

**OPINION 6**  
LET LOVE PERMEATE  
LIFE AND LIVING

**WORLD 9**  
LANKA SUMMONS CANADIAN DIPLOMAT OVER  
SANCTIONS ON RAJAPAKSA BROTHERS

**MONEY 10**  
INDIA TO GROW BY 6.6%  
NEXT FISCAL: WORLD BANK

DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR  
RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH  
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RANCHI, THURSDAY JANUARY 12, 2023; PAGES 12-13

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## Don't usurp Parliament power: VP to judiciary

Refrain from public posturing and one-upmanship, Dhankhar tells judges

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAIPUR

In an unprecedented attack on the judiciary by a senior constitutional functionary, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Wednesday asked the judges to refrain from "one-upmanship and public posturing" from judicial platforms and also frowned at the power allegedly usurped by the judiciary to review laws passed by Parliament.

Addressing the 83rd All India Presiding Officers Conference in Jaipur, Dhankhar, who is the Rajya Sabha chairman, said, "Today this one-upmanship and public posturing from judicial platforms are not good. These institutions must know how to conduct themselves."

The Vice President also hit out at the judiciary for scrapping the NJAC Act and maintaining the supremacy of the Collegium in appointment of judges.

Dhankhar also travelled in the past and picked up the landmark 1973 Kesavananda



Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar with Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla and Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot at the 83rd All India Presiding Officers' Conference in Jaipur on Wednesday

Bharati case verdict, claiming that in its verdict the Supreme Court set a wrong precedent and diluted the lawmaking power of Parliament.

In the 1973 Kesavananda Bharati case, the court in a 7-6 decision said it could strike down amendments to the Constitution that were in violation of the fundamental architecture of the

Constitution. It means that he disagrees with the Supreme Court ruling that Parliament can amend the Constitution but not its basic structure.

Dhankhar said as presiding officers of legislatures, they cannot have an Ostrich-like stance on judiciary-legislature relations. Parliamentary sovereignty cannot be permitted to be diluted or compro-

mised by the executive or the judiciary, he said in his strongest remarks yet against alleged judicial interference in the working of Parliament.

"If any organisation strikes down a law by Parliament, then it is not good for democracy. And it would be difficult to say we are a democratic nation," he said.

of several political parties have joined it at different stages.

"I now invite you to personally join the concluding function of the Bharat Jodo Yatra in Srinagar on January 30 at noon. The function is dedicated to the memory of Mahatma Gandhi, who lost his life on this day in his tireless struggle against the ideology of hatred and violence," Kharge wrote.

## CAPF eligible for old pension scheme: HC

Court junks NPS for them, says CAPF part of armed forces

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a major decision, the Delhi High Court on Wednesday ordered implementation of the old pension scheme in the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) terming the paramilitary forces as the "armed forces of the Union of India".

The decision came in response to the writ petition by one Srinivas Sharma seeking implementation of the old pension scheme.

In its order, the High Court held that CAPFs are also included in the armed forces of India and new pension scheme (NPS) is not applicable to them. Whether a person is recruited in CAPF today, has been in the past or will be in future, he will be eligible for the old pension scheme, according to the order.

The old pension scheme for the paramilitary forces was scrapped for personnel who joined the forces after 2004 as the Centre was ambivalent on the status of the paramilitary forces' personnel.

However, the old pension scheme was retained for the defence forces which too are



An Injured CRPF jawan is rushed to a hospital after being airlifted from the site of an IED blast triggered by CPI (Maoist) in the dense forest of Chaibasa in Ranchi on Wednesday

armed forces of the Union under the command of the Defence Ministry.

The paramilitary forces, according to the respective Acts of the Parliament, are also armed forces of the Union under the command of the Union Home Ministry.

Trashing the new pension scheme for the paramilitary forces, the court recognised these forces as 'armed forces of the Union of India'.

The ambivalence in recognising the paramilitary forces as armed forces of the Union led to the adoption of the new

pension scheme for the CAPFs.

After January 1, 2004, all personnel recruited in central Government jobs were excluded from the purview of the old pension, including the CAPFs. However, the Government then contended that the army, navy and air force were the only armed forces of the Union Government.

The BSF Act, 1968 states that the force was constituted as an armed force of the Union of India. Similarly, the rest of the CAPFs have also been constituted as the armed forces of the Union of India.

## CAPSULE

### PRO-MONARCHY MARCH BY THOUSANDS IN NEPAL

**Kathmandu:** Thousands of people held a rally in Nepal's national capital on Wednesday during which pro-monarchy slogans were chanted. The protesters gathered around the statue of former King Prithvi Narayan Shah, who unified and built modern Nepal some 255 years ago, and chanted pro-monarchy slogans. The monarchy was abolished in 2008 in Nepal after the ouster of the last king — Gyanendra.

### CABINET OKS ₹2,600 CR TO PROMOTE RUPAY

**New Delhi:** The Cabinet on Wednesday approved a ₹2,600 crore scheme for promoting RuPay debit cards and low-value BHIM-UPI transactions. Under the scheme, banks will be provided financial incentives for promoting Point of Sale (PoS) and e-commerce transactions using RuPay and UPI in the current financial year.



Guyana President Mohamed Irfaan Ali, Suriname President Chandrikapersad Santokhi, Union MoS for Food Processing Industries Prahlad Singh Patel, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and other dignitaries listen to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's addresses during Madhya Pradesh Global Investors Summit 2023 in Indore on Wednesday

## Man, girl found dead in Delhi hotel; murder, suicide suspected

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A young man and a woman were found dead in a hotel room in outer north Delhi's Bawana area on Wednesday. The police suspect that the man first killed the woman and then died by consuming sulphas tablets recovered.

According to the police, the woman had an injury on the neck while foam marks and a foul smell were noticed in the mouth of the man. There was also some vomit on the side of the man's body, Deputy Commissioner of Police Devesh Kumar Mahla said.

A black liquid was found in the bathroom which seemed to be vomit, the officer said.

The man and woman checked in at hotel around 10 am on Tuesday and went into their room, police said. On checking with the reception, it was found that both the deceased were 21 years old. A blood-stained knife and sul-

phas powder were found at the spot, police said.

Prime facie, it looks like the man killed the woman and later consumed sulphas tablets leading to his death, the DCP said. CCTV footage was checked but no one could be seen entering the room after they checked in, police said.

A case has been registered in the matter and an investigation is underway, the police officer said, adding that address details are being verified. The duo were colleagues and worked in a shoe manufacturing factory in the Bawana industrial area. They knew each other for the last six to eight months, police said.

When family members of the deceased were contacted, they told police that they were aware that both knew each other and were friends. However, family members maintained that they did not know the depth of their relationship, police said.

## Cong invites Opp leaders to join Bharat Yatra in Srinagar on concluding day

Your presence will strengthen voice of truth, compassion, Cong tells leaders

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In a major outreach to political parties, the Congress has invited leaders of 21 Opposition parties to join the concluding function of the Bharat Jodo Yatra in Srinagar on January 30, saying their presence would strengthen the yatra's message of truth, compassion and non-violence.

The list of leaders includes Congress' current allies in State Governments JD(U), RJD, JMM, DMK besides Trinamool Congress, Shiv Sena, TDP, SP, BSP, Left parties, RLSP, NCP, National Conference among others. RJD chief Lalu Prasad and Bihar Deputy CM Tejashwi Yadav have been invited.

Separate invitations have also been shared to NC lead-



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi offers prayers at Fatehgarh Sahib Gurdwara, during the party's 'Bharat Jodo Yatra', in Fatehgarh Sahib on Wednesday

ers Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah. Farooq, representatives from Shiv Sena, NCP, DMK have already marked their presence at different occasions en route the Bharat Jodo Yatra.

In a letter to the presidents of the parties, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said from the beginning of the yatra, the Congress has sought the participation of every like-minded party and on the invitation of Rahul Gandhi, MPs

## Thousands of flights in US grounded after system glitch

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Normal air traffic operations are resuming gradually across the US on Wednesday following a technical failure of a key pilot notification system that resulted in the grounding of thousands of flights for several hours.

The Federal Aviation Administration announced earlier in the morning that it suffered an outage of its Notice to Air Missions or NOTAMS, which alerts pilots and other personnel about airborne issues.

The FAA ordered airlines to delay all domestic departures early Wednesday morning, but lifted the ground stop just before 9 am after several hours.

"Normal air traffic operations are resuming gradually across the US following an overnight outage to the Notice to Air Missions system that provides safety info to flight crews. The ground stop has been lifted. We continue to look into the cause of the initial



Travelers stand in the departures hall of Terminal B at LaGuardia Airport in New York on Wednesday

problem," FAA said in a tweet. According to FlightAware, a flight tracking company, more than 3,700 flights within, into or out of the US were delayed and more than 600 were cancelled due to the system failure.

More than 21,000 flights were scheduled to take off in the US on Wednesday, mostly domestic trips, and about 1,840 international flights expected

to fly to the US, AP reported, citing aviation data firm Cirium.

The FAA earlier said it is making progress in restoring its Notice to Air Missions system and departures are resuming at the Newark Liberty International Airport and Atlanta International Airport due to air traffic congestion in those areas.

## Joshimath anti-raiding stir rages on



People affected by the gradual 'sinking' of Joshimath gather at Tehsil office after cracks appeared in their houses on Wednesday

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ DEHRADUN

Protesters demanding adequate compensation once again stalled the demolition of unsafe structure in the subsidence-hit Joshimath town on Wednesday.

In a bid to end the protest, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh

Dhami visited the town, announced interim assistance for the affected people, and said the Government will provide compensation according to the market rate.

He clarified that only two hotels were going to be mechanically demolished and not the houses marked as unsafe.

## Disaster-proof town planned for displaced

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Central Building Research Institute (CBRI) has proposed to develop a disaster-resilient model town to rehabilitate people displaced from the sinking Uttarakhand town of Joshimath.

The Roorkee-based institute of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), has also suggested a three-pronged action plan for Joshimath that envisages demolition of tilted buildings, safety assessment of existing 4,000 buildings and providing intermediate shelters to the displaced people, CBRI Director R Pradeep Kumar said.

## 'Naatu Naatu' waltzes back home with Golden Globe

PTI ■ LOS ANGELES

'Naatu Naatu', the irrepressible, fun track from the blockbuster "RRR", danced its way to a Golden Globe as the "best original song-motion picture" — at a star spangled awards ceremony here.

The song, which beat the likes of numbers by Taylor Swift, Rihanna and Lady Gaga, to win the coveted award is the first time an Indian production has won a Golden Globe.

Organised by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, the prestigious awards, which mark the beginning of the Hollywood season that ends with the Oscars in March, were presented here on Tuesday night.

"RRR" had also been nominated in the 'best picture-non English' category and lost out to Argentina's his-



Jenna Ortega announced on stage to loud cheers from the "RRR" team.

The track has been composed by veteran music director M M Keeravaani and voiced by singers Kala Bhairava and Rahul Sipligunj. Keeravaani thanked director S S Rajamouli for his "vision" as he accepted the award.

"It has been an age-old practice to say that this award actually belongs to someone else. So I was planning to not say those words when I get an award like this, but I'm sorry to say that I'm going to repeat the tradition because I mean my words.

## Auto, taxi fares rise up to 20% in Delhi

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Auto and taxi fares went up by nearly 15-20 per cent in the national Capital from Tuesday.

According to the new fares, the metre down charge (minimum fare) for the initial 1.5 kilometre for auto rickshaws has been increased from Rs 25 to ₹30, while the per kilometre charge afterwards has been hiked from ₹9.50 to ₹11. The revised rates came into force from January 9.

The Delhi Cabinet took the decision to hike the fares in October last year, the new fares were notified on Tuesday after the Lieutenant Governor cleared the proposal. The hike in fares will be applicable to black and yellow taxis and all auto rickshaws.

There has been no increase in waiting charges and night charges for auto rickshaws,

while the charges for extra luggage have been hiked from ₹7.50 to ₹10.

For taxis, the existing charge for the first km was Rs 25 for both AC and non-AC types. This will go up to ₹40. The per kilometre charge after metre down will increase to ₹17 for non-AC and ₹20 for AC taxi. Before the revision, they were ₹14 for non-AC and ₹16 for AC.

The 25 per cent night charges will remain unchanged. The waiting charge, which is currently ₹30, will be charged by ₹1 per minute after 15 minutes stay. The extra luggage charge has been hiked from ₹10 to ₹15. The last revision in the auto-taxi fares was done in 2020, while that for taxis, which includes black-and-yellow taxis, economy taxis and premium taxis, happened nine years back in 2013.



# 5 jawans injured in IED blast in West Singhbhum

PNS : JAMSHEDPUR

The Maoist ultras today made their presence felt by triggering a blast. Five CRPF jawans were injured in an IED blast triggered at a jungle under the Tonto police station area of West Singhbhum district about 110 km away from Jamshedpur this afternoon.

The IED blast took place at Sarjamburu forest while the paramilitary forces were carrying out a search operation for the naxals who were reportedly hiding.

After the explosion took place, the forces were also rained shots by the naxals, but the former gave a befitting response by retaliating the fire.

After the IED explosion was triggered, an additional number of paramilitary forces rushed to the Sarjamburu for-



An injured CRPF jawan being rushed to a hospital after being airlifted from the site of an IED (Improvised Explosive Device) blast triggered by CPI (Maoist) rebels, in the dense forest of Chaibasa on Wednesday. PNS

est. "Five jawans were injured in the explosion. They have been air-lifted to a hospital in Ranchi. The operation is still on," said an official. According to police, the CRPF had started carrying out the operation at the Sarjamburu on

getting intelligence input that a big number of naxals belonging to naxal leader Misir Besra was anchored deep inside the jungle.

Sources informed that the high alert has been sounded after intelligence report that the ultras may attack at naxal areas.

Sources informed that there are intelligence inputs that CPI (Maoist) may indulge in demonstrative acts of violence by targeting security forces and economic infrastructure such as trains, buses, railway stations, bus stations and other places where people are likely to gather in significant numbers.

"Every effort will be made to maintain law and order and to ensure security of the people. This time all security forces have also been alerted to remain vigi-

lant, particularly against IEDs and landmines," said another official.

Meanwhile, the police and paramilitary forces have started frisking commuters in the bordering areas. At some places common people are also being interrogated by police and paramilitary forces on suspicion. Forces have been deployed in strategic locations.

Police said that the security has been beefed up in the area and they were keeping strict vigil on movement of the Naxlites. "There has been a substantial increase in Maoist activities in this. We are not much concerned about small acts of violence because these activities can be controlled by us, but the bigger attacks are worrisome," said a security official.



Chief Minister Hemant Soren greets his father Shibu Soren along with younger brother Basant Soren on the occasion of Dishom Guru's 79th birthday in Ranchi on Wednesday. PNS

# Jharkhand's tableau at Republic Day parade after 7 years



PNS : RANCHI

State's tableau depicting the famous Baidyanath Dham temple in Deoghar will be one of the 16 tableaux of states and union territories to be displayed at the Republic Day parade in New Delhi this year in New Delhi. The state will participate in Republic Day parade after seven years' gap. The tableau would have a

statue of Birsa Munda in the front. Adivasi art Sohrai would be shown at the side panel, while traditional dance 'Paika' would be presented along with the tableau.

The selected states and UTs have to ready their tableaux by January 19 and participate in a rehearsal on January 23.

By January 19, the chosen states and UTs must have their tableaux ready, and on January 23, they must take part in a rehearsal. Notably, Jharkhand has only four times shown their tableau at the R-Day procession. Its tableau, which was inspired by ancient clay temples in Maluti in the Dumka area, won second place in 2015. The state displayed a tableau with a Dokra art theme in 2013. When it made its premiere at the R-Day parade in 2004, it featured Birsa Munda. In 2021, the

state didn't submit any proposals. Santhal Hul in 2022 was used as a model, but it was rejected.

Jharkhand has showcased its tableau during the R-Day parade only four times. In 2015, its tableau based on historic terracotta temples in Maluti in Dumka district bagged the second prize. In 2013, the state presented a Dokra art-themed tableau. It showcased Birsa Munda when it debuted at the R-Day parade in 2004. The state did not send any proposal in 2021. The suggestion based on Santhal Hul in 2022 was rejected.

According to the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Defence, the selection process of tableaux is an elaborate and time-consuming affair. The ministry constitutes a committee of distinguished persons from various fields to help shortlist the best prop-

osals. In view of time constraints, only a limited number of proposals will be shortlisted and this time, the Centre is focussing on giving an opportunity to those states, which have showcased their tableau least number of times in the last eight years.

Apart from this for the first time since Independence, the women contingent of the Border Security Force (BSF) atop camels will be featured in the Republic Day Parade 2023. Mahila Praharis, the women contingent of the paramilitary force as popularly known, will be seen riding camels along with their male counterparts.

Since 1950, a similar squad of the Army used to participate in the annual parade, however, in 1976, it was replaced by the BSF's camel contingent.

# 'Central Committee to take positive steps on drought'



Agriculture Minister Badal during a meeting with Central government officials on drought assessment in the State on Wednesday. PNS

PNS : RANCHI

In a meeting with the State Agriculture Minister, Badal, on Wednesday, Central Government Officials' team leader and Joint Secretary S Rukmani said, "We have taken stock of Ranchi's Chanho block and our team will go to 7 districts to assess the drought situation and send its report to the sub-committee of the Central Government and we are hopeful that the Central Committee will take positive decisions on the recommendations sent by our team."

Badal held a meeting with the Central Government officials' team that had come to assess the drought situation in the State and informed about the situation. After the meeting held at Nepal House, Badal said that 226 blocks have come

under the grip of drought. He said that the Central Government team has been informed about all the points and it is expected that the Central Government will take a positive decision on the report submitted by the central team and will take appropriate steps for the upliftment of the drought-affected farmers.

The Agriculture Minister further said that the department had made all the preparations in advance and had also done other works from seed distribution, but due to less rains in the State, there has been about 65 per cent less yield. Till August 15, instead of 658 mm, only 426.3 mm of rain was received, due to which 226 blocks of the State were affected. He said that the State Government is working for the economic empower-

ment of 58 lakh farmers of the State.

To inspect the situation of drought in the State a team consisting of Government of India officials reached Ranchi on Tuesday in leadership of Joint Secretary to the Government of India, S Rukmani. This team will hold a meeting with the officials of the State Government.

The team will visit the drought affected areas, only after that it will be decided what is the status of that area in the list issued by the Jharkhand Government. Till January 13, the team will take stock of different blocks of Jharkhand. Only after that, according to the demand of Jharkhand, a decision will be taken on whether the Central Government will get assistance of Rs 9,000 crores under the drought relief scheme or not.

In the team that reached Ranchi, Dr Man Singh, Niti Aayog's, SC Meena, Director, Karan Chowdhary, Dr Rajshekhkar, Advisor, Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, VR Thakre, Director of Animal Husbandry Department, UK Nayyar, Deputy Secretary of Rural Development, Pramod Narayan, Director of Water Resources Department, Mahesh Kumar, Director, Department of Expenditure, Brijmohan Singh, Assistant Director, Khadi and Public Distribution Department are included.



JMM Supremo Shibu Soren along with his wife Rupri Soren and son and State Chief Minister Hemant Sooren cuts a 79 pound cake on the occasion of the 79th birthday, in Ranchi on Wednesday. Pix by Ratan Lal

# Extremists beat up guards, set on fire 2 vehicles in Kanke

PNS : RANCHI

Suspected extremists attacked security guards on duty and set on fire two heavy vehicles in Ranchi's Kanke area late on Tuesday night. The extremists had demanded a levy from a stone chips mine owner. The Tertiary Prastuti Committee (TPC) has attacked the Stone Chips Mines located near ITBP

Center of Kanke. Ranchi Rural SP, Noushad Alam said that they beat the guard who was on duty at the time and the mobile has been snatched away. The incident took place at around quarter to 11 in the late night. It has been learned that the extremists were threatening the Stone Mines operator for extortion for several days, he added. Alam further said that the

armed extremists reached the mines in the number of 11 at night. They were asking about the owner by pointing a pistol at the guard's forehead. After getting the information, Alam along with Dy.SP reached the spot. Police also searched for militants in the surrounding area. But the police did not get any clue. The militants had reached the mines on foot, he added.

The Rural SP said that the criminals knew that the mines are very close to the Ring Road and that there is an ITBP camp nearby. "That's why they stayed there only for 10 minutes and escaped after setting fire to two highways. During that time dozens of truck drivers were present in the mines. Some of them immediately started showing courage by picking up stone dust from the

mines and throwing it on both the highways, due to which the fire was extinguished immediately and the hywas were saved from burning. After this incident, there is an atmosphere of panic among the mines workers," he added.

Meanwhile, in the morning near Koriyasa Rajkrit Middle School in Deoghar, miscreants killed a young man by hitting him with a bomb. The young

man died on the spot due to a bomb hit on his head. The dead person has been identified as Laxmi Yadav.

The criminals who came in the number of 4 to 6 escaped from the spot after carrying out the incident. Here, on the information of the incident, SDPO Pawan Kumar reached the spot with the police force where the police took stock of the incident.

# Prakash slams Govt over attacks on BJP leaders



PNS : RANCHI

BJP State President and MP Deepak Prakash reached Medica Hospital today and met Gumla District BJP Kisan Morcha General Secretary and former block president Sumit Kesari, who was seriously injured in firing by the criminals yesterday. His condition remains serious.

State General Secretary and MP Aditya Sahu and Balmukund Sahay were also present along with the State President. Prakash spoke to the Superintendent of Police Gumla and DIG of South Chhotanagpur division over the phone demanding the arrest of the criminals behind the incident. He told the family members that the entire BJP family is standing with them in this hour of crisis. He assured all possible help to the family members.

Keshri was the ex-block president of BJP and the secretary of the party's Zila Kisan Morcha.

Police said Keshri along with his nephew Utsav Keshri (20) was at his fly ash brick plant site located along the Bilingbira road in Palkot block headquarters on Monday. At about 9.30 pm, two miscreants carrying arms entered the site by scaling the boundary wall of the plant and took both of them captive at gunpoint. The two were then taken to some distance on foot and Utsav was asked to bring a motorcycle from the plant.

Fearing that Utsav may be abducted, Keshri pleaded with the criminals not to take his nephew captive. "He (Utsav) was later let go with a warning not to reveal the incident to anyone or else they will kill his uncle (Keshri)," a police officer said.

# Work to eliminate malnutrition among children in State: Secy

State Monitoring and Implementation Committee meeting held under Jharkhand State Nutrition Mission

PNS : RANCHI

Secretary, Women and Child Development and Social Security department, Kripa Nand Jha today said that children are the future of the family, State and the country. Saving children from malnutrition is the priority of the state government. The department is working with full readiness, awareness and commitment to save children from malnutrition. The state has to work towards making malnutrition free at all costs.

"Provide quality nutritious food to children in Anganwadi centers of the state. Implement with commitment all the schemes run by the department for the physical and mental development of the children. Identify malnourished children and women suffering from anaemia in the state by conducting a survey and health workers prepare data by conducting their medical check-up," he said in the meeting of the State Monitoring and Implementation Committee at Project Bhawan Complex Auditorium on Wednesday.

Even after 22 years of for-



Secretary, Women and Child Development and Social Security, Director General State Nutrition Mission Rajeshwari B, Director Social Welfare Chhavi Ranjan along with others during a meeting in Ranchi on Wednesday. PNS

mation of Jharkhand state, Jharkhand is surrounded by a big disaster of malnutrition. According to the latest National Family Health Survey 5, most of the children of Jharkhand are suffering from malnutrition. Anaemia affects 69 per cent of children and 65 per cent of women. Efforts have been started by the government to improve the health of mothers, children and adolescent girls of the state with a grand campaign against malnutrition and anaemia. "Samar

Abhiyan' The aim of this campaign is to identify children and women suffering from severe malnutrition and anaemia and treat them. As well as providing adequate and nutritious food. The government is very serious about this campaign.

Rajeshwari B, Director General, Jharkhand State Nutrition Mission, directed the officials of the department to speed up the work progress of the summer campaign scheme. In the meeting, the departmental secretary informed that

through this campaign, the system is being ensured to provide services in a time-bound manner, to create concrete and intensive monitoring and intervention infrastructure.

In the meeting, Director General State Nutrition Mission also gave necessary guidelines while reviewing the status of weight measurement of children registered in all Anganwadi centers district wise. Get all children registered in Anganwadi centers weighed and ensure malnourished/severely malnourished children are admitted to MTC.

In the meeting, a detailed discussion was held on IC for successful implementation of the scheme. The secretary said that the scheme should be firmly implemented in the state through publicity.

In the meeting, Director General of Jharkhand State Nutrition Mission Rajeshwari B, Director Social Welfare Chhavi Ranjan, Under Secretary Arshad Jamal, Chief Medical Officer-cum-Civil Surgeon and other officials of the concerned district were present.

# IN BRIEF

## BLANKET DISTRIBUTION BY SBPS STUDENTS

Keeping with the tradition of the school of making the lives of the needy a little comfortable, Sarala Birla Public School, Ranchi organized a community outreach programme 'Shubheksha: Donating for a cause'. The students, escorted by their teachers, went and distributed blankets in Paika, Chatra, Sirpa and Bongai Bera village of Angara block under Ranchi district. School Head Personnel and Admin Dr. Pradip Varma praised the efforts made by the school for taking this initiative. Principal Paramjit Kaur said that apart from academic excellence, the school also endeavours to inculcate the sense of love and benevolence among the students by conducting such activities.



## SEMINAR ON ACCIDENT RELIEF, DISASTER MANAGEMENT

A seminar on disaster management and accident relief and rescue was organized by the Medical Department of Ranchi Railway Division and St. John Ambulance Brigade at Divisional Railway Hospital Complex, Hatia on Wednesday. The main objective of the seminar was to discuss in detail the topics related to quick rescue and relief work, first aid to injured passengers and medical aid at the time of railway accident. About 100 employees of the Medical Department and St. John Ambulance Brigade were given information about accident relief and rescue and medical assistance through power point presentation during the seminar. The seminar was conducted by Circle Medical Officer Dr. Vivek Sahai under the guidance of Chief Medical Superintendent Dr. SK Behera. On this occasion ACMS - Muri Dr. Jharia Kachhap, ACMS- Ranchi Dr. Sanjeev Kumar, ACMS Dr. Manisha Verma, ACMS Dr. Brajesh Sahu, Dr. Neelam Dayal, Dr. Saloni Sinha, St. John Ambulance S.P. Rout, Divisional Commander, and members of the Civil Defense and staff of the Medical Department were present.





# 3 soldiers killed after falling into J&K gorge



**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU**

A junior Commissioner along with two other jawans made a supreme sacrifice in the line of duty after they slipped into a deep gorge late Tuesday evening in Machhal sector of North Kashmir's Kupwara district.

According to a Srinagar based Defence Spokesman, "a routine operational task was undertaken on 10 Jan 2023 at about 5:30 p.m in Machhal Sector, along a narrow winter track.

While moving towards the forward post, snow along the

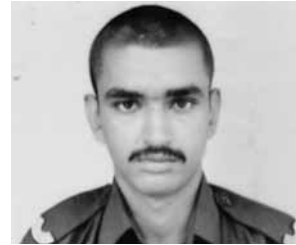


**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU**

narrow track broke, leading to slipping of one JCO and two Jawaans into a deep gorge". Immediately a search and rescue operation was launched with troops from the nearest post.

"In spite of adverse weather condition and rough terrain, sustained efforts of the search party led to the recovery of mortal remains of the three brave soldiers today morning between 4:15 to 4:45 am," the Defence spokesman said.

The three slain have been identified as Naib Subedar Parshotam Kumar, 43, Havaladar Amrik Singh, 39 and Amit Sharma, 23.



**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU**

Kumar a resident of village Majua Uttami, Bishnah Jammu in J&K had joined Army in 1996. He is survived by his wife and two children.

Hav Singh had joined the Army in 2001. He belonged to Village Mandwara, Una in Himachal Pradesh. He is survived by his wife and one son.

Amit Sharma had joined the Army in 2019. He belonged to Village Talasi Khurd, Hamirpur in Himachal Pradesh. The braveheart is survived by his mother. The mortal remains of the deceased soldiers will be dispatched to their native villages for performing the last rites.

# Eligibility criteria for JEE relaxed

Top 20 percentile students in each Board will now be eligible to seek IIT, NIT admissions

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

In a major move that would provide a breather to thousands of students, the eligibility criteria for JEE (Advanced) has been relaxed following constant demand from IIT aspirants in this regard.

The Ministry of Education on Wednesday said the top 20 percentile students of each education Board will now be eligible to seek admission in IITs and NITs and appear for JEE Advanced even if they have not scored 75 per cent marks in Class 12. The decision comes against the backdrop of constant demands for relaxing the eligibility criteria for JEE (Advanced), which requires at least 75 per cent marks in aggregate in the class 12 exam-



ination conducted by the respective education boards.

"The 20 percentile criteria will help those candidates who are short of 75 per cent aggregate in their Class 12 boards. Discussions were held and since many of the top 20 percentile candidates in a number of state boards score below 75 per cent marks or 350 marks, the Ministry decided that if a candidate is in the top 20 percentile he or she is eligible," official sources said.

The online registration for the first edition of JEE-Main will end on January 12. The exam will be conducted between January 24 and 31.

According to the JEE (Main) 2023 information bulletin, admission to BE/BTech/BArch/BPlanning programmes in the NITs, IIITs, and CFT via central seat allocation board will be based on all India rank with the additional eligibility of at least 75 per cent in aggregate in the class 12 examination conducted by the respective education boards.

For Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe candidates, the qualifying aggregate is 65 per cent in Class 12 board exams. The eligibility criteria was kept in abeyance during the pandemic (2020, 2021 and 2022).

# Silvassa: Minor boy beheaded, chopped for human sacrifice

**PTI ■ SILVASSA**

A nine-year-old boy was kidnapped and decapitated as part of a "human sacrifice" ritual in Dadra and Nagar Haveli district of the Union Territory and his body was chopped into pieces, police said on Wednesday.



Police arrested two men and detained a teenage boy last week after the headless body of the boy, belonging to a tribal community, was found in the Damanganga canal near Vapi town in Valsad district of neighbouring Gujarat.

The boy went missing from Sayli village in the Dadra and Nagar Haveli (DNH) district of the UT on December 29 last year, following which a case of kidnapping was registered at the Silvassa police station on December 30, police said in a release.

While multiple teams were found to trace the boy, a headless body matching his description was found at Vapi, located around 30 km away from Silvassa, the headquarters of the DNH district, police said.

While the body was found in a canal in Vapi, parts of the body, suspected to be of the victim, were found in Sayli village where the ritual was performed, an official said. The body parts have been sent for forensic examination, he added.

"The investigation led the police to a juvenile. He revealed he had kidnapped the victim on December 29, 2022, from Sayli village and murdered him as a human sacrifice with the help of his accomplice," the police said.

# TMC ignores Cong invite to Srinagar; takes dig at Rahul

**SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA**

The Trinamool Congress is not giving much importance to an invite it has received from the Congress to attend the closing ceremony of Bharat Jodo Yatra which is likely to take place in Jammu and Kashmir.

Side tracking questions on whether the party would send representatives to Srinagar party spokesperson and MP Dr Shantanu Sen on Wednesday said that instead of making a spectacle out of the much hyped Yatra apparently aimed at uniting India the Congress leadership should have tried to unite their own rank and file.

"Firstly TMC is a disciplined party and all decisions are taken by our party president Mamata Banerjee and commander and national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee so it is upon them to decide whether to go to Srinagar or not... but for me I can only say that instead of embarking on a Bharat Jodo Yatra Rahul Gandhi and the Congress leadership should have first tried to unite their own party... the way leaders like Ghulam Nabi Azad and Kapil Sibal are quitting the party there is a big question about the Congress' internal unity itself," Sen said.

The TMC leadership, which has never cloaked Mamata Banerjee's prime ministerial ambitions, had not joined the Yatra in earlier phases when invited to do so by



Janpath.

Wondering whether the Congress would be able to hold together the party even after the Yatra Sen said the "A 137-year-old party, the Congress has failed even to keep its flock together even after winning in certain States... where most of their elected representatives have quit the party... this is a poor reflection on their leadership."

Again he accused the Congress of perpetrating corruption when it was in power leading to its defeat in the 2014 general elections. "They had come back to power in 2009 but failed to retain it on account of large scale corruption... they will have to take care of this also."

Taking a dig at Rahul Gandhi the TMC MP said that he should first indicate that he was a full time politician. "Yatra is all right but what is the guarantee that their leader will once again not go abroad in holiday trip leaving the party and the politics to its own fate... so the Congress leadership should first take care of such drawbacks before talking big on unity etc," he said.

# BSP invites ire over song praising Mayawati as a goddess

**PNS ■ LUCKNOW**

Close on the heels of controversy over Congress leader Salman Khurshid calling former party president Rahul Gandhi as Lord Ram during a press conference recently, now the Bahujan Samaj Party has drawn ire over a song to be released on party's president Mayawati's birthday on January 15.

The song states that Indians consider Mayawati as their goddess. This time, on Mayawati's birthday, the theme of the song which will resonate in everyone's ears and the song on which the workers will dance will be "Incarnation of sakshat devi and Gautam

Buddha". Mayawati will be presented as a big leader through this song.

The beginning of the song goes something like this - "Among all the leaders of the country, Behanji is in first place, and her name is among the great leaders of the world. Because of her courage and bravery, she is called Iron Lady, the people of India consider her as a goddess."

Interestingly, according to BSP leaders, they do not know who has written the lyrics of this song. A senior party leader said that there was a team in Delhi which got the song written and sung by noted Bollywood singer Kailash Kher.

On the other hand,

Laxman Singh, president of BSP's Delhi unit, said that no one was involved in getting this song written or prepared on behalf of his unit. "Yes, I have also received this song from Mayawati's office and have been asked to play it on her birthday," he disclosed before the local media persons.

Bahujan Samaj Party spokesperson Dharamveer Chowdhary, when asked about the song comparing Mayawati with a goddess, said that the song was the voice of Bahujan Samaj and Sarva Samaj.

"Mayawati is the form of god in human form. People of Bahujan Samaj worship her. Mayawati also helps in the same way as Lord Ram helped

the poor, downtrodden and backward section of the society," he said.

Sources said that while the song was sent to all party units, the central unit of the party in New Delhi has also instructed to play it especially in Dalit hamlets and rural segments during celebration of former Uttar Pradesh chief minister Mayawati's birthday on January 15.

Party activists will celebrate BSP supremo's birthday as 'Jan Kalyankari Diwas' (Public Welfare Day). On Mayawati's birthday, party leaders and workers try to show her in a different light. Sometimes she is depicted as Iron Lady on the posters and



sometimes as the messiah of Dalits. This time the workers will celebrate BSP supremo Mayawati's birthday with great fanfare on January 15, and preparations have started for this.

It may be mentioned that Mayawati has already announced this time that "she

will celebrate her birthday with simplicity". She has also asked all the workers to go among the people and share their sorrows. Mayawati has clearly directed that her birthday should be celebrated as a public welfare day and party workers should help the poor and destitute by going among them.

# ED attaches 'luxurious' house of sextortionist



**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday attached a 'luxurious' house of the prime accused Archana Nag worth Rs 3.64 crore in connection with ongoing money laundering investigation into the high-profile sextortion racket being run in and around the city of Bhubaneswar.

Earlier, the ED had seized two high end vehicles worth Rs 56.5 lakh under Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The ED had registered a case under PMLA against the lady 'blackmailer' Archana Nag, her husband Jagabandhu Chand, Shradhanjali Behera, and Khageswar Patra on the basis of two separate FIRs registered by the Bhubaneswar Police.

# Case registered against 14 men for doing stunt on 3 bikes in Bareilly

**PNS ■ LUCKNOW**

Fourteen people riding three motorcycles and performing stunts have landed in trouble in Bareilly district after their video went viral on social media.

The police have registered a case in this connection and are making investigations to initiate legal proceedings.

In the video clip which went viral, as many as 14 men are seen riding three motorcycles - six on one and four each on two - in Deorania police circle of Bareilly. They can be seen performing a dangerous stunt on a section of Bareilly-Nainital highway.

The video is reported to have been shot on Sunday.

As per reports, police also saw them performing the stunt, but the men fled the spot before the police could act.

A police action has been initiated against the men involved in the stunt and all the motorcycles have been seized.

Senior Superintendent of Police of Bareilly, Akhilesh Kumar Chaurasia, said, "Once the information was received, the bikes were seized. Further action is being taken."

# AIPEF to oppose grant of Noida power licence to Adani

**PNS ■ LUCKNOW**

The All India Power Engineers Federation (AIPEF) said it would oppose the grant of licence for power distribution in Gautam Buddha Nagar to a private company.

Adani's power company Adani Jewar Electrical Company Limited has recently applied to the UP State Electricity Regulatory Commission for obtaining a parallel licence for distribution of electricity in Noida and Greater Noida.

Prior to this, Adani had applied for parallel licence in Navi Mumbai and Torrent Power in Pune and Nagpur in Maharashtra, in protest against which the Maharashtra's power employees and engineers went on strike. Maharashtra's Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis held talks with the power workers in the midst of the strike and gave a written assurance that the Maharashtra government would oppose the parallel licence in the regulatory commission and would not allow privatisation.

Chairman of AIPEF Shailendra Dubey said that according to the Electricity Act, 2003, the basic condition for obtaining a parallel licence for distribution of electricity



was that the private company should have its own power distribution network like substations and network of lines in the area in which it sought the licence.

It is notable that the entire network of power distribution in Noida is with the Paschimanchal Vidut Vitran Nigam and Adani has no network there.

Dubey further said that in 1993, private company Noida Power Company Limited was given electricity distribution licence in Greater Noida, whose term was expiring in August 2023. He said in such a situation, this network would automatically come to Paschimanchal Vidut Vitran Nigam, therefore, no company could be given licence in Greater Noida area also until that company builds its network completely.



Maharajanj, or Unnao. So far, in this cold wave, 21,926 blankets have been distributed in Lakhimpur Kheri, 16,629 in Hardoi, 12,640 in Bareilly, 12,546 in Banda, 12,050 in Bulandshahr, 11,414 in

Deoria, 11,989 in Maharajanj, 11,600 in Ghazipur, 11,570 in Prayagraj, 10,395 in Ballia, 10,288 in Rae Bareilly, 10,265 in Unnao, 10,123 in Firozabad, 9,990 in Lucknow, 9,450 in Sitapur, and 9,437 in Shravasti.

# Need for Hindus to unite: Togadia

**PNS ■ LUCKNOW**

International Hindu Council president Dr Praveen Bhai Togadia alleged that the murder of Kanhaiya in Rajasthan and Shradha in Delhi had made it clear that Hindus were in danger across the country.

"In such a situation, there is a need for Hindus to wake and to be united," he said in Pilibhit on Wednesday.

Dr Togadia, while talking to journalists on Wednesday, said that he was going across the country to awaken Hindus.

"Today Hindus need to wake up and fight for their rights," he said.

Referring to the coming



Lok Sabha elections, Dr Togadia said that he never contests elections but always gives support to the candidates.

Talking about Ram temple at Ayodhya, Dr Togadia made it clear that the credit of the temple was not of any political party or any organisation but it was a victory for 100 crore Hindus.

# Unprecedented security for Gkp Khichdi Mela



**PNS ■ LUCKNOW**

The famous Khichdi Mela at the Gorakhnath temple in Gorakhpur will begin on Sunday amid unprecedented security.

The devotees will have to go through three layers of security to participate in the mela. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, who heads the Gorakhnath temple, has been personally supervising the arrangements. He made a surprise visit to the district on Tuesday night to make on the spot inspection of the ongoing arrangements.

Yogi Adityanath directed the officials to ensure timely arrangements and to ensure

that the event passed off peacefully with no trouble to the visitors.

Talking to media persons about the security arrangements, Additional Director General (ADG) Akhil Kumar said devotees would have to pass through three layers of security.

The first checking will be done at the entry points of the city, the second at the entry of Gorakhnath temple premises, and third at the entrance gate of the main temple.

The Gorakhnath temple has been receiving several bomb threats, some of them fake, which has necessitated an increase in security. The district

administration has completed arrangements for the week-long Gorakhpur festival to be held between January 11 and 17 at the Champa Devi Park.

Talking to reporters, festival nodal officer and Vice-Chairman of Gorakhpur Development Authority, Mahendra Singh Tanwar, said nearly 200 artistes would take part in the festival, including 180 local ones, and the area had been divided into four super zones. In addition, a police station has been established at the temple.

The annual Khichdi Mela attracts lakhs of devotees from India as well as Nepal and is a much-awaited event.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Unwise

### Govt should refrain from seeking more money from Union Carbide for the 1984 Bhopal gas tragedy

Why is the Government seeking additional compensation from Union Carbide for the 1984 Bhopal gas tragedy? Way back in 1989, there was an agreement which stipulated a payment of \$470 million (Rs 715 crore at that time) by the American company. That was supposed to be the final settlement. If over three decades after reaching a settlement, India makes additional demands, what sanctity would be left in the pacts we make with other countries, big companies, or multilateral agencies? What impact would it have on the foreign direct investment that our leaders ardently seek? In fact, there are the questions someone in the Government must have raised when a decision was made to seek an amendment to the mutually agreed 1989 deal with Union Carbide; apparently, no one did. But the apex court asks questions and flags issues (this is the main reason why the Government is at loggerheads with the judiciary, but that's another story). So, it was left to the five-judge Bench of Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul, Sanjiv Khanna, Abhay S Oka, Vikram Nath, and JK Maheshwari to remind the Government about the far-reaching ramifications of the proposed move, one of which would be the impact on prospective investments by multinational corporations. The Bench is hearing a curative petition filed by the Centre. Saying that populism cannot be the basis of judicial review and the "sanctity of the settlement" would go away if the case is reopened, it also said that a Rs

50-crore sum of the compensation which remains unutilised even after so many years.

The Government's move brings to mind the unedifying episode of retrospective taxation which brought a lot of embarrassment to the nation. The sordid saga of retrospective taxation began with the famous Vodafone case. Vodafone bought Hutchison's mobile telephony business and other assets in India in 2007, on which the Indian tax officials demanded Rs 7,990 crore in capital gains and withholding tax from Vodafone. Vodafone legally challenged the demand notice, and won the case in the Supreme Court in 2012. The matter should have ended there, but taxmen managed to convince the then finance minister, Pranab Mukherjee, to disregard the highest court of the land and undo its ruling by bringing in an ordinance — which he did. Retrospective taxation was widely opposed, including by those within the ruling dispensation. Prime minister Manmohan Singh was convinced that the proposed amendment in the IT Act would impact FDI inflows into the country, Mukherjee wrote in his memoir, adding that Sonia Gandhi, Kapil Sibal, and P Chidambaram also expressed the apprehension that the retrospective amendments would create a negative sentiment for FDI. When the Bharatiya Janata Party came to power, it also continued with retrospective taxation; the Government did a somersault only when its position became absolutely untenable in the international arena. It should not do anything that brings more embarrassment to India.

### PICTALK



Snow-covered Rasheel village after fresh snowfall in Lahaul-Spiti district

# Let love permeate life and living

### For human survival, love is the panacea. It must essence of human life else we are bound to end up fighting and annihilating everything around



JS RAJPUT

Human survival on the planet earth is unthinkable without the presence of love. It needs no elaboration on how critically significant is the presence of love amongst living beings. In a rare instance in contemporary history, hatred, violence prolonged incarceration only helped purify the stream of love within an enlightened individual, Nelson Mandela. He presented a shining example of how love could overcome even the most ferocious inflictions of hatred: "People are not born to hate. They are taught to hate. They can be taught to love. No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite." It is also a stark reality that people suffer burgeoning levels of hate, distrust, terror, violence, and wars. And this is happening in our civilized world in the third decade of the 21st century!

Never before have human beings been familiar with the secrets of nature today. Never before governments, and global organizations were as well-equipped as today to annihilate human suffering anywhere on the planet earth. Then, why are people suffering on one count or the other? Love flourishes in peace, in righteous conduct, in nonviolence, in truth! All these five — truths, peace, nonviolence, righteous conduct, and love — constitute the ultimate prescription for a totally humane world.

Interestingly, each one of these is organically linked to the other four! This perfect five is also an expression of ultimate human aspiration. It would be a goal that subsumes spirituality, the essence of faith and manifestation of the essential unity of all human beings, and the eternal search for truth.

The very survival of the planet earth; and hence humanity; is at stake. The world before us; and emerging before generations ahead; was comprehensively articulated by the secretary general of



the UN Antonio Guterres at the COP-15, representatives from 190 countries met in Montreal in December 2022 to take a final call on global biodiversity framework for years ahead: "With our bottomless appetite for unchecked and unequal economic growth, humanity has become a weapon of mass destruction. We are treating nature like a toilet. And ultimately, we are committing suicide by proxy."

Obviously, the survival of humanity on the planet earth requires a two-fold long-term strategy that could give lasting impetus to the process of learning universal values and internalization of humane elements by every citizen and every human being. This process — of moving ahead in the direction of a humane world — would require the participation of every individual citizen and human being in two major initiatives: restoration of the sensitive man-nature mutuality on one hand, and reinventing the man-man relationship to a level where every person treats every other person 'as he himself would like to be treated by everyone else'.

It is not something like two agenda items in a plan or program; it would cover every aspect of human life and living, it would require



NEVER BEFORE, HUMAN BEINGS WERE FAMILIAR WITH THE SECRETS OF NATURE AS OF TODAY. NEVER BEFORE GOVERNMENTS, AND GLOBAL ORGANIZATIONS WERE AS WELL-EQUIPPED AS TODAY TO ANNIHILATE HUMAN SUFFERINGS ANYWHERE ON THE PLANET

high-level intellectual churning, and acceptance of the reality that 'learning to live together' and 'Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam' are no more clichés, but a basic approach and skill that is as essential to human survival as are air, water, and food. As one contemplates the existing and emerging shape and situation of our planet, attention invariably shifts to the process of growing up of human beings, the manner each innocent and unaware child is taught to love. Let the child witness love all around in family, schools, and society let him observe love connecting people. Let this environment transform him from a 'person to a personality'. Education policies deserve fresh thinking and let humanistic and ethical values develop around the fulcrum of love. Educational institutions, particularly teacher preparation establishments, could set examples. One has personally observed how national and regional level educational institutions nurture love across all diversities. These need to remain conscious of external elements that would be interested in disturbing the symphony of national unity and integrity.

Teaching learning materials are undergoing serious transformations, and this is the

time to ensure that no opportunity is ignored that could reemphasize the need to internalize love for others, and the desire to help and serve the needy. Rapid technological advancements are threatening to downgrade human ingenuity and intelligence.

These could lead to neglect of the human element in the process of growing up, and also in professional life. It has to be taken note of in the preparation of textual materials. The objective of education must be cautiously woven around humane values. It must particularly lay emphasis on the equality of all religions, and comprehension of universal human values drenched in love. These form part of every faith and religion. In a cohesive world, human life must remain a quest for the secrets of nature; it must persistently strive to understand man, nature, and the beauty that makes every initiative and effort worthwhile. The future world must appear beautiful to its inhabitants. Recall the lines of Keats: "Beauty is truth, / Truth beauty — that is all / ye know on earth, / and all ye need to know."

(Professor Rajput works in education, social cohesion, and religious amity. The views expressed are personal)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### VIVEKANANDA WAS NOT COMMUNAL

Sir — While the child Narendranath experimented with hookahs used by different communities to experience how one "loses" his caste or religion, the matured Swami Vivekananda advocated for universal brotherhood and equality of all human beings.

Though Vivekananda was a proud Hindu as well as Indian, that did not deter him from pointing out the vices that had plagued the religion and the nation. Neither did he paint an imaginary story revolving "glory" of ancient India by "discovering" a test-tube baby, plastic surgery with Ram's arrows being "missiles" and Kubler's Pushpak Rath an "aircraft" nor tried to impose his religious belief upon other communities by projecting Hinduism and India as superior to others; rather his true love for his own religion and country got translated into love and respect for all religions and humanity as a whole.

It is indeed a disgusting sight when the rabid orthodox pseudo-nationalist merchants of hatred, who have emerged as the self-declared "guardians" of Hindus and "holy cows" and can't hold a candle to the liberalism of the great sage, dare to project the humanitarian harmony-personified Swami Vivekananda as one of their "icons"! Had Vivekananda been alive, he would have got ashamed to witness the communal environment in his country. Lastly, the Bhakts and their leaders are earnestly requested to not invoke the name of Swami Vivekananda in their divisive lips and pen on the occasion of his birthday! This humanitarian started the ritual of Kumari Puja by worshipping a 4-year-old Kashmiri Muslim girl in Kheer Bhavani in 1898! Yes, this all-embracing sage used to see the Divine Mother in all female entities irrespective of religion. So instead of paying lip service to Vivekananda at the drop of a hat, they should try to learn his values and treat all citizens and human beings on an absolutely equal pedestal irrespective of their origin-birth-caste-religion-language-race-region.

Kajal Chatterjee | Kolkata

KOHLI'S TON

### Joshimath disaster



603 buildings have developed cracks and more than 68 families are shifted to safe locations. The historic recurrence of Uttarakhand 2013 is a corollary of incessantly ignored alarming bells by nature and experts. Rampant infrastructure development, improv-

er drainage system, and unprecedented changes in climate have made the area more fragile and paved the way for disaster. The localities are paying the price of someone else's greed by evacuating their hometown. Safety negligence is leading to accidents. Amplified landslides and cracks in the house symbolises not only the need for strict rule and regulations but also the forced and timely implementation of these rules. Moreover, the need of the hour is also to stop the hydropower projects in order to pause further destruction. Also, bring Dam Safety Law into effect, especially for places like Himachal where almost 97% of the area is prone to landslides.

Tashi Baheti | Ujjain

Sir — Congrats to Emperor Kohli on his achieving the milestone of the 73rd international century and his 45th ODI century. He needs just 5 more to beat Sachin Tendulkar's world record of 49 ODI centuries. Now that more ODIs and T20s are being played, Virat has more opportunities to achieve 100 international centuries.

Should Virat play IPL (to gain more practice) or quit IPL (to avoid overplay and exhaustion)? He should decide with medical experts and cricket experts and coaches. Emperor Kohli also has new records for most ODI centuries (9) against any single nation (Sri Lanka). Also most ODI centuries (20) on the home (Indian) soil, from 102 matches. (Whereas Sachin Tendulkar has 20 ODI tons on home soil, from 164 games). Hope the best of Virat is yet to come and he will be on the ground for many more years.

Madhu Nivriti PS | Secunderabad

### GOVERNOR WALKOUT NOT CALLED FOR

Sir — By staging an unprecedented walkout from the Assembly after intentionally skipping a few key portions of the approved text over his customary address, Tamil Nadu Governor R. N. Ravi has brought a new low to the House.

Governors are generally expected to stick to the text prepared by the governments of the day. That the governor refused to even read the name of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the father of the Indian constitution, is highly disappointing. It is all the more upsetting that he did not even wait for the recital of the national anthem, thus disrespecting the same. ("Stalin objects to straying, Guv walks out of House", Jan. 10).

The tumultuous incident that took place in the Tamil Nadu Assembly has only escalated the already simmering relationship between the governor and the political Executive of the State, and it is a clear indication of how the position of a governor is being misused in a democracy for personal and political gains. The events that folded up last Monday in the TN House led to ruminate about amending the Indian constitution and abolishing the position of Governor altogether or allowing the members of a State government to elect the Governor on their own.

Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

## SOUNDBITE

Today, the world listens to India. It can become the engine of development of the world.



Prime Minister — Narendra Modi

We salute the Iranian citizens who are heroically fighting for their freedom. They are sacrificing their lives for basic human rights.

Prime Minister of Israel — Benjamin Netanyahu

Indian cinema should stop such nudity content on big and small screens. Showing things against our culture and tradition will definitely cause conflicts among the people.



Actor — Anant Nag

It's rare to see someone strike this way. I have seen amazing players like AB de Villiers, Vivian Richards, Sachin Tendulkar, Virat Kohli, and Ricky Ponting but few can hit the ball as cleanly as Suryakumar. Hats off to him!

Former cricketer — Kapil Dev

I have killed the Rahul Gandhi that exists in your mind. I have no interest in my image.



Congress leader — Rahul Gandhi

## Lunatic Asylum

### Pseudo-intellectuals hit a new low by forcing a caterer to serve non veg dishes in Kerala student festival

Swami Vivekananda described Kerala as a lunatic asylum when he visited South India as part of his Bharat Yatra during the latter half of the nineteenth century. What made the Hindu saint express his disgust was the apartheid in vogue in the region at the instance of certain caste leaders who had made it a symbol of royalty and feudalism. The modern-day royalty and feudalism in the State are epitomized by certain political goons and pseudo-intelligentsia who want Kerala to remain as a communal cauldron. It is an accepted policy that arts and culture should unify people who follow myriad religious beliefs. Kerala is home to Asia's biggest cultural jamboree of school children, the State Schools Youth Festival. Nearly 10,000 school students from across the State participate in arts and cultural events spread over five days. The event assumes more significance than any other festival in the State thanks to the innocence of the teenage participants. Noted caterer Pazhayidam Mohanan Nampoothiri, whose cooking and serving of foods was the one who has been feeding the participating children with quality vegetarian dishes for the last 25 years. Nampoothiri dedicates a month every year to cook and feed the child participants.

Media reports about the school youth festival would not be complete without features about the daily delicacies served by him. But Nampoothiri shocked Kerala with his announcement that he would not be there with his kitchen from next year as a section of the self-styled intelligentsia took umbrage over the fact that he serves only vegetarian stuff during the event. The fact that Nampoothiri serves a non-vegetarian menu during the annual Kerala Schools Sports Meet was hidden from society. The statement was like opening a Pandora's Box in a State which stands polarised on communal lines. Things reached an alarming level this time as Nampoothiri and his staff had to sit on guard round-the-clock in the kitchen as well as the storeroom because of threats by certain elements that they would put poison in the food. They demanded that beef delicacies be served and described the ace caterer as emblematic of communalism and fascism. They were silent about dozens of people getting killed in the State after consuming non-vegetarian dishes from eateries. Let the children enjoy their favorite dishes. Communalism and Fascism have no space in kids' worlds. One cannot be blamed if he doubts whether Kerala is an Animal Farm visualized by George Orwell.



Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

## FIRST COLUMN

## STRESS CAN CAUSE MENTAL ILLNESSES

Try to open your heart to someone you can trust to relive stress



JYOTI KAPOOR

Everyone experiences stress, which gives you an unpleasant feeling, but it's not a disease in itself. However, there are links between stress and mental health issues such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, depression, and psychosis. It is a reaction to a real or perceived event that acts as a stressor.

In other words, how stressed one feels depends on how much stress one perceives in a given situation. Stress causes a chemical response in the brain with several physical and psychological effects. Acute stress can trigger anxiety, and long-term stress, even if it is of low intensity, can cause permanent changes. Your heart, muscles, nervous system, and immunity all get affected. Fatigue, lethargy, muscle aches and pains, lack of enthusiasm, irritability, and sleep disturbances may occur.

Lifestyle malfunctions are the result; social and interpersonal health suffers. Mental illnesses, like any illness, are vulnerable to stressful events. Here the stress chemical acts as a trigger, which activates an underlying vulnerability.



Acute stress associated with the sudden death of a loved one can trigger mood disorders like depression and bipolar disorder. Psychotic disorders associated with hallucinations and delusions can become prominent after severe stressful events like death or an accident.

Loss of sleep can trigger the onset of manic or depressive episodes in known or high-risk cases of bipolar disorder. Similarly, in patients with OCD or Observed Compulsive Personality Disorders, stress exacerbates obsessive-compulsive symptoms.

Long-term stressful situations that go untreated manifest as psychosomatic conditions or somatoform disorders. Anxiety disorders and health-related anxieties are often caused by prolonged life stressors in biologically vulnerable individuals. Physical or surgical stress is also known to cause anxiety episodes and sometimes psychosis in individuals with limited stress-coping abilities.

The signs and symptoms of stress may be thinking-related, emotional, or physical. This can vary from person to person. Thinking-related symptoms may include feeling difficulty, concentrating or thinking, memory-related problems, facing negativity or lack of self-confidence, feeling constant worrying, and difficulty making decisions.

Emotional symptoms may include the likes of feeling moodiness, low morale, irritability, feeling hopeless or helpless, apprehensive, anxious or nervous, feeling depressed, being unhappy or guilty, agitated or unable to relax.

Physical symptoms may include headaches, muscle tension or other physical pain or discomfort, stomach problems, loss of sex drive, rapid heart rate, high blood pressure and fatigue.

To deal with stress, one should start making a stress diary and identify what causes stress, while also asking why it causes stress; is it a negative presumption about the event or a reality that is bothering you? One must figure out ways to deal with stress and figure out the alternatives in cases of failures. If you are not able to do this exercise by yourself, consult a psychotherapist.

Some healthy ways to deal with stress may include—regular breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including those on social media; eating healthily and practicing good hygiene; exercise, get plenty of sleep; and give yourself a break if you feel stressed out.

Taking part in other activities could also be helpful. Talking to others is also a way out of stress. Try to open your heart to someone you can trust. Ask when you need more help. If problems continue or you are thinking about committing suicide, talk to a psychologist, social worker, or professional counsellor regarding the same.

(The author is founder and senior psychiatrist, Manasthali)

# Swami Vivekananda: true icon for youths

During Amrit Kaal, let's make the most of the teachings of Swami Vivekananda to make an Atmanirbhar Bharat

Swami Vivekananda was an incredibly versatile personality with a vast knowledge of different subjects, including Western philosophy. He was the first Hindu monk of India, who spread the message of Hinduism and 'Sanatan Dharma'. He established the supremacy of 'Sanatan' values, culture and Hinduism in a decisive manner.

It was a great achievement as this was done by Swami Vivekananda, born on January 12, 1863 in Kolkata, at a time when the whole world used to look down upon us.

Blessed with a yogic temperament, he used to practice meditation even from his boyhood. Inquisitive to the core, his life underwent a sea change ever since he came into contact with Sri Ramakrishna Paramhans, which later on developed into a unique guru-disciple relationship with fewer parallels in the history of spiritual masters. He once asked Shri Ramakrishna Paramhans one day in November 1881: "Sir, have you seen God?" He replied: "Yes, I have. I see Him as clearly as I see you, only in a much intenser sense."

Under divine guidance of Shri Ramakrishna Paramhans, Swami Vivekananda made strides on the spiritual path. His speech at the World's Parliament of Religions, Chicago, on September 11, 1893 left an indelible mark on the gathering comprising religious and spiritual personalities of different faiths from across the world. He started his speech by addressing the gathering from the core of his heart as 'sisters and brothers of America' which was followed by thunderous applause from the audience.

He said: "It fills my heart with joy unspeakable to rise in response to the warm and cordial welcome which you have given us. I thank you in the name of the most ancient order of monks in the world; I thank you in the name of the mother of religions; and I thank you in the name of the millions and millions of Hindu people of all classes and sects."

Swami ji went on to add: "I am proud to belong to a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance. We believe not only in universal toleration but we accept all religions as true... I am proud to belong to a nation which has sheltered the persecuted and the refugees of all religions and all nations on earth." Swami ji was of the firm opinion that all paths lead to the one true God, as is also mentioned in Rig Veda that 'Ekam Sat Vipra Bahuda Vadanti' (Truth is one; the wise call it by various names.)

His views of modern Indian secularism were based on equal respect for all faiths. He supported religious tolerance as a part of public culture, as he wanted harmony and peace. It was not a mere hollow proposition but a strong intent to serve the people with compassion and



SWAMI VIVEKANANDA WAS AN INSPIRATIONAL PERSONALITY. FOR HIM, YOUTH WAS THE HARBINGER OF HOPE AND THE FULCRUM OF CHANGE. HIS CLARION CALL—ARISE AWAKE AND STOP NOT UNTIL THE GOAL IS REACHED—STILL REVERBERATES IN OUR HEARTS AND MINDS

(The author is Governor, Haryana)



without any discrimination either on the basis of caste or religion. There was no place for appeasement in his views on secularism. It was all inclusive, which he preached in the US and the UK, the two countries he visited extensively after delivering the historic lecture at Parliament of the World Religions in 1893.

Swami Vivekananda's concept of potential divinity of the soul, principle of morality and ethics, and being a bridge between the East and the West, and sense of unity, pride in the past, and the sense of mission are real assets for us. He defined and strengthened the sense of unity for us as a nation, giving a proper understanding of our country's great spiritual heritage. Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose wrote: "Swamiji harmonized the East and the West, religion and science, past and present. And that is why he is great. Our countrymen have gained unprecedented self-respect, self-reliance and self-assertion from his teachings."

In the words of eminent British historian A L Basham, in centuries to come, he will be remembered as one of the main moulders of the modern world...!"

Swami Vivekananda was an inspirational personality. For him, youth was the harbinger of hope and the fulcrum of change. His clarion call - Arise awake and stop not until the goal is reached - still reverberates in our hearts and minds. He said that he wanted youths with muscles of iron, nerves

of steel and gigantic hearts. He wanted the youth of the country to have strong will power to serve the motherland and masses. He once said: "Go, all of you, wherever there is an outbreak of plague or famine, or wherever the people are in distress, and mitigate their sufferings" by serving the country.

During his travels all over India, Swami Vivekananda was deeply moved to see the appalling poverty and backwardness of the masses, in particular the down-trodden. He was the first religious leader in India to understand and openly declare that the real cause of India's downfall was the neglect of the masses. They had lost their faith in their capacity to improve their lot due to centuries of oppression. He realized that despite poverty, 'the masses clung to religion, but they had never been taught the life-giving, ennobling principles of Vedanta and how to apply them in practical life.'

He saw education as the only means to improve their economic condition, and spiritual knowledge to infuse in them faith in themselves and strengthen their moral sense. What was education for him? In his own words: "The education which does not help the common mass of people to equip themselves for the struggle for life, which does not bring out strength of character, a spirit of philanthropy, and the courage of a lion — is it worth the name? Real education is that which enables one to stand on one's own legs." That is

self-confidence!

As a divine soul, Swami Vivekananda visualized the role of science and technology in improving the life of human beings. So when he met Jamshedji Tata on a ship, he asked his help in creating human capital dedicated to sciences. Jamshedji Tata, inspired by the words of Swami Vivekananda, established the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru! Swami ji wanted to "bring the best aspects of both the traditional Hindu and Western systems of education".

During Amrit Kaal, let's make the most of the teachings of Swami Vivekananda, a great philosopher, thinker, orator, poet, and the greatest patron of the youth, to make an Atmanirbhar Bharat! We celebrate January 12, the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, as the National Youth Day, to draw inspiration from the 'philosophy of Swami ji and the ideals for which he lived and worked could be a great source of inspiration for the Indian Youth.' The dream of Ek Bharat, Sarvshrestha Bharat and making India Vishwa Guru can be realized by following the path shown by Swami Vivekananda, which is at the centre of the governance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji. Let us resolve today to assimilate the essence of teachings of Swami Vivekananda—national spirit, patriotism, unity in diversity, inclusivity and purity! This will be the real tribute to Swami Vivekananda.



BANDARU DATTATRAYA

## POINT COUNTERPOINT

WHATEVER APPLIES TO THE ENTIRE COUNTRY, TAMIL NADU SAYS NO. TRUTH MUST PREVAIL. THAMIZHAGAM IS A MORE APPROPRIATE WORD.  
— TAMIL NADU GOVERNOR  
RAN RAVI



HE MAKES STATEMENTS THAT ARE FACTUALLY INCORRECT AND POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS.  
— DMK LEADER  
TR BAALU

# Gamosa, cultural symbol of Assam, gets GI tag

If Indian states do not apply for the GI tags for their specialised products for commercial use, other countries can do that

The government has recently granted Geographical Indication (GI) tag to various products, including Gamosa of Assam, Tandur Redgram of Telangana, and an apricot variety of Ladakh. Gamosa, a significant cultural symbol and identity of Assam, has received the Geographical Indication tag from the Central Government.

The Gamosa, a symbol of the culture and identity of Assam, is traditionally a hand-woven rectangular cotton piece of cloth with red borders and different designs and motifs, is offered to elders and guests as a mark of respect and honour. It is similar to 'Khata', a silken scarf, presented to guests in Sikkim and Tibetans as a mark of respect. Gamosa tag has been received by Assam after



PK VASUDEVA

(The author is a retired senior professor of international trade)

five years of scrutiny by the Controller General of Patents.

A Geographical Indication (appellation of origin) is primarily an agricultural, natural or a manufactured product (handicraft and industrial goods) originating from a definite geographical territory. There is a proper process of registration of GI products, which includes filing of application, preliminary scrutiny and examination, show cause notice, publication in the geographical indications journal, opposition to registration, and registration. Any association of persons, producers, organisation or authority established by or under the law can apply. The applicant must represent the interest of the producers.

Geographical indications are generally related to tradi-

tional products, produced by rural communities over generations that have gained a reputation for the markets for their specific qualities. Such a name conveys an assurance of quality and distinctiveness.

Geographical Indications protection is granted through the Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). On the one hand, it is granted through sui generis law (public law), e.g., in the European Union. In other words, GI protection should apply through ex-officio protection, where authorities may support and get involved in the making of GI collective dimensions together with their corresponding GI regulatory council, where ongoing dis-

course with the government is implied for effective inspection and quality control.

On the other hand, it is granted through common law. In other words, it is similar to the protection afforded to trademarks as it can be registered through collective trademarks and also through certification marks. A geographical indication is a name or sign used on products, which corresponds to a specific geographical location or origin (e.g. a town, region, or country).

The Controller-General Patents, Designs and Trade Marks who is also the Registrar of Geographical Indications and is based in Chennai to administer this Act. It is a sui generis Act of Parliament for protection of geographical

indications in India. This country, as a member of the WTO, enacted the Act to comply with the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS).

The GI tag ensures that none other than those registered as authorised users (or at least those residing inside the geographical territory) are allowed to use the popular product name and others have to pay at commercial rates for their use like patents. Darjeeling Tea became the first GI tagged product in India in 2004-05.

The top five states holding maximum number of GIs are Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra and Kerala. Recently, the government has supported the promotion of

GIs by approving an expenditure of Rs 75 crore for three years for promotion of awareness programmes.

The commerce and Industry ministry said on 13 December that the total number of GI has reached 432. The famous goods, which carry GI tag, include Alphonso Mango from Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg and other adjoining areas in Maharashtra, Basmati rice, Darjeeling Tea, Amritsari fish, Phulkari of Punjab, Chanderi Fabric, Mysore Silk, Kullu Shawl, Kangra Tea, Thanjavur Paintings, Allahabad Surkha, Farrukhabad Prints, Lucknow Zardozi and Kashmir Walnut Wood Carving.

Some other products which have been granted GI tag include Mahabaleshwar Strawberry, Blue Pottery of

Jaipur, Banarsi Sarees, Tripuri Laddus, Kangra Paintings, Nagpur Oranges, Kashmir Pashmina, Rasagulla of Odisha, Phulkari of Punjab and manufactured goods like Pochampalli

Ikat, Kancheepuram Silk, Sholapur chadars Bagh Prints, Madhubani paintings, etc.

Himachal Pradesh can easily get the GI tag for its Kinnaur apples and so on. Other states should also try to get GI tags for their specialised products so that the farmers and other genuine experts get their well-deserved income from their hard work and research. If Indian states do not apply for the GI tags for their specialised products for commercial use, other countries can get the certification as their own products.





# UK, Japan sign defence deal Amid rising concern about China



AP ■ LONDON

The leaders of Britain and Japan are signing a defence agreement on Wednesday that could see troops deployed to each others' countries.

The two countries are strengthening military ties amid growing concern about China's increasing military assertiveness and designs toward Taiwan, which it considers a renegade province.

The British government said the defence agreement "cements our commitment to the Indo-Pacific" region. It is due to be signed by Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and UK leader Rishi Sunak during a meeting in the symbolic setting of the Tower of London fortress.

The deal has been in the works for years,



AP ■ TOKYO

and was discussed when Kishida visited Sunak's predecessor, Boris Johnson, in London in May.

The Reciprocal Access Agreement — Japan's first with a European nation — allows the two countries to hold joint military exercises.

The British government said it will allow the armed forces of the two Group of Seven countries "to plan and deliver larger and more complex military exercises and deployments".

It reflects a new "Indo-Pacific tilt" in Britain's foreign policy following the country's departure from the European Union in 2020. Britain sees Japan as its key East Asian ally.

"In this increasingly competitive world, it is more important than ever that demo-

cratic societies continue to stand shoulder to shoulder as we navigate the unprecedented global challenges of our time," Sunak said.

The two leaders were meeting at the Tower of London, a 1,000-year-old former palace and prison that houses the Crown Jewels.

Sunak's office said they will view Japanese armor presented to King James in 1613 by Shogun Tokugawa Hidetada of Japan to mark the first-ever trade agreement between England and Japan.

Japan has joined Western nations in condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine and imposing sanctions against Moscow. Japan also has supplied Ukraine with helmets and other non-lethal military aid.

Japan is concerned Russia's invasion of Ukraine could have an impact in East Asia, where China's military has grown increasingly assertive and threatened to unite with Taiwan by force if necessary.

Concerned about rapid weapons advancement in China and North Korea, Japan in December adopted key security and defence reforms, including a counterstrike capability that makes a break from the self-defence-only principle it has maintained since its defeat in World War II.

Japan holds the presidency of the G-7 this year, and Kishida is on a weeklong trip to visit allies including Italy, France, Canada and the United States, where he is due to meet President Joe Biden at the White House on Friday.

# Lanka summons Canadian diplomat over sanctions on Rajapaksa brothers

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's Foreign Ministry Son Wednesday summoned Canada's top diplomat here and expressed its displeasure over his country's decision to impose "unilateral sanctions" on its four citizens, including two former presidents.

Canada on Tuesday imposed sanctions on four Sri Lankans, including former presidents Gotabaya Rajapaksa and Mahinda Rajapaksa, for committing what it called "gross and systematic violations of human rights" during the country's civil war.

Sanctions were also imposed on Staff Sergeant Sunil Ratnayake and Lt Commander Chandana P Hettiarachchithie.

Reacting to the sanctions, the foreign ministry summoned Canada's Acting High Commissioner in Colombo and expressed the government's displeasure over the move.

"Foreign Minister Ali Sabry summoned the Canadian Acting High Commissioner Daniel Bood to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs," the foreign ministry said in a tweet.

He "expressed the deep regret of the Government on the announcement of unilateral sanctions brought against

four individuals including two former Presidents of Sri Lanka by the Government of Canada based on unsubstantiated allegations," it added.

"Foreign Minister Sabry emphasised that such unilateral action by the Canadian Government, motivated by domestic political compulsions in Canada, sets a dangerous precedent and is inimical to Sri Lanka's interests, especially when national unity and reconciliation are of paramount importance," the statement said.

"It was also stressed that the announcement by Canada is detrimental to the Government's ongoing efforts towards national unity, reconciliation, and stability," it said, adding that the foreign minister asked Canada to review the decision and engage constructively with Sri Lanka.

This is the first time that Rajapaksa brothers have been banned by any country despite long held accusations of rights abuses and corruption.

In a separate statement, the Foreign Ministry said it is "unfortunate that this action by the Canadian Government could polarise communities and have a detrimental impact on ongoing processes in place to secure socio-economic sta-

bility."

Earlier, State Minister of Foreign Affairs Tharaka Balasuriya said that the sanctioning of former presidents was "untimely" and was intended to pacify domestic elements in Canada.

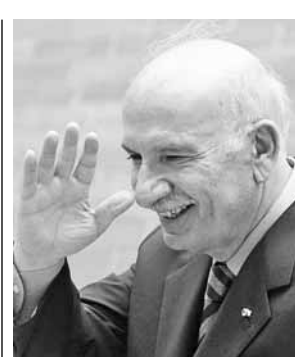
He said Canada's decision to impose sanctions on the Rajapaksa brothers came at a time when Sri Lanka was attempting to take forward the post-war reconciliation process.

"This shows who our friends really are and who are not," he was quoted as saying by the Colombo Gazette newspaper.

The sanctions target former president Gotabaya, who resigned in July last after a massive protest against his government, and his elder brother Mahinda, who has held the titles of president and prime minister.

Gotabaya temporarily fled his country last summer after mass protests over the country's economic crisis, while Mahinda resigned from his post as prime minister last spring.

Sri Lanka's majority Sinhalese population had praised the brothers for defeating Tamil separatists after a 26-year civil war, which took place from 1983 to 2009.



# Father of peace deal that ended Lebanon's civil war dies

AP ■ BEIRUT

Hussein Husseini, Lebanon's former parliament speaker and the father of the 1989 Taif Agreement that ended the country's 15-year civil war, died on Wednesday after days of illness. He was 85.

Husseini was admitted to Beirut's American University Medical Centre on January 3, after suffering from a strong flu, the state-run National News Agency said.

NNA added that Husseini remained in the intensive care unit until his death on Wednesday morning.

Caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati declared a three-day mourning period in the crisis-hit Lebanon while Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri postponed a session that was scheduled to take place on Thursday to elect a new president.

Husseini was elected to parliament representing the north-eastern Baalbek-Hermel region in 1972 and remained a legislator until 2008. He was elected as parliament speaker in 1984, a job that he kept until 1992.

The politician was a harsh critic of Lebanon's sectarian-based political system that divided top posts in the country of 5 million between Christian and Muslim communities.

Husseini was also a strong vocal opponent of the country's financial policies, including heavy borrowing, that started in the 1990s and eventually led to Lebanon's ongoing three-year economic meltdown.

# Thousands rally in Nepal to seek restoration of monarchy

AP ■ KATHMANDU

Thousands of supporters of Nepal's former royal family held a rally on Wednesday demanding the restoration of monarchy in the Himalayan nation. They gathered around the statue of King Prithvi Narayan Shah, who started the Shah dynasty in the 18th century. The last Shah king — Gyanendra — was forced to step down and the monarchy abolished in 2008, making Nepal a republic.

There are still many supporters who seek to bring the monarchy back and rally every year on the birth anniversary of

Prithvi Narayan. Some previous rallies have turned violent with clashes between demonstrators and police. Wednesday's rally was peaceful and police in riot gear kept a close watch on the event that included participants waving flags, playing music and chanting slogans to praise the monarchy. Nepal's new government led by Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal declared Wednesday a public holiday to mark Prithvi Narayan's birthday. Dahal led Maoist communist rebels between 1996-2006 seeking to abolish the monarchy in Nepal. Gyanendra became the king after his elder brother was assassinated in a palace massacre



in 2001 but remained unpopular. Political parties teamed up with the Maoist insurgents to organise protests forcing him to give up power in 2006.

Two years later, Parliament voted to abolish the monarchy. Gyanendra, 75, remains a common citizen and is not politically active. The protesters welcomed the government's declaration of a public holiday and allowing them to hold the rally.

"The monarchy needs to return to Nepal. We are seeking a ceremonial king and we are fine with an executive prime minister but need a ceremonial king," said Ram Prasad Upreti, a retired medical doctor.

# Report: UK, US supplied arms, killed civilians, in Yemen

AP ■ CAIRO

Weapons supplied by the United Kingdom and the United States and used by a Saudi-led coalition fighting in war-torn Yemen killed at least 87 civilians and wounded 136 others in just over a year, a new report said Wednesday.

The report by the Oxfam charity found that the Saudi-led coalition used weapons supplied solely by the UK and the US in hundreds of attacks on civilians in Yemen between January 2021 to the end of February 2022. Britain is the sec-

ond-biggest supplier of weapons to Saudi Arabia, after the US.

Yemen's war began when the Iranian-backed Houthis seized the country's capital in September 2014 and forced the internationally recognised government into exile. A Saudi-led coalition armed with US weaponry and intelligence entered the war on the side of Yemen's exiled government in March 2015.

Oxfam's report comes ahead of a legal challenge by the Campaign Against Arms Trade, or CAAT, against the UK government on supplying weapons.

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# Bolsonaro eyes return to Brazil as US stay pressures Biden

AP ■ MIAMI

The Biden administration is under growing pressure from leftists in Latin America as well as U.S. lawmakers to expel Jair Bolsonaro from a post-presidential retreat in Florida following his supporters' brazen attack on Brazil's capital over the weekend.

But the far-right ex-president may pre-empt any plans for such a stinging rebuke. On Tuesday, he told a Brazilian media outlet that he would push his return home, originally scheduled for late January, after being hospitalized with abdominal pains stemming from a 2018 stabbing.

"I came to spend some time away with my family but these weren't calm days," Bolsonaro told CNN's Portuguese-language affiliate in Brazil. "First, there was this sad episode in Brazil and then my hospitalization."



Bolsonaro arrived in Florida in late December, skipping the Jan. 1 swearing-in of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who became the first elected Brazilian president not to receive the presidential sash from his predecessor since democracy was restored in the 1980s. Bolsonaro is reportedly staying at the Orlando-area home of Brazilian mixed martial arts fighter Jose Aldo, a fervent supporter.

His visit to the Sunshine state went largely unnoticed in the US. Until Sunday's attack by

thousands of die-hard supporters who had been camping for weeks outside a military base in Brasilia, refusing to accept Bolsonaro's narrow defeat in an

October runoff. Their invasion of Brazil's congress and presidential palace left behind shattered glass, smashed computers and slashed artwork.

**REGISTRATION NOTICE**  
General public is hereby informed that Mrs. Kashimi W/o Mr. Hans Raj is intending to sell Portion of Property No. A-43, Old Plot No. A-30, area measuring 82 Sq. Yds., i.e. 68.22 Sq. Mtrs., out of total area measuring 104 Sq. Yds., out of Chkera No. 49/12, Old Chkera No. 367, situated in the revenue estate of Mundka, now Colony known as P & T Block, Rajghat Park, Mundka, Agawala Colony, Delhi State Delhi-110041, to Sri. Shakunika W/o Sri. Anil Shikha Ram, to be financed & mortgaged by my client i.e. M/s. DMI Housing Finance Pvt. Ltd. The Original Notarized G.P.A. AT&S & Will dated 02.02.1994 and Notarized G.P.A. AT&S & Will dated 18.10.1996, pertaining to the aforesaid property have been lost and complaint has been registered on 01.01.2023 vide N.P.L.No. 216/2000/2023 with U.P. Police. Any person(s) found in possession of aforesaid original sale deed, then kindly contact the undersigned along with original property document, within 15 days from date of this notice on below address, failing which, the claim as per aforesaid sale deed shall be treated as null and void in respect of the subject property.  
Raghav Tiwari (Advocate)  
Ch. 830, Patiala House Courts, New Delhi-110002  
Mob. :- 9912076186/96566

**ICICI Bank**  
Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No.- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005  
**PUBLIC NOTICE: Builder Cancellation**  
This is to bring to your notice that **RAM KISHOR/ REENA PAL** (borrower/s) has availed Home loan facility vide facility agreement number **LBND00004901191** located at **UNIT NO. LG-408H, LOWER GROUND FLOOR, GAUR CITY CENTRE, PLOT NO C1 A /GH 01, SECTOR 4, GREATER NOIDA, NOIDA**. The borrower/s has failed to pay the contractual amount to the builder as per the terms and conditions of the agreement. The Bank has informed the same to the borrower through letter dated January 09, 2023 informing that **GAURSONS HI-TECH INFRASTRUCTURE PRIVATE LIMITED** has cancelled the allotment of the above mentioned property. You are therefore requested to resolve this matter with the builder within 7 days from the date of this publication. Please take further notice that post cancellation of the allotment of the said property ICICI Bank shall not be bound/responsible for any other allotment done by the builder.  
Dated: January 12, 2023 For ICICI Bank Limited  
Place: Delhi/ NCR

**UPSIDA**  
कार्यालय उप महापंचायत (सिविल), निर्माण खण्ड-दुतीया  
उपग्रह राज्य औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण  
देहिसर सिटी, गाज़ियाबाद। E-Mail- cd3@upsida.com  
अल्यकालीन ई-निविदा सूचना  
एतद्द्वारा सूचित किया जाता है कि प्राधिकरण के विभिन्न खण्डों में स्थित औद्योगिक क्षेत्रों में सिविल कार्यों, विकास एवं अनुसंधान रख-रखाव के कार्यों हेतु सरकारी/सहजनिक उपकरण/निर्माण/सहिकरणों/परिचर/नगर निकायों में पंजीकृत फर्म/ठेकेदारों से अल्यकालीन ई-निविदायें आमंत्रित की जाती हैं।  
कार्य का नाम क्रि.सं प्रा.सं क्र.सं ई-निविदा सूचना  
1. Special Repair & Maintenance of Administrative Building at I.A. Baghpat. अल्यकालीन 37.87  
2. Special repair & Maintenance of Administrative Building in apparel park (P-2) at I.A. Trans Delhi Signature City, Ghaziabad. अल्यकालीन 39.29  
3. Repair & Maintenance of Administrative Building at I.A. Trans Delhi Signature City, Ghaziabad. अल्यकालीन 23.92  
4. Construction of Public Toilets in I.A. Baghpat Distt-Baghpat. अल्यकालीन 16.45  
5. Construction of Toilet block at I.A. Trans Delhi Signature City, Ghaziabad. अल्यकालीन 17.96  
उपरोक्त निविदा 12.01.2023 से 19.01.2023 को 18.00 बजे तक अपलोड की जा सकती है जिसके दिनांक 20.01.2023 को 11.00 बजे या इसके पश्चात घोला जायेगा। निविदादाताओं द्वारा शायपनों की मूल प्रतियाँ दिनांक 23.01.2023 को 17.00 बजे तक पंजीकृत कर/अनुमति प्राप्त रूप से कार्यालय में जमा की जा सकती है।  
नोट:- 1. निविदादाता अपनी निविदाओं में समस्त कर एवं जीएसटी सहित दरें अंकित करें। अलग से कोई कर देव नहीं होगा। 2. निविदा सम्बन्धी विस्तृत जानकारी वेबसाइट [www.upsida.com](http://www.upsida.com) पर स्थापित लिंक यूपीएससी की वेबसाइट <http://etender.up.nic.in> पर देखी जा सकती है।  
उप महापंचायत (सिविल), उपग्रह राज्य औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण, फ्लोर-3, गाज़ियाबाद।

**NORTHERN RAILWAY**  
CORRIGENDUM  
Ref: Tender Notice No. 69/2022-2023 dated 14.12.2022 S.No. 03  
T.No. 77226005 Opening date 12.01.2023  
In reference to above tender, opening date of tender has been extended from 12.01.2023 to 25.01.2023. All other terms and conditions remain unchanged. This is the first Corrigendum against above tender. The corrigendum has been published on website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in).

**Before the Central Government Registrar of Companies, Delhi**  
In the matter of sub-section (3) of Section 13 of the Limited Liability Partnership Act, 2008 and rule 17 of the Limited Liability Partnership Rules, 2009 in the matter of the Limited Liability Partnership Act, 2008, Section 13 (3) AND In the matter of **RASAVADA CAPITAL LLP** having its registered office at **TG2, 7A, Orchard Gardens, Sun City, Sector-54, Golf Course Road, Gurgaon-122011** Petitioner Notice is hereby given to the General Public that the LLP proposes to make a petition to Registrar of Companies, Delhi & Haryana under section 13 (3) of the Limited Liability Partnership Act, 2008 seeking permission to change its Registered office from the state of "Delhi" to the state of "Haryana". Any person whose interest is likely to be affected by the proposed change of the registered office of the LLP may deliver or cause to be delivered or send by Registered post of his/her objections supported by an affidavit stating the nature of his/her interest and grounds of opposition supported by an affidavit to the Registrar of Companies, Delhi & Haryana, within 21 (twenty one) days from the date of publication of this notice with a copy to the petitioner LLP at its registered office at the address mentioned above.  
For and on behalf of **Rasavada Capital LLP**  
Sd/-  
Reena Wadhvani, Designated Partner  
Date: 11-01-2023 Place: Delhi

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Be it known to all that SMT. MANPREET KAUR BHANDARI W/O SH. MANDEEP BHANDARI R/O 378, SAINIK VIHAR, PITAM PURA, DELHI -110034 AND SMT. JASMEET BAWA W/O SHRI GURMEET SINGH SOOBHANS R/O 70A, 'F' STREET, APT 131, HOBBOKEN, USA AND MANDEEP KAUR LOOMBA W/O SHRI ARUNDEV PAUL SINGH LOOMBA R/O 3715, PRUNERIDGE AVE, SAINT CLARA CA 95051, USA (Smt. Owners), by representing themselves as absolute and exclusive owners of Entire DDA BUILT UP FREE-HOLD SFS CATEGORY-II FLAT NO. EB-62, DUPLEX FIRST FLOOR, WITH SCOOTER GARAGE, SITUATED AT G-8 AREA, RAJOURI GARDEN, NOW KNOWN AS MAYA ENCLAVE, NEW DELHI-110064, have agreed to sell and transfer the same to my clients, (i) Shri Gurdip Singh Chadha son of Shri Anand Singh Chadha and Shri Anmoldeep Singh Chadha son of Shri Gurdip Singh Chadha, both residents of EB-61, Maya Enclave, Hari Nagar, New Delhi 110054 free from all encumbrances whatsoever, vide written agreement. (ii) Original Allocation Letter; (iii) Original 5<sup>th</sup> and Final Installment Certificate; and (iv) Original Death Certificate of Smt. Jyotsna Kaur are reported to be lost and missing. Anybody else including bank/financial institutions etc. having any sort of interest claim in the aforesaid property or any part thereof on the basis of aforesaid or any other deeds/documents or otherwise are required to put forth his/her claim with the undersigned in writing with documentary evidence, within 5 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which it shall be presumed that the aforesaid property/flat is free from all sorts of encumbrances (registered or un-registered) and my clients shall proceed further to complete the transaction as bonafide purchaser in terms of the already agreed arrangement/agreement and any claim and/or objection raised thereafter shall be considered as waived and abandoned and the same shall not be binding upon my clients.  
Gaurav Sachdeva (Advocate)  
C-21, Malviya Nagar, New Delhi-110017  
Ph. :- 41048314, 9810006297

**UJVN LIMITED**  
H.O.: "UJWAL", Maharani Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun-248006, Telephone: 0135-2763808, Fax- 0135- 2763508, CIN No. U40101UR2001SG025866, Website: www.ujvn.com  
प.सं. 37 e-Tender Notice दिनांक 11.01.2023  
Office of the Executive Engineer, Project Civil Maintenance- Dakpathar, UJVN Ltd., Dakpathar (Dehradun) invites online bids from interested parties. Brief summary of tender is given below:  
Tender No. 22/EE/PCM-DKP/TN/2022-23  
Name of work : Renovation and modernization of Khodri Power House complex at Khodri.  
Estimated cost : 1.84,34,924.66 (GST Extra)  
Date of availability of bid document on website : From 17:00 hrs of 12.01.2023  
Last date for submission of bids on website : Up to 17.00 Hrs of 03.02.2023  
For fuller & further details, kindly visit e-procurement portal "https://uktenders.gov.in"  
Executive Engineer (PCM)

**UJVN Limited**  
H.O.: "UJWAL", Maharani Bagh, G.M.S. Road, Dehradun-248006 Telephone: 0135-2763508, Fax: 0135-2763507 CIN No. U40101UR2001SG025866 Website: www.ujvn.com  
प.सं. 38 Tender Notice Dated: 11/01/2023  
Office of Executive Engineer (M) Ramganga Power Station, UJVN Limited, Kalagarh, Distt. Pauri Garhwal invites sealed tender from interested parties. Detail of tender is given below.  
T.No. 23/EE(M)RPSK/2022-23  
Name of work/supply/ services etc. - Annual operation & upkeep of Erector Hostel and Canteen at Ramganga Power Station, Kalagarh. Estimated cost : Rs. 8,22,971/- GST Extra  
Date of availability of bid document on website : 12/01/2023  
Last date for submission of tender : 03/02/2023 up to 16.00 Hrs.  
For fuller & further details, kindly visit our website. The tender documents can be downloaded from the Nigam's website "www.ujvn.com"  
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (M)  
"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

**OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER, CONSTRUCTION WING, UTTARAKHAND PEYJAL NIGAM**  
E-32, JUDGE FARM, HALDWANI, DISTT.- NAINITAL (PIN 263139)  
Letter No.: 114/Nivida-Anubandhu/Loahgat/19 Date : 11-01-2023  
**E-Tender Notice**  
1. Name of the work: CONSTRUCTION OF PARKING AT NAGAR PALIKA PARISHAD, LOHAGHAT, DISTRICT - CHAMPAWAT.  
2. Estimated Cost: - Rs. 87.24 Lakh  
3. Period of Completion:- 12 Months  
4. Date and Time of availability of Bid documents in the portal:- 12-01-2023 (10.00 hrs)  
5. Online Bid submission: End date :- 25-01-2023 (17.00 hrs)  
6. Date & Time of Technical bid Opening :- 28-01-2023 (11.00 hrs)  
7. Name and Address of the Officer inviting bid: - General Manager (Kumaon), Nirman Wing, Uttarakhand Pey Jal Nigam, Haldwani.  
8. For further details, details of subsequent Amendment / correction documentation etc. may be obtained from the e-Procurement portal [www.uktenders.gov.in](http://www.uktenders.gov.in)  
GENERAL MANAGER

**NORTHERN RAILWAY**  
Tender Notice  
The Dy. Chief Engineer/TM/CL, Northern Railway, State Entry Road, New Delhi for and on behalf of the President of India invites **Open E-tender** under One Packet System for the under noted work:-  
1. Name of work and location : Conversion of 09 Nos. BG Coaches into Camping Coaches (Workshop cum Rest Van) for Track Machine Staff of Northern Railway at TM/D/BI.  
2. Completion period of the work : 06 Months  
3. Approx. Cost of work : Rs. 1,77,37,521.32  
4. Earnest Money amount (to be deposited Online) : Rs. 2,38,700.00  
5. Cost of Tender Document (to be deposited Online) : Rs. Nil.  
6. Date & Time for submission of E-tender and opening of tender : Tender documents remain available on IREPS website i.e. [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) from 26.01.2023 upto 15.00 hrs. on 09.02.2023. Tender Bids may be uploaded from 26.01.2023 upto 15.00 hrs. on 09.02.2023 in IREPS website. The tender will be opened soon after 15.30 hrs. on 09.02.2023.  
7. Detailed Tender Notice & Tender Document : The detailed tender document is available on [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in). Above tender document will be available for online submission of offer on IREPS website i.e. [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) from 26.01.2023 to 09.02.2023. All other terms and conditions in respect of above tenders are given in tender document. The detailed tender notice also can be seen on the Notice Board of the above office.  
No: 1-W-DyCETMCL-CC-15-22-23 Dated: 10.01.2023 105/2023  
Serving Customers with a Smile

**DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT AGENCY OF GUJARAT**  
An Autonomous Society promoted by Tribal Development Department, Govt. of Gujarat (Phone No. 079-232-52253)  
E-Tender Notice No: VKY/ 2023/3049/D-SAG  
**TENDER NOTICE**  
Development Support Agency of Gujarat (D-SAG) invites e-tender from intending bidders for "Engagement of Design and Technical Agency for Preparation of Design DPR for Civil and Curation Part and Project Management Consultancy Services for The 'National Museum of Tribal Freedom Fighters' at Garudeshwar, Gujarat". The tender document can be downloaded from the website [www.dsag.gujarat.gov.in](http://www.dsag.gujarat.gov.in) and [www.nprocur.com](http://www.nprocur.com) from Dt.12/01/2023; 12:00 PM hours onwards.  
Important Dates:-  
Pre Bid Meeting Date & Time Dt. 20/01/2023 Time 11.30 hours  
Last Date & Time for Submission of Bids Dt. 01/02/2023 by 18:00 hours  
Technical Bid Opening Date & Time Dt.02/02/2023 by 11:30 hours  
Interested bidders are requested to download the tender document from the above mentioned websites. Further details can be obtained from the office of Chief Executive officer, Development Support Agency of Gujarat, 3rd Floor, Birsra Chauda Bhavan, Gandhinagar, Gujarat-382010. Phone- (079) 23252253, Email- [ceodsag@gujarat.gov.in](mailto:ceodsag@gujarat.gov.in)  
Sd/- Chief Executive Officer, Development Support Agency of Gujarat Gandhi Nagar  
No/INF/VPN/2022/G/2227

# Japan, S Korea protest China visa stoppage amid Covid spat



AP ■ TOKYO

Japan and South Korea defended public health restrictions on travellers from China on Wednesday, a day after China stopped issuing new visas in both countries in apparent retaliation.

Chinese embassies stopped issuing new visas for South Koreans and Japanese on Tuesday. It wasn't clear whether China would expand the visa suspensions to other countries that have imposed stricter virus testing on passengers from China following its COVID-19

surge. South Korean Foreign Minister Park Jin said Wednesday he finds it "significantly regrettable" that China stopped issuing short-term visas to South Koreans and called for China to align its pandemic steps with "scientific and objective facts."

According to South Korea's Disease Control and Prevention Agency, about 17 per cent of the 2,550 short-term travellers from China from January 2 to Tuesday have tested positive.

South Korea has stopped issuing most short-term visas at its consulates in China through the end of January while also requiring all passengers from China, Hong Kong and Macau to submit proofs of negative tests taken within 48 hours of their arrival in addition to COVID-19 tests at the airport.

# India to grow by 6.6% next fiscal: World Bank

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

India's economic growth rate will slow to 6.6 per cent in next financial year from an expected 6.9 per cent in 2022-23, the World Bank said in its latest economic update.

India however is expected to be the fastest growing economy of the seven largest emerging-market and developing economies (EMDEs), it said.

The growth rate of 6.9 per cent in current fiscal year (April 2022 to March 2023) compares with 8.7 per cent in the previous year. For 2024-25, the growth rate is projected at 6.1 per cent.

"The slowdown in the global economy and rising uncertainty will weigh on export and investment growth," it said.

The government has increased infrastructure spending and various business facilitation measures. However, it will



crowd-in private investment and support the expansion of manufacturing capacity.

"Growth is projected to slow, to 6.6 per cent in FY2023/24 before falling back toward its potential rate of just above 6 per cent," it said.

The GDP expanded by 9.7 per cent on an annual basis in the first half of fiscal year 2022-23, reflecting strong private consumption and fixed investment growth.

Consumer inflation in most of the last year was above

the Reserve Bank's upper tolerance limit of 6 per cent, prompting the policy rate to be raised by 2.25 percentage points between May and December.

India's goods trade deficit has more than doubled since 2019, and was USD 24 billion in November, with deficits for crude petroleum and petroleum products (USD 7.6 billion) and other commodities (for example, ores and minerals at USD 4.2 billion) accounting for the widening.

# Markets end on flat note in highly choppy trade

**PTI ■ MUMBAI**

In a highly volatile trade, equity benchmarks Sensex and Nifty ended on a flat note on Wednesday amid unabated foreign fund outflows and a weak trend in index heavy-weight Reliance Industries.

Continuing its previous day's decline, the 30-share BSE Sensex dipped 9.98 points or 0.02 per cent to settle at 60,105.50. During the day, it fell 309.7 points or 0.51 per cent to 59,805.78.

The broader NSE Nifty skidded 18.45 points or 0.10 per cent to end at 17,895.70.

From the Sensex pack, Bharti Airtel, Hindustan Unilever, Titan, Reliance Industries, Nestle, IndusInd Bank, Bajaj Finserv and NTPC were the major laggards.

Sun Pharma, UltraTech Cement, Tata Motors, Larsen & Toubro, Tata Consultancy



Services, HDFC Bank and Tata Motors were among the winners.

"The biggest drag on the market in the near-term is the sustained selling by FIIs for 13 continuous sessions, which has taken the cumulative cash market selling to Rs 16,587 crore," said V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge declined 0.27 per cent, while smallcap index ended marginally higher by 0.02 per cent.

# Startup funding in India drops 33 per cent to USD 24 bn in 2022: Report

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

Funding for Indian startups dropped by 33 per cent to USD 24 billion in 2022 as compared to the previous year though it was nearly double the amount recorded in 2019 or 2020, said a PwC India report on Wednesday.

Global investors were still positive about the Indian startup ecosystem despite the global slowdown, as per the report titled 'Startup Tracker-CY 22'.

"Funding for Indian startups in CY22 was nearly USD 24 billion, a drop of 33 per cent in comparison to CY21 but was still more than twice the funds raised in CY20 and CY19 each", it said.

The startups received total funding of USD 13.2 billion in 2019, USD 10.9 billion in 2020 and USD 35.2 billion in 2021.

Despite the funding slowdown, Amit Nawka, Partner - Deals & India Startups Leader, PwC India, said, "some areas like SaaS (Software as a service)



and early-stage funding have remained upbeat. With significant dry powder waiting to be invested, it seems likely that the funding scenario will begin to normalise after 2-3 quarters."

Meanwhile, he added, many startups were using the current situation to tighten operating models and optimise cash runway by deferring discretionary spends and investments.

The report said the early-stage deals accounted for 60-62 per cent of the total funding in 2021 and 2022 in volume terms and average ticket size per deal was USD 4 million per deal.

In value terms, it added, early-stage deals contributed to

approximately 12 per cent of the total funding in 2022 compared to nearly 7 per cent in 2021. Growth and late-stage funding deals accounted for 88 per cent of the funding activity in 2022 in value terms, representing 38 per cent of the total count of deals.

According to the report, average ticket size in growth-stage deals was USD 43 million and late-stage deal was USD 94 million during 2022.

As regards the city-wise startup funding, the report said, Bengaluru, NCR and Mumbai accounted for nearly 82 per cent of total Indian startups as of December 2022. As many as 28 per cent of startups in the top three cities have raised in excess of USD 20 million.

Bengaluru witnessed the highest number of unicorns, followed by NCR and Mumbai. Similar trends have been noted for other companies that have raised more than USD 50-100 million, the report said.

# Micro & small enterprises corner 55% of total orders placed on GeM portal

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

Micro and small enterprises (MSEs) have cornered over 55 per cent of the total orders placed on the public procurement platform GeM since FY 2020-21, a senior government official said.

The Government e-Market (GeM) portal was launched on August 9, 2016, for online purchases of goods and services by all the central government ministries and departments.

GeM CEO P K Singh said that the public procurement policy for MSEs mandates 25 per cent of buying of goods and services from these units and 3 per cent MSEs owned by women.

"On GeM, MSEs have secured 55.2 per cent (Rs 1,41,887 crore) of total order value (Rs 2,57,263 crore) and MSEs owned by women have secured 8 per cent (Rs 11,373 crore) of the MSE orders since



FY 2020-21 till now. The numbers reflect inclusivity on GeM," Singh told PTI.

Procurement of goods and services from government portal GeM has crossed Rs 1 lakh crore so far this fiscal on account of an increase in buying activities by different ministries and departments.

The commerce ministry is also in the process of awarding a project to upgrade the portal.

Currently, government departments, ministries, public sector units, state governments, and Central Armed Police Forces are allowed to carry out transactions through this portal.

# Rupee gains 13 paise to 81.61 against US dollar

**PTI ■ MUMBAI**

The rupee gained 13 paise to close at 81.61 against the US dollar on Wednesday, driven by foreign inflows from bonds selling and overall weakness in crude oil prices.

However, a muted trend in domestic equities dented investor sentiments and capped the sharp gains in the rupee, traders said.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 81.73 and touched an intra-day high of 81.52 and a low of 81.82 against the greenback.

It finally ended at 81.61, registering a rise of 13 paise over its previous close.

On Tuesday, the rupee settled at 81.74 against the US dollar.

"Indian Rupee appreciated on Wednesday extending gains of the previous day on

foreign inflows from bonds selling...And overall weakness in crude oil prices," said Anuj Choudhary - Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas.

However, FII outflows and recovery in US Dollar capped sharp gains.

Choudhary further noted that the dollar gained as traders are adjusting their positions ahead of US CPI inflation data.

The dollar also gained on safe-haven appeal as the World Bank trimmed the 2023 global GDP forecast to 1.7 per cent citing the Russia-Ukraine conflict, inflation and higher interest rates as the main reasons.

"We expect the Rupee to trade with a positive bias amid risk-on sentiments and weak crude oil prices. However, sustained outflows by foreign investors may cap



sharp gains. Investors may remain cautious ahead of inflation data from the US and India on Thursday. USD/INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of Rs 81 to Rs 82," Choudhary said.

The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, advanced 0.06 per cent to 103.30.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude futures rose 0.42 per cent to USD 80.44 per barrel.

# Direct tax collection grows 24.58 pc to ₹14.71 lakh crore till Jan 10

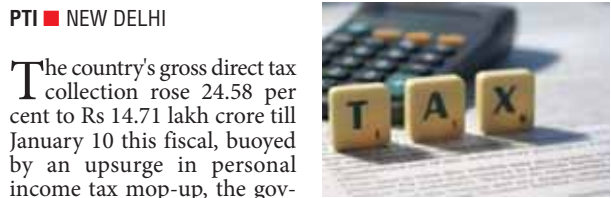
**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

The country's gross direct tax collection rose 24.58 per cent to Rs 14.71 lakh crore till January 10 this fiscal, buoyed by an upsurge in personal income tax mop-up, the government data showed on Wednesday.

After adjusting refunds, net direct tax collection stood at Rs 12.31 lakh crore, 19.55 per cent higher than the net collections for the corresponding period of last year.

The net collection is 86.68 per cent of the total budget estimates of direct taxes for the current fiscal. The Budget had estimated direct tax collection at Rs 14.20 lakh crore this fiscal.

On gross basis, collections from corporate income tax (CIT) grew 19.72 per cent, while that for personal income tax (PIT) increased 30.46 per



cent. "The provisional figures of direct tax collections up to 10th January, 2023 continue to register steady growth. Direct tax collections up to 10th January, 2023 show that gross collections are at Rs 14.71 lakh crore which is 24.58 per cent higher than the gross collections for the corresponding period of last year," the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said in a statement.

After adjusting refunds, the net growth in CIT collections is 18.33 per cent and that in PIT (including securities transaction tax) is 20.97 per cent.

# Healthcare tech industry body seeks cut in customs duty, removal of health cess on medical devices in Budget

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

Ahead of the Budget, Medical Technology Association of India (MTAI) on Wednesday urged the government to reduce customs duties and removal of health cess on imported medical devices.

MTAI, which represents medical technology companies, appreciated the various reforms undertaken by the government during the previous year, but said that more was needed to be done as 80 per cent of the medical devices used are imported.

MTAI Chairman and Director General Pavan Choudhary said the customs duties and taxes levied on medical devices in India are one of the highest in the world and highest among the neighbouring countries which directly impacts patients' affordability.

"As the preparation for the



Union Budget 2023 gets underway, we expect a correction in the customs duties and taxes levied on medical devices," Choudhary said.

The sector, he added, requires more focus in government outlays and one way to achieve this is by increasing the public health spending to meet the current gaps in healthcare demand and supply. He also suggested the government should consider a separate budget allocation for promoting and marketing medical device sector globally.

**PTI ■ MUMBAI**

MTAI said the high customs duty has adversely impacted the costs of medical devices in India and it should be reduced to 2.5 per cent. Also, the 5 per cent health cess ad valorem imposed on imported medical devices has further compounded the burden on the industry and should be removed.

There is a need for focused increase in public spending on health infrastructure especially in Tier 2, Tier 3 cities and rural areas, MTAI added.

# POWERGRID CSR bids for mother-child care

**PNS ■ BAGHPAT**

As a CSR initiative, Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID) signed an MoU with CMO, Baghpat for providing financial assistance towards establishment of 11 maternal and newborn care units, 8 nutrition rehabilitation centers and mobile pathology labs along with upgradation of the already existing NRC at District Hospital in Baghpat. Along with these establishments, POWERGRID shall also provide funding for the next 12 months towards providing nutritious food and protein to malnourished children / underweight children / adolescent girls of the district.



Malnutrition, especially micronutrient deficiencies, restricts survival, growth and development of children.

It contributes to morbidity and mortality in vulnerable population, resulting in substantial diminution in productive capacity in adulthood and consequent reduction in the nation's economic growth and wellbeing.

# Gold jumps ₹89; silver by ₹677

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

Gold price jumped by Rs 89 to Rs 56,126 per 10 gram in the national capital on Wednesday amid gains in rates of the precious metal globally, according to HDFC Securities.

In the previous trade, the yellow metal had settled at Rs 56,037 per 10 gram.

Silver also rose Rs 677 to Rs 69,218 per kilogram.

"Spot gold prices in the Delhi markets traded at Rs 56,126 per 10 gram, up Rs 89 per 10 gram. Domestic market gold prices gain was capped by a stronger rupee," said an analyst at HDFC Securities.

In the overseas market, gold was trading higher at USD 1,882.2 per ounce while silver was up at USD 23.88 per ounce.

# 'India recycles only 30% of 3.4 MT plastic waste'

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

India generates around 3.4 million tonnes (MT) of plastic waste, a report said on Wednesday noting that only 30 per cent of it is recycled.

Over a five-year period, the plastic consumption in the country has risen at a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of 9.7 per cent to 14 MT in the financial year 2016-17 to 20 million tonnes in 2019-20, Marico Innovation Foundation said in a report released in the national capital.

India's plastic waste output also doubled between the said period, the report titled 'Plastics, The Potential and Possibilities' said.

The Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and Praxis Global Alliance report said, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu contribute 38 per cent India's plastic waste.

# UP signs 79 MoUs worth ₹76,000 cr

**PTI ■ LUCKNOW**

The Uttar Pradesh government on Wednesday held a roadshow here in which 79 memorandums of understanding (MoU) worth Rs 76,000 crore were signed, an official release said.

Industrial Development Department Minister Nand Gopal Gupta Nandi addressed eminent industrialists in the roadshow and discussed the changes that have taken place in the state in the last five years and the investment-friendly policies of the Yogi Adityanath government while inviting them to invest in the state, as per the release.

The investors who came to participate in the event appreciated the wind of change in the new Uttar Pradesh, it added.

Kamlesh Jain, Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer of Varun Beverages, said: "We have 7 plants in UP. The environment of UP is better than anywhere else. We had to set up a plant in Gorakhpur. The allotment letter for the land arrived within two and a half months. The Uttar Pradesh government is doing great work. We will invest Rs 3,400 crore in Uttar Pradesh."

# Bajaj Allianz, Punjab & Sind Bank enter into corporate agency partnership



**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

Public sector lender Punjab & Sind Bank and Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance on Wednesday entered into corporate agency partnership, under which bank customers can avail insurance products of the life insurer.

Punjab & Sind Bank is the 25th scheduled commercial bank that is partnering with

Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance for distributing its life goals-based product suite.

The partnership will allow Delhi-headquartered Punjab & Sind Bank's customers to avail a variety of retail life insurance products from Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance including term, savings, retirement and investment options, according to a joint statement.

# Meta, FADA join hands to enable auto dealerships to reach customers digitally

**PTI ■ GREATER NOIDA**

Social media platform Meta Son Wednesday said it has joined hands with Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) to enable auto dealers across the country to reach consumers digitally.

The announcement of the programme Move with Meta was made at the Auto Expo 2023 here.

It would upskill more than 3,000 auto dealers across the country to build a social presence and digitise using Meta platforms, the social media giant said. FADA, currently, represents 15,000 auto dealers across the country.

With people increasingly relying on digital touchpoints to decide on their automobile



purchases, auto dealers have felt an urgent need to become discoverable to customers online, it said.

Meta platforms enable auto dealers to build a social presence through its key products, such as Stories, Reels, Business messaging, and Facebook and WhatsApp Groups.

It added that Facebook and Instagram also help auto dealers with a more efficient model of lead generation through hyperlocal outreach.

# Govt to invite Eols for Concor privatisation this month

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

The government will this month invite Expression of Interest or preliminary bids for privatising Container Corporation of India (Concor), an official said on Wednesday.

The official said the bid document for Concor is almost ready and has to get approval from 'Alternative Mechanism' which is essentially a group of key Cabinet ministers.

"We are trying hard to issue the Preliminary Information Memorandum inviting Expression of Interest (EoI) for Concor as quickly as possible. It should be issued this month, subject to approval," the official told PTI.

The Cabinet, in November 2019, had approved strategic sale of a 30.8 per cent stake,



along with management control, in Concor out of the government equity of 54.80 per cent. The government will retain 24 per cent stake post sell-off but without any veto powers.

However, the stake sale was hanging fire as investors awaited clarity on the rail land lease policy and licensing fees. The Union Cabinet in

September approved a revised policy which provides for long-term leasing of railway land for cargo related activities for a period of up to 35 years at 1.5 per cent of market value of land per annum.

The completion of Concor strategic sale would spill over to next financial year when financial bids would come in from potential investors.

# WorkIndia raises \$12mn in funding led by SBI Holdings

New Delhi: WorkIndia, India's largest blue and gray-collar job portal, has raised \$12 million in its pre-series B funding from SBI Holdings, Tokyo, Yamauchi No.10 Family Office, the founding family of Nintendo, Persol and Insitor. Kunal Patil, Co-founder, and CEO, WorkIndia said, "The blue-collar market has seen two phenomena viz one penetration and two, adoption."

# INDIA EYEING ANOTHER BIG WIN WITH ROHIT, VIRAT IN FULL FLOW

PTI ■ KOLKATA

buoyed by the form of its top three batters, a clinical India will look to take an unassailable 2-0 lead when they face Sri Lanka in the second ODI here on Thursday.

Having ended his century drought for nearly three years in a T20 against Afghanistan in the Asia Cup in September, Virat Kohli has not looked back since then especially in the white ball format and brought up his 73rd International century in their 67-run win in Guwahati on Tuesday.

He looked in supreme control in the first ODI in Guwahati on Tuesday and made Sri Lanka pay the price for two dropped chances to slam a back-to-back ODI hundreds that formed the backbone of India's massive 373 for seven. It was like the Kohli of the old as he looked uncluttered and no Sri Lankan bowler troubled him.

Returning from an injury, Indian skipper Rohit Sharma too allayed any concerns whatsoever of being short on match-fitness as he took on the Lankan attack in a 67-ball 83 to set the

foundation for a mammoth total. He seemed to be in his zone before coming to his favourite venue Eden Gardens.

The last time the two teams met in an ODI here, Rohit struck that world record 264 eight years back. Now here in his favourite venue as the Indian skipper, Rohit would be definitely keen to get to a big score.

That an ODI century is also eluding him since a long time — his last ODI hundred came against Australia in January 2020 would also be an added motivation.

Add young opener Shubman Gill's splendid ODI run to Indian top three and Indian top-order looks sorted and would once again look to dominate the pedestrian Lankan attack.

Having got unflinching support from his skipper, Gill was back as opener in the ODI format at the expense of left-handed keeper-batter Ishan Kishan, a selection that copped a lot of criticism in Guwahati.

But Gill silenced all that debate with yet another aesthetic knock of 70 off just 60 balls as he continued his fine form from



last year during which he has averaged 70-plus from 12 innings.

With Shreyas Iyer also coming back from a dream ODI last year and occupying the no 4 spot with his flair for tackling

spin and rotating strike in the middle overs, the only spot that may open up in the batting order is that of KL Rahul.

Rahul, who also doubles up as a wicketkeeper, has been in wretched form of late but may get a longer run especially in the series to prolong Kishan's wait.

Mohammed Siraj continued to raise his stakes and looked terrific with the new ball in an opening spell of 5-1-15-2, laced with 25 dot balls on a flat deck at Barsingpore Stadium.

On Eden's fast deck, Siraj will relish the challenge bowling with old warhorse Mohammed Shami as it remains to be seen whether the team think tank opts for an extra seamer.

Umran Malik played the role of the enforcer in the middle overs till Dasun Shanaka took on him en route to a fine century.

The young pace gun is a work in progress and would look to improve with every match.

Skipper Dasun Shanaka has been the only silver-lining for Sri Lanka in a lopsided contest in Guwahati. From being 179/7, the premier Lankan all-rounder gave the visitors some hope with a valiant 108 not out as he would look to continue his fine form.

Taking full advantage of the dew, Shanaka took Indian bowling to cleaners but they would need a collective effort from their batters to give India any fight.

With opener Pathum Nissanka also in good form, the Lankans would look to put up a strong show with the batting.

But the biggest letdown for the Sri Lankans was their fielding as they dropped Kohli twice. They would also hope for an improved show from their bowlers especially in the power-play where they gave a lot of width to Indian batters.

It also remains to be seen whether Sri Lanka will get the services of left-arm seamer Dilshan Madushanka who made his debut in Guwahati.

He hurt his right shoulder while fielding and coach Chris Silverwood said they are awaiting the X-ray to make sure everything is okay.

TEAMS (FROM) India: Rohit Sharma (c), Hardik Pandya (vc), Shubman Gill, Virat Kohli, Suryakumar Yadav, Shreyas Iyer, KL Rahul (wk), Ishan Kishan (wk), Washington Sundar, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Axar Patel, Mohammed Shami, Mohammed Siraj, Umran Malik and Arshdeep Singh.

Sri Lanka: Dasun Shanaka (c), Kusal Mendis (vc), Pathum Nissanka, Avishka Fernando, Saadeera Samarawickrama, Charith Asalanka, Dhananjaya de Silva, Wanindu Hasaranga, Ashen Bandara, Maheesh Theekshana, Chamika Karunaratne, Dilshan Madushanka, Kasun Rajitha, Nuwanidu Fernando (ODIs), Dunith Wellalage, Pramod Madushan, Lahiru Kumara. Match starts: 1.30pm IST.

## I was in denial about my vulnerability, frustration was creeping in: In-form Kohli recalls prolonged lean patch

PTI ■ GUWAHATI

A remarkably eloquent Virat Kohli admitted being in complete denial about his 'vulnerabilities' and 'frustrations' during his poor run of form, which in turn also made him 'cranky' and 'snappy' with his family and friends.

Kohli smashed his 45th ODI hundred, a 87-ball 113, to guide India to a 67-run win over Sri Lanka in the opening game here on Tuesday.

The 34-year-old batter had scored an identical 113 against Bangladesh in his final ODI of 2022 and has now 73 international hundreds with the last three coming in a space of four months after a near three year lull.

"In my case, in denial, frustration was creeping in. I was very cranky, very snappy in my space. It was not fair on (wife) Anushka (Sharma), my closed ones, it's not fair on the people who support you. So I had to take responsibility and kind of put things in perspective," Kohli told teammate Suryakumar Yadav in an interview for bcci.Tv.

Kohli reiterated the need to be away from his primary pas-



sion in order to rekindle it and feel hungry once again.

"I was far off from my cricket. My attachments, my desire, had totally taken over. That's when I realised that I can't be away from who I am. I have to

be true to myself. Even when I am vulnerable, I am not playing well, I am the worst player around, I have to accept it. I can't be in denial," Kohli admitted his frailties.

In fact, he had a word of

advice for Surya, who is in the form of his life as far as T20Is are concerned.

"Sometimes what happens, you (Surya) will also experience it as you play more and more now, people look at you differ-

ently. When Surya goes out to play, people will say that Surya will do it. To keep up with it is an intense process," he told his junior colleague about the weight of expectations that he has carried for more than a decade now.

One only realises the downside when form deserts a player, said Kohli.

"When your cricket is going well, all these things flow well but whenever there is a slight dip, in my case, frustration started creeping in because I wanted to play in a certain way but my cricket was not allowing me to play like before."

Kohli said that he would like to build on his good form having started the new year with a lull.

"I am just happy... In the last two years I didn't have such a start," Kohli said.

"It was the first match of the year and I got a century, so hopefully, I can build on this because it is also a World Cup year and there is a big Test series coming against Australia.

"When you score runs in any match, it gives you confidence. I am happy I was able to almost bat through the innings,

to give the team 20-30 extra runs with dew coming in. I am just happy and excited to play."

Kohli stressed on the need to get away and comeback refreshed, an approach that has helped him get rejuvenated.

"Sometimes your mindset goes up and down when you play so much, but keeping that mental freshness is helping me."

The former India skipper had endured an extended lean patch for last few years and also took a month off from the game last year before returning to score his first hundred in 1020 days in September against Afghanistan in T20 Asia Cup.

Kohli continued his magnificent run in the T20 World Cup in Australia, scoring 205 runs to be named the ICC Men's Player of the 'Month for October'. He then smashed his 44th ODI hundred in December last year.

"When I returned relaxed in Asia Cup, I started enjoying training again, which is how I have always played cricket," he said.

So I would say that if you feel even a bit of desperation then take two steps back, rather pushing more and more because it will only go away from you."



## KL has found ways to get out, coaches should work on his flaws: Azharuddin

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

KL Rahul needs to be way more consistent and work on his technical flaws with national team coaches, feels former India captain Mohammed Azharuddin. The 57-year-old Azhar, whose elegant wrist work made him a cynosure of cricket fans, is a bit disappointed that a player of Rahul's talent isn't realising his full potential.

"I think consistency is the problem in KL Rahul's case. But I think there are coaches who should rectify his flaws. In my opinion, he is a good player but consistency is missing in his game," Azharuddin told PTI in an exclusive interaction.

Rahul, who has had a string of poor scores since his international comeback, was bowled round his legs for a sedate 39 in the opening ODI against Sri Lanka in Guwahati on Tuesday.

"I think Rahul is getting out in a lot of manners. Primarily, it is not the good balls that are getting him out. It is poor shot selection first up that is causing problems," said Azhar, who believes that all senior players should take out time and play domestic cricket.

Limited over captain Rohit Sharma and superstar Virat Kohli were among runs in the opening ODI and Azharuddin feels that these two will be India's premier performer during the 50-over World Cup at the end of the year. "Both are very good and classy players and they have done well in the past too, as the records say. I do believe Kohli and Rohit will do fairly well in the World Cup. In ODI format, they have always been pretty consistent."

Having captained the Indian team in two phases and close to a decade between 1990 to 1999, Azharuddin has a fair idea about people with leadership acumen. Hardik Pandya, the

new T20 skipper is one such player according to him.

"Hardik has looked good as a leader and seems that he can carry the team along. But he needs to be careful about his back as he had been out for a long time. India would need Hardik, the all-rounder and we can't afford to risk injuries. Hardik has got a young team and that's the way forward. To forge a winning combination, it will need strong co-ordination for the upcoming T20 series."

Indian selectors have copped a lot of flak of late and Azhar would ideally like his former teammate and chairman of selectors Chetan Sharma to clear the air about certain selections so that there is no ambiguity. "Definitely, Chetan is supposed to be doing at least one or two press conferences and should tell that what is the way forward for the current Indian team," he was forthright. He has now been the president of Hyderabad Cricket Association for more than a year but had his share of differences with former India players like Arshad Ayub and Shivlal Yadav with regards to running the administration.

"It has been good so far. We are fighting to revive the lost reputation of the Hyderabad Cricket Association. We had a lot of work done (in terms of renovation) in the Stadium arena as well as dressing rooms."

"When I took charge, it was all in pathetic condition. We will be hosting our second international match in three months time (vs New Zealand). We are very happy that the BCCI has recognized our hardwork and matches are being allotted to us," Azharuddin said.

It must be mentioned BCCI awards matches to every centre as per its own devised rotation system and thus Hyderabad is hosting a T20 and ODI in a short span of time.

## Playing in T20 leagues will prepare me for ODI World Cup: Joe Root



scoring runs aplenty, he has only played 32 T20Is, scoring 893 runs.

The 32-year-old went unsold in his very first IPL auction (base price Rs 1 crore) this year at Kochi even as country-mate Sam Curran went for a record sum of Rs 18.25 crore and the current Test skipper Ben Stokes earned Rs 16.25 crore.

Indicating that he wants to get a good grip on the shortest format, given that all the money now is in domestic leagues, Root hoped he could score big in ILT20 and then take his T20 career further.

"It's really exciting for me. I haven't played a lot of T20 cricket in the last couple of years, but my experience as a cricketer will hold me in good stead," said Root, who was not part of the team's T20 World Cup run in 2021 and 2022, though he was a part of the side that won the ODI World Cup at Lord's in 2019.

"Hopefully, I can go out there and get some big scores to help our team win some matches."

Root also said that Sachin Tendulkar was his icon and a "standout" for him when he was growing up.

"I mean obviously there are some wonderful players currently playing but look at what Sachin (Tendulkar) has achieved; it's just remarkable really, the longevity, the ability to be such a high-performing player at such a young age, and then to be able to sustain and to keep developing and moving forward in the game," Root told Zee.

## Ranji Trophy: Prashant scores ton as Himachal take first-innings lead

PTI ■ NADAUN

Prashant Chopra completed his 12th first-class century as the Himachal Pradesh opener helped the hosts take the first-innings lead in their Ranji Trophy Group A match against Odisha on Wednesday.

The dependable opener's 198-ball 138 was the highlight of the day as Himachal quickly got on with the task of erasing the opponents' first-innings lead.

Beginning the day at 91/2 in reply to Odisha's first-innings total of 191, Himachal had only Prashant to thank for guiding them to a modest 258 even as the visitors' seam bowler Sunil Roul wreaked havoc.

The 24-year-old Roul created a lot of hurdles for the hosts with his nagging line and length.

But Prashant, starting from where he had left off on Tuesday at 61, kept accumulating runs



and punished any loose deliveries by dispatching them for boundaries. The opener ended up with 18 fours and a six with a healthy strike rate of almost 70 to boot.

The seasoned batter, in the process, completed his 4,000 first-class runs even as Roul continued to chip away, returning figures of 6/62.

Prashant finally fell victim to a Roul delivery, trapped in front of the wicket. His dismissal

13 overs with Anurag Sarangi and Shantanu Mishra unbeaten on 14 and 15 respectively.

BRIEF SCORES: At Nadaun: Odisha 191 and 29 for no loss in 13 overs vs Himachal Pradesh 258 in 76.5 overs (Prashant Chopra 138, Amit Kumar 46; Sunil Roul 6/62).

At Kalyani: Baroda 269 in 100.1 overs (Jyotsnil Singh 85, Priyanshu Moliya 50, Mahesh Pithiyani 52; Mukesh Kumar 3/56, Akash Deep 4/71) vs Bengal 189 for 9 in 59 overs (Anustup Majumdar 90; Soyeb Sopariya 3/43, Sahejadhkan Pathan 4/46).

At Rohtak: Nagaland 88 in 42.1 overs (Shrikant Mundhe 32; Amit Rana 5/15) vs Haryana 56 for 2 in 14.5 overs (Yuvraj Singh batting 38).

At Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh 107 for 6 in 52 overs (Dhruv Jurel 29, Sameer Choudhary batting 28; Agrim Tiwari 2/17) vs Uttarakhand.

## Murphy earns maiden call-up, Australia name spin-heavy squad for Test tour of India

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Uncapped off-spinner Todd Murphy, with all of seven match first-class experience, received his maiden Test call-up as Australia on announced a spin-heavy squad for their upcoming four-Test series in India starting February 9.

Looking for their first Test series win in India since 2004, Australia will play Test matches in Nagpur (February 9-13), New Delhi (February 17-21), Dharamsala (March 1-5) and Ahmedabad (March 9-13). The 22-year-old from Victoria will join fellow

spinners Ashton Agar, Mitchell Swepson and Nathan Lyon in the 18-member squad which also includes Peter Handscomb and Matthew Renshaw as batting backups.

Owing to a finger injury, Mitchell Starc will miss the first Test in Nagpur on February 9 and is likely to join his pace colleagues -- captain Pat Cummins, Josh Hazlewood, Scott Boland and Lance Morris later for rest of the series. All-rounder Cameron Green will also be part of the contingent as he races against time to recover from a finger fracture.

"We have selected a squad that pro-



vides the depth and flexibility required to adapt depending on the conditions we may encounter," former skipper and current chief selector George Bailey said in a statement.

On Murphy's call-up, Bailey said:

"Todd Murphy has progressed quickly having impressed in domestic cricket and recently with Australia A. With those performances Todd has emerged as a strong spin option."

Murphy will be Nathan Lyon's understudy, having taken 29 wickets in his seven first-class games so far. He has also played 14 List A and 8 T20 games "Ashton Agar continues to impress following his comeback in Sydney and we believe left-arm finger spin will play an important role in Indian conditions. Mitchell Swepson has recent Test experience in the sub-continent and offers leg-spinning variety."

While Handscomb will join Renshaw as the batting backups, Marcus Harris was left out.

"Peter Handscomb deserves his place back in the squad. His domestic form has been strong recently and Pete has proven he can perform at the Test level," Bailey said. "His experience against spin on the subcontinent is valuable and he is also an exceptionally good close to the wicket catcher."

Handscomb last played a Test in 2019. Australia will also play three ODIs in India but the squad for the limited over series will be announced at a later date.

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# AUSTRALIAN OPEN 2023: UNVACCINATED DJOKOVIC BACK, YEAR LATER

**AP ■ BRISBANE**

Novak Djokovic had just wrapped up last season by winning the ATP Finals for a record sixth time when, rather than looking ahead to 2023, his mind immediately went back to the way 2022 began: He was unable to compete in last year's Australian Open after being deported from the country because he was not vaccinated against COVID-19. That whole episode, and the decision to eschew the shots required for entry elsewhere, too, helped define his season and, perhaps to some, his legacy. So as he reflected on his triumph at the year-ending championships in Italy last November, Djokovic viewed it through the prism of what occurred in Australia last

January. "It feels deeply satisfying and, at the same time, huge relief, because of the circumstances that I have been through this year — situations earlier this year, of course, with Australia. ... That had an effect, obviously, on my start of the year," the 35-year-old from Serbia said. "For the first several months, I was trying to find that balance, game-wise but also mentally, in order to be able to come back to the court and find that tennis level that I need."

When the new Grand Slam season begins at the Australian Open on Monday morning (Sunday night EST), Djokovic will be back. Back in Australia — despite never getting inoculated against the coronavirus — thanks to government decisions

to remove any vaccination requirements for visitors and to waive what could have been a three-year ban for him as someone whose visa had been revoked. Back at a tournament he has dominated like no other, resulting in nine of his 21 major trophies, including the past three times he played there.

Back in position to strive for elite status and to challenge his great rival Rafael Nadal for supremacy in the Grand Slam title chase. Sure, it is Nadal who is the defending champion and who owns a men's-record 22 majors. It is Djokovic, though, who will draw the most attention. And it is Djokovic who will be viewed as the favorite — and would have been, even had he not started off his trip to Australia by winning a tuneup



title at Adelaide. The lead-up to this Australian Open has been filled with talk about who will not be there: Serena Williams and Roger Federer ended their playing careers in 2022, as did Ash Barty; No. 1-ranked Carlos Alcaraz and seven-time major champion Venus Williams are injured; former No. 1 and four-time Slam winner Naomi Osaka last played a completed match in August; another former top-ranked player, Simona Halep, is serving a provisional doping suspension. Once play begins, the talk will squarely be about Djokovic, and most folks in the sport seem to agree he should be back in the field. Nadal, for one, called it "good for tennis."

"It's nice to see cooler heads prevailing there, (after) politics

got in the way," former U.S. Davis Cup captain Mardy Fish said.

Frances Tiafoe, an American who reached the U.S. Open semifinals, said: "We want the biggest players playing in the biggest tournaments in the world, regardless of everything else. We're trying to sell a product at the end of the day, and you want those big names at the big events."

One measure of how much things have changed, even as the coronavirus remains a part of daily life around the world: For the first time since 2020, players at the Australian Open will not need to self-report if they test positive for COVID-19; tournament director Craig Tiley said they're simply being encouraged to stay away if they are sick.

## Man United, Newcastle advance to League Cup semifinals

**AP ■ LONDON**

Manchester United cannot stop winning. Marcus Rashford cannot stop scoring. Make that eight straight wins in all competitions for United after a 3-0 victory over third-tier Charlton Athletic secured a place in the English League Cup semifinals on Tuesday.



Rashford came on as a 60th-minute substitute and had enough time to grab two goals, scoring for the sixth game in a row.

While United is looking to end what will be a six-year trophy drought, Newcastle has a shot at a first piece of silverware since 1955.

The Saudi-controlled club from northeast England dispatched Leicester 2-0 thanks to goals by Dan Burn and Joelinton and advanced to the last four of the League Cup for the first time since 1976. Not even 18 months into its new era, Newcastle is perhaps exceeding expectations after rapidly becoming a force in English soccer.

It is the latest positive step in encouraging seasons for two teams who have also established themselves in the top four of the Premier League.

Newcastle and Man United are tied on points in third and fourth place, respectively, and are in relentless form, with just one loss between them since September.

The other two quarterfinals take place Wednesday, when Manchester City visits Southampton and Nottingham Forest hosts Wolverhampton in another all-Premier League matchup.

**RELENTLESS RASHFORD**

Drawn against the lowest-ranked team left in the competition, Man United manager Erik ten Hag was able to field a weakened lineup against Charlton — perhaps in view of side trap, for his 18th goal for club and country this season.

Rashford has 15 goals and six assists in 25 matches for United and is perhaps in the best form of his career.

United is through to the semifinals for the third time in four seasons. It was eliminated by City in the last four in 2020 and '21.

**EASY FOR NEWCASTLE**

At St. James' Park, Dan Burn was the unlikely scorer of Newcastle's breakthrough goal in the 60th minute, the tall left back taking a pass from Joelinton and surging through Leicester's defense before slipping home a low finish.

"I like to get forward and it's entertaining watching a guy my size running into the box," Burn said after scoring his first goal for the team he grew up supporting.

"I used to sit in the East Stand," he added. "You always want to score in front of the Gallowgate End and to do that in front of my family was amazing." Joelinton, who had earlier hit the post, then scored himself in the 73rd with a low, angled shot.

The 1976 final was the only time Newcastle has reached the League Cup's title match.

## Hero Cup gives Europe chance to assess options for Ryder Cup

**AP ■ WASHINGTON**

For European golf, this year's Ryder Cup is set to mark a break from the past. This week might provide a hint as to who is part of the future.

The Hero Cup match-play event takes place in Abu Dhabi from Friday to Sunday, pitting Britain and Ireland against Continental Europe in a competition that allows European Ryder Cup captain Luke Donald a chance to assess his options eight months out from the contest with the United States outside Rome.

New blood will be needed in Donald's Ryder Cup team because of the likely absence of veteran players — such as Ian Poulter, Lee Westwood and Sergio Garcia, who all play in the Saudi-funded LIV Golf league — who have long been the backbone of Europe's lineup.

The Hero Cup, essentially a renewal of The Seve Trophy that had eight editions from 2000-13, is the perfect opportunity for up-and-coming players to prove themselves in a team format and press their case for inclusion in the Ryder Cup, especially with Donald having six captain's picks.

## Malaysia Open: Sindhu loses to Marin, Prannoy trumps Sen in opening round



**PTI ■ KUALA LUMPUR**

Double Olympic medalist PV Sindhu faltered on her return to action after a long injury lay-off but in-form HS Prannoy continued his sensational run to progress to the second round of the Malaysia Open Super 1000 badminton tournament here on Wednesday.

Sixth seed Sindhu, who was playing her first match since she sustained a stress fracture on her left ankle en route her Commonwealth Games gold in August, lost 12-21, 10-21, 15-21 to Rio Olympics champion Carolina Marin of Spain in 59 minutes.

Earlier, world No. 8 Prannoy lived up to his new status of being India's best-ranked men's

singles player with a comeback behind 22-24, 21-12, 21-18 victory over Lakshya Sen, ranked 10th, in an edgy opening-round contest that went for little over an hour.

The 30-year-old from Kerala will next face Indonesia's Chico Aura Dwi Wardoyo.

Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty also advanced to the pre-quarterfinals with a 21-16, 21-13 win over the Korean pair of Choi Sol Gyu and Kim Won Ho.

The world No. 5 pair will meet the Indonesian combination of Muhammad Shohibul Fikri and Bagas Maulana.

Malvika Bansod, however, failed to cross the opening hurdle, losing 9-21, 13-21 to second seed Korean An Se Young.

The women's doubles pair of Ashwini Bhat and Shikha Gautam lost 10-21, 12-21 to Thailand's Supissara Paewwamsampran and Puttita Supajirakul.

Sindhu came into the match with a 5-9 head-to-head record against Marin, who had a tough last few years, having suffered an ACL in both her knees.

The Indian had a rusty start as she struggled with her finishing, allowing an aggressive Marin to grab an 11-3 lead at the interval. The Spaniard then zoomed to eight game points with precise returns, converting them at the first opportunity.

In the second game, Sindhu returned the favour, moving to a massive seven-point lead at the break. The Indian followed up her strokes well, playing some excellent shots and looking more polished at the net as she grabbed 10 game points with the Spaniard going to the net time and again.

Sindhu converted it when Marin faltered with her net play again.

In the decider, Marin again found her touch as her cross-court returns, punch clears and body smashes kept Sindhu at bay. The Spaniard moved into the breather with a four-point advantage after Sindhu went wide.

# FIH World Cup: Analysis of participating teams

**PTI ■ BHUBANESWAR/ROURKELA**

Analysis of teams participating in the FIH Men's Hockey World Cup, beginning here from Friday.

**Argentina (world rank: 7)**

Rio Olympics champions Argentina are Pan American hockey's flag bearer, having won the continental title on 14 occasions. With a swashbuckling style and incredible technical ability, Los Leones can beat any team in the world on their day, something they showed in their 2-1 victory over reigning Olympic and world champions Belgium in November. But the team coached by former Argentina goalkeeper Mariano Riconi has struggled in the World Cups, having reached the semifinals only once in their 13 appearances so far — in the 2014 edition when they had finished third. Last time, they topped their group but lost to England 3-2 in the quarterfinals. The loss of star penalty corner specialist Gonzalo Peillat to the German team after playing more than 100 matches for Argentina will be felt.

Agustin Mazzilli, Lucas Vila and team captain Matias Rey — named Player of the Tournament as his team swept to victory in the 2022 Pan American Cup in Santiago, Chile to seal their World Cup — are among the players to watch out for despite being well into their 30s.

The Kookaburras are the most consistent men's hockey team in the last 30 years, having remained in the top four of the FIH World Rankings for the duration of that period. They have won every prize available, including the Olympic, World Cup, FIH Hockey Pro League and Oceania Cup titles.

The team coached by former striker Colin Batch has not played

too many matches after a shoot-out loss to Belgium in the Tokyo Olympics in 2021. They, however, claimed a sensational seventh Commonwealth Games title, thrashing India 7-0 in the final in Birmingham in August last year. Since then they have played just five matches against India, winning 4-1 in a high-scoring home series in November-December.

Unlike many other teams in this World Cup, Australia has not started their Pro-League campaign this season but known for fast-paced, attacking hockey with compact defence, there is no doubt that the Australians will go in search of a record-equalling fourth world title. They had lost to the eventual runners-up Netherlands in the semifinals in the shoot-out and beat England in the third-place match.

Captain Eddie Ockenden, penalty corner specialist Blake Govers, defender Jake Harvie, midfielder Aran Zaleski will be among the players to watch out for the brilliant Kookaburras.

**Belgium (world no: 2)**

Belgium's rise from among European also-rans to the summit of global hockey has been one of the standout stories of the past two decades. In the past last years the Red Lions have won every major title on offer, including the World Cup (2018), Olympic Games (2021), European Championship (2019) and FIH Hockey Pro League (2020-21).

They are again the favourites to win the title, along with Australia and the Netherlands, and defend the title they won at the Kalinga Stadium four years ago. The team coached by Dutchman Michel van den Heuvel has strength and depth in every department and contains some of the world's finest players, proven winners who have claimed the biggest titles on the greatest of stages.

They, however, have relied

on the tried and tested players with more than half of the squad above 30 years and over (or nearly) 200 matches to their kitty.

In Vincent Vanasch — who lost to India's PR Sreejesh in the FIH Goalkeeper of the Year award — and Loic Van Doren, they have two world class goalkeepers, while Arthur Van Doren, Victor Wegnez, Felix Denayer, Florent Van Aubel, John-John Dohmen, Alexander Hendrickx, Arthur de Sloover and Tom Boon — the latter two both shortlisted for the FIH Hockey Stars Player of the Year Award for 2022 — are all extraordinary talents.

**Germany (world no: 4)**

With four Olympic gold medals, two World Cups and eight European titles, Germany have an enviable history in international hockey. Tactically astute and technically superb, Die Honamas — as the German national team is known as — have a habit of hitting form at Olympic Games and World Cups, something they will be hoping to repeat here in Odisha.

After losing to India in the bronze-medal play-off in the Tokyo Olympics, Germany got a new coach in Andre Henning. The team had a long preparation of more than eight months, winning 13 out of 18 matches in the past year and will look to replicate the same performance in the World Cup.

Forward Niklas Wellen — who was one of the nominations for the FIH Best Player award — and goalkeeper Alexander Stadler, who was in the running for Best Goalkeeper award, would be among the key players in this German team.

Another forward Christopher Rühr and captain Mats Grambusch would be the other star players. The addition of star penalty corner specialist Gonzalo Peillat — the man who fired

Argentina to Olympic gold at Rio 2016 — would only lend potency to the side.

**India (world no: 6)**

India won the World Cup once in 1975, and since then have failed to qualify for the semifinals. They won a bronze in the inaugural edition in 1971, clinched a silver in 1973. In the previous edition, also held in Bhubaneswar, they did go past the group round but failed to win a quarterfinal game against the Netherlands. From 1978 to 2014 they could not go past the group stage.

After years of sliding down in the world game, culminating to the failure to qualify for the 2008 Olympic Games — a competition they had won a record eight times — India are back at the top table.

A bronze medal at the Tokyo Olympic Games was a landmark moment for the team, following it up with a third-place finish in the 2021-22 edition of the FIH Hockey Pro League.

Since Graham Reid took over the head coach's position,

India's stature has grown up. He has been able to get the best out of the players, injecting a tactical discipline to their trademark skilful, fluid playing style, making them a team that is respected and feared in equal measure.

After losing to Australia 0-7 in the Birmingham Commonwealth Games final, India had improved a lot in the away series against the Kookaburras. India lost 1-4 in the high-scoring series but contested on equal footing in three matches and notched up a rare win against their formidable opponents.

Captain and FIH Player of the Year Harmanpreet Singh, a fabulous defender and one of the best drag flickers in the game, will be the key player while goalkeeper PR Sreejesh, midfielder ace Manpreet Singh and Hardik Singh, and striker Mandeep Singh are all capable of bringing about game-changing moments.

Defender Amit Rohidas, who has captained the team in the past and also takes penalty corners, and forward Akashdeep

Singh will be among the other players to watch out for.

**Netherlands (world no: 3)**

Under head coach Jeroen Delmee, the legendary Dutch defender who as a player won two Olympic gold medals, the Netherlands have found consistency in their performance. Since taking charge in the latter part of 2021, Delmee has injected a significant amount of fresh talent into the Oranje squad. The young guns rose to the challenge in style, winning 12 of their 16 matches in the 2021-22 edition of the FIH Hockey Pro League to win the title for the first time.

Having suffered painful defeats in the last two FIH Men's World Cup finals, the Netherlands will be aiming to make it third time lucky this time around and win a fourth world crown, a feat only Pakistan have managed to achieve.

Captain Thierry Brinkman, striker Koen Bijen, penalty corner ace Jip Janssen and goalkeeper Pirmijn Blaak will be among the players to watch out for.

England (world no: 5)

England played in World Cup final only once, in 1986, when they lost to Australia 1-2 in front of their home crowd in London. They finished fourth in the last three editions and the current team under new head coach Paul Revington will be hoping to win its maiden title.

But they have come in this World Cup with a young squad, with 10 players having zero experience at this level.

Zach Wallace, Condon David, Martin Harry and Roper Phill will be among the England players to watch out for.

**Spain (world no: 8)**

Spain hosted the first-ever World Cup in 1971. So far in hockey's most prestigious event, Spain have played in the finals twice, in 1971 and 1998, but failed to win the crown. They will be the dark horse in Pool D which also has India, England and Wales. Recent wins against teams like India and New Zealand will surely make them believe that a young squad can beat the best teams in the world.

Under coach Max Caldas, Spain will expect Alvaro Iglesias, Ricardo Sanchez and Enrique Gonzalez to play the playmaking

role.

**Korea (world no: 10)**

After failing to qualify for the 2018 edition, Korea return to World Cup action courtesy of a superb victory at the Asia Cup, where they defeated Malaysia in the final. The team has been involved in two high-profile competitions in recent months, finishing runners-up to Malaysia in the Sultan Azlan Shah Cup in November. Evergreen 39-year-old captain Namyong Lee will be among the key players.

**New Zealand (world no: 9)**

New Zealand are all set to compete in their 11th World Cup, with the Odisha event being their seventh in succession. They are yet to finish higher than seventh, a placing they have achieved on four separate occasions, but that could all change this time around.

The Black Sticks are always a force to reckon with, being blessed with some genuinely world-class players in their ranks.

Defender Blair Tarrant, veteran striker Simon Chitt, penalty corner expert Kane Russell, defensive midfielder Nick Ross and 19-year-old debutant Charlie Morrison could be the players to wat

## Current Indian hockey team is way more matured than teams of past: Hassan Sardar

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

He used to be a resident threat to Indian hockey teams of late '70s and early '80s but Hassan Sardar, Pakistan's master centre forward of yesteryears is amazed to see the maturity shown by the national team from the neighbouring region in recent years.

In his opinion Australia, Belgium and Netherlands are other strong contenders apart from India.

The FIH Men's Hockey World Cup gets underway in Bhubaneswar and Rourkela

from Friday. India is pitted in group D along with England, Spain and Wales.

Olympic gold medallist Sardar, who mesmerized the Indian hockey loving public with 11 goals during the 1982 World Cup in Mumbai, feels that there is not much difference between Harmanpreet Singh led team and other top nations.

"I had said before the Tokyo Olympics that this Indian team is capable of winning medals at the highest level. They won bronze but there is hardly any major difference in top 4 teams in world hockey now," Sardar

told PTI Bhasha in an exclusive interview from Pakistan.

"This Indian team is way more focussed and matured. Add to it, they have an added advantage playing at home ground. I have seen a hockey tournament in Odisha and would like to congratulate state CM Naveen Patnaik for promoting hockey in a big way," said the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic gold medalist.

India's lone title win in WC was 48 years back when Ajitpal Singh's defeated Pakistan in the final.

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**OFFICE PREMISES REQUIRED AT RATU ROAD, RANCHI, JHARKHAND**

Bank desires to acquire office premises on long lease, preferably on Ground Floor at Ratu Road, Ranchi having carpet area of around 1500-2000 sq. ft. Interested parties owning suitable premises may apply to Regional Office, Ranchi, within 10 days (Excluding the date of advertisement). Applications received by 6.00 PM on 23rd January 2023 will only be accepted. Perfora and other details can be downloaded from our website <https://www.idbibank.in> under Notices-Tenders or collected from any of our Branches

Date : January 12, 2023  
Place : Ranchi

Sd/-  
**Chief General Manager**  
**PATNA ZONE**