

**OPINION 6**  
MODI'S CHARISMA  
TRANSCENDS BORDERS**WORLD 9**  
N KOREA SPY SATELLITE  
LAUNCH FAILS**MONEY 10**  
CENTRE'S FISCAL DEFICIT NARROWS  
TO 6.4% OF GDP IN FY23

BHUBANESWAR, THURSDAY JUNE 1, 2023; PAGES 12 ₹4

the pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com

Published From  
DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR  
RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH  
DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADALate City Vol.19 Issue 148  
\*Air Surchage Extra if ApplicableHAZLEWOOD  
PRAISES KOHLI'S  
WORK ETHICS  
12 SPORT

— Right to worship Gyanvapi-Shringar Gauri —

# Hindu women plea maintainable: HC

## Mosque panel's petition rejected

PNS/PTI ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The Allahabad High Court on Wednesday rejected a plea challenging the maintainability of a suit filed by five Hindu women seeking permission for regular worship of Shringar Gauri and other deities in Varanasi's Gyanvapi mosque compound.

Justice JJ Munir dismissed the mosque management committee's revision petition that contended that the suit is barred under the Places of Worship Act, 1991, which prohibits conversion of any place of worship and provides for the maintenance of its religious character as it existed on August 15, 1947. The Anjuman Intezamia Masjid (AIM) committee had filed the petition in the high court against the order of the district judge of Varanasi in September last year that turned down its objections on the maintainability of the suit filed by the five Hindu women.

The suit filed in August 2021 sought permission for daily worship at Maa Shringar Gauri Sthal in the Gyanvapi



complex.

The district judge had on September 12, 2022, dismissed the plea of AIM filed under Order 7 Rule 11 of the Civil Procedure Code (CPC). It had observed that the suit by the Hindu women was not barred by the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991, The Wakf Act 1995, and the UP Shri Kashi Vishwanath Temple Act, 1983, as was being claimed by the AIM.

The counsel for the petitioner, SFA Naqvi, contended the claim of the Hindu side that the devotees were restrained from worshipping Shringar Gauri and other deities on the outer wall of Gyanvapi in 1993 is an "artificial" claim and an example of clever drafting.

According to him, no order was passed by the then State Government in writing in 1993.

He said that the aforesaid claim has been made only to avoid the application of the Places of Worship Act, 1991.

He pointed out that even if the claim of the Hindu side is accepted, why did they not file suit in 1993 when they were so restrained or thereafter. Hence, the suit filed before the Varanasi court is illegal under the Limitation Act which bars the filing of any suit for declaration after three years of an incident. He claimed that Gyanvapi is on a Waqf property, hence in case of any grievance, the claim should be made before the Waqf Tribunal.

# Cong guarantees betrayal of your trust: Modi

By boycotting new Parliament, Opp insulted 60,000 labourers, says PM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In poll-bound Rajasthan, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday launched his party's month-long pan-India campaign, 'Maha Jansampark' from Ajmer and urged people not to be 'misled' by "the guarantee habit" of the Congress which he said "is not new but 50-years-old."

Addressing a public rally at Ajmer, Modi said people of Rajasthan have suffered on account of policies of the Congress which is in the habit of "tricking people".

"Fifty years ago, the Congress guaranteed that it will remove poverty. But it turned out to be their biggest betrayal to the poor. It has been a policy of the Congress to mislead the poor."

"The Opposition insulted the hard work of 60,000 labour-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi waves at supporters during a public meeting in Ajmer on Wednesday. Former Rajasthan CM Vasundhara Raje is also seen PTI

ers (Shramik) and the sentiment of the country," by boycotting the inauguration of the new parliament, said Modi.

The rally marked the start of a series of BJP public meetings over a month in a major outreach campaign as the party completes nine years in power at the Centre.

Modi compared the "slow speed" of vaccination coverage in the country under the Congress with its speed under the BJP Government at the Centre. "When there was a Congress Government, the

vaccination coverage could reach only around 60 per cent.

At that time, 40 out of 100 pregnant women, and children could not receive life-saving vaccines. Had there been a Congress Government (now), 100 per cent vaccination coverage in the country would have taken 40 more years. Several generations would have passed by then. Can you imagine the number of poor women and children who would have died in the absence of life-saving vaccines?" Modi said.

## Court raps police for summons only through WhatsApp

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A court here has criticised the Delhi Police for serving summonses on public witnesses only through WhatsApp and referred the matter to the deputy commissioner of police, West district, for "appropriate action".

Additional Sessions Judge Hem Raj was hearing a murder case registered at Punjabi Bagh police station which was at the stage of prosecution evidence.

Noting that one of the prosecution witnesses was absent and did not respond to repeated calls, the judge said the Delhi Police Commissioner had issued a standing order in February last year regarding the service of summonses upon the witnesses. The judge also noted in another case, a letter was received from the DCP (west) stating there is no circular from Delhi Police to serve the summonses on WhatsApp.

"Earlier also, this court has noted in several cases that the witnesses are being served by the police officials on WhatsApp...", the judge said.

# Shah vows Manipur peace, return of displaced people

## Govt working on 3-pronged plan

PNS/PTI ■ IMPHAL

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday said here that the Government is committed to restore peace in Manipur and ensuring an early return of all internally displaced people back to their homes. Meeting victims from both Meitei and Kuki communities in relief camps in the State, he assured them of security and said the Government's focus is to ensure their safe return home.

The Centre is working on a three-pronged approach to bring the warring Meitei and Kuki communities into a narrow common ground for lasting peace in trouble-torn Manipur, sources said on Wednesday. These include dialogue with the affected people, rehabilitating those who had to leave their homes



Union Home Minister Amit Shah in a meeting with a Kuki delegation, in Moreh, Manipur on Wednesday PTI

with enhanced security and control over insurgents, the sources privy to the development said. The major task before the Government is to build confidence between the Meitei and Kuki communities.

On his third day of a trip to Manipur to broker peace between warring communities, Shah visited Moreh in

Tengnoupal district, followed by a tour to Kangpokpi district, and had wide ranging discussions with civil society organisations.

Amit Shah said, "We are committed to restoring peace in Manipur as early as possible and ensuring their (refugees) return to their homes."

# Cops refute claim of 'no ample proof' against WFI chief

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police on Wednesday refuted reports which claimed that there was no adequate evidence against BJP MP and the Wrestling Federation of India chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, saying the sexual harassment case against him is under consideration and the status report of the investigation will be submitted to court. The Delhi Police also cordoned off India



Gate and barred public entry to the memorial's lawns on Wednesday.

In a related development,

Delhi Commission for Women chief Swati Maliwal on Wednesday issued a notice to police seeking to file a case against a man who allegedly revealed the identity of a minor wrestler who has filed a sexual harassment complaint against Singh.

Earlier, official sources said police had not found sufficient evidence to buttress the allegations levelled against Singh by female wrestlers and that it will submit the report within

15 days.

As the news came out in the media, the Delhi Police took to Twitter saying: "It is clarified that this news is 'wrong' and the investigation into this sensitive case is under progress with all sensitivity."

A police spokesperson also shared the same message with reporters, but after nearly an hour, the Delhi Police deleted its tweet. The public relations officer (PRO) also removed the message she had shared in the

official WhatsApp group for reporters.

Later, the police spokesperson shared another message in Hindi that read: "The cases filed by women wrestlers are still under consideration. Status reports are being filed before the court regarding the investigation in the said cases. As the cases are under investigation, it would be against the procedure to say anything before the report is filed in the court."

## CAPSULE

### AHMEDNAGAR. COLLEGE TO BE NAMED AFTER HOLKAR



The Maharashtra CM and the Deputy CM pay tribute to Ahilyadevi Holkar on her birth anniversary, in Ahmednagar on Wednesday PTI

**Mumbai:** In two simultaneous announcements, Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde said that the Ahmednagar district will be renamed as 'Ahilyadevi Holkar Nagar' in memory of the great queen of Malwa, who ruled from 1767-1795, while the State Health Ministry named a new government medical college at Baramati after Ahilyadevi Holkar.

**KHALISTANI SUPPORTERS HECKLE RAHUL AT EVENT Santa Clara:** Congress leader Rahul Gandhi was heckled by a group of Khalistani supporters who raised slogans against him and briefly interrupted his speech during an event here in the US state of California.

**CONMAN SUKESH ALLEGES HARASSMENT BY JAILORS New Delhi:** The Delhi Lieutenant Governor office has forwarded a complaint by Sukesh Chandrasekhar alleging "mental harassment" by prison staff to the chief secretary for action.

## State hikes ex-gratia for its staffs

Now Rs 10L in death case

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha Government on Wednesday increased the ex-gratia for its employees in the case of death while being on duty from Rs 4 lakh to Rs 10 lakh.

Besides, the ex-gratia for permanent disability due to injury was hiked from Rs 2 lakh to Rs 5 lakh and the same for partial disability from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 2 lakh. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has approved the proposal in this regard

She was working as labourer to meet study expenses

NALINI SAHU ■ KORAPUT

A ray of hope has emerged for the Bonda tribal girl Karama Muduli, a talented student pursuing her degree course in Commerce, who worked as a daily labourer during the current summer vacation to meet the expenses of her education. The Malkangiri district administration has assured to extend a helping hand to her for her higher studies.



A team of senior officials of the district administration led by Welfare Officer Prafulla Bhujabal on Wednesday visited Karama's house and enquired about her requirements. The team prepared a report and submitted it to the district Collector for further help.

Karama also received an immediate relief of Rs 30,000 from the Chief

Minister's Relief Fund. The CMO also announced to provide a laptop to her.

Karama, who had scored 82.66% and topped the Plus II Commerce in Malkangiri district, now studies in the Rama Devi University in Bhubaneswar.

Karma returned to Bonda Hills, her native place in Malkangiri, this summer vacation to earn some money by working as a construction labourer. Since her parents are daily labourers, they were unable to afford her education expenses. The only Government assistance her parents are receiving is a meagre monthly old-age

pension of Rs 500 each.

Even as Karma aims to crack the civil services examinations, financial constraint has stood as a major obstacle to her dreams.

Recently while recalling her experience in the Rama Devi University, Karma had said, "There are rich girls studying at the university. Seeing them, I often thought to lead a lifestyle like theirs. I wish I would eat and wear what they do."

"I couldn't even afford to buy new notebooks. So, instead of writing with a pen, I would write with a pencil so that I would erase them and write again," she had said.

# Minister rules out power cuts in State

Says tripping causing power outages

AK SAHOO ■ BHUBANESWAR

Energy Minister Pratap Keshari Deb on Wednesday trashed the allegation of power cuts in the State. He said the sporadic incidents of power outage are results of tripping, a technical problem that occurs due to infrastructural issues.

"Why should we have power cuts when we have surplus power? Sometimes, high demand of power leads to failure in power supply with installed infrastructure. However, we promptly ad-



dress that issue," said Deb.

Sharing the performance of his department after a review meeting by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, the Minister said that with the present generation of 8,065 MW, the State is able to meet the average peak hour power demand of around 5,400 MW.

"The Union Government has appreciated Odisha for

the increase in average duration of power supply in rural areas from 30.13 hours in 2019-19 to 23.22 hours in 2021-22. This is better than the national average of 20.5 hours," said the Minister.

Deb said the aggregate transmission and commercial (ATC) loss had been brought down from 30.57% in 2018-19 to 18.12% in 2022-23. Besides, 4.11 new connections were provided and 5,100 consumer grievances were redressed online through the Mo Bidyut programme.

The Minister informed that the share of renewable power has increased from 2.74% in 2018-19 to 10.10.7% in 2022-23.



UCCIL holds meet on ‘Women Entrepreneurs Interface’

‘State Govt does not dare to let CBI probe Naba murder’

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Utkal Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ltd (UCCIL) conducted a workshop on Wednesday on “Women Entrepreneurs’ Interface” led by Jayashree Mishra, chairperson of the Women Entrepreneurs/Narishakti Committee of UCCIL. Conducted in association with the World Trade Centre (WTC), Bhubaneswar, the participant women entrepreneurs displayed various indigenous products in textile, food processing, natural cosmetics and tin items manufacturing. Principal Secretary to Government of Odisha Usha Padhee as chief guest encouraged the women entrepreneurs by sharing her



domain knowledge and advising them to keep a very positive attitude and a consistency in their pursuit. She said, “Chase your dream, be competent, do good and it will return in many folds.” Advisor of World Trade Centre and Chairperson of Mahila Atmanirbhar Abhiyan Dr Rina Ray drew examples from Indian mythology and said that women who perform their responsibility with the right spirit get their due respect and

honour in society. Choudhury Jyoshna Das, convener of WTC Women Forum, World Trade Centre, urged the entrepreneurs for engaging more and more women from the downtrodden section. PK Gupta, Joint Director, MSME, DI, Cuttack responded to the queries raised by the entrepreneurs. UCCIL president Dr Brahma Mishra, under whose expert guidance and leadership the workshop of a unique kind was organised for the first

time, drew examples from the Scandinavian countries like Sweden and Norway which have demonstrated the maximum empowerment of women entrepreneurs in the world. He assured a brighter future for the women entrepreneurs as the Government of Odisha is planning to set up 30 Industrial Parks dedicated for women entrepreneurs. A vote of thanks was offered by Garonica Mahapatra.

Manmohan flays CM Patnaik for distress migration of Ganjam

PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR

Though Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik himself represents Ganjam district, the district could not develop as expected in the 23 years of BJD rule in Odisha. As a result, thousands of people are going to other States as migrant (dadan) labourers, alleged BJP State president Manmohan Samal during his recent visit to Brahmapur. Addressing a Press meet here, Samal said that if BJP comes to power in Odisha within five years 90% of land will be irrigated. “Our farmers will not face any problem in selling their crops. They will



be guided and assisted to produce five crops in a year,” he claimed. Similarly, Samal criticised the BJD Government on former Minister Naba Das murder case. Expressing his anguish over the investigation conducted by the State Crime Branch, the BJP State chief said the State Government has no courage to allow CBI to investigate the case. Moreover, he criticized the investigation

process as charge sheet was filed after long 120 days the murder took place. Even police couldn’t recover the bullet used in the murder, he said. He also alleged that all efforts of the State Government failed in proving Naba Das’s murderer ASI Gopal Das as mentally ill. Samal also took on the Naveen Government for dillydallying on a full-fledged airport in Brahmapur. Though

the Central Government has asked the State Government to expedite the process for providing required land for the airport project, the latter is not showing any interest in the matter, Samal charged. Among others, district BJP president Bibhuti Bhusan Jena, State BJP vice president Bhruu Baxipatra, spokesperson Biranchi Narayan Tripathi and Ashok Mishra were present.

Girl jumps from 3-storey bldg

For scoring 2nd Divn in +2 exams

PNS ■ BALESWAR

In a shocking incident, a student attempted suicide by jumping off a three-storied building in Baleswar district as she was distressed over her poor record after the Plus II Science and Commerce results were announced on Wednesday. The student was identified as Itishree, daughter of one Laxman Mahal in Simulia village under Nilgiri NAC of

the district. As per reports, after the results were announced, Itishree, a Science student, got upset as she had scored second division in the examinations. Extremely distressed, she went to the terrace of her home and jumped off the building as an attempt to end her life. Though she survived miraculously, she suffered grievous injuries. Family members rushed her immediately to the Nilgiri hospital. But as her condition deteriorated, she was referred to the District Headquarters Hospital.

Historians visit iconic 9, Pithapur



PNS ■ CUTTACK

9, Pithapur, Cuttack in 1932 was the headquarters of legendary revolutionary and martyr of India’s freedom struggle Bhagabati Charan Panigrahi. In 1972 this was the address for the then CM of Odisha Nandini Satpathy. Since 2022 the address serves as the headquarters of Nandini Satpathy Memorial Trust (SNSMT) chairman Suparno Satpathy. Chief Historian of Freedom

Museums, Government of India Prof Kapil Kumar along with a team paid a visit to the spot recently. Prof Kumar delivered a key note address on ‘Who Made India Free’ at Saheed Bhawan. The place held a very significant role in the history of India’s freedom. It used to be a secret meeting spot of several revolutionaries which include Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. Sri Aurobindo, Bagha Jatin, Veer Baishnab Patnaik and many others.

+2 Science, Commerce Results out

Nayagarh records highest pass percentages in both streams

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The results of the Odisha Plus Two Examinations-2023 for Science and Commerce streams conducted by the Council of Higher Secondary Education (CHSE) were announced on Wednesday. The overall pass percentage of Science stream has been recorded at 84.93 and the same for Commerce stream is 81.12.



Below are key figures of the results: Science: No. of candidates appeared: 92,950. No. of candidates passed: 78,938. No. of boys passed: 42,121. No. of girls passed: 36,817. No. of students passed in 1st division: 39,573. No. of students passed in 2nd

division: 24,257. No. of students passed in 3rd division: 14,852. No. of Higher Secondary Schools with 100% result: 291. No. of Higher Secondary Schools with zero result: 2. District with highest pass percentage: Nayagarh (96.41). District with lowest pass percentage: Gajapati (61.55).

Commerce: No. of candidates appeared: 24,082. No. of candidates passed: 19,536. No. of boys passed: 12,121. No. of girls passed: 7,415. No. of students passed in 1st division: 7,410. No. of students passed in 2nd division: 4,543. No. of students passed in 3rd division: 7,492. No. of Higher Secondary Schools with 100% result: 94. No. of Higher Secondary Schools with zero result: 0 District with highest pass percentage: Nayagarh (93.9). District with lowest pass percentage: Boudh (55.55).

BJP launches Maha Jansampark Yatra

To reach out to 3 cr families in a month

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The BJP State unit on Wednesday launched a month-long special public relations campaign, Maha Jansampark Abhiyan, to mark the completion of nine years of the Modi Government. “The campaign aims to reach out to the public and brief them about the achievements of PM Modi and the BJP since 2014,” BJP State president Manmohan Samal said at a Press conference here. “We aim to reach out to at



least three crore families and a total of 36,606 booths. At least five lakh BJP workers will participate in the campaign. PM Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will also come to Odisha,” Samal added. Through its campaign, the BJP aims to consolidate its footprints in the Lok Sabha and

Assembly constituencies for the 2024 elections. Ever since it was thrown out of an 11-year-old a coalition with the BJD, the BJP has been desperately seeking to avenge the humiliation. The BJP has lost seven Assembly by-polls held after the 2019 elections. What has worried the party leaders is that in the 2022 rural

and urban local body polls, the party’s performance was far below its expectation. It won only 42 Zilla Parishad seats. The party’s vote share stood at 30.07%, 2.42% less than its 2019 vote share in Assembly elections. In the municipal polls, the party won 16 of the 108 municipal chairman posts as against 76 bagged by the BJD.

RI ends life at tehsil office

PNS ■ CUTTACK

A Revenue Inspector (RI) was found hanging under mysterious circumstances at the Nischintakoili Tehsil Office in Cuttack district on Tuesday night. The deceased was identified as Sanjay Das. He was working in the Tarat section of Nischintakoili block. Several employees of the office spotted the body hanging from a ceiling fan on the upper floor of the building and informed police about it. Cops recovered the body for postmortem and started an investigation to ascertain the circumstances under which he died. On the other hand, his daughter alleged that he had been subjected to harassment by his superiors. She said her father’s health had deteriorated due to stress at work and he was unwillingly transferred. She claimed that the transfer and workplace harassment drove her father to end his life.

Govt ITI BBSR holds blood camp



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Under the guidance of Principal Government ITI, Bhubaneswar Er Jeetamitra Satapathy , a blood donation camp was organised at its campus. Due to the hot summer, there is blood dry situation in almost all blood banks of Odisha. Relatives of the patients like thalassemia, cancer, road accident victims etc. are facing problems in arranging blood. To meet the shortfall, the institute took the initiative with the Indian Red Cross Society Odisha State

Branch. Junior Red Cross Officer Laxman Swain joined and motivated the donors. Nininee Tripathy coordinated the blood donation programme. Training Officer Chandra Sekhar Sundaray and Subrat Swain, faculties Ajit Mohanty, Anita Mishra and Prachi Mahapatra helped to make the camp successful. Red Cross Regional Blood Centre under the leadership Dr Geetanjali Mishra, Gulshan Kumar Dash collected the blood. Thirty three new blood donors donated in the camp.

HITTING THE BULL’S EYE

Modi did theatrics to grab votes in 2024

It is actually unclear as to why the Supreme Court refused to entertain a PIL seeking direction that the new Parliament building be inaugurated by the President and not the head of the executive, the Prime Minister. The petitioner had rightly referred to Article 79 of the Constitution of India, which says the Parliament comprises President at the top and the two Houses namely Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha are expected to be under him or her. The petitioner had also cited Article 87, which says the Parliament session commences with a Special Address by the President. But the apex court bench wondered how the provisions cited were related to the inauguration of the new building. As was normal, Solicitor General of India Tushar Mehta said the petitioner should not be allowed to withdraw the petition as he would file the same petition in the High Court. But the kind-hearted judges paid no heed to the SG’s appeal. Incidentally Article 79 of the Constitution points out that the President, the first citizen of the nation, has the power to summon



BISWARAJ PATNAIK

and prorogue the Parliament sessions. It is the President who appoints the Prime Minister and other Ministers and all executive actions are taken in the name of the President. So, not inviting the President for the ceremony is a humiliation and a violation of the Constitution. President Droupadi Murmu was not even invited to the inauguration of the new Parliament building. As many as 19 opposition parties boycotted the inauguration ceremony saying Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s

decision to ignore the President was not only ‘a grave insult but a direct assault on our democratic setup as enshrined in the Constitution’. The Parliament cannot function without the President. The boycotting signatories included the Congress, Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, Aam Aadmi Party, Trinamool Congress, Janata Dal (United), Nationalist Congress Party, Shiv Sena (Udhav Thackeray), Communist Party of India (Marxist), Samajwadi Party, Rashtriya Janata Dal, Communist Party of India, Indian Union Muslim League, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, National Conference, Kerala Congress (Mani), Revolutionary Socialist Party, Rashtriya Lok Dal, Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, and Viduthala Chiruthaigal Katchi. Strangely, the Biju Janata Dal decided joyously to participate by choosing to remain oblivious to the fact that the Odisha tribal woman President was being offended openly. Not one creature from the Odisha ruling party raised even a feeble voice to express displeasure. Participating in the event is no sin,

but not expressing anxiety is a small sin on the part of BJD. There is a great deal of murmur now that there is some clandestine give-n-take arrangement between the BJD and the BJP up there, for which an absolute silence was maintained. Knowing people say it would be foolhardy to expect Prime Minister Modi, whose pet project is the new Parliament building, to let go the opportunity to bask in the limelight and extract maximum mileage from the event. At a time when the institution of Parliament is seriously imperilled, there are perhaps two things that are more important than the politicking over who gets to inaugurate the new building. The first is the new building itself -- how and why it was conceived and what it symbolises. Second is the choice of Hindutva ideologue VD Savarkar’s birth anniversary being chosen to be the date of inauguration. Even architect Gautam Bhatia wrote at the time that the process was approved in a ‘veil of secrecy mired in an opaque processes’. This is in contrast to the way things work in other democracies, where such

momentous architectural changes are ‘carefully considered, opened for discussion, and formulated after a consensus’. Building new Parliament hoses in democracies is not an entirely uncommon proposition, but such a rush to approve designs and the complete lack of public engagement is unheard of. It is instructive to consider the example of the Parliament House in Australia’s capital Canberra, which took over a decade to plan and complete. In 1975, the Australian Parliament established a joint standing committee for planning, design and construction of the building. On its recommendations, a two-stage design competition was announced in 1979. A total of 379 entries from 32 countries were submitted, of which five were allowed to the second stage. The winner was announced in 1980 and subsequently the design and construction approved by the House of Representatives. The new building was officially opened in 1988. The process is in complete contrast with the undemocratic manner in which the new

Parliament building in India was approved and got built. When Hindu religious priests of upper caste were conducting the inauguration of the new Parliament building, it was suspected by a few why Droupadi Murmu is not presiding over the function. This suspicion, though, appeared misplaced. The truth was that unless given the centre-stage, Modi would have no chance to perform theatrics to prove supremacy. He would not like to get lost in dark as the spotlight would fall on the President if she inaugurated the former’s dream structure. The ‘Adheenams’ would never hand over the ‘Sengol’, a monarchical sceptre symbolising power, to a simple tribal woman. But mainly, the new building is intended to symbolise both Modi’s legacy and also the believable ancient origins of India’s democracy. This was why it was imperative for the new building to come up in time for the 2024 general elections despite the deaths and disruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. The other big issue was the choice

of Savarkar’s birth anniversary for the inauguration. On one level, it reaffirmed the link of the current Government with the exclusivist idea of Hindutva for which Savarkar is best-known. This open Hindufication of the nation is a deviation of the Government’s public rhetoric of emphasising inclusivity encapsulated in slogans such as ‘Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas’. Over the violently-kicked-up row, the most pathetically servile statement President Madam Murmu made has devastated many an Indian heart. As if held at gunpoint, she parroted out, “I am deeply satisfied” that Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the new structure. Several opposition parties had boycotted the event over Modi’s decision to inaugurate the new Parliament House and not the President. Obviously, she has been forced by the BJP honchos to vomit out this statement penned by the headless speech writer employed by the saffron gang. Madam Murmu, having been a ‘dream come true’ beneficiary, would not have any other choice than to blurp these words.



# Surging Uttarakhand

INVESTORS' PARADISE

Acting upon the vision of PM Narendra Modi, CM Pushkar Singh Dhami led government, is surging ahead on all development parameters. The state government is committed to usher in industrial growth, with special focus on MSMEs

## Growth agenda powered by double-engine government



“With a focused approach for inclusive growth of the state, the mantra that is being followed is, ‘Reform-Perform-Transform’. Uttarakhand has the potential in diverse fields, and the same is being tapped so that it benefits the hardworking youth of the state seeking employment. To promote and develop a conducive ecosystem, investors and stakeholders have our support in all the endeavours and we are working for the state’s development.”

-Pushkar Singh Dhami, Chief Minister, Uttarakhand



“The construction of a developed India for the 21st century rests primarily on two pillars — pride in our heritage, and second, every possible effort that is being made towards development. Today, both these pillars are being strengthened by the state of Uttarakhand. This decade surely will be the decade of Uttarakhand.”

-Narendra Modi, Prime Minister



### FISCAL INCENTIVES & CONCESSIONS

**Investment Promotion Assistance (capital subsidy):** The assistance (capital subsidy) shall be admissible on the fixed capital investment on plant & machinery and factory building/ work. For Category- A, 40% (max up to Rs 40 lakh); for Category- B & B+, 35% (max up to Rs 35 lakh); for Category C, 30% (max up to Rs 30 lakh); and for Category D, 15% (max up to Rs 15 lakh).

\*Capital investment subsidy shall be available only from one source, either from central government or state government sponsored capital investment subsidy schemes.

CATEGORY	INCLUDED REGION
Category A	Entire districts of Pithoragrah, Uttarkashi, Chamoli, Champawat, Rudrapur and Bageshwar
Category B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Entire district of Almora</li><li>All hilly development blocks of district Pauri Garhwal, Tehri Garhwal. (Excluding regions under category B+)</li><li>All hilly development blocks of district Nainital and Dehradun. (Excluding regions under category B+)</li></ul>
*Category B+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Kotdwar, Sigaddi and adjoining plain regions of Dugadda development block of district Pauri Garhwal</li><li>Dhalwala, Muni Ki Reti, Tapovan and adjoining plain regions of Fakot development block of District Tehri Garhwal</li><li>Kotabagh development block of district Nainital</li><li>Plain regions of Kalsi development block of district Dehradun</li></ul>
Category C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Regions located above 650 mts from sea level in Raipur, Sahaspur, Vikasnagar and Doiwala development blocks of district Dehradun</li><li>Ramnagar and Haldwani development blocks of district Nainital</li></ul>
Category D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Entire districts of Haridwar and Udham Singh Nagar</li><li>Remaining area of district Dehradun and Nainital (which are not included in category B, B+ and C)</li></ul>

To make India self-reliant by promoting local manufacturing, Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s idea of Atmanirbhar Bharat seems to be bearing fruit in Uttarakhand. CM Pushkar Singh Dhami, too, has reiterated upon creating local employment opportunities.

So, towards fostering investment and encouraging micro, small, and medium enterprises, the government of Uttarakhand has shaped the ‘MSME Policy 2015’ to fit in the scheme of things.

MSMEs are critical in providing inclusive employment generation and their facilitation is top priority for the government. The MSME Policy aims at utilising local resources, generating employment opportunities for people, especially in hill regions, and also promoting self-employment. The policy provides a comprehensive package of incentives as well as other supports for the benefit of the public.

The policy shall remain in effect till June 30, 2023. Enterprises established before January 31, 2015, undergoing expansion/modernisation/ diversification (by way of addition of more than 25% on fixed capital investment), shall also be eligible for Capital Investment Subsidy, Interest Subsidy and Stamp Duty exemption under the scheme. Categorisation of various regions of the state has been done to decide the quantum of fiscal incentive. The state has been divided into five categories for the purpose of quantum of incentives/ subsidies as stated.

### Reimbursement of SGST

Reimbursement of the SGST after adjustment of input tax credit on B2C sale of the finished product for category A is 100% for the first 5 years and 90% thereafter; and for category B & B+ 100% for the first 5 years and 75% thereafter

Concession of stamp duty on registration of sale deed/ lease deed of land for category A is 100%; for category B & B+ is 100%; category C is 100%; and for category D is 50%

To promote the establishment of private industrial estates in hilly areas, a Special Integrated Industrial Promotion Policy was announced. This policy was proposed to encourage the private participation of the industrial sector

## Setting up of industrial areas

In the special integrated industrial promotion policy announced for hilly and remote areas, on a total expenditure incurred on primary infrastructure facilities, like internal roads, drains, lighting etc., a provision of 50 per cent subsidy, up to Rs 50 lakh, was made. This has been done to promote the establishment of private industrial estates in hilly areas.

In view of the expiry of the special industrial package approved by the Government of India, and the limited availability of land for industries in the integrated industrial estates developed by SIDCUL, private participation has been encouraged for the establishment of industrial estates/ areas. The main provisions of this policy are as follows:

- For the establishment of a private industrial estate, it is necessary to have at least 30 acres in the plain area, and at least 2 acres or more, in the hilly area.
- In the private sector, for the development of IT Park/ Biotechnology Park, it is necessary to have a minimum built-up area of 18,000 sqm, as per the prevailing building bye-laws of SIDA.

For private industrial estate/ area, the investor/ promoter will arrange the land from his own resources.

- For the development of industrial estates/ areas, the SIDA/ unified building byelaws will have to be followed, and SIDA will act as the regulatory authority.
- It will be the responsibility of the promoter of the industrial estate to provide infrastructure facilities such as internal roads, drains, lighting, and other common facilities in such industrial estates.
- For the establishment of private industrial estates/ areas, the process of in-principle approval/ regulation will be of two stages. In the first phase, in-principle approval will be given for the establishment of the industrial estate. For the

establishment in the second phase, as per the layout plan approved by SIDA on the acquired land, after submission of completion certificate, a formal notification will be issued.

- For the development of infrastructure facilities outside private industrial estates/ areas, an Infrastructure Development Fund will be created with a fund of Rs 100 crore. This fund will be operated by SIDCUL. In relation to the total capital investment made in the private industrial location, 2 per cent will be given for infrastructure facilities outside the location.
- Under this policy, capital subsidy at the rate of Rs 10 lakh per acre will be given in four phases against the capital investment made on the infrastructure facilities within the locality, and for the establishment of CETP in private industrial localities, fixed capital will be provided. Subsidy will be given up to 40 per cent of the investment, up to a maximum of Rs 1 crore.
- This policy will be applicable from the date of issue of notification and will be effective for the next five years.



### The Uttarakhand Logistics Policy-2023

#### ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

- Logistics park, inland container depot, warehouse, truck terminal, logistics vehicle, cold storage etc.
- Development of eco logistics or green logistics/ technology logistics facilities.

#### FINANCIAL INCENTIVES

- Financial incentive ranging from 10 to 25 per cent on project cost.
- Maximum grant of Rs 8 cr for project cost up to Rs 50 cr, maximum grant of Rs 24 cr for project cost of Rs 50 cr to Rs 150 cr, and maximum grant of Rs 32 cr for project cost above Rs 150 cr.
- For warehousing facility, 5,000 sq ft area with minimum investment of Rs 2.50 cr in hilly area and 10,000 sq ft area required in plain area with minimum investment of Rs 5 cr.
- 45,000 sq ft land required for truck terminal with minimum investment of Rs 5 cr.
- Minimum area for cold storage 5,000 sq ft.

TOWARDS ENDORSING ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, PLASTIC HAS BEEN BANNED IN UTTARAKHAND. HERE ARE SOME KEY POINTS FOR ONE-TIME USE OF PLASTIC IN THE STATE

## SINGLE-USE PLASTIC BAN: POLICY BOOST FOR SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

Single-use plastic, be it of any shape - plastic carry bags (with or without handles) of thickness, size and colour and non-woven poly single use bags made of polypropylene, thermocool (polystyrene), polyurethane, styrofoam and the like; disposable cutlery or plastic, such as plate trays, bowls, cups, glasses, spoons, forks, straws, knives, stirrers, etc - the production, purchase, sale, import, storage, use and supply of these have been banned in the state of Uttarakhand. In addition, by notification of the government dated August 12, 2021, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, India, from July 1, 2022, the manufacture, import, storage, distribution, sale and use of expanded polystyrene articles are also prohibited.

By banning the use, storage, manufacturing, buying, and selling of single-use plastic products, production work has stopped in the units engaged in the manufacture of these products in the state. Employment has also been affected by this. With a view to combating plastic waste pollution and eradicating single-use plastic by promoting innovation and entrepreneurship, and to encourage manufacturing of alternative products in the form of substitutes to single-use plastic, financial incentives have been provided in the MSME Policy 2015 (as amended from time to time). Towards giving incentives, this policy has been approved by

the cabinet as well. Following provisions have been made for additional financial incentives:

- INVESTMENT PROMOTION ASSISTANCE:** Fixed capital made in plant and machinery and workshop building of the enterprise. Top-up investment incentive subsidy of 10% (maximum Rs 10 lakh) on investment.
- INTEREST SUBSIDY:** Payable on term loan taken from financial institution/ bank for establishment of enterprises an additional interest reimbursement assistance up to Rs 1 lakh/ annum/ per unit for C category districts, up to Rs 2 lakh/ annum/ per unit for D category districts, (as classified by the MSME policy).
- REIMBURSEMENT OF SGST:** In diversification of existing enterprise or establishment of new enterprise for manufacture of alternative products, the total gross SGST to be received by the state government from the SGST chargeable on new plant and machinery reimbursement assistance of 20 per cent (after adjustment of ITC). The benefits of all the above facilities will be available only to those units which have been affected or closed due to the ban order of the Central/ state government.

## ODTP: Boosting local products

Taking into account the needs of the people, PM Narendra Modi’s idea for sustainable development of rural India aims at espousing local products. The ‘One District Two Products’ scheme of the Uttarakhand government launched in October 2021, strives to promote and generate self-employment opportunities

PHOTO: DIPR UTTARAKHAND



Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, officials believe that the increase in business and demand will create employment (in packaging, testing, logistics) in the hill state at the local level, while the export of products will also go up. The PM has urged tourists to shell out at least 5% of the total spending to purchase local products. Under Uttarakhand’s ‘One District Two Products’ the local products specific to each district will be identified and two of them will be developed.

The scheme aims to give a boost to traditional manufacturing and the craft industry of the state and help promote them on a

national and international scale. It will also create employment opportunities for local farmers, artisans, craftsmen etc.

Everything, from sweets, snacks, herbal products to brass craft, woollens, etc, is being identified and promoted. Millet biscuits of Bageshwar, handicrafts from Champawat, baked goods and mushrooms from Dehradun, candles from Nainital, honey products from Haridwar, kidney beans from Musiyari, temple artifacts from Rudrapurayag are some of the products identified for promotion under the scheme. The products will be developed based on the market demand with the help of modern technology, skill, and design development.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has always emphasised that startups are a crucial component of Atmanirbhar Bharat. The Uttarakhand Startup Policy encompasses measures to support and facilitate all the key stakeholders in the start-up ecosystem. The policy contains provision for various incentives and assistance to startups, incubators, mentors, educational institutes, investors etc.

Under the leadership of chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhami, the state government has also launched startup official portal as a one-stop interactive platform for innovator, entrepreneurs, incubators, mentors, investors, educational institutes, students, and service providers etc to connect them with each other and keep themselves updated about the startup ecosystem.

After the launch of the Uttarakhand Startup Policy, the growth of the startup ecosystem in Uttarakhand accelerated significantly. From adding the number of startups, to number of incubators, mentor, investors, partners etc, the growth of all key stakeholders has been encouraging.

### Key Points of Uttarakhand Startup Policy

- Under the new policy to set up 1,000 startups in five years, the objective is to set up at least one incubation centre in each district



## Empowering startups, aiding entrepreneurship

Uttarakhand, once regarded as a late beginner in the startup ecosystem of the country, has seen rapid progress in past three years. While, till the end of the year 2018, there were only 100 startups in the state, the figure had gone beyond 500 by the end of 2021

- To registered startups Rs 15,000 monthly allowance per month, up to one year. Startups based on scheduled caste/ tribe/ divyang/ transgender or grassroots innovations will get Rs 20,000 monthly allowance
- Registered startups will get up to Rs 10 lakh, one-time seed funding. Startups based on scheduled caste/ tribe/ divyang/ transgender or grassroots innovations will get up to Rs 12.50 lakh seed funding
- For national patents, per patent Rs 1 lakh

- help and for international patents Rs 5 lakh reimbursement
- Application for trademark and industrial design will invite an assistance of Rs 10,000
- One-time free-of-cost pre-incubation support and incubation assistance
- For the establishment of new incubation centers Rs 1 crore, and for expansion of existing incubation center capital subsidy up to Rs 50 lakh
- For the establishment of enterprise Rs 200 crore fund provision

## MEGA INDUSTRIAL POLICIES SPURRING GROWTH

TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE ECONOMY OF THE STATE, THE PUSHKAR SINGH DHAMI LED GOVT HAS EMPHASISED ON THE SETTING UP OF INDUSTRIES IN UTTARAKHAND BY OFFERING INCENTIVES TO ENTREPRENEURS AND INDUSTRIES IN VARIOUS SECTORS

Under the investment policy, there are four categories getting benefits i.e, 7% interest subsidy and SGST concessions of 50% for all projects, except the large project category which has 30% concession. The four categories are:

- Large projects having investments of Rs 50 cr to Rs 75 cr
  - Mega projects having investment of Rs 75 cr to Rs 200 cr
  - Ultra mega projects having investments of Rs 200 cr to 400 cr
  - Super ultra mega projects with investments above Rs 400 cr
- Besides this, under the guidance of PM Narendra Modi, the government is backing the industrial sector with power assistance. The industries are reimbursed with Re 1 per unit on the electricity bill for extended period of five years from the start of production. Biotechnology policy is working towards smoothing the process of innovation, development, deployment or commercialisation of new products, processes or services driven by technology or intellectual property.
- The focus is on the Mega Food Parks (MFP) and the established units within them.
- 6% Interest subsidy (maximum of Rs 4 lakh) for five years
  - 100% stamp duty exemption and purchase land and leasing properties
  - 1.55/unit for irrigation purpose for food processing units
  - 100% exemption on mandi fee on raw materials for a period of five year



## ‘Pioneer’ effect Defunct pipeline mended; villagers get water

After Sub Collector’s intervention  
**SRIKUMAR MAHANTA**  
■ SONEPUR

A day after a news story on lapses in timely responding to a drinking water crisis in Arda village in Tarbha block was published in The Pioneer, the district administration seriously took note of it.

Sub-Collector Ipsita Priyadarshini Mishra intervened in the matter and directed the Executive Engineer, RWSS, Subarnapur to look into the issue and resolve it with immediate effect. And, the problem was sorted out with the locals of Arda village getting drinking water on Wednesday.



Notably, the drinking water project in Arda village of Tarbha block was out of order in the last few days. Locals alleged that the contractor and the RWSS officials were in nexus as the drinking water project was constructed in a substandard manner. The villagers demanded strong action against the contractor and

RWSS officials for botching up the project work which went defunct just within a few days of its commissioning. The guidelines say the contractor is supposed to repair and maintain a drinking water project for five years for any defects. However, in this case, despite repeated pleas of the locals, the department was not responding.

## 70th webinar of Thinkers’ Club ‘Youths should follow Paramhansa preaching’

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Thinkers' Club of the Twin cities, Cuttack and Bhubaneswar organised a virtual seminar on degeneration of moral standards and values in society recently. The Club requested, Shashanka Sekhar Grahacharya, Director of Gopabandhu Institute of Administration to speak from the life and philosophy of Shree Shree Ramakrishna Paramhansa. Grahacharya said Paramahansa realised that the ultimate goal of every religion is the same but the paths are different. His discourses had a

magic spell on the audience. He used to cite examples of small stories to make the devotees understand the intricacies of spiritual knowledge. His greatest discovery was, Narendra Nath, who was famous as 'Swami Vivekananda' in later years, he said.

The Guru had strong faith in Goddess Mother Kali. He believed in charity. As per his advice, Ramakrishna Mutts were established at different locations of the world. The mutts are centers of teaching, learning, training and charity, he added.

Grahacharya further said

what Ramakrishna Paramhansa had said nearly 200 years back are relevant even today and advised the present youths to follow the teachings of the great Guru and his ardent disciple Vivekananda.

The meeting started with the melodious bhajan in the voice of Anindita Das. Bishop DB Hrudaya, Dr Rajat Satapathy and Prof Umasankar Misra participated in the discussion. While club president Barada Prasanna Das presided, Dr Dipayan Pattanaik summarised the discussion and offered the vote of thanks.

## G’pati BJD hails CM for drinking water projects

PNS ■ PARALAKHEMUNDI

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has given a grand gift to Gajapati district on completing the 4th year of the 5th term in office. He has recently approved Rs 379.18 crore for drinking water supply in the district.

Chief Minister Patnaik is committed to provide clean drinking water to the people living in rural areas. The Chief Minister has approved implementation of two large rural drinking water supply projects.

Through the project, 37 panchayats of two blocks in the district will be benefited.

BJD Gajapati unit held a Press meet on the occasion and thanked the CM for the grant.

Gajapati District BJD Youth president S Lingaju, District Council president G Tirupathi Rao, vice president Laxmikant Parichha, Women's wing president Poonvase Naik, senior BJD leader Antyarami Gamang, former BJD president Basant Das and Kashinagar Block Chairman B Sayamma were present. About 1,31,733 people living in 346 villages will be provided with drinking water after the commissioning of the two projects. About 58,977 people of 156 villages of 16 panchayats of Gumma Block and 72,756 people of 190 villages of 21 panchayats of Rayagada Block will be benefitted. The projects will be implemented within 24 months.

## Amit Garg new CEO TPSODL

Arvind Singh new CEO TPCODL

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Amit Garg has been appointed as the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of TP Southern Odisha Distribution Limited (TPSODL) from June 1, 2023.

Prior to his appointment as CEO, Garg had served as the Chief Operating Officer (COO) at TPSODL since August 2022. He has also held

the position of CEO at Tata Power Trading Company Limited (TPTCL). With over three decades of invaluable experience in the power industry, he holds a graduate degree in electrical engineering from Jabalpur engineering college, Madhya Pradesh. Arvind Singh, the outgoing CEO, who has played an important role in the success of TPSODL since its inception in January 2021, shall work as the CEO at TP Central Odisha Distribution Limited (TPCODL), Bhubaneswar.

## In Jajpur 2 die as hillock caves in during quarrying

PNS ■ JAJPUR

Two workers were killed on Wednesday in an illegal granite quarry as a portion of the hillock caved in at Lunibara under Jenapur police station of Jajpur district.

The mishap occurred when the quarrying was underway with the use of poclain machines. The deceased workers were identified as Santanu Khilar (28), a machine operator and Apu Rout (17), a helper. Both died on the spot.

Police seized the bodies and sent them to the local Government hospital at Dharamsala for autopsy, said the IIC of Jenapur police station, Umakanta Nayak. "A contractor illegally engaged some workers to collect granite stones though he has not obtained any permission from the authorities for lifting stones from the hill. We will take necessary actions against the persons who illegally engaged workers in the illegal quarry work," said Dharamsala Tehsildar Swagat Das.

## In last 9 years Paradip Port spent Rs 3,260 cr for capacity expansion

PNS ■ PARADIP

Commemorating the occasion of Modi Government's nine years in office, Chairman, Paradip Port Authority PL Haranadh on Wednesday highlighted the growth saga of Paradip Port while interacting with media.

On March 2015, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the Sagarmala Programme with a view to achieve the broad objective of promoting port-led economic development. The Paradip Port has implemented several capacity expansion projects on BOT basis with a total



investment of Rs 3,260 crore during the last 9 years, said Haranadh.

They include Clean Cargo and Container Berth of 5 MMTPA capacity at a cost of Rs 430 crore, Development of new Iron Ore Terminal of 10 MMTPA at Rs 740 crore, Mechanization of 3 existing berths (EQ) of 30 MMTPA at Rs 1,440 crore to handle coal exports and Development of a New Coal

Investment Berth of 10 MMTPA at Rs 650 crore.

The 82 km-long Haridaspur-Paradip Railway line connecting Paradip Port to the rich iron ore mining hinterland in the Keonjhar areas has been completed at a cost of Rs 3,200 crore. The rail line has reduced the distance from Paradip to the Kalinganagar cluster of steel plants and iron ore mines.

By leveraging port-led industrialisation, Paradip Port has successfully attracted investments worth Rs 8,754 crore for the development of 769 acres of portland. The strategic initiative will facilitate establishment of industrial facilities with a combined capacity of 50.6 million metric tons per annum (mtpa) and generate employment opportunities for over 3,700 individuals.

Paradip Port has planned 99 initiatives under the Maritime India Vision 2023, at an investment of Rs 16,743 crore, out of which around 42 initiatives are completed.

## BJD lambasts Centre for apathy to VSSUT

Says Rs 2K cr grant from State Government to boost institute’s dev

NIMAI CHARAN SAHU  
■ SAMBALPUR

The Sambalpur unit of BJD slammed the Centre for its stepmotherly attitude to the VSSUT, Burla that was the first Engineering College of the State after independence and a university now.

Talking to the media, former MLA Dr Raseswari Panigrahi said, "I have written to the Centre for financial assistance under inclusive education and community partnership (IECP) scheme. But the Central Government did nothing for the institute."

"The Central Government did not pay any heed to our request, rather it upgraded an engineering college at Sipur in West Bengal," Dr Panigrahi added. Hence, the State Government converted the

VSSUT to a university to bring it at par with others in the country. And the recent grant of Rs 2,000 crore will boost its development further, she said.

Higher Education Minister Er Rohit Pujari said that with huge funds from State Government, there could be remarkable infrastructural development of VSSUT and the students could get education of IIT standard from here. "The VSSUT will be turned to be an institute of world standard very soon only

at the initiative of the Naveen Patnaik Government," Er Pujari boasted.

District BJD president Siddhart Das highly praised the decision of the State Cabinet for huge fund to VSSUT as it was required to cater to the various needs of 10,000 students. Land acquisition for further expansion of the university would begin very soon, Das informed. All other office bearers of BJD were present to thank the CM for the huge grant.

## Ex-serviceman builds cemetery from pension money

As he had to cremate son’s body in isolated spot in village sans graveyard

AKSHAY ROUT ■ JAJPUR



the work of retired army officer Rabinarayan Ojha, a resident of Ward No. 1 of Sadakpur Panchayat under Korei Block in Jajpur district.

Anil, the middle son of Rabinarayan's three sons, was serving in the army. He came home on leave in February 2021. He fell down and cracked his head. He was first treated at Korei hospital and

then at Cuttack. As his condition did not improve, he was taken to the Command Hospital in Kolkata. He died there on April 11, 2021. After bringing the body to the village, he was cremated in an abandoned place.

Rabinarayan could not accept this easily. He spent nearly Rs 5 lakh from his pension money to complete

more than half the work of the cemetery. Seeing this, local Sarpanch Rabindra Behera extended his hand of cooperation. He provided a grant of about Rs 1 lakh and the cemetery has now been completed. A road has also been built there. Rabinarayan says that no one in the village will now bother to cremate the body of a near and dear. He says if a tube well is dug near the cemetery, it would be useful. Social activist Taraprasad Mishra and youth activist Pradeep Kumar Mohanty praised Rabinarayan for his noble work.

## Govt approves Rs 2,312 cr for drinking water

Rs 330 cr for establishment of Odisha University of Health Sciences

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The State Cabinet has approved tenders for execution of eight rural drinking water supply projects worth Rs 2,312.11 crore in Ganjam, Balangir and Gajapati districts.

On the occasion of completion of the fourth year of the fifth term of his Government, Chief Minister

Naveen Patnaik chaired a State Cabinet meeting, in which 18 important proposals including the tenders for the drinking water supply projects were approved.

Speaking to mediapersons, Chief Secretary Pradeep Kumar Jena said supply of safe drinking water to the people living in the rural areas is one of the priority areas of the State Government.

Accordingly, the State Cabinet has approved the lowest tender amounting to Rs 1,509.91 crore for execution of a mega piped water supply project to provide safe drinking water in Ganjam

district out of JJM (Jal Jeevan Mission) funding. By execution of the project, around 9,92,368 people of 770 villages under 228 GPs of 12 blocks of the district would be benefited, he said.

Similarly, the Cabinet also approved a tender worth Rs 379.17 crore for execution of two rural drinking water supply projects in Gajapati district to benefit more than 1.31 lakh residents of 346 villages.

The Government also cleared two tenders of Rs 423. crore for execution of five drinking water projects in Balangir district. All the

drinking water projects would be completed in two years, Jena said.

The Cabinet also decided to spend Rs 364.40 crore in three years (2022-23 to 2024-25) for implementation of the State Plan scheme "Sustainable Harnessing of Ground Water in Water Deficit Areas".

The Cabinet also approved allocation of Rs 330.17 crore for establishment of an Odisha University of Health Sciences.

It approved a tender worth Rs 209.73 crore for Konark Temple Complex. Konark Heritage Area Development Plan (KHADP) under Integrated Development of

Heritage & Monuments and Tourist Destination scheme will transform the physical infrastructure in and around the temple complex and upgrade the visitors' experience, he said.

The Chief Secretary also informed that another tender of Rs 156.21 crore for execution of the Ekamra Plan. The Ekamra Kshetra Amenities and Monuments Revival Plan is an integrated approach towards reviving and enhancing the heritage value of the inner core of the old town of Bhubaneswar through urban design intervention and

infrastructure upgradation of the 11th-century Lord Lingaraj Temple.

The Cabinet also decided also allow transfer of Chaka land. This move would give relief to the landowners in terms of sell/transfer/partition of their Chaka land and updation of land records. It will also result in revenue generation through collection stamp duty and registration fee on the transactions, Jena said.

Besides, the Cabinet also approved a proposal to make Hindi movie 'Zwigato' and recently-released Odia movie 'Delivery Boy' tax-free till June 30, 2023.

## INBRIEF

### CM FLAGS OFF SERGADA-PURI AC BUS SERVICE

Bhubaneswar: The OSRTC has launched an AC bus service from Seragada of Ganjam district to Puri. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik flagged off the Jagannath AC Bus service on



Wednesday in videoconferencing. Patnaik said the bus service would facilitate convenient travel to the Jagannath Dham for the people of Ganjam. Especially, many women throng Puri from Ganjam district for observing Habisya Brata during the month of Kartik. The bus service would help them immensely.

### BRAHMAPUR CORPORATOR DISMISSED FROM BJP

Bhubaneswar: Brahmapur Ward-27 Corporator Nilakantha Sahu was on Wednesday dismissed from the primary membership of the BJP on the charge of anti-party activities, said a BJP release here.

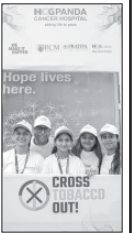
### SNLF OBSERVES WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY

Bhubaneswar: The World No Tobacco Day was observed here on Wednesday jointly by the Satya Nagar Ladies' Forum (SNLF) and the Sparsh Hospital. A walkathon was organised from Master Canteen square to Sparsh Hospital to raise public awareness. Bhubaneswar Mayor Sulochana Das and Sparsh Hospital MD Priyabrata Dhir joined the event as guests. SNLF members Subhedita Ray, Dipti Behera, Kajol Mohapatra, Diptiprabha Rath, Sarita Patnaik, Gobinda Patra, Sasmita Patel and others joined the programme and encouraged the participants. The programme was coordinated by SNLF secretary Anuradha Dash.



### HOSPITALS HOLD WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY

Bhubaneswar: The HCG Panda Cancer Hospital, Cuttack, and the HCG Daycare, Bhubaneswar on Wednesday organised a walkathon to promote "Tobacco-Free Living" on the World No Tobacco Day. The 2.5-km walkathon was joined by prominent persons, including Bhubaneswar Mayor Sulochana Das.



### TOURISM CONCLAVE REPORT PRESENTED TO GOVT

Bhubaneswar: Chief Secretary Pradeep Jena released the recommendations of the 5th Odisha Tourism Conclave - 2023 presented to him by the Hotel & Restaurant Association of Odisha (HRAO) in the presence of Addl. Chief Secretary, Tourism Surendra Kumar, Principal Secretary, Industries Hemant Sharma, Principal Secretary, Finance Vishal Dev and Director & Addl. Secretary, Tourism SR Jadhav on Tuesday. The recommendations were made by tourism experts, hoteliers, travel agents, tour operators, cruise liners, airlines and environmentalists on development of tourism in Odisha. "The recommendations would be helpful to the State Government and the stakeholders to take Odisha tourism to the next level," said HRAO Chairman JK Mohanty.



### 7-YR-OLD ANSHU'S STORYBOOK RELEASED

Jajpur Road: Seven-year-old writer Anshu Dasnayak's storybook 'Kuni Kalamara Karamat' was released here on Tuesday by eminent writer Nanda Singh in the conclusion ceremony of a literary function. Anshu's father former Korai MLA Akash Dasnayak, mother Subhrajyoti Dasnayak, grandfather eminent TU leader and writer Mayadhar Nayak and grandmother educationalist Indira Das were present. The effort of Anshu was praised by all. Anshu said he was inspired by his father and grandfather to write the book.



### CHARCOAL SEIZED FROM MACHHAPUR RLY STN

Athagarh: Range Officer of Khuntuni Nilamadhab Sahu with his squad members seized 300 kg of wood charcoal from Machhapur railway station on Wednesday morning. As per sources, mafias regularly transport charcoal and other forest products to Bhubaneswar by rail in connivance with some unscrupulous forest officials for selling them at higher prices. Seldom do the Forest officials come for seizing the banned forest products. So the raid is a first of its kind and RO Sahu booked an UD case. No one has been arrested.



### RI HELD TAKING BRIBE IN BARGARH

Bargarh: The Vigilance Police on Tuesday caught Damodar Suna, Revenue Inspector (RI) of Padampur Tehsil in Bargarh district while accepting a bribe of Rs 3,300. A middleman Samadeb Banchhor was also held. Suna had demanded Rs 300 each as bribe to prepare land maps from 11 persons. Both Suna and Banchhor were later arrested.



### GAJAPATI: ROBBERS SHOW NO MERCY FOR HANDICAPPED

Parlakhemundi: On Tuesday night, six robbers looted the shops on the highway near Merapalli village under the Mohana police station of Gajapati district. They first came to the shop of Niranjana Sahu and looted his mobile phone and other valuable at gunpoint. Later, they looted the shop of Basudev and also snatched away the gold chain and silver bracelets worn by his wife. Though Basudev requested to leave them unharmed as they are handicapped, the looters did not spare them.



### JSW BPSL OBSERVES MENSTRUAL HYGIENE WEEK

Bhubaneswar: On the occasion of World Menstrual Day, the JSW Foundation is observing Menstrual Hygiene Week from May 28 to June 2 in peripheral villages by sensitising the community on prevailing menstruation practice and issues. A month back, 3500 women in peripheral villages were sensitised on reusable environment-friendly sanitary pad and provided with same at a very subsidised rate.





# Meghalaya reservation: Govt reconstitutes panel

## State Law Minister to head the committee

PTI ■ SHILLONG

The Meghalaya Government has reconstituted a committee to review the state reservation policy in the backdrop of an indefinite hunger strike launched by the opposition Voice of the People's Party (VPP) seeking changes to the existing reservation formula, an official said on Wednesday.

The committee was reconstituted on Tuesday and will hold a meeting with political parties on the issue on Wednesday, he said.

The committee will be headed by the State Law Minister Ampareen Lyngdoh. A final decision on the reservation policy will, however, be taken only after Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma holds a meeting, his deputy Sniawbhalang Dhar told PTI on Wednesday.

"The issue is sensitive and needs to be discussed at length. However, it should not be discussed in the streets but across the table ... The government will take a decision with the best interests of the people



and the state in mind," he said. The VPP is raking up the reservation issue, which does not have the support of the other parties, he claimed.

The party is demanding the review of the "outdated and unfair" job reservation policy in existence in the state. A hunger strike by its president Ardent Basaiawmait here, on the issue entered its ninth day on Wednesday.

The party, which has four MLAs in the 60-member House, is demanding a review of the 40:40 job reservation for Khasi-Jaintia community and Garos. The party claims that the population of the Khasis has increased and hence there was a need for a review. The committee invited the agitating

VPP MLAs for talks on Wednesday, which was promptly refused.

Basaiawmait said the agitation will be withdrawn only if the government expresses its readiness to review the 1972 job reservation policy which awarded 40 per cent of reserved jobs to Garos, 40 per cent for Khasi-Jaintia tribes, 5 per cent for other tribes and 15 per cent for general category candidates.

"Our stand was made clear to the government. I will not leave the venue (of the hunger strike) till the government agrees to review the job reservation policy," he said. Dhar criticised Basaiawmait's absence at the all-political party meeting on Tuesday last week which was chaired by Sangma.

A government-instituted committee on reservation roster had met on Monday too but the VPP and several organisations did not attend it. Lyngdoh said the committee will inform the government on the need for a discussion since there is a demand to review the reservation policy.

# Af-made cooker IED found in anti-infiltration op

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Famous Afghan pots, made of aluminium and used for cooking delicious recipes, have now been introduced by the Pakistan based terrorist handlers to trigger powerful explosions targeting security convoys inside the Indian territory.

On Wednesday one such pressure cooker, made in Afghanistan, was recovered by the Indian troops after they successfully foiled a major infiltration bid along the line of control in Poonch.

The IED weighed approximately 10 Kgs and had markings of a local manufacturer identified as Pir Baba, makers of Afghan Pressure cookers.

Indian army troops also managed to apprehend three terrorists after a brief exchange of firing in which one of the jawans also received injuries.

According to a Jammu based Defence Spokesman Lieutenant-Colonel Devender Anand, "during the intervening night of May 30-31 a joint team of security forces intercepted a group of terrorists attempting to infiltrate inside the Indian territory taking advantage of the bad weather conditions and heavy rains in the region". Lt Col Anand said, "around 1.30 a.m when an Indian army ambush challenged the group of terrorists they were fired



# NIA raids 51 J&K areas to nip new ultra groups

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Wednesday cracked down once again on the newly floated terrorist outfits in Jammu and Kashmir, and seized incriminating literature and several digital devices.

The searches were conducted in three locations in the Kashmir Valley at the residential premises of sympathisers/cadres, hybrid terrorists and Over Ground Workers (OGWs) linked with the newly-formed offshoots and affiliates of several proscribed

Pakistan-backed terror outfits, such as Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT), Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM), Al-Badr and Al-Qaeda among others, the NIA said in a statement here.

"The day-long raids and searches were conducted at locations in Srinagar and Budgam districts, as part of the ongoing NIA investigations into the activities of the recently formed terrorist groups, including The Resistance Front (TRF), United Liberation Front Jammu & Kashmir (ULFJ&K), Mujahideen Gazwat-ul-Hind

upon. In the retaliatory firefight terrorists received injuries. The blood trails have been traced in the forward area", he added.

The Defence Spokesman said, during the search operations in the area the security forces apprehended three terrorists with some weapons, war like stores including one pressure cooker IED and packets of narcotics.

During their preliminary interrogation the apprehended terrorists revealed their sinister plot to target the security forces with the help of pressure

cooker IED. One Indian Army soldier was injured in the ensuing firing and has been evacuated. Search operations are in progress, the defence spokesman added.

The security forces have recovered 01x AK-56 Rifle with balance 10 rounds in the magazine( rest ammunition has been fired by the terrorist who is subsequently injured), 02 x Pistol with 02 x Magazines and 70 rounds, 01x IED of approx 10-12 kg, 06 x Chinese Grenades and 20 Packets of Narcotics.

# Govt committed to implement guarantees in K'taka, vows Sidda

## Cabinet will take a call on June 2

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Asserting that his government will implement the five poll guarantees promised ahead of the assembly polls, Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Wednesday said officials have shared their inputs on financial implications, and the cabinet will meet on June 2 to decide on the implementation.

The cabinet meeting was earlier scheduled for June 1.

In view of the implementation of guarantees, the Chief Minister today held a meeting with all the Ministers and senior officials of the concerned departments at Vidhana Soudha, the seat of state secretariat and legislature, here.

"We had given five guarantees to the people, regarding these five guarantees concerned officials and finance department officials have made a presentation together. All the Ministers have seen the presentation, it has all the details -- proposals and financial implications of the implementation," Siddaramaiah said.

Speaking to reporters here after the meeting, the CM said, "we have not discussed in today's meeting, discussion and decision will be on the day after. On Friday at 11 AM, I have convened the cabinet meeting, where we will discuss, and after that our decision will be made known to you."

"But, the government has taken a call to implement all the five guarantees. It is a guarantee that we will implement the guarantees," he added.

The Congress had promised to implement the 'guarantees' - 200 units of free power to all households (Gruha Jyoti), Rs 2,000 monthly assistance to the woman head of every family (Gruha Lakshmi), 10 kg of rice free to every member of a BPL household (Anna



Bhagya), Rs 3,000 every month for unemployed graduate youth and Rs 1,500 for unemployed diploma holders (both in the age group of 18-25) (YuvaNidhi), and free travel for women in public transport buses (Shakti), on the very first day of assuming power in the state.

There is mounting pressure on the new government from opposition parties and various sections of people from across the state, to fulfill its five guarantees as promised ahead of polls.

Asked whether the five guarantees will be implemented at once or one after the other, the CM said, "All those things have not been decided yet, it will be discussed and decided in the cabinet."

To a query about BJP's criticism, he said, "let BJP (central govt) fulfill whatever they had promised, before questioning us. We will implement what we had promised, we had implemented earlier too, we will do it even now."

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar told media that officials shared inputs in today's meeting and also gave four to five options regarding the implementation of the guarantees, and what would be the financial impact.

"We are committed to implementing the guarantees, no doubts on that. Following officials sharing their opinion and inputs, some of us (Ministers) have also shared our view, and we have asked officials to rework and present it before the cabinet. As they sought time, there is no cabinet tomorrow, it has been postponed by a day -- to Friday.

# Maha renames Ahmednagar dist after Ahilyadevi Holkar

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a major announcement made on the occasion of 298th birth anniversary of queen of Malwa kingdom Ahilyadevi Holkar, Maharashtra Chief Minister Shinde said here on Wednesday that the Ahmednagar district would be renamed Ahilyadevi Holkar Nagar' in her memory.

Simultaneously, State Health Minister Girish Mahajan announced the naming of a new government medical college at the NCP chief Sharad Pawar's home town of Baramati in Pune district after Ahilyadevi Holkar.

Speaking at a function organised on the 298th birth anniversary of Ahilyadevi Holkar at her native village of Chaundi that he and deputy chief minister Devendra Fadnavis attended, Shinde

made a formal announcement about the re-christening of Ahmednagar district as Ahilyadevi Holkar Nagar'

Ahilyadevi, the Holkar Queen of the Maratha Malwa kingdom who is known for building temples and 'dharashalas' throughout India, was born in Chaundi in Ahmednagar district on May 31, 1795. She ruled the Malwa kingdom from 1767 to 1795.

Minutes after Fadnavis expressed desire that Ahmednagar district be renamed as 'Ahilyadevi Holkar Nagar', Shinde said: "All of us want Ahmednagar district be renamed after Ahilyadevi Holkar. Keeping that in view, I announce that the state government is renaming Ahmednagar district 'Ahilyadevi Holkar Nagar'" Heaping praise on Ahilyadevi Holkar, Fadnavis said: "If

Rajamata Ahilyadevi Holkar weren't there, Kashi wouldn't have remained in a form it is today. If she wasn't there, we wouldn't have temples of Lord Shiva. That's why people want Ahmednagar renamed Ahilyanagar". "We are the people who chant the name of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. We have renamed Aurangabad as Sambhajanagar under your (Shinde's) leadership, we have renamed Osmanabad as Dharashiv.

The chief minister himself is 'mawala' (soldier) of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. That being the case, Ahmednagar will be renamed as Ahilyanagar," the deputy chief minister said. Later in his speech, Shinde said: "Ahilyadevi's maiden name is Shinde. Even I am a Shinde. ....Ahilyadevi Holkar is an inspiration for all of us.

# Savitribai Phule: Maha CM orders action against two sites over offensive content

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Taking serious cognisance of offensive articles published against Savitribai Phule in two websites, Maharashtra chief minister Eknath Shinde on Wednesday directed the State chief Secretary to initiate stern action against two websites in question for putting out defamatory content against Maharashtra's iconic social reformer.

The chief minister's directive to the state chief secretary came hours after a delegation of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) -- led by its state president Jayant Patil and leader of the Opposition in the State Assembly Ajit Pawar -- met Mumbai Commissioner of Police Vivek Phansalkar and demanded action against the two websites. They also

demanding that the defamatory content against Savitribai Phule be removed from the two websites. Apart from Patil and Pawar, the other NCP leaders who were part of the delegation that met the Mumbai Police Commissioner included senior leader Chhagan Bhujbal and MP Sunil Tatkare. They submitted a two-page memorandum to the Police Commissioner, listing the names of the websites and their offensive remarks.

Among other things, the memorandum submitted by the NCP delegation said that a person claiming to be some 'Bharadwaj' had made the scurrilous remarks against Savitribai (1831-1897) who is considered the pioneer of women's education from the mid-1850s - who is revered in the state and country.

# 2 dead, 6 critical as molten iron falls on workers at Bankura factory

PTI ■ DURGAPUR/BANKURA,

Two workers of a sponge iron factory in West Bengal's Bankura district succumbed to their burn injuries on Wednesday, while six others are fighting for their lives after molten iron fell on them, officials said.

The accident happened at a factory in Ghutgarya in Barjora around 9 am on Tuesday, injuring at least 17 people, they said. Eight of them were admitted to a private hospital in Durgapur where two persons died in the early hours of Wednesday while undergoing treatment, officials said.

The conditions of the other six people are also critical as they have received over 80 per cent burn injuries, doctors treating them said.

## ED's 'BIGGEST CATCH' IN JOB-FOR-CASH SCAM

# Suvendu: Mamata must explain her kin's role in teacher recruitment scam

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Bengal Opposition Leader Suvendu Adhikari on Wednesday demanded an explanation from Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee regarding some of her family members' suspected role in the multi-crore recruitment scam.

This, a day after the Enforcement Directorate arresting Sujay Bhadra popularly known as Kalighater kaku or the Uncle of Kalighat -- considered the "biggest catch till now".

Bhadra's arrest is being considered as more important than that of former Bengal Education Minister and number two in the Mamata Banerjee Cabinet Partha Chatterjee, thanks to his alleged close links with some of the members of the Chief Minister's family.

"It has come to light that Kaku was the CEO and a director of the Leaps and Bounds company of which many members of the Banerjee family like Amit Banerjee, Rujira Banerjee, Lata Banerjee were directors ... as they are the closest relations of the Chief Minister, she now owes an explanation regarding the scam or scams that had been taking place in Bengal," Adhikari said.

Alleging that the Chief Minister was the fountainhead of all the scams, Adhikari said Bhadra's arrest had made it clear that the Agencies had reached till the chest level ... now you have to reach the ear ... then pull it to get to the head," adding, "Mamata



Banerjee is the queen of all the evils that have been taking place in Bengal." Sources in the ED said that scam money flowed into Bhadra's companies via two routes: first the money that came from cow, sand and coal smuggling and second, the money that came in from the recruitment scam. From Bhadra it went further up. Bhadra had earlier claimed that TMC national general secretary

Abhishek Banerjee was his "boss" and he worked in his company -- of which Banerjee, his wife Rujira, uncle and aunt Amit and Lata Banerjee were directors. Bhadra who worked in the company since 2009 too was a director in the company and enjoyed the powers of the chief executive officer, insiders said.

Bhadra had also said that "no power on earth can reach up to my boss because he never receives phone calls ... does not transact with anyone ... so all the investigation will come and stop at my door steps." The ED while seeking 14-days' remand of Bhadra told the court that he functioned as a prime link between the State's topmost family and the scamsters who collected money from all over the State from the job-seekers.

# TMC hits the streets in favour of grapplers

**Kolkata:** Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday hit the streets against the alleged manhandling of wrestlers in Delhi when they were trying to move towards new Parliament building on Sunday. The new parliament building was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday amid boycott by a large number of opposition parties.

Banerjee, who had on Tuesday criticized the alleged police attack on the wrestlers "who had brought fame to our country," led a 2-km procession from Hazra Road in south Kolkata to Rabindra Sadan.

Players and functionaries of Kolkata's big three clubs -- Mohan Bagan Club, East Bengal Club and Mohammedan Sporting Club -- took part in the rally. Iterating that the rally would continue on Thursday too Banerjee said, "We are with the wrestlers in their fight and so we



have taken out this rally which will continue tomorrow also ... Wrestlers are the pride of our country." Wondering as to why the person who had been "accused of physical assault" on wrestlers was not being arrested Banerjee had said on Tuesday, that people (BJP leaders) who were busy in Puja Paath (worship) had forgotten that such holy activities suit only those people who worship humanity.

Banerjee, who has no love lost with the BJP Government is likely to attend the meeting of the opposition leaders this month in Patna. "I am with all those parties that oppose the BJP and will support them," subject to conditions of reciprocation, Banerjee had said. **PNS**

# India, China hold 27th meeting to resolve border dispute

**New Delhi:** In the backdrop of tension prevailing at the border in Ladakh for the last more than three years, India and China on Wednesday held the 27th Meeting of the Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border affairs (WMCC). The meeting at the diplomatic level was held here in person, the ministry of external affairs said here. Joint Secretary (East Asia) from MEA led the Indian Delegation.

The Chinese delegation was led by the Director General of Boundary and Oceanic Affairs Department of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The two sides reviewed the situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Western Sector of the India-China border areas and discussed proposals for disengagement in remaining areas in a frank and open manner.

Restoration of peace and tranquillity will create conditions for normalising bilateral relations. In order to achieve this objective, in accordance with existing bilateral agreements and protocols, they agreed to hold next (19th) round of Senior Commander's meeting at an early date. The two sides agreed to continue discussions through military and diplomatic channels. **PNS**



Tribal people of Manipur take part in a 'Tribal Solidarity protest' against the ongoing tension in the state, at Jantar Mantar, in New Delhi, on Wednesday **PTI**



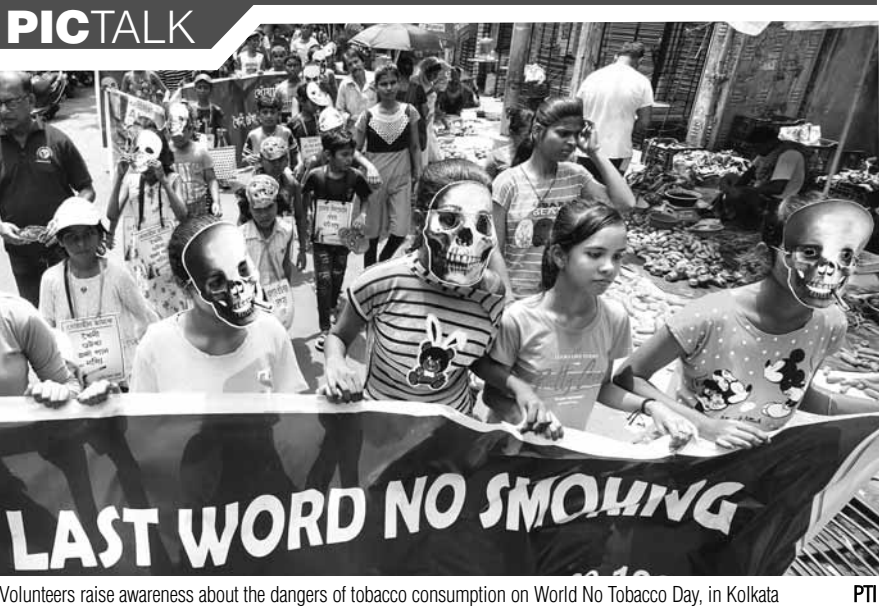
# Check hyperbole

## Rahul mocks and slams PM Modi at a gathering of Indian diaspora in San Francisco, US

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi is at it again: he has lambasted and lampooned Prime Minister Narendra Modi on foreign soil. Addressing a gathering of Indian diaspora in San Francisco, US, he ridiculed Modi for having the pretensions of being omniscient. In fact, he mocked the top leaders of the Bharatiya Janata Party of being delusional about their knowledge: “some groups of India think that they know everything. Even if they have a conversation with God, they might explain to him.” He added, “Prime Minister is one of them.” Deriding BJP leaders, Rahul continued: “They can speak to scientists and explain science to them. They can explain history to historians, warfare to the army and flying to the air force. But at the heart of it, they don’t know anything.” Barbed sarcasm can be effective, but Rahul seems to be going too far. His claim that the “normal instruments for doing politics were not working anymore.” He also blamed the Modi Government for threatening people and deploying Central agencies against political opponents. The use of law enforcement bodies to harass the Opposition is old in India; the present dispensation is no exception. But should the underbelly of our country be put on showcase? There is much that is wrong with governance and other aspects of India, but a senior Opposition leader advertising that in the United States doesn’t make much sense. Rahul may succeed in scoring a few political points, but not without damage to India’s image in the world.



To that extent, the BJP’s sharp reaction to his remarks is justified. Information & Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur said, “During his foreign visits, Rahul Gandhi insults India, which is unacceptable. He wants to insult PM Modi but ends up insulting India, questioning India’s progress. He is trying to tarnish India at a time the world is acknowledging our growing stature.” Just as in Rahul’s comment, there is also an element of hyperbole in Thakur’s reaction too. Rahul’s remarks are bad for India’s image, but not an insult. Besides, Congress leaders are not the only ones who discuss domestic matters abroad; PM Modi has also criticised previous governments on foreign soil in the past. Indian politicians will do well by scaling down the ingredient of hyperbole in political debate. Gruesome murder of a minor girl in Delhi doesn’t mean that there is no fear of the police in the national capital; unjust arrest of a journalist doesn’t imply that the entire press has been gagged in the country; India leaving the UK behind in terms of GDP doesn’t mean that we have become a developed nation. Also, politicians should grow a thicker skin; every adverse comment their adversaries make against them shouldn’t become an excuse to indulge in rant and cant. And they should also ensure that domestic political disputes are not internationalised.



Volunteers raise awareness about the dangers of tobacco consumption on World No Tobacco Day, in Kolkata

# Costly higher education a problem

## The escalating cost of education is denying higher education to students who wish to pursue it but cannot afford its prohibitive cost

Baban Bhagat, from Chand Kewari village in Muzaffarpur district in Bihar, works as a daily wage labourer in the nearby town. His meagre income barely covers the subsistence needs of his family, let alone the educational aspirations of his two sons. While his elder son’s academic journey abruptly ended after completing Class 12, his younger son, due to lack of money, just managed to get enrolled in Class 12. “I have tried my best to provide education to both my sons, but our financial circumstances render it impossible for me to bear the equivalent expenses for both of them, even for an undergraduate program at an ordinary institution,” lamented Baban. Presently, his elder son, a high school graduate, has also become a labourer, trapped in the same cycle of limited opportunities.

A recent official survey reveals how a significant increase in education expenditure in India, has placed a substantial financial burden on households. Particularly for those households from rural areas with minimal income, educating their children becomes a burden than an investment, especially when it comes to girls. According to Pankaj Kumar, a resident of the same village, due to prevailing poverty, most children can only study up to the 10th or 12th standard. With the increase in enrollment and examination fees for graduation in government colleges, dropout rates have further aggravated. Awadhesh Kumar Das who works as a teacher in a private school in Muzaffarpur, emphasized that children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds face significant challenges when it comes to pursuing education in fields like engineering, medicine, or enrolling in coaching classes for exams like the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) or Bihar Public Service Commission (BPSC). This difficulty stems from the increasing privatization of



educational institutions. In recent times, several reports have raised concerns about the potential impact of the New Education Policy on the privatization of higher education, leading to increased costs that could make education unaffordable for many students. According to a report, the National Education Policy is designed to support a neo-colonial economic order, favouring those from affluent backgrounds while potentially discriminating against the poor and oppressed. Addressing similar concerns, Devesh Chandra, the former District Councilor of Muzaffarpur, expressed his apprehension that the new education policy could make it increasingly difficult for underprivileged children to access higher education. He emphasized the need for a comprehensive policy that ensures equal educational opportunities for all individuals, regardless of their socio-economic background. On the other hand, Ajay Kumar Singh, the District Education Officer of Muzaffarpur, reassures that the new education policy is designed to provide equi-

table education to everyone. Whereas highlighting on dropping out of girls from higher education, Dr Shri Bhagwan Rai, an Assistant Professor at Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar Bihar University, Muzaffarpur, believes the government and parents share equal responsibility for this situation. “The government can be held accountable for the expensive nature of education, as it has become a major obstacle for girls to pursue higher education. Additionally, parents cannot be absolved of their role in perpetuating gender disparities by treating the education of boys and girls differently,” the Professor expressed. The escalating cost of education has undoubtedly presented formidable challenges for individuals seeking higher education, particularly impacting girls. It is crucial to recognize that girls are disproportionately affected by these financial barriers and encounter significant limitations in the absence of accessible, free, and affordable education.

(The writer is Charkha’s Volunteer Trainer)



SAPNA KUMARI

(The writer is Charkha’s Volunteer Trainer)

Charkha Feature

# Modi’s charisma transcends borders

## PM Modi’s recent tour of Japan, Papua New Guinea and Australia can be seen as a marker of his growing popularity and influence

In a world filled with diverse cultures, ideologies, and ambitions, PM Modi Ji’s engagements have gone beyond the realm of mere diplomacy, becoming more of a celebration of India’s global leadership and cultural heritage.

The immense respect and goodwill that the world leaders feel for India and its leader, PM Modi Ji is reflected in their various extraordinary gestures—be it President Biden seeking his autograph or Prime Minister James Marape of Papua New Guinea showing his respect by touching PM Modi’s feet at the airport or Australian PM Albanese referring to PM Modi as ‘The Boss’.

The New Zealand Prime Minister specially came all the way down to Papua New Guinea to meet our leader, demonstrating a deep appreciation for India’s leadership. All these countries may have varying opinions on several issues, but such heartfelt gestures highlight PM Modi Ji’s popularity and India’s growing stature.

Several unprecedented honours came India’s way too. The highest awards of Papua New Guinea (Companion of the Order of Logohu) and Fiji (Companion of the Order of Fiji) were conferred upon PM Modi Ji, symbolizing his tireless efforts in championing the unity of Pacific Island countries and spearheading the cause of the Global South. Papua New Guinea’s Prime Minister, James Marape, referred to PM Modiji as the ‘leader of the Global South’. These accolades firmly establish PM Modi Ji’s standing as an international leader and further enhance India’s reputation on the world stage.

At the community reception in Australia, leaders of all hues—the Australian PM – accompanied by the Leader of the Opposition, Foreign Minister, former Prime Minister, and several other ministers – walked hand in hand with PM Modi Ji. The illumination of the Sydney Opera House in the colours of the Indian flag, and the renaming of Harris Park to Little India further emphasize the influence of India and its diaspora in Australia.

Great Push for Indian Culture, Values, and Ethos.



PM Modi Ji also effectively utilized global platforms to showcase Indian culture, values, and ethos.

By wearing recycled materials at the G7 and the Forum for India–Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC), and hosting a lunch for FIPIC leaders featuring Indian cuisine and millet-based items, PM Modi Ji showcased India’s commitment to sustainability. Hiroshima which was the first to face atomic bombing in the history of mankind, today serves as the most fitting setting for commemorating the legacy of Mahatma Gandhi and PM Modi Ji’s unveiling his bust in this historic city symbolises the message of non-violence that Gandhi ji stood for.

Also, the release of the timeless Tamil classic, “Thirukkural,” in the Tok Pisin language, was an effort to bring Indian thought and culture closer to the people of Papua New Guinea. In his engagements with industry leaders, scientists, academicians, and cultural icons, PM Modi Ji positioned India as the world’s preferred investment destination, fostering economic growth and job creation.

Nobel Laureate Brian Paul Schmidt, who met the PM, highlighted India’s scientific prowess and its ability to undertake world-class



THE WORLD TODAY LOOKS AT INDIA WITH AWE AND RESPECT. UNDER PM MODI ‘S LEADERSHIP, INDIA’S ASCENT TO BECOMING THE 5TH LARGEST ECONOMY HAS BEEN SWIFT AND PROMISES PEACE, OPPORTUNITY, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUSTAINABILITY

research. “PM Modi is one of the most visible leaders that India has had in my lifetime. He takes an interest in whoever he talks to, whether it’s the President of USA or someone he meets for first time from society. India’s ability to do world class science has become an order of magnitude higher,” he told reporters after the meeting.

In Professor Toby Walsh’s words, India is “absolutely world’s most extraordinary democracy. UPI is a wonderful example of how India can do things itself” During his diplomatic parleys in the Quad, FIPIC, and G7 summits, the Prime Minister underscored India’s active role in shaping the global agenda and fostering collaborations among nations. He interacted with over two dozen world leaders throughout his visits. The community event in Sydney was attended by around 20 thousand people.

In contrast to some leaders who blame others or badmouth the country, PM Modi Ji’s speech singularly focussed on the India Story, highlighting its progress, achievements, and aspirations. From Japan to Papua New Guinea and Australia, the newspaper headlines widely featured PM Modi Ji, capturing the collective attention and fascination of

readers everywhere. The world today looks at India with awe and respect. Under PM Modi Ji’s leadership, India’s ascent to becoming the 5th largest economy has been swift and promises peace, opportunity, development, and sustainability.

Opposition politicians, like Rahul Gandhi, have developed a regrettable habit of resorting to abuse and falsehoods. They regularly undermine India’s image, and our democracy and heap insults on our Prime Minister, our government and also our nation and leave no stones unturned to downplay India’s staggering achievements. By this, they are doing a huge disservice to the nation and people will never forgive them.

PM Modi Ji’s leadership, diplomacy, and vision have strengthened international relations, garnered admiration from world leaders, attracted investments, and fuelled economic expansion. Without indulging in such petty politicking, we all must work together for India’s progress, celebrate its growth and development, in line with the Prime Minister’s principle of Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas Sabka Vishwas and Sabka Prayas.

(The writer is MoS, Electronics & Information Technology, )

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### They are super kings!



The IPL meant CSK aka Chennai Super Kings for many cricket lovers. There is a worthy reason why this team is titled Super Kings. Yes, they are the super kings of the Indian Premier League, as recently the team clinched the Fifth trophy marking one of a kind triumph for itself. MS Dhoni, Ravindra Jadeja and Kadamli like legendary stars proved that old is gold for IPL.

Despite fans missing the Helicopter shots of MS Dhoni in T-20, ODI and World Cup-like events, fans are lucky to never miss his magic on IPL pitches. It’s a great victory of the Chennai Super Kings over the Gujarat Titans of Hardik Pandya. It’s time for celebration for entire cricket lovers, Dhoni lovers and CSK lovers.

Ganapathi Bhat | Kolkata

Nerves said many, temperament said some, but Prannoy overcame all to finally come up with trumps.

The Indian champion has, however, continuously ranked within the top ten in the world. From number nine, now he is ranked seven. En route to the Malaysia Masters title, the hero of India’s 2022 Thomas Cup win had the better of All England Champion Chinese Li Shifeng in round 16 and almost pipped Indonesian Christian Adinata who retired hurt in the semis. Again big names were scalped by Prannoy; the only difference this time was that he went all the way to finish at the top. After Prakash Padukone and Pullela Gopichand, no Indian has been able to lift the All-England title. Lakshya Sen came within striking distance of the crown but fell at the final hurdle in 2022.

Ganapathi Bhat |Kolkata

#### PROOF OF POPULARITY

Sir — If any foreign leader touches the feet of any Indian leader or issues any

statement in praise of him, religiously it needs to be portrayed as the “ultimate proof” of his “worldwide popularity and the “impeccable stature” being enjoyed by him in the international sphere! However, when internationally reputed newspapers and journalists speak of the deluge of intolerance as being practised during the “regime” of “Good Days” the “saffron mainstream” immediately brands it as “colonial mindset” and “conspiracy” of the West! As far as the mindset of “Head I win, Tail You Lose” is concerned, the sycophants simply have nopeers!

It is high time these set of hypocrites be sternly told that mere popularity does not necessarily bear proof of one’s “greatness” “efficiency” or “success”. Also, utterances repeated long shrill and continuous enough do not render utter falsehood into “truth”!

Kajal Chatterjee | Kolkata

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



FIRST COLUMN

EFFICACY OF SATSANG MUST BE UNDERSTOOD

Satsang is association with good people; It is also about the inner quality of ‘sattva’ or purity



RAVI VALLURI

It was a desolate sight to see my nonagenarian grandmother. A deeply religious person whose life was dedicated to the Almighty, she lay afflicted by Alzheimer’s, in an incapacitated condition in a small nursing home in Bangalore. There was just a nurse to attend to her needs. Misty-eyed, I entered the room along with two gentlemen. Grandma was quite unexpectedly injected with vital prana as she stared at us. “Moorty garu!” she exclaimed, much to the astonishment of the nurse who was involved in an animated conversation with Moorty garu. As we left, my grandmother looked forlorn and her benefactor blessed her. A somnolent 94-year-old woman abruptly awakening upon seeing Shri VSR Moorty, obviously meant that the satsangs he rendered were exemplary. There was one rendition of the Narada Bhakti sutras at our house in Hyderabad which is etched in my memory bank. The year was 2014 and it was a crisp and cool morning in early November. I was posted in Secunderabad on South Central Railway. As I was poring over files, I walked Shri VSR Moorty. Moorty Garu focused his attention on my computer screen. Pictures of Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar were flipping across the monitor. He looked at Gurudev’s photograph quite intently and uttered, “Ravi, I would like to have an interaction with Gururji.” This interaction or satsang would be recorded by Sri Venkateswara Bhakti Channel (SVBC). My jaws fell in astonishment. Millions of devotees of Gurudev wait to have a glimpse of the Master and I had this onerous task of organising an interaction with the Master himself. But that is a challenge for any seeker and I promptly sent a mail to the Master and his secretariat seeking an appointment.



He then shared, “Ravi, the Sankalpa needs to be pure, rest Almighty God will take ensure that things fall in place, Sai Ram.” I was stunned that evening when the Secretariat agreed to fix the appointment at such short notice. We made the peregrination to the Bangalore Ashram of the Art of Living along with the staff from SVBC. For three days and three nights, we were witness to something transcendental. The interaction ranged on a variety of subjects from ancient Hindu practices, and various schools of Hindu philosophy to the present day. It is well-nigh impossible to decode the divine and pen the interaction. A senior teacher of the Art of Living, Shri Vinod Menon was to tell Moorty Garu, “This is the closest one could unravel divinity, you are indeed blessed, coming so close to the Divine.” In the amphitheatre on my mind the graphic scene of BR Chopra’s Mahabharata, the television serial played out, where Lord Krishna tells Bhishma, “Arjun woh nar hai jo Narayan ke darshan karwayega.” (That is, Arjuna is the person who will be the medium to reveal the resplendence of Narayana himself). So, this was satsang. . . . What does one mean by Satsang? (I quote Yogapedia to describe Satsang) Satsang is a Sanskrit term derived from two roots: sat meaning true and sangha meaning community, company, or association. It can be translated as “associating with good people” or simply “being in the company of truth.” It refers to the act of gathering like-minded, uplifting people, especially those on a spiritual path. Satsang is associated with the inner quality of sattva (goodness or purity), which is one of the three gunas (natural attributes) alongside rajas (passion) and tamas (inactivity). A sattvic person makes a natural Satsangi, or “seeker of truth.” So let us all be satsangis in quest of the quintessential truth. (The writer is an author and a spiritual teacher)

Rs 2k note exchange: Demonetisation 2.0

Rs 2000 note exchange will not have any impact on black money. It will only help hoarders by exchanging Rs 2000 notes without disclosing their identity



UTTAM GUPTA

In its decision to withdraw Rs 2000 currency notes from circulation announced on May 19, 2023, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has stated that they will continue to be legal tender. The notification issued in this regard states:- “...in pursuance of the “Clean Note Policy” of the RBI it has been decided to withdraw the Rs 2000 denomination banknotes from circulation. The banknotes in Rs 2000 denomination will continue to be legal tender.” From the above, prima facie one gets a sense that it is not a demonetization exercise as it happened over six years ago when, Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared on November 8, 2016, that Rs 500 and Rs 1000 denomination currency notes won’t be legal tender with immediate effect.

**If not demonetization then, what is?** It is merely a “Clean Note Policy” - as the RBI puts it? The central banks’ argument runs something like this: high denomination notes such as Rs 2000 is normally avoided for cash transactions. Yet, these had to be brought in following the note ban of 2016 to address the logistics of swapping the mammoth old Rs 500/1000 notes for new currency within a short time frame and thus minimize economic disruption. Nearly 90 per cent of the Rs 2000 notes valued at Rs 673,000 crore at their peak as on March 31, 2018, were issued from November 8, 2016, to March 31, 2017. The intent was to phase them out after the RBI had pumped in a sufficient stock of lower denomination Rs 500 (albeit new) notes to meet the transactional requirements of the economy. Already, the stock of Rs 2000 notes has declined from Rs 673,000 crore representing 37.3 per cent of notes in circulation on March 31, 2018, to Rs 362,000 crore constituting only 10.8 per cent of notes in circulation on March 31, 2023. Further, these being at the end of their estimated



THE CIRCULAR ALSO ALLOWS A PERSON TO DEPOSIT RS 2000 NOTES INTO HIS BANK ACCOUNT WITHOUT ANY LIMIT. FOR DEPOSITS ABOVE A SPECIFIED LIMIT, THE BANK IS REQUIRED TO REPORT TO THE INCOME TAX DEPARTMENT

(The writer is a policy analyst)

lifespan of 4 - 5 years and the stock of Rs 500 denominations adequate to meet the currency requirement of the public, it was logical to completely phase out the Rs 2000 note. The RBI circular says that beginning May 23, 2023, the public may deposit Rs 2,000 banknotes into their bank accounts and or exchange them with banknotes of other denominations up to a limit of ten notes of Rs 20,000 value ‘at a time’ in banks until September 30, 2023. The facility for the exchange will also be provided at the 19 Regional Offices (ROs) of RBI having Issue Departments. First, holders of Rs 2000 notes get 131 days to get rid of them which is two-and-a-half times the time given to the holders of Rs 500/1000 notes in 2016 i.e. 52 days to exchange them with the new currency. Second, Rs 2000 notes are only 10.8 per cent of the currency in circulation value-wise (as of March 31, 2023) against old Rs 500/1000 notes being a whopping 86 per cent of the corresponding figure in 2016, this time the load on the system is much less. **Can we simply treat this as a routine exercise?** At a fundamental level, the ‘withdrawal’ of the Rs 2000 banknotes - an exercise that the RBI hopes will get consummated on September 30, 2023 - doesn’t gel with its reiteration that these notes will remain legal tender even after September 30. Imagine a scenario whereby all of the Rs 2000 notes come back to the banks by this deadline then, any talk of whether it will remain legal tender is irrelevant. Look at it from another angle.

If, the intention is to maintain the legal status of the Rs 2000 note even after September 30, 2023, implying that it will continue to be accepted for settlement of payments, then why would holders come forward for exchange or deposit in the bank account? To understand the real intent behind the RBI move, we need to know to what use Rs 2000 notes worth Rs 362,000 crore (as on March 31, 2023) are being put. Do these support legitimate economic activity or people are simply using them to ‘hoard their unaccounted income?’ It can’t be the former; had it been the case then, given the RBI issuing predominantly Rs 500 notes after March 31, 2017, Rs 2000 notes would have disappeared by now. The bulk of these notes are likely held as black money. Daily reports of enforcement agencies raids yielding a mountain of cash from the premises of dubious bureaucrats, politicians, businesspersons and so on confirm this. Unfortunately, the measures outlined in the RBI circular and subsequent clarifications given by the governor and public sector banks (PSBs) such as the State Bank of India (SBI) fail to address this menace. The RBI allows a person to exchange Rs 2,000 banknotes with other denominations up to a limit of ten notes of Rs 20,000 value ‘at a time’ in banks. While exchanging he is not required to share his identity. This means he can visit a branch any number of times in a day and increase the value of exchange. By doing say ten trips, he can get rid of Rs 2 lakhs worth of black money in a day. If this is repeated for 131 days, he can dis-

pose of Rs 262 lakh. Under such an arrangement which doesn’t insist on the identity at the time of exchange, a person holding say Rs 100 crore in Rs 2000 notes as ‘unaccounted cash’ can get this exchanged with smaller denominations of Rs 500/100 notes by hiring a number of persons to visit branches of any number of banks and repeat for over 4 months. With anonymity preserved, he could go for a less tedious process. He could simply conspire with the bank manager - under a quid pro quo - to have those Rs 100 crore exchanged. All that the latter needs to do is to show in records multiple entries of Rs 20,000 each. The circular also allows a person to deposit Rs 2000 notes into his bank account without any limit. For deposits above a specified limit (Rs 10 lakh in a savings account), the bank is required to report to the income tax department. But, the hoarder of black cash won’t take this route when the other option (read: exchange) where he can remain anonymous, is available. To conclude, far from combating black money, the RBI operation will only help hoarders keep it in a safer zone by exchanging Rs 2000 notes with smaller denomination Rs 500 notes without having to disclose their identity. The RBI/government should go for a course correction. First, it should say upfront that ‘from October 1, 2023, Rs 2000 note won’t be legal tender. Second, for every exchange, the bank should insist on a person’s identity either PAN or Aadhaar. Third, for depositing money in the account, the banks should strictly enforce KYC norms.

Manual scavenging is a curse, must end now

To end this menace Govt must provide alternative employment opportunities and encourage mechanised cleaning technologies

“Death does not discriminate, but the system does” cried out Rukmani Devi, a grief-stricken relative who lost her cousin, Nand Kushwaha, and his son Nitesh, in a horrifying incident that unfolded in Bahora Ramnagar village. The tight-knit community mourns the loss of four lives, all victims of the archaic and inhumane practice of manual scavenging. On a sombre Sunday morning, tragedy struck as these brave souls descended into a septic tank, unaware of the deadly consequences that awaited them. The incident occurred under the jurisdiction of the Nebua Naurangia police station in the Kushinagar district of Uttar Pradesh, a region plagued by the persisting men-



BISWAJEET BANERJEE

(Writer is Political Editor, The Pioneer, Lucknow)

ace of manual scavenging. Despite numerous promises and legislative measures to eradicate this degrading practice, it continues to thrive, claiming innocent lives and shattering families. Manual scavenging, a practice that involves the manual cleaning of septic tanks, drains, and dry latrines, has been banned in India since 1993 under the Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act. However, the law remains largely ineffective, with thousands of individuals still forced into this hazardous occupation due to poverty, social discrimination, and a lack of alternative livelihood options. Incidentally, the government, which has introduced

several measures to prohibit manual scavenging and rehabilitate those involved, does not consider septic cleaning as manual scavenging, despite the National Human Rights Commission’s (NHRC) recommendation to expand the definition of manual scavengers. The incident serves as a stark reminder of the hazardous conditions faced by manual scavengers. “Nand was our sole breadwinner,” sobbed Rukmani Devi, her voice heavy with grief. “We had hoped for a brighter future for Nitesh, but now he is gone too. Why does no one care about our lives?” The tragedy that befell the Kushwaha family is not an isolated incident. According to a report by Safai Karamchari Andolan, an organization

fighting for the rights of sanitation workers, there have been over 1,800 deaths related to manual scavenging in the past decade alone. In four years, between 2017-2021, 330 people lost their lives due to “hazardous cleaning of sewer and septic tanks” in India, as per the data presented in Lok Sabha in August 2022. “Each death represents a life cut short, dreams left unfulfilled, and families left devastated,” Dinesh Kanojia, an office-bearer of Safai Karamchari Aandolan said and added: “We clean society’s waste, but society refuses to acknowledge us as humans.” Despite the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and the Rehabilitation Act of 2013, which outlawed the employ-

ment of manual scavengers and aimed to provide rehabilitation measures, the implementation has been woefully inadequate. The lack of political will, insufficient enforcement, and social apathy have perpetuated this grave injustice. The dangers of manual scavenging extend beyond the risk of asphyxiation and drowning. The workers are often exposed to toxic gases, disease-causing pathogens, and unsanitary conditions that pose serious health risks. The absence of social safety nets and adequate welfare measures further deepens their economic struggles, leaving them with limited choices. “The persistence of manual scavenging in India is a grave violation of human rights, as it subjects individu-

als to dehumanizing conditions, health hazards, and social exclusion,” Raghuvanshi, a Dalit activist, said. The tragedy in Bahora Ramnagar village should serve as a wake-up call for the authorities and society at large. Immediate action is needed to ensure justice for the victims and their families and to put an end to this brutal practice. To address this grave issue, a multi-pronged approach is necessary. Strengthening the implementation of existing laws, providing alternative employment opportunities, investing in mechanized cleaning technologies, and raising public awareness are crucial steps toward eradicating manual scavenging. Collaboration between government bodies, civil society organizations, and

affected communities is essential to ensure sustainable change. “No more lives should be lost in the depths of septic tanks,” declared Smita Yadav, a social worker. “It is time to break the chains of this exploitative practice and work towards a future where dignity and equality prevail.” She said: “As the Kushwaha family and the entire community grieve the loss of Nand and Nitesh, their deaths must not be forgotten. Their tragedy should ignite a collective resolve to eliminate manual scavenging and create a society where every life is valued and respected. Let us unite in our demand for justice and in our commitment to building a future free from this dark chapter of human suffering.”



# Ahead of House debt ceiling vote, Biden shores up Democrats

## McCarthy scrambles for GOP support

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Hard-fought to the end, the debt ceiling and budget cuts package is heading toward a crucial US House vote as President Joe Biden and Speaker Kevin McCarthy assemble a coalition of centrist Democrats and Republicans to push it to passage over fierce blowback from conservatives and some progressive dissent. Biden is sending top White House officials to meet early Wednesday at the Capitol to shore up support ahead of voting. McCarthy is working furiously to sell sceptical fellow Republicans, even fending

off challenges to his leadership, in the rush to avert a potentially disastrous U.S. default. Despite deep disappointment from right-flank Republicans that the compromise falls short of the spending cuts they demanded, McCarthy insisted he would have the votes needed to ensure approval. “We’re going to pass the bill,” McCarthy said as he exited a lengthy Tuesday night meeting at the Capitol. Quick approval by the House and later in the week the Senate would ensure government checks will continue to go out to Social Security recipients, veterans and others and would prevent financial upheaval at home and abroad. Next Monday is when the Treasury has said the U.S. would run short of money to pay its debts, risking an eco-

nomically dangerous default. The package leaves few lawmakers fully satisfied, but Biden and McCarthy are counting on pulling majority support from the political centre, a rarity in divided Washington, testing the leadership of the Democratic president and the Republican speaker. Overall, the 99-page bill restricts spending for the next two years, suspends the debt ceiling into January 2025 and changes policies, including new work requirements for older Americans receiving food aid and greenlighting an Appalachian natural gas line that many Democrats oppose. For more than two hours late Tuesday as aides wheeled in pizza at the Capitol, McCarthy walked Republicans through the details, fielded questions and encouraged



Scott Perry, left, and Chip Roy, R-Texas, speak with reporters as member of the conservative House Freedom Caucus talk about the debt limit deal during a news conference Tuesday on Capitol Hill in Washington. Agencies

them not to lose sight of the bill’s budget savings. The speaker faced a sometimes tough crowd. Leaders of the hard-right House Freedom

Caucus spent the day lambasting the compromise as falling well short of the spending cuts they demand, and they vowed to try to halt passage by

Congress. “This deal fails, fails completely,” Rep. Scott Perry, R-Pa., the chairman of the Freedom Caucus, said earlier in the day, flanked by others outside the Capitol. “We will do everything in our power to stop it.” A much larger conservative faction, the Republican Study Committee, declined to take a position. Even rank-and-file centrist conservatives were unsure, leaving McCarthy desperately hunting for votes. Rep. Nancy Mace, R-S.C., said after the “healthy debate” late into the night she was still a no. Ominously, the conservatives warned of potentially trying to oust McCarthy over the compromise. “There’s going to be a reckoning,” said Rep. Chip Roy of Texas. Biden was speak-

ing directly to lawmakers, making more than 100 one-on-one calls, the White House said. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office said the spending restrictions in the package would reduce deficits by \$1.5 trillion over the decade, a top goal for the Republicans trying to curb the debt load. McCarthy told lawmakers that number was higher if the two-year spending caps were extended, which is no guarantee. But in a surprise that could further erode Republican support, the GOP’s drive to impose work requirements on older Americans receiving food stamps ends up boosting spending by \$2.1 billion over the time period. That’s because the final deal exempted veterans and homeless people, expanding the food stamp rolls by 78,000

people monthly, the CBO said. House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries said it was up to McCarthy to turn out votes from some two-thirds of the Republican majority, a high bar the speaker may not be able to reach. In the 435-member House, 218 votes are needed for passage. Still, Jeffries said the Democrats would do their part to avoid failure. “It is my expectation that House Republicans would keep their promise and deliver at least 150 votes as it relates to an agreement that they themselves negotiated,” Jeffries said. “Democrats will make sure that the country does not default.” Liberal Democrats decried the new work requirements for older Americans, those age 50-54, in the food aid programme.

**दि बाजपुर को-आपरेटिव शुगर फैक्ट्री लि०,**  
बाजपुर, ऊधमसिंह नगर (उत्तराखण्ड)  
फ़ोन: ००५४०१०२ / २०२३-२४ / ४०१  
दिनांक: ३०.०५.२०२३

**ई-निविदा सूचना**  
सत्र २०२३-२४ हेतु चीनी मिल में विभिन्न सामग्री की आपूर्ति एवं सेवाओं हेतु जी०एस०टी० में पंजीकृत अधिकृत विक्रेताओं/प्रतिष्ठित आपूर्तिकर्ताओं एवं अनुमती ठेकेदारों से दिनांक ०१.०६.२०२३ सांय ४.०० बजे से ३०.०६.२०२३ सांय ४.०० बजे तक चरणबद्ध तरीके से ई-निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है।  
ई-निविदा सूचना [www.bazpursugar.com](http://www.bazpursugar.com) तथा विस्तृत निविदा प्रपत्र [www.uktenders.gov.in](http://www.uktenders.gov.in) से डाउनलोड की जा सकती है।  
प्रधान प्रबंधक

**THE HARYANA STATE COOPERATIVE AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT BANK LTD;**  
SCO 31-34, SECTOR-02, PANCHKULA - 134112  
**Requirement of CBS Software Purchase**

HSCARDB intends to purchase banking software which is to be implemented in 70 Branches, 19 CEO Offices and in Head Office by the successful bidder. The detail of tender document, terms & conditions and scope of work can be seen/downloaded from the website <https://haryanacardbank.org>. Offers are required to be sent online on the portal <https://etenders.hry.gov.in> on or before 13-06-2023.

Managing Director

RATHI STEEL AND POWER LIMITED						
Regd. Office: 24/1-A, Mohan Cooperative Industrial Estate, Mathura Road, New Delhi-110044						
CIN-L27109DL1971PLC005905						
web: www.rathisteelandpower.com e-mail:investors@rathisteelandpower.com Tel: 011- 40512426						
Extract of Audited Statement of Financial Results for the quarter and Year ended 31th March 2023 (in Lacs)						
SL. No.	PARTICULARS	QUARTER ENDED			YEAR ENDED	
		31.03.2023 (Audited)	31.12.2021 (Unaudited)	31.03.2022 (Audited)	31.03.2023 (Audited)	31.03.2022 (Audited)
1	Total income from operations (net)	16688.71	17302.02	9921.64	72756.98	54577.56
2	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before tax, exceptional and / or extraordinary item.	511.93	300.65	517.53	1,225.35	462.49
3	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (before Extraordinary items)	511.93	300.65	517.53	1,225.35	462.49
4	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional and / or Extraordinary items)	8,033.75	300.65	(3,593.82)	8,747.17	(3,648.86)
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	8,050.18	334.91	(3,552.50)	8,764.54	(3,607.54)
6	Equity Share Capital	3,130.81	3,130.81	3,130.81	3,130.81	3,130.81
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve as shown in the Balance Sheet of previous year)	--	--	--	--	--
8	Earnings Per Share (after extraordinary items) (of Rs.10/- each)					
	a) Basic :	25.58	0.96	(11.48)	27.86	(11.65)
	b) Diluted:	25.58	0.96	(11.48)	27.86	(11.65)
The above is an extract of the detailed format of Statement of Audited Financial Results for the quarter and year ended on 31th March 2023 filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Statement of standalone Audited Financial Results are available on the websites of the BSE Limited (www.bseindia.com).						
The above financial results were reviewed by the audit committee and approved by Board of Directors of the Company at their meeting held on 30-05-2023.						
		Date: 30-05-2023,			Place: New Delhi	

Integra Telecommunication and Software Limited					
CIN:L74899DL1985PLC020286					
Registered Office: Flat No. 1311,13th Floor, Devika Tower 6, Nehru Place, New Delhi - 110019					
Corporate Office: 610/611, Nirmal Galaxy Avior, L.B.S. Road, Mulund (W), Mumbai-400080					
Email ID: <a href="mailto:info@integratelesoftware.com">info@integratelesoftware.com</a> ; Website: <a href="http://www.integratelesoftware.com">www.integratelesoftware.com</a>					
Extract of Statement of Audited Results for the Quarter and Year ended on 31/03/2023 (Amount in lakhs)					
S. No.	Particulars	Quarter ended			Year ended
		31.03.2023 Audited	31.12.2022 Un-Audited	31.03.2022 Un-Audited	31.03.2023 Audited
1.	Total Income from Operations	3.79	3.78	34.92	64.43
2.	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(3.43)	(4.95)	25.25	32.61
3.	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period before tax(after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(3.43)	(4.95)	25.25	32.61
4.	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period after tax(after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(11.62)	(4.95)	16.64	24.43
5.	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit/(Loss) for the period (after tax) and other Comprehensive Income(after tax)]	(11.62)	(4.95)	16.64	24.43
6.	Equity Share Capital (Face Value of Rs. 10/- per share)	1,056.00	1,056.00	1,056.00	1,056.00
7.	Reserve (excluding revaluation reserves as shown in the balance sheet of previous year)	-	-	-	23.49
8.	Earning Per Share (of Rs.10/- each) (for continuing and discontinued operations) Basic & Diluted	(0.11)	(0.05)	0.16	0.23
<b>Notes :-</b> 1 The above is an extract of the detailed format of Audited Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchange under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The financial results were reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of Directors at their respective meetings held on 30th May, 2023. Format of the Financial Results are available on the websites of the Stock Exchange at <a href="http://www.bseindia.com">www.bseindia.com</a> and on Company's website at <a href="http://www.integratelesoftware.com">www.integratelesoftware.com</a>					
<b>For Integra Telecommunication and Software Limited</b> Sd/- Ramaswamy Narayan Iyer Managing Director DIN:03045662					
<b>Place: Mumbai</b> <b>Date: 30.05.2023</b>					

## Imran Khan gets bail till June 19

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan anti-corruption court on Wednesday granted bail to former premier Imran Khan until June 19 in the Al-Qadiri Trust case involving an alleged corruption of over Rs 50 billion. Khan appeared before the Islamabad-based accountability court after the high court here earlier in the day extended the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief's protective bail for three days and directed him to seek bail from the anti-corruption court within this period. Accountability court Judge Muhammad Bashir, presiding over the hearing, granted Khan bail till June 19 against surety bonds worth Rs 500,000. Earlier, Khan travelled from Lahore to the capital and first



Security personnel with bulletproof shields escort Pakistan's former Prime Minister Imran Khan, center, as he leaves after appearing in court, in Islamabad, Pakistan on Wednesday. AP/PTI

appeared before the Islamabad High Court (IHC) where Justice Miangul Hasan Aurangzeb and Justice Saman Rifat Imtiaz granted him three-day protective bail with direction to go to the anti-corruption court for

bail. The court had earlier on May 17 given him bail till May 31. Khawaja Haris counsel for Khan was present in the court while the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) was represented by prosecutor

Muazaffar Abbasi in the alleged corruption case that led to Khan's arrest on May 9 in the Islamabad High Court premises.

The cricketer-turned-politician's arrest led to massive protests across Pakistan that left more than 10 persons dead and thousands of PTI supporters behind bars. The PTI chief was two days later released by the Supreme Court with the direction to seek bail from the Islamabad High Court. In an informal chat with the media persons on the occasion, Khan said the powerful establishment was running the country. “The government and establishment are the same thing, the latter is running the former,” he said, adding that there is no choice except to hold elections.

SANEH INDUSTRIAL INVESTMENTS LIMITED							
Regd. Office : Delton House 4801 Bharat Ram Road 24 Daryaganj New Delhi -110002 (India)							
Phone No. 91-11-23273907, CIN: L74899DL1980PL060079							
STATEMENT OF AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER / YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2023							
(Rs. In Lakh)							
S. No.	Particulars	Standalone			Consolidated		
		Quarter ended 31.03.2023	Year ended 31.03.2023	Quarter ended 31.03.2022	Quarter ended 31.03.2023	Year ended 31.03.2023	Quarter ended 31.03.2022
		Audited	Audited	Audited	Audited	Audited	Audited
1	Total income from operations (net)	(0.00)	-	0.02	5.27	6.13	0.02
2	Net Profit for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and / or Extraordinary items)	(1.30)	(3.50)	(3.58)	3.16	1.12	(4.75)
3	Net Profit for the period before Tax (after Exceptional and / or Extraordinary items)	(1.30)	(3.50)	(3.58)	3.16	1.12	(4.75)
4	Net Profit for the period after Tax (after Exceptional and / or Extraordinary items)	(11.67)	(13.88)	(3.58)	3.16	75.32	(4.75)
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit for the period (after tax) and other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	12.67	19.53	(40.98)	98.46	204.58	(144.76)
6	Equity share capital (Face Value of Rs.10/- each)	24.00	24.00	24.00	24.00	24.00	24.00
7	Earnings Per Share (before extraordinary items) (Face Value of ` 10/- each)						
	(a) Basic (Rs.)	(4.86)	(5.78)	(1.49)	1.32	31.38	(1.98)
	(b) Diluted (Rs.)	(4.86)	(5.78)	(1.49)	1.32	31.38	(1.98)
NOTES :							
1) The above is an extract of the detailed format of audited Quarterly Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly / Annual Financial Results are available on the Stock Exchanges website <a href="http://www.cse-india.com">www.cse-india.com</a>							
2) The above results have been prepared in accordance with principle and procedures of Indian Accounting Standards(Ind AS) as notified under the companies (Indian Accounting Standards) Rules, 2015 as specified under section 133 of the Companies Act, 2013.							
3) The above Audited Standalone and Consolidated Financial Results were reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors of the Company in its meeting held on 30th May, 2023.							
By order of the Board For Saneh Industrial Investments Limited							
Sd/- Vivek Gupta (Director) DIN 00035916							
Place : Delhi Date : 30 <sup>th</sup> May, 2023							

UNITED LEASING & INDUSTRIES LIMITED					
Regd. Office : Plot No.66, Sector-34, EHTP, Gurugram, Haryana-122001.					
CIN : L17100HR1983PLC033460 Website: <a href="http://www.uliltd.com">www.uliltd.com</a> ,					
Email id: <a href="mailto:investorrelations@uliltd.com">investorrelations@uliltd.com</a> , Phone: 011-49075251					
Extract of Audited Financial Results for the Quarter & Year Ended 31st March, 2023					
(Rs. in lac, except per Share data)					
Sl. No.	Particulars (Refer Notes Below)	Quarter Ended		Year Ended	
		31.03.2023	31.12.2022	31.03.2022	31.03.2023
		[Audited]	[Unaudited]	[Audited]	[Audited]
1	Total Income from Operations	111.93	445.19	223.21	1,047.44
2	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period before tax and exceptional items	(7.75)	17.13	24.30	55.59
3	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period before tax after exceptional items	(7.75)	17.13	24.30	55.59
4	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period after tax	(4.51)	12.85	13.84	43.00
5	Total Comprehensive Income	-	-	-	-
6	Paid-up equity share capital	300.00	300	300.00	300.00
7	Earning Per Share of Rs.10/- each (not annualised)				
	a) Basic	(0.15)	0.43	0.46	1.43
	b) Diluted	(0.15)	0.43	0.46	1.43
<b>Notes :-</b>					
1 The above is an extract of the detailed format of Audited Financial Results for the Quarter and Year ended March 31, 2023 filed with the Stock Exchange under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Audited Financial Results for the quarter and year ended March 31, 2023 are available on the Bombay Stock Exchange website <a href="http://www.bseindia.com">www.bseindia.com</a> and on Company's website <a href="http://www.uliltd.com">www.uliltd.com</a>					
2 The figures for the quarter and year ended March 31, 2022 and March 31, 2023 are the balancing figures between audited figures in respect of the full financial year and the year to date figure up to nine months of the respective financial year.					
3 Figures of the above Previous periods have been regrouped/reclassified/ restated wherever necessary.					
<b>For United Leasing &amp; Industries Ltd.gLrk-&amp;@</b> <b>Anil Kumar Khanna</b> [Managing Director] DIN :00207839					
<b>Date: May 30,2023</b> <b>Place: Gurugram [Haryana]</b>					

## 9 more to be tried under stringent Army Act

PTI ■ LAHORE

Nine more members of Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party were arrested and handed over to the Pakistan Army on Wednesday to be tried under the stringent Pakistan Army Act over their alleged role in the May 9 attacks on sensitive military installations and government buildings. With these arrests, the number of PTI activists to be tried under the Army Act and the Official Secrets Act has exceeded 50. “On the orders of the anti-terrorism courts, nine suspects belonging to PTI and involved in the attack on the ISI buildings (in Faisalabad)

and military installations in Multan Cantonment were handed to the Pakistan Army on Wednesday for their trial under the Army Act and Official Secrets Act,” a court official said. On May 9, violent protests erupted after paramilitary Rangers arrested 70-year-old Khan, the chairman of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party from the Islamabad High Court premises in connection with a corruption case. His party workers vandalised a dozen military installations, including the Lahore Corps Commander House, the Mianwali airbase and the ISI building in Faisalabad in response to Khan's arrest.

## US complains of unsafe move by Chinese jet

AP ■ WASHINGTON

The US military said Tuesday that a Chinese fighter jet flew aggressively close to a US reconnaissance aircraft over the South China Sea, forcing the American pilot to fly through the turbulent wake. The Chinese J-16 fighter pilot “flew directly in front of the nose of the RC-135,” which was conducting routine operations in international airspace last Friday, US Indo-Pacific Command said in a statement. It called the Chinese move an “unnecessarily aggressive maneuver.”

US defense leaders have complained that China's military has become significantly more aggressive over the past five years, intercepting US aircraft and ships in the region. And tensions with China have only grown in recent months over Washington's military support and sales of defensive weapons to self-governing Taiwan, China's assertions of sovereignty to the contested South China Sea and its flying of a suspected spy balloon over the US. In a further sign of the tensions, China said its defense chief will not meet with US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin when the two men attend a security conference in Singapore this coming weekend. Austin is scheduled to address the Shangri-La Dialogue on Saturday, while Chinese Defense Minister Gen. Li Shangfu will speak at the gathering on Sunday.

## China facing more complex security challenges, Xi warns

Beijing (PTI): China is facing more complex and difficult security concerns, President Xi Jinping has said, as he warned citizens to prepare for “worst-case and extreme scenarios” amid deepening tensions with the United States and the European Union. Xi, who presided over a meeting of the National Security Commission on Tuesday, said the complexity and severity of national security problems faced by the country increased dramatically, the state-run Xinhua news agency reported. “The national security front must build up strategic self-confidence, have enough confidence to secure victory, and be keenly aware of its own strengths and

advantages,” he said. The report said that it was stressed at the meeting that “we must be prepared for worst-case and extreme scenarios, and be ready to withstand the major test of high winds, choppy waters, and even dangerous storms.” More efforts must be made to modernise our national security system and capacity, and be prepared for actual combat and in dealing with practical problems,” it said. Documents including “guidelines on speeding up the building of risk monitoring and early warning system for national security” and “guidelines on strengthening extensive public education along with national security” were deliberated and adopted at the meeting.



# N Korea spy satellite launch fails

AP ■ SEOUL

North Korea's attempt to put the country's first spy satellite into space failed Wednesday in a setback to leader Kim Jong Un's push to boost his military capabilities as tensions with the United States and South Korea rise. After an unusually quick admission of failure, North Korea vowed to conduct a second launch after learning what went wrong with its rocket-liftoff. It suggests Kim remains determined to expand his weapons arsenal and apply more pressure on Washington and Seoul while diplomacy is stalled.

South Korea and Japan briefly urged residents to take shelter during the launch.

The South Korean military said it was salvaging an object presumed to be part of the crashed North Korean rocket in waters 200 kilometers (124 miles) west of the southwestern island of Eocheongdo. Later, the Defense Ministry released photos of a white, metal cylinder it described as a suspected rocket part.

A satellite launch by North Korea is a violation of UN Security Council resolutions that ban the country from conducting any launch based on ballistic technology. Observers say North Korea's previous satellite launches helped improve its long-range missile technology.

North Korea long-range missile tests in recent years demonstrated a potential range that could reach all of the continental US, but outside experts say the North Korea still has some work to do to obtain functioning nuclear missiles.

The newly developed Chollima-1 rocket was launched at 6:37 a.m. at the North's Sohae Satellite Launching Ground in the



A TV screen shows a file image of North Korea's rocket launch during a news program at the Seoul Railway Station in Seoul, South Korea on Wednesday. *AP/PTI*

northwest, carrying the Malligvong-1 satellite. The rocket crashed off the Korean Peninsula's western coast after it lost thrust following the separation of its first and second stages, the North's official Korean Central News Agency said. South Korea's military said the North Korean rocket had "an abnormal flight" before it fell in the water. Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno told reporters that no object was believed to have reached space.

North Korea media said the country's space agency will investigate what it calls "the serious defects revealed" by the launch and conduct a second launch as soon as possible. "It is impressive when the North Korean regime actually admits failure, but it would be difficult to hide the fact of a satellite launch failure internationally, and the regime will likely offer a different narrative domestically," Leif-Eric Easley, a professor at Ewha University in Seoul, said.

"This outcome also suggests that Pyongyang may stage another provocation soon, in part to make up for today's setback," Adam Hodge, a

spokesperson at the US National Security Council, said in a statement that Washington strongly condemns the North Korean launch because it used banned ballistic missile technology, raised tensions, and risked destabilizing security in the region and beyond.

The UN imposed economic sanctions on North Korea over its previous satellite and ballistic missile launches, but has not responded to recent tests because China and Russia, permanent council members now locked in confrontations with the US, have blocked attempts to toughen sanctions. Seoul's military said it boosted military readiness in coordination with the United States, and Japan said it prepared to respond to any emergency.

The US said it will take all necessary measures to ensure the security of the American homeland and the defense of South Korea and Japan.

South Korea's capital, Seoul, issued alerts over public loudspeakers and cellphone text messages telling residents to prepare for evacuation after the launch was detected, and Japan activated a missile warn-

ing system for Okinawa prefecture in southwestern Japan, in the rocket's suspected path.

"Please evacuate into buildings or underground," the Japanese alert said.

Japanese Defense Minister Yasukazu Hamada said Japan plans to keep missile defense systems deployed to its southern islands and in southwestern waters until June 11, which is the end of North Korea's announced launch window.

KCNA didn't provide details of the rocket and the satellite beyond their names. But experts earlier said North Korea would likely use a liquid-fuelled rocket as most of its previously tested long-range rockets and missiles have done.

Though it plans a fuller investigation, the North's National Aerospace Development Administration attributed the failure to "the low reliability and stability of the new-type engine system applied to (the) carrier rocket" and "the unstable character of the fuel," according to KCNA.

On Tuesday, Ri Pyong Chol, a top North Korean official, said the North needed a space-based reconnaissance system to counter escalating security threats from South Korea and the United States. However, the spy satellite disclosed in the country's state-run media earlier didn't appear to be sophisticated enough to produce high-resolution imagery. Some outside experts said it may still be able to detect troop movements and large targets such as warships and warplanes. Recent commercial satellite imagery of the North's Sohae launch center showed active construction indicating North Korea plans to launch more than one satellite. In his Tuesday statement, Ri also said North Korea would test "various reconnaissance means" to monitor moves by

the United States and its allies in real time. With three to five spy satellites, North Korea could build a space-based surveillance system that allows it to monitor the Korean Peninsula in near real-time, according to Lee Choon Geun, an honorary research fellow at South Korea's Science and Technology Policy Institute.

The satellite is one of several high-tech weapons systems that Kim has publicly vowed to introduce. Other weapons on his wish list include a multi-warhead missile, a nuclear submarine, a solid-propellant intercontinental ballistic missile and a hypersonic missile.

In his visit to the space agency in mid-May, Kim emphasized the strategic significance of a spy satellite in North Korea's standoff with the United States and South Korea.

Easley, the professor, said Kim has likely increased pressure on his scientists and engineers to launch the spy satellite as rival South Korea successfully launched its first commercial-grade satellite aboard the domestically-built Nuri rocket earlier this month.

South Korea is expected to launch its first spy satellite later this year, and analysts say Kim likely wants his country to launch its spy satellite before the South to reinforce his military credentials at home. After repeated failures, North Korea successfully put its first satellite into orbit in 2012, and the second one in 2016.

The government said both are Earth-observation satellites launched under its peaceful space development program, but many foreign experts believed both were developed to spy on rivals. Observers say there has been no evidence that the satellites have ever transmitted imagery back to North Korea.

# New US aid package for Ukraine may be up to \$300 million

AP ■ WASHINGTON

A US military aid package for Ukraine that is expected to be announced this week will total up to USD 300 million and will include additional munitions for drones, US officials said on Tuesday. The drone ammunition comes after new attacks by unmanned aircraft targeted Moscow.

There has been no suggestion that US-made drones or munitions were used in the recent attacks on Moscow, and US officials have repeatedly said that Ukraine has agreed not to use any American-provided weapons for attacks on Russian soil. The Kremlin blamed Kyiv for Tuesday's attack, but Ukrainian officials had no direct comment.

But the new aid package comes at a tense moment in the war. The latest drone attack on Moscow follows Russia's seizure of the eastern Ukrainian city Bakhmut after a nine-month battle that killed tens of thousands of people. Ukraine is also showing signs that its long-awaited spring counteroffensive may already be underway.

The Russian Defence Ministry said five drones were shot down in Moscow and the systems of three others were jammed, causing them to veer off course. President Vladimir Putin called it a "terrorist" act by Kyiv. A US defence official said the drone strikes would not affect the weapons aid

packages the US is providing Ukraine, to include drone ammunition. The official said the US has committed to supporting Ukraine in its effort to defend the country and Ukraine had committed to not using the systems inside Russia, so the aid would likely continue unchanged.

All of the US officials spoke on the condition of anonymity because the latest aid package has not yet been publicly announced.

US officials did not provide details on the drone munitions in the new aid package or specify which unmanned aircraft would use them. The Defense Department has given Ukraine a variety of unmanned aircraft over the last year, for both surveillance and attacks, including at least two versions of the Switchblade, a so-called kamikaze drone that can loiter in the air and then explode into a target. Other more sophisticated drones can drop munitions, but the US has been reluctant to publicly share details about those. Also included in the newest package will be munitions for Patriot missile batteries and the High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS), Stinger missiles for the Avenger system, mine-clearing equipment, anti-armour rounds, unguided Zuni aircraft rockets, night vision goggles, and about 30 million rounds of small arms ammunition, said the US officials.

# Grossi urges Russia, Ukraine to ban attacks at Europe's largest nuclear plant

**United Nations (AP):** The UN nuclear chief stressed Tuesday that the world is fortunate a nuclear accident hasn't happened in Ukraine and asked Moscow and Kyiv to commit to preventing any attack on Europe's largest nuclear power plant and make other pledges "to avoid the danger of a catastrophic incident."

Rafael Grossi reiterated to the UN Security Council what he told the International Atomic Energy Agency's board of governors in March: "We are rolling a dice and if this continues then one day our luck will run out."

The IAEA director general said avoiding a nuclear accident is possible if five principles are observed at the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, where fighting on seven occasions, most recently last week, disrupted critical power supplies, "the last line of defense against a nuclear accident."

Grossi "respectfully and solemnly" asked Ukraine and Russia to observe the principles, saying IAEA experts at Zaporizhzhia will start monitoring and he will publicly report on any violations.

Ban attacks from or against the plant, especially targeting reactors and spent fuel storage areas. Ban the storage of heavy weapons or presence of military personnel that could be used for an attack.

# UK govt hails first post-Brexit trade deals with Aus, NZ

AP ■ LONDON

The UK government hailed an era of cheaper Australian wine and New Zealand kiwi fruit as free-trade agreements with the two Southern Hemisphere nations took effect on Wednesday.

UK Business and Trade Secretary Kemi Badenoch said that the start of the first all-new trade deals that Britain has struck since it left the European Union marked "a historic moment".

Economists, however, said the economic effect would be limited. Trade expert David Henig called the new deals "a bit of a nothing-burger".

The agreements remove tariffs on most goods, streamline some regulations and make it easier for Britons to work Down Under, and for Aussies and Kiwis to work in the UK.

Britain marked the occasion by sending the Australian and New Zealand governments care packages of products it hopes will get an export boost, including Welsh whiskey, English gin, leather bags from the Cambridge Satchel Co. and Beano, a kids' comic book. The UK says the deals will boost bilat-

eral trade by 53 per cent with Australia and 59 per cent with New Zealand, though the overall volumes are relatively modest: Australia accounts for 0.9 per cent of UK trade, and New Zealand for 0.2 per cent.

Henig, director of the UK Trade Policy Project at the European Centre for International Political Economy, said that the deals "could make bits and pieces of difference. For individual companies it can make a difference".

But, he said, "the likeliest outcome is very little changes". Many economists say no amount of new trade deals will make up for the economic hit of leaving the EU, which before Brexit accounted for about half of all UK trade. Britain's exit erected new trade barriers with the bloc, an economic behemoth of 27 countries and 500 million people. Britain's independent Office for Budget Responsibility estimates Brexit knocked 4 per cent off UK gross domestic product.

The new deals together are expected to bring an estimated boost to GDP of about 0.1 per cent by 2035. Some former UK government officials also say the deals are skewed towards Australia and New Zealand.

# Latvia's Parl elects Rinkevics as Prez

**Helsinki (AP):** Latvian lawmakers on Wednesday picked the country's long-serving and popular foreign minister, a strong backer of Ukraine, as its new head of state in a tight vote. The 100-seat Saeima legislature elected Edgars Rinkevics, the country's top diplomat since 2011, as president to serve for a four-year term.

He received 52 votes, one vote more than required to win the race. Incumbent Egils Levits, Latvia's head of state since 2019, didn't seek reelection. Rinkevics, who announced in 2014 that he is "proudly" homosexual, will be the first openly gay president in the Baltic nations — all former Soviet republics where attitudes to sexual minorities have

been less tolerant than in western Europe.

His closest rival, businessman Uldis Pilems, got 25 votes in the third round of voting between the two remaining contenders after the third candidate, Elina Pinto, had dropped out of the contest.

Rinkevics, 49, served — among other posts — as a state secretary with the defense ministry and worked as a journalist with Latvian Radio in the 1990s.

As foreign minister, he has enjoyed high popularity among Latvians due to his hard stance toward neighbouring Russia and his unwavering support for Ukraine that is under assault from Moscow.



**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
This is to inform general public that Sh. Pawan Kumar Gupta has acquired the Upper Ground Floor Only Without Roof Rights "said Floor" Built-on Plot No. 4227, old Plot No. 3462 area measuring 90 Sq. Yds., Built-on Plot No. 25 Situated at Village Chowki, Mubarakabad Budh Nagar/Colony Known as Jai Mata market, Tri Nagar Delhi- 110035 vide Sale Deed dated 12.10.2021, Doc no. 14636 and Now, Sh. Pawan Kumar Gupta and Mr. Mukesh Kumar Gupta are mortgaging the above said property with Indusind Bank Ltd. & in case anyone has any objection, the same may be raised within 07 days of this publication to Mr. Muneesh Dhaswan/ Mr. Sudhir Jain (Advocates), Law Vertas North, Unit no 907, 9th Floor, GD-ITL Tower, (B-08), Netaji Subhash Place, Delhi-110034 or contact at 9066707172/9818228636 (M).

**PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LTD.**  
(Office: Chief Engineer/ P&M, PSPCL, Ludhiana)  
Corporate Identification No. U40109PB2010SGC033813  
website: www.pspcl.in  
**Tender Enquiry No. 03/CE/P&M/2023**  
CE/P&M, PSPCL, Ludhiana invites e-Tender for Manufacture, testing, supply & delivery of different types of Fire Extinguishers as per PSPCL specifications. For detailed NIT and tender specification, please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> from **31-05-2023 from 11:00 AM** onwards. Note: Corrigendum and addendum, if any will be published online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>  
**76155/12/1721/2023/24539** Dated CHD :- 5/31/2023

**Office of the Superintending Engineer**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Circle, Public Works Department, Pithoragarh**  
Email : [sepwdpth@rediffmail.com](mailto:sepwdpth@rediffmail.com)  
Letter No. : 2865/458C.B./2023 Dated : 30/05/2023  
**National Competitive E-Tender Notice**  
The Superintending Engineer, 3rd Circle, Public Works Department Pithoragarh invites tender through E-Tendering (**Two Bid System**) on behalf of Hon'ble Governor of Uttarakhand for following works. All other information will be available from date **05-06-2023** at 5.00 PM onward on website <http://www.uktenders.gov.in>

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Earnest Money (in Lac)	Cost of Tender (₹)	Validity of Tender (day)	Period of Completion (months)	Contractor's Category of Registration
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Construction of 24 Units Type-II & 12 Units Type-III Residential Quarters for Class-III Employees at Judgeship Champawat Headquarter of Champawat District.	20.40	5000.00 +G.S.T.	120	17	Category A & Higher for Building works, in state Govt./Govt. of India

**RLF LIMITED**  
Regd.Office : 14Kms, Gurgaon Pataudi Road,Jhund Sarai Veeran, Distt.Gurugram, Haryana.  
CIN : L74999HR1979PLC032747, Website: [www.rlftd.com](http://www.rlftd.com),  
Email id: [investorrelations@rlftd.com](mailto:investorrelations@rlftd.com), Phone: 011-49075251.

Statement of Audited Financial Results for the Quarter and Year Ended March 31, 2023						
(Rs. in Lakhs)						
Sl. No.	Particulars (Refer Notes below)	Quarter Ended			Financial Year Ended	
		31.03.2023 [Audited]	31.12.2022 [Unaudited]	31.03.2022 [Audited]	31.03.2023 [Audited]	31.03.2022 [Audited]
1	Total Income from Operations	25.27	25.21	22.4	96.62	70.10
2	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period before tax and exceptional items	(16.83)	(7.63)	-84.77	(34.16)	(87.64)
3	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period before tax after exceptional items	(16.83)	(7.63)	-84.77	(34.16)	(87.64)
4	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period after tax	(260.71)	(7.63)	-84.77	(278.04)	(87.64)
5	Total Comprehensive Income	-	-	-	-	-
6	Paid-up equity share capital	980.08	980.08	980.08	980.08	980.08
7	Earning Per Share of Rs.10/- each (not annualised)					
	a) Basic	(2.66)	(0.08)	(0.86)	(2.84)	(0.89)
	b) Diluted	(2.66)	(0.08)	(0.86)	(2.84)	(0.89)

**Notes :-**

- The above Audited Financial Results of the Company for the quarter and year ended March 31, 2023 have been reviewed by Audit Committee and approved by the Board at its meeting held on 30th May, 2023
- The Financial Results of the Company have been prepared in accordance with the Indian Accounting Standards ("Ind AS") as prepared under Section 133 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with relevant rules issued thereunder. The Company had previously issued its unaudited financial results for the quarter ended March 2023 based on its preliminary selection of exemptions and accounting policies.
- The Company's Primary business segment is reflected based on principal business activities carried on by the Company. As per Indian Accounting Standard (Ind-As-108) "Operating Segments" as notified under the Companies ( Indian Accounting Standards) Rules, 2015 as amended, the Company operates in one reportable business segment.
- The previous periods/ year figure have been regrouped / reclassified, wherever necessary.

For RLF Limited  
Sd/-  
Vikas Grover  
Director  
Place : Gurugram, Haryana  
Dated : 30th May, 2023  
DIN : 07075918

**M.P. MADHYA KSHETRA VIDYUT VITARAN CO. LTD.**  
(Govt. of M.P. Undertaking)  
NISHTHA PARISAR, BIJALEE NAGAR, GOVINDPURA, BHOPAL-23  
Phone No. : 0755-2602033-36, Fax : 2589821, 2586636  
Ref. MD/MK/04/NIT/786 Date : 31.05.2023  
**TENDER NOTICE**  
MPMKVCL, Bhopal, invites following bids through e-tendering.

Tender specification Number	Particulars	Approx. Value (Rs. Lakh)	Tender Fee including GST (in Rs.)	Date of Pre-Bid Conference	Date of Opening of Tender
MD/MK/04/933	Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) for SCADA Part-B Line Equipments namely Auto Reclosure, Sectionalizer, 2/3/4 Way RMUs and 11 KV & 33 KV Fault Passage Indicator (FPI) installed under MPMKVCL, Bhopal	357.00	11800	08.06.2023 03.00 PM	16.06.2023 03:00 PM

Other details and full Tender documents would be available on Company website <https://portal.mpcz.in> & Govt. Website <https://mptenders.gov.in> shortly.  
M.P. Madhyam/110144/2023 **CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER (PROC.)**

**Delton Cables Limited**  
Regd.Office : Delton House 4801 Bharat Ram Road 24 Darya Ganj New Delhi -110002  
Website : [www.deltoncables.com](http://www.deltoncables.com), E-mail: [cs@deltoncables.com](mailto:cs@deltoncables.com),CIN: L31300DL1964PLC004255  
**EXTRACT OF AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2023** (Rs. in lakhs)

SL No	Particulars	Quarter ended 31.03.2023 Audited	Quarter ended 31.12.2022 Unaudited	Quarter ended 31.03.2022 Audited	Year Ended 31.03.2023 Audited	Year Ended 31.03.2022 Audited
1	Total income from operations (net)	8,112.41	6,797.67	4,821.84	27,348.13	15,971.49
2	Net Profit for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and / or Extraordinary items)	98.53	191.85	386.27	656.96	105.02
3	Net Profit for the period before Tax (after Exceptional and / or Extraordinary items)	98.61	191.85	386.19	664.95	104.94
4	Net Profit for the period after Tax (after Exceptional and / or Extraordinary items)	(432.85)	157.33	294.40	57.75	76.61
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit for the period (after tax) and other Comprehensive income (after tax)]	(429.05)	153.78	317.41	63.64	92.88
6	Equity share capital (Face Value of Rs.10/- each)	864.00	864.00	864.00	864.00	864.00
7	Earnings Per Share (before extraordinary items) (a) Basic (Rs.) (b) Diluted (Rs.)	(5.01) (5.01)	1.82 1.82	3.41 3.41	0.67 0.67	0.89 0.89

**Notes:**  
1) The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly / Annual Financial Results are available on the Stock Exchanges website ([www.bseindia.com](http://www.bseindia.com)) and on Company's website ([www.deltoncables.com](http://www.deltoncables.com)).  
2) The above result have been prepared in accordance with principle and procedures of Indian Accounting Standards (Ind AS) as notified under the companies (Indian Accounting Standards) Rules, 2015 as specified under section 133 of Companies Act, 2013.  
3) The above results have been reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of Directors at their meeting held on May 30, 2023. The Statutory Auditors of the Company have have expressed an unmodified audit opinion on these results.  
For and on behalf of the Board  
Sd/-  
Vivek Gupta  
(Managing Director)  
DIN 00035916  
Place : Delhi  
Date : 30-May-23

**RATHI BARS LIMITED**  
CIN No: L74899DL1993PLC054781  
Regd. Office : A-24/7, Mohan Co-operative Indl. Estate, New Delhi-110017  
Ph.: +91-11-43165400, Web: [www.rathisteels.com](http://www.rathisteels.com),  
E-mail : [rathibars@hotmail.com](mailto:rathibars@hotmail.com)  
**STATEMENT OF PROFIT AND LOSS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 2023** (Rs. In Lacs)

Particulars	Quarter Ended			Year Ended	
	31-03-2023 (Unaudited)	31-12-2022 (Unaudited)	31-03-2022 (Unaudited)	31-03-2023 (Audited)	31-03-2022 (Audited)
1 Total Revenue From operations	19,868.14	7,412.35	13,787.42	48,263.78	49,392.66
2 Net Profit/Loss for the Period (Before Tax)	91.35	66.84	94.92	331.54	317.48
3 Net Profit/Loss for the Period (After Tax)				258.39	285.37
4 Total Comprehensive Income	91.35	66.84	94.92	258.39	285.37
5 Equity Share Capital	1,633.04	1,633.04	1,633.04	1,633.04	1,633.04
6 Reserves (Excluding Revaluation Reserves)				7,402.57	7,144.18
7 Earning Per Share (of Rs. 10 Each)					
Basic :	0.56	0.41	0.58	1.58	1.75
Diluted :	0.56	0.41	0.58	1.58	1.75

**\* Not Annualised**  
1 The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly/Annual Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosures Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The Full format of the Quarterly/Annual Financial Results are available on the Stock Exchange's websites i.e. [www.bseindia.com](http://www.bseindia.com) and also at the website of the Company at [www.rathisteels.com](http://www.rathisteels.com).  
2 The Company does not have any Exceptional and Extraordinary item to report during the above periods.  
3 The Company has not discontinued any of its operations during the above periods.  
4 Tax expenses / Provision for Taxation has been made on annual basis only.  
5 The figures of previous year / Quarters have been re-arranged/re-grouped wherever felt necessary.  
By order of the Board  
for **Rathi Bars Limited**  
**Anurag Rathi**  
(Managing Director)  
DIN : 00063345  
Place: New Delhi  
Date : 30/05/2023



# Centre's fiscal deficit narrows to 6.4% of GDP in FY23

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre's fiscal deficit narrowed to 6.4 per cent of the GDP in 2022-23 from 6.71 per cent in FY22, as anticipated by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her Budget in February this year.

In the Union Budget, the government aimed to further bring down the fiscal deficit - a key indicator of borrowing -- during the current financial year 2023-24 to 5.9 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP).

Unveiling the revenue-expenditure data of the Union government for 2022-23, the Controller General of Accounts (CGA) said the fiscal deficit in absolute terms was Rs 17,33,131 crore (provisional), marginally down from the amount projected in the Revised Estimates (RE) in the Budget.

CGA said the government received Rs 24.56 lakh crore (101 per cent of corresponding RE 2022-23 of total receipts) during 2022-23.

It comprised Rs 20.97 lakh



crore tax revenue (Net to Centre), Rs 2.86 lakh crore of non-tax revenue and Rs 72,187 crore of non-debt capital receipts.

Non-debt capital receipts consist of the recovery of loans

and miscellaneous capital receipts.

About Rs 9.48 lakh crore has been transferred to state governments as devolution of taxes by the central government, which is Rs 50,015 crore higher than the previous year (2021-22).

The CGA data further revealed that the Centre's total expenditure was Rs 41.89 crore (100 per cent of corresponding RE 2022-23), out of which Rs 34.52 lakh crore was on the revenue account and Rs 7.36 lakh crore on the capital

account.

Out of the total revenue expenditure, Rs 9.28 lakh crore was on account of interest payments and Rs 5.31 lakh crore towards major subsidies.

As per CGA, the revenue deficit for the fiscal ending March 2023 was 3.9 per cent of GDP while the effective revenue deficit worked out to be 2.8 per cent of GDP.

Aditi Nayar, Chief Economist and Head - Research and Outreach, Icra, said the government was able to restrict its FY2023 fiscal

deficit at Rs 17.3 lakh crore, a shade below the FY2023 RE, with higher than estimated revenue receipts and a small undershooting in revenue expenditure, offsetting the dis-investment miss and a healthier than expected capex.

"In FY2023, the government's net tax revenues reported a healthy growth of 15.2 per cent, amidst a 17.8 per cent contraction in non-tax revenues, 7.8 per cent increase in revenue expenditure, and a robust 24.2 per cent expansion in capex," she said.

# IT sector growth to slow down further in FY24: Icra

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Indian IT companies revenue growth will slow down further to mid-single digits amid intensifying headwinds for the nearly USD 250 billion dollar sector, domestic rating agency Icra said on Wednesday.

The continuing uncertainties are set to take their toll on hiring, and companies are expected to keep employee addition at "low levels" in the near term, the rating agency said, adding that the net addition is negative in the last two-quarters of FY23.

As per industry lobby grouping Nasscom's report published in March, the sector's growth slowed down to 8.4 per cent in FY23 from over 15 per cent in the previous fiscal.

"Despite a strong order book and deal pipelines of Indian IT services companies, Icra expects the revenue growth to remain subdued in mid-single digits in USD terms in FY2024," the agency said.

It has maintained its stable outlook for companies in the sector, which is generally known to have the best quality on leverage positions.

The agency said the growth momentum witnessed a slowdown in the last two quarters due to macroeconomic headwinds in the US and Europe, which together account for up to 90 per cent of the industry's



revenues.

On a sectoral basis, growth from the banking, financial services and insurance segment, which contributes nearly a third of the overall revenues, tapered more than other segments because of the crisis in American banks, it said.

There are delays in decision-making by customers, as visible from the slowdown in the conversion of deals to revenues to some extent, it added.

On the profitability front, Icra said companies in its sample set witnessed a 1.90 per cent narrowing in the operating profit margins to 22.9 per cent in FY23 and added that it expects the number to remain steady despite the slowdown in revenue growth.

From an employee addition perspective, the top five companies in the sector added 83,906 people in FY23 compared to 2.73 lakh in FY22.

Hiring will "remain at low levels in the near term till the macroeconomic uncertainty continues", the agency added.

ASHNOOR TEXTILE MILLS LIMITED						
Registered Office : Behrampur Road, Khandsa Village, Gurugram, Haryana- 122001, India, Tel: +91 (0124) - 4809756						
CIN: UL17226HR1984PLC033384   E mail: atml_delhi@yahoo.com   Website : www.ashnoortex.com						
Statement of Standalone Audited Financial Results for the Quarter and Year Ended March 31, 2023						
Sl. No.	Particulars	(Rs. in lakhs)				
		For the quarter ended March 31, 2023	For the quarter ended December 31, 2022	For the quarter ended March 31, 2022	For the Year ended March 31, 2023	For the Year ended March 31, 2022
		(Audited)	(Unaudited)	(Audited)	(Audited)	(Audited)
1	Total Income from Operations (Net)	3,586.47	2,354.92	7,703.84	17,778.83	26,232.20
2	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	416.00	50.01	211.89	781.18	1,206.48
3	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	432.05	50.01	207.44	797.23	1,202.03
4	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	311.88	35.14	138.46	612.43	895.53
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	311.88	35.14	138.46	612.43	895.53
6	Paid Up Equity Share Capital	1,273.95	1,273.95	1,273.95	1,273.95	1,273.95
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the Audited Balance Sheet of the previous year	4,388.01	-	3,775.58	4,388.01	3,775.58
8	Securities Premium Account	240.00	240.00	240.00	240.00	240.00
9	Net Worth	5,661.96	5,350.12	5,049.53	5,661.96	5,049.53
10	Paid up Debt Capital / Outstanding Debt	0.18	0.24	0.13	0.18	0.13
11	Outstanding Redeemable Preferences Shares	-	-	-	-	-
12	Debt Equity Ratio	1.25	1.00	1.94	1.25	1.94
13	Earnings Per Share (of Rs. 10/- each) (before and after extraordinary items)					
	1. Basic:	2.45	0.28	1.09	4.80	7.02
	2. Diluted:	2.45	0.28	1.09	4.80	7.02
14	Capital Redemption Reserve	-	-	-	-	-
15	Debtenture Redemption Reserve	-	-	-	-	-
16	Debt Service Coverage Ratio	2.20	0.68	2.87	1.82	3.50
17	Interest Service coverage Ratio	4.69	1.58	4.20	2.77	4.41
Note:1 The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly and Yearly Financial Results filed with the Bombay Stock Exchange under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly and Yealy Financial Results as on March 31, 2023 are available on the websites of the Bombay Stock Exchange i.e. www.bseindia.in and on web site of the Company i.e. www.ashnoortex.com						
By Order of the Board of Directors For Ashnoor Textile Mills Limited Sd/- Suneel Gupta Managing Director DIN - 00052084						
Place : Gurugram, Haryana Date : 30-05-2023						

FEEDBACKINFRAPRIVATE LIMITED						
CIN-U74899DL1990PTC040630						
Registered Office: 311, 3rd Floor, Vardhaman Plaza, Pocket 7, Plot No. 6, Sector 12, Dwarka, New Delhi - 110078, India						
Corporate Office: 1st Floor, Plot No. 77A East Tower, Ifico Road, Sector-18, Gurugram - 122015, Haryana, India						
Telephone: Board: +91 124 4169100    Fax: +91 124 4169155						
E-mail: feedback.legal@feedbackinfra.com    Website: www.feedbackinfra.com						
STANDALONE AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR HALF YEAR ENDED 30ST MARCH, 2023						
Sl No.	Particulars	Quarter Ended March 31,2023	Quarter Ended December 31,2022	Quarter Ended March 31, 2022	For the Year Ended March 31, 2023	For the Year Ended March 31, 2022
		Audited	Audited	Unaudited	Audited	Audited
1	Total Income from Operations	4,562	4,494	6,080	19,245	19,978
2	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and / or Extraordinary items)	(3,608)	(2,712)	(2,526)	(10,151)	(11,306)
3	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional and / or Extraordinary items)	(3,608)	(2,712)	(6,550)	(10,151)	(17,414)
4	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional and / or Extraordinary items)	(2,764)	(2,033)	(5,337)	(7,627)	(13,503)
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	(2,825)	(2,033)	(4,895)	(7,688)	(13,061)
6	Paid up equity share capital	1,636	1,636	1,636	1,636	1,636
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve)	(16,839)	(14,015)	(9,152)	(16,839)	(9,152)
8	Securities premium account	1,739	1,739	1,739	1,739	1,739
9	Net Worth	(15,203)	(12,379)	(7,515)	(15,203)	(7,515)
10	Paid up debt capital / Outstanding Debt	54,791	53,205	52,235	54,791	52,235
11	Outstanding Reedeemable Preference Share	-	-	-	-	-
12	Debt Equity Ratio *	-3.23	-4.30	-6.95	-3.23	-6.95
13	Earnings Per Share (for continuing and discontinued operations)					
	Basic	-16.89	-12.43	-32.62	-46.61	-82.53
	Diluted	-16.89	-12.43	-32.62	-46.61	-82.53
14	Capital Redemption Reserve	-	-	-	-	-
15	Debtenture Redemption Reserve	1,210	1,210	1,210	1,210	1,210
16	Debt Service Coverage Ratio (DSCR) *	0.00	-0.01	-0.02	0.00	-0.06
17	Interest Service Coverage Ratio (ISCR) *	0.02	-0.16	-0.44	0.17	-0.39
Additional information as per Regulation 52(4) of SEBI (LODR) Regulations, 2015						
1 During the year ended March 31, 2023, principal and interest amount was due on Non-Convertible Debenture but not paid.						
2 There has been no improvement in financial strength of the company during the year and company continued to face financial constraint, therefore company has not got the credit rating reassessed therefore care has assigned INC (ISSUER NOT COOPERATIVE).						
3 Debentures are secured by way of first pari- passu charge by hypothecation of entire current assets, movable fixed assets of the Company both present and future, Corporate Guarantee of the Promoter Company and pledge of shares of subsidiary Company. These are to be secured against first pari- issue charge over total assets to the extent of total assets cover of atleast 1.5 times. The total asset coverage ratio is 1.28. times as on March 31, 2023.						
* Notes 1: Adopted definitions for Ratios:						
Ratios has been computed as follows						
Debt Equity Ratio = Total Debt / Total Equity**						
Total Debt= Non current borrowings + current maturities of non-current borrowings						
Total equity = Equity share capital + Other equity + Compulsory convertible instruments to equity						
Interest Service Coverage Ratio (ISCR)=( EBDIT-Current Tax)/Gross Interest						
Debt Service Coverage Ratio (DSCR) = (EBDIT-Current Tax)/(Gross interest + Principal Repayment of long Term debts excluding repayment from refinancing of debt)**						
Assets Coverage Ratio = (Total assets) / (Total borrowing excluding unsecured borrowings and compulsory convertible instruments to equity)						
Note - 2						
a) The above is an extract of the annual financial results required to be filed with the Stock Exchange under Regulation 52 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 (as amended). The full format of the annual financial results are available on the Stock Exchange website www.bseindia.com and on the Company website www. feedbackinfra.com						
b) For the items referred in the Regulation 52(4) of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, the pertinent disclosures have been made to the Bombay Stock Exchange website www.bseindia.com and on the Company's website www. feedbackinfra.com						
c) The above financial results for the year ended March 31, 2023 have been reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors in the meeting held on30 <sup>th</sup> May 2023.						
d) The Statement has been prepared in accordance with the Indian Accounting Standards ("Ind AS") as prescribed under Section 133 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with relevant rules issued thereunder and in terms of Regulation 52(1) of SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosures Requirements) Regulations, 2015 and SEBI's circular no. CIR/IMD/DFI/69/ 2016 dated August 10, 2016.						
e) The Company is primarily in the business of consultancy. The Board of Directors of the Company, which has been identified as being the chief operating decision maker (CODM), evaluates the Company's performance, allocate resources based on the analysis of the various performance indicator of the Company as a single unit. Therefore, the Company's business activity falls within a single business segment in terms of Ind AS 108.						
For and on behalf of Board of Directors Sd/- Hari Om Director DIN No. 10045489						
Place : Gurugram Date : 30th May, 2023						

PUBLIC NOTICE	
Reg : Plot No. 802, Phase-V, Udyog Vihar, HSIIDC, Gurugram.	
Plot No. 802, Phase-V, Udyog Vihar, HSIIDC, Gurugram Measuring 450 Sq. Meter was allotted by the Corporation to Sita Ram Gupta and Sons (HUF), Sanjay Gupta And Sons (HUF), Rajesh Gupta (HUF), Rachita Gupta vide Allotment/Re-Allotment Letter No.2260 Dte 27.09.2018.	
The Corporation has been informed that the original allottee Mr. Sita Ram Gupta has expired on 31.10.2020. The Surviving legal heirs of the deceased allottee all Surviving Members are (Sanjay Gupta, Laxmi Devi, Moenakshi Gupta, Meetu Goel, Rechita Gupta, Sonia Gupta) have approached the Corporation for transfer of the plot in favour of Sh. Sanjay Gupta And Sons (HUF) and others.	
The Corporation is in process of considering their request & transferring the said plot in favour of Sh. Sita Ram and Sons (HUF), Parveen Bansal (HUF) Through this public notice it is hereby informed that in case, any of the legal heirs of late Sh. Sita Ram Gupta or any other person having his/her objection in writing before the undersigned or Addl. General Manager (Estate), HSIIDC Limited, C-13-14, Sector-6, Panchkula, Haryana along with an affidavit within a period of 30 days from the date of publication of the notice.In case no response is received within the aforesaid period, it will be presumed that no one has any objection to transfer of the said plot in favour of Sh. Sita Ram and Sons (HUF), Parveen Bansal (HUF) and the corporation shall go ahead with transfer of plot in his favour.	
Estate Manager For & behalf of Haryana State Industrial and Infrastructure Dev. Corp Ltd. Vanijya Nikunj Complex Udyog Vihar, Phase-V, Gurugram	
PUBLIC NOTICE	
<b>Subject :</b> Transfer of ownership in respect of H.No.490, 3rd Floor, Urban Estate, Huda, Sector-2, Faridabad, measuring area 161.96 Sq. Mtr., in respect of 100% share upon the basis of Sale Deed bearing document No.1522 dated 03-06-2022, registered in the office of Sub Registrar Ballabgarh. Whereas the applicant <b>Sh. Pradeep Aggarwal S/o Sh. Mitthan Lal Aggarwal R/o Plot No.1, Apna Ghar Market, Sohna Road, Sector-23, Faridabad, Haryana</b> , intends to apply for the transfer of the said property in his favour on the basis of Sale Deed. If any person is having objection against the transfer of the said property, He/she can submit objections in the writing to Estate Officer HSVP, Faridabad, along with supporting documents within 30 days from the date of publication of this notice. Otherwise the Estate Officer may transfer the said property as per HUDA policy and may not entertain subsequent claim if any.	
Applicant - Sh. Pradeep Aggarwal	

## 40-50 FDI proposals from countries sharing land border with India pending



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

About 40-50 foreign direct investment (FDI)proposals from countries sharing land border with India under the provisions of Press Note 3 are pending for approval with the government, official sources said.

Under Press Note 3, the government has made its prior approval mandatory for foreign investments from countries that share land border with India. These countries are China, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Bhutan, Nepal, Myanmar and Afghanistan.

As per that decision, FDI proposals from these countries need government approval for investments in India in any sector.

"About 40-50 proposals are pending with the commerce and industry ministry as they require security and political clearances," one of the sources said.

Sources added that there is no consideration at present to ease norms under this press note.

"FDI is not totally banned from these countries. It is just that they (investors from these countries) have to follow the government approval route and of course that takes times," a source said.

The government has a commitment to clear these proposals in three months time, but it takes about seven months.

As per industry sources, MG Motor, a British brand owned by China's largest automaker SAIC Motor Corp, has been awaiting government approval for around two years now to raise funds from its parent.

## Sensex, Nifty trip over profit taking in banking, energy shares

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty cut short their four-day gaining streak and closed lower by half a per cent on Wednesday due to profit-taking in banking, energy and metal stocks amid weak trends in global markets.

Snapping its four-day rally, the 30-share BSE Sensex fell 346.89 points or 0.55 per cent to settle at 62,622.24. During the day, it tumbled 568.11 points or 0.90 per cent to 62,401.02.

The NSE Nifty declined 99.45 points or 0.53 per cent to end at 18,534.40.

In the four-day rally to Tuesday, Sensex advanced by 1,195 points or 2 per cent while Nifty rose by 348 points or 2.26 per cent.

"Markets witnessed profit-taking and shed over half a per cent, tracking mixed cues. After the initial downtick, the Nifty index traded with a negative bias for most of the session however a marginal rebound in the final hours trimmed some losses," said Ajit Mishra, SVP - Technical Research, Religare Broking Ltd.

Global headwinds, especially from the US markets, are causing intermediate volatility however the positional up trend is still intact, Mishra



said.

From the Sensex pack, Axis Bank, State Bank of India, Reliance Industries, HDFC, HDFC Bank, NTPC, Tata Steel and UltraTech Cement were the major laggards on Wednesday.

Bharti Airtel, Tech Mahindra, Asian Paints, Sun Pharma, Tata Motors and Kotak Mahindra Bank were among the gainers.

"As indicated by multiple economic data points, the Indian economy is presently experiencing a robust recovery, leading to an upward trend in domestic equity markets. However, the rally is being hindered at times due to negative signals from global peers, as observed today.

"Concerns about a recession and potential interest rate hikes in western markets are impacting the domestic market but it is nevertheless maintaining the outperformance," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

## Key infra sector growth slows down to 6-month low of 3.5% in April



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The production growth of eight key infrastructure sectors slowed down to a six-month low of 3.5 per cent in April 2023 due to a decline in the output of crude oil, natural gas, refinery products and electricity.

The core sector growth was 9.5 per cent in April 2022 while in March 2023 the key infra sectors recorded a growth rate of 3.6 per cent. The growth rate in April 2023 is the lowest since October 2022 when the sectors expanded by 0.7 per cent.

Coal production growth declined to 9 per cent in April this year, according to the official data released on Wednesday.

Fertiliser production soared by 23.5 per cent, steel by 12.1 per cent and cement output by 11.6 per cent in April, the data showed.



# Olympic sports bodies meet amid uncertainty over Russians competing at Paris Games

AP ■ LAUSANNE

Olympic sports bodies were meeting Wednesday amid ongoing uncertainty about if and how Russian athletes could return to their competitions ahead of the 2024 Paris Games. The annual meeting of the Association of Summer Olympic International Federations (ASOIF) comes more than two months after the IOC detailed advice on how individual athletes from Russia and its military ally Belarus could be reintegrated as neutral athletes, despite those countries' ongoing war on Ukraine. Exactly how that neutrality is being defined is not very much clearer now as key qualification events start for the Olympics that open in July next year.

The International Olympic Committee in March advised that some Russians and Belarusians could return in individual events but not team sports, if they had not actively supported the war in Ukraine,



and are not contracted to "military or national security agencies."

The IOC also suggested ASOIF and the winter sports umbrella group, AIOWF, could oversee "creating a single independent panel" to run and "harmonize" the neutral status evaluations of hundreds of athletes, coaches and support staff.

That has not happened and there was no move Wednesday on the ASOIF agenda in the IOC's home city of Lausanne toward taking on that complex responsibility.

IOC president Thomas Bach told leaders of governing bodies on the 32-sport Paris program, who have ultimate control over their own events,

some had proven how Russian and Belarusians could continue to compete.

"You are doing so against the backdrop of the many traditional, I may say, naysayers who want to make people believe that it would never work," Bach said. He did not speak with reporters when leaving after his speech.

Bach and the IOC led calls within days of the invasion of Ukraine in February of last year to banish Russia from international sport, including to protect the security of athletes.

As the war continued and the 2024 Olympics approached, the IOC and Bach started to suggest it was discrimination to exclude all Russians and Belarusians. If approved to compete, the IOC said Russian and Belarusians would not be allowed to use their flag, anthem or uniforms in national colors.

ASOIF officials previously cautioned "each sport has different realities," including where Olympic qualification events are being hosted and the influence of Ukraine's allies in sports and governments, especially in Europe.

In gymnastics, a top-tier Summer Games sport where Russians excel, a decision on reintegrating them was pushed back to at least July. World championships that are a key qualifier for Paris start Sept. 30 in Antwerp, Belgium.



## Djokovic draws flak for political messages at French Open

AP ■ PARIS

French Sports minister Amelie Oudea-Castera said Wednesday that Novak Djokovic's political message about Kosovo was "not appropriate" and warned the former top-ranked Serb player that he should not do it again.

Speaking on TV station France 2, Oudea-Castera said French Open director Amelie Mauresmo spoke with Djokovic and his entourage to insist on the principle of "neutrality" on the field of play.

"When it comes to defending human rights and bringing people together around universal values, a sportsperson is free to do so," she said. But Oudea-Castera added that Djokovic's message was "militant, very political" and "must not be repeated."

Djokovic has drawn criticism from Kosovo's tennis federation after offering his thoughts on clashes in northern Kosovo between ethnic Serbs and police and NATO peacekeepers.

After a first-round victory in Paris on Monday, Djokovic wrote in Serbian on the lens of a court-side TV camera: "Kosovo is the heart of Serbia. Stop the violence."

Kosovo's tennis federation said Tuesday that Djokovic's comments were "deplorable" because he was stoking tensions between Serbia and Kosovo.

A former province of Serbia, Kosovo's 2008 declaration of independence is not recognized by Belgrade. Ethnic Albanians make up most of the population, but Kosovo has a restive Serb minority in the north of the country bordering Serbia.

Djokovic, who has won 22 Grand Slam titles, is scheduled to play in the second round at Roland Garros on Wednesday.

Speaking to reporters in Serbian, Djokovic said Monday that he thought what he wrote on the TV camera was "the least I could do. I feel responsibility as a public figure ... as well as a son of a man who was born in Kosovo."

Without mentioning Djokovic by name, French

## Debutant Stearns beats former champ Ostapenko to reach French Open 3rd round

AP ■ PARIS

French Open debutant Peyton Stearns produced the biggest win of her career by defeating former champion Jelena Ostapenko to reach the third round at Roland Garros on Wednesday.

Stearns, a former player at the University of Texas, only turned professional in June last year.

Ostapenko won the 2017 French Open but has since failed to advance past the 3rd round. The 17th-seeded Latvian dropped her serve five times against Stearns and hit 28 unforced errors in her 6-3, 1-6, 6-2 loss.

The 21-year-old Stearns has been climbing the WTA rankings and entered the French Open at No. 69 on the back of an encouraging clay-court campaign.

Third-seeded Jessica Pegula also advanced after Camila Giorgi retired due to injury. The American led 6-2 when her Italian rival threw in the towel.

Only hours after husband Gael Monfils won a five-set thriller in Tuesday night's session, Elina Svitolina rallied past qualifier Storm Hunter 2-6, 6-3, 6-1.

In the men's bracket, former runner-up Stefanos Tsitsipas ousted Roberto Carballes Baena 6-3, 7-6 (4), 6-2. The fifth-seeded Greek was a bit slow to find his range and was made to work hard for two sets but rolled on after he won the tiebreaker.

Open organizers indicated in a statement issued Tuesday that no rules had been broken, saying: "Occasionally, discussions about international news events enter the realm of the tournament, which is understandable."

Only matter of time before India becomes leading chess nation in world, says Carlsen

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Five-time world champion Magnus Carlsen feels it is only a matter of time before India becomes a leading chess nation, saying the country is "doing a lot of right things".

Carlsen who is the current world rapid chess champion, is widely regarded as the best player of the current generation.

While Indian chess players have done extremely well in global circuit in recent years, the country also successfully hosted the Chess Olympiad last year.

"I think India is doing a lot of right things so far, and it is a matter of time before it is clearly the leading chess nation in the world," Carlsen was quoted as saying in a press release.



The Norwegian Grandmaster is one of the icon players for the inaugural Global Chess League, which is the world's first and largest official franchise league of its kind, with chess players from all over the world competing in a unique joint team format.

The GCL is a joint venture between Tech Mahindra and the international chess federation (FIDE), which will witness six teams competing in a minimum of 10 matches each in a double round-robin, rapid format from June 21 to July 2 in Dubai.

"It is an exciting prospect for me to be a part of. This will be something new. Something that has not been done this way in over-the-board chess. I am looking forward to exploring this format for future."

The league will see each of the six franchises play a total of 10 matches in a double round-robin format, with the winner of each match being decided in a best-of-six board scoring system played simultaneously.



## Nkunku, Dembélé recalled by France

AP ■ PARIS

Christopher Nkunku and Ousmane Dembélé were recalled Wednesday to France's national team.

The two strikers were included in coach Didier Deschamps' squad for upcoming European Championship qualifiers against Gibraltar and Greece after missing Les Bleus' previous games due to injury.

France tops the Group B standings in qualifying after back-to-back wins against the Netherlands and Ireland. The two-time world champions take on Gibraltar in Portugal on June 16, then host Greece three days later at the Stade de France.

Nkunku, who plays for RB Leipzig in the Bundesliga, has been sidelined for months due to a knee injury while Barcelona's Dembele missed a series of games due to a hamstring problem.

Deschamps will be without the injured Paul Pogba and N'Golo Kanté, with William Saliba also missing because of a back injury.

**FRANCE SQUAD:**  
**Goalkeepers:** Alphonse Areola (West Ham), Mike Maignan (AC Milan), Brice Samba (Lens)

**Defenders:** Axel Disasi (Monaco), Wesley Fofana (Chelsea), Theo Hernandez (AC Milan), Ibrahim Konaté (Liverpool), Jules Koundé (Barcelona), Ferland Mendy (Real Madrid), Benjamin Pavard (Bayern Munich), Dayot Upamecano (Bayern Munich)

**Midfielders:** Eduardo Camavinga (Real Madrid), Youssouf Fofana (Monaco), Antoine Griezmann (Atlético Madrid), Adrien Rabiot (Juventus), Aurélien Tchouaméni (Real Madrid),

**Forwards:** Kingsley Coman (Bayern Munich), Ousmane Dembélé (Barcelona), Olivier Giroud (AC Milan), Randal Kolo Muani (Eintracht Frankfurt), Kylian Mbappé (Paris Saint-Germain), Christopher Nkunku (RB Leipzig), Marcus Thuram (Borussia Mönchengladbach).

# Bonmatí aims for 2nd Women's Champions League title with Barcelona

AP | BARCELONA

When Barcelona midfielder Aitana Bonmatí was the only girl playing on her village's soccer team, she quickly learned that she would have to fight for the game she loved.

That character-forging experience has helped the 25-year-old Bonmatí lead her team to a fourth Women's Champions League final in five years. On Saturday, the Spanish club will face German team Wolfsburg in Eindhoven for the title.

Back in her younger days, her opponents weren't the source of trouble. It was her own teammates.

"I was the only girl and I remember having lots of fights. The boys had a hard time accepting that a girl could play soccer," Bonmatí told The Associated Press recently in an interview at the stadium where Barcelona's women play most of their games. "It was like I can't step on a girl, or 'How can a girl play ahead of me?'"

"But I don't blame those boys, it was an issue of education and society as a whole," she



said about her childhood in Sant Pere de Ribes, a village just south of Barcelona where Bonmatí grew up watching Lionel Messi and his teammates dominate men's European soccer on TV.

"I think those years helped me grow as a person, forging my character, and as a player. I believe they made me a more physical player, and the intensity I play with I got from that time."

Bonmatí is hoping Barcelona will win its second European Cup, and, if all goes well and a group conflict with

Spain's coach can be resolved, play at her second Women's World Cup this year.

Bonmatí has been a key part of Barcelona becoming the dominant team in Spain, where it has won four league titles in a row, and is now a regular finalist in Europe's elite club tournament.

Slick with the ball, possessing great vision and quick with her feet, her dribbling and passes for teammates are critical to Barcelona's possession-based attack. Bonmatí is proud that her style of play is pure "Made in Barcelona."

# Alonso gives Spaniards hope of ending F1 drought

AP ■ BARCELONA

It's been nearly a decade since there was this much hype surrounding the Spanish Grand Prix.

The last time the Formula One crowd in Spain had such high hopes of celebrating a victory by Fernando Alonso — the country's biggest racing idol — was back in 2013, when the two-time champion was driving for Ferrari.

Alonso went on to win that race in Barcelona, but since then has never been in a realistic position to make it to the top step of the podium again at home. That was his last win in F1 anywhere, and the last by any Spaniard in the local race.

The 41-year-old Alonso arrives revitalized with an Aston Martin team that is one

of the surprises of the season and has been running near the top from the start. Alonso has five podium finishes in six races so far, and is coming off a season-best second-place finish in Monaco last weekend.

"One step higher than any other podium this year, but we're still aiming for one step (higher) hopefully in the future races," Alonso said. "Barcelona is going to be a celebration. We have so many Aston Martin fans in Spain now."

A record crowd is expected this weekend to support Alonso and fellow Spaniard Carlos Sainz Jr. at the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya. More than 40,000 tickets were sold in the first few hours after being put on sale last year, and more tickets were made available again earlier this year. More



than 100,000 people are expected for Sunday's race.

Alonso, who won his F1 titles with Renault in 2005-06, is seeking his 33rd victory in the series. After coming up short of the title in 2013, he had a lackluster 2014 season with Ferrari and then struggled with McLaren from 2015-18. He spent a few seasons away from

F1 before returning with Alpine in 2021, when he made his only podium appearance since leaving Ferrari in the race in Qatar.

Alonso, who also won in Barcelona in 2006, downplayed expectations ahead of this year's Spanish GP despite his good start to the season, noting that defending champion Max Verstappen and Red Bull will remain the big favorites.

"And we have to see in a normal circuit, what is the package of Mercedes and the upgrades that Ferrari will bring apparently to Barcelona as well. So we have to have the feet on the ground," Alonso said.

The Spaniard said he doesn't want to "disappoint anyone" by coming into his home race with too many expectations, and will not put "any pressure on my team or myself."



## US men's soccer to play Germany, Ghana in October exhibitions

AP ■ CHICAGO

The US men's soccer team will play exhibitions against Germany and Ghana in October.

No. 14 Germany will play the 13th-ranked US on October 14 at Rentschler Field in East Hartford, Connecticut, and No. 60 Ghana will face the Americans three days later at Geodis Park in Nashville, Tennessee, the US Soccer Federation said on Tuesday.

The US has an automatic berth for the 2026 World Cup as co-host and Germany has an automatic spot in the 2024 European Championship, which it is hosting.

## Top surfers to compete in Indian Open with an eye on Paris 2024

PTI ■ MANGALORE

With an eye on next year's Paris Olympics, top Indian surfers will vie for top honours in the three-day Indian Open at the Sasithl beach beginning here on Thursday.

Organised by the Surfing Federation of India, the fourth edition of the meet assumes significance as the sport marks its debut at the Paris Olympics next year.

A four-member team based on their last year's rankings is currently competing at the Olympic qualifying World Surfing Games in El Salvador.

The others will compete here in a field of 70 with an eye to make the cut for upcoming International meets in the lead up to Paris 2024.

Some of the top names who would be in action include Sathish Sarvannan, Ruban V,



Srikanth D, Surya P, Sanjaikumar S, Manikandan Desappan and Nithishvarun T, a stated a press release.

This edition will also include teen sensation Kishore Kumar in the Male Groms category.

Competition will be held in four categories — Male Open, Male Groms (U-16), Female Open and Female Groms (U-16).

Shrishti Selvam, Sinchana D Gowda and Sugar Shanti Banase are some of the top women surfers who will be vying for top honours.

## Chotrani, Anahat win National Circuit squash

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Maharashtra's Veer Chotrani and teen sensation Anahat Singh of Delhi bagged the men's and women's singles titles respectively in the sixth NSCI Open National Circuit squash tournament, here on Wednesday.

Chotrani defeated second seed Suraj Chand 11-9, 11-8, 11-6 in a one-sided final, while Anahat downed top seed Urwashi 11-7, 11-8, 11-3 without breaking a sweat to emerge senior champions.

At 14, Anahat had become India's youngest Commonwealth Games 2022 participant in Birmingham.



Chotrani applied a lot of pressure on the defensive game of Suraj, who in return attempted to engage his opponent in long rallies.

However, Chotrani managed to come out on top on every time and maintained his lead to seal the issue.

Chotrani does not participate in national level competitions and is thus ranked No 16 in the country.

# Man City's Grealish emerging as the face of English soccer

AP ■ LONDON

Armed with the boyish charm and marketability of David Beckham and the skills and playfulness of Paul Gascoigne, Jack Grealish has a potent mix that has seen him quickly emerge as the face of English soccer.

Now that he is starting to add trophies to his growing list of endorsement deals that already include Gucci and Puma, the possibilities appear endless for the Manchester City winger who is the most expensive English soccer player of all time.

Grealish — he of the bulging calf muscles and swept-back hair — was already hot property in the English game

before a 2021 move from Aston Villa to City for 100 million pounds (then \$139 million) that took his appeal to a new level.

Nearing the end of his second season at City, the 27-year-old Grealish has finally established himself as a key part of a Premier League-winning team that is seeking to clinch the second leg of a treble of major titles this season by beating Manchester United in the FA Cup final on Saturday.

He is far more than a soccer player these days, though. "People like Jack Grealish are the new sports lifestyle icons," Alan Seymour, a sports academic and author in business and marketing, told The Associated Press. "As he's



matured and got more attuned to what is required of him as a footballer, on the field and off the field, it's why he is right up there with the very best sports personalities for marketability, not only in football but away from football."

Elements of the wild-child

image that shadowed him in the early years of his career remain.

At the height of the lockdown amid the pandemic, Grealish was found slurring his words after crashing his car in a residential estate and was later banned from driving for nine

months. Then there were those images of him playing a prominent role in City's Premier League title celebrations last year, when he was seen swigging a beer and — bleary-eyed and with a croaky voice — aiming a dig at Newcastle midfielder Miguel Almiron that gained plenty of air time.

Grealish unashamedly accepts that's who he is. He recently said he might have been a nightclub promoter if he wasn't a soccer player and that he'd always be prone to the kind of excesses that mean he embodies the spirit of a regular soccer fan.

But the loveable, charming part of Grealish's personality is inescapable. It shines through in every interview he does —

he pinches himself that he is a soccer professional, playing against the likes of Real Madrid in the Champions League — and in his public friendship with a young City fan named Finley, who has cerebral palsy. He's a popular member of the City squad, striking up a particularly close relationship with superstar striker Erling Haaland off the field.

"I feel so much more confident in this team," said Grealish, who was left out of many of City's big games last season while he adapted to the demands of manager Pep Guardiola. "I feel fitter and back to what I know, what I can do. This is why City bought me and I have so much to offer."



# ICC seeks PCB assurances on team to India for ODI World Cup

PTI ■ KARACHI

The International Cricket Council (ICC) chairman and CEO are in Lahore to seek guarantees from the PCB that it will not push for implementing a hybrid model for its matches in the ODI World Cup in India later this year.

Insiders confirmed to PTI that ICC chairman Greg Barclay and CEO Geoff Allardice have specifically come to Lahore to get some assurances from the Pakistan Cricket Board on the national team's participation in the World Cup in October-November.

The development comes after PCB chief Najam Sethi made it clear that the team will not travel for the World Cup in India if the Rohit Sharma led side doesn't visit Pakistan for the preceding Asia Cup.

"The ICC and World Cup hosts, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) are concerned with the hybrid



model being pushed by Najam Sethi who heads the cricket management committee of the PCB.

"Although the hybrid model has been suggested by Sethi for the Asia Cup which precedes the ICC event, the concern remains

that once accepted for the regional event the PCB might also then ask the ICC to implement it for the World Cup when it comes to Pakistan playing in India," he explained.

Sethi has already indicated that if the Pakistan government

doesn't give clearance or has security concerns about sending the team to India, PCB could ask the ICC to hold Pakistan's matches at a neutral venue.

"Naturally neither the ICC nor the BCCI want such a situation since Pakistan's unequiv-

ocal participation in matches in India would guarantee the success of Indo-Pakistan matches and also the tournament itself."

Another source said this was the primary reason why BCCI secretary Jay Shah was still reluctant to accept the hybrid model for the Asia Cup and support having three or four matches of the tournament in Pakistan and the remaining games in UAE or Sri Lanka.

Pakistan are the hosts of the Asia Cup and Sethi has said repeatedly that if the tournament is moved to one neutral country from Pakistan, it will not take part in the competition.

He has also hinted that if Pakistan didn't get to host some Asia Cup matches it could have an adverse bearing on the World Cup as well.

"The ICC officials are trying to work as a bridge between the PCB and BCCI and resolve the outstanding issues pertaining to the Asia Cup and World Cup."



expect. The weather is holding up, it has been sunny, a little windy, a little chill but something that we have to get used to (when) playing in England," he said.

India's fielding coach T Dilip said the focus will be on close-in catching since the running part of the fitness drill was covered in the IPL.

"The players have been coming from an IPL so a key thing for us to take care of was the workload, how much they have run, how much they have taken care.

"What we understood and got out of that is things (like) ground fielding have been covered in the IPL, so the focus here was more on the volume of catching, especially when you are talking about close-in catching, the slip catching and the flat catches. These are the catches that we tend to increase the volume (of)," he said.

Mhambrey said while the bowlers will get some rest in days leading up to the WTC final, the group is determined to extract the maximum benefits from the training sessions.



## Dhoni will take medical advice for knee injury and decide: CSK CEO Viswanathan

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Chennai Super Kings captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni will be seeking expert opinion from sports orthopedics in Mumbai on the state of his dodgy left knee before taking a call on his treatment, CEO Kasi Viswanathan said on Wednesday.

Dhoni had played the entire IPL season with a heavily strapped left knee and although he looked absolutely okay while keeping, more often than not batted as late as No.8 and didn't look swift while running between the wickets.

"Yes, it is true that Dhoni will be taking medical advice for his left knee injury and accordingly decide. If surgery is advised, it can only be ascertained after reports come out, it will be completely his call," Viswanathan told PTI.

Is there a possibility that Dhoni will decide against playing next season and thus free up a purse of Rs 15 crore for the mini auction, the CEO replied: "Frankly, we are not even thinking on those lines as we haven't reached that stage.

"It will be completely Dhoni's call. But I can tell you in CSK, we haven't entertained those thoughts," Viswanathan said.

Asked if CSK supremo N Srinivasan addressed the players after the fifth IPL Trophy and if celebrations were in the offing. "He is very happy but there were no celebrations. The players dispersed for their respective destinations from Ahmedabad only. Also if you have seen CSK, we are never big on celebrations," the veteran official said.

Asked if the fifth IPL title feels the sweetest, considering the spate of injuries to its top players, Viswanathan said: "It's all about team spirit and every player knowing his role which is very well defined in our set up.

"Even a player of Ben Stokes' stature despite his nature was brilliant around the group and the youngsters looked upto to him. This has been possible because of our captain."

What has been CSK's hallmark over the years which enabled them to reach final in 11 of the 14 editions that they have been a part of?

"I have been associated with CSK from season 1 and we have never deviated from our process. The key has been to keep things simple and explain every player what is expected of them. In our franchise, the skipper keeps everything uncomplicated," Viswanathan said.

CSK were barred from the league for two editions.

## Hazlewood praises Kohli's work ethics

PTI ■ LONDON

Australia pacer Josh Hazlewood has spoken highly of Royal Challengers Bangalore teammates Virat Kohli and Mohammed Siraj ahead of the World Test Championship final against India at The Oval starting June 7.

Hazlewood, who has been battling with multiple injuries over the last six months, had to cut short his IPL stint with a side issue. However, he feels he is not far from bowling full tilt as Australia gear up for the big final.

Talking about Kohli, whose wicket he will be targeting at The Oval, Hazlewood said the Indian superstar's work ethic makes him the player that he is.

"I think it's probably how hard he works (that stands out). His fitness first of all - and then his skill work and batting and fielding in particular.

"He is always out there (training) first and leaves last ... and the intensity he trains at all the time is at such a high level it drags everyone else along for the ride. That can leak on to the other players and improve them as well," Hazlewood told the ICC.

On RCB's leading wicket taker Siraj, who is expected to play a big part in the WTC final, Hazlewood said: "I was a bit late getting there (to RCB this year),



but before then he was on fire.

"He is up there at the top of the wickets every time, and the economy rate was probably the thing as bowling at Chinnaswamy (RCB's home ground) is impossible sometimes and he was going at six or six-and-a-half an over. His control was great and he is bowling well."

**'CLOSE TO BOWLING FULL PACE:** The Australian cricket team has been training in Formby in England ahead of the WTC final. Hazlewood trained with the team on Monday and said he is feeling good going into

the big game.

"My fitness is pretty good and it is just a matter of ticking off every session from here until that date (June 7) basically. "We will probably have anywhere from three to four more sessions - bat versus ball and then a couple of longer days in the nets as well or centre wicket down in London — so it is just ticking off those last few boxes and pulling up well from every session," he said.

"It was pretty close (to full pace today). I came down for a little bowl yesterday just to

loosen up and to get a bit more out of today's session, so it is feeling good. It is always good to get the first one out of the way and when we get to London we will steam in," he added.

Hazlewood could feature in only three games in the IPL before his injury flared up.

"In T20 you are bowling a lot of various different balls every over. A wide yorker, to a bounce, to a slower ball and it probably got jammed up a little bit and a bit of scar tissue from previous injuries flared up.

"It calmed down pretty quickly, I had a week off but I didn't quite get back to going 100 percent at IPL. But the last few bowls have been good and I have been building up nicely," he said.

Having played as many as 15 Tests against India, Hazlewood is looking forward to the challenge of playing the Asian giants at a neutral venue.

"It is a strange stat that as I think I have just played a lot of cricket against them. What is going to be interesting is playing them here in England.

"It is going to be interesting for both teams how they go about it and how different it is to playing them in Australia or in India as typically you only play them there," he said.

"That is the exciting thing about it and everyone is looking forward to next week," he added.

## Bharat over Kishan, Umesh over Shardul for WTC XI: Sarandeep

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Former India selector Sarandeep Singh says picking KS Bharat over Ishan Kishan as the wicketkeeper for the World Test Championship final against Australia is a no brainer and he would also choose Umesh Yadav over Shardul Thakur in the playing eleven.

In the absence of the injured Rishabh Pant, Kishan, who is yet to play Test cricket, can provide the x-factor but Sarandeep feels Bharat walks into the eleven as the frontline wicketkeeper.

"KS Bharat for sure. He is a proper Test match wicketkeeper and we saw that against Australia at home, he kept superbly. He has been around for a while and he should get the

opportunity," Sarandeep told PTI on Wednesday. The WTC final will be played at the Oval in London from June 7. The former India spinner said Kishan's time will come.

"Ishan is an opener. I am not saying he is not capable of playing Tests. He is one for the future but he opens in limited overs cricket. Things will be different at number six. "Yes he goes hard from ball one, which can be counter productive in England, but Bharat can also bat well and play shots also," he reasoned.

**'Umesh's extra pace and old ball skills will come handy':** Mohammed Shami and Mohammed Siraj, who were breathing fire in the recently-concluded IPL, will share the workload in the pace depart-

## Indian bowlers focus on building workload ahead of WTC final

PTI ■ PORTSMOUTH

The Indian cricket team is focussing on building workload for the bowlers, who had an extensive run in the IPL, ahead of the World Test Championship final against Australia starting on June 7 at The Oval.

In the bowling department, while the likes of Mohammed Siraj, Shardul Thakur, Axar Patel, Jaydev Unadkat and Umesh Yadav were part of the first batch to travel to England, pace spearhead Mohammed Shami's departure was delayed as the IPL final in Ahmedabad last Sunday was moved to the reserve day after incessant rain.

The middle-order mainstay Virat Kohli was also among the players who left in the first batch along with the Rahul Dravid-led coaching staff. Kohli joined the camp on Monday along with Cheteshwar Pujara, who linked up with the squad in England as he was busy playing County Championship for Sussex.

The Indian team is expected to have a few practice sessions at the Arundel Castle Cricket Club in Sussex ahead of the big final.

"The preparation has been good so far. The initial bit was to ease into the practice session but the last two sessions have been pretty happy — I think we pushed them a little bit. Just adding a little bit of workload for the bowlers, just kind of preparing them for the Test match," said India's bowling coach Paras Mhambrey in a video released by the BCCI.

"(We are) happy with the conditions, I think it is a lovely ground, (it is) kind of what you can

## Stokes plans to play as allrounder in Ashes

AP ■ LONDON

England captain Ben Stokes eased concerns about his ability to bowl in the upcoming Ashes series because of long-standing knee issues and said Wednesday he is planning to play every test this summer.

"Unless I can't walk, I'll be on the field," Stokes said with a smile the day before England begins its one-off test against Ireland, which serves as a warmup for the five-match Ashes series against Australia.

After having knee issues during the tour of New Zealand in February, Stokes played only twice for Chennai Super Kings in the recently-finished Indian Premier League, sending down just one over for 18 runs.

However, the 31-year-old Stokes said his knee is much better than it was in New Zealand and he will take his place in the England team as an allrounder against Ireland at Lord's and then Australia.

"What I have done is I have got myself in a position where I'm not able to look back and regret or say I've not given myself the best opportunity to play a full role with the ball this summer," Stokes said.

"I've worked incredibly hard with the medical team in Chennai, liaising with the ECB



guys. I have got myself into a place where I feel like back at 2019, 2020 space in terms of my own body and fitness and everything like that."

Pushed about the exact nature of his knee problem, Stokes said: "We know what it is and it's about managing it."

"It's managing it with workload," he added, "and working it with the med team just to get through it."

England has already named its team for the Ireland test, with seamer Josh Tongue making his debut while fast bowlers James Anderson and Ollie Robinson are rested. Ireland has lost all six of its matches since gaining test status in 2017. That includes a defeat against England at Lord's in 2019.

Captain Andrew Balbirnie has said beating England would be "the biggest moment in Irish cricket history"



## Thai Open: Kiran stuns Shi Yuqi

Lakshya, Satwik-Chirag too win, Sindhu makes early exit

PTI ■ BANGKOK

India's Kiran George scripted a stunning straight-game win over world number 9 Shi Yuqi of China but double Olympic medallist PV Sindhu made an opening round exit from the Thailand Open Super 500 tournament here on Wednesday.

Ashmita Chaliha and Saina Nehwal also made winning starts to their campaign in women's singles, while Lakshya Sen and world number 4 pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty also progressed to the pre-quarterfinals.

On a day when Kidambi Srikanth and B Sai Praneeth also failed to cross the opening hurdle, 2022 Odisha Open winner Kiran, a product of the Prakash Padukone academy, notched up a 21-18 22-20 win over third seed Shi Yu Qi, who is a 2018 world championships silver medallist. Kiran will take on China's Weng Hong Yang next.

His academy mate Lakshya also dug deep to eke out a hard-fought 21-23 21-15 21-15 win over Chinese Taipei's Wang Tzu Wei. He is likely to square off against All England champion Li Shi Feng of China.

Commonwealth Games champion and top seeds Satwik and Chirag too had to work hard to outwit the Danish combination of Rasmus Kjaer and Frederik Sogaard 21-13 18-21 21-17 in a thrilling match.

A former world champion, Sindhu, however, faltered in the opening round, going down fighting 8-21 21-18 18-21 to Canada's Michelle Li in 62-minute match. In other matches, Ashmita, who came through the qualifiers, beat compatriot Malvika Bansod 17-21 14-21, while London Olympics bronze medallist Saina defeated Canada's Wen Yu Zhang 21-13 21-7.

He asked the bowlers to bowl fuller length deliveries to allow the Dukes ball to swing.

"As a bowling unit also you'll need to bowl a much fuller length for your new ball, for the bowlers to be able to get the movement in the air as well as after pitching."

Gavaskar highlighted the challenges India would face playing in English conditions.

"I think the English conditions are challenging because firstly we are used to play with the sun on our backs. When you are playing in England, often you are playing in conditions where there is no sun, it's a little overcast, the weather is a little bit cooler, so you sometimes wear a jumper.

"That's something that you know, the Indian player, West Indian players and Sri Lankan players are not really used to so that can be just a little bit of a dampener, little sort of light but you just feel little bit encumbered by that.



ball.

"They'll need to play in England as late as possible to allow for the swing to do it's bit, not to reach out for the ball which often a lot of people make the mistake having played on good pitches.

"Wherever you play on good pitches, you tend to play through the line, not necessarily half volleys, but in England those deliveries can move just that little bit. So, I think those are the things that as a batter you need to watch out for."

PTI ■ PORTSMOUTH

Former captain Sunil Gavaskar on Wednesday reckoned Cheteshwar Pujara could provide valuable insights to his Indian teammates ahead of the World Test Championship final against Australia, having played extensively in the English County Championship.

With Pujara's knowledge and captaincy experience (at Sussex), his inputs could prove invaluable, especially against Australian batter Steve Smith, who is also a part of his county side.

The WTC final is scheduled to be held at the Oval in London from June 7-11.

"The fact that he is been around will mean that he will have also seen how the pitch has been behaving at The Oval.

"He might not have played at The Oval, he might be in Sussex not too far away from London but he will have kept an eye on what is happening and his inputs will be invaluable as far as the bat-

ting unit is concerned or even as far as the captaincy is concerned," Gavaskar told Star Sports.

"He will have the captains here as far as the Oval pitch is concerned and don't forget he has also been captaining the team, so he definitely will have worked out quite a few strategies seeing that Steve Smith, the Australian is his teammate at the moment."

Gavaskar also said the Indian batters, coming off the IPL, will have to adjust their bat speed ahead of the WTC final, and advised them to play as late as possible.

"I think they are going to look at their bat speed. Coming from T20 where the bat speed is very fast to Test cricket where the bat speeds got to be a lot more control, that is something they'll need to do," Gavaskar told Star Sports.

He also emphasized the need for batters to play as late as possible in English conditions, allowing for swing and avoiding the mistake of reaching out for the