.

"Das was admitted with gunshot wounds on the left side of his chest. On operating, it was found that a single bullet had entered and exited the body, injuring the heart and left lung, causing massive internal bleed-



Odisha Health Minister Naba Das at a hospital after he was shot at by a policeman near Brajrajnagar in Jharsuguda district on Sunday

PTI Photo

ing and injury. The injuries were repaired, and steps were taken to improve the pumping of the heart. He was given urgent ICU care. But despite best efforts, he could not be

revived and succumbed to his injuries," said the statement issued by Apollo Hospital in Bhubaneswar.

According to reports, Das suffered injuries on the left side of

his chest, while another policeman, who was standing guard, was also injured in the firing.

"Assistant Sub-inspector of Police (ASI) Gopal Das opened fire at the Minister, who sustained bullet injuries. The Minister was then rushed to a hospital," Brajrajnagar SDPO Guptaeswar Bhoi told reporters. An inquiry has been launched to find out what prompted the ASI to open fire, Bhoi said.

In a video footage of the incident, Das is seen bleeding from the chest. Some people lifted the injured Minister, who seemed unconscious, and placed him on the front seat of a car.

Initially, he was taken to the Jharsuguda district headquarters hospital, the SDPO said. Arrangements were then made to airlift him to a Bhubaneswar hospital for "better treatment", he said.

The incident triggered tension in the town as the Minister's supporters pointed fingers to the "security lapses".

Some supporters even claimed that a conspiracy was hatched to target him.

Bhoi said that the ASI was currently being interrogated, and more details will be available after a thorough investigation.

The Government has ordered a Crime Branch probe into the incident.

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# Rahul unfurls Tricolour at historic Lal Chowk

75 yrs after Nehru hoisted flag at Lal Chowk, Gandhi hoists Tricolour to mark yatra's end

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI/SRINAGAR

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday unfurled the Tricolour at the historic clock tower of Lal Chowk in Srinagar to mark the end of the 3,500-km-long Bharat Jodo yatra. After attending the brief ceremony at Lal Chowk Rahul posted a tweet on his timeline, saying, "By hoisting the Tricolour at Lal Chowk, the promise made to India was fulfilled today. Hate will lose, love will always win. There will be a new dawn of hopes in India."

Rahul hoisted the Tricolour at Lal Chowk 75 years after his great-grandfather Jawaharlal Nehru did so for the first time here. Rahul was first scheduled to hoist the Tricolour at the Congress office in Srinagar as earlier the Congress said that hoisting the national flag at Lal Chowk is "part of the RSS agenda". But the party changed its plan at the last minute after its leaders perhaps realised the significance of the Lal Chowk. To mark the end of the yatra,



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi with his sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and supporters during the Bharat Jodo Yatra, in Srinagar, on Sunday

PTI Photo

the Congress has convened an all-party gathering that will also reflect the extent of Opposition unity Rahul has been able to achieve through the Kanyakumari-to-Kashmir foot march.

Rahul was accompanied by his sister and Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and party leaders from Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) for the flag hoisting.

The security for the 10-minute event was at its peak as all roads leading to Lal Chowk had been sealed off from Saturday night

and no vehicular movement was allowed. Shops, business establishments, and the weekly flea market were closed as part of the security drill for the flag unfurling by the former Congress president.

Taking a 30-minute break from the Kanyakumari-to-Kashmir foot march at Sonawar, Rahul drove to the Pradesh Congress Committee headquarters on Maulana Azad Road before heading to the clock tower, locally known as 'Ghanta Ghar', to unfurl the Tricolour.

More than a dozen Opposition

parties will attend the concluding function on Monday. While the DMK, NCP, RJD, Shiv Sena, CPI(M), CPI, Viduthala Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK), Kerala Congress, National Conference, PDP, and JMM have confirmed their participation, the Trinamool Congress, Samajwadi Party, and the TDP will skip the function. A total of 24 parties were invited by Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge for the final function of the foot march led by Rahul.

*Continued on Page 9*

# 'Padma Awards echoes in Naxal-hit areas this time'

Those who showed right way to youth were honoured, says PM in talk show

**PNS ■** NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday, in his monthly radio talk 'Mann ki baat', spoke about 'Padma Awards' echoing "even in those areas which used to be Naxal affected" with the awardees recognised for showing the "right path to the misguided youth".

Addressing the people, the Prime Minister took on a range of issues including the environment, wetlands, e-waste, and the importance of millets and yoga in health, and there also praised the Republic Day celebrations of this year.

Drawing the attention of listeners to the grand Republic Day parade and Padma awards,



Modi said, "This year the echoes of the Padma Awards are being heard even in those areas which used to be Naxal affected. Due to their efforts, those who show the right path to the misguided youth in Naxalite-affected areas have been honored with Padma Awards."

"For this, Ajay Kumar Mandavi, who does wood carving in Kanker, and Parshuram Komaji Khune, associated with the famous Jharipatti Rangbhoomi of Gadchiroli, have also received this honour."

This time there has been a good representation of the trib-

al community and people associated with tribal life among the Padma awardees.

"Tribal life is different from the hustle and bustle of the cities; its challenges are also different. Despite this, tribal societies are always ready to preserve their traditions. Efforts are also made to preserve and research aspects related to tribal communities," said Modi.

"Similarly, many great personalities who have worked on tribal languages like Toto, Ho, Kui, Kuvi and Manda have received Padma Awards. It is a matter of pride for all of us."

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# Rain fails to dampen Beating Retreat spirit

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

The Beating the Retreat ceremony to mark the formal ending of Republic Day celebrations was a spectacular affair on Sunday despite the rain and inclement weather.

The lighted mass brass drums and crescendo of martial music by soldiers of the Armed forces dispelled the chill of the cold weather at Vijay Chowk here.

While the performers braved incessant rain to play tunes in their uniforms, the drone show was cancelled due to bad weather.

Foot-tapping music marked the beginning of the ceremony with the arrival of President Droupadi Murmu. She was welcomed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.

The Prime Minister was drenched as he moved around outside the sheltered area, waving at the audience after the ceremony was over. For the first time, a 3-D anamorphic projection was done on the facade of North Block and South

Block.

As many as 29 Indian tunes were played by the music bands of the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, the State Police and the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF).

Never missing a step despite the wet ground, the bands began playing the "Agniveer" tune followed by the enthralling tunes like "Almora", "Kedar Nath", "Sangam Dur", "Queen of Satpura", "Bhagirathi" and "Konkan Sundari".

The Air Force's band played "Aprajey Arjun", "Charkha", "Vayu Shakti", "Swadeshi", while fascinating "Ekla Cholo Re", "Hum Taiyyar Hai", and "Jai Bharat" were played by the band of the Navy.

The Army's band played "Shankhnaad", "Sher-e-Jawan", "Bhupal", "Agranee Bharat", "Young India", "Kadam Kadam Badhaye Ja", "Drummers Call", and "Ae Mere Watan Ke Logon". The event came to a close with the ever-popular tune "Sare Jahan se Accha".

In a magnificent sight, the contrast of the bands playing

*Continued on Page 9*

# Maurya, Shivpal, Azam among 14 gen secretaries appointed by SP

**Lucknow (PNS):** Swami Prasad Maurya, who recently stirred a controversy by his intemperate remarks on Ramcharitmanas, has been rewarded by being appointed as general secretary of the Samajwadi Party. Shivpal Singh Yadav, uncle of party chief Akhilesh Yadav, and veteran

leader Mohammad Azam Khan are also among the 14 national general secretaries appointed by the party.

The SP declared its 62-member national executive on Sunday with Akhilesh Yadav as its national president.

The uncle-nephew duo of Shivpal and Akhilesh, who

parted ways in 2016, came together during the Mainpuri Lok Sabha by-election in December last year following the death of SP founder Mulayam Singh Yadav.

The SP on Sunday released the list of 62 national executive members on its Twitter handle.

*Detailed report on Page 3*

New Zealand's batter Devon Conway gets out during the 2nd T20 cricket match between India and New Zealand, at Bharat Ratna Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ekana Cricket Stadium in Lucknow on Sunday

PTI

# Thalaivar's unherioc act to hit small artistes' livelihood

**KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■** KOCHI

Hundreds of comedy and mimicry artists across the country are in for a shock as South India's superstar Rajinikanth has cracked the whip on them through a public notice.

The artists eking out a living by mimicking and imitating Rajinikanth are banned from doing so, according to the public notice issued by Rajinikanth through his lawyer Subbiah Elambharathi on Saturday.

The superstar, popularly addressed as 'Style Mannan (King of Styles)', 'Thalaivar (leader)', and 'Badshah (emperor)' is one of the leading Indian personalities caricatured by mimicry artists in the country. No comedy shows would be complete without the portrayal of Rajinikanth, and there are artists specialising in mimicking and caricaturing the superstar. "Our client is an actor of



humongous reputation having acted in films across languages for decades. His charisma and nature as an actor and a human being has earned him the title "Superstar" called upon by millions of his fans worldwide. The sheer proportion of his fan base and his respect across the film industry is unmatched and indisputable. Any damage or violation to his reputation or persona would entail great loss to our client having its effect

over many spheres," says the notice. It warns the general public that their client is the only person who has control over the commercial utilization of his personality, name, voice, image, likeness and other characteristics that are uniquely identifiable with their client and no one can utilize or misappropriate or imitate any facets of their client's personality and exploit the same commercially in any manner whatsoever without the

consent and express authorization from him. "It has come to our client's notice that various platforms and mediums and also various product manufacturers are misappropriating our client's name, voice, image, photographs and caricature image, artistic image, computer Artificial Intelligence generated images and other characteristics to create popularity amongst the public and to entice member of the public to purchase their products and to have access their platform and medium. Our client is popularly known as Superstar," the notice continues.

The advocate concluded the notice with the warning that of anyone was found infringing their client's rights, the violator would have to face civil and criminal charges in accordance with the law.

Rajinikanth's dialogue delivery and mannerisms are the most sought-after items in

mimicry shows. There are many artists who caricature the superstar as chief minister and army commander much to the delight of the audience. One of the mobile phone manufacturers had named a signature phone series after a Kochadiyaan a character portrayed by the superstar. In 2015, Rajinikanth patented the mannerism of the character he portrayed in 'Baba', a movie in which he played the lead role.

Salim Kumar, who bagged the national award for best actor, said one cannot blame the superstar for his decision to issue a notice like this. "It is his personal decision. What I understand is that some of the comedy artists have spoofed him and it is bound to have hurt him. Mimicking should not end up in spoofing anybody," Salim Kumar, who himself was a leading mimicry artist before entering the film industry told *The Pioneer*.

# Indian women win U-19 T20 WC

**PTI ■** POTCHEFSTROOM

India on Sunday won their maiden ICC title in women's cricket as a bunch of sprightly and talented teenagers lifted the inaugural U-19 World Cup with an emphatic seven-wicket victory over England.

The Shafali Verma-led India U-19 squad managed to do what their seniors could not do by clearing the final hurdle in a global event. India first bundled out England for 68 in 17.1 overs and then returned to knock off the paltry target in 14 overs to lift the coveted trophy. "It is just a proud moment, it's our first world cup," said Trisha with stumps in hand after the memorable win. The win on Sunday also reaffirms India's dominance at the U-19 level with the boys winning the world title in the Caribbean last year. India's bowling attack, led by pacer Titas Sadhu and sup-

ported by leg-spinner Parshavi Chopra, set up the comprehensive win on Sunday as they blew England away with a clinical display at Senwes Park.

While Sadhu showed that Indian women pace bowling is in safe hands following the retirement of Jhulan Goswami with impressive figures of 4-0-6-2, Chopra too continued her dream run as she snapped two for 13. Archana Devi also scalped 2 f or 17, while Mannat Kashyap (1/13), Shafali (1/16) and Sonam Yadav (1/3) accounted for one wicket each as England were all at sea after being asked to take first strike.

Following a pep talk from India's Olympic champion javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra, India came out with a specific plan and executed it perfectly as England's innings never really took off after being reduced to 16 for three in four overs. *(Detailed report on Page 12)*

# SEBI may probe recent short selling on bourses

**IANS ■** NEW DELHI

Markets regulator, SEBI is likely to probe short selling in the Indian stock markets in the last few days. Sources said Indian markets have been under onslaught in the last few trading sessions and a probe will ascertain the role of short sellers in bringing the market down.

According to a SEBI discussion paper, 'Short selling — the sale of a security that the seller does not own' — is one of the long-standing market practices, which has often been the subject of considerable debate and divergent views in most of the securities markets across the world. The votaries of short selling consider it as a desirable and an essential feature of a securities market.

*Continued on Page 9*



# Youth, mother suffer burns in acid attack

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Blowing to smithereens the claims of improved law and order, a youth and his mother were attacked with acid inside their house in Gomti Nagar on Saturday night. Police were yet to ascertain the motive even as the victims claimed that they had no enmity with anyone. The youth's father is a carpenter and the family is of a humble background.

As per reports, two men rang the doorbell of the house (Viram Khand-3) of Sena Ram Verma, who is a carpenter. As Verma's wife Aneeta opened the door, one of the men inquired about her son Vikas. As soon as Vikas reached there, one of the men, who was carrying a bottle, threw acid on Vikas. When Aneeta rushed to her son's rescue, she was also attacked with acid.

Vikas's brother Akash later called his relatives and friends for help. The victims were later rushed to Ram Manohar Lohia Institute of Medical Sciences from where they were referred to the burn unit of Civil hospital. Vikas suffered burns on the right side of his face, shoul-

der and neck. He also suffered burns in the eye. Aneeta also suffered burns on her face, hands and legs.

Both were said to be not in a condition to speak properly because of trauma. "The mother-son duo are yet to get over the shock. They are not saying anything," a family member said.

The station house officer of Gomti Nagar claimed that the attack could well be a fallout of some personal enmity. However, he appeared to be doubting the claims made by the victims' family but did not explain it further. He added that the motive for the attack was yet to be ascertained as the victims' family did not share with the police anything in this regard. "The family told the police that they had no enmity with anyone," the SHO said.

Sources said the attack could be a result of some grudge or enmity. "Either the family is hiding the truth or the police are trying to save the skin of some influential people who may have orchestrated the attack," one source said.

Meanwhile, the police got a CCTV footage in which two

youths, one of whom was carrying a bottle, were spotted. The police said they were trying to identify the suspects.

Meanwhile, three persons ended their lives in different parts of the city on Sunday. Anas Siddiqui (22) of Lakhimpur Kheri ended his life at his sister's house in Lucknow on the intervening night of Saturday and Sunday.

Reports said Anas, who was jobless, had been living with his sister Afsana in Silver City Colony for the last 10-15 days. He was found hanging from the ceiling of a room on the top floor. Anas was said to have been depressed due to joblessness.

In Mohanlalganj, a 30-year-old man, Babulal of Sisendi village, was found hanging from the ceiling at his old house. Brother Pappu said Babulal went to their old house and hanged himself. Police said Babulal was an alcoholic. Meanwhile in Mohanlalganj, a 60-year-old washerman, Ram Narayan of Dhanuva Saand village, ended his life at his house on the intervening night of Saturday and Sunday. Police sent the body for autopsy.

# Woman molested over land dispute

Lucknow (PNS): A woman was molested over a land dispute in Gosainganj police station area. Police registered a case only after the complainant requested senior officials. The incident was reported on January 27. Reports said the complainant had a dispute over the ownership of a land with another woman, identified as Nisha, a resident of Alambagh. The issue is sub judice and the land is in possession of the complainant. On the fateful day, three men — identified as Sanjay, Dheerendra and his brother Shiva — reached the land and parked a tractor-trolley there. It was alleged that the complainant, who was all alone, was abused when she confronted the men for parking the tractor-trolley on her land.

"They called Nisha who reached the scene and provoked the above-named accused, asking them to kill me. The trio lunged at me and pinned me down. They attacked me and groped me with a malafide intention," the complainant alleged.

Meanwhile, police claimed to have arrested a bootlegger in Bakshi-Ka-Talab and recovered 11,688 liquor bottles being transported to Bihar on the intervening night of Saturday

and Sunday. The accused was identified as Rajesh Rathor of Mainpuri district. The police seized the container carrying the liquor bottles. The accused confessed to his crime and disclosed that he had changed the registration number of the truck. However, he ran out of luck. The police said they were tipped off about a container carrying Haryana-made liquor to Bihar. A team laid a trap and stopped the container at the check point. Initially, Rajesh claimed that he was carrying medicines but the police checked the container and recovered liquor bottles. The police said they recovered four registration number plates, Rs 3,600 in cash and a mobile phone from the possession of the accused.

## JUDGE THREATENED

A resident of Mall Avenue was accused of sending a threat letter to an additional civil judge who passed the verdict of a case involving a family member of the former. Reports said that Himanshu Sinha aka Sumit Kumar Sinha of Mall Avenue sent the threat letter to the judicial officer who had decided the case, Beena Sinha vs Shahida Parveen, on January 25.



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath inaugurated the India vs New Zealand 2nd T20 match by ringing the bell at the giant Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ekana Cricket Stadium on Sunday. Former Indian player and match referee Javagal Srinath and former Indian team coach and commentator Ravi Shastri also rang the bell with him. Earlier, Yogi also met Indian cricket team Captain Hardik Pandya and New Zealand Captain Mitchell Santner at the stadium. Both the captains presented a bunch of flowers to the CM.

# Mughal Gardens name change BJP conspiracy to divert attention from core issues: Akhilesh

PTI ■ KANNAUJ/LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Sunday took potshots at the Centre over renaming Rashtrapati Bhavan's famed Mughal Gardens to 'Amrit Udyan' and said it (name change) was a BJP conspiracy to divert attention from core issues such as price rise and unemployment.

The iconic Mughal Gardens at Rashtrapati Bhavan will now be known as 'Amrit Udyan', which would open for the public from January 31, an official statement issued on Saturday said.

Reacting to the Centre renaming Mughal Gardens, Yadav said, "Why not change the name of Lucknow-Agra Expressway to Amrit Expressway. I wonder if our names may be changed to Amrit by them (BJP)."

"All the works done by the Samajwadi Party during its regime will be renamed as Amrit Medical College, Amrit Cancer Hospital, Amrit toilets

etc. This (renaming) is a well-planned conspiracy of the BJP to divert the attention of people from the core issues of price rise, unemployment, etc."

Yadav was in Kanauj to provide financial help to family members of two labourers killed in a terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir. He handed over Rs 1 lakh to family members of each victim.

A government job would be given to a member of each family when the Samajwadi Party forms the government in the state, he said. The Samajwadi Party chief also spoke on the decline in share prices of Adani Group companies during the past week.

Share prices of Adani Group companies took a beating for a second straight session on Friday, falling up to 20 per cent and losing over Rs 4.17 lakh crore from the combined market valuation of listed firms after US-based Hindenburg Research made damaging allegations.

The Adani Group denied

the allegations and said it was examining legal options to take "punitive action" against Hindenburg Research for its "reckless" attempt to sabotage a mega share sale at the conglomerate's flagship firm.

People's hard-earned money invested in Life Insurance Corporation and State Bank of India is at stake, Yadav said. "The game of numbers is on. The real game will be on Monday (when stock markets reopen)," he added.

On protests by some BJP activists over his visit to a temple, Yadav said, "Now, BJP members will decide who can visit temple and who cannot." He alleged that development works initiated by his government in Kanauj had been stopped by the BJP.

Meanwhile, BSP chief Mayawati also took a dig at the government, asking if the "problems" of the country and its people will go away by changing names.

In a tweet in Hindi, Mayawati said, "Except for a

handful of people, all the people of the country are suffering from a stressful life due to high inflation, poverty and unemployment etc, and instead of focusing on resolving these problems, attempt to divert people's attention through conversion, renaming, boycott and hate speeches are unfair and sad."

On Saturday, while the BJP said the renaming of the iconic gardens shreds yet another symbol of colonialism, opposition parties advised the government to focus on creating jobs and controlling inflation instead.

In another tweet, former Uttar Pradesh chief minister Mayawati said, "Will changing the name of the famous Mughal Gardens of Rashtrapati Bhavan solve the burning day-to-day problems of the country and crores of people here?"

"Else, the general public will consider this as an attempt by the government to cover up its shortcomings and failures," she said.

# Cong launches 'Haath Se Haath Jodo' to connect with people in hinterlands

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

The Congress has started a 'Haath Se Haath Jodo' campaign in Uttar Pradesh, as a follow-up to its 'Bharat Jodo Yatra', to reach out to people in the hinterlands ahead of the 2024 general elections.

This state-level campaign, party leaders said, would strengthen the Congress' prospects and act as an extension of the Kanyakumari to Kashmir 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' that passed through the politically crucial state earlier this month. Uttar Pradesh sends 80 members to the 542-member Lok Sabha.

The 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' is currently in its final lap in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, with Rahul Gandhi hoisting the national flag at Lal Chowk in the city on Sunday.

AICC national general secretary and in-charge of Uttar Pradesh Priyanka Gandhi Vadra is likely to visit the state in February for the programme, party leaders said.

The 'Haath Se Haath Jodo' campaign is aimed at apprising people at the grassroots level of the failures of the central government, they said.

Armed with a letter from Rahul Gandhi sharing his experiences during the 'Bharat Jodo Yatra', Congress leaders and workers aim to fan out across the state up to the tehsil, block and village levels in order to connect with people during the next two months.

"The aim of the campaign is to apprise the people of the kind of hatred which is seen in society and the prevailing sit-

## THIS STATE-LEVEL CAMPAIGN, PARTY LEADERS SAID, WOULD STRENGTHEN THE CONGRESS' PROSPECTS AND ACT AS AN EXTENSION OF THE KANYAKUMARI TO KASHMIR 'BHARAT JODO YATRA' THAT PASSED THROUGH THE POLITICALLY CRUCIAL STATE EARLIER THIS MONTH

uation in Uttar Pradesh. We have presented certain facts in a 'chargesheet' against the government on issues such as farmer suicides, betrayal of the youth and how their dreams were shattered by the central and the state governments," Congress spokesperson Ashok Singh told PTI.

In-charges of all the 849 blocks in the state have been finalised for the campaign. Congress leaders, office bearers and workers will go from village to village and communicate with the public, he said. "Now we will go to the people on the issues of public welfare through the 'Haath Se Haath Jodo Yatra' with senior party leaders, including former MPs, MLAs and MLCs as well as regional presidents and the UPCC president," Singh said.

The anti-people policies of the BJP government at the Centre and in Uttar Pradesh will be discussed by organising 'chaupal' and 'sabha' in the villages, he added.

Deepender Hooda, Rajya Sabha MP from Haryana and in-charge for this campaign in Uttar Pradesh, will come to Lucknow in a couple of days, Singh said. According to the

Congress' West Uttar Pradesh unit chief Naseemuddin Siddiqui, all provincial presidents of the party have held discussions on ways to make the programme successful.

He said that in the 75 districts of Uttar Pradesh, current and former ministers, MPs, and MLAs have been given the responsibilities of district coordinators.

Rahul Gandhi's letter, which will be handed over to the people, recounts the "sweet and sour" experiences of the former Congress chief during his journey from Kanyakumari to Kashmir, besides flagging issues of unemployment, inflation and atrocities carried out by the BJP government in the country and the state, party leaders said.

"Haath Se Haath Jodo Yatra is an extension of 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' for reaching up to the block level, where every household will be visited and Gandhi's letter will be handed over. There will also be a vehicle with a screen to display the main points of Rahul Gandhi's yatra," the Congress had told PTI.

Priyanka Gandhi is likely to visit the state sometime

during these two months, Siddiqui said, adding that other senior leaders will also be roped in to visit different parts of Uttar Pradesh. He further said that discussions will be held with the public by setting up chaupals in every village. "If anyone feels that the government has done injustice to women, then there is an open offer for them. Priyanka Gandhi will fight for them and get them their rights," he added.

Siddiqui said the target is to take Rahul Gandhi's 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' message from the state headquarters to the block level. Crossing over to Uttar Pradesh from Delhi, Rahul Gandhi had travelled to Ghaziabad, Baghpat and Shamli before entering Haryana. Main opposition Samajwadi Party's ally the RLD had joined the yatra in Baghpat.

Samajwadi Party supremo Akhilesh Yadav and BSP chief Mayawati had greeted the yatra but did not participate in it.

Shrinking to two seats from its earlier tally of nine in the Uttar Pradesh assembly elections, the task is cut out for the grand old party in the crucial general election next year. In the 2019 general election, the Congress could hold its sway only in the Rae Bareilly seat of Sonia Gandhi. Even Rahul Gandhi lost from the family's traditional Amethi seat. With its stock continuing to go downhill in the most populous state, the Congress failed to find any partner in the opposition camp and had to go it alone in the 2022 assembly election.

# Flight aborts take-off after suspected bird hit

Lucknow (PTI): A Kolkata-bound AirAsia flight aborted its take-off after a suspected bird hit at the Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport here, officials said. "The pilot of an AirAsia flight aborted take-off after a suspected bird hit on the runway at around 11 am. This occurred before the flight could lift off. The aircraft returned to the bay and all the passengers were debarked safely," spokesperson of the airport Rupesh Kumar said. He said there were over 180 passengers on the flight. "Alternate arrangements were being made by the airline for the passengers," Kumar said.

# 3 held, 45 booked for installing Ambedkar's statue on govt land

Ballia (PTI): Three people were arrested and 45 others were booked for allegedly installing Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar's statue on government land in the Rasda Kotwali area illegally, police said on Sunday. Police have been directed to ensure peace in the village.

Station House Officer (SHO) of Rasda Kotwali, Himendra Singh said a case has been registered against 10

named and 35 unknown persons under sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) on Saturday and the police arrested three of the named accused on Sunday. According to police, a statue of Dr Ambedkar was illegally installed on government land in Lohta village of Rasda Kotwali area on Friday night. As soon as the incident was reported, the police reached the spot and removed the statue.

# School teacher brutally murdered

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a sensational killing, a school teacher was brutally murdered inside his house in Gonda district sometime on Saturday night. His body was found lying in a pool of blood on Sunday morning.

According to Additional Superintendent of Police Shivraj, Krishna Kumar Yadav (32) of Jalalpur police station area of Ambedkar Nagar district was working as an assistant teacher in Janta Inter College at Itiyathok and used to live with his sister, also a teacher, in a rented room in Forbesganj locality in Kotwali Nagar police station area. His sister had gone to Lucknow on Saturday evening and he was alone in the room.

The ASP said that a youth and a girl had visited Krishna's room late on Saturday evening and kept talking to him for a long time and they returned late at night. He said that the

landlord saw blood flowing from the door of Krishna's room early on Sunday and upon opening the door, he found his dead body in the room. According to Shivraj, the police reached the spot on getting information about the murder from the landlord, and sent the body for post-mortem. The ASP said the police had the investigation and some important clues had been found. He said that every point was being investigated seriously and the relatives had been called after informing them. An FIR was registered on the basis of their complaint.

In another incident, the body of a youth was found lying in a drain on Sunday afternoon in Kakrala town in Alapur police station area of Budaun. On getting the information, the local police reached the spot and sent the body for autopsy. Relatives of the deceased suspect that he was killed and his body was

dumped in the drain to conceal the crime.

Ajmat Khan (35 years), son of Akbar Khan of Ward No 7, Kakrala, slept in his house on Saturday night. Sometime in the night, he disappeared so the family launched a hunt for him and found his body lying in the drain on Sunday noon. Police are waiting for the post-mortem report before heading with the investigation.

Meanwhile, the body of one Shivaji Yadav, head of Mathauli village under Harpur Budhat police station of Gorakhpur, was found hanging in his room on Sunday morning. The local police claimed that the victim seems to have committed suicide.

According to the information, some boys who went for a walk on Sunday morning reached the village head Shivaji Yadav's house. When there was no response from

Yadav's house, they peeped through the window and were shocked to see the body of the village pradhan hanging from the latch of the roof. A huge crowd of villagers gathered around the pradhan's house and informed the cops at the local Harpur Budhat police station. Station in-charge Sandeep Yadav, who reached the spot, broke open the locked door and brought the dead body down from the trap. The police sent the body for post-mortem.

It is said that the pradhan's wife lives in Gorakhpur city. He also has a son. One of the pradhan's brothers is a constable in the police while two brothers live abroad. According to the police and the villagers, the pradhan committed suicide but the reason for the extreme step is yet to be ascertained.

According to the people, the pradhan had no enmity with anyone in the family.

# Ramcharitmanas pages burned in Vrindavan

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

A group called Akhil Bharatiya OBC Mahasabha on Sunday in Vrindavan burned photocopies of pages allegedly carrying "objectionable comments on women and Dalits" in Ramcharitmanas, supporting SP leader Swami Prasad Maurya.

The protest was held in Vrindavan Yojana sector apparently in solidarity with Maurya, who had on January 22 in a statement said the Hindu epic contained passages discriminatory of women and shudras.

"As reported in a section of media that we had burnt copies of Ramcharitmanas, it is incorrect to say that. We took out the photocopies of the objectionable comments

from the Ramcharitmanas, which were against the 'shudras' and women, and burned the photocopied page in a symbolic protest," Devendra Pratap Yadav, a state office bearer of the Akhil Bharatiya OBC Mahasabha, told PTI.

"Swami Prasad Maurya has already demanded that the objectionable comments mentioned in the Ramcharitmanas should be removed or banned. The government did not take any step in this regard. We have extended support to Swami Prasad Maurya on this, and the Akhil Bharatiya OBC Mahasabha stands with Swami Prasad Maurya," he said.

Ramcharitmanas, an epic poem in Awadhi language, is based on the Ramayana and has been composed by 16th-century Bhakti movement poet Tulsidas. "We stand unit-

ed with him as far as his statement and the move is concerned," Yadav said, and added that the group will continue to stage such protests in future.

Maurya, a prominent OBC leader in Uttar Pradesh, had kicked up a controversy by alleging that certain verses of the Ramcharitmanas "insult" a large section of society on the basis of caste and demanded that these be "banned."

Maurya, who was a cabinet minister in the BJP government, had resigned and joined the Samajwadi Party before the 2022 Uttar Pradesh assembly polls. He had contested from the Fazilnagar assembly seat in Kushinagar district but lost. He was later sent to the legislative council by SP president Akhilesh Yadav.

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# India's Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam motto providing new inspiration to world: CM



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath during a meeting with the participants of the Gen Next Democracy Network programme at his official residence in Lucknow on Sunday

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

If the young leaders of the world work together with commitment towards democracy, it would pave the way for the welfare of humanity not only in India but across the world, said Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday.

"All the countries of the world are working together with the spirit of India's ancient motto 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' (the world is a family), while having adopted democracy in some form or the other which can provide a new inspiration to the world," the chief minister said during a meeting of the participants of the Gen Next Democracy Network programme at his official residence here on Sunday.

On this occasion, the chief minister also felicitated the young leaders from Argentina, Botswana, Canada, Hungary, Indonesia, Japan and Lithuania on behalf of the Uttar Pradesh government and citizens.

The chief minister said that India, which was currently celebrating the Amrit Mahotsav of its independence, was not only the largest democracy in the world, but also the mother of all democracies as it was deeply rooted in the country since ancient times.

Yogi said that Uttar

Pradesh represented the spiritual and cultural ethos of India and was an important state in many ways. "Uttar Pradesh plays the most important role in India's food production. With 11 per cent cultivable land, we produce 20 per cent of India's total foodgrains. Uttar Pradesh is number one in India in foodgrain production. Uttar Pradesh is number one in sugarcane production. Uttar Pradesh is number one in vegetable and milk production as well. For the last few years, the work done in the field of infrastructure in Uttar Pradesh has instilled a new confidence in Uttar Pradesh as well as in the entire country," the chief minister asserted.

Welcoming the young leaders, the chief minister remarked, "I am happy that you have come here after visiting the oldest city of the world, Kashi. Kashi is the city of India's spiritual and cultural identity. This city has been known since the beginning of creation. Not only this, along with Kashi, India has also given the world's oldest scripture Rigveda to the world. I am happy that the young leaders of Japan are also here. The memories of Japan are linked to India, because India and the land of Uttar Pradesh play an important role in it, be it the land of Lord Buddha's enlight-

enment or the land of his attainment of perfection, his Mahaparinirvana place or his holy land. These cultural relations between India and Japan are very ancient. You yourself must have seen those memories of Japan in Varanasi. Former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe himself took this programme forward through the India-Japan Cultural Council."

Referring to the relations of India and Uttar Pradesh with Indonesia, the chief minister said that Ramlila of Indonesia was famous in the world. "Every year I invite Indonesia's Ramlila to perform in Ayodhya, the birthplace of Lord Ram, and I am happy that Ramlila from Indonesia fascinates the people of entire Uttar Pradesh," Chief Minister Yogi said. The chief minister remarked further: "It is a matter of great pride for all of us in the year of the Amrit Mahotsav of Independence that countries are working with the spirit of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, the guiding philosophy of India since ancient times, while India and Prime Minister Narendra Modi have got the opportunity to chair the G20 countries. On the one hand young leaders associated with major democracies of the world are coming to India through this event organised by ICCR

## India hosting seventh batch of young leaders

**Lucknow (PNS):** India is hosting the 7th batch of young leaders from January 22 to 31, 2023, as part of a new initiative called the Gen Next Democracy Network. The event has been planned by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), India's Ministry of External Affairs. Under this, young emerging leaders from global fora are visiting India to have a comprehensive overview of India's democratic traditions, its cultural heritage, its developmental initiatives and Indian democratic traditions at Union and state level. The programme is divided into various groups, consisting of approximately seven to eight countries with two to five representatives from each country in each group. The ICCR has so far hosted six batches of Gen Next Democracy Network programme delegates from 31 countries. These tours were very successful and the groups held meetings at various places including Parliament.

(Indian Council for Cultural Relations), and on the other G20 summits are also going to be held at different places in India under the theme 'One Earth, One Family, One Future'.

The chief minister said that democratic values were supreme in India, and UP, and its best example was seen during the pandemic when 80 crore people were provided free ration while more than 220 crore vaccine doses were given to the people free of cost. According to the chief minister, free vaccines were made available to more than 25 countries of the world. He added

further, "In Uttar Pradesh, we are running many programmes which are bringing changes to the lives of common citizens and making them self-reliant. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi, every citizen of the country and the state feels proud because he knows that not only India is in safe hands, but also the interests of every citizen are protected. The G20 summit will also work in the future to further this spirit of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam and I am sure that the young leaders of all the prestigious countries of the world will be successful in furthering this spirit of democracy."

## Aarohini initiative by UP govt to empower underprivileged girls

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Yogi Adityanath government is running several programmes, including Mission Shakti, to empower girls. In line with this initiative, on the instructions of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, a new campaign is being started to make the daughters of the underprivileged class capable and self-reliant, claimed an official spokesman here on Sunday.

Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, Uttar Pradesh, in association with a non-governmental organisation (NGO), will work under the Aarohini Initiative Training Programme for the safety and security of girls in all 746 Kasturba Gandhi residential girls' schools in the state. The campaign aims at enabling daughters of the underprivileged sections to raise their voice for their rights along with creating an understanding of the happenings in their lives among them. To make girls capable, training will be provided to full-time teachers of Kasturba Gandhi residential girls' schools, who will not only educate girls but will also be helpful for them. The training of teachers will start in Lucknow from February 1.

Director General of School Education Vijay Kiran Anand said that the main objective of the Aarohini programme, which would be implemented in three phases, was gender sensitisation. In the first phase, which will start on February 1, teachers will be trained. Two teachers of every Kasturba Gandhi residential girls' school

will receive the training, and they will then educate the girl students of the school. Along with the teachers, the institution will also groom the girls through debates and other activities. In the third phase, the campaign will be run at community level, making people aware of the issue of gender sensitisation.

Under the Basic Education department, there are 746 Kasturba Gandhi residential girls' schools in the entire state, out of which 56 have been upgraded up to class 12. Aarohini tackles the problems of these young girls. The warden will select teachers for training. Apart from this, the officer of the Basic Education department will review this entire programme from time to time.

Leading this programme on behalf of Study Hall Education Foundation, Priyanka said that Aarohini was a gender-based programme. "In Kasturba Gandhi residential schools, daughters from underprivileged classes, whose families have a huge gender gap, come to study. Our aim under this programme is to raise awareness of girls about their rights and issues and empower them to fight for themselves. During the training, teachers will be told about how this programme will work and how they have to make the children aware. The whole programme is based on critical feminist pedagogy," she said.

According to her, the teachers will make children understand their problems and enable them to find solutions to it on their own. With the

help of this, girls will be able to face challenges like child marriage, domestic violence, not being able to complete education or any kind of problem in a planned manner and raise their voice for their rights. Apart from this, the annual 'Daughters Campaign' will also be run in these schools in which a specific issue is raised by involving children, the community and the teachers.

According to the memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed between the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan and the NGO, the organisation will train two full-time teachers (1,492 teachers on priority basis) from all 746 Kasturba Gandhi residential girls' schools on safety and protection of the girl child. To provide cooperation to the teachers at the district level by the institution, the girl education coordinator of each district will be provided training at the state level as the main trainer. Also, a support network will be created by involving trained teachers, chief trainer district coordinator (girls' education), child welfare committee members, district child welfare officers and district child marriage prohibition officers in all Kasturba Gandhi residential girls' schools of the state. Study Hall Educational Foundation will also provide cooperation by making field visits from time to time through women employees. Trained teachers will be provided important information and suggestions related to women's issues by the organisation through tele-monitoring cell (phone call) every month.

## Yogi congratulates U-19 women cricket team

**Lucknow (PNS):** Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday congratulated the Under-19 Indian women's cricket team for winning the inaugural edition of the Women's U-19 T20 World Cup by beating England in the final.

Lauding the young players on their victory, the chief minister said, "Jai Ho! The daughters of the nation won

the historic ICC Women's #U19T20WorldCup today. Hearty congratulations to the entire team!"

He further said, "This historic win achieved by the unwavering dedication and hard work of the team is an inspiration for the talents of the country and the world."

It is notable that Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has been making dedicated efforts

to foster sports culture in the state. Recently, on January 26, Yogi had honoured the sportspersons who made the country proud. Due to the efforts of the government, the daughters of the state are representing the country in various sports competitions. Many players from UP, including Archana Devi, were also a part of the women's team that won the World Cup.

## Maurya, Shivpal, Azam among 14 gen secretaries appointed by SP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Swami Prasad Maurya, who recently stirred a controversy by his intemperate remarks on Ramcharitmanas, has been rewarded by being appointed as general secretary of the Samajwadi Party. Shivpal Singh Yadav, uncle of party chief Akhilesh Yadav, and veteran leader Mohammad Azam Khan are also among the 14 national general secretaries appointed by the party.

The SP declared its 62-member national executive on Sunday with Akhilesh Yadav as its national president.

The uncle-nephew duo of Shivpal and Akhilesh, who parted ways in 2016, came together during the Mainpuri Lok Sabha by-election in December last year following the death of SP founder Mulayam Singh Yadav.

The SP on Sunday released the list of 62 national executive members on its Twitter handle.

In 2016, Shivpal Yadav, the then SP's Uttar Pradesh unit president, had an open feud



with the then chief minister Akhilesh Yadav and was sacked from Uttar Pradesh cabinet. Sidelined in the party, Shivpal Yadav had formed the Pragatisheel Samajwadi Party (Lohia) in 2018 and contested against SP from Firozabad in the 2019 Lok Sabha election. After their show of unity in Mainpuri, there was speculation that Shivpal Yadav will be formally rehabilitated in the party. Swami Prasad Maurya, a former minister in the Yogi Adityanath government, switched from the Bharatiya Janata Party to the Samajwadi Party before the 2022 Uttar



Pradesh assembly elections and lost from Fazilnagar constituency in Deoria district. He was, however, accommodated by the SP and was elected to the UP Legislative Council.

The other national general secretaries are Ravi Prakash Verma, Balram Yadav, Vishwambhar Prasad Nishad, Awadhesh Prasad, Indrajeet Saroj, Ramjilal Suman, Lalji Verma, Ram Achal Rajbhar, J Antony, Harendra Malik and Neeraj Chowdhury.

While Akhilesh Yadav will continue to hold the post of national president, Kiranmoy Nanda will be national vice-



president and Ram Gopal Yadav will continue as national principal general secretary.

Sudip Ranjan Sen will be the party treasurer, while there will be 19 national secretaries, including Madhu Gupta, Kamal Akhtar, Rajendra Chaudhary, Rajiv Rai and Abhishek Mishra. Jaya Bachchan, Abu Asim Azmi, Ram Govind Chaudhary, Pawan Pandey, Lilawati Kushwaha, Ujjwal Raman Singh, Akshay Yadav, Tej Pratap Yadav, Dharmendra Yadav and Raj Kumar Mishra are among the party's national executive members.

## Over ₹20K cr paid to paddy, cane growers in 4 months

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Farmers in Uttar Pradesh have received more than Rs 20,000 crore over the past four months for their paddy and sugarcane. With the UP sugarcane crushing and paddy procurement seasons underway, the total farm payments are expected to more than double at the end of the respective marketing cycles.

While sugarcane payments by private and cooperative sector sugar mills are to the tune of over Rs 9,000 crore, the corresponding figure for paddy by government agencies, including Food Corporation of India (FCI), is close to Rs 11,000 crore so far. UP Cane and Sugar Commissioner Sanjay Bhooresddy said the state was committed to ensuring prompt payments to farmers, and the situation was being regularly monitored.

"The sugar mills have been directed to clear outstanding sugarcane payment and the process is being reviewed on a regular basis," he said.



Sugarcane payment of Rs 9,144 crore represents nearly 71 per cent of arrears pertaining to the current 2022-23 crushing season (October-September). Of the 120 sugar mills in UP, the private sugar mills account for the maximum of 93 units, followed by 24 cooperative sector plants and three of UP State Sugar Corporation. Bhooresddy said UP sugarcane payments totaled more than Rs 1.91 lakh crore in the last six years.

Since UP's annual budget 2023-24 will be tabled in the run-up to the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, the financial statement is expected to provide a host of

sops to the rural sector. Prompt payment of prominent cash crops, including wheat, paddy and sugarcane, with a composite annual payout of more than Rs 50,000 crore under the institutional mechanism in UP, will help the government in its pro-farm narrative during the election campaign for 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

Meanwhile, UP is targeting to procure 70 lakh tonnes of paddy in the current kharif marketing season 2022-23. So far, the state has purchased about 58 lakh tonnes of the cash crop, which represents 82 per cent of the seasonal target.

Recently, UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath directed authorities to ensure that the farmers do not face hurdles in selling their produce at the government's procurement centres numbering 4,200 across the state. In the 2022-23 kharif season, the MSP (minimum support price) of paddy has been fixed at Rs 2,040 per quintal (100 kg) for common paddy and Rs 2,060 per quintal for Grade A paddy.

## 'Govt encouraging sports talents in villages'

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The government is encouraging sports talents by building stadiums and open gyms in villages. Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya said here on Sunday that efforts were being made to enhance, make efficient and competent sports talents in the state. He said to strengthen the sports infrastructure in rural areas, sports grounds were being built in rural areas under the MGNREGA scheme. "The government is encouraging sports talents by making stadiums and open gyms in villages," he said and added, "The young generation will shine and raise the name of their villages by improving the sports grounds of the villages and the sports talents of the villages will hoist the flag of India in the world," Maurya said stadiums under MGNREGA scheme, open gyms, sports grounds and parks were being built in villages and they are also being used.

Rural Development Commissioner GS Priyadarshi said that in view of the importance of sports, more parks and stadiums had been built than the target under MGNREGA. "Construction of playgrounds has been done and it is expected that by the end of the financial year, two times more playgrounds will be built than the target. In the Labour department's budget of the current year 2022-23, the work of 8,226 playgrounds had been completed against the target of 5,516 playgrounds. Under convergence with various departments, MGNREGA playgrounds are also being developed as MGNREGA parks, in which swings for children's entertainment and open gyms for teenagers are also being constructed, along with walking tracks for the elderly persons. From the year 2018 till now, 21,168 playgrounds have been constructed in the state under the MGNREGA scheme - 1,236 in the year 2018-19, 2,242 in the year 19-20, 4,173 in the year 20-21, 5,291 in the year 21-22 and in 8,226 so far in 2,022-23.

## Two youths held for insulting national anthem in Meerut

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Two youths have been arrested for allegedly insulting the national anthem in the Eidgah locality of Meerut district. A purported video of the event showing the youths dancing while the national anthem is being played went viral on social media.

Station House Officer of Railway Road police station, Sanjay Sharma, said, "Both the accused have been arrested on Saturday. The investigation is on. A case has been reg-

istered against them under Section 2 (prevention of insults to national honour) of the Flag Code of India."

Sachin Sirohi, former president of the Hindu Mahasabha, had lodged a complaint in this regard. He said, "One of the accused had uploaded the video on his WhatsApp status. One of my sources then downloaded and shared the controversial video with me. After we brought the matter to light, the Railway Road police took cognisance of the incident and registered a case against both the accused."

## 10 killed, 15 hurt in separate road mishaps

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

At least six persons were killed and 15 injured when a speeding truck ran over bystanders in Lakhimpur Kheri on late Saturday night, police said. The accident occurred when the killer truck ploughed into bystanders, mostly villagers, who gathered at the roadside following a car-scooty collision near Pangri village on the Kheri-Bahraich highway.

The deceased were identified as Rizwan (20), Karan (14), Paras Nishad (84), Karunesh Verma (30), Virendra Verma and Jang Bahadur (17), all from Pangri Khurd village in Lakhimpur Kheri.

Superintendent of Police Ganesh Prasad Saha along with other police officials rushed to the spot and monitored the

operations to rescue the victims. According to police officials, a car going towards Bahraich on Pilibhit Basti road near Pangri Khurd village hit a scooty coming from the opposite direction at around 7:30 pm in which the scooty rider sustained injuries. After this, a crowd gathered on the spot, most of whom were residents of the village. The speeding truck coming from Bahraich ran over the crowd and fell into a ditch. The injured were rushed to the district hospital for treatment.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath expressed grief over the loss of lives, and directed officials to ensure proper treatment of the injured persons, the chief medical officer said in a tweet in Hindi. District Magistrate Mahendra Bahadur Singh, Chief Development

Officer Anil Kumar Singh and Superintendent of Police Ganesh Prasad Saha took cognisance of the accident. Identification of the injured was underway. The Akhilesh Yadav-led Samajwadi Party expressed condolences and urged the UP government to give compensation to the families of the victims.

Meanwhile, a motorcycle-borne man and his son were hit by a truck while going to distribute wedding cards in Kannauj district. They died on the spot.

After the accident, the driver fled with the truck.

Komal, daughter of farmer Awadhesh Dubey (50) of Nathapurwa village of Tirwa Kotwali area is to be married on February 15. Aditya Dubey (26), the family's only son working in a furniture factory

in Bareilly, came home on January 28. Awadhesh Dubey had left the house to distribute the wedding card with his son Aditya on Sunday morning. A speeding truck hit their bike on the bypass near Pal crossing in Sadar Kotwali, killing Awadhesh and Aditya on the spot. Kotwali in-charge Rajkumar Singh said that both the bodies were sent for autopsy and efforts were on to nab the truck driver.

Meanwhile, Vedprakash (50) and his wife Shakuntala Devi (48) of Bari village under Pilibhit police station Newriya, were killed in a collision between a Bolero and an unknown vehicle near Lauhangapur forest on the Khutar Purnapur state highway in Shahjahanpur at around one o'clock on Saturday night. Ved Prakash had left for

Ayodhya on Saturday night with family members and relatives. His Bolero collided with a vehicle due to fog in Lauhangapur forest. Vedprakash and Shakuntala Devi died on the spot. After this, the driver of the other vehicle fled along with the vehicle.

On getting information about the accident, the police reached the spot and sent the injured to the community health centre where the doctor pronounced Vedprakash and Shakuntala Devi dead. Seriously injured Ram Singh, his wife Anita Devi, son Aryan, Ashok Kumar, his wife Sarita Devi, Anand Swaroop were referred to government medical college. Vedprakash's son Kamal Kumar filed a complaint against the unknown driver.



# 2 mobile phone snatchers held

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Naubasta police have arrested two mobile phone snatchers late on Saturday night. They were identified as Pawan Chopra of Rajapurwa, HO Auriyara, Vidhnu police station and Gopal alias Gaurav of ML14/392, Bagia Colony, Jarauli Phase-2, Barra police station, Kanpur. Police have recovered a motorcycle from them. According to reports, when the accused Pawan Chopra in the process of snatching mobile phone from a pedestrian busy talking on it on Saturday night, suddenly fell on the street, police caught him. Later at his behest police arrested another accused Gopal alias Gaurav from his house. One of their accomplices Sonu was still absconding. Police team comprised Virat Nagar outpost incharge SI Uday Pratap

Singh, constables Robin Singh and Sanjay Kumar Tewari.

Meanwhile Kidwai Nagar police arrested two juvenile offenders and recovered a stolen scooter related to a case lodged under Section 379/411 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) along with the key of another scooter from them on Saturday night. The juvenile offenders aged 17 years were residents of Shulabh Sauchalaya, near Dada Nagar crossing, Govind Nagar and Malin Basti, Kidwai Nagar. Police have recovered the scooter and key of Honda Company scooter from them. Police team comprised Kidwai Nagar outpost incharge SI Pramod Kumar, SI Abhishek Sonkar and constable Neelu Yadav.

In yet another incident a bike-borne farmer was intercepted by three masked miscreants with the intention of

looting him on Kisan Road under Vidhnu police station area late on Saturday night. After making the farmer fall from the bike and brutally beating him up, when miscreants recovered only Rs 100 from his possession, they became angry. They chased the farmer with the knife, the latter escaped on foot raising an alarm by leaving his bike on the spot. The incident took place around 12 o'clock late on Saturday night. Farmer Shravan Pal of Bilti village, Gajner (Kanpur Dehat) said he had arrived at his maternal uncle Mathura Pal's house in Bhairampur. On Saturday evening due to labour pain his maternal aunt was admitted to Vidhnu community health centre (CHC). Around 12 o'clock at night when he was going to Bhairampur to bring food for the attendants, three bike-

borne masked miscreants after making him fall from the motorcycle, beat up with stick and punches and bouts. Thereafter, during search when miscreants got only Rs.100 from his possession they held him at knife-point. The scared farmer escaped on foot after leaving his bike on the spot. When miscreants were trying to start the bike, a dumper passing that way stopped there. On seeing the dumper, miscreants escaped towards the Hamirpur road after leaving farmer's bike on the spot. With the help of dumper driver, the farmer informed the police about the incident.

Station House Officer (SHO) Yogesh Kumar Singh said a police team was sent to spot to carry out investigation. On the basis of complaint, further action will be taken in the matter, he said.

# 15 hurt as dumper rams into bus

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

As many as 15 persons, including two women, were injured when a speeding dumper rammed into a stationary private bus on the Kanpur-Lucknow highway under Sohramau police station of Unnao district on Sunday morning. After the incident, the private bus fell into a pit while the dumper collided with four other vehicles on the other side of the road. All the injured were sent to a private hospital in Lucknow where the condition of women was stated to be critical.

According to reports received here, a godown of an online shopping company is situated in Kati Bagia, Banthara (Lucknow). Company bus used to pick and drop labourers from Sadar area and other villages along the highway daily.



As many as 15 persons were injured when a speeding dumper rammed into a stationary bus on Kanpur-Lucknow highway on Sunday morning.

On Sunday morning when the bus after picking labourers from the Sadar area, stopped mid-road to pick up a labourer from Bajehra village under Sohramau police station area,

a speeding dumper laden with the building material going towards Lucknow from Kanpur rammed into it from behind. Due to powerful collision the bus after breaking a betel kosk

fell into a pit while the dumper moved towards another side of the road across the divider. Meanwhile, mini truck, dumper, loader etc going to Kanpur from Lucknow also rammed into the dumper. In the incident 15 bus passengers, including Shivani and Bhawna, were injured and admitted to SR Hospital, Alambagh, Lucknow. The condition of both the women was stated to be critical. After the incident, a massive traffic jam prevailed on the highway and the movement of other vehicles was allowed through the service lane. After removing the damaged vehicles with the help of crane, the movement of traffic was restored after around five hours. The force of Sohramau, Aajnain and Banthara police stations remained present on the spot during the rescue operation.

# Benefit of higher pension should be given to all pensioners: Shukla

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

At the monthly meeting of the EPS-95 National Agitation Committee's Kanpur Division held at the Rawatpur bus stand on Sunday, leaders were up in arms to fight for increase in the pension amount. Speaking on the occasion, national adviser Rajesh Kumar Shukla said the 'discriminatory' circular issued by the EPFO on December 29, 2022, was not acceptable to pensioners. He said the benefit of higher pension be given to all pensioners and call upon all to launch a decisive fight for their rights. The meeting was chaired by divisional president and national general secretary Om Shanker Tewari. He said if their demands were not resolved during the Budget session starting from January 31, pensioners would be compelled to launch nationwide



EPS-95 National Agitation Committee, Kanpur Division, organised monthly meeting at Rawatpur Bus Stand on Sunday.

road/rail roko movements at the risk of the government. The other leaders who addressed the gathering included Sunderlal Pandey, Kripa

Shanker Shukla, PC Mishra, Sudha Nigam, KP Verma, Ashok Yadav, Udaivir Singh Yadav, Sudhir Kumar Mishra, Puttu Singh Kushwaha and

Ram Dayal Sharma. Jairop Singh Parihar conducted the proceedings while Om Shanker Tewari proposed the vote of thanks.

# Banking correspondents felicitated

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Bank of Baroda (BOB) organised a review meeting with BC Sakhi and bank mitras and felicitation ceremony at Baroda Swarojgar Vikas Sansthan, Mariyani, Chaubepur, recently. Assistant General Manager (AGM) and zonal chief, Bank of Baroda, Jagjiv Kumar Jais was the chief guest on the occasion who felicitated the Banking Correspondents (BCs) for the good work done by them in different categories. A total of 27 prizes were declared in different categories. Maximum number of prizes were won by



The Bank of Baroda organised Bank Mitra Samiksha and Samman Samaroh in Mariyani (Chaubepur).

the BC Suhani Sahu. Prizes were given for promoting the social banking schemes, including PMJJBY, Atal Pension Yojana, PMSBY and on the basis of overall performance of BCs. Zonal chief highlighted the role of BCs in carrying the banking facilities to rural areas and informed about the ways to increase their income.

He advised them to extend good behaviour with the masses. Director of the Vikas Sansthan Dheeraj Kumar apprised about the free skill development programme being run by the bank. Other senior officers of the bank were also present on the occasion.

# Reunion: A moment of nostalgia

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Sir Padampat Singhania Education Centre (SPSEC) hosted the 27th Year Reunion of 1996 batch in its premises on Saturday. The event witnessed several alumnus and alumna gathering to walk down the memory lane with each other to renew friendship and relive their school years. The alumni entered the school gates and received a traditional welcome by teachers who applied 'tilak' on their foreheads. After the lighting of the lamp, they then gathered for a group photograph. To keep up the school tradition of being the 'green school', the alumni planted saplings and did their bit in conservation of environment. Punit Kathuria (the then school captain) and Shuchi Khanna, the alumni were the compères of the day. They welcomed the gathering and actively took charge of the further proceedings. A floral tribute was paid to Sir Padampat Singhania after which blessings of Goddess Saraswati were invoked with the blissful recitation of 'He Sharde Maa' and the Gayatri Mantra 'Om Bhur Bhuwah Swaha'. Conducting the school assembly, the 1996 batch mates chorused the school anthem, 'Saahas Dheeraj Ke Hum Saathi' with enthusiasm which was followed by a spellbinding dance presentation by school students leaving everyone mesmerised. The alumni shared that they will like to remain connected with their roots through a bigger platform in which stupendous success stories of school and alumni will be shared from time to time. Principal of the institution Bhawna Gupta extended a warm welcome to the former students for being present for the meet despite their busy schedule, especially Sanjay Rastogi and Santosh Makhani, who are working overseas but managed to come to India for this day. She also apprised about other ex-students, all placed in well-known national, international and multinational companies while others have flourishing businesses. The principal also presented the



The SPSEC organised the 27th Year Reunion of 1996 batch on Saturday.

school report highlighting various milestones reached in the past years. She reiterated that the school strives for excellence in all fields of education and looked forward for their co-operation in this mission. The campus tour left the alumni nostalgic when they revisited the familiar places where they had studied and were captivated to see the newly-constructed building, the Foundation Block, the Sports Academy, the library, the Robotics Lab and AR - VR Lab, Sculpture (Art & Craft) Lab, music lab and various developments that have taken place since then. Chemistry, Biology and Physics Labs lured them to peep into them, rekindling the memories of yesteryears. The enthusiasts enjoyed clicking photographs throughout the event at selfie points and almost everywhere in their childhood home to recreate memories forever. Teachers with glittering eyes and warmth in their hearts were elated to interact with these students whom they

had groomed. The alumni felicitated the principal, teachers and other staff members to express their gratitude towards them. They also expressed their emotions and thoughts on the Wall of Expression 'Dilki Gehraiyon Se' as well as in the visitors' book. It was indeed a day full of fun and frolic when the alumni played various games like musical chair, table tennis, lawn tennis and cricket. The institution seemed abuzz with enthusiasm, twittering, giggling and chuckling when they shared their memories about their teachers and batchmates travelling down the memory lane of those golden days. Ankur Jain proposed the vote of thanks and expressed gratitude to the management, the principal and the teaching staff whose committed support and guidance made the 27th Year Alumni Meet 2023 a grand success. The programme concluded with a sumptuous lunch which was enjoyed by all at their all time favourite place - the canteen.

# Special convention organised

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The joint forum of the Employees' Welfare Coordination Committee organised a special convention/symposium on the 10th Foundation Day at the PWD auditorium, Civil Lines, on Saturday. It was chaired by the president Dr Suresh Chandra Gupta. Representatives of different organisations in railway, defence, bank, insurance, electricity, development authority, nagar nigam etc., office-bearers and members of the Committee took part in the event in large number. The meeting saw detailed discussion on 'anti-officers, employees and labourers' policies of the government. General Secretary Sharad Prakash Agarwal informed about the memorandum on Budget 2023 sent to the union finance minister through district magistrate, divisional commissioner and state minister, UP government. He gave detailed information about main demands and proposed strategy of movement to be launched by the committee. The proposal put up by the acting president Raghvendra Singh to fight for their



Joint Forum of Employees' Welfare Coordination Committee organised the 10th Foundation Day meet on Saturday.

seven demands was unanimously approved by all. Their demands included revoking of old pension scheme by abolishing the old one, ban on sale of public sector organisations, immediate recruitment on vacant posts, regularising all contract workers on permanent basis, cent per cent appointment of deceased dependants by removing the ceiling of five per cent, restoring all withheld allowances and nomination of working class candidate in legislative

council on the pattern of graduate/teacher candidates.

Prominent office-bearers present were Arvind Trivedi, Pradip Bhatia, Rajiv Nigam, Yogesh Thakur, Rama Shanker, Sushil Bajpai, SK Sahu, SK Singh, Shivendu Srivastava, Sudhir Sonkar, Ajay Shanker Nigam and Anil Bajpai. Secretary AN Dwivedi conducted the proceedings while the acting president Raghvendra Singh proposed the vote of thanks.

# Workshop on RWAI from tomorrow

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The Department of Physical Education, Faculty of Arts, Banaras Hindu University (BHU) is going to organise a national workshop on Research Writing and Academic Integrity (RWAI-2023) from January 31 to February 4 at Dronacharya Karan Singh Hall of the university. The main purpose of this national workshop is to equip the physical education professionals with the latest developments and advancements in the field of research.

Talking to the presspersons on Saturday, the members of organising committee of the national seminar informed that this workshop comprises 15 sessions for five days (three sessions per day), includes developing a publication strategy during the very first day followed by the bibliometric evaluation (Impact and Visibility), research and publishing ethics in the next two days and during the last two days of the workshop, sessions will be on writing results, discussion, basics of writing research proposal and report.

Moreover, the workshop will provide a platform for acquiring basic and advanced knowledge of research writing and academic integrity in the field of Sports Sciences. Further, it will enhance the competency of scholars by equipping them with analytical knowledge and skills to ensure the quality of work, managerial ability to apply different types of statistical tools, interpretation of results/finding and the use of results for decision making. Additionally, participants will be receiving valuable information regarding writing a well-structured research article using honest and verifiable methods to publish in a reputed journal through lecture as well as in the practical sessions.

Approximately 300 delegates from different states of the country have registered for this workshop. For the quality assurance only 60 participants have been registered for the workshop. Prof. Bhaskar Mukherjee, Department of Library and Information Science, BHU and Prof. Yogesh Upadhyay, Dean, School of Studies in Management, Jiwaji University, Gwalior and, Dr. Arun Kumar Deshmukh, Institute of Management Studies, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi will be imparting the training and information as experts in this workshop.

The workshop will be inaugurated by the chief guest Prof. Ramesh Chand, Emeritus Professor, Advisor (University Advancement and Alumni Relations), BHU on January 31 at 10:00 am in the Dronacharya Karan Singh Hall, Department of Physical Education, BHU, while Prof. Yashwant Singh, Director, Institute of Agricultural Sciences, BHU will be the Guest of Honour. The valedictory function will be held on February 04 at the Department's Dronacharya Karan Singh Hall, BHU from 01:00 pm onwards.

The chief patron of the workshop is Prof. Sudhir Kumar Jain (Vice Chancellor, BHU) and the patron is be Prof Vijay Bahadur Singh (Dean, Faculty of Arts), whereas, Prof Rajiv Vyas, (Head, Department of Physical Education) is the workshop director, while Prof Dilip Kumar Dureha, Prof Sushma Ghildyal, Prof BC Kapri, Prof T Onima Reddy, and Dr Akhil Mehrotra are the Workshop Advisors. The convener of workshop Prof Abhimanyu Singh and Prof Vikram Singh is its co-convener were present during the press conference besides the workshop organising secretary Dr Pradeep Singh Chahar, and treasurer Dr Linet Khakha. The members of the organising committee are Dr Binayak Kumar Dubey, Dr Krishnkant, Dr Deepak Kumar Dogra, Dr Abhishek Verma and Dr Shailesh Kumar.

# Seminar on contribution of literature & journalism in freedom movement



A seminar being held at MGKV in Varanasi on Saturday

Pioneer

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Former director of Madan Mohan Malviya Institute of Hindi Journalism, Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapeeth (MGKV) Prof Om Prakash Singh said that until the feeling of self-respect did not come among the Indians, there was no inspiration for independence. He was addressing the two-day national seminar on 'Contribution of Literature and Journalism in the Indian Independence Movement' organised in the committee room of MGKV's Central Library under the joint aegis of Vasudev Singh Smriti Nyas and MMM Institute here on Saturday. Presiding over the session, Prof Singh said that there were many challenges to journalism in our national movement. "Hindi language is acceptable in every corner of the country. No matter which corner of the country, the Hindi language is read and understood there so we must take exception to the sophistication of language and its mystery. We must keep in mind what was the environment of Indian journalism at the time of independence. At that time journalists also had to face economic problems," he said. Highlighting the history of Hindi journalism, the main speaker Dr Vashishtha Narayan Singh said that in those days, Hindi Pradeep newspaper was fined for writing against the Britishers. Its editor Paradkar ji had to go to jail several times. Premchand also closed the swan due to financial reasons but he published Jagran newspaper even at a loss of 200 rupees. The situation at the time of independence in 1947 was critical, he said. Dr Vinod Singh mentioned the journalism of James Augustus Hickey to the journalism of Bhartendu. "The period of Bhartendu is called the period of prose creation.

Amidst those challenges, Bharatendu did the work of protecting literature and journalism," he said, highlighting the historical per-

spective to the challenges of journalism. Dr Arun Kumar Sharma said that nowadays fake news is being published more in the media. "Our biggest challenge is to fight this fake news. Today is the era of advertisement due to which the challenges of paid news have also increased and due to this, credibility in journalism is going away," he said. On the occasion, Dr Naveen Chand Lohani from Chaudhary Charan Singh University, Meerut connected virtually and threw light on the challenge of Indian journalism during the freedom movement. In the first session of the second day, prominent scholars gave their respective statements on the subject 'Challenges of Journalism in the Indian Independence Movement'. In the second session, prominent scholars expressed their views along with research scholars who also presented their research papers. President of the session, Dr Shraddha Nand said that Prof Vasudev Singh was a master of history. Highlighting the subject, he said that there should be the presence of literature in journalism. Prof Gayatri Singh, Prof Gayatri Maheshwari, Neeraj Kumar Singh, Pooja, Seema Tiwari etc also expressed their views.

The closing session started after garlanding and lighting the lamp on the picture of Prof Vasudev Singh. The chairman of the session Dr Anand Vardhan mentioned Rudra Kasikeya's book Behti Ganga. Along with this, he also mentioned Pratap published from Meerut and underground newspaper Ranbheri published from Banaras and threw light on the challenges of journalism. Special speaker in the session Prof Om Prakash Singh threw light on the freedom struggle of 1857. Umapati Dixit said that it is definitely true that there is an interdependent relationship between literature and journalism. The chairman of the closing session was Dr Vashishtha Narayan Singh.



# Minister invites Dubai investors

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

With a view to attract more and more investment in Uttar Pradesh, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Stamp and Court Registration Fees Ravindra Jaiswal participated in a special programme organised in Dubai (UAE) and urged the investors, especially the expatriates of UP, to invest in the state.

Participating in the UP Foundation Day programme organised by the Uttar Pradesh Diaspora Forum (Dubai Chapter) and the Indian People's Forum at the Indian Consulate at Dubai, Jaiswal expressed his gratitude to the non-resident Indians (NRIs), especially the investors of UP. He appreciated them for keeping the culture and tradition of the state alive even in the Gulf as folk songs and folk dances of UP were presented by the NRIs in the function. On the occasion, artistes staged various folk arts like Birha, Kajri, Ramliila etc.

The Minister highlighted the investment-friendly environment in the state and said that the state's environment has



UP Minister Ravindra Jaiswal at an investors' meet in Dubai (USE).

been made convenient and beneficial for industries and investors by the government of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. "Uttar Pradesh's position in Ease of Doing Business has continuously improved," he said, appealing to the NRIs, especially from UP that by investing in the state,

they can not only expand their business but also express their love for their motherland. At the same time, he added that they can become an ally in taking UP to a new peak of progress.

Talking about the UP government's target of making the state's economy one trillion

by the year 2027, he said that it is a great opportunity for the NRIs. "There is a big opportunity," he added.

On the occasion, he was honored by the NRIs by giving mementos. Along with this, many NRIs were also assured to come for investment in the state.

# 7 suffer burns as pandal catches fire

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Seven devotees, including a Swoman, were badly burnt when a fire broke out in the pandal of Bhardwaj Mahotsav on Saturday night at the ongoing Magh Mela. They were admitted to the Swaroop Rani Nehru Divisional Hospital. The condition of the woman is said to be critical.

The fire broke out when a woman devotee was cooking food and there was a leakage in the cylinder. In no time the cylinder started burning and the flames engulfed the pandal. The devotees, residents of Pratapgargh, were staying at the camp of Brahma Rishi Swami

Atmanand Bhakti in Sector 4. A 'bhandara' was organised there on Saturday night. The incident took place when the 'prasad' was being prepared. Kitchen items were burnt to ashes. The fire brigade controlled the fire.

Devotees were given first aid in the hospital located at Magh Mela. After this they were referred to Swarooprani Nehru Hospital. SP Magh Mela Dr. Rajeev Narayan Tripathi said a fire broke out at Bhardwaj Mahotsav at Magh Mela around 6:00 pm. Four vehicles of fire brigade reached the spot and the fire was brought under control after about 20 minutes. In the incident, people who were present

around the cylinder got scorched and were admitted to Swarooprani Nehru Hospital. Their condition is out of danger. The scorched devotees include Raj Bhushan Singh (37), Usha Singh (55), Shivpujan Tiwari (59), Bitton Singh (50), Vijay Singh (49), Chatni Lal and Indra Pal Singh.

**TWO THRASHED:** Two youths were thrashed in a clash with neighbours in Binda village. Vijay Bahadur, Ajit Kumar, Ranjit Kumar, Anshu Kumari were playing DJ loudly at around 12 o'clock at night in Binda village of Kotwali area. When Marmagya and Gyanesh, who live in the neighbourhood, stopped them then an argument took place

between Vijay Bahadur and Marmagya. The people from Vijay Bahadur's side allegedly thrashed Marmagya and another person with sticks and rods and stones were also pelted in the incident. Marmagya and his accomplice were badly injured when the stone hit their heads.

Saidabad outpost police incharge reached the spot and sent the injured to the Community Health Centre Upardaha for treatment from where they were sent to the district hospital after first aid.

On the complaint of Marmagya's brother Sarvagya, the Handia police registered a case and started further proceedings.

# Saints narrate tales in various languages at Magh Mela

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

At a time when some of the saints who are camping in the ongoing Magh Mela are quite qualified the devotees are fortunate to listen to religious eloquent discourses of saints who have never been to school or formal education yet are expertly orating tales from revered Hindu texts in various languages.

Interestingly many of them can and are doing so in different languages like English, Sanskrit, Assamese, Oriya and Tamil among others. In the name of school or college education, it had been their gurus and fellow seers through which they have learnt the languages. Being multilingual has also helped them propagate Sanatan Dharma across the country and even abroad for years now.

Be it Swami Krishnacharya of Mathura, Swami Adhokshjanand Devtirath, Saint Sitaram Das of Khak Chowk or Sant Prabhakar of Gayatri Ganga Charitable Trust, all these seers are well versed in different languages despite not having any formal schooling as such.

According to these saints, preaching in the regional dialect is necessary to deliver discourses in the very language of the state which they were visiting so as to ensure that locals better understood what they were saying. Take for instance, Swami Krishnacharya of Mathura who has set up his camp on Sangam Lower Road in the Mela area.

"I have never gone to



A bhandara being held in Magh Mela area in Prayagraj on Sunday

Pioneer

school or college. In childhood itself, I became a disciple of the well-known saint Guru Sita Ram Tyagi. He was a very knowledgeable person and was well versed in multiple languages. I started learning these languages from him while studying different religious texts under him," said the saint. Today Swami Krishnacharya preaches in Sanskrit, English, Hindi, Tamil, Malayalam languages.

He has also visited many countries, including US, UK and Australia, and delivered discourses there in English also. Similarly, well known saint Swami Adhokshjanand Devtirath, who has studied at a Gurukul, is also one such saints. "I learnt Sanskrit in the

Gurukul and also learnt about the various Sanatani traditions there. But with time I had to learn other languages in a bid to reach vast audience during my discourses and interactions. My guru Swami Niranjan Devtirth helped a lot in this. Even more help was given by his Guru Swami Bharati Krishna Devtirth. Today I have good command over many languages like English, Hindi, Sanskrit, Assamese, Oriya, Marathi and Bengali besides Arabic and Urdu as well," he shared.

Swami Adhokshjanand Devtirth has also visited Pakistan and Bangladesh for preaching Sanatan religion. Saint Sitaram Das of Khak Chowk is another such saint. "I

did some initial school till class V while living at Malad in Mumbai. However today I can fluently speak English, Hindi, Sanskrit and Marathi languages which has been great help while travelling across country while giving religious orations," he said.

For Sant Prabhakar of Gayatri Ganga Charitable Trust, English was always a challenge. "However, after coming in contact with Guru Paramhans Atmadev, I worked hard and with his support and encouragement managed to get a good command on English language. This has helped in preach across the world, including Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, despite not knowing Tamil or Bangla," he said.

# Togadia demands population control law

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

President of the Antarrashtriya Hindu Parishad (AHP) Dr Praveen Togadia strongly demanded laws for control of increasing population in the nation. "If a Population Control Act is not enacted to stop the increasing population in the country, then the grand Ram temple being built in Ayodhya will be in danger after 50 years," he said, adding that due to this not only Ram temple but millions of Hindus of the country and their families will not be as safe as in the Kashmir Valley.

The firebrand Hindu leader, while talking to the reporters at Shri Ram Janaki temple in Gurudham area here on Sunday, said that Gyanvapi temple was there and it has been proved. "Baba Vishwanath is sitting there. It is a sin not to worship Shiving. That's why worship of Baba Vishwanath sitting in Gyanvapi should start every day," he said.

He expressed concern over the removal of ancient temples in the name of development. He was reacting over the talk of removing Dundhi Ganesh temple in Kashi Vishwanath Gali. "This is the



AHP chief Dr Praveen Togadia at Ram Janaki temple in Varanasi on Sunday.

Pioneer

temple of the Lord as its idol is God and the place is also God. There is no temple in Prayag at the confluence of Ganga-Yamuna-Saraswati, yet there is a pilgrimage. That's why we would like the temple of Dhundhi Raj Ganesh to remain where it is. That place is sacred. No ancient temple should be removed in Kashi,"

he said.

According to him, better arrangements should be made for the convenience of the devotees but it is a sin to remove the ancient temple. He expressed hope that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath would look into the matter and ensure that not

a single temple is removed by respecting the reverence of Hindus.

On the question of Ramcharit Manas, Togadia said that millions of Hindus have faith in their hearts.

"Marketing should not be done by commenting on those who question Ramcharit Manas," he added.

# Tricolour unfurled as per Hindu calendar

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Though it sounds strange, it was happened in this holy city when a section of Sanskrit students (batuks) of Jagadgurukulam along with some local residents celebrated the Republic Day on Sunday as per Hindu calendar when they unfurled the national flag on the occasion of Magh Shukla Ashtami of Vikran Sanvat 2079 at Shankaracharya Ghat near Srividya Math. The day has been celebrated since 1950 on January 26 across the nation but these batuks did the same three days after.

In the beginning, Acharya Bhopendra Mishra and Acharya Omprakash Pandey got the flag worshipped. Then chief guest Girish Chandra Tiwari, along with batuks, teachers and others of Jagadgurukulam Vidyalaya and Jagadguru Shankaracharya Swami Swaroopchand Saraswati Nyaya Vedanta College unfurled the tri-colour.

Media in-charge Sanjay Pandey said that according to the inspiration and orders of Shankaracharya of Jyotishpeeth Swami Avimuktेश्वaranand



Tricolour being unfurled as per Hindu calendar in Varanasi on Sunday.

Pioneer

Saraswati the programme was organised during the day and the purpose of celebrating Republic Day on Magh Shukla Paksha Ashtami was to do the same as per the tradition of Sanatan culture. "When every work from our birth to death is done according to Hindi dates, then why we should not celebrate our Republic Day as

per the Hindu calendar," he asked, adding that when we follow our religion, culture and tradition and used to guide the whole world, many problems and challenges have arisen in the nation due to blind imitation of western civilization. If we start following our tradition and Vedic system again, our nation will again become

Vishwaguru, he said.

Important among those who were also present were Harishchandra Sharma, Ramesh Pandey, Sadanand Tiwari, Ajit Mishra, Aryan Suman, Meera Pandey, Vijaya Tiwari, Nirmala Tripathi, Seema Sanyal, Ruby Dubey, Ramchandra Singh, Satyajit Bapuli and Amala Yadav.

# AU admn steps up preparations to implement NEP

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The three-year undergraduate course run at Allahabad University will now become history from the new session. The University is going to implement the New Education Policy (NEP) from the session 2023-24. Thereafter the four-year undergraduate semester-based course will come into effect.

Admissions to the first year of four-year undergraduate courses will be done through Combined University Entrance Test (CUET), while admission to 10 new five-year professional courses will be done through Post Graduate Admission Test (PGAT).

The Allahabad University administration has stepped up preparations for implementation of New Education Policy. For this the statute of the uni-

**Admissions to the first year of four-year undergraduate courses will be done through Combined University Entrance Test, while admission to 10 new five-year professional courses will be done through Post Graduate Admission Test**

versity will have to be changed. Allahabad University runs a three-year undergraduate course. The examination for this course is held once a year. The four-year undergraduate course being implemented now will be divided into eight semesters. In every semester students have to go through midterm and then end semester examinations.

All departments of gradu-

ate courses have prepared courses according to the NEP and have also taken approval from various committees. However, many departments are still in the process of approval. This system is to be implemented from this session itself, in such a situation, the formalities of starting new courses will be completed before the application process of CUET. In the new four-year

course, students will have complete freedom to choose subjects.

Apart from their syllabus, they will be able to study the subjects of other courses as well. This new syllabus will be flexible. This includes certificate in the first year, diploma in the second year, degree in the third year and degree honours in the fourth year.

All departments were entrusted with the responsibility of making 13 skill development courses. Public Relations Officer Prof Jaya Kapoor said Allahabad University is preparing to implement the New Education Policy from the new session.

The university has to implement the new course structure under the NEP. Preparations for implementation are being expedited as per the prescribed procedure.

# Thana Samadhan Diwas organised

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

As many as 26 cases out of 153 were disposed of on the spot on Thana Samadhan Diwas organised at 18 police stations in the district on Saturday. DIG RP Singh attended the day at Madihan police station. At City Kotwali police station CDO Srilaxmi VS, SP Santosh Kumar Mishra and city magistrate Vinay Kumar Singh jointly heard the grievances of the aggrieved.

Addressing the police personnel DIG asked them to

ensure cent percent disposal as the day is one of the top priorities of the government. He said land disputes should be disposed of in the presence of revenue teams. He asked the revenue officials to ensure there is no encroachment on government land. The Lekhpals and supervisor kanoongos should be made responsible to keep the public land as safe as possible. Inspecting the register related to Thana Samadhan Diwas he asked the officials concerned to mention the mobile number of the appli-

cants. The DIG inspected the police station, checked records, office, campus, investigations, action against the criminals etc. He interacted with staff, became aware with problems and directed to take all the measures to control the crime.

**WORKSHOP:** A two-day workshop for CBSE schools on capacity building in teaching mathematics under New education policy 2020 concluded at Daffodils Public School on Saturday. Giving details about the workshop principal Kanchan Srivastava said under

the guidance of resource persons Dr Ramesh Chandra, former principal Government Inter College, Ayodhya and Babita Shukla mathematics teacher, Tagore Public School, 36 teachers of Mirzapur and Bhadohi learned about the number sense, computation, operation sense, measurement sense etc. The participants also took part in other activities which were helpful for teaching. The resource persons appreciated the school management for making all necessary arrangements.

# Sparsh awareness drive from today

**VARANASI (PNS):** The death anniversary of the 'Father of the Nation' Mahatma Gandhi on January 30 is also observed as Anti-Leprosy Day (Leprosy Prevention Day). 'Sparsh' leprosy awareness campaign will be started in the district from this day itself, which will continue till February 13. During this, the health teams will make the residents of the district aware about leprosy. Giving this information, Chief Medical

Officer (CMO) Dr Sandeep Chaudhary said that along with the guidelines of the District Magistrate S Rajalingam for the successful operation of the campaign, the resolution message of leprosy-free district has also been received, which will be read and administered oath on the day. This is the main theme of the day is 'Act Now: End Leprosy'. He said that leprosy can be completely cured by

early diagnosis and timely treatment and disability can also be avoided. Its treatment is available at all government health centres, he added. District Leprosy Officer and ACO Dr AK Maurya informed that considering Monday as Leprosy Prevention Day, the residents of the district will take a pledge to be leprosy free and an awareness campaign will be started. The gram pradhans will also administer

the oath at the gram sabha level. The aim of the campaign is to find and confirm the symptoms of leprosy and start feeding the patients as soon as possible so that the patients can be saved from disability. "Sparsh leprosy awareness campaign is being run in the district since 2017," he said, adding that a total of 195 teams have been formed for the campaign for rural and urban areas.







FIRST COLUMN

EXAM ANXIETY IS BIG ISSUE FOR STUDENTS

A sound mental health depends upon multiple factors



DR JYOTI KAPOOR


Anxiety is one of the major mental health issues that students face just before their board and competitive examinations. Anxiety stems from the unrealistic expectations of family members and parents. In India, success is often measured in terms of outstanding grades. A student often goes through anxiety, stress and in extreme cases depression. Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his bestselling book 'Exam Warriors' talked about examinations and has outlined a refreshing approach, urging everyone to celebrate the tests like a festival with enthusiasm. Mental health experts across India have opined that every year before and after examination sessions, they have been getting a lot of youngsters suffering from anxiety and stress. Most of them have been victims of burnout due to long preparation hours and uncertainty about the future. They need counselling and medicines to deal with stress post their examinations. The stress becomes all the more over-powering when the student appears for competitive exams, which are highly competitive, rigorous, and target-oriented. A recent study showed that among those preparing for medical entrance exams, 72.2 per cent experienced high levels of stress interfering with their day-to-day functioning.




The most common complaints of such students are poor concentration level and lack of focus. Fear of failure keeps it going. In most of the cases, students hardly consult a mental health expert or talk about their issues with peers/parents. No recreation, continuous study for most of the day, parental pressure and fear of failure aggravate their condition. Such preparations are time-consuming and tedious, and students frequently sacrifice other aspects of their lives to focus on one test. One should not forget the fact that our brain needs to break. It cannot function 24/7. The scenario becomes worse when results for competitive exams or board exams are not according to their expectations. A sound mental health depends upon multiple factors and the most important one is emotional support. If somebody has that, it ensures a healthy growth of mind, body and soul. Many students stay away from their parents (in a different city to prepare for exams) or if at all they are staying with their parents, they hardly interact with them due to their busy schedule. At times, dealing with such a stressed environment with no emotional support, students start to feel lonely. They get addicted to unhealthy practices, including excessive alcohol consumption, gambling, overeating, participating compulsively in sex, shopping or internet browsing, smoking and substance abuse. Unfortunately, our education system doesn't prepare us for failure. Nobody tells us that if plan A fails then what would be plan B. That's the reason when a student experiences failure, they feel that it's the end of the world for them. They get exposed to enormous stress both physically and mentally. In many cases, a student might not want to appear for a competitive course and he/she is just doing it because of certain family and societal pressure. These young children have known their entire lives that this one exam will determine how long they live. They have no time for extracurricular activities, socialising, or sports, which prevents their personalities from developing. The coping mechanism is incumbent upon creating a schedule that enhances the performance of body and mind, while refreshing with short breaks. Consuming wholesome foods and at least eight hours of sound sleep each night also help. Long study sessions reduce the amount of time available for exercise and the body becomes lethargic, and the mind begins to react negatively, which calls for taking time out for physical activity. Discovering a calming exercise is also important. Speaking to loved ones frequently for emotional support also helps along with staying away from unrealistic expectations. (The author is Founder and Senior Psychiatrist, Manasthali)

Focus on rural consumption to revive the economy

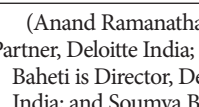
Rural consumption is facing headwinds in the wake of double-digit price increases and dim prospects of income



ANAND RAMANATHAN



ROUNAK BAHETI



SOUMYA BOSE

(Anand Ramanathan is Partner, Deloitte India; Rounak Baheti is Director, Deloitte India; and Soumya Bose is Manager, Deloitte India)

Some modest Budget expectations from FM

The tax slabs can be suitably adjusted for inflation to alleviate the economic hardships of the common man

In a few days' time, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will be presenting her fifth budget, the last full budget before the 2024 elections. Despite pressure for increasing populist expenditure, one hopes that she will stick to the pragmatism that marked her earlier budgets and focus instead on consolidating the fiscal path further. Given the present state of the economy with seven per cent growth looking achievable, revenues showing healthy growth, the GST stabilising at around Rs 1.5 lakh crore a month and the continuing bull run in the stock markets, the factors are favourable for the government for projecting a fiscal deficit target less than the last year's budget estimate of 6.4 per cent. However, there are some aberrations in our taxation structure which must be corrected. These were flagged after the last year's budget and it is time the government acts. Chief among these is the complex structure of our capital gains taxation that is arbitrary, ad-hoc and distorts the market, and this must be rationalised for efficient allocation of resources. There is not only a multiplicity of rates and holding periods for different types of investments, but some have benefits for inflation indexation which others do not have. Capital gains tax is levied on profits made on capital investments on real estate, gold, stocks, mutual funds, and various other financial and non-financial assets. It can be either a long-term capital gains tax (LTCG) or short-term capital gains tax (STCG) depending on the holding period of the investments. Unlike income tax, for the LTCG, the tax rate does not change in a progressive manner. Thus, the same rate of tax applies for all capital gains whether in lakh or crore rupees. There is also a separate set of exemptions that apply to LTCG, and they come with arbitrary conditions. For example, one can get exemption for buying a house after selling another, provided the new house is bought within two years or constructed within three years of the sale. On LTCG on stocks and equity mutual funds, there is an exemption limit of Rs 1 lakh. On others, the benefit of indexation is available. The last time the government tinkered with the capital gains tax regime was in the Budget for FY19, when the LTCG was reintroduced on listed shares. The surge in capital market transactions combined with the booming stock market since then has led to healthy growth in collections, and these can be further streamlined and increased by rationalising and simplifying the structure of capital gains taxation. There should be one uniform rate for LTCG and all LTCGs should be given the benefits of indexation. There is no ratio-

OVER 100 MILLION DEMAT ACCOUNT WERE OPENED IN INDIA DURING THE PANDEMIC YEARS (MARCH 2020 TO DEC 2022), HUGELY EXPANDING THE BASE OF RETAIL INVESTORS IN THE STOCK MARKET WHO ARE WILLING TO TAKE ADDITIONAL RISKS TO GENERATE WEALTH

(The author is a former Director General at the Office of the Comptroller & Auditor General of India)



nale for treating listed and unlisted stocks differently and applying different rates in respect of them. Different tax rates in respect of tax assets move resources from one to another, and the same happens with different holding periods. Real estate sector is the biggest absorber of black money, which is why its prices are way above its intrinsic value. If we want to cleanse the system, special incentives for investing in real estate or holding onto it must be removed and the sector must be brought under the GST regime. Over 100 million demat accounts were opened in India during the pandemic years (March 2020 to Dec 2022), hugely expanding the base of retail investors in the stock market who are willing to take additional risks to generate wealth. Given an estimated 10-fold increase in our direct tax collections from the increased stock market activity and the future potential for further increases, rationalisation of the capital gains structure is urgently called for. The threshold limit for LTCG also needs to be raised substantially from the present limit of Rs 1 lakh to encourage more retail participation in equity investing. This can only increase the direct tax collections further. Even if all these changes cannot be introduced in this budget, the FM must make her intent of rationalising the structure of capital gains taxation absolutely clear with a specific roadmap. Secondly, there is also an urgent need to rationalise the centrally sponsored schemes to increase the allocative efficiency in the budget. But there are many schemes which have inherent populist biases and are economically inefficient; they consume scarce resources that have an opportunity cost. These schemes also tend to proliferate. There is an urgent need to take a hard look at some of these schemes and rationalise them, not through bundling together under some umbrella schemes as the government had done in the past, but through convergence and merger, and substantial reduction of redundancies. The previous finance commissions have all red-flagged this issue and the latest, the 15th Finance Commission has said, "We have noted the proliferation of centrally sponsored schemes and central sector schemes and the tendency to continue with them without an evaluation of their outcomes. It is our expectation that the Union Government will utilise the year 2020-21 to complete the review of such schemes and thereafter prune and rationalise the list to focus on certain key sectors and interventions with nation-wide externalities. The objective in our view should be to ensure that there is a minimum level of expenditure on certain desired sectors to improve human development and infrastructure. This will also reduce pressure on the revenue account of the Union to enable higher capital expenditure within the available fiscal space." Government is yet to review and rationalise these schemes which will release lot of taxpayer funds for capital purposes and curtail unproductive expenditure. Lastly, the dual system of income tax assessment that was introduced in the FY20 budget under section 115BAC of the Income Tax Act is making no sense. For one thing, it is again too complex with six rates — 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30 per cent - without exemptions, as against three in the pre-existing tax regime with exemptions. With or without exemptions, there should be only a single tax regime. The alternate tax regime has failed to enthuse people, and if the FM is serious about it, she should simplify it to the extent that a taxpayer can prepare and file her tax return under the new regime without the help of chartered accountants. The alternative is to raise the existing exemptions suitably keeping in mind the fact that high inflation which has become the new permanent normal now will not slow anytime soon, especially with the Russia-Ukraine War showing no sign of ending. The tax slabs can be suitably adjusted for inflation to alleviate the economic hardships of the common man.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

SWAMI PRASAD MAURYA IS CONTINUOUSLY ATTACKING 'HINDU DHARMA', 'HINDU AASTHA' AND RAMCHARITMANAS. — BJP LEADER SIDHARTH NATH SINGH



IF MAHANTS ARE TALKING ABOUT BEHEADING ME AND CHOPPING OFF MY TONGUE, ARE THEY NOT TERRORISTS AND BUTCHERS? — SAMAJWADI PARTY LEADER SWAMI PRASAD MAURYA



ANAND RAMANATHAN



ROUNAK BAHETI



SOUMYA BOSE

(Anand Ramanathan is Partner, Deloitte India; Rounak Baheti is Director, Deloitte India; and Soumya Bose is Manager, Deloitte India)

The Indian rural population is spread across 6.3 lakh villages and constitutes 64 per cent of the total population. However, it contributes only 37 per cent of overall consumption of Fast Moving Consumer goods (FMCG). Historically, rural consumption has been growing at 3-5 per cent points higher than urban, driven by increasing disposable income and growth of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector on the back of successful rollout of government policies towards higher Minimum Support Prices (MSP), fertilizer subsidies, Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS).

Rural consumption is currently facing headwinds in the wake of double-digit price increases and lower visibility of future income among rural households. However, in the long term, rural markets possess immense growth potential, and the upcoming budget is expected to provide adequate focus on job generation, capability development and infrastructure related initiatives which can have a multiplier effect towards driving growth in rural consumption. The Indian agriculture sector is still dependent on the timely arrival of monsoon, as a result there is a need to protect farmers from vagaries of weather conditions. The Government needs to focus on enhancing benefits and coverage of crop insurance schemes and focus on increasing coverage under micro-irrigation (like drip, sprinklers, etc.) which has proved more efficient than traditional techniques. India is one of the countries with significant post-harvest losses. There are 8,000 cold storages having 35 million metric tons capacity across India, but 59 per cent of this capacity is concentrated in only four states — Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat. In addition to encouraging private sector to develop such facilities through foreign direct investment (FDI) and tax incentives, the Government can also incentivize Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) and Self Help Groups (SHGs) to develop low capacity warehouses and micro cold storages for reducing wastages of small farmers. An average agricultural household in India has 60 per cent of their annual income in debt. The Government can increase outlay towards initiatives/schemes aimed at financial inclusion and generate greater awareness on existing schemes which extends credit guarantees to MSMEs/ FPO/SHGs for working capital financing and term lending with interest subvention. Additional outlay under NABARD Fund can be committed towards providing credits to processing units even outside designated food parks for modernization/ upgradation. According to the NSS, the annual income of a farm household was Rs 1.23 lakh, whereas average debt was Rs 74,100 from July, 2018 to June, 2019. With increasing internet and smartphone penetration in rural markets, the Government can focus on improving access to information for farmers through online trainings, advisory services on agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry and other allied sectors. Expediting 5G rollout, with network availability, will also help speed up implementation and adoption of Agri-tech in generating more opportunities and employment in Rural India. Market linkages can facilitate better price realizations for farmers. The Government can look at accelerating adoption and integration of National Agriculture Market (eNAM) with the Agri-markets across the country through policy levers like synchronization of quality standards in agricultural produces, standardization of sorting/grading systems and systematic and accelerated registration of farmers, traders, and other ecosystem players in the portal. Rural reach has been a challenge with higher cost of logistics driven by less-than truckloads. Government impetus in fast-tracking National Logistics Policy implementation, coupled with integrated information platforms, will reduce inefficiencies in movement of goods, increasing access and opportunities for rural India. Micro-clusters through setting up rural entrepreneurship hubs in districts under 'One District One Product' initiative is an excellent opportunity to promote the rural economy. Interventions include support through training, better exposure to markets and setting up of facilities for value addition. This can promote entrepreneurship opportunities for rural youth. In addition, the Government can also consider providing a separate allocation to create a dedicated Venture Capital (VC) fund for new age startups focused on servicing the rural economy. With global recession looming in the horizon, the upcoming Budget presents the Government a timely opportunity to unlock the levers for harnessing the growth and employment potential of the rural economy.



# Probe team recovers Mirage black box

## Efforts on to retrieve all parts of SU-30 data recorder

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
NEW DELHI

As the IAF has started investigations to ascertain the cause of the air mishap near Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh on Saturday, its teams on Sunday recovered the black box of the ill-fated Mirage-2000 and a part of the flight data recorder of the SU-30 MKI. Efforts were on to retrieve all the parts of the black box or the data recorder of the SU-30 to enable the board of inquiry to find out the reason for the accident.

The data recorder of the Mirage-2000 and the SU-30 were found in the Morena district where both planes went down. Wing Commander Hanumanth Rao Sarathi flying the Mirage was killed while the two pilots of the SU-30 managed to eject before the crash. They were now undergoing medical treatment, officials said here.

As regards the recovery of the data recorder and collecting the wreckage of both the planes, officials said teams of IAF studied and inspected a forested area of Pahargarh where the debris of the two



Relatives and Air Force personnel during the last rites of Wing Commander Hanumanth Rao Sarathi, who was killed in plane crash in Morena, Madhya Pradesh, at Belagavi on Sunday

PTI

fighter jets fell on Saturday.

The two frontline combat aircraft of the IAF crashed during a training mission in Morena possibly due to mid-air collision when the wings of the two aircraft brushed against

each other while flying at speeds of more than 800kms.

A black box, or the flight data recorder, is an electronic recording device placed in an aircraft and helps in the investigation of flight accidents.

Pahargarh area police inspector Dharmendra Gour said the forested area where the wreckage fell has been cordoned off.

“Even police are not being allowed in the (cordoned off)

area. Officials of IAF are present there,” he said. Media personnel are also not allowed in the area.

Defence experts have said the Russian-designed Sukhoi-30MKI jet and the French Mirage-2000 possibly had a mid-air collision, but there was no official comment on the cause of the crash from the IAF.

Both the jets had taken off from the Gwalior Air Force station. The base has squadrons of both Sukhoi-30MKIs and the Mirage 2000 jets. The crash took place at about 5.30am.

Morena Collector Ankit Asthana on Saturday said the debris of both aircraft fell in the Pahargarh area of the district and also in Rajasthan's Bharatpur, which borders Madhya Pradesh.

A high-level probe has been ordered into the accident, officials earlier said. It was the first Mirage 2000 as well as Sukhoi-30MKI that the IAF lost in a mid-air collision.

The SU-30MKI is a twin-seater combat jet, while the Mirage 2000, manufactured by French aerospace major Dassault Aviation, is a single-seater aircraft.

# CPI demands probe into all Adani group business deals

## Attacks Centre for allowing monopoly to company in the ports and airports

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
NEW DELHI

The Communist Party of India (CPI) on Sunday demanded a thorough probe into all deals of the Adani group. The party's national secretariat in a statement blamed Modi Government for patronage given to industrialist Gautam Adani by allowing monopoly in the ports, and airports sector and backing of LIC in share markets.

“The National Secretariat of the Communist Party of India has repeatedly pointed out that the pro-corporate and pro-big business policies adopted by the RSS-BJP combine government led by Narendra Modi are resulting in the loot of national and natural assets by Adani and others. The Modi government has asked the public sector enterprises including LIC to invest in Adani companies' shares.

“The Adani group is now having control over seaports,



airports and profit-making public-sector enterprises. The sudden growth of Adani group after Modi came to power is proof of the patronage received from the government. The investors including the average Indian investor and the public sector units are already under heavy loss due to alleged manipulations by the Adani

group,” said CPI.

The CPI demanded a thorough probe into all the deals of the Adani group by competent authorities so that further loss can be averted.

“Party also demands exemplary punishment to all those responsible for the loot of the national and natural assets,” said CPI.

# Bihar students in lurch over JEE dates clash

## NTA assures JEE aspirants, new date to be announced today

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
NEW DELHI/PATNA

The schedule of the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) Main 2023 examinations has left the Bihar students jittery as it coincided with the Class 12 mathematics exam to be conducted by the Bihar Intermediate board on February 1.

Sources in the Ministry of Education said a late evening meeting conducted on Sunday has decided to hold a discussion with the Bihar Education Department to adjust the conflicting exam dates either way.

A senior official of the National Testing Agency (NTA) has assured that Bihar students desiring to take the JEE will not face any problems and a new decision to tweak the



date and timing shall be announced positively by Monday morning.

Students taking the Bihar Board (BSEB) exam in 2023 have took to social media to express their concerns and urged either of the organizers to adjust or reschedule the exam dates. National Testing Agency (NTA) which conducts

the JEE for admissions towards IITs and engineering colleges across the country recently revised JEE Main 2023 exam dates, as of which, the JEE Main 2023 Exams will be conducted on January 24, 25, 28, 29, 30, 31 and February 1.

Interestingly the JEE 2023 exam had to be rescheduled since a date of testing of one

batch of aspirants/applicants fell on January 27 earlier which had to be withdrawn because of the Pariksha Pe Charcha (PPC) 2023 was scheduled on January 27 in which lakhs of students, teachers parents and other stakeholders participated.

The Bihar School Examination Board (BSEB) will conduct the mathematics exam of the class 12th board exam for 2023 on February 1, from 9.30 am to 12.45 pm. While the JEE Main 2023 will take place from 9am to 12pm.

Candidates who has to mandatory take the Class 12 board exams and those who have intended to take JEE

Main schedule for same day on February 1 have requested the Bihar government to amend necessary changes which is significant for their career.

# Man booked for impersonating as secretary of PMO

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has booked Ankit Kumar Singh for impersonating as Secretary of the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) in a case for personating a government servant.

“It has been learnt by this office that a man Ankit Kumar Singh is moving around claiming himself to be Dinesh Rao, an IAS officer of 1997 batch of Bihar cadre and posted as a Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office, and looking after Varanasi district.

His mobile number is 9454008098 and he is learnt to have contacted Prabhu Narayan Singh, District Magistrate, Agra, Uttar Pradesh seeking favours for his constituency.



stintency.

Prima facie, it appears to be a case of impersonation as PMO official as no official by the given name is posted in this office. Accordingly, CBI is requested to lodge a complaint for initiating investigation into the matter, as per law. Assistant Director, PMO, said in a complaint dated September 24, 2021.

The case was registered following notifications from the Department of Personnel and Training under which the CBI functions and the Home Department of the Uttar Pradesh Government for investigating the case.

While the UP Government accorded consent to the CBI to investigate the case under its jurisdiction across the State on August 24, 2022 and subsequently the DoPT notified the agency to probe the matter in a notification dated November 14 last year.

The suspect has been booked under Section 170 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) for personating a government servant.

# Rollout of HPV vax against cervical cancer: Govt likely to float global tender in April

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Health Ministry intends to roll out HPV vaccine against cervical cancer in the national immunisation programme for girls aged nine to 14 years in June for which a global tender is likely to be floated in April, official sources have said.

Serum Institute's made-in-India HPV vaccine "CER-VAVAC" was launched by Union Home Minister Amit Shah on January 24, in presence of the Pune-based firm's CEO Adar Poonawalla and Prakash Kumar Singh, its Director-Government and Regulatory Affairs.

“The ministry is likely to float in April a global tender for 16.02 crore doses of HPV vaccine, which will be supplied by 2026. Apart from domestic manufacturer Serum Institute of India, global vaccine manufacturer Merck is also likely to participate in the tender,” an official source said.

In July last year, India's drug regulator granted market authorization to Serum Institute of India's indigenously developed HPV vaccine.

It has also been cleared by government advisory panel National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (NTAGI) for use in the public health programme.

Prakash Kumar Singh, on the sidelines of a South Asia meet on HPV last month, had said that the price of CER-VAVAC will be affordable compared to the international HPV vaccine available in India.

India, at present, is fully dependent on foreign manufacturers for HPV vaccines.

Globally, three foreign firms manufacture HPV vaccines out of which two sell their doses in India.

Each dose of the vaccine available in the market costs more than ₹4,000, sources said.

In September 2022, Poonawalla had said that each dose of its "CER-VAVAC" vaccine would cost ₹200 to ₹400.

# Cattle runover on tracks: Rly starts fencing Mumbai-Ahmedabad route

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
NEW DELHI

To curb incidents of cattle runover in the busy Mumbai - Ahmedabad section, Indian Railways has initiated the work of construction of cattle barrier fencing.

To begin with, the Western Railway has initiated the work of construction of Metal Beam fencing on Mumbai - Ahmedabad section. The metal barrier fencing will cover a length of about 622 km, between Mumbai to Ahmedabad and will be undertaken at an approximate cost of ₹245.26 crore.

“All the 8 tenders have been awarded and work is progressing in full swing. The work is expected to be completed by end of May 2023. The fencing will be of guard rails made of metal. The fencing is very robust as it consists of two W-beams. A W-beam type stands for wide flanges, which are thicker, that aid in resisting bend stress,” said a senior railway official.

Such fenceings are used in



highways & expressways, especially at accident prone areas to provide protection to vehicles as well as pedestrians.

At the same time Western Railway appealed to the cattle owners/cattle grazers to not let their cattle come near the railway land/tracks.

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw had announced that barriers or concrete bollards

will be constructed along the fast moving train sections to secure the rail infrastructure and at the same time safety of the passengers on board.

In yet another initiative, Railways have already put on the service of its security personnel to man and then simultaneously create awareness along the residents of tracks.

A fresh application has been moved before the Supreme Court urging that the matters related to alleged forcible religious conversions be taken up by a larger bench of five judges as they involve the interpretation of the Constitution.

A three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud is scheduled to hear the batch of pleas on Monday against anti-conversion laws of several states regulating religious conversion due to interfaith marriages and on matters related to alleged forcible conversions.

The fresh application is filed by advocate Ashwini Upadhyay, who is among the petitioners. He has asked the court to refer the petitions to a larger bench saying there are several questions of laws involved which require the interpretation of the Constitution.

He raised questions like whether the previous judgments of this Court interpreting Article 25(1) of the Constitution are grossly erro-



neous in so far as they upheld the word “propagate” would include entitlement to convert.

“Whether the word “propagate” needs to be construed in a manner which is not detrimental to fraternity, unity, dignity and national integration...,” Upadhyay's fresh plea said.

It should also not lead to communal conflagration on account of religious communities trying to convert the weaker section of other religious communities and were attempting to make demographic changes as witnessed in the nine states/UTs (Ladakh, Lakshadweep, Kashmir, Mizoram, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Manipur, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh) and around 200 districts of India, the application said.

# PIL filed in SC challenging Centre's decision to ban BBC documentary

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A PIL has been filed in the Supreme Court against the Centre's decision to “ban” a BBC documentary on the 2002 Gujarat riots in the country, alleging it was “malafide, arbitrary and unconstitutional”.

The PIL filed by advocate ML Sharma also urged the apex court to call and examine the BBC documentary - both parts I and II - and sought action against persons who were responsible and were involved directly and indirectly with the 2002 Gujarat riots.

Sharma said that in his PIL he has raised a constitutional question and the top court has to decide whether citizens have the right under Article 19 (1) (2) to see news, facts and reports on the 2002 Gujarat

riots.

He has sought direction to quash the order dated January 21, 2023 of the Ministry of the Information and Broadcasting, terming it as illegal, malafide, arbitrary and unconstitutional.

His plea said whether the central government can curtail freedom of press which is a fundamental right as guaranteed under Article 19 (1) (2) of the Constitution.

“Whether without having an Emergency declared under Article 352 of the Constitution of India by the president, Emergency provisions can be invoked by the central government?” the PIL said.

It claimed the BBC documentary has “recorded facts” which are also “evidence” and can be used to further the cause of justice for the victims.

# Leprosy cases declining not due to non-transmission, but due to non-detection: WHO

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
NEW DELHI

The World Health Organisation (WHO) on Sunday reminded the member nations not to be complacent in view of declining new leprosy cases, which it asserted were not due to decrease in transmission of the disease, but because of cases remaining undetected amid covid-related disruptions.

Against this backdrop, it has asked the countries to urgently address gaps in leprosy services which were affected

due to Covid-19 pandemic. “Act Now. End Leprosy.” is this year's theme for World Leprosy Day being observed on Sunday.

“Leprosy is 100% curable when detected early. Yet, today, in addition to covid-19 related challenges, stigma and discrimination- both institutionalized and informal, continue to impede prompt diagnosis and treatment and facilitate onward spread of leprosy. This has to change,” said Dr Poonam Khetrapal Singh, regional director, WHO South-East Asia.

She pointed out that over

the past decade, strong progress was achieved in several key areas of leprosy prevention, treatment, and control globally, with new cases among children reduced by 27% between 2010 and 2019, visible deformities at time of diagnosis reduced by 23% between 2014 and 2019 and the rate of new cases among children reduced to 7.6 per million children as opposed to 9.8 in 2014.

However, in 2021, 140,000 new leprosy cases were reported, with 95 per cent of new cases coming from the 23 global priority countries. Of these,



File photo

PTI

6 per cent were diagnosed with visible deformities or grade-2 disabilities (G2D). Over 6 per cent of new cases were children under the age of 15, with 368 being diagnosed with grade-2 disabilities, she said.

Even as a 10 per cent increase in new cases was reported in 2021 against 2020, the reported cases were still 30% lower than in 2019. Reportedly, this is not because of a decrease in transmission, but due to cases remaining undetected amid covid-related disruptions.

“Countries must continue

to urgently restore leprosy services, with a focus on expanding single dose rifampicin chemoprophylaxis, intensifying active case finding, and ensuring prompt diagnosis and treatment with multidrug therapy,” added Dr Khetrapal Singh.

The global health official also stressed on ensuring increased access for persons affected by leprosy and their families to mental health care as up to 50% of those affected face psychiatric morbidities such as depression, anxiety disorders and suicide attempts.



# Guj junior clerk recruitment exam cancelled after question paper leak

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

The competitive examination for the recruitment of Gujarat government's junior clerks scheduled on Sunday was postponed soon after it came to light that its question paper had been leaked, following which 16 persons were arrested, officials said.

The Gujarat Panchayat Service Selection Board (GPSSB) announced post-ponement of the examination early Sunday morning, hours before it was scheduled to start across 2,995 centres at 11 am. As many as 9.5 lakh candidates had applied for 1,181 posts. The Gujarat Anti Terrorist Squad (ATS) said it arrested 16 persons in this connection and recovered the copy of the question paper from their possession.

GPSSB's in-charge chairman Sandeep Kumar later announced that the examination will be conducted within 100 days and a new date will be announced in the next few days.

Addressing a press conference, Superintendent of Police (SP) of Gujarat ATS Sunil Joshi said 16 persons have been arrested so far in this case, including 15 from Vadodara and one from Hyderabad. Seven out of the 16 accused are part of a gang from Bihar.

"The state ATS nabbed 15 accused from a computer exam centre named Stackwise Technology in Vadodara around 1.30 am on Sunday when they had gathered there with the copy of the question paper. The question paper recovered from them matched with that of the original paper, prompting the government to immediately decide on postponing the exam," he said. Working on a tip-off that a man from Odisha, identified as Pradip Nayak, was going to deliver the question paper to Ketan Barot and Bhaskar Chaudhary in Vadodara city, the ATS formed a special team involving personnel from the Surat crime branch and Vadodara Special Operations Group (SOG) and arrested 15 persons from the exam centre along with the copy of the photo and copy of the question paper, Joshi said. "When we contacted the GPSSB, it confirmed that the copies matched with that of the original question paper. It was immediately decided to postpone the examination," he said.

Further investigation revealed that Nayak was given the copy of the paper by one Jeet Nayat, who worked at K L Hitech Press in Hyderabad



Representational image

where the paper was printed. A team rushed to Hyderabad and arrested Nayak who was being brought to Gujarat, he said.

Barot and Chaudhary were arrested in the past in cases investigated by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), he said. Chaudhary is a native of Bihar and lives in Vadodara, and Mohanty hails from Odisha and resides in Surat, Joshi said.

"The accused from Odisha contacted Chaudhary and Barot through the gang from Bihar. Chaudhary and Barot then contacted the accused in Gujarat, and they all decided to gather at Chaudhary's exam centre in Vadodara," Joshi said.

He said that most of the accused are involved in education consultancy business. "The accused persons were booked under sections 406 and 409 (criminal breach of trust), 420 (cheating) and 120(B) (criminal conspiracy) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and the case will be investigated by the ATS," he said.

Further probe will reveal the extent of exchange of money and the involvement of students in this connection.

An ATS team was sent to Odisha to arrest a wanted accused from the state, he said. Revealing the modus operandi, Joshi said that Nayak came in touch with a gang from Bihar led by one Murari Paswan, one of the accused.

"Paswan and his gang member Mintu Kumar contacted the accused persons from Vadodara. Through the Paswan gang, the supplier group came in contact with the recipients," he said.

"Most of them are involved in education consultancy, and one is a co-owner of a nursing college. We have arrested 16 accused, and the gang is completely busted," he said.

Early in the day, GPSSB's Sandeep Kumar told reporters that the examination will be held within 100 days. The board expressed regret for the inconvenience caused to the candidates and announced the examination will be conducted

afresh at the earliest, for which the board will issue a new advertisement.

Meanwhile, candidates reached the examination centres from far-off places on Sunday and expressed anger over the development. Members of the National Students' Union of India (NSUI), the Congress's student wing, blocked roads and shouted slogans against the government even as a number of them were detained in different parts of the state, according to police.

Members of Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), the student wing of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) also joined the protest. Some of the angry candidates demanded strong action against those responsible for the paper leak.

Police teams were deployed at the exam centres and bus stands as agitated candidates expressed their anguish and anger over the development.

"We feel helpless and uncertain about their future due to paper leak incidents happening regularly. The government should take care that such an incident does not recur. We travelled from far-off places and took trouble to reach here only to find the exam was cancelled," said a candidate. The opposition Congress and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) demanded strict action against the culprits. Gujarat AAP president Isudan Gadhvi demanded that the government form a Special Investigation Team (SIT) headed by a retired Supreme Court judge to investigate the paper leak cases in the state.

Apart from the SIT, we demand that the government come up with a strict law against paper leak in the upcoming budget session of the Assembly (to begin from February 23). The government should also provide a compensation of Rs 50,000 each to the candidates and make sure the candidates are not made to deposit the fees all over again," Gadhvi told reporters.

## Bad weather forces Shah to address Hry rally over phone

**Gohana (PTI):** After his visit here to attend a public rally on Sunday was cancelled due to bad weather, Union Home Minister Amit Shah addressed the gathering briefly over phone and exuded confidence that "lotus will bloom" on all Lok Sabha seats in the state in 2024 elections.

He also said the Manohar Lal Khattar government has reined in corruption and undertaken development in all fields during the past eight years. Addressing the 'Jan Utthan Rally', Shah appealed to the people of Haryana to vote for BJP to make Narendra Modi the Prime Minister again. "I could not come, but in near future I will come to Gohana," he said, adding "on every Lok Sabha seat, Bharatiya Janata Party's lotus will bloom, I have full belief." BJP had in 2019 won all the 10 Lok Sabha seats from Haryana.

Haryana unit of the BJP had been preparing for the Gohana rally for the past few weeks and Shah was also to address a party meeting here.

# WB Govt staffers protest over non-payment of DA

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

As though the 600-days-long sit-in demonstration by the victims of recruitment scam was not enough, a joint forum of 8 lakh strong State Government employees unions too have begun a continuous dharna in support of 38 per cent hike in dearness allowances.

The government employees including the retired staff have been protesting for months alleging that the Government had not paid them the revised dearness allowance after the Seventh Pay Commission recommendations were implemented by various governments. This, despite the Calcutta High directing the State to do so.

According to the joint forum leaders while they were eligible for a approved 34 per cent DA of the basic pay the government has so far given 3 per cent DA, which was not only less than the central government standards but also lesser than the DA given by the other States like Kerala, Bihar,

Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and even Uttar Pradesh. The employees association which promptly got support from the protestors of teachers' recruitment scam said they would continue the movement, till their demands were made.

"We have called for a 2-hour cease work on Wednesday ... if the Government continues to pay no heed to our demand then we will go for a bigger movement," one of their senior leaders said, even as the ruling Trinamool Congress blamed the Opposition BJP and the Left for fomenting problem.

"It is the CPI(M) and BJP which are inciting the government workers to derive political mileage from it ... still the people will once again vote for the Trinamool Congress in the panchayat and general elections" TMC MP Shantanu Sen said.

Supporting the cause of the State employees, Bengal Opposition Leader Suwendu Adhikari said, his party would raise the issue inside the Assembly and take the move-

ment to its logical end. "We will raise this issue in the Assembly ... because this Government does not even listen to the High Court which has directed them repeatedly to clear the DA," he said. The State government has moved the Supreme Court after the High Court order directing the government to clear the DA arrears of the employees.

CPI(M) MP and senior counsel Bikash Ranjan Bhattacharya said "there is no rule of law in Bengal which is proved by the way they get the audacity to defy the High Court ... this is sheer arrogance that has come with power..."

However TMC MP Sen advised the opposition to consider the large-scale welfare works undertaken by the Chief Minister. "Mamata Banerjee has introduced a whole range of projects from Kanyashree, Yuvashree, Sabooj Saathi, Sikshashree, Swasthya Saathi to Lakshmir Bhandar ... on the other hand the Centre is not releasing more than Rs 1 lakh crore due to the State Government.

## 2,300 hectares land retrieved during anti-encroachment drive in Kishtwar

PTI ■ JAMMU

Over 2,300 hectares of state and 'kachcharai' land were retrieved during the ongoing anti-encroachment drive in Kishtwar district of Jammu and Kashmir, an official said on Sunday.

The anti-encroachment drive is going on in full swing in all tehsils under the direct supervision of Deputy Commissioner, Kishtwar, Devansh Yadav, registering 75 percent progress, he said.

"The district administration has activated men and machinery on mission mode to evict the illegal occupants from the state land. Till date, around 47,552 kanals (2377.6 hectares) of state and Roshini land, out of total 64,192 kanal, have been retrieved," the official said. Under kachcharai land, he said, over 384 kanals (19.2 hectares) have been retrieved, out of a total encroached 572 kanals through a series of anti-encroachment drives. The retrieved land in Kishtwar town is worth crores of rupees, he added. Yadav has passed strict directions to Assistant Commissioner, Revenue, Kishtwar, Varunjeet Singh Charak and all tehsildars to chalk out a comprehensive plan and intensify the eviction and demolition drives in collaboration with police and other concerned in the coming days so that the rest of encroached land is retrieved in stipulated time.

Meanwhile, officials said more than 35 kanals of encroached land was retrieved from illegal occupants in different parts of Kathua district on Saturday. The retrieved land included over three kanals and six marlas from former minister Prem Sagar Aziz and nine kanals and 15 marlas from District Development Council, Chairman, Kathua, Col (retd) Mahan Singh from Plahi village, they said. The officials said the land freed from the encroachers also includes a high-value land worth Rs 2. 41 crore in Basohli sub-division.

The Jammu district administration has retrieved prime government land, measuring 20 kanals and five marla, from Machallian-Nagbani village in the Doman area on the outskirts of the city, they said.

Deputy Commissioner, Jammu, Avny Lavasa appreciated the efforts of revenue officers and asked them to leave no stone unturned to retrieve the state land from encroachers.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrives for the Beating Retreat ceremony, at Vijay Chowk in New Delhi, on Sunday

PTI Photo

### FROM PAGE 1

## RAKSHAK TURNS BHAKSHAK AS COP SHOOT ODISHA MIN

Das, a three term MLA, has represented the Jharsuguda Assembly constituency since 2009. He is considered to be the second richest minister in the State government after Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. Das, a 60-year-old politician from the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) is said to be a confidante of Patnaik.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed his condolence over the demise of Naba Kishore Das. Taking to Twitter, PM Modi wrote, "Saddened by the unfortunate demise of Minister in Odisha Government, Shri Naba Kishore Das Ji. Condolences to his family in this tragic hour. Om Shanti."

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik offered his condolences and said that Naba Kisore Das' death was a great loss to Odisha. "He was an asset for both the government and the party. He has successfully carried many initiatives in the health department to the benefit of the people," the Chief Minister said.

## 'HATE WILL LOSE, LOVE WILL ALWAYS WIN,' SAYS RAHUL

The Congress did not extend an invitation to the AAP, BRS, BJD, and Akali Dal, who are the party's bitter rivals in their respective states. Earlier, Congress former ally in Karnataka, JDS said the Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda was invited to the rally but will be unable to attend it. He conveyed his "deep appreciation" for Rahul Gandhi for his achievement of walking the length of the nation for harmony.

Addressing a press conference in Srinagar hours after unfurling the national flag at the historic clock tower of Lal Chowk, Rahul advised the Modi government to deal with China firmly by making it clear that "we are not going to tolerate them sitting on our land". Rahul claimed the approach that the government was following "by completely denying that the Chinese have taken our land", is extremely dangerous as it would give them the confidence to do even "more aggressive things."

The government must deal with China firmly and make it clear that "we are not going to tolerate them sitting on our land". Rahul said the Prime Minister of India is the only person in the country who is under the impression that the Chinese have not taken any land from India.

"I recently met some ex-army people and even a delegation from Ladakh. They said that 2000 square kilometres of our Indian territory have been taken over by the Chinese," Gandhi said. He also said that many of the patrolling points that used to be in Indian territory are now firmly in Chinese hands, he said.

Rahul was responding to a question a day after External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said some people deliberately spread wrong news about the China issue, knowing it is not true, for politics and by talking about some land, which was taken by China in 1962, they give the impression this happened recently - comments that are viewed as a dig at Gandhi.

"Sometimes, they talk about some land, which was taken by China in 1962. But they will not tell you the truth. They will give

you the impression that this thing happened yesterday," he had said without taking names. Rahul Gandhi has been raising the issue of Chinese aggression along the Line of Actual Control, alleging that Indian land has been occupied.

The Bharat Jodo Yatra led by Rahul Gandhi concluded on Sunday at Sonwar amid tight security arrangements. Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said the Yatra has spread the message of love to every corner of the country and urged the party's supporters to unite to take the nation forward.

Challenging Union Home Minister Amit Shah about law and order situation in Kashmir, Rahul said if the situation is so good in J&K, then he should walk to Srinagar's Lal Chowk from Jammu. "There are targeted killings in the state, bomb blasts happening, what security personnel are talking indicates that the situation is not good... if the BJP thinks so, why doesn't Amit Shah walk to Lal Chowk from Jammu," he said.

The mainstream Kashmiri leaders belonging to the National Conference and the Peoples Democratic Party, however, stayed away from the flag ceremony.

During the press conference Rahul Gandhi also targeted the ruling party and accused them of attacking the institutions. "I think what the RSS & BJP are doing is attacking the institutional framework of the country, judiciary, media etc. What you see in J&K is the same assault. When we talk in the parliament our mics are muted. I want to talk about GST, China... but you can't. It's happening all across the country in different ways. As far as I'm concerned I'm very clear, the first step should be the restoration of statehood and democratic rights."

Expressing his gratitude for the welcome he received in J & K, Rahul also said that statehood and restoration of the democratic process is fundamental and very important. He also said that if the situation is normal then why doesn't Amit Shah walk from Jammu to Kashmir and unfurl the tricolor at Lal Chowk?

## 'PADMA AWARDS ECHOES IN NAXAL-HIT AREAS THIS TIME'

"Dhani Ram Toto, Janum Singh Soy and B. Ramakrishna Reddy ji... the whole country has become familiar with them now", he said. The Prime Minister spoke about the importance of 'millets' and said 2023 will be the 'International Year for Millets'. Modi mentioned the names of people from different states who have dedicated their professional lives to promoting 'millet-made' food.

Modi said a revolution is underway in the health sector because of public participation in campaigns such as International Yoga Day and International Year of Millets.

"Just as people have made yoga and fitness a part of their lives by active participation, similarly they are also adopting millet on a large scale," he said.

"What is common between Yoga Day and our different types of coarse grains -- Millets, then you might think... what is this comparison? If I say that both have a lot in common, you will be surprised. In fact, the United Nations has taken the decision of both International Yoga Day and International Year of Millets after India's proposal.

"Secondly, yoga is also related to health and millets also play an important role in health. The third thing is more important -- a revolution is on the way because of public participation in both campaigns. Just as people have made yoga and fitness a part of their lives by taking active participation on a large scale; similarly people are adopting millets on a large scale", said Modi.

"People are now making millets a part of their diet. A huge impact of this change is also visible. On the one hand, the small farmers who traditionally used to produce millets are very excited. They are very happy that the world has now started understanding the importance of millets. On the other hand, FPOs and entrepreneurs have started efforts to market millets and make them available to people", he said.

"Have you ever heard the word Milletpreneurs? ", asked the Prime Minister. A women's self-help group in the tribal district Sundargarh is associated with Odisha Millets Mission. They make biscuits, cakes and other eatables from millets," Modi said.

He said a revolution is underway in the health sector because of public participation in campaigns such as International Yoga Day and International Year of Millets.

"Just as people have made yoga and fitness a part of their lives by active participation, similarly they are also adopting millet on a large scale", the Prime Minister said.

Drawing the attention of people towards the problem of e-waste, Modi said, "Proper disposal of e-waste can become a great force to build a circular economy. Today's latest devices are also the e-waste of the future. Whenever someone buys a new device or replaces his old device, it becomes necessary to keep in mind whether it is discarded properly or not."

The Prime Minister also touched on India being the largest democracy in the world.

"we Indians are proud of the fact that our country is also the Mother of Democracy. Democracy is in our veins, it is in our culture -- it has been an integral part of our work for centuries. By nature, we are a Democratic Society", he said

"Dr. Ambedkar had compared the Buddhist monks union to the Indian Parliament. He described it as an institution where there were many rules for Motions, Resolutions, Quorum, Voting and counting of votes. Babasaheb believed that Lord Buddha must have got inspiration from the political systems of that time" he said The Prime Minister also hailed India's ranking in the Global Innovation Index and said India has improved and achieved a good rank

## SEBI MAY PROBE SHORT SELLING ON INDIAN BOURSES

The critics of short selling on the other hand are convinced that short selling, directly or indirectly, poses potential risks and can easily destabilise the market.

In an efficient futures market, the relationship between spot price and futures price of the underlying asset is governed by cash-and-carry arbitrage and reverse cash-and-carry arbitrage. The latter requires that traders should be able to sell the underlying security short unless of course there are enough traders who own

the security and are able to sell it cash to take advantage of a too low futures price.

It is noteworthy though, that despite the conflicting schools of thought, securities market regulators in most countries and in particular, in all developed securities markets, recognise short selling as a legitimate investment activity. Such jurisdictions also have an active market for equity derivatives which includes stock futures. Some of the jurisdictions even recognise the usefulness of naked short sales in certain circumstances and instead of prohibiting short sales; the regulators have permitted it to take place within a regulated framework.

The International Organisation of Securities Commissions (IOSCO) has also reviewed short selling and securities lending practices across markets and has recommended transparency of short selling, rather than prohibit it.

As per media reports, in 2022, the US prosecutors considered racketeering charges in a sprawling probe of hedge funds and research firms that bet against stocks.

The US Justice Department issued subpoenas to dozens of firms as part of the sweeping probe focused on potentially manipulative trading around negative reports on listed companies published by some of their investors, media reports said.

Adani Group has said in a statement that accounting (or fraud type assertions) "investigation" by Hindenburg are devoid of facts. Of Adani portfolio's nine public listed entity's eight are audited by one of the Big 6. On leverage or over leverage issue -- 100 of our various companies are rated (these account for nearly 100 per cent of our EBITDA), Adani Enterprises said in a stock exchange filing.

On revenue or balance sheet being artificially inflated or managed -- out nine listed companies in Adani portfolio six are subject to specific sector regulatory review for revenue, costs and capex, Adani Group said. In relation to governance, four of our large companies are in the top 7 per cent of the peer group in Emerging markets or the sector or the world. On the LAS position do note that overall promoter leverage is less than 4 per cent of promoter holding, the group said.

## RAIN FAILS TO DAMPEN BEATING RETREAT SPIRIT

with the lights on their instruments on and then playing "Aye mere watan ke logon", with the same lights switched off, cast an ethereal spell on the Vijay Chowk. The buglers performed under the leadership of Naib Subedar Santosh Kumar Pandey, and the pipes and drums band was played under the instructions of Subedar Major Baswaraj Vagge. The ceremony traces its origins to the early 1950s when Major Roberts of the Indian Army indigenously developed the unique ceremony of display by the massed bands. Now, it has emerged as an event of national pride when the colours and standards are paraded.

"It marks a centuries-old military tradition when the troops ceased fighting, sheathed their arms and withdrew from the battlefield and returned to the camps at sunset at the sounding of the Retreat," a Defence Ministry statement said on Saturday.



# Sri Lanka police investigates threats on election commission

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lankan police have launched an investigation into alleged telephone threats received by the members of the independent elections commission, an official said on Sunday.

Police spokesman Nihal Thalduwa said court orders to analyse telephone records had been obtained.

On 19 January, two members S.B. Divaratne and K.P. Pathirana had lodged complaints over telephonic threats to resign. Later M.M. Mohamed, another member, had received similar threats.

Fourth member P.S.M. Charles had reportedly offered her resignation from the membership.

The opposition charged that it was the government which was keen to postpone

the local election scheduled for March 9.

The opposition pointed to statements made by ruling SLPP members that the current economic collapse environment was not the best to hold an election when the entire focus must be to restore the economy derailed by the shortage of foreign reserves in the country.

The opposition claims that resignation of election commission members would lead to the postponement of the election.

However, the chair of the Commission SG Punchihewa said the election could only be postponed by a court order or an act of parliament.

The ruling SLPP controls a larger majority of the 340 local councils having won them in 2018.

However, with their



bungling in the economy which led to the worst economic crisis ever, the opposition said the ruling party faced the prospect of being routed and therefore wanted to postpone the election.

Sri Lanka is yet to clinch the anticipated bail out from the IMF as negotiations for

debt restructuring had slowed down the process since September.

Many reforms such as tax hikes and utility tariff raises are being opposed by the trade unions further complicating the electoral prospects for the ruling party at the March 9 election.

# Trump says beating of Nichols ‘never should have happened’

AP ■ COLUMBIA

Former president Donald Trump on Saturday said the footage of the brutal beating of Tyre Nichols by five Memphis police officers is "horrible" and that the attack "never should have happened".

"I thought it was terrible. He was in such trouble. He was just being pummelled. Now that should never have happened," Trump said in an interview with The Associated Press on Saturday, a day after authorities released footage of the attack on the 29-year-old Black man after a traffic stop. Nichols died three days later.

The comments were notable for Trump, who is running for the White House again and has a history of encouraging rough treatment of people in police custody.

He was president during the racial justice protests that

emerged in the summer of 2020 following the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis. At the time, he signed an executive order encouraging better police practices but was criticised for failing to acknowledge systemic racial bias.

Trump ultimately centred his 2020 reelection bid around a "law and order" message that emphasized support for law enforcement.

The newly released violent video in Memphis shows police holding down and beating Nichols for three minutes with their fists, boots and batons. The footage shows police screaming profanities at him while Nichols screams for his mother. Trump said Nichols calling out for his mother was "a very sad moment".

"That was really the point that got me the most, to be honest with you," he said.



Trump did not address the video in his campaign speeches in New Hampshire or South Carolina, the first stops of his 2024 presidential campaign.

The five former Memphis Police Department officers, who are also Black, have been fired and charged with murder and other crimes. The legal team for Nichols' family has likened it to the infamous 1991 police beating of Los Angeles

motorist Rodney King. Trump said Memphis Police were taking a "strong step" by disbanding the police unit involved in the attack, which was created to target violent offenders in areas beset by high crime.

"Look, the tape was perhaps not totally conclusive but, to me, it was pretty conclusive and it was vicious and violent and hard to believe - over a traffic violation," he said.

# Israeli police seal off home of Jerusalem synagogue attacker

AP ■ JERUSALEM

Israeli police on Sunday sealed up the east Jerusalem home of a Palestinian attacker who killed seven people and wounded three outside a synagogue, one of several punitive measures approved by Benjamin Netanyahu's Cabinet overnight.

The move came following a deadly weekend in which seven people were killed and five others wounded in two separate shootings in Jerusalem, in one of the bloodiest months in the occupied West Bank and east Jerusalem in several years.

The measures threatened to further raise tensions and cast a cloud over a visit next week by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

The weekend shootings followed a deadly Israeli raid in the West Bank on Thursday that killed nine Palestinians, most of them militants.

In response, Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip fired a barrage of rockets into Israel, triggering a series of Israeli airstrikes in response. In all, 32 Palestinians have been killed in fighting this month. Addressing the Cabinet on Sunday morning, Netanyahu said that "we sealed the home of the terrorist who carried out the horrendous attack in Jerusalem, and his home will be demolished".

"We are not seeking an escalation, but we are prepared for any scenario. Our answer to terrorism is a heavy hand and a strong, swift and precise response," he said.

The police on Sunday released footage of Israeli army engineers welding metal plates over the windows and welding the front door shut as part of the operation in response to Friday night's deadly shooting.

Police said the attacker, identified as a 21-year-old east Jerusalem resident, was

killed in a shootout with officers after fleeing the scene in the predominantly ultra-Orthodox east Jerusalem settlement of Neve Yaakov.

On Saturday, a 13-year-old Palestinian boy opened fire elsewhere in east Jerusalem, wounding two Israeli men, paramedics said. The attacker was shot and hospitalised.

Funerals for the victims in Friday's shooting, the deadliest attack on Israelis since 2008, were scheduled to take place Sunday.

Netanyahu's Cabinet also said it plans a series of other punitive measures, including cancelling social security benefits for the families of attackers, and would take steps to "strengthen the settlements" this week as part of the government's response to the weekend's attacks.

Netanyahu said that strengthening settlements in the occupied West Bank was aimed at "sending a message to



the terrorists that seek to uproot us from our land that we are here to stay".

Israel captured the West Bank, along with east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip in the 1967 Mideast war. It has built dozens of settlements, now home to more than 500,000 Jewish settlers, in the decades since.

Most of the international community considers the settlements an obstacle to peace with the Palestinians, who

seek the West Bank as the heartland of a future independent state.

In Cairo, Blinken opened his Mideast tour on Sunday and was to speak with students at the American University in the city before holding talks with Egyptian officials on Monday.

He was then scheduled to travel to Israel for the most critical leg of the visit for talks with Israeli and Palestinian officials.

# 2 Palestinians killed by Israeli security personnel in West Bank

AP ■ JERUSALEM

Two Palestinian men died on Sunday from gunshot wounds from Israeli security personnel in separate incidents, the Palestinian Health Ministry said, as Israeli forces sealed off the home of an east Jerusalem man who killed seven people outside a synagogue on Friday.

They were the latest Palestinian casualties in one of the bloodiest months in the occupied West Bank and east Jerusalem in recent years, and followed two Palestinian attacks targeting Israelis in Jerusalem. The escalating violence threatened to further raise tensions and cast a cloud over a visit next week by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

The ministry said an 18-year-old Palestinian man who was shot by a security guard next to the West Bank settlement of Kedumim died

Sunday.

The Israeli military said that a settlement security guard had identified a man armed with a pistol outside the settlement and shot him.

The ministry also confirmed the death of a 24-year-old Palestinian man who was wounded in an Israeli army raid in Jenin on Thursday that killed nine other Palestinians. There was no immediate claim of his affiliation with a militant group.

Earlier on Sunday, Israeli police sealed up the east Jerusalem home of a Palestinian attacker who killed seven people and wounded three outside a synagogue, one of several punitive measures approved by Benjamin Netanyahu's Cabinet overnight.

The Ukrainian Embassy in Israel said Saturday that one of the seven people was a Ukrainian national.

Israeli media reported that Irina Korlova, a healthcare worker, was killed along with six Israelis in the shooting.

The weekend shootings followed a deadly Israeli raid in the West Bank on Thursday that killed 10 Palestinians, most of them militants. In response, Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip fired a barrage of rockets into Israel, triggering a series of Israeli airstrikes in response. In all, 34 Palestinians have been killed in fighting this month.

Addressing the Cabinet on Sunday morning, Netanyahu said that "we sealed the home of the terrorist who carried out the horrendous attack in Jerusalem, and his home will be demolished".

"We are not seeking an escalation, but we are prepared for any scenario. Our answer to terrorism is a heavy hand and a strong, swift and precise response," he said.

# Peru's protest 'deactivators' run toward tear gas to stop it

AP ■ LIMA (PERU)

When police fire tear gas at protesters demanding the resignation of Peruvian President Dina Boluarte, most run away.

A few, though, run toward the gas canisters as quickly as possible — to neutralize them.

These are the "deactivators." Donning gas masks, safety goggles and thick gloves, these volunteers grab the hot canisters and toss them inside large plastic bottles filled with a mixture of water, baking soda and vinegar.

The deactivators made their debut in Peru street protests in 2020, inspired by protesters in Hong Kong who in 2019 unveiled new strategies to counteract the eye-stinging, breath-stealing effects of tear gas. With protesters in Lima facing a nearly daily fusillade of tear gas, more people have joined the ranks of deactivators

trying to shield them and keep the demonstrations going.

Peruvians have been protesting since early December, when former President Pedro Castillo was impeached after a failed attempt to dissolve Congress. His vice president, Boluarte, immediately took over — and has faced strong opposition ever since.

Fifty-eight people have died in connection with the unrest, including one police officer. Forty-six of the deaths occurred during direct clashes between protesters and police.

The protests have exposed deep divisions in the country between the urban elites and the rural poor. Demonstrations were first largely concentrated in the south, a long-neglected region of Peru that felt a particular kinship to Castillo's humble background as a rural teacher from the Andean highlands.

# UK PM sacks Tory party chief over tax penalty row

PTI ■ LONDON

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on Sunday sacked one of his Cabinet ministers and Conservative Party chairman, Nadhim Zahawi, after he was found to have been in serious breach of the Ministerial Code.

Zahawi, who was a minister without portfolio as the chief of the governing Tory party, had faced fierce pressure in recent days to quit over questions about his finances after it emerged that he had agreed a penalty settlement with His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) department.

Sunak had ordered an independent investigation into the Iraqi-born former Chancellor's tax affairs amid growing Opposition demands

for him to sack Zahawi. His independent ethics adviser, Sir Laurie Magnus, submitted his assessment on whether the HMRC settlement amounted to a breach of the ministerial code.

"When I became Prime Minister last year, I pledged that the government I lead would have integrity, professionalism and accountability at every level," writes Sunak in his letter to Zahawi, released by Downing Street.

"Following the completion of the independent adviser's investigation — the findings of which he has shared with us both — it is clear that there has been a serious breach of the Ministerial Code. As a result, I have informed you of my decision to remove you from your position in His Majesty's government," he said.

He added that Zahawi should be "extremely proud" of his "wide-ranging achievements in government over the last five years", particularly crediting his "successful oversight of the COVID-19 vaccine procurement and deployment programme".

In the correspondence to Sunak, also released by Downing Street, Magnus said his overall judgement was that "Mr Zahawi's conduct as a minister has fallen below the high standards that, as Prime Minister, you rightly expect from those who serve in your government". Earlier this week, Zahawi said he welcomed the investigation and looked forward to "explaining the facts of this issue" to Magnus — the UK Prime Minister's Independent Adviser on Ministers' Interests..

# Friends remember volunteer killed trying to help civilians

AP ■ KYIV

Friends and volunteers gathered in Kyiv's St Sophia's Cathedral on Sunday to say goodbye to volunteer Andrew Bagshaw who was killed with his colleague Christopher Parry while they were evacuating people from a front-line Ukrainian town. Bagshaw, 48, a New Zealand-British joint national, and Briton Parry, 28, went missing earlier this month while heading to the town of Soledar, in the eastern Donetsk region, where heavy fighting was taking place.

Volunteers spoke of their memories of Bagshaw and read out tributes from his family.

Nikolletta Stoyanova, a friend of Bagshaw's, spoke afterwards of his bravery.

"Even if no one wanted to go to Soledar, they can't do it. Because if he understood that someone needs help, they need to do this help for these people," Stoyanova said.

Bagshaw's father, Phil, told reporters in New Zealand that his son wanted to do something to help. "He was a very intelligent man, and a very independent thinker," he said.

"And he thought a long time about the situation in Ukraine, and he believed it to be immoral. He felt the only thing he could do of a constructive nature was to go there and help people."

Ukrainian police said on January 9 that they had lost contact with Bagshaw and Parry after they headed for Soledar.

# Iran says drone attack targets defense facility in Isfahan

AP ■ DUBAI

Bomb-carrying drones targeted an Iranian defence factory in the central city of Isfahan overnight, authorities said early Sunday, causing some damage at the plant amid heightened regional and international tensions engulfing the Islamic Republic.

The Iranian Defence Ministry offered no information on who it suspected carried out the attack, which came as a refinery fire separately broke out in the country's northwest and a 5.9 magnitude earthquake struck nearby, killing three people.

However, Tehran has been targeted in suspected Israeli drone strikes amid a shadow war with its Mideast rival as its nuclear deal with world powers collapsed. Meanwhile, tensions also remain high with neighbouring Azerbaijan after a gunman attacked that coun-

try's embassy in Tehran, killing its security chief and wounding two others.

Details on the Isfahan attack, which happened around 11:30 pm Saturday, remained scarce. A Defence Ministry statement described three drones being launched at the facility, with two of them successfully shot down. A third apparently made it through to strike the building, causing "minor damage" to its roof and wounding no one, the ministry said. Iranian state television's English-language arm, Press TV, aired mobile phone video apparently showing the moment that drone struck along the busy Imam Khomeini Expressway that heads northwest out of Isfahan, one of several ways for drivers to go to the holy city of Qom and Tehran, Iran's capital. A small crowd stood gathered, drawn by anti-aircraft fire, watching as an explosion and sparks struck a dark building.



"Oh my God! That was a drone, wasn't it?" the man filming shouts. "Yeah, it was a drone."

Those there fled after the strike.

That footage of the strike, as well as footage of the aftermath analysed by The Associated Press, correspond-

ed to a site on Minoo Street in northwestern Isfahan that's near a shopping centre that includes a carpet and an electronics store.

Iranian defence and nuclear sites increasingly find themselves surrounded by commercial properties and residential neighbourhoods as the

country's cities sprawl ever outward. Some locations as well remain incredibly opaque about what they produce, with only a sign bearing a Defense Ministry or paramilitary Revolutionary Guard logo.

The Defense Ministry only called the site a "workshop," without elaborating on what it

made. Isfahan, some 350 kilometres (215 miles) south of Tehran, is home to both a large air base built for its fleet of American-made F-14 fighter jets and its Nuclear Fuel Research and Production Center.

The attack comes after Iran's Intelligence Ministry in July claimed to have broken up a plot to target sensitive sites around Isfahan. A segment aired on Iranian state TV in October included purported confessions by alleged members of Komala, a Kurdish opposition party that is exiled from Iran and now lives in Iraq, that they planned to target a military aerospace facility in Isfahan after being trained by Israel's Mossad intelligence service.

Activists say Iranian state TV has aired hundreds of coerced confessions over the last decade. Israeli officials declined to comment on the attack.



# KING OF MELBOURNE

## Djokovic wins his record-extending 10th Australian Open title to equal Nadal's 22 Slam titles

AP ■ MELBOURNE

An emotional Novak Djokovic called it "the biggest victory in my life" after sweeping past Stefanos Tsitsipas to win a 10th Australian Open title and equal Rafael Nadal's 22 Grand Slam crowns on Sunday.

The Serb will return to world number one as he overcame a hamstring injury and off-court drama to defeat the Greek third seed 6-3, 7-6 (7/4), 7-6 (7/5) on Rod Laver Arena.

The 35-year-old climbed to his player's box afterwards to embrace his mother and broke down in uncontrollable tears, collapsing to the ground sobbing.

His father Srdjan was again missing after he sparked controversy by posing with a fan carrying a Russian flag featuring Vladimir Putin's face following his son's quarter-final win.

The emphatic victory over Tsitsipas capped a remarkable return for Djokovic to Melbourne Park, having missed last year's tournament when he was deported over his Covid vaccination stance.

"I have to say this has been one of the most challenging tournaments I've ever played considering the circumstances, not playing last year, coming back this year," he said, wearing a jacket with 22 emblazoned on it.

"I want to thank all the people that made me feel welcome, comfortable, to be in Melbourne.

"I try to pinch myself and really live through these moments, it's a long journey," added Djokovic, who was more emotional than usual.

"Only my team and family know what we have been through in the last four or five weeks and this is why I'd probably say this is the biggest victory in my life considering the circumstances."

### 'NOT GOING ANYWHERE'

There had been an air of inevitability about Djokovic triumphing once more.

After his three-year ban from Australia was lifted, he won the lead-up Adelaide International before reinforcing his status as an all-time great in Melbourne.

His dominant win drew him level



with Nadal on a record 22 Slams, two clear of now-retired Roger Federer.

The Spanish great made a second-round exit with a hip injury, one of a series of shocks which upended the men's and women's draws during the first major of the year.

"I guess we always find the A-game on the Slams," Djokovic said of equalling his old rival Nadal. "This is what I feel both Nadal and myself probably still fight for.

"It is still what motivates us the most, winning the biggest titles in our sport and trying to keep up with the young guns.

"Tennis is in good hands," he added. "But we're still not going anywhere."

Nadal and Djokovic have won 16 of the last 19 Slams.

The 36-year-old Spaniard though

## Tsitsipas 'couldn't be more excited'

AP ■ MELBOURNE

Stefanos Tsitsipas said he was excited about the future and took confidence from his exploits at the Australian Open, despite losing Sunday's final to Novak Djokovic.

"There are definitely things that I can improve and get better at, given the circumstances today. But I don't think there's any reason for me to be affected by today's loss," said the 24-year-old.

"It is a step forward. I'm looking forward to scoring more points

during this season, making bigger results, fighting for bigger trophies.

"I very much enjoy the way I play, my attitude on the court, my mental stability, my concentration levels.

"There's still a little bit more to add to the whole structure of my game. I couldn't be more excited to be heading towards that path."

Tsitsipas, who has talked about a new-found maturity this year, will move up to world number three when the new rankings come out on Monday.

While he lost to 10-time Australian champion Djokovic, he showed resolve throughout the tournament when he was tested.

Against Jannik Sinner in round four he kept calm and dug deep to win a brutal five-setter, and quickly regrouped when Karen Khachanov took their semi-final to a fourth set.

But in the Serbian 22-time Grand Slam winner Djokovic he admitted he met his match.

"There's nothing that I could have extracted more for today. I did everything possible," he said.



## Krejčíková-Siniakova defend AO women's doubles title

AP ■ MELBOURNE

Czech top seeds Barbora Krejčíková and Katerina Siniakova successfully defended their Australian Open women's doubles crown on Sunday to extend their dominant Grand Slam streak. The pair outgunned Japan's 10th-seeded Shuko Aoyama and Ena Shibahara 6-4, 6-3 to post their 24th straight win at a major after triumphing last year at the Australian Open, Wimbledon and US Open.

"A big thanks to my partner

Barbora," said Siniakova. "I'm so happy we did it again, it was a nice journey. Thank you for playing with me."

It was their seventh Slam title to make them only the fifth women's team in the Open-era to claim so many. Martina Navratilova and Pam Shriver hold the record with 20.

They broke Shibahara's opening service game to immediately put the Japanese pair on the back foot and never let up, repeating the feat in the second set to cruise home in 1hr 29mins.

is set to slide down the rankings when they are released on Monday, in contrast to Djokovic.

The Serb will dethrone Spanish teenager Carlos Alcaraz and return to the top for the first time since June. Tsitsipas will climb one place to three.

### TSITSIPAS 'STEP FORWARD'

Both men were back on a court that helped them rise to stardom.

Djokovic won his first Grand Slam in 2008 on Rod Laver Arena while Tsitsipas burst on the scene in 2019 when he stunned defending champion Federer in the last 16.

Moving freely with only minimal strapping on his troublesome left hamstring, Djokovic opened with a comfortable hold after being greeted by huge cheers.

He worked two break points on

Tsitsipas's opening serve, to no avail, but kept probing and the Greek handed him a break for 3-1 with a careless double fault.

Tsitsipas, 24, in only his second Grand Slam final to Djokovic's 33rd, appeared nervous, losing the first set.

But he battled back into contention in a much closer second set as his confidence grew, earning his first break point -- and set point -- when Djokovic blasted a backhand wide.

But the Serb clung on to keep the set on serve and it went to a tiebreak, where his greater experience roared to the fore.

Against the odds, Tsitsipas broke for the first time on Djokovic's opening serve in set three, only to relinquish the advantage immediately after a gripping rally.

# Germany win Men's Hockey WC title

PTI ■ BHUBANESWAR

Germany ended Belgium's dominance in global hockey in the last five years as they made yet another stunning comeback from two-goal deficit to beat the defending champions in penalty shootout to win the FIH Hockey Men's World Cup for a third time here on Sunday.

The two sides were locked 3-3 at the end of regulation time of the thrilling final before Germany eventually won 5-4 in sudden death in front of a packed Kalinga Stadium.

Niklas Wellen (29th), Gonzalo Peillat (41st) and captain Mats Grambusch (48th) scored for Germany in the regulation time while Florent van Aubel Florent (10th), Tanguy Cosyns (11th) and Tom Boon (59th) found the target for Belgium.

This was the third time in the tournament that Germany had won after trailing 0-2 and their mental strength and never-say-die attitude came to the fore again as they denied the Belgians to defend their title.

The earlier two matches were against England in the quarterfinals and Australia in the semifinals.

Germany joined Australia and



Netherlands to have clinched the World Cup title three times. Their earlier triumphs had come in 2002 and 2006. Only Pakistan have won the event four times.

A day before the summit clash, head coach Andre Henning had said that Germany have given massive

focus on their defence but a two-minute Belgium blitzkrieg left them in daze.

Van Aubel gave Belgium the lead in the 10th minute. The ball got a deflection and went up inside the German 'D'. Aubel leapt in the air and smashed it down into the German goal.

## Netherlands beat Australia 3-1 to clinch Bronze

PTI ■ BHUBANESWAR

Captain Thierry Brinkman struck twice as Netherlands dished out a superb show of attacking hockey to beat world No.1 Australia 3-1 and clinch the bronze medal in the FIH Men's Hockey World Cup here on Sunday.

Brinkman struck in the 35th and 40th minutes while penalty corner expert Jip Janssen scored the other goal for Netherlands in the 33rd minute.

Australia's lone goal came from their penalty corner expert Jeremy Hayward in the 13th minute.

The bronze meant that

Netherlands finished on the podium for the fourth time in succession and they are also equal with Australia on the maximum number of medals won in the showpiece event.

Both Netherlands and Australia have now won 10 medals each in the 15 editions of the World Cup.

The Dutch finished third in 2010 and runners-up in 2014 and 2018. They have won the title in 1973, 1990 and 1998.

For three-time champions Australia, this was the first time they are returning home without a medal after they finished fourth in the 1998 edition. They had won a bronze in the last edition here.

Antoine Kina cross from the left.

Germany took a referral for a back stick but the video umpire ruled against them.



## AC Milan's title defence in tatters

AP ■ MILAN

AC Milan's season went even further off the rails on Sunday after a humiliating 5-2 home defeat at the hands of Sassuolo left them at risk of dropping out of the Champions League places.

Everything that could go wrong for troubled Milan did at a gloriously sunny San Siro, with two goals ruled out for offside and a shocking defensive display condemning the champions to a second straight heavy loss after being hammered 4-0 at Lazio on Tuesday.

Stefano Pioli's side dropped down to fourth and will find themselves a whopping 15 points off the Scudetto pace if league leaders Napoli beat fierce rivals Roma in Sunday's late match.

Milan's title defence lays in tatters and they will also drop out of Serie A's top four if either Roma or Lazio, who host Fiorentina later in the day, avoid defeat.

Domenico Berardi was the star man for Sassuolo, who are 16th after winning for the first time since late October, the Italian having a hand in Gregoire Defrel and Davide Frattesi's goals which put his team two ahead after just 20 minutes.

Oliver Giroud, who had a fine early finish disallowed, then headed Milan back into the game but Berardi reestablished Sassuolo's two-goal lead with a

header of his own from a 30th-minute corner.

Pioli brought on Rafael Leao at half-time after leaving his star attacker out of the starting lineup but Milan were three goals down seconds after the restart, Armand Lauriente smashing home a penalty after being brought down by Davide Calabria.

And an awful afternoon turned into a nightmare when Matheus Henrique drilled in the fifth with 11 minutes remaining, leaving Divock Origi to curl home a beautiful but entirely irrelevant consolation goal for the hosts.

Later Paul Pogba could make his first Juventus appearance since returning from Manchester United last summer after being named among the substitutes for their clash with surprise package Monza.

France midfielder Pogba injured the meniscus in his right knee in July and missed out on the World Cup.

He initially elected not to go under the knife in a bid to make the Qatar tournament but despite later changing his mind he didn't recover in time to play for Les Bleus.

Juventus sit 11th in Serie A after being docked 15 points for illicit transfer activity and will be overtaken by promoted Monza should the Turin giants lose to the club owned by Silvio Berlusconi as they did in September.

# Bayern held at home to Frankfurt

AP ■ MUNICH

Bayern Munich saw their lead in the Bundesliga cut to just one point on Saturday after Randal Kolo Muani's equaliser held the German champions to a 1-1 draw with Eintracht Frankfurt.

The result was Bayern's third consecutive 1-1 draw, with the Bavarians still looking for their first win of 2023.

Union Berlin's 2-0 derby win over city rivals Hertha earlier on Saturday meant Bayern's three-point cushion on top of the table had been erased by kick-off.

"We had three or four big chances that we might have actually made the most of before Christmas," Bayern coach Julian Nagelsmann told Sky.

Bayern lacked fluency early in a testy opening half, which saw both centre-back Matthijs



de Ligt and goalkeeper Yann Sommer pick up yellow cards.

With 34 minutes gone, former Man City forward Leroy Sane settled his team's nerves by hammering a cross from veteran forward Thomas

Mueller past the outstretched hand of Frankfurt 'keeper Kevin Trapp.

After the goal, Bayern rekindled their early season form and produced their best spell of the match, with France

defender Dayot Upamecano going close to doubling their lead just three minutes later.

Bayern continued to push for a second goal after the break but Frankfurt, who had only lost once in their previous 11 games in all competitions dating back to early October, looked dangerous on the break.

Eintracht coach Oliver Glasner brought on Japan international Daichi Kamada just past the hour and the change had an almost immediate impact, Kamada exchanging passes with Kolo Muani before the latter struck the ball past Sommer and into the net.

"We have a great group and if I can help the team, then I'm very satisfied," said Kolo Muani, who now has seven goals and 10 assists in the league this term.

"It was an intense game for us. We came here to get a point and we did it."



## Christie, An win Indonesia titles

AP ■ JAKARTA

Badminton world number three and home hero Jonatan Christie secured his first Indonesia Masters title on Sunday, as South Korean star An Se-youth roared back to win her second women's championship in Jakarta.

Christie calmly dispatched unseeded compatriot Chico Aura Dwi Wardoyo 21-15,

21-13 in the 44-minute final in front of a roaring hometown crowd.

It was an impressive victory for Christie, who last won a major singles title at the 2018 Asian Games.

In the women's singles final, world number two An made a stunning comeback to beat Spain's three-time world champion Carolina Marin 18-21, 21-18, 21-13.



# India win U-19 Women's T20 WC title

PTI ■ POTCHEFSTROOM

India on Sunday won their maiden ICC title in women's cricket as a bunch of sprightly and talented teenagers lifted the inaugural U-19 World Cup with an emphatic seven-wicket victory over England.

The Shafali Verma-led India U-19 squad managed to do what their seniors could not do by clearing the final hurdle in a global event.

India first bundled out England for 68 in 17.1 overs and then returned to knock off the paltry target in 14 overs to lift the coveted trophy.

"It is just a proud moment, our first world cup," said Trisha with stumps in hand after the memorable win.

The win on Sunday also reaffirms India's dominance at the U-19 level with the boys winning the world title in the Caribbean last year.

India's bowling attack, led by pacer Titas Sadhu and supported by leg-spinner Parshavi Chopra, set up the comprehensive win on Sunday as they blew England away with a clinical display at Senwes Park.

While Sadhu showed that Indian women pace bowling is in safe hands following the retirement of Jhulan Goswami with impressive figures of 4-0-6-2, Chopra too continued her dream run as she snapped two for 13.



Archana Devi also scalped 2 for 17, while Mannat Kashyap (1/13), Shafali (1/16) and Sonam Yadav (1/3) accounted for one wicket each as England were all at sea

after being asked to take first strike.

Following a pep talk from India's Olympic champion javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra, India came out with a specif-

ic plan and executed it perfectly as England's innings never really took off after being reduced to 16 for three in four overs.

Chasing 69, Shafali started

with a boundary off Hannah Baker before launching Sophia Smale for a maximum. But Baker came back to get rid of the India skipper, who was caught by Alexa Stonehouse in

the 3rd over.

Her opening and team's best batter in the tournament, Shweta Sehrawat, also was back in the hut after giving a simple catch to Baker off Grace Scrivens in the fourth over.

Soumya Tiwari (24 not out) and Gongadi Trisha (24) then dug their heels in with a 46-run partnership.

With four runs needed, Trisha was cleaned up by Stonehouse, as Tiwari knocked off the winning runs.

Besides Shafali, Richa Ghosh was the other international cricketer in the U-19 squad.

Earlier, Sadhu bowled 20 dot balls in her quota of four overs. She struck in the fourth ball of the innings with a superb caught and bowled effort to get rid of Liberty Heap (0).

Spinner Archana then cleaned up Niamh Fiona Holland (10), while Gongadi Trisha pulled off a sensational catch to get rid of Grace Scrivens (4) to hand Archana her second wicket.

Sadhu could have added another wicket to her name but senior pro Richa dropped a regulation catch of Ryana Macdonald Gay, who had edged an away going ball.

The Bengal pacer, however, didn't have to wait longer as she went through the gates of Seren Smale (3) next.

Macdonald Gay played a

## BCCI announces ₹5 crore reward for victorious squad

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

BCCI secretary Jay Shah on Sunday announced a whopping cash reward of Rs 5 crore for the entire India squad following its title winning performance at the inaugural Women's U-19 T20 World Cup.

India recorded a dominating seven-wicket win over England in the final in South Africa.

The Shafali Verma-led India U-19 squad managed to do what their seniors could not do by clearing the final hurdle in a global event.

"Women's Cricket in India is on the upswing and

the World Cup triumph has taken the stature of women's cricket several notches higher. I am delighted to announce INR 5 crore for the entire team and support staff as prize money. This is surely a path-breaking year," Shah tweeted after India's triumph.

The secretary also invited the entire unit to Ahmedabad on Wednesday.

"I invite @TheShafaliVerma and her victorious team to join us at the Narendra Modi Stadium, Ahmedabad and witness the third T20I on 1st February. This humongous achievement surely calls for a celebration," he added.

couple of hits to the fence to ease the pressure but in-form leg-spinner Parshavi Chopra then got into the act, trapping Charis Pavely (2) in front of wicket as England lost half their side for 39 in 10 overs.

Left-arm spinner Kashyap also kept things tight at the other end as Chopra removed Macdonald Gay with Archana taking a superb one-handed catch with a full dive at extra cover. India's fielding was exemplary in the big game.

With England at 46 for 6 in

12 overs, skipper Shafali brought herself in but Alexa Stonehouse hit her for a rare boundary.

Soumya was then in action as her direct hit found Josephine Groves short by a big margin, leaving England at 53 for 7.

Shafali and Richa then combined to pile further misery on England with the latter producing a stumping effort. Kashyap then removed Stonehouse with Sonam taking a dolly at cover.

# India edge past NZ to level series

SHALABH SAXENA ■ LUCKNOW

Indian batsmen were made to toil hard by New Zealand spinners as the host chased a paltry total of 99 runs for the loss of four wickets in a nail-biting finish, to level the T20I series at Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ekana International Stadium on Sunday.

Indian innings got off on a quite note with Mitchell Santner and Michael Bracewell making good use of all the help offered by the pitch. Shubhman Gill tried to break the shackles and hit two boundaries but was caught at deep midwicket by Allen off Bracewell.

In the end, Hardik Pandya (15 not out off 20) and Suryakumar Yadav (26 not out off 31) took the team over the line with a ball to spare and six wickets in hand.

Kishan has gone off the boil since his double hundred in Bangladesh while Gill has not been able to carry on his scintillating ODI form into T20s. The stylish right-hander fell while trying to pull a spinner for the second game in a row but was surprised by the amount of turn.

Tripathi, who is getting to play at number three in Kohli's absence, was unable to take the attack to the New Zealand spinners.

The Indians felt the pressure and that was evident with the run out of Washington Sundar, who sacrificed his wicket to ensure Surya's stay in the middle.



Earlier, looking at the winning record of teams batting first who emerged victorious; New Zealand skipper Santner opted to bat. Skipper Hardik Pandya started the proceedings

Finn Allen got the edge and was dropped by a diving Ishan Kishan and the ball went for a boundary followed by another four again off the top edge. Chahal replaced Washington and started off with a zipper; the ball pitched on leg stump and turned sharply. Allen then tried to reverse sweep to a full delivery, which hit him on the back leg

en route to the stumps. Hardik's move paid off instantly. With this wicket, Chahal became the highest wicket-taker for India in T20 International with 91 wickets, surpassing Bhuvneshwar Kumar.

Hardik brought back Sundar from the pavilion end and he struck too. Conway (11) tried to reverse sweep a full delivery and the ball brushed his gloves and Ishan caught it cleanly. With both the openers back in the pavilion, Phillips joined Chapman.

Hardik made yet another

bowling change, bringing Deepak Hooda from the pavilion end and he delivered too. Glenn Phillips tried to play a reverse sweep on a perfect off-spinner and missed it completely.

Local lad Kuldeep Yadav then wove the web around in-form Daryl Mitchell (8) and cleaned bowled him. The ball pitched outside the off stump and spun sharply to shatter the stumps. Mark Chapman, who was struggling throughout his innings, tried to break the shackles and attempted a reverse sweep on Hooda but

## Full house

Lucknow (PNS): It was a full house at Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ekana International Stadium as there was hardly any spot to be occupied. The fans were jostling to get into the stadium even after the New Zealand innings. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath was also present to watch the match.

the ball fell ahead of Kuldeep, who got rid of the ball quickly only to inflict a run out. Chapman wanted a single but Bracewell denied immediately and Chapman found himself way out of the crease and Ishan did the rest. At the end of the 13th over New Zealand were tottering at 62 for five.

Skipper Pandya, bowling his last over, got the reward in the form of dangerous Michael Bracewell. Bracewell hooked the bouncer and the top edge was taken cleanly by Arshdeep Singh, who was still waiting to bowl his first over. Bowling the 18th over of the innings, Arshdeep did not wait for long for the wicket as Ish Sodhi pulled a sharp bouncer into the hands of Pandya at midwicket. Arshdeep finished off the over with another short one to Lockie Ferguson, who tried to defend it but the ball lobbed into the hands of Washington Sundar at gully.

The series decider will be played in Ahmedabad on Wednesday.

# 'WC win shows kind of depth India possess'

PTI ■ POTCHEFSTROOM

India has been waiting for this moment for a long time, said chief coach Nooshin Al Khadeer on Sunday after the U-19 women's cricket team lifted its maiden ICC trophy, adding that the T20 world cup triumph underlines the country's enormous depth of talent.

The Indian women's team on Sunday lifted its first-ever ICC trophy with a seven-wicket win over England in the U-19 T20 World Cup final.

"It is a fabulous feeling. This is the feeling we have been waiting for very long. This is the first time we won the cup and it has come with the U-19 kids. Just shows the kind of depth we have and what is there for us in the future," she said after the match.

India had lost to Australia by seven wickets in the Super Six stage, their only defeat in the tournament.

"The most special thing is the belief. I knew they had a bad game against Australia, but the way they have gathered and played there after, we kept it very simple and we thought we would just play proper and simple cricket and we would achieve this.

"From the National anthem and till the time we won we had goosebumps. I personally realise and understand how special this is for us," she said.

"To live it from the young girls it's commendable. We have been waiting very long for a cup. We have a good future

back in India. God has been kind and I'm keeping it simple."

India skipper Shafali Verma credited the support staff for all the support.

"The way all the girls are performing and backing each other, so happy. Incredible feeling. Thanks to the staff, the way they have been backing us everyday and telling us that we are here for the cup and because of them we are here," she said during the post-match presentation ceremony.

"The players have been backing me a lot. Thanks to BCCI for giving me this beautiful team and really happy for winning the cup."

While Shafali had a modest outing with the bat, fellow opener Shweta Sehrawat emerged as the highest run-getter with 297 runs at an average of 99. "She (Shweta Sehrawat) has been excellent and has followed all the plans from the staff," Shafali said.

"Not just her, Archana, Soumya and I can't really take the names but they all have been incredible."

The other senior player in the team, Richa Ghosh said the triumph will give a boost to the senior team to go for the title in next month's T20 World Cup, also in South Africa.

"It is a superb feeling. I have been waiting for this since U-19 days for so many years. All the players have a good positive energy, I really enjoyed with them and we will take the momentum in the senior world cup," she said.

BY PRAVIN THIPSAY

In the erstwhile Soviet Union, four prestigious Chess awards were conferred every year for excellence in different parts of Chess. The best attack award was named after the greatest attacking player of all time, Dr. Alexander Alekhine. The best defence award was called the 'Lasker award' in memory of Dr. Emanuel Lasker, who possessed extraordinary skills in defence. The best endgame award was named after 'Chess Playing Machine' Jose Raul Capablanca, who had little difficulty in converting 'theoretically drawn' endgames in wins. And the best strategy award went to none other than legendary Wilhelm Steinitz.

A Chess game played between two strong players, who have correctly grasped the important principles of Chess, usually takes a slower pace than a game between two amateurs. Since direct skirmishes are likely to fail early in the game, nowadays the strong players choose to slowly mobilize all their forces, thereby building up the position in a true warfare style, before launching an attack. This concept was first thought of in the 1870s by a player, who, after mastering the attacking and defensive skills of Paul

# Steinitz: A strategist par excellence

Morphy, felt a need to look for something more concrete and complex than a direct violent attack from move one. He came out with a new revolutionary concept with his words "In the beginning of the game ignore the search for combinations, abstain from violent moves, aim for small advantages, accumulate them, and only after having attained these ends, search for the combination with all the power of intellect, because then (after strengthening the position by accumulating the small advantages) the combination must exist, however deeply hidden". Though a controversial thought then, the player was able to justify this strategy by defeating the best of the contemporary players. This type of play is called strategic play. The Soviet Union's 'best strategy award' is named after the player mentioned above, Wilhelm Steinitz of Austria, the first official World Chess Champion.

Wilhelm Steinitz (May 14, 1836 – August 12, 1900) was born at Prague (now the capital of the Czech Republic) in the Bohemia state of the Austrian Empire and later moved to

Vienna, the capital, to study mathematics. Around 1860, he became the strongest Chess player in the world and decided to move to England in 1862 to compete with the strong players there. Steinitz had a brilliant record of matches and tournaments for more than three decades; he became famous as 'The Austrian Morphy' in the 1860s for his brilliant attacking play. Though Steinitz solicited for slower attacking methods, he never disagreed with Morphy's way of King side attack. Steinitz's match against Zukertort in 1886, in which the Chess Clock was used for the first time in history, is considered to be the first official match for the World Chess Crown. Steinitz became an American (USA) citizen in 1888. In 1894, he lost his world Chess throne to Dr Emanuel Lasker of Germany. However, Steinitz continued to play brilliantly for a couple of years more after which his health deteriorated. Steinitz succumbed to various illnesses and passed away on 12th August 1900 at New York.

For our new series "Learn

from the Champions", I have chosen a game played by Steinitz while he was on his decline and yet had not lost any knowledge or skills he had accumulated in four decades. This game has been annotated by almost all world champions and Chess writers. Here is an example of how deeply had he grasped the essence of Chess. Let us see what Grandmaster Tartakover has to say about the game. "The feature of the following game is how White fastened on a small weakness in the enemy's camp and how, by skillful maneuvering, he prevented him from castling. Never relaxing his grip, he wound up the game with one of the most beautiful and aesthetically satisfying combinations ever devised on the chessboard".

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.c3 Nf6 5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4 Bb4+ 7.Nc3

"A move already advocated by Greco the Calabrese in 1619, by which White offers to give up a pawn for the attack." --- Tartakover.

7...d5! "The usual and better course here is 7...Nxe4; though

Black must not hope to hold the gain of the pawn." Tartakover and Reti.

8.exd5 "White has come out of the preliminary skirmish with a pawn in the centre. Even though it is isolated, this pawn will prove a tower of strength". Tartakover.

8...Nxd5 9.0-0 Be6! "After this move which, to all appearances, is perfectly sound, Black loses his chance of castling. He should, at all costs, have played 9...Bxc3, and then completed his development. 10.bxc3 0-0 11.Re1, was necessary, though White stands much better." --- Reti.

10.Bg5! Be7 11.Bxd5 Bxd5 12.Nxd5 Qxd5 12...Bxg5 is even worse. For example, 13.Re1+! Be7 14.Nxe7 Nxe7 15.Qa4+ Qd7 16.Qb4 etc.

13.Bxe7 Nxe7 14.Re1 "After this orgy of exchanges, Black finds himself unable to castle. With his next moves he tries to get his king into safety by 'artificial castling', but it takes too much time". -- Tartakover.

"The point of all the

exchanges, as by this move White obtains command of the board, prevents Black from castling, and initiates a most powerful attack on the King." - - Dr. Tarrasch.]

14...f6 15.Qe2 Qd7 16.Rac1!!

"16.Rad1! would have been more accurate" -- Anatoly Karpov. For example, if 16...c6? 17.d5! cxd5 18.Rxd5 Qc7 19.Nd4 when Black has no defensive possibility left.

16...c6? "It would have been preferable to play 16...Kf7 , as White can't embark on a combination with 17.Qxe7+ Qxe7 18.Rxe7+ Kxe7 19.Rxc7+ due to 19...Kd6! " --- Dr Tarrasch.

17.d5!! "A fine square vacating sacrifice. The d4 is made available for the knight, thus greatly intensifying the attack". --- Tartakover.

17...cxd5 18.Nd4 Kf7 "Black has almost castled, but not quite". --- Tartakover.

19.Ne6 Rh8 Now White wins with a forced combination, exactly in the style Steinitz had quoted. A very difficult combination to

spot though.

20.Qg4! g6 21.Ng5+! Ke8! Black seems to have held his

own as a few exchanges seem to be inevitable now. But the Austrian Morphy had already foreseen the end of the battle! 22.Rxe7+!!

"An amazing situation! All White's pieces are 'en prise', and Black threatens ...?xc1#. Yet he cannot take the checking rook, 22...?xe7 23.?xc8+ ?xc8 24.?xc8+, and White remains a piece ahead." --- Tartakover. "The variations resulting from 22...?xe7 show the astounding degree of precision, which was required of White's calculations, before he could venture on the move in the text, e.g. 22...?xe7 23.?e1+ ?d6 24.?b4+! ...?c7 25. ?e6+ ?b8 26. ?f4+ and wins. In this beautiful combination the rook remains 'en prise' for several moves until Black, compelled to capture it, succumbs to a mating finish". --- Tartakover. 22...Kf8! 22...Kxe7 23.Re1+ (23.Qb4+ seems as strong.) 23...Kd6 24.Qb4+ Kc7 25.Ne6+ Kb8 26.Qf4+ 23.Rf7+! Kg8!

[23...Ke8?? 24.Qxd7# Or 23...Qxf7 24.Rxc8+ Rxc8 25.Qxc8+ etc. 24.Rg7+! Kh8! [24...Kxg7 25.Qxd7+ Or 24...Qxg7 25.Rxc8+ Or 24...Kf8 25.Nxh7+! Kxg7 26.Qxd7+ 25.Rxh7+!

At this stage, Black, who himself was a strong Chess master, left the tournament hall without making a move. The rules of the game did not have a possibility of 'resigning the game' in those days. Steinitz, therefore, had to demonstrate the following winning line to the organisers before being awarded the full point! (The tournament wasn't being played with Chess clocks).

"Mr. Steinitz (at the time) demonstrated the following brilliant and remarkable mate in ten moves" - - Dr Tarrasch 25.Rxh7+! 25...Kg8 26.Rg7+! Kh8 27.Qh4+! Kxg7 28.Qh7+ Kf8 29.Qh8+ Ke7 30.Qg7+ Ke8 31.Qg8+! Ke7 32.Qf7+ Kd8 It is Mate in three now. 33.Qf8+! Qe8 34.Nf7+! Kd7 35.Qd6#!

White doesn't give Black a single chance to execute mate in one with ...Rxc1. A truly amazing combination.

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