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BARCA BEAT REAL MADRID IN EL CLASICO
11 SPORT

UK Govt, Indian diaspora slam Tricolour disrespect

British MP rapped for batting for Amritpal

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE/ AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI/ LONDON

A day after alleged Khalistani supporters grabbed the Indian Tricolour atop the Indian High Commission, the United Kingdom Government on Monday termed the acts of vandalism as "disgraceful" and "completely unacceptable." Britain said it will take the security of the Indian High Commission in London "seriously." One person was arrested later in connection with the incident.

Meanwhile, officials from the Indian mission in London said the "attempted but failed" attack was foiled and the Tricolour was now flying "grander," with a larger tricolour now adorning the India House façade.

As regards the incident of vandalism, Scotland Yard said it was called to reports of disorder on Sunday afternoon and that a man has been arrested as its enquiries continue.

"There was no report of any injury, however windows were broken at the High Commission building," the Metropolitan Police statement said.

British Labour MP Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi's tweet, expressing concern over the ongoing action to arrest Amritpal Singh and arrest of some alleged Khalistani elements, has received condemnation. Dhesi, an MP from Slough, tweeted, "Very worrying reports coming from #India, of the imposition of an internet blackout in the #Punjab state, with mass arrests and restrictions on gatherings. Praying that the tense situation is soon resolved and that human rights of all are respected."

Taking exception to his message, Congress spokesperson and senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi criticised Dhesi for "nurturing Khalistani sentiments" in the United Kingdom and said his tweet will not fetch him new votes from Slough "which has a massive chunk of Pakistan supporting population."

Sharing the photograph in a Twitter post, the BJP's national spokesperson Jaiveer Shergill said, "Jhanda Ooncha Rahe Hamara-UK Govt must act... Punjab and Punjabis have a glorious track record of serving/protecting the Nation. Handful of jumping jacks sitting in the UK do not represent Punjab."

Congress leader Shashi Tharoor termed the incident on Sunday at the Indian High Commission "utterly shocking" and a "major insult".

The British condemnation came after India on Sunday evening summoned the senior-most UK diplomat in New Delhi to convey its "strong protest" at the actions taken by separatist and extremist elements against the Indian High Commission in London.

British Deputy High Commissioner Christina Scott was summoned to the MEA in view of the incident as High Commissioner Alex Ellis was out of Delhi, sources said.

Ellis described the incident as "disgraceful" and "totally unacceptable".

People from Sikh Community protest against vandalisation by Khalistani supporters at Indian High Commission in London, in New Delhi on Monday PTI

Entrance blocked, Indian envoy in Canada cancels visit to event

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/ BRITISH COLUMBIA (CANADA)

In an apparent fall out of the ongoing operation to nab Amritpal Singh in India, its envoy to Canada had to cancel an event in British Columbia due to security concerns as alleged Khalistani supporters blocked the entrance to the venue there.

Some of the protesters were also reportedly wielding swords. In another incident, a 21-year-old Sikh student was assaulted in British Columbia.

The incident related to the Indian envoy took place late on Sunday in front of the Taj Convention. High Commissioner to Canada Sanjay Kumar Verma was scheduled to attend a reception organised by the Friends of India and Canada Foundation in Surrey, British Columbia.

Consulate hit in US; India protests, summons envoy

PNS/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI/ WASHINGTON

An incident of vandalism by alleged Khalistani supporters targeting the Indian consulate in San Francisco has taken place. The perpetrators installed so-called Khalistan flag on the consulate premises.

This was the second such incident involving the Indian embassies with the first one in London on Sunday evening when the Indian tri-colour was grabbed by the protestors.

India on Monday summonsed the US envoy to register protest against attacks on its consulate in San Francisco.

As regards the attack in the US, raising pro-Khalistan slogans, the protesters on Sunday broke open the makeshift security barriers raised by the city police and installed two so-called Khalistani flags inside the consulate premises. Two consulate personnel soon removed these flags.

Soon thereafter, a group of angry protesters entered the consulate premises and started hitting the door and windows with the rods.

India, Japan to boost ties, free Indo-Pacific

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India and Japan on Monday resolved to further deepen their strategic ties during talks here between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his counterpart Fumio Kishida. The two leaders also said their ties are important for a peaceful, stable and prosperous Indo-Pacific besides benefitting the two countries in diverse areas.

The two leaders also discussed the entire gamut of the ties covering trade and economics besides defence in the summit shortly after the Japanese Prime Minister arrived in the national Capital on Monday morning on a nearly 27-hour visit.

Kishida pledged $75 billion plan to promote an open and free Indo-Pacific. The plan he announced is seen as Tokyo's bid to forge stronger ties with countries in South and Southeast Asia to counter China's growing assertiveness there. "We plan to expand the cooperation of the free and open Indo-Pacific framework," Kishida told the Indian Council of World Affairs.

The visit came amid the ongoing Ukraine conflict and its adverse impact on the global supply chains of energy and food. The visit also came in the backdrop of China's growing assertiveness in the strategically-crucial Indo-Pacific region.

In his media statement, Modi referred to India's presidency of the G20 and Japan chairing the G7 grouping, and said it is the best opportunity to work together on priorities of both sides for global good. Modi said he briefed Prime Minister Kishida extensively about priorities of the Indian presidency of G20.

The Prime Minister said the India-Japan special strategic and global partnership is based on the democratic principles and respect for international rule of law and that it is important for the Indo-Pacific as well.

Modi said both sides also discussed the importance of reliable supply chains for semiconductors and other critical technologies.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Japanese PM Fumio Kishida at Buddha Jayanti Park in New Delhi on Monday PTI

NSA slapped on Amritpal's 5 aides; uncle surrenders

Curbs on Internet services extended

PTI ■ CHANDIGARH

The Punjab Police on Monday flagged a possible "ISI angle" as it invoked the stringent National Security Act against five men linked to radical preacher Amritpal Singh, whose uncle and driver surrendered amid a Statewide crackdown against his "Waris Punjab De" group.

The pro-Khalistan supporter and radical preacher has allegedly been maintaining close links with drug peddlers and Pakistan's ISI to further his goal for a separate country for the Sikhs, officials said. While drug lords were allegedly helping the pro-Khalistan preacher financially, including gifting him a high-end Mercedes SUV, the ISI was helping him with arms, ammunition and other logistics, they said.

Meanwhile, the Punjab Government extended the suspension of mobile internet services, this time up to Tuesday noon. The Khalistan sympathiser's uncle Harjit Singh and driver Harpreet Singh gave themselves up before police past Sunday midnight.

CAPSULE

PRESENTATION OF DELHI BUDGET PUT ON HOLD

New Delhi: The presentation of the Delhi Government's budget for 2023-24, scheduled for Tuesday, has been put on hold, with the Arvind Kejriwal dispensation and the Central Government trading charges over allocations in various heads. But the MHA denied the report.

ED GRILLS KAVITHA FOR 10 HRS; QUIZ TODAY ALSO

New Delhi: BRS leader K Kavitha was grilled by the Enforcement Directorate for more than 10 hours on Monday in a Delhi excise policy-linked money laundering case and has been called again on March 21, officials said.

Clear OROP arrears by Feb 28; no more sealed-cover note: SC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday refused to accept the sealed-cover note submitted by the Defence Ministry and fixed February 28, 2024, for disbursement of "One Rank, One Pension" (OROP) arrears. The Bench, headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud ordered that the Centre is duty-bound to comply with its 2022 judgment on the payment of pension arrears worth ₹28,000 crore for 2019-2022.

"Sealed covers in court are against transparency, we want to end it...Please share the sealed cover with the opposite side or take him to the chamber. We want to put an end to the sealed cover business being followed by the SC since High Courts also follow it," said the CJI when Attorney-General R Venkataramani submitted the details in a sealed cover.

"This is about implementing the orders. What can be the secrecy here? You must give a copy to the other side. Sealed covers are completely against settled judicial principles," said CJI when the A-G insisted on submitting it in a sealed cover.

Modi's push to make India energy atmanirbhar by 2047: US report

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

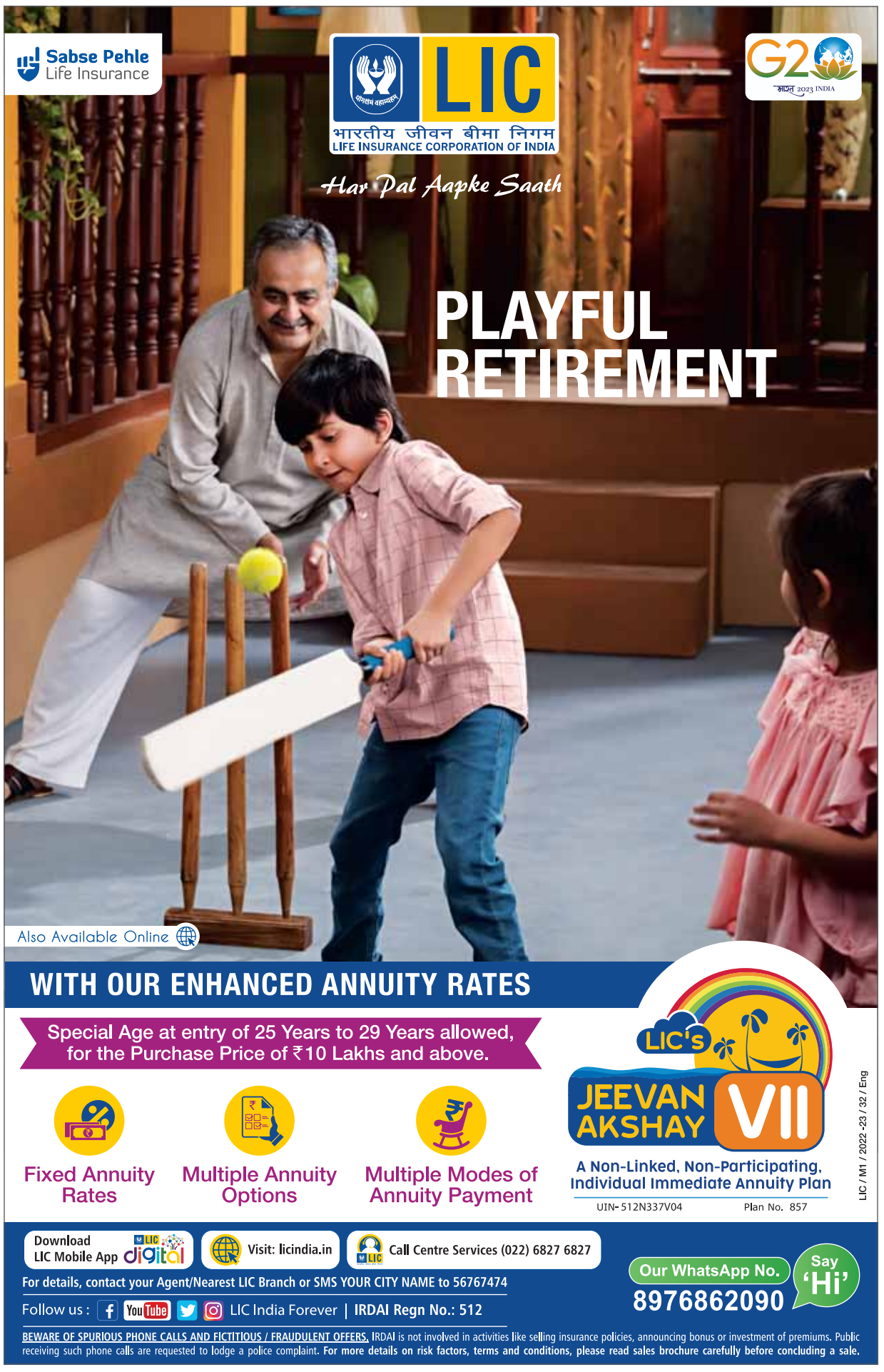
India, the world's fifth largest economy, can achieve energy independence through clean technology by 2047, a report by a top US research institute said, highlighting Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Atmanirbhar Bharat push that spans from a massive renewable capacity addition to electric mobility, saving billions of dollars in imports.

Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, a US' federally funded research and development centre, along with The India Energy and Climate Center (IECC) located at UC Berkeley's Goldman School of Public Policy published a report, "Pathways to Atmanirbhar Bharat", that highlights the steps taken by India towards the adoption of clean energy.

India is 80-85 per cent dependent on imports to meet its oil and coal needs. The price and supply volatility in global energy markets, as witnessed in recent years, strain India's foreign exchange reserves, resulting in economy-wide inflation. However, recent dramatic declines in clean energy costs provide India an opportunity to lower energy imports through investment in renewable energy, battery storage, EVs, and green hydrogen, the report said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has already set a target to install 500 GW (gigawatt) of renewable energy capacity by 2030. The government intends to grow EV sales in India to capture the markets of 30 per cent of private cars, 70 per cent of commercial vehicles and 80 per cent of two- and three-wheelers by 2030. Also, it is targeting production of 5 million tonnes of green hydrogen by splitting water using electricity from renewable sources.

Abundant solar energy and local technology will aid this and also reduce carbon emissions.



Ladli Behna Yojana will increase dignity of women

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that social revolution is taking place in Madhya Pradesh for women empowerment. Schemes like Mukhya Mantri Kanya Vivah Yojana, Ladli Laxmi Yojana, 50 percent reservation for women in local elections, reservation in police recruitment, Livelihood Mission and Sambal are being implemented successfully. Now the Ladli Bahna Yojana has been started, which will not only lead to overall development of women, but will also increase their respect and self-confidence in the society.

Chouhan was addressing the Ladli Bahna Sammelan at Lanji in Balaghat district on Monday. He distributed benefits under various schemes to the women. Initially, Chouhan performed Kanya-Pujan and welcomed the women by showering flowers. Women presented rakhis to the Chief Minister. Chouhan handed over a cheque of Rs 10 lakh to Anjali Choure, who runs Didi Cafe under the National Rural Livelihood Mission.

The Chief Minister said that the aim of my life is the welfare of my sisters. My life will become fruitful if there is a smile on the lips of my sisters. The respect of women is highest in Madhya Pradesh. Women need not tolerate any kind of injustice, your brother is always with you. There is no need to worry for the marriage of sisters and daughters, Shivraj Mama will take care of the arrangements of their marriage.

Chouhan said that before becoming the Chief Minister, me and my wife would make arrangements to get girls hailing from poor families married. When I became the Chief Minister, I first started the Mukhya Mantri Kanya Vivah Yojana. The previous government did not give the benefit of this scheme to anyone. Now we have decided that under this scheme a cheque of Rs 50,000 will be given to the daughters and Rs 6,000 to the organizing marriages.

Chouhan said that daughters are now considered a boon instead of a curse in Madhya Pradesh. In the Ladli Lakshmi Yojana, Rs 30,000 are deposited in the name of a girl child as soon as she is born, so that she gets funds from time to time for her studies etc. Today there are 44.50 lakh Ladli Lakshmis in Madhya Pradesh. Their Mama also pays the fees for the education and higher education of the daughters.

Chief Minister Chouhan said that today a large number of sisters are representing in the panchayats. They have got political empowerment. In Madhya Pradesh, 50 percent seats in panchayats have been reserved for sisters. Women are also being given reservation in police recruitment. Self-help groups of women are formed by the Rural and Urban Livelihood Mission and financial and other assistance is provided to them for various activities. In this way their economic and social empowerment is taking place. At the same time, their self-confidence is being boosted.

Chouhan said that ever since he became the Chief Minister this time, the idea was constantly coming in his mind as to what gift he should give to the sisters. I thought of giving gifts to sisters not once but every month. Last January 28 at 4 am the concept of Ladli Bahna Yojana came to my mind and I decided that every month I will put 1000 rupees in the accounts of poor and lower middle class sisters.

The benefit of Ladli Bahna Yojana will be given to all those sisters whose family's annual income is less than two and a half lakh rupees. Sisters will not have to give any income certificate for this. Just a form has to be filled, which our employees will come to your village/locality and get it filled. Along with this, they will also get your e-KYC done.

Chouhan said that the filling of forms for Ladli Bahna Yojana will start from March 25, which will continue till April 30. Money will start coming into the accounts of the sisters from coming June 10.

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan being presented a Rakhi by a group of women during Ladli Behna sammelan in Lanji, Balaghat district on Monday. Pioneer photo

Bhopal all set for grand opening of Shooting World Cup

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The State capital is all set for a grand opening ceremony of a historic Shooting World Cup stage, the first ever to be held in India outside the national capital of New Delhi.

Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Hon. Chief Minister, Madhya Pradesh, will be the Chief Guest at the ceremony, to be held at the Kushabhau Thakre International Convention Centre.

Luciano Rossi, President, International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF), who arrived at the city earlier in the day, will be the Guest of Honour. Also present will be Yashodhara Raje Scindia, Minister for Sports and Youth Welfare, Government of Madhya Pradesh and Raninder Singh, President, National Rifle Association of India (NRAI).

The Chief Minister, will virtually inaugurate the brand-new Finals Hall of the MP State Shooting Academy range, venue of the ISSF World Cup Rifle/Pistol Bhopal.

Speaking ahead of the historic occasion, Singh said, "It is indeed a historic occasion for the country. The range in Bhopal is truly world class and I must commend the leadership of the Hon. Chief Minister as well as the effort put in by the Minister for Sports and her entire team for making this day a reality. For the sport to grow further in the country, it was important that international events such as these were taken to different parts and Bhopal has shown the way. We look forward to a memorable world cup."

Besides the inauguration of the Finals Hall, the opening ceremony will also witness the oath taking ceremony as well as a performance of Mallakhamb, an indigenous martial art sport which is gaining popularity by the day. The Hon. Chief Minister will then host a dinner in honour of the ISSF President and his wife Ms. Laura Rossi.

Close to 200 shooters from 30 countries will be taking part in the ISSF World Cup Rifle/Pistol Bhopal. Prominent names taking part will be the likes of Jean Quiquampoix, the reigning Olympic champion in the men's 25m Rapid Fire Pistol, Rio Olympic champion in the event Christian Reitz of Germany and reigning women's air rifle world champion Alison Marie Weisz of the USA among others.

India's own reigning world champion in the men's 10m Air Rifle, Rudrankksh Patil, will also be seen in action as will the two reigning Air Pistol world champions, Liu Jinyao and Lu Kaiman of China.

Unofficial practice at the M.P. Shooting Academy range was on full steam with countries like USA, China, Germany, Denmark, Maldives, Mexico, Chinese Taipei, Romania, Denmark and Saudi Arabia besides India, all testing the ranges on the day. Competitions begin on March 22, 2023, with the men's and women's 10m Air Pistol finals scheduled on the very first day. Indian and China have fielded the largest contingents with both entering 37-shooters respectively. For India, 22-shooters will be vying for medals while the others will be playing for ranking points only.

The ISSF World Cup Rifle/Pistol Bhopal, will see a total of 10 finals, all Olympic events, over five consecutive competition days.

District Collector for action on open borewell

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

District collector Avinash Lavania issued orders of registering case against those who leave their borewell open in Bhopal district

Collector Avinash Lavania gave orders in this regard on Monday. SDM and Tehsildars have been asked to survey and find open borewell. At the same time, notices will also be glued in police stations.

A seven-year-old boy had fallen into an open borewell at village Kherkhedi near Sironj in Vidisha district. He was taken out after 24 hours of rescue. However, the child failed to survive and died. After this, once again questions started arising regarding open borewells across the state.

Collector Lavania had requested the people to cover the borewell if it is open at their place. On Monday, he issued a new order.

Collector and District Magistrate Lavania has issued an order under section 144 asking to close unused and open borewells in the district with strong iron lids with nut bolts. It has been said in the order that such borewells in which the motor has not been inserted. If the borewell has not been sealed with a cap, then the Executive Magistrate of the concerned area should visit the area and ensure that the arrangement is done.

Collector Lavania has issued instructions that immediate action should be taken on this order. He has asked to put the order on the notice boards in all SDMs, revenue offices and police stations. Punishable action will be taken under section 188 for violation of the order issued above.

Postal deptt official dies of cardiac arrest while dancing

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

In a shocking incident, the Assistant Director of the Postal Department named Surendra Kumar Dixit suddenly collapsed and died while dancing at an event in Madhya Pradesh's Bhopal. Reports say the man suffered a cardiac arrest. The video of the incident has surfaced on the internet. In the video, the man can be seen dancing to the song 'Bas Aaj Ki Raat Hai Zindagi, Kal Hum Kahan, Tum Kahan...' with his colleagues, when he suddenly fell.

People around him tried to help the man but to no avail.

The Postal Department hosted the 34th All India Postal Hockey Tournament from March 13 to March 17 at the Major Dhyanchand Hockey Stadium in Bhopal. The final match was scheduled for March 17. On the evening of March 16, a cultural programme was organised in the office premises of the department itself.

Meanwhile, a 16-year-old girl died of cardiac arrest at a school amid the cold weather conditions in Madhya Pradesh's Indore. Vrinda Tripathi, a Class 11 student, fell unconscious and died at her school in the Usha Nagar area. The girl had gone to school to rehearse for a Republic Day event the next day when she collapsed.

Vrinda was rushed to a hospital, where doctors tried to revive her with cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and other means but to no avail, he said.According to doctors, the girl had died before being brought to the hospital.

Commissioner Police Bhopal Makrand Deoskar along with other senior officials during police personnels' self promotion and capacity development programme after completion of one year training in Bhopal on Monday. Pioneer photo

Car of private company accountant overturns at Shyamla Hills, dies

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

An accountant of a private company died after his car overturned at high speed in Shyamala Hills area late in the night on Sunday.

The accident took place when five friends including the deceased had gone out for dinner late at night in a car and near Kamla Park, the vehicle lost control and collided with the divider and overturned.

The people inside the car suffered serious injuries in the accident. All injured were rushed to Hamidia hospital where one of them was declared dead. At present, the police have handed over the body to the family members.

All injured were rushed to Hamidia hospital where one of them was declared dead

SI Gopal Singh said that Amit Dongre (27) of PWD Quarter Police Shyamala Hills, worked as an accountant in Kunji Lal Dongre Private Company.

Amit's father Tarun works in Pushkar. Amit had left the house with his friends Rohit, Dipesh, Aamir and Nitin at around 12.30 in the night on Sunday night after asking for food.

All had alcohol near Mata Mandir and then went to Qazi Camp to have food. The car bearing registration number MP04TA8529 was being driven by Rohit.

The five friends had reached near Kamla Park. Then the vehicle lost control and collided with the divider and overturned. Due to high speed, the car overturned twice. In which Amit suffered a serious head injury and Nitin's leg was fractured.

Police have handed over the dead body to the family members after getting PM done. At present the police are investigating the matter. Preliminary investigation has revealed that the vehicle belonged to Travels, which is attached with Satpura Bhawan.

Saurashtra Tamil Sangamam to celebrate links in Guj and TN

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The central government has announced "Saurashtra Tamil Sangamam" on the lines of the Kashi Sangamam to be held in Saurashtra from 17th April 2023 onwards. The program will rediscover, reaffirm and celebrate the over 1,000-year-old emigration and contribution of Saurashtrian Tamils.

At the press conference organized in the city, the dignitaries launched an iconic logo, theme song, and a registration portal for participants.

Over 3,000 participants will be offered a once-in-a-life glimpse into the life of Saurashtrian Tamils, history, art, and the economic activities in and around Saurashtra.

The Saurashtra Tamil Sangamam is a program that highlights the oneness of India's culture by narrating untold histories of how a community emigrated to Tamil Nadu and their contributions to the country. Addressing the press conference, Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare and Chemicals & Fertilisers "This is an excellent initiative by the Modi government that enables a once-in-a-life reunion. This program will offer students and academicians to learn the history of Saurashtrians."

Dr Mandaviya further added, "The program imparts crucial lessons on oneness in our culture. In the words of PM Narendra Modi, this is Ek Bharat, Shreshta Bharat. The Saurashtra Tamil Sangamam will showcase illustrious professionals from Saurashtra and Tamil Nadu. This is an opportunity to visit Saurashtra and feel the energetic atmosphere."

Kunvarjibhai Bavaliya, Minister of State for Water resources and Water supply, Government of Gujarat, said, "Thanks to the vision of PM Narendra Modi, Saurashtrians are as closer to their Janani - Gujarat as their mother Tamil Nadu. I wish all my Saurashtrian brothers and sisters a great experience when they arrive in Saurashtra."

CM pays tributes to Veerangana Avantibai Lodhi

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan paid tribute by garlanding the portrait of Veerangana Avanti Bai Lodhi on her death anniversary on Monday. Chouhan also remembered her contribution.

Rani Avantibai Lodhi was active in the revolution of the year 1857 and became the leader of the liberation movement in Rewanchal. She fought continuously with the British. The British had to bow down before her courage, due to which the state of Mandla and Ramgarh became independent. The British sent forces from Nagpur towards Ramgarh. Rani Avantibai's army was much smaller than the British army.

The British army surrounded Rani Avantibai from all sides who stayed on the front. Compelled Rani sacrificed her life by stabbing a dagger in her chest.

She chose the honourable option instead of dying at the hands of the British. Rani Avantibai did the work of lighting the flame of independence by sacrificing herself for the protection of her subjects. The Central Government also issued a postal stamp on March 20, 1988, in the memory of Veerangana Rani Avantibai.

CME conducted at AIIMS Bhopal on hybrid mode

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Pancreatitis is one of the most important Gastrointestinal (GI) diseases. There are two forms of pancreatitis - acute and chronic. The two most common causes of acute pancreatitis are alcohol abuse and small gallstones.

A multi-centric research project to estimate the burden of pancreatitis and major gastrointestinal disorders in India is going on in collaboration with departments of Surgical and Medical Gastroenterology with funding from ICMR under task-force scheme.

A CME was conducted in hybrid mode (online & offline) as an advocacy measure to improve engagement of clinicians and hospitals involved in management of pancreatitis and other major gastrointestinal disorders.

Prof. (Dr.) Bertha Rathinam, HoD Anatomy was the chief guest. Dr. Manisha Srivastava and Prof. (Dr.) Arun Kokane joined as guests of honour. Dr Rajnish Joshi (HoD Medicine) was also present.

Dr. Sanjeev Kumar, Additional Professor, AIIMS Bhopal (also Principal Investigator of the project) explained the current epidemiology of Pancreatitis.

He sensitized the audience on the need for patient-centered outcome 'disability adjusted life years (DALY)'. This was followed by session by Dr Saumya Jaganath Mahapatra, Assistant Professor, Medical Gastroenterology, AIIMS Delhi on the medical management of acute & chronic pancreatitis. He explained the pathway from acute to recurrent to chronic pancreatitis. Dr. Vishal Gupta, Additional Professor & HOD of Surgical Gastroenterology explained the role of surgical interventions.

He gave emphasis on need for early care by team of critical care specialist and medical interventions when sterile inflammation is going in acute pancreatitis. He showed videos of pancreas surgery through intraabdominal and retroperitoneal approaches.

Dr Saransh Jain, consultant medical gastroenterologist explained the diagnostic dilemma in both acute and chronic pancreatitis by comparing the differential diagnoses of characteristic abdominal pain mimicking as acute pancreatitis.

National Cadet Corps contingents during an awareness campaign to save Sparrow on the occasion of World Sparrow Day in Bhopal on Monday. Pioneer photo

Valedictory ceremony of Glaucoma Week held

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

On March 18, world marked the end of glaucoma week. AIIMS Bhopal had designed a week long campaign and conducted various activities to raise awareness of glaucoma among people, under the world glaucoma week. Today concluding ceremony program is celebrated in the presence of Director and Dean AIIMS Bhopal under the guidance of Dr. Bhavna Sharma, HOD

ophthalmology AIIMS Bhopal in which prize was distributed to the winners of slogan, poster and photography competition to motivate the participants and to analyse the activities performed under the campaign so that all team members can do more better work from this time.

Meanwhile, Under the expert guidance of Executive Director of AIIMS Bhopal Prof (Dr.) Ajai Singh, the Video Endoscopy system has been procured and installed in the Department of Surgical Oncology AIIMS Bhopal. The demonstration and training of Upper GI endoscopy was given to related staff on the third floor modular OT and it has been now functional in Surgical Oncology Department.

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Veerangana Rani Avantibai sacrificed for motherland

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that the Veerangana Rani Avantibai sacrificed her life for the motherland fighting with all her might for her existence. She presented a wonderful example of war skills, leadership ability and patriotism by continuously fighting against the British in the freedom struggle of 1857.

Chief Minister Chouhan also mentioned the wars fought by Rani Avantibai in Jabalpur, Mandla and Dindori areas. He said that their heroic stories will also be included in the curriculum so that the future generation remembers Rani Avantibai, Raja Shankarshah-Raghunath Shah and tribal leaders.

Along with this, a grand memorial and park of Veerangana Rani will be built at Mankedi, the statue site. Heroic stories of Rani Avantibai will also be engraved in the memorial.

Chief Minister Chouhan attended the Martyrdom Day programme of Veerangana Rani Avantibai at Mankedi in Bargi of Jabalpur district today. He said that I am feeling proud by paying floral tributes at the birthplace of Veerangana Avantibai. Describing the bravery saga of Veerangana, the Chief Minister said that British officers and prominent historians also admired her strategic skills. Chief Minister Chouhan thanked the Prime Minister Narendra Modi and said that memorials of brave martyrs and tribal leaders are

being built in the Amrit Utsav of Independence being celebrated under his leadership. Along with this, the sequence of making memorials is going on in Madhya Pradesh as well. He recalled from the stage the great personalities and revolutionaries who made invaluable contribution to the freedom of the country through their sacrifice during the freedom struggle.

Chief Minister Chouhan said that every possible effort will be made to provide irrigation water to maximum number of villages under the Rani Avantibai Sagar Project. For this, a project will be prepared and instructions for the survey will be issued immediately. He told that the area under irrigation is continuously increasing in the state. At one time only 7.5 lakh hectares was irrigated, which has been increased to 45 lakh hectares. It will be increased to 65 lakhs in the next 2 years.

Chief Minister Chouhan said that all-round efforts are going on to quench the thirst of the farmers.

Chief Minister Chouhan said that I am happy to say that today you have talked about renaming the college after Raja Raghunath Shah-Shankar Shah. Earlier we have named Chhindwara University after Raja Raghunath Shah-Shankar Shah. In the beginning, Chief Minister Chouhan paid floral tributes to Rani Avantibai's statue and picture.

The Chief Minister inaugurated the programme by performing the Kanya Puja. MLA Jalam Singh Patel also addressed. Chairman Backward Classes Commission Gauri Shankar Bisen, Chairman Gau Samvardhan Board Swami Akhileshwaranand Ji Maharaj, District Panchayat President Shri Santosh Varkade, along with public representatives and a large number of residents were present.

Congress party activists participate in a rally on 'Loktantra Samman Diwas' programme organised by the Congress party on the third anniversary of the fall of Kamal Nath led Congress Government, in Bhopal on Monday. Pioneer photo

Women participate in a camp organised for filling up the application forms for Mukhyamantri Ladli Behna Yojna in Bhopal on Monday. Pioneer photo

Supreme Court's claim is overwhemengly false: Survivors allege

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

At a press conference organizations of survivors of the Union Carbide disaster in Bhopal presented their response to the decision of the Supreme Court that was made available online on March 15, 2023.

Earlier, the organizations had condemned the decision on the day the Curative Petition for additional compensation for the disaster was dismissed by the Bench on March 14.

Rashida Bee, President of the Bhopal Gas Peedit Mahila Stationery Karmchari Sangh said, "The Supreme Court Bench has deliberately ignored arguments against Union Carbide using fraudulent means to settle the case of the disaster in February 1989. Our lawyer who the Court named and attempted to shame, in fact presented documentary evidence of Union Carbide's representative misled Indian government officials into believing that the majority of survivors suffered only temporary injuries. There is not a word in the decision about this."

"The Court's claim that Bhopal survivors received six times more compensation than that provided under the Motor Vehicles Act is overwhelmingly false." Said Balkrishna Namdeo of Bhopal Gas Peedit Nirashrit Pensionbhogi Sangarsh Morcha. "The MV Act of 1988 stipulates payment of

Survivors presented their response to the decision of the Supreme Court that was made available online on March 15

Rs. 50 thousand to Rs 2.5 lakhs to victims of injury depending on its severity and the number of Bhopal victims who have received six times the minimum amount is less than 1 % of the claimants." he said.

Rachna dhingra of the Bhopal Group for Information & Action said, "The judges have displayed ignorance of the basic fact that contamination of groundwater in Bhopal by Union Carbide's hazardous waste predates the gas disaster of 1984 and is unrelated to it.

They chose to ignore that the ongoing contamination is due to unsafe dumping of poisonous waste before and after the disaster by Union Carbide. Also ignored by them was the condition of returning the land in its original condition under which Union Carbide had taken the land on lease."

Said Nawab Khan President of Bhopal Gas Peedit Mahila Pursh Sangarsh Morcha, "Nowhere in 34-page decision is there any indication that the judges are even remotely familiar with the scientific facts on medical consequences of exposure to Union Carbide's leaked gas. There is nothing in it to show that the judges had any understanding of the chronic nature of exposure induced diseases among the Bhopal survivors."

"While the decision claims to be sympathetic to the survivors, the Bench's derisive attitude towards the survivors' organizations is clear in the manner it describes them throughout the decision." said Nousheen Khan of Children against Dow Carbide. She "The judges have also made their bias for Union Carbide by completely omitting to mention that the corporation continues to abscond from the criminal case on the disaster." She added.

Nath demands immediate compensation to farmers

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

State Congress President Kamal Nath has written a letter to Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan.

In this, he demanded that relief amount should be distributed immediately for the damage caused to the crops due to hailstorm. He demanded the recovery of outstanding electricity bills from the farmers should be stopped and the recovery of crop loans should also be stopped immediately.

Kamal Nath has written in his letter that natural calamity has occurred in many districts of Malwa, Nimar, Bundelkhand, Mahakaushal and Narmada Puram. For the last 15 days, the government is only talking about conducting a survey and till now not a single farmer has received relief amount.

He further said that Rabi crops like wheat, barley, gram, peas, mustard, linseed, coriander, isabgol etc. were either ripe for reaping or had been cut in the field for threshing.

These crops have been damaged due to hailstorm and excessive rain.

The basic objective of the Revenue Book Circular is to distribute the relief amount immediately after the occurrence of natural calamity in the form of immediate assistance in natural calamity. But if the survey work is not completed within 15 days, then the whole exercise is futile.

Due to non-distribution of the relief amount, there is anger among the farmers across the state and to increase the suffering of the farmers, attachment proceedings are now being taken for the recovery of outstanding electricity bills.

The last date for submission of crop loan has been fixed as March 28. The farmer brothers suffering from the calamity are being made to suffer more by the government. Therefore, you are requested that the distribution of the relief amount for the damaged crops of the farmer brothers should be started without delay.

Fearing poor result, class 7 girl commits suicide

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Fearing final examinations and unable to bear the pressure a class 7 girl student committed suicide by hanging with the ceiling at Arera hills area.

Father runs a vegetable shop near the house. The incident took place when the student was alone at home. The family members closed the shop and reached home, the door was found open. On going inside the house, they saw that the girl was hanging. The family members took her to the hospital where the doctors declared him dead.

According to the information, Khushi Kushwaha (14) used to study in class VII. The girl went to her father's shop

Police did not find any suicide note from the spot. Because of this, the real cause of death could not be ascertained

around 8 pm on Sunday night and while returning home there, met brother Krishna on the way.

After this he went towards the shop to get the shop closed and to pick up his mother Ranu and when the family reached home after some time, the door was found open. After this, the family hurriedly took the girl down and took her to Jaypee Hospital where the doctors declared her dead.

Police were informed and have not find any suicide note from the spot. Because of this, the real cause of death could not be ascertained.

The reason of death would be investigated as family members were not aware of any reason and have expressed ignorance over the suicide which the girl committed after meeting the father at her shop. On her way back her brother asked to study by returning home which could be a possible reason for taking the extreme step.

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY G20

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is notified for the information of general public that high speed trail test has to be conducted between Babina and Bijrotha on 21-03-23. Common public, vehicle drivers, farmers and the cattle grazers of this area are informed not to let their cattle come close to the railway track, to use ROB and RUB to cross the railway track and to take all necessary precautions. If any accident takes place on the rail line during the speed trail, railway administration will not be responsible.

Senior Divisional Safety Officer
Jhansi

415/23 (D)

North central railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @northcentralrailway @CPRONCR

State govt starts survey work in affected districts

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that the state government is standing with the farmers in the crisis caused by hailstorm. Survey work has been started in the hailstorm affected districts. After completing the survey work in a week, immediate relief will be provided to the farmers.

Joint teams of Revenue, Agriculture and Panchayat and Rural Development departments have been formed for the survey. There should be no negligence in the survey, the survey should be done with honesty and sensitivity and every affected farmer should get relief, special care should be taken that no farmer's field is left out of the survey.

Chouhan gave these instructions in the meeting held at the residence office. Principal Secretary Revenue Manish Rastogi along with officials of Revenue Department were present. Chief Secretary Iqbal Singh Bains joined virtually.

Chouhan said that along with the survey, the list of affected farmers and losses suffered by them should be posted in the panchayats. After resolving the objections received from the farmers, the loss should be assessed with full sensitivity and transparency. Along with the relief amount, farmers will be provided the benefit of crop insurance scheme on the basis of crop cutting experiment done with updated technology. Parallel to the survey, necessary action should be taken for crop insurance scheme to compensate the farmers for the loss in time. Due to this, the amount of immediate relief given in RBC 6-4 and the crop insurance scheme will be available to the farmers. In addition to loss of crops, relief will be provided commensurate with the enhanced amount for cattle loss.

It was told that in 520 villages of 51 tehsils of the affected districts, preliminary information has been received that crops on 33 thousand 758 hectares of 38 thousand 900 farmers have been affected.

नाम परिवर्तन

मैं रजनीश दुबे आत्मज ओमप्रकाश दुबे, निवासी मकान नं. 30, खटीयापुरा कटलपुरा, सांवलिया मंदिर के सामने, बैरसिया, भोपाल, मध्य प्रदेश, 463106, यह उद्घोषणा करता हूँ, कि पूर्व में मेरा नाम रजनीश दुबे था जिसे बदलकर मैने अपना नाम रजनीश ओमप्रकाश दुबे कर लिया है। अत: आज से मुझे रजनीश ओमप्रकाश दुबे के नाम से जाना व पहचाना जावे।

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY G20

L. No. JHS-DyCEE-WS-T-14-2022-23 Date : 17.03.2023

TENDER NOTICE

For and on behalf of President of India, the Dy.CEE/Work Shop, North Central Railway, Jhansi invites open tenders through online (E-Tendering) for the following work:-

Description of work	Tender value	Bid Security
Jhansi Workshop: - Electrical work for :- Part-A :- Provision of New Shed in Latthaline in Wagon Repair Workshop Jhansi, **Part-B:-** Construction of material storage wards (01No) facilities for wagon / coaching items with heavy duty industrial metal racks in GSD/JHS.	Rs. 17,16,722.60/- only	Rs. 34,300/- only

Tender No. : JHS-DyCEE-WS-T-14-2022-23
Completion period: 06 months
Closing date of tender: 17.04.2023 (upto 15:00 Hrs.).
Tenderer will submit the tender online upto **17.04.2023** (upto 15:00 Hrs.). Complete details & for submission of tenders can be seen in Indian Railway website **http://www.ireps.gov.in.** 402/23(AN)

North central railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @CPRONCR @northcentralrailway

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY G20 भारत 2023 INDIA

E-Tender No: DYCE-JHSW-51 Date: 15.03.2023

E-TENDER NOTICE

Dy. Chief Engineer/ workshop/ Jhansi for and behalf of President of India invites **"Open Tender"** through On line E-Tendering (Single Packet) for the following work:

Description of work	E-Tender No.	Approx Cost Rs.	Bid Security Rs.	Cost of Tender Form Rs.	Date of Closing Tender
Zone no. 3 C Annual Sectional contract for repair & maintenance, white washing, colour washing, distempering, painting, polishing & varnishing of Rail spring Karkhana, Sithouli and attached Railway colony in the jurisdiction of JE/ Works/ Sithouli under AXEN/ Workshop/ Sit houli for the year 2022-23.	DYCE-JHSW-51	4553430/-	91100/-	NIL	17.04.2023 at 15:00 hrs

Date of Completion/ period from issue acceptance letter: 12 Months.

Note: (1) E-Tender online can be submitted upto **15:00 hrs** on **17.04.2023** **(2)** For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website **www.ireps.gov.in.** 389/23 (P)

North central railways @ CPRONCR @northcentralrailway www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY G20

E-Tendering Tender Notice Jhansi Division

GSU N.C. Railway, Jhansi for and on behalf of President of India invites sealed "Open Tender" through on line (E-Tendering) for the following work.

Description of work	E-Tender No.	Approx Cost (₹)	Earnest Money (₹)
Jhansi Division:- Improvement to station building, platforms, circulating area, waiting halls/toilets and providing green patches at Mahoba and Chhatarpur stations under Amrit Bharat station scheme.	JHS-ENGG-GSU-2023-09	94543021.10	622700.00
Jhansi Division:- Improvement to station building, platforms, circulating area, waiting halls/toilets and providing green patches at Orchha and Tikamgarh stations under Amrit Bharat station scheme.	JHS-ENGG-GSU-2023-10	94373626.25	621900.00

Date of closing for both Tenders- 13.04.2023 at **15.00** hrs. and **Date of completion/ period from issue acceptance letter-** 10 Months. • Tender online can be submitted up to **15.00** hrs. on **13.04.2023** • For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railway website **www.ireps.gov.in.** 400/23 FA

North central railways @CPRONCR @northcentralrailway www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

tru
TruCap Finance Limited
(Formerly known as Dhanvarsha Finvest Ltd)
Registered Office: 3rd Floor, A Wing, D.J. House, Old Nagardas Road, Andheri (East), Mumbai – 400 069, Maharashtra
GST No: 27AAACD9887D1ZC
Corporate Identity Number: L24231MH1994PLC334457

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the Public that Auction of pledged Gold Ornaments will be conducted by TruCap Finance Limited (Formerly known as Dhanvarsha Finvest Ltd) on 27th March 2023 at Imamigate, Agrasen Chowk, Bhopal at 11:00 A.M.

Branch address: TruCap Finance Limited (Formerly known as Dhanvarsha Finvest Ltd). 1st Floor, Above Canara Bank, Imamigate, Sultania Road, Agrasen Chowk, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh - 462001

The Gold Ornaments to be auctioned belong to Loan Accounts of our various Customers who have failed to pay their dues. Our notices of auction have been duly issued to these borrowers.

The Gold Ornaments to be auctioned belong to Overdue Loan Accounts of our various Customers mentioned below with branch name.

Imamigate Branch: GL0000000012681, GL0000000016864, GL0000000045582.
Indrapuri Branch: GL0000000017892, GL0000000036746, GL0000000038583, GL0000000040815.
Karondh Branch: GL0000000046847.
Kolar Branch: GL0000000049395.
Sehore Branch: GL0000000029133.
Ganj Basoda: GL0000000041683

For more details, please contact TruCap Finance Limited (Formerly known as Dhanvarsha Finvest Ltd).
Contact Person: Satish Kumar.
Contact Number(s): 9560735444

TruCap Finance Limited (Formerly known as Dhanvarsha Finvest Ltd) *reserves the right to alter the number of accounts to be auctioned &/ postpone / cancel the auction without any prior notice.)*

TruCap Finance Limited
(Formerly known as Dhanvarsha Finvest Ltd)

बैंक ऑफ़ बड़ौदा
Bank of Baroda
विजया VIJAYA देना DENA

POSSESSION NOTICE
[RULE 8(1)] FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

Branch: Hinduja Bhavan Sarafa Bazar, Lashkar, Gwalior, Ph. 0751-2421299, Email : Gwalio@bankofbaroda.com

Whereas, the Undersigned being the Authorised officer of the **Bank of Baroda** Under the securitization and reconstruction of Financial assets and Enforcement of security interest Act 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 8 of the security interest (Enforcement) rules 2002,issued demand notice upon the Borrower calling to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice being within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrower having failed to repay the amount, Notice is here by given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken the possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under section 13(4) of the Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest(Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on this the borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealing with the property will be subject to the charges of **Bank of Baroda** For an amount as shown below and Interest thereon.

Name & Address of Borrower	Outstanding Amount	Description of the Property	Demand/Possession Notice
Borrowers- Mrs. Anita d/o Rakesh Singh and Mr. Atul Kumar Vitthariya s/o Ramswaroop Rajak Guarantor - Mr. Ishwardeen S/o Gamaprasad	Rs. 5,24,636.56 + Date : 11/10/2022 Interest & other expenses	Property Owner- Smt Anita Bithariya- Equitable mortgage of Property having plot no. EWS-266, MahadJi Nagar Yojna of Gwalior Vikas Pradhikaran, situated in Ward no. 59 Survey no. 288 Gram Chirwai, Gwalior Distt- Gwalior. Area- 50 Sqmt. Bounded : East : Aam Rasta, West : bhavan no. 273, North- bhavan no. 265, South- bhavan no. 267 In the name of Smt Anita Bithariya	Demand Notice Date 11.10.2022 / Possession Date 18.03.2023

Place: Gwalior, Date: 19.03.2023 Authorised officers, Bank of Baroda

कार्यालय अधीक्षण यंत्री, ग्रामीण यांत्रिकी सेवा,
भोपाल मंडल भोपाल पुराना सचिवालय भोपाल
दूरभाष (फोन) 0755-2738774, E-Mail_ID - seresbhopal@mp.gov.in
निविदा विज्ञप्ति क्र.-: 13/2022-23

क्रमांक 493 दिनांक :- 14.03.2023

मंडल अंतर्गत निम्नलिखित कार्यो हेतु ऑनलाईन निविदायें आमंत्रित की जाती है। उल्लेखित कार्यो का विस्तृत विवरण वेबसाईट https://mptenders.gov.in पर देखा जा सकता है।

क्र.	ग्रायांसे संभागीय कार्यालय	सिस्टम टेण्डर नम्बर	आमंत्रण का क्रम	कार्य का प्रकार	निर्माण कार्यो की अनुमानित लागत (लाख में)
1	रायसेन	2023_RES_256880	द्वितीय	बी.टी. रोड निर्माण कार्य गीदगड़ से गीदगढ़ टोला लम्बाई 1.98 कि.मी. जनपद पंचायत सांची।	268.33
2		2023_RES_256879	प्रथम	बी.टी. रोड निर्माण कार्य ग्राम कहूला से महूला होते हुये ग्राम मेहगांव तक सड़क निर्माण लम्बाई 9.00 कि.मी. वि. खं. गैरतगंज।	753.20
3		2023_RES_260212	प्रथम	नवीन सामुदायिक भवन निर्माण कार्य मय विद्युतीकरण सहित ग्राम कहूला, ग्रा.पं. टेपाकार खोड़ी वि. खं. गैरतगंज।	31.25
4		2023_RES_260213	प्रथम	नवीन सामुदायिक भवन निर्माण कार्य मय विद्युतीकरण सहित ग्राम सिलारी ग्रा.पं. लालगवां वि. खं. गैरतगंज।	31.25
5		2023_RES_260214	प्रथम	नवीन सामुदायिक भवन निर्माण कार्य मय विद्युतीकरण सहित ग्राम सुरई ग्रा.पं. पठारी वि. खं. गैरतगंज।	31.25
6	सीहोर	2023_RES_260215	प्रथम	ग्राम खेरी सिलेगना आमोन जोड़ में 01 स्वागात द्वार का निर्माण वि. खं. बुधनी।	6.00
7	भोपाल	2023_RES_260216	प्रथम	भोपाल हाट बाजार परिसर में अजीविका मार्ट निर्माण कार्य मय विद्युतीकरण कार्य सहित विकासखण्ड भोपाल	23.18

उपरोक्त निविदाओं के निविदा प्रपत्र (टेण्डर डाक्यूमेंट), वेबसाईट: https://mptenders.gov.in पर ऑनलाईन भुगतान कर क्रय किये जा सकेगें। ऑनलाईन निविदा प्रपत्र क्रय प्रारंभ करने की **तिथि 21.03.2023 समय 18.00 बजे** है। निविदा (बिड) प्रपत्र प्रस्तुत करने का अंतिम **दिनांक 06.04.2023 समय 18.00 बजे** तक है। विस्तृत निविदा सूचना व अन्य जानकारी वेबसाईट पर देखी जा सकती है। संशोधन संबंधी सूचनाएँ केवल वेबसाईट पर दी जावेगी। पृथक से प्रकाशन नहीं किया जावेगा।

(सज्जन सिंह चौहान)
अधीक्षण यंत्री
ग्रामीण यांत्रिकी सेवा
भोपाल मण्डल भोपाल

G-24718/22

India vital for stability in Indo-Pacific: Kishida

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida on Monday said India is indispensable for peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific and no country should use force or coercion in trying to drive their territorial claims, after unveiling his plan for the region. These observations were in apparent reference to Russia and China.

Delivering the 41st Sapru House lecture, Kishida also strongly condemned Russia's aggression against Ukraine and said global principles of respecting sovereignty and territorial integrity must be adhered to in every corner of the world.

On the Ukraine conflict, Kishida also noted Prime Minister Narendra Modi's message to Russian President Vladimir Putin that 'today's era is not of war'.

The Japanese prime minister delivered the lecture in the presence of a gathering of top diplomats, envoys and strategic affairs experts, hours after holding wide-ranging talks with Prime Minister Modi on further strengthening the India-Japan 'Special Strategic and Global Partnership'. "India is indispensable," Kishida said while elaborating on his vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific. The Japanese prime minister also said Tokyo will collaborate closely with New Delhi in contributing to stability in the South Asian region.

"Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) is a vision gaining traction. The FOIP is a visionary concept. It is to defend rule of law and freedom," he said.

Kishida said countries must follow the United Nations principles of respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity and peaceful resolution of disputes.

"Peace is paramount. The principles such as respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and opposition to unilateral changes to status quo by force must be followed. The principles should be adhered to in every corner of the world," Kishida said.

His comments came amid increasing global concerns over the Russian invasion of Ukraine and China's military muscle-flexing in the Indo-Pacific. Kishida said states should not use force or coercion in trying to drive their claims at sea.

Stalemate over Adani, Rahul continues in Parl

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Parliament was adjourned for the day on Monday without transacting any business as the deadlock continued between the ruling and the opposition parties over Rahul Gandhi's alleged 'anti-India' remark in Loonon and a demand for a Joint-Parliamentary Committee (JPC) probe into the charges of share manipulation against the Adani business Group.

Both the houses of Parliament have not conducted any business since the start of the second-leg of the budget session on March 13.

In a repeat of scenes of the earlier days, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla again asked agitating members to come to his chamber to discuss issues and find a way out.

"You come, sit and discuss. Both the ruling side and opposition come to the chamber and discuss. We will find a solution and run the House. We will discuss your topics and issues also," he said after the house resumed proceedings for the day and members of the treasury benches raised the issue of Rahul's remarks.

Countering the treasury benches, opposition members, including those from the Congress, also shouted slogans demanding a JPC probe into alleged stock manipulation by the Adani Group.

"Sit down. Let the Question Hour continue….Nation wants to watch the House proceedings. This House belongs to you," Speaker Birla said in an effort to bring the House in order.He also assured the members that they will get adequate opportunity to speak as per rules after the Question Hour.

The Speaker also objected to Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) member Harsimrat Kaur Badal showing a placard from her seat, saying it was not allowed in the House.

"Please allow Parliament function" was written on one side of the SAD member's placard while "save democracy" was written on the other side.

As the members refused to relent, the Speaker adjourned the proceedings till 2 pm. It was adjourned for the day after it resumed in the afternoon.

Rajya Saba too was adjourned for the day in the afternoon after its proceedings remained derailed in the morning session.

As soon as the Upper House reassembled for the afternoon session, after being adjourned in the morning session, Deputy Chairman Harivansh asked Sujeet Kumar (BJD) to raise a discussion on the working of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship amid sloganeering by the treasury bench and the opposition members.

Even as Kumar tried to speak, the slogan shouting continued, forcing the deputy chairman to adjourn the House for the day.

Earlier, as the House assembled for the day, the ruling and opposition parties traded barbs over Rahul's remark in London and the demand for the probe into allegations against the Adani Group.

During the morning session, as the ruling BJP and the opposition parties kept shouting slogans, Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar had adjourned the proceedings till 2 pm.

Dhankhar said he had received notices under rule 267-9 from Congress members, including Pramod Tiwari, Rajneet Ranjan, Kumar Ketkar, Syed Nasir Hussain, Amee Yajnik, AKhilesh Prasad Singh, Neeraj Dangi and Mukul Wasnik, to discuss the failure of the government to constitute a joint parliamentary committee (JPC) to look into allegations of accounting fraud and stock market manipulation against the Adani Group.

Opp accuses Govt of stalling Parliament, diverting attention from demand for JPC on Adani group

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Several opposition parties on Monday accused the government of stalling Parliament and finding ways to divert attention from the opposition demand for a Joint Parliamentary Committee probe (JPC) into the Adani issue.

Leaders of opposition parties, including those from the Congress, DMK, RJD, CPI-M, CPI, NCP, JDU, AAP, and Shiv Sena, met in the chamber of Leader of Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge in Parliament House complex and coordinated their strategy on the demand for a JPC into the Adani issue.

Speaking to reporter outside Parliament House, Congress deputy leader in Rajya Sabha Pramod Tiwari claimed nothing happens in the BJP without the directions of the prime minister. Despite several attempts our demand for a JPC is not being accepted, he said.

"Why is the government shying away from JPC...The BJP is running away from JPC and is finding ways to divert attention and is not allowing Parliament to function. We have pledged that till the time JPC is not constituted, we will not budge and continue with our struggle. This is not for leaders, but for the people," Tiwari said.

"You may carry on with 'police Raj', it is indicative of dictatorship. This seems just a trailer of dictatorship and the real dictatorship is yet to come," he charged.

Ram Gopal Yadav of the Samajwadi Party said if a JPC probe is held then the real culprits will come out and the BJP will stand "exposed".

Platform screens at Patna rly stn show porn clip, ad agency contract cancelled

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI/PATNA

A day after TV screens installed at platform number 10 at Patna railway station played a porn clip, the Railways on Monday said it has cancelled the contract of the agency responsible for relaying advertisements on the screens.

Passengers at the Patna Junction railway station were in for a shock on Sunday when TV screens installed at the platforms displayed a porn video clip. Confirming the incident, a railway official said on Monday the private operator who was given the contract has been "blacklisted" and booked in FIRs lodged separately by the RPF and GRP.

In a statement, Virendra Kumar, Chief Public Relations Officer, East Central Railway (ECR), said that two FIRs have been registered against the agency, one each by the Railway Protection Force (RPF) and the Government Railway Police (GRP).

"A serious note was taken of the lapse when the matter was reported. The tender awarded to the operator concerned has been terminated forthwith and he is being blacklisted for any future contracts", said Virendra Kumar, chief public relations officer of East Central Railway zone.

"All TV screens installed by the operator have been disconnected. The RPF and GRP have registered separate FIRs in connection with the embarrassing incident. Investigations into it are on", he added.

MHA for CBI inquiry against Aman Biradari for FCRA violations

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has recommended a CBI inquiry against activist Harsh Mander's NGO 'Aman Biradari'. MHA officials on Monday said a CBI inquiry has been recommended against the NGO for violation of various provisions of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act. Mander, who was a member of the Sonia Gandhi-led National Advisory Council during the erstwhile UPA Government, founded Aman Biradari -- "a people's campaign for a secular, peaceful, just and humane world".

All NGOs receiving foreign funding have to mandatorily register with the Home Ministry under the FCRA. According to Mander's website (https://harshmander.In), he is the "founder of Aman Biradari, a people's campaign for a secular, peaceful, just and humane world, established after the Gujarat communal carnage of 2002".

"Aman Biradari works closely with other people's organisations and groups for the defence of secularism; for public compassion; and for promoting the values of the constitution," it states. In October 2022, the MHA had cancelled the FCRA registration of the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation (RGF) and the Rajiv Gandhi Charitable Trust (RGCT) -- two NGOs headed by Congress leader Sonia Gandhi -- for alleged violation of laws.

Rahul writes to LS Speaker, seeks permission to speak over London democracy remarks

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

With the ruling party continuously mounting pressure, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday wrote to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla to allow him to speak in the Lok Sabha over his democracy remarks made in London. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said time has been sought for Rahul Gandhi to speak in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday and he will make his statement if allowed. He has not made any public statement about his London remarks yet.

Kharge also slammed the Modi government over the Delhi Police team reaching Rahul Gandhi's residence on Sunday to inquire about his "women are still being sexually assaulted" statement made during the Bharat Jodo Yatra. "This is an attempt to target and harass. They want to weaken us by intimidation, but we will not get scared or be weakened," Kharge said.

Party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi too attacked the Centre over the Delhi Police's notice to her brother Rahul Gandhi and said the people of the country are watching all the exploits of "the corrupt BJP government" and will reply when the time comes.

BJP has launched a major offensive against him and has been stalling both houses of Parliament while demanding an apology from him. The ruling party has accused the Congress leader of seeking foreign intervention as "democracy in India is under threat". The former Congress chief has however defended his statement at a meeting of the Parliamentary Consultative Committee for External Affairs and has claimed that he has never insulted the country.

Rahul Gandhi had met Birla last week after his return from the UK and on the same day told the Press that he requested the Lok Sabha presiding officer to allow him to speak in the House. Congress leaders said that Rahul Gandhi wants to speak in the Lok Sabha to clarify his remarks made in London, over which the BJP is demanding an apology from him after accusing him of insulting the country and its institutions on foreign soil.

In a tweet message Priyanka Gandhi said, "Notice is being given to Mr Rahul Gandhi as to why did you raise the voice of women, dalits, tribals, poor, farmers and youth who were suffering from atrocities?" "PM's friend Gautam Adani accused of having business relations with 38 shell companies abroad, no notice. Infiltration of fake company in defense sector through Adani, no notice. The government itself is accused of changing the rules to benefit Adani, not even discussed in the Parliament," the Congress general secretary said.

SC directs all HCs to set up RTI portals within 3 months

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday directed all High Courts to set up RTI portals within three months. The apex court also asked High Courts to implement RTI portals in district judiciary also. The bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud said the apex court had also set up a portal for filing RTI applications to help people access information about the top court. The bench, also comprising Justices PS Narasimha and JB Pardiwala, was apprised that the High Courts of Delhi, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha have already set up web portals for the purpose, while in Karnataka the High Court is using the website which is being set up by the State Government.

"We are of the view that such an exercise be carried out by all the High Courts in the country no later than within a period of three months from the date of this order," the bench said. The apexcourt was hearing a plea seeking direction to the registrar general of all high courts to establish and operationalise online RTI portal, both for the high courts as well as the district judiciary.

India records 1,50,000 road accidents deaths annually

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

While the West has seen steady fall in incidence of road traffic accidents, India continues to record higher injuries with nearly 1,50,000 deaths annually of which 25 per cent is contributed by two wheeler road mishaps, doctors flagged concerns on World Head Injuries Awareness Day on Monday.

Among children particularly under 12, prominent reasons for death are a fall from a height, usually a balcony, they said. As per the Government 2020 data, 328 people died every day due to road traffic accidents.

Dr Deepak Gupta, Professor of Neurosurgery at AIIMS, pointed out that helmets reduce risk of death and head injury by 50-60 per cent. "Two times higher deaths have been noted in non-helmeted riders, the majority of whom are women compared to helmeted riders. No doubt, helmets reduce risk of death by 50 per cent.

"With helmets, hospital deaths are reduced by 16 per cent, cervical spine injuries are lesser and facial injuries are also lesser by 12—60 per cent. New road safety rules should be followed (Six airbags in LMVs , mandatory seat belt usage for back seat riders, helmets for pillion riders) introduced by the Government," he added.

Now the doctors have launched two campaigns, 'SAHE" that aims to create awareness about safety gears like seat belts, airbags, helmets and road etiquettes while another is about 'safe balcony' as a disturbing chunk of accidents is due to fall from the balcony.

Well known neurologist Dr AK Mahapatra pointed out that high falls contributes to 5-7% of TBI, a unique injury pattern reported from India. "Many of these are potentially preventable if one targets improved balcony/barricading/ check on new home/work place building norms," he said.

Similarly, over speeding and drowsy driving continues to be the greatest killer on new highways. Dr Gupta also underscored the fact that investment in precautionary measures was meager when compared to the cost incurred on treatment post TBI.

To draw home his point, he said that helmets cost Rs 2500, seat belts cost Rs 1000 and expenditure incurred on car airbags is a few thousand rupees and in fact they are pre-fitted in your vehicle. But if severely injured, costs incurred can run more than Rs 10-50 lakhs in private set ups and months of stays in public hospitals. Needless to say, pain, agony and loss of bread earners of the family are priceless, he added.

Dr Deepak Jha, Neurosurgeon from AIIMS, Jodhpur talked about the government's role in enforcing the law such as mandatory seat belts for both front and rear passengers in the cars and headgears for men and women on two-wheelers.

ED grills Kavitha in excise policy case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Monday grilled BRS leader K Kavitha for over 10 hours after she appeared before the agency for a second round of questioning in the money laundering probe linked to the Delhi excise policy 'scam'.

Kavitha entered the ED headquarters here at 10:30 AM and after making formalities like marking attendance, her questioning and recording of statement under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act began at about 11 AM and continued till about 9.30 PM, officials said.

The 44-year-old Bharat Rashtra Samithi MLC daughter of Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao has been asked to appear again on Tuesday, they said.

She was first questioned in the case on March 11 for around nine hours following which she was summoned again on March 16.Kavitha had skipped the deposition last week citing her pending plea before the Supreme Court for relief against the ED action in the case.

The agency, however, rejected her claims and asked her to depose on March 20. The apex court has fixed the hearing on her petition on March 24.

On March 11, Kavitha was confronted with the statements made by Hyderabad-based businessman Arun Ramchandran Pillai, an arrested accused in the case who allegedly shares close ties with her, apart from some other suspects in the case.

During Monday's session, Kavitha is said to have been physically confronted with Pillai and her former auditor Butchibabu Gorantla, officials said.

The ED has been on record stating that Pillai "represented the South Group", an alleged liquor cartel linked to Kavitha and others, that paid kickbacks amounting to about Rs 100 crore to the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) to gain a larger share of the market in the national capital under the now-scrapped Delhi excise policy for 2020-21.

The "South Group" comprises Sarath Reddy (promoter of Aurobindo Pharma), Magunta Srinivasulu Reddy (YSR Congress MP from Ongole Lok Sabha seat in Andhra Pradesh), his son Raghav Magunta, Kavitha and others, according to the ED.

Pets may pass multi-drug resistant organisms to sick owners: Research

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Healthy dogs and cats could be passing on multidrug-resistant organisms (MDROs; bacteria that resist treatment with more than one antibiotic) to their hospitalized owners, and vice versa. according to new research being presented at this year's European Congress of Clinical Microbiology & Infectious Diseases (ECCMID) in Copenhagen, Denmark to be held next month. However, the researchers have also clarified that "we identified only a handful of cases suggesting that neither cat nor dog ownership is an important risk factor for multidrug-resistant organism colonization in hospital patients."

The study of over 2,800 hospital patients and their companion animals is by Dr. Carolin Hackmann from Charité University Hospital Berlin, Germany, and colleagues.

"Our findings verify that the sharing of multidrug-resistant organisms between companion animals and their owners is possible," said Dr. Hackmann.

The role of pets as potential reservoirs of MDROs is a growing concern worldwide. Antimicrobial resistance happens when infection-causing microbes (such as bacteria, viruses or fungi) evolve to become resistant to the drug designed to kill them. Estimates suggest that antimicrobial resistant infections caused almost 1.3 million deaths and were associated with nearly 5 million deaths around the world in 2019.

In this case control study, researchers wanted to find out whether pets (ie, cats and dogs) play a role in the infection of hospital patients with MDROs.

They focused on the most common superbugs in hospital patients—methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA), vancomycin-resistant enterococci (VRE), 3rd generation cephalosporin-resistant Enterobacterales (3GCRE) and carbapenem-resistant Enterobacterales (CRE), which are resistant to multiple antibiotics including penicillin and cephalosporins.

'Only Lord Krishna can crack layers of Bengal job scam'

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Only Lord Krishna can crack the mutli-departmental and multi-layered recruitment scandals." That was how an advocate representing the Enforcement Directorate on Monday put his case before a designated court in Kolkata while demanding custody of Ayan Sil a builder and a latest fish netted by the Agency presently investigating the multi-crore school level recruitment scam in Bengal.

The arrest of Sil a close aide of jailed Trinamool Congress leader Shantanu Banerjee has opened a new dimension in the recruitment scandal, ED told the court adding his arrest has unveiled a parallel scam in the municipal department.

A 38-hour raid in Sil's house has yielded incriminating documents and hard discs which are a "data mine," and have brought to the surface illegal appointment of at least 5,000 civic employees in 60 municipalities out of which seven are in North 24 Parganas bordering Kolkata only, the ED told the court.

For the first time the Agency has stumbled upon a detailed "rate chart" for jobs at Sil's residence. According to this rate chart Group D employees including the sweepers, drivers etc were charged Rs 4 lakh per job while for Group C jobs including assistant teachers and typist an aspirant had to cough up Rs 7 lakh, the ED referring to the hard discs and documents said.

The Agency has also recovered several hundred original OMR sheets apparently referring to the 2012 Teachers' Eligibility Test (TET) exams, sources said. Besides, like Shantanu Banerjee and Anubrata Mondal, the senior TMC leader of cattle smuggling fame, Sil too had taken recourse to at least 50 fake accounts to chanelise his black money, sources said.

Earlier after arresting Banerjee, a TMC leader from Hooghly district the ED had told the court that they had struck a "gold mine" adding how the CDR or call data recorder of his two mobile phones had yielded the names of some topmost politicians of the State.

"The names cannot be revealed in the open court considering its political sensitivity and hence they have been listed in the case diary," the ED officials said leading the Opposition parties to immediately demand interrogation of such "senior most" leaders based in South Kolkata.

In Sil's case too, the ED said the CDR has revealed the names of 4-5 "influential persons," who played an important role in money transaction and functioning of the multi-departmental and multi-layered job racket, sources said.

The ED officials pointed out that apart from SSC and municipal job scam, the "data mine" recovered from Sil's residence could also lead to a parallel recruitment scandal in Fire Brigade department too, adding the data were being studied in that respect.

Reacting to the Monday's arrest Bengal Opposition Leader Suvendu Adhikari said he was contemplating a Public Interest Litigation seeking revelation of the educational certificates of the employees appointed in the past one decade.

"The TMC's organized job syndicate has left no department untouched … I want someone to file a PIL so that the certificates based on which these people have obtained their jobs … most of these jobs were given to the close aides of the TMC leaders, MLAs, MPs, councilors etc," he said.

When contacted, Bengal Municipal Affairs Minister Firhad Hakim said that he would soon order an internal inquiry to ascertain whether there were people who had obtained their jobs illegally.

Last eight months have seen recovery of cash and property worth several hundred crores and arrest of a number of senior ministers, MLAs, leaders, party strongmen and senior government functionaries including vice chancellors and secondary board chairmen.

Cong sounds K'taka poll bugle

Gives 3 poll guarantees — 200 units of free power, ₹2,000 monthly assistance to Gruha Lakshmi, 10 kg rice free to every BPL family member

PTI ■ **BELAGAVI**

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday called on party leaders in the state to fight the BJP with unity, as he exuded confidence of "sweeping" the forthcoming Karnataka Assembly polls with absolute majority.

He also announced unemployment allowance for the youth, as the party's fourth poll guarantee, on coming to power. The Congress has already announced three poll '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), and 10 kg of rice free to every member of a BPL household (Anna Bhagya).

Addressing a public rally at Belagavi in northern Karnataka, Gandhi hit out at the BJP-led Central government, saying "this country belongs to everyone, does not belong to two to three selected, it is not Adani's". "Select people, who are BJP's friends, are getting all the benefits. It is leading to corruption," the Wayanad MP alleged. Gandhi and AICC President M Mallikarjun Kharge, who hails from the state, said an unemployment allowance of Rs 3,000 per month would be given for graduates and Rs 1,500 for diploma holders for two years in the event of the party gaining power in the State, where Assembly elections are due by May. Gandhi attacked the Basavaraj Bommai government in Karnataka, dubbing it as the "most corrupt government". "It is a 40 per cent commission government," he claimed. The Congress, on coming to power, will fill up all the government job vacancies in Karnataka, he asserted. Exuding confidence in the party winning the Assembly election, Gandhi said: "All Congress leaders will fight the Karnataka Assembly election united, Congress will sweep this election."

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge with party leader Rahul Gandhi and others during the 'Yuva Kranti Samavesha', in Belagavi, on Monday PTI Photo

I cannot be intimidated by police, cases: Rahul Gandhi

PTI ■ WAYANAD (KERALA)

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday said he cannot be intimidated by the repeated political attacks on him, police being sent to his house numerous times or the many cases lodged against him as he believes in the truth and always stood with it.

Gandhi's remarks came in the wake of a Delhi police team reaching his residence on Sunday to inquire about his "women are still being sexually assaulted" statement made during the nationwide Bharat Jodo Yatra.

"Many people may be scared of the Prime Minister, BJP, RSS and the police, but I am not. I am not scared of them in the least and that is their problem.

Mamata on alliance hunt; to meet Naveen

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KOLKATA

After holding talks with Samajwadi Party chieftain Akhilesh Yadav, Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is likely to visit Odisha later this week apparently to meet her counterpart Naveen Patnaik. Banerjee who will visit the Puri Jagannath Temple will also "call on Navin Babu" at Bhubaneshwar, senior leaders in the Trinamool Congress said not ruling out political talks between the two leaders.

Banerjee — a devotee of Lord Jagannath — who seems to have been facing one of the worst crises of her political career in the wake of the multi-departmental recruitment scam exploding the her government's face sending a number of her close aides including Partha Chattaerjee and Anubrata Mondal to jail will offer special prayers at the Jagannath Temple, sources said.

Banerjee had performed a yagna or special prayers at her residence ahead of the 2021 Assembly elections that saw her coming out with flying colours routing the BJP by many miles.

Though Banerjee is likely to raise a dialogue on a possible non-BJP, non-Congress alliance the Biju Janata Dal chief who too has maintained equi-distance from the two national parties is unlikely to join the alliance being contemplated by Banerjee, Yadav et al, sources said reminding Patnaik had hardly been in any political meeting which was staunchly anti-Narendra Modi.

Earlier this week like Banerjee, SP chief too had said that they were not contemplating any Congress-led alliance against the BJP adding however that they would definitely try to stitch together an alliance keeping the two bigger parties out.

Omar says BJP not ready to face electors

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister and National Conference vice-president Omar Abdullah on Monday observed that his party machinery was still intact and flourishing in the plain areas of Jammu region against all odds.

Sporting a white headgear Omar, in his inimical style, also lashed out at the ruling Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) for not showing raw courage to hold the much-awaited Assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). Omar while addressing his first public meeting, after the Abrogation of Article 370, in Bajalta area of Jammu also charged that BJP was not ready to face electorate and that's why they were running away on one pretext or the other from holding elections. First they said it is necessary to complete delimitation of Assembly constituencies then they said summary revision of electoral rolls should also be completed. Then they talked about weather not being conducive but now they have no justification to further delay the polls. Abdullah said the weather is getting pleasant, they have only two reasons for delaying the polls further, one could be the worsening security situation which they claim has improved and the second being that they are afraid to face the voters."If they had been brave, they would have gone for the elections.

After today's public rally, some people (among the BJP) who were supportive of early elections will also feel jittery," he said in an apparent reference to former legislator Devender Singh Rana who resigned from the post of NC provincial president and joined the BJP in October 2021.

Abdullah said the public meeting has proved beyond any doubt that the NC is alive both in Kashmir and the Jammu province.

"People come and go but those who have love for the organisation and are not linked to any particular individual will stay back because they are with the party's principles, flag and agenda," he said. The NC will show its real strength during the assembly elections, Abdullah asserted. "They will try to polarise the situation as they are doing elsewhere in the country. We have to frustrate their attempts by standing united," he said.

The former chief minister said for the first time he is witnessing a government which "feels happiness in inflicting difficulties on the people. It will be better to get rid of this government as soon as possible".

"They are only engaged in propaganda, drama and showoff… Sometime back, we heard of an outside company making an investment in Srinagar but it proved much ado about nothing," the NC leader said referring to the Emaar group of United Arab Emirates laying the foundation of a mega mall project worth Rs 500 crore on Sunday.

He said his party was accused of being an obstacle in the path of development and job creation, and asked what happened over the past three years. "There is no new project, and recruitment for government jobs was cancelled owing to scams," Abdullah said.

Those who celebrated the abrogation of Article 370 in Ladakh and Jammu are equally sad, he claimed. "We were angry from day one but there were some people who celebrated it with a hope of 'New J&K'.

The people in Jammu suffered economically because of the stopping of the darbar move and anti-encroachment drive, while Leh people are openly expressing that they were happy to be part of J&K," the NC leader said.

'NCP would not support any policy to punish relatives of terrorists'

Jammu: National Conference Vice President Omar Abdullah Monday claimed his party would not support any policy to punish relatives of terrorists as it is against natural justice.

Omar also clarified no terrorist was given government jobs by previous dispensation in J&k. Interacting with reporters after addressing a public rally Omar Abdullah also raised issue of "misuse of police against civilian population".

"No terrorist was given a (government) job but we did not punish people because they were relatives of terrorists. Is it fair for me to punish you for the crime committed by your father or a son? Tomorrow, if God forbid a close relative of (Lt Governor) Manoj Sinha Sahab commits a crime, should he be sent to jail?" the former chief minister said. ***PNS***

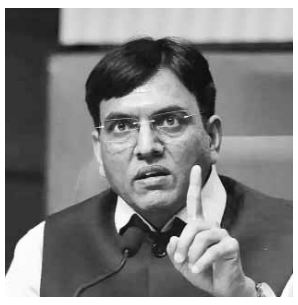
10-day all-India Police Commando Competition to begin in Manesar

New Delhi: The 10-day 13th all India Police Commando Competition will begin on Tuesday at the National Security Guard (NSG) campus at Manesar, Gurugram, Haryana. The 13" All India Police Commando Competition will be organised under the aegis of NSG at its Manesar Campus from March 21 to March 31.

"The prestigious National Level Competition is designed to assess the Best Commando Team amongst CAPFs and State Police Forces based on their physical fitness, tactical skills, mental robustness, shooting prowess, leadership qualities and esprit-de-corps," the NSG said in a statement. In the event, 24 teams are in the fray for this prestigious annual event conducted under the aegis of All India Police Sports Control Board. This event holds importance for participating teams since it is being held post-Covid pandemic after a gap of three years, the last such event being held at Pune in December, 2019. "During ten-day event, the teams will display their expertise in multiple facets of Special Forces training, including precision shooting, endurance, special operations planning and execution, and special survival skills, which aptly demonstratecollective preparedness of nation to face terrorists challenges," it said. ***PNS***

Digital platforms have potential to meet universal health targets

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



Digital health is a great enabler in delivery of health care services and has the potential to support overall universal health coverage targets, Dr Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Health Minister on Monday said and added a two-pronged approach has been adopted in this regard with a focus on digital health through policy framework and by creating a digital ecosystem for path breaking interventions.

These focus on not just availability, accessibility, affordability but also equity of health services, said the Minister at the inaugural of the two-day conference here co-hosted by the Ministry and the WHO South-East Asia Regional Office.

"It is time to move from 'silos to systems' with collaboration of all countries for enhanced coverage and quality of healthcare services," he said in his virtual address at the 'Global Conference on Digital Health - Taking Universal Health Coverage to the Last Citizen', a co-branded event under India's G20 Presidency organised by WHO - South-East Asia Region in collaboration with the Ministry.

Reiterating India's commitment towards Universal Health Coverage, the Minister cited digital interventions have become the foundations of many crucial health programmes such as reproductive child healthcare, Ni-kshay, TB control programme, integrated disease surveillance system, hospital information system, among many others.

Addressing the event, Dr Poonam Khetrapal Singh, Regional Director, WHO South-East Asia Region, said digital health can significantly improve the quality, accessibility, affordability and sustainability of person centric health services and effectiveness of disease management.

"Digital health is a critical imperative today as it can democratize healthcare and fast track what our Region has been working intensely towards since 2014 - the universal health coverage," she said.

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has particularly highlighted the importance of the application of digital technologies to health and its potential to strengthen health systems, prevent disease and enhance service delivery at the global, national and sub-national level, she said.

BJP welcomes Kerala Bishop Mar Joseph Pamplany's support

'There is no freedom of expression for Bishops in Kerala'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Monday welcomed Kerala Bishop Mar Joseph Pamplany's "support" to the BJP and "Church's willingness" to hold discussions with the Modi-government to "protect the interests of farmers."

Minister of State for External and Parliamentary Affairs V. Muraleedharan hit-out at the Left parties and the Congress "for criticizing Bishop for supporting the centre." "There is no freedom of expression for bishops in Kerala. Freedom of Expression is denied to bishops, either because they are Christians or their views favour the government of India," said the BJP leader. Addressing a press conference here , Muraleedharan said " how the Bishop of Pala was ridiculed for pointing out the dangers of Narcotic Jihad, and its impact on the Christian community."

Taking a dig at CPM and Congress he said "they say they are for minorities and freedom of speech but when a Christian bishop speaks his mind or indirectly favours the government of India – they pounce upon him, a ridiculous situation in Kerala", said the union minister adding "it exposed the double standards of Congress and CPM and their hypocrisy". Muraleedharan claimed that these parties never cared for either farmers or minorities and "just wanted them to remain as safe vote banks and they should not be allowed to be moved away." On attacks on Churches , Muraleedharan questioned Congress's double-speak– and reminded them of the incidents in Chhattisgarh ruled by the Congress.

Speaking about the "acceptance" of the Christian community of BJP "and Prime Minister Narendra Modi" he mentioned that Meghalaya with over 75% Christians, Nagaland withover 80% Christians and Goa with around 25% Christians have "reposed their trust in BJP."

Besides Muraleedharan former Union Minister KJ Alphonse and BJP Spokesperson Tom Vadakkan also attended press conference.

SC clubs 3 FIRs against Cong leader Pawan Khera

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday clubbed three FIRs lodged against Congress leader Pawan Khera for allegedly making objectionable remarks against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and transferred them to the Hazratganj police station in Uttar Pradesh's Lucknow.

Extending the interim bail till April 10, a bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justices P S Narasimha and J B Pardiwala took note of the facts that three FIRs were lodged against Khera. Out of the three FIRs, two were lodged at the Cantonment police station in Varanasi and the Hazratganj police station in Lucknow. The third FIR was lodged in Assam.

The apex court bench directed that the three FIRs stand transferred to Hazratganj police station in Lucknow. Khera, whose interim bail was extended till April 10, will have to appear before the court of competent jurisdiction in Lucknow to seek regular bail in the matter.

The apex court, from time to time, had been extending the interim bail of Khera who was arrested by the Assam Police on February 23 in connection with his alleged remarks against Modi made at a press conference in Mumbai on February 17.

The Congress spokesperson was arrested from the Delhi airport after he was deboarded from a plane that was supposed to take him to Raipur. He obtained bail from a magisterial court here on February 23 after CJI-led bench granted him interim bail during an urgent hearing earlier in day.

ED attaches properties of Pune edu group for money laundering

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Monday said it has attached four properties, including land and a school building, of the promoters of a Pune-based education group under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The action is part of a probe into an alleged bank loan fraud against a cooperative bank in Pune. The attached assets belong to Rosary Education Group and its main partners Vinay Aranha and Vivek Aranha. A provisional order for attaching four properties has been issued under the PMLA, the agency said in a statement.

"The present market value of the attached properties is estimated to be around Rs 98.20 crore," it said. On March 10, the ED had arrested Vinay Aranha. The money laundering case stems from a Pune Police FIR filed on the basis of a complaint made by Shivaji Vithal Kale of Cosmos Bank against Vinay Aranha and Vivek Aranha.

The complainant alleged that the accused obtained loans of Rs 20.44 crore from the bank by submitting "fake" property documents. Vinay Aranha submitted "bogus" work invoices (in the guise of refurbishment of the Rosary schools) and got loans disbursed to bogus vendors which were immediately withdrawn in cash and handed back to Aranha (Vinay), it said.

The ED alleged that Vinay Aranha "diverted" the loans and got crores of rupees in cash. He also got loan amounts worth Rs 34 crore disbursed to Paramount Infrastructure, Shabbir Patanwala, Ashwin Kamat, Deepti Enterprises and others. "All these so-called vendors have admitted that they did not do any work and returned the cash to Aranha. Despite giving repeated opportunities, Vinay Aranha has not given any account of the utilisation of the cash," it said.

The ED found the schools of the group "did not" maintain any account of revenue, expenditure and income since 2012 and no ITRs (income tax returns) were filed.

"All this was purposefully done to enable Vinay Aranha to siphon off funds as per his whims and fancy. He admittedly splurged large amounts on celebrities and to host gala events (in the name of Vinay Aranha Foundation) for self-aggrandisement and also purchased multiple luxury cars," the ED said.

In a separate case, the ED attached immovable properties worth Rs 20.16 crore of Bengaluru-based Injaz International represented by its partners Misbahuddin S. and Suhail Ahmed Shariff money laundering charges. The accused had allegedly acquired the 'proceeds of crime; and layered the same in the form of various immovable properties.

The ED had initiated an investigation on the basis of the FIR registered by the Wilson Garden Police Station (Bengaluru) against Injaz International and its associated group, under various sections of the Prize Chits and Money Circulation Schemes (Banning) Act, 1978, Indian Penal Code and Chit Funds Act. The 'Proceeds of Crime' in this case is Rs 80.99 crore.

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PAPER WITH PASSION

Asian alliance

Japanese PM Kishida's visit to New Delhi has the potential to open new vistas in bilateral ties

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's visit to New Delhi Monday is important not just from the perspective of bilateral relations covering a gamut of spheres but also a critical signal it sends to the big bullies in the international arena: democracies are joining hands like never before. The two nations are discussing a raft of issues, ranging from defence and security to trade, investment, and technology. Committing themselves to a peaceful, stable and prosperous Indo-Pacific, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Kishida vowed to expand the India-Japan global strategic partnership. This century has seen the deepening and broadening of the bilateral ties, which became 'Global Partnership' in 2000, 'Strategic and Global Partnership' in 2006, and 'Special Strategic and Global Partnership in 2014. This is of great importance against the backdrop of China's bellicosity in the region. It is serendipitous that India's presidency of G20 coincides with Japan's presidency of the G7. It needs to be mentioned here that Kishida has been striving to bring the rich and poor nations of the world together. In his address to the Japanese Parliament earlier this year, he revived the term Global South. This was a favorite of the votaries of non-alignment, used to depict and highlight the North-South conflicts. But the Japanese Prime Minister resuscitated just the term, not the idea that it connoted to the pinkish non-alignment enthusiasts. He doesn't seem to be an admirer of Nehruvian principles in international matters; he would not like to act as the trade union leader of poor nations and fight against rich countries; indeed he comes from a rich country. He wants to unite all countries, rich as well as poor, for a rules-based international order.

Kishida is following the late prime minister Shinzo Abe's foreign policy, which has been called "panoramic diplomacy." It has been officially described as a "diplomacy that takes a panoramic perspective of the terrestrial globe." Gone are the days of Tokyo's pacifism. A quarter of a century ago, when India carried out nuclear explosions, Tokyo condemned New Delhi. Today, however, Japan sees an ally in India in the eventuality of a conflict with China; it is arming itself. Japan's role in strengthening the Quad is critical. It is a measure of growing proximity between the two nations that Modi and Kishida met three times in 2022. Along with defence and security cooperation between the two Asian democracies, trade is also growing. Last year, the bilateral trade was $20.75 billion, the largest ever. The two countries signed a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement or CEPA in 2011. Now both sides emphasise reliable supply chains for semiconductors and other critical technologies. A year ago, Kishida had promised a Rs 320,000-crore investment target in India in five years. This may be the time to redeem the old promise — and make new ones. The same is true for India.

PICTALK

A boy plays with snow on a tree in Doda district of Jammu and Kashmir PTI

The hullabaloo over UK's refugee policy

SARADINDU **MUKHERJI**

There's been a sharp increase in the number of asylum seekers to Britain. PM Rishi Sunak is trying to put a timely end to the impending danger

The outcry over the latest Refugee/Asylum Bill in Britain was not unexpected. The Indian media has not remained unaffectd. Incidentally, even a fraction of this "concern" is seldom seen in the latter's coverage of genuine refugees fleeing to India — victims of religious persecution from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan!

The website of the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) indicates that it "is profoundly concerned by the asylum Bill introduced by the UK Government in the House of Commons" . It further stated, "The legislation, if passed, would amount to an asylum ban-extinguishing the right to seek refugee protection in the U.K. for those who arrive irregularly, no matter how genuine or compelling their claims may be". It further urged, "the Government, to all MPs and Peers to reconsider the Bill and instead pursue a more humane and practical policy solution".

Be that as it may, the ground reality is that there has been a sharp increase in the number of small boat arrivals on British shores in recent times. All of them have sought asylum in the country. In the year ending September 2022, the UK received 72,027 asylum applications. This is double the number of applicants received in 2019. Add to this the number of unresolved cases. In the critical backdrop of the UK's declining Christian population and a sudden upsurge in the Muslim population, it assumes a serious complexion. These are the real causes of concern.

Since the 1950s, there have been many legal and illegal immigrants who have settled down in English and have done well. Most of them have complied with the norms of the host community. As against them, there have been a growing number of Islamic terrorist activities, targeting the sons of the soil and their civilizational values. One would do well to recall, among many, the activities of the ISIS bride Shamima Begum, who had been stripped of her British citizenship and the forceful campaign in her favour by numerous Britishers including the B.B.C. There are areas in London and the midlands, which make one feel as if they have been transported to a strange, unfamiliar territory, resembling more of a Pakistani and Bangladeshi ghetto.

In the early 1990s, a "Muslim Parliament" had been set up in Britain and had been clamouring for absurd favours including the introduction of Sharia! This writer pointed out this emerging threat thirty years ago. ("Muslim Parliament in Secular Britain", The Pioneer, 7 Feb 1992: "Islamic Assertion in Britain", The Pioneer, 30 June 1995)

They carry with them the medieval religious-social-political norms of their original homeland that were notorious for inhumane treatment of religious minorities. Then, there are the crimes committed by the Muslim grooming gangs who have played systematic havoc with the British white girls besides many Hindu/ Sikh girls, unfortunately abetted by the British society on the pretext of multiculturalism that has generally failed. Integration of such a sizable and viciously ungrateful segment of the population into the mainstream was a non-starter to begin with.

> MANY OF THESE IMMIGRANTS CARRY THE MEDIEVAL RELIGIOUS-SOCIAL-POLITICAL NORMS OF THEIR ORIGINAL HOMELANDS, WHICH ARE INFAMOUS FOR THEIR INHUMAN TREATMENT OF RELIGIOUS MINORITIES

After all, the UK, is a sovereign nation and its political culture is shaped by the ideas of Hobbes- who had enunciated the concept of untrammeled sovereignty (Leviathan, 1561) which came to be tempered by the liberal ideas of John Lock and the subsequent political revolutions and remedial parliamentary legislations. While its claim to "civilizing mission" in its erstwhile colonies, when the Sun had not yet set on the British Empire, need not be taken seriously, it is absurd to demand that every refugee/asylum seeker entering Britain by hook or crook is entitled to stay back and enjoy all the benefits of a welfare state free of cost. Those who find this Nazi like may have to revise their knowledge of some rudimentary history !

Rishi Sunak, and his Conservative Party may have correctly sensed the nature of the impending danger, and are now trying to put a timely end to it. Surely, the number of their sympathisers in Britain and elsewhere in the civilised world would increase. Sunak belongs to a Hindu family that once lived in a part of undivided India which is now in Pakistan. Unlike many of India's political classes, he must be aware of the disastrous consequences of a changing religious demographic. There is still a solution to the problem in Whitehall even without Palmerston and Disraeli.

Following the mass expulsion of Asians by Idi Amin from Kenya, their rehabilitation in Britain was both legal and justified, and so is the status of the asylum seekers from Hong Kong, which had been a Crown colony till it was returned to China, and inhabitants of the Falkland islands for which the "Iron Lady" had fought with Argentina.

It is high time that the UNHCR and its parent bodies extinguish the very roots of this malady in the countries of origin — the persecution of religious minorities and their flight across boundaries. Why should they not begin with India's neighborhood? That should be a top priority for any non-political and impartial humanitarian agency.

(The author is a Member of the ICHR)

Memories rush back as the mangoes bloom

AMIT **KANWAR**

Being in the midst of nature is unmatched. To be one with nature is to live a pristine life in tune with the moment

In spring, trees bloom, turning the world into a colourful garden. One bloom that stands out is the bloom of mango trees. The trees bloom and the air is filled with a sweet scent that attracts bees, birds, and people. For me, as a child, the season of spring, which starts in February in north India and spills into the month of March, was a season of extremes. The first few days were spent studying for final exams, and the last few days were spent jovially and academically free. We played hide and seek or explored the jungle trails during the balmy, pleasant weather filled with colors and fragrances of spring. Occasionally, we sneaked into a friend's ox driven 'Belna', (country made sugarcane juice machine) where freshly prepared jaggery coming from a huge boiler, treated our taste buds.

As the weather gets warmer, the bloom starts maturing and with the onset of monsoons, the fruit is ripe and ready. During school days, the ripening of mangoes coincided with the two-month long monsoon break and there are so many memories associated with those mango-savouring holidays. Every tree had a folklore and history associated with it- some were planted by a revered ancestor and some took to roots by accident, some had divine powers and some were the abode of ghosts, some bore fruits every year and some never. The rain soaked days, paddy fields and trees blanketed in green, mango trees loaded with fruits, the streams filled with fresh water meandering leisurely downhill, the early morning calls of '*koel*'(Cuckoo) and the company of friends made those times truly memorable ones.

It was like reliving all those past moments when I was at home at the beginning of the mango bloom. A whiff of fresh fragrance from our courtyard blooming mango tree transported me back in time. I savoured every day trying to hold on to those smells, sights and flavours and enjoyed every moment of spring at home. The sun rises woke me up early to witness the most spectacular sights of nature and the sunsets took me to the highest hilltop in the village, the flowing streams led me on paths less taken, the forests took me in a search of wild, I sat under trees and felt the morning breeze touching my cheeks, I roamed in wheat fields and saw the fresh dew drops kissing the tender plants, I heard the birds chirping in the silence of mornings, I sat on the bank of the rivers to feel the stillness and solitude, I met old friends and we talked late into the nights, like good old times and doing all this I understood the true meaning of living in moments.

(The writer pens down stories of human interest and his travels . He also likes to click portraits)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

NO RELAXATION FOR EWS MEMBERS

Sir — The rationale behind the reservation of seats in Government employment and education is often asserted to be the inadequate representation of various social groups. Due to poor implementation of government policies, sometimes even by the Government itself, the purpose of reservation in favour of reserved categories, be it OBC, SC, ST, or the newly introduced EWS, often gets defeated in other dimensions. I recently observed that the application fee for various government examinations such as Provincial Civil Service (PCS) in states like Uttar Pradesh for EWS candidates is exactly the same as for the unreserved (General) candidates. This is ironic because the very purpose behind the EWS quota is to uplift economically weaker sections as is evident from the very definition of EWS. Thus, it defeats the very purpose of reservation. This is because EWS candidates may find it difficult to fill out the forms for those exams where the application fees are very high.

Shivanshu K Srivastava | *Lucknow*

NATIONALIST MUSLIMS

Sir — According to a certain prominent leader of a poll-bound state, his party definitely needs the support of "nationalist Muslims"! However there has been no mention of asking for support from "nationalist Hindus"! Surely in his dictionary, the entire Hindu community is "nationalist" by default! After all no Hindu can afford to terrorise or work against the nation, such is their "sanskar"! Disgusting, but hardly surprising given his party's "glorious tradition" of flexing rabid religious muscle mixed with invocations of barbaric Islamophobia!

Also thanks to him, we can arrive at the conclusion that loudspeakers "screaming" azan (which get performed few times a day for just a few minutes) disturb the neighborhood students and patients ; but his silence upon the day/days long screams (shlokas, bhajans, mantras, drums, conch, bells) coming from loudspeakers of temples during various festivals throughout the year prove that if sound emanates from temples, it acts as balm or honey upon ears without causing minimum disturbance to the neighbourhood students and patients! What better can be expected from such a force which treats electoral wins of their own as "Victory of democracy" but the Opposition wins are "triumph of dynasts"!

What a blatant example of hypocrisy!

Kajal Chatterjee | *Kolkata*

CLOSING OF MADRASAS IN ASSAM

Sir — Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's decision to shut down all madrasas is a foolish decision. It is nothing but a move to suppress the Muslim community. By closing all madrasas in the State and saying that there is a threat to our culture and tradition is against our constitution. This is because it is against the right to practice and learn his own religion. Instead of converting Madrasas into other schools why don't the Assam Government construct new modern schools? Government funding should only be stopped if they believe the Quran is being taught in madrasas. Who are these people to decide what to study and what not to study? If madrasas are closed, there will be mass dropout of female students. Is this *Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao*? In any madrasa, besides Islamic studies and languages such as Arabic and Urdu, general subjects and other modern Indian languages are taught to all students. Many parents who prefer their daughters to get Islamic education along with regular subjects will pull them out of schools.

The Assam Government has forgotten that notable personalities such as Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Munshi Prem Chand, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, and Dr Zakir Hussain studied in madrasas. Previously the Government cited that madrasas are funded by terror activities. However, the Government could found nothing like that in the madrasas. The Assam Government should know that these madrasas were set up to fulfill a religious need rather than promote enmity with any community.

Zakir Hussain | *Kazipet*

Millets: Superfood against hunger

The United Nations has declared the year 2023 as the International Year of Millets (IYOM) in response to a suggestion made by the Indian government to promote millets as a nutritious and climate-resilient crop. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has also voiced his support for Millets. He stated that they are the gateway to prosperity for small farmers and a key to fighting hunger, malnutrition, and poverty.

The Global Millets (Shree Anna) Conference held in Pusa, New Delhi, is a crucial event for the global good, highlighting India's increasing responsibility for the global good. It is a matter of great honor for India that after its proposal and efforts, the United Nations declared 2023 the International Year of Millets.

Millets have been a staple in India for centuries, mentioned in some of the oldest Yajurveda texts. However, with the Green Revolution in the 1960s, millets were replaced by rice and wheat, which were considered more profitable. But now, with the promotion of millets as a superfood, their popularity is once again on the rise. The International Year of Millets is an opportunity to promote millets as a superfood and raise awareness of their benefits. The Indian government's Millet Mission is an example of the importance placed on promoting millets and their potential to fight hunger, malnutrition, and poverty.

Amarjeet Kumar | *Hazaribagh*

Send your feedback to:
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FIRST COLUMN

LIFE INSURANCE UNDER THE NEW I-T SCHEME

What to do with the insurance policies already taken, is the big question

S **KALYANASUNDARAM**

The Union Budget presented for the next fiscal year has provided the necessary incentive for taxpayers to switch to a new income tax scheme. Individual taxpayers are free to choose the old scheme or the updated scheme as per his/her convenience. Under the old scheme, tax payers were claiming deductions based on different savings, expenses and loan repayments as per provisions of the IT Act. The revised scheme does not allow any such deductions and immediately provides a higher exemption limit. Therefore, individuals opting for the new scheme need not continue with their savings.

The situation provides an opportunity for individuals to continue or discontinue endowment policies (and also similar life cover instruments like Money back policies, ULIP etc.). Though ideally term insurance will be the best option for life coverage, many have contracted for endowment policies on the perception that it is also a saving instrument. If they have taken the insurance only as a saving measure, they now have the option to discontinue it. The following options are available when choosing a new tax scheme for endowment policies (and similar policies).

Surrender the policy

It is possible to surrender the insurance policy to the issuer. This means no more premium is payable on this and the life cover will also lapse. The insurance company will return what is called the surrender value. Surrender value is the amount the policyholder will get from the life insurance company if he decides to exit the policy before maturity. Surrender value varies from policy to policy and it is printed on the policy itself.

Do not surrender but stop paying premium

This would not be the only option available. One need not surrender the policy but simply stop paying further premiums. When one continues with the policy without paying any further premium, the policy will have what is called "Paid up Value". In other words, the paid up value is the value payable at maturity of the discontinued policy (of premium payment).

Generally, a life insurance policy with an investment value earns some paid up value after at least 3 years in force (5 years for ULIPs). This means that policies like money-back endowment will have paid-up value after 3 years and ULIP will have market value after 5 years. To calculate the paid up value, multiply the number of premiums paid by the sum assured by the total number of premiums. This method will offer continuing life coverage at a reduced amount (paid up value) and maturing.

Allow it to lapse

By not paying premiums further, one can allow the policy to lapse if it has no surrender value. The premium paid will be a loss. But cash outflows for many more years in the future will be a big saving.

Taxation

The surrender value of a life policy is allowed as a tax-free benefit only if it fulfils some conditions with regard to the number of years premium paid. But as the surrender value eligibility matches this, the surrender value will be tax free. (Only if the policy was issued between 1st April 2003 and 31st March 2012, there are additional conditions). There is no change in the deductions allowed in earlier years on account of premium payment. For paid up value, the amount received on maturity will be tax free.

Takeaway

The revised income tax regime allows the discontinuation of insurance policies taken with intent to save. This should not be confused with the necessity of life insurance. One may need life insurance protection, and it may be appropriate to have term insurance for the amount of coverage required. The decision of surrendering, continuing the policy without further premiums, or letting it lapse depends on the individual's determination of opportunity cost.

(The writer is a retired banker)

Inflation management needs salutary changes

SUMEET **BHASIN**

The Reserve Bank of India's MPC will meet in the first week of April. The stakeholders are concerned if it will emerge wiser from recent global experiences

Vietnam became the first country to break ranks with the global community to cut the policy rates. The Central bank of Vietnam surprised the global economists to cut the benchmark interest rate. The East Asian nation was wary of the fact that the blind-walking alongside the US Federal Reserve to keep raising the interest rates would have surely taken its economy into fast downturn.

Europe remains hawkish with rate hikes, increasing the policy rate by 50 basis points last week. Jerome Powell, the head of the US Federal Reserve, has come under intense fire within his country. He is being accused of walking the US economy to the doorsteps of a deep recession. He has been dogged in pursuit of higher interest rates despite fellow members cautioning him of risks associated with hawkish measures.

Within a span of a few days, three banks in the US have come to their knees, with one collapsing in 48 hours. The US and Europe are now battling the worst fears of economists of banks failing the high interest regime. The monetary policy meeting (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of India will meet in the first week of April. The concerned stakeholders are watching out with intense curiosity to see if the MPC of the RBI will be wiser from the immediate global experiences of following a hawkish path.

Inflation indeed is a cause of concern. The poor suffers the most from an uncontrolled inflation. Therefore, there is an unequivocal understanding that inflation must be tamed with all the policy might available at the RBI and the government.

But it must not be ignored that high interest rates may be suicidal for the economy, as a number of factors make it less effective at controlling inflation, while harmful economic growth more. High interest rates drive away capital, which may exacerbate inflation further, while harming emerging economies more by putting pressure on their currencies.

Several studies and reports have taken note of the creditstress, harming small businesses and low-income households, who are most sensitive to changes in interest rates, while being at loan repayments risks when rates are high. Also, economic growth naturally takes the blows of high interest rate regime, as private investment and private consumption take backseat in the economy.

> WITHIN A FEW DAYS, THREE BANKS IN THE US HAVE COME TO THEIR KNEES, WITH ONE COLLAPSING IN 48 HOURS. THE US AND EUROPE ARE NOW BATTLING THE WORST FEARS OF ECONOMISTS OF BANKS FAILING THE HIGH INTEREST REGIME

(Author is a policy analyst)

Furthermore, increasing interest rates may not address the underlying causes of inflation, which can be caused by a range of factors, including rise in the money supply, high production costs, or changes in consumer demand. For instance high cereal costs in India is driving inflation high. Indeed, core inflation is also staying above six per cent. But cereal and fruits are making the management of inflation a daunting task. India indeed needs to take steps to work on post-harvest management with the participation of the private capital to ensure that the cereals, fruits and vegetables don't march on high price trajectory to give fresh legs to inflation.

Thus, it's incumbent upon the policymakers to consider targeted interventions to address specific drivers of inflation. The government has done well by proactively asking the Food Corporation of India (FCI) to auction the public wheat stock in the open market. The four rounds of the auctions of the wheat stocks have shown sobering impact on the wheat prices, which have significantly cooled down in the last few days.

Similar interventions are needed to cool down the prices of the specific drivers stepping up the inflation. The price stabilization fund, which is a mechanism created by the Centre, to deal with the volatility in the prices of food items needs effective utilization. This has to be done by the state governments with effective utilization of the market intelligence architecture. It will be worthwhile to explore if there could be a mechanism to incentivize the states for better performances on the price stabilization front.

Failures among banks, including Silicon Valley Bank (SVB), have been attributed to a variety of factors, with high-interest rates bring the principal culprit, which has proven to be unsustainable and even disastrous. Banks resort to offer high-interest rates to attract depositors in pursuit of rapid growth. But the banks tend to gain customers who are primarily interested in the rate, leading to a higher concentration of risky or unstable deposits. This makes banks becoming host to hot money, which can make a sudden flight from the first sign of stress, as had been the case with Silicon Valley Bank and other regional banks in the US.

By all accounts the RBI will not be able to meet the projected inflation rate of 5.7 per cent for this fiscal. This will be possible only if inflation crashes by over 230 points in the last month of the financial year. This will call for the RBI to explain why it failed in the inflation management as mandated by Parliament. We already know that couple of the members of the MPC had opposed the Repo Rate hike in the last meeting. Therefore, it will be desired that the RBI embraces a course correction in the light of the fresh developments globally.

Pausing the rate hike trend will be most desired by the stakeholders. Cut in the rate hikes will, however, be the demand of the prevailing situations. Also, the fact that India had not resorted to printing of currencies to deal with the situations arising out of the Covid-19 pandemic may be factored in since the market is not flush with cash that requires to be sucked out. Indeed, the US and the European nations had excessively printed their currencies to deal with the economic crises due to the pandemic. They may require flushing out the excess cash from the system to control the inflation. This is surely not the case in India.

But it must not be forgotten that India has paid a heavy prices for such quick-fix approach of the government to deal with the situations arising out of the economic crisis. The UPA government led by Manmohan Singh, former prime minister, had done exactly the same thing, of giving cash in the hands of the people in its bid to find an easy way out of the economic crisis, which India faced in the wake of the 2008 global crisis. This had led Indi to double-digit food inflation for the remainder of the term of the UPA government. It was only when Narendra Modi took charge of the country as the prime minister that the Central government could tame the runaway food inflation with agile policy making.

The weather scientists have warned that India may have to face El Nino this year. There may be a risk of weather pattern disruptions, which could also have bearing on prices of several items, which constitute the retail inflation basket. This also calls for the RBI to elicit wider participation in the process of the inflation management, since some of the solutions may lie in the domains of the Centre and the state governments.

It must be understood that working in silos is an ailment that made India suffer the most. The RBI must make sure that it's not working from silos.

Reforming Parliament: Charity begins at home

It is high time that parliamentary reforms are undertaken to make the House more effective and in sync with the changing times

KALYANI **SHANKAR**

Just as we need reforms in many other areas, Parliament needs reforms urgently. Right now, both Houses remain paralysed. The Opposition is looking for public and media attention to embarrass the Government, while the Government is also in an aggressive mood.

The BJP opposed the earlier Congress Governments precisely as the Congress is following now, everything which could attract the public and media attention. The direct TV telecast also makes members play to the gallery.

The face-off between the adamant Treasury Benches and the belligerent Opposition continues over two controversial issues. The first concerns Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's recent alleged defamatory comments about the Modi government in the U.K. Strangely, the treasury benches are demanding, "Rahul Gandhi *sadan mein aao, sadan mein aakar maafi mango* (Rahul Gandhi come to the House and apologise)."

The second comes from the Opposition, which demands a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) probe into the Adani-Hindenburg issue. The Adoni issue had been simmering for some time, but the Government has been unwilling to discuss it in the House.

The second half of the budget session opened on March 13. The row has become intense now, with the Opposition taking to the streets. The Congress also gave a privilege notice against Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Lok Sabha.

Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal said, "A member of this House (meaning Rahul Gandhi) went abroad and made defamatory comments. He has to tender an apology. And how these people (some Opposition MPs) who are protesting and carrying placards in the House should be acted against; in my opinion, they should be suspended."

This brings us to the larger question of Parliament's functioning. There are enough checks and balances. Parliament's liberal framework provides many opportunities for vigorous debate, discussion, and dissent. Political parties must replace disorder, disruption and delay in legislation with debate, discussion, and decision in a democracy. The adage is while the Opposition should have its say, the Government should have its way.

Historically, there was a degree of homogeneity in both Houses in the fifties and sixties. Many members like Piloo Modii enlivened the House with their repartees, humour, and healthy debates while maintaining the dignity and decorum of the House.

Congress shrank since the eighties while others, including regional parties, grew, leading to coalition politics.

Another area for improvement is the duration of sittings. Most state legislatures sit for barely 30 days a year. In some, like Haryana and Punjab, the average is about a fortnight. The Parliament spends less time on legislative business resulting in lawmakers spending less time on law-making.

The first three Lok Sabhas sat for an average of 120 DAYS a year. The Lok Sabha spent less than 10 minutes to pass a law, and the Rajya Sabha less than half an hour.

The National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution recommended that Lok Sabha should have at least 120 and Rajya Sabha 100 sittings. A single minute in Parliament leads to an expenditure of Rs. 2.5 lakhs approx to the exchequer.

The former chief justice N.V. Ramana recently lamented how Parliament passed laws without deliberation and debate. The judiciary interprets the law and always looks for the discussion before passing the law. The presiding officers of both Houses have time and again urged the members to maintain the dignity of the House in mind.

There should be a complete revamp of the rules to make clearing legislation and discussion on issues open, transparent, and outcome-oriented. Secondly, political parties should choose eminent men and women as members.

Thirdly, new members should be given adequate time to participate in the proceedings.

Fourthly, the party leaders should focus more on Parliament's functioning as they are also stakeholders.

Fifthly, Question Hour should not be disturbed as that is when Government answers many questions. The cancellation of Zero Hour and Question Hour indicates that parliamentary reforms are urgently needed.

Sixthly, presiding officers should be given more teeth.

Seventhly, accommodation and negotiations should be part of the conduct of the House.

Eighthly, new members should be trained to understand the House's rules and regulations.

The parliamentary committees have gradually decreased their number of sittings. The Government also only refers some pieces of legislation to the committee.

A healthy democracy needs a fit functioning Parliament. Indian democracy has matured over the years, and it is time to make some necessary corrective issues.

(The author is a senior journalist)

Xi, Putin hold talks in Moscow

China pushes plan to end Ukraine war

PTI ■ BEIJING/MOSCOW

Chinese President Xi Jinping and his Russian counterpart and ally Vladimir Putin held crucial talks in Moscow on Monday amid concerted efforts by China to push for a peace deal to end the Ukraine war, weeks after Beijing successfully brokered a pact between Iran and Saudi Arabia to end their bitter rivalry.

Xi and Putin, who met over 40 times in the last 10 years to forge close ties to oppose the US-dominated world order, held talks hours after the Chinese leader arrived in Moscow for a three-day state visit to a "grand welcome", official media on both sides reported. Kremlin aide Yury Ushakov told the media that Presidents Xi and Putin will hold face-to-face talks followed by their delegations later. They will continue their talks on Tuesday too, according to Russian official media.

Ushakov said the visit would be strictly a business visit, "there will be no additional protocol stuff, the main thing is negotiations, negotiations and negotiations." In his arrival statement, Xi said, "Our two countries have consolidated and grown the bilateral relationship on the basis of no-alliance, no-confrontation and not targeting any third party, and set a fine example for developing a new model of major-country relations". He said China will continue to work with Russia to safeguard the international system with the UN at its core, the international order underpinned by international law, and the basic norms of international relations based on the purposes and principles of the UN Charter.

President Putin said that Moscow has studied Beijing's proposals for resolving the conflict in Ukraine and that he will discuss it at a meeting with President Xi, state-run Tass news agency reported.

"We have thoroughly studied your proposals for resolving the acute crisis in Ukraine," Putin said, addressing the Chinese leader at a meeting on Monday. "Of course, we will have an opportunity to discuss this," he stressed.

"We know that you proceed from the principles of justice and observance of the fundamental provisions of international law and indivisible security for all countries," Putin said, noting that China was taking a "fair and balanced position on most pressing international problems."

Putin stressed Russia's openness to negotiations. "Of course, we will discuss all these issues, including your initiatives, which we treat with respect, of course," he said.

Significantly, as Xi arrived in Moscow becoming the first world leader to meet Putin after the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued an arrest warrant against the Russian leader accusing him of committing war crimes in Ukraine, Beijing strongly criticised the Court accusing it of double standards. The ICC should uphold an objective stance, respect the immunity of heads of state from jurisdiction under international law, exercise its functions and powers prudently in accordance with the law, and avoid politicisation and double standards, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin told the media in Beijing.

While there is no imminent danger of Putin being arrested by the ICC, its warrant was seen as a serious image crisis for him as 123 countries are members of the Court.

Ahead of his crucial talks with Putin which were expected to focus on beefing up Beijing-Moscow close and strategic ties, Xi on Monday spoke of his peace plan to end the raging Ukraine war. Xi said his plan takes into account the "legitimate" concerns of all parties and reflects the broadest common understanding of the international community.

US to send ammunition, tanker trucks to Ukraine

Washington (AP): The US is poised to announce that it will send Ukraine $350 million in weapons and equipment, U.S. officials said Monday, as fierce battles with Russian forces continue for control of the city of Bakhmut, and troops prepare for an expected spring offensive.

The latest package of aid includes a large amount of various types of ammunition, such as rockets for the High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems, and an undisclosed number of fuel tanker trucks and riverine boats, according to the officials. Officials said it will be announced later Monday. It comes as Chinese leader Xi Jinping arrived in Moscow on Monday, giving a political lift to Russian President Vladimir Putin against the West just days after an international arrest warrant was issued for the Kremlin leader on war crimes charges related to Ukraine. Officials said the American aid will be taken from Pentagon stocks through the presidential drawdown authority, so it will be able to be delivered quickly to the warfront.

Countries urged to rally behind court probes in Ukraine

London (AP): Ukraine's justice officials and the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court appealed Monday to countries around the world to boost funding and support for the global court's investigations into alleged war crimes in Ukraine to ensure Russia is held accountable.

Justice ministers from over 40 countries travelled to London for the war crimes conference, jointly hosted by Britain and the Netherlands, aimed at rallying extra support for the International Criminal Court's probes into atrocities allegedly committed by Russian forces in Ukraine.

The conference came days after the global court issued an arrest warrant for Russian President Vladimir Putin, accusing him of personal responsibility in the abduction of children from Ukraine.

Friday's move was the first time the court has issued a warrant against a leader of one of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council. "We share the belief that President Putin and the wider leadership must be held to account," Britain's Justice Secretary Dominic Raab said as he opened the meeting. "Let's make sure that we back up our words with deeds, that we back up our moral support with practical means to effectively investigate these awful crimes."

Deana Uppal, a film-maker, philanthropist, entrepreneur and former Miss India UK, has been honoured with the prestigious Points of Light award by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Rishi Sunak. The award recognises Uppal's exceptional work through her charity, the DKU Kindness Diaries Charitable Trust, in supporting poverty-stricken communities in Rajasthan, India. The Kindness Diaries Trust, founded by Uppal in 2015, has been working tirelessly to address poverty in India through a variety of initiatives. The trust provides food, clothing, and shelter to those in need, and also runs education and vocational training programs to help individuals become self-sufficient. Alongside the charity work, Deana produced and directed a documentary on the Nomadic community, Gaddia Lohars in Rajasthan: 'India's forgotten people', which can be seen on Netflix.

NYCB to buy Signature Bank

New York (AP): New York Community Bank has agreed to buy a significant chunk of the failed Signature Bank in a USD 2.7 billion deal, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. said late Sunday.

The 40 branches of Signature Bank will become Flagstar Bank, starting Monday. Flagstar is one of New York Community Bank's subsidiaries. The deal will include the purchase of USD 38.4 billion in Signature Bank's assets, a little more than a third of Signature's total when the bank failed a week ago.

The FDIC said USD 60 billion in Signature Bank's loans will remain in receivership and are expected to be sold off in time.

Donald Trump gets muted response to protest call

Washington (AP) Former President Donald Trump's calls for protests ahead of his anticipated indictment in New York have generated mostly muted reactions from supporters, with even some of his most ardent loyalists dismissing the idea as a waste of time or a law enforcement trap.

The ambivalence raises questions about whether Trump, though a leading Republican contender in the 2024 presidential race who retains a devoted following, still has the power to mobilize far-right supporters the way he did more than two years ago before the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection at the U.S. Capitol. It also suggests that the hundreds of arrests that followed the Capitol riot, not to mention the convictions and long prison sentences, may have dampened the desire for repeat mass unrest.Still, law enforcement in New York is continuing to closely monitor online chatter warning of protests and violence if Trump is arrested, with threats varying in specificity and credibility, four officials told The Associated Press.

Mainly posted online and in chat groups, the messages have included calls for armed protesters to block law enforcement officers and attempt to stop any potential arrest, the officials said.

The New York Young Republicans Club has announced plans for a protest at an undisclosed location in Manhattan on Monday, and incendiary but isolated posts surfaced on fringe social media platforms from supporters.

Nepal PM Prachanda wins vote of trust

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

Nepal's Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' on Monday secured a vote of confidence in parliament, winning the second floor test within three months, an outcome he said would provide stability to his government.

Prime Minister Prachanda secured 172 votes in the 275-member House of Representatives. Other 89 lawmakers voted against him whereas one abstained. A total of 262 members of the lower house were present in the house.

The 68-year-old Maoist leader needed at least 138 votes out of 275 lawmakers. Eleven political parties including Nepali Congress, CPN-Maoist Centre, Rastriya Swatantra Party, CPN-Unified Socialist, Janata Samajwadi Party Nepal, Lokatantrik Samajwadi Party, Nagarik Unmukti Party, Janamat Party among others voted in favour of Prachanda.

CPN-UML and Rastriya Prajatantra Party voted against him. Nepal Workers and Peasants Party abstained. Speaking to the media after receiving the vote of confidence from the House, Prachanda said he would start discussions with the parties in the alliance. "The government will get full shape within two to four days," he said, adding that "Now the government will run smoothly."

Prachanda's victory paved the way for the expansion of the cabinet by inducting ministers from the ruling alliance including the largest party in the Parliament - the Nepali Congress, which has already announced plans to join the government.

The expansion of the cabinet is likely within the next two-three days to give a full shape to the government, according to party sources. Prachanda on Sunday exuded confidence that he will comfortably win a vote of confidence in the House of Representatives.

"Last time, I received support from 99 per cent members of the House of Representatives, and I hope, this time I will get one hundred per cent votes," he said. Prachanda sought a vote of confidence as two parties in the seven-party alliance - Rastriya Prajatantra Party and CPN-UML - withdrew support to his government following his decision to support Nepali Congress candidate Ramchandra Paudel in the presidential election. Prachanda, who was sworn in as the country's Prime Minister in December, comfortably passed the first floor test on January 10 with 268 votes after all parties except the Nepal Workers and Peasants Party and the Rastriya Janamorcha voted in favour of the government.

Ramsahay sworn in as Vice-President

Kathmandu (PTI): Ramsahaya Prasad Yadav, a senior Madhesi leader, was on Monday sworn in as Nepal's third Vice President, days after he comfortably defeated a candidate fielded by the CPN-UML. At a special ceremony at Sheetal Niwas, the President's Office, President of Nepal Ram Chandra Poudel administered the oath of office and secrecy to 52-year-old Yadav.

Yadav, a candidate from the Janata Samajbadi Party (JSP), defeated his nearest rival, Ashta Laxmi Shakya of the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) [CPN-UML] led by former prime minister KP Sharma Oli, by a comfortable margin in the election for the post held on March 17. He becomes the Himalayan nation's third Vice President and the first from the Madhes region, bordering India. Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', Speaker of the House of Representatives Devraj Ghimire, former prime ministers, ministers, and Members of Parliament were among the dignitaries present at the occasion.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to general public at large that my client Axis Bank Ltd, having one of its Branch at 23, Himalaya House, First Floor, K.G. Marg, New Delhi-110001, intends to grant loan facility to Sh. Dheeraj Kharbanda against security of Entire Second Floor without roof rights including undivided proportionate ownership rights in the land underneath along with the rights to passage, easement and benefits (hereinafter referred as **"Said Portion"**) Built-up Property bearing No.315, with roof rights, having area measuring 125 Sq. Yds. In the layout plan of The Delhi Sainik Co. Operative House Building Society, known as Sainik Vihar, situated at Pitampura, New Delhi-110034 (hereinafter referred to as "Said Property"). Smt. Satya Gupta W/o Sh. Prem Sagar Gupta was the recorded owner of the Said Property by virtue of Conveyance Deed dated 05.07.1994 duly registered as Document no. 6274 on 08.07.1994. Thereafter, Smt. Satya Gupta W/o Sh. Prem Sagar Gupta expired intestate on 20.08.2013 and her husband Sh. Prem Sagar Gupta already expired on 18.11.2006, leaving behind only one legal heir i.e. Sh. Jeewan Jyoti Gupta, who executed an Indemnity Bond dated 16.09.2014 duly registered as Document no. 865 on 16.09.2014, who claimed to be the sole and absolute owner of the Said Property by virtue of Hindu Succession Law. Any person(s) has/have any objection(s) or claim(s) with respect to right, title or interest in the said property in any manner whatsoever, must immediately contact the undersigned in writing along with all supporting documents in respect of their claim(s)/ objection(s).

If no such claim is received with in a period of **7 days** from the date of publication of this notice, then it will be presumed that no one has any paramount right, title, or interest in the said property and even if someone has any claim/objection, he/she/they have given up the same.

Himanshu Ahuja (Advocate)
Contact No.: 9810310373, 011-41830049
E-mail Address : alolegals@gmail.com

NORTHERN RAILWAY
(Construction Organization)
TENDER NOTICE

The **Dy. Chief Engineer/Construction/Northern Railway, Tilak Bridge, New Delhi** for and on behalf of the President of India invites **Limited e-tender** under **Single-packet system** for the following work.

1.	Name of work and location	"Carrying out Final Location Survey (FLS), Geotechnical studies, preparation of GAD of Bridges, L-Section, Yard Plans, Drawing of other structures, preparation and submission of DPR & other preliminary activities in c/w BHIWANI-ROHTAK-PANIPAT-AMBALA/SHAMBHU- TO BE DEVELOPED AS FEEDER ROUTE OF WDFC (245 Km)
2.	Completion of the work	08 (Eight) Months
3.	Approx. Cost of work	3.80 Cr. only
4.	Earnest Money to be deposited	3,40,000/-
5.	Date & Time for submission of E-tender and opening of tender	Tenders may be uploaded upto **11.30 hrs. on 11.04.2023** on IREPS web site i.e. **www.ireps.gov.in.** The bidders can participate in the e-tender, the Bid of which will be opened at **11.30 hrs. on 11.04.2023.**
6.	Detailed Tender Notice & Tender Document	The detailed e-tender notice is available on IREPS website i.e. **www.ireps.gov.in** from 22/03/2023 to 11/04/2023 and bidders will be able to offer their technical and financial bid from 28/03/2023. All other terms and conditions in respect of above tenders are given in tender document.

Tender Notice No. 482-ACS-C-BNW-ROK-PNP-UMB-TKJ
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NORTHERN RAILWAY
Principal Chief Materials Manager
Headquarters Office, Baroda House, New Delhi-110001
Mail ID: salenr365@gmail.com

No.: 117-S/Sales/Auction Programme/2023-24 **Dated: 20.03.2023**

e-Auction Notice No. April/2023

E-Auction will be conducted for disposal of Ferrous Scrap, Non Ferrous Scrap, Other Misc Scrap, Condemned Loco, Coaches and Wagons, Scrap Rail and other scrap P.Way material. Used lead Acid Batteries/Used oil/ Refused oil will be sold only to recyclers registered with State Pollution Control Board. **Auction programme is as under:-**

e-AUCTION DATES FOR April, 2023.

S. No.	Depot conducting auction	Time	1st round	2nd round	3rd round	4th round	5th round
1	Alambagh/Lucknow 0522-2451257	10.00	3	10	17	24	29
2	Shakurbasti 011-27015387	10.00	5	12	19	25	29
3	Jagadhari 01732-252388	10.00	4	11	18	25	29
4	Sr.DMM/LKO 0522-2234756	10.00	4	11	18	24	28
5	Sr.DMM/FZR 01632-244154	11.00	6	13	20	26	28
6	Sr.DMM/UMB 0171-2611203	11.00	5	12	19	25	28
7	Sr.DMM/MB 0591-2413141	10.00	6	13	20	26	28
8	Sr.DMM/DLI 011-23365311	11.00	3	10	17	24	28

1. The details of item to be sold in auction will be available in catalogue at **www.ireps.gov.in.**
2. The intending purchasers may inspect the scrap material before the auction during working hours at nominated locations.
3. To participate in e-auction, purchasers need to get themselves registered with ireps. The details on last sold rates in auctions are available at **www.railnet.gov.in**.
4. For further details regarding registration and other conditions of e-auction, please visit Railway website **'www.ireps.gov.in'**.

(Om Kumar)
Dy. Chief Material Manager/S&P

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French government facing two motions of no-confidence

Paris (AP): France's government is facing a critical, maybe fatal, moment Monday with no-confidence motions filed by lawmakers who are furious that President Emmanuel Macron ordered the use of special constitutional powers to force through an unpopular bill raising the retirement age from 62 to 64 without giving them a vote.

National Assembly lawmakers are set to vote in the afternoon on two no-confidence motions, one from the far-right National Rally and the other, more threatening one from a small group that has gathered support across the left. The Senate, dominated by conservatives who back the retirement plan, passed the legislation last week. The no-confidence motions each need the backing of 287 lawmakers in the National Assembly, the lower chamber, to pass. Although the motions appear unlikely to succeed, the climate of protest that Macron's pension reforms has sparked in parliament and on the streets means the outcome of voting in the National Assembly is not guaranteed.

No such motion has succeeded since 1962. Macron's centrist alliance still has the most seats in the National Assembly. A minority of lawmakers from the Republicans party could stray from the party line, but it remains to be seen whether they're willing to bring down Macron's government. The tensions in the political arena are echoed on the streets, marked by intermittent protests and strikes in various sectors, from transport to energy and sanitation workers. Garbage in Paris is piling ever higher and reeking of rotting food on the 15th day of a strike by collectors. The three main incinerators serving the French capital have been mostly blocked, just like a garbage sorting centre northwest of Paris. "The goal is to support the workers on strike in Paris ... to put pressure on this government that wants to pass this unjust, brutal and useless and ineffective law," said Kamel Brahmi, of the leftist CGT union, speaking to workers with a bullhorn at the Romainville sorting plant.

Thai Parliament dissolved, election set for May

AP ■ BANGKOK

Thailand's Parliament was dissolved Monday by a government decree, setting the stage for a May general election that poses an opportunity to lessen the military's influence in politics.

The dissolution, just a few days before the end of the four-year term of the House of Representatives, was initiated by Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, who is seeking a fresh mandate in the vote provisionally set for May 7. The election will pit the popular opposition Pheu Thai party, backed by billionaire populist Thaksin Shinawatra, against parties representing the conservative establishment, closely linked to the military.

Thaksin-led and -backed parties have won the most seats in every election since 2001, but have been blocked from staying in power by military coups, unfavourable rulings by the conservative judiciary and election laws drafted to favour army-backed parties. The leading Pheu Thai candidate is Thaksin's daughter, 36-year-old Paetongtarn Shinawatra, who is heavily favoured in opinion polls.

If elected, she would be the third member of the Shinawatra family to be prime minister in the past two decades. Her father held office in 2001-2006, and Thaksin's sister Yingluck Shinawatra in 2011-2014. Both of them were toppled by coups.

Dissolving Parliament before the end of its term allows lawmaker candidates to switch party affiliations just 30 days before the election, instead of the 90 days required if Parliament's term had merely expired. This allows candidates to shop around for parties offering them the best support, while parties can beef up their roll of potential winners by recruiting candidates with a proven record of winning votes in their local constituency. More than 52 million of the country's population of over 66 million are eligible to vote across 400 constituencies. Four hundred seats will be determined by first-past-the-post races in each constituency. A separate party preference ballot will seat the other 100 members of the House of Representatives from national party lists. Prayuth, who turns 69 on Tuesday, was the sole prime ministerial candidate of Thai politics' conservative wing in the 2019 election. He first assumed the top job after staging a military coup as army commander, ousting Yingluck's elected government in 2014.

He did not run in the 2019 election but was selected prime minister by Parliament after the army-backed Palang Pracharath party formed a coalition government.

This year, however, he faces a challenge from his longtime comrade-in-arms and deputy prime minister, 77-year-old Prawit Wongsuwan, who has been named the new Palang Pracharath candidate for prime minister. Prayuth joined the recently formed United Thai Nation party in January to become its candidate, even though a court ruled last year that he can serve only two more years in office under the constitution. The party is less experienced, raising the question of whether it can win the minimum 25 seats in the lower house to put forward Prayuth as a prime minister candidate.

Officials abducted; jihadists repelled in Nigeria vote

AP ■ ABUJA

Security forces repelled an attack by Islamic extremists on a coalition center in northeastern Nigeria and several election officials elsewhere were kidnapped as results trickled in Sunday from the gubernatorial vote.

Meanwhile, the incumbent governor in the battleground state of Lagos appeared to have secured reelection, though results from more than two-thirds of the states were still being counted. Festus Okoye, a spokesman for Nigeria's Independent National Electoral Commission, said Sunday it had received reports of violence and was reviewing them. Nigeria's election laws grant the electoral body the power to void the outcome of an election in certain circumstances.

"Some of our staff were abducted, some were harassed, some were intimidated, some were hospitalized and in one case killed," Okoye said.

Twenty-eight of Nigeria's 36 states held elections for new governors on Saturday while state lawmakers were also elected for nearly 1,000 constituencies. Nigeria's constitution grants governors both enormous powers and immunity from any form of prosecution while in office, making them very influential both in their states and at the federal level.

Saturday's elections were held as the political opposition continues to reject the recent victory of President-elect Bola Tinubu, who belongs to the ruling All Progressives Congress party. In the northeastern Borno state, Islamic State-backed extremist rebels attempted to disrupt the collation of results on Sunday but were repelled by security forces who killed many of them, local officials and residents said.

Babangida Ajiri, head of a local security outfit collaborating with the military, said at least 40 of the rebels were killed with their arms recovered. "They wanted to surround the village, but the troops engaged professionally and thwarted their mission," said Ajiri. "It was during the early morning search that we discovered most of the bodies of the killed terrorists."

The ruling All Progressives Congress' Babajide Sanwo-Olu had won 19 of the 20 council areas in Lagos state, defeating Gbadebo Rhodes-Vivour of the Labour Party. He immediately rejected the outcome, alleging that their supporters were intimidated and that the result was manipulated.

Anti-graft body summons Imran's wife

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's anti-corruption watchdog on Monday summoned Imran Khan's third wife Bushra Bibi in a corruption case, a day after police registered a terrorism case against the ousted premier and over a dozen leaders of his party for indulging in vandalism and creating unrest outside the judicial complex here.

Clashes erupted outside the Islamabad Judicial Complex on Saturday when Khan, the chief of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party arrived in Islamabad from Lahore to attend a much-awaited hearing in the Toshakhana case. However, due to the violence outside the judicial complex, the judge allowed Khan to return home after signing a register.

The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) team arrived at Khan's Zaman Park residence in Lahore and issued notice to Bushra, according to The Express Tribune newspaper.

She was summoned on Tuesday, the report said.

Earlier, the NAB summoned Khan and his wife to their Rawalpindi office on March 9 to question them on the Toshakhana case.

TOSHAKHANA CASE

Bushra Bibi

The hearing in the Toshakhana case was adjourned till March 30 as the judge observed that the situation was not conducive for holding the hearing.

Khan, 70, the former prime minister, has been in the crosshairs for buying gifts, including an expensive Graff wristwatch he had received as the premier at a discounted price from the state depository called Toshakhana, and selling them for profit.

He was disqualified by the Election Commission of Pakistan in October last year for not sharing details of the sales. The election body later filed a complaint with the district court to punish him, under criminal laws, for selling the gifts he had received as prime minister of the country.Khan has vehemently denied those charges.

Lahore Police on Sunday booked Khan and over 1,000 PTI workers under terrorism charges. Khan, the cricketer-turned-politician was ousted from power in April last year after losing a no-confidence vote, which he alleged was part of a US-led conspiracy targeting him because of his independent foreign policy decisions on Russia, China, and Afghanistan.

Since his ouster, he has been demanding early elections to remove what he termed an "imported government" led by prime minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Sharif has maintained that elections will be held later this year once the parliament completes its five-year tenure.

Khan's nephew, supporters held

Islamabad (PTI): Pakistan police arrested Imran Khan's nephew and a number of his supporters on Monday for their alleged involvement in the attacks on the security personnel outside a court here over the weekend where the ousted premier arrived from Lahore to appear in the much-awaited hearing in a corruption case.

The raft of arrests was the latest amid the mounting cases filed against Khan, the chief of the main opposition party, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). Monday's arrests bring the total number of Khan's followers detained in Islamabad to 198 since Saturday.

Among those arrested also include Hassan Niazi, Khan's nephew.

The details of the other arrests were not known immediately. His supporters threw firebombs and hurled stones at the officers as riot police wielded batons and fired tear gas. More than 50 officers were injured and a police checkpoint, several cars and motorcycles were torched.

Lahore Police on Sunday booked Khan and over 1,000 PTI workers under terrorism charges in two cases. The number of cases against Khan has climbed up to 97. Police also claimed to have recovered rifles, Kalashnikovs, bullets, marbles and petrol bombs from his house during the search operation.

Khan, 70, who arrived in the federal capital from Lahore on Saturday, appeared at the gates of the district court in the much-awaited corruption case. However, due to the violence outside the judicial complex, the judge allowed Khan to return home after signing a register.

The former prime minister has been in the crosshairs for buying gifts, including an expensive Graff wristwatch he had received as the premier at a discounted price from the state depository called Toshakhana, and selling them for profit.

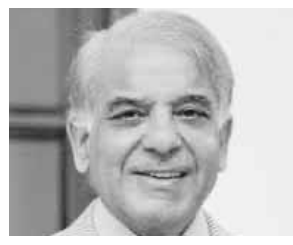
Shehbaz Sharif condemns smear campaign against Army Chief

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday strongly condemned the "disgusting" smear campaign against Pakistan Army chief General Asim Munir and other institutions by his predecessor Imran Khan and urged Pakistanis living abroad to raise their voices against it. Khan, the chief of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, has accused Gen Munir of orchestrating the crackdown against him last week by the country's security personnel in a corruption case.

"The campaign against the Army chief is intolerable and a continuation of the conspiracy against the institutions," Prime Minister Sharif was quoted as saying by the PM Office. In a tweet, Sharif directly held Khan responsible for the campaign against Gen Munir.

"PTI's disgusting smear campaign against Chief of the Army Staff General Asim Munir at the behest of Imran Niazi is deserving of the strongest condemnation," he tweeted. "This man (Khan) is stooping to unprecedented lows in his desperation for power & going to the extent of damaging the country &



undermining our armed forces & their leadership," he said in another tweet.

Prime Minister Sharif said the campaign against Gen Munir, who he said was the "first army chief to be appointed on merit in Pakistan," could only be the agenda of the enemies of Pakistan. Gen Munir, who served as chief of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), replaced Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa as the Chief of Army Staff in November last year.

Sharif said "toxic politics" was being spread, as he urged patriotic Pakistanis living abroad to raise their voices against the "foreign-funded campaign."

The Pakistan Prime Minister also blamed Khan for dragging heads of state institutions for his dirty politics, which he said was against the Constitution. "Strict legal action should be taken against those who instigate chaos, riots and rebellion in Pakistan," the premier warned. Pakistani police on Sunday registered a terrorism case against Khan and over a dozen PTI leaders for indulging in vandalism, attacking security personnel and creating unrest outside the judicial complex here ahead of a court hearing in a graft case involving the ousted premier.

Clashes erupted outside the Islamabad Judicial Complex on Saturday when Khan arrived in Islamabad from Lahore to attend a much-awaited hearing in the Toshakhana case. Khan has been in the crosshairs for buying gifts, including an expensive Graff wristwatch he had received as the premier at a discounted price from the state depository called Toshakhana, and selling them for profit. Established in 1974, the Toshakhana is a department under the administrative control of the Cabinet Division and stores precious gifts given to rulers, parliamentarians, bureaucrats, and officials by heads of other governments and states and foreign dignitaries.

IMF denies tying economic bailout to compromise on Pak's nuclear prog

Islamabad (PTI): The IMF on Monday rubbished claims that it has attached nuclear-programme-related strings for the revival of Pakistan's much-anticipated bailout programme that has been stalled for months, a media report said. Cash-strapped Pakistan is awaiting a much-needed USD 1.1 billion tranche of funding from the Washington-based International Monetary Fund (IMF), which was originally due to be disbursed in November last year. The funds are part of a USD 6.5 billion bailout package the IMF approved in 2019, which analysts say is critical if Pakistan is to avoid defaulting on external debt obligations.

Pakistan, currently in the throes of a major economic crisis, is grappling with high external debt, a weak local currency and dwindling foreign exchange reserves enough to shore up for barely one month's imports.

Esther Perez Ruiz, IMF's resident representative in Islamabad, has denied attaching any strings to the External Fund Facility (EFF), according to Geo TV.

"Regarding recent speculation that programme discussions with the authorities for the ninth review under the IMF-supported programme may have covered Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme, I want to be categorical that there is absolutely no truth to this or any insinuated link between the past or current IMF supported programme and decision by any Pakistani government over its nuclear programme," the report said, quoting the official.

The IMF chief said discussions have exclusively focused on economic policies to solve Pakistan's economy and balance of payments problems, in line with the Fund's mandate for promoting macroeconomic and financial stability. It comes days after Pakistan's Finance Minister Ishaq Dar assured Parliament that the federal government would not make any compromise on the country's nuclear and missile programme despite tough economic conditions and hurdles to secure a loan from the IMF. "Let me assure you that nobody is going to compromise anything on the nuclear or the missile programme of Pakistan — no way," Dar told Parliament last week. Dar also indirectly held Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party and its chief Imran Khan responsible for the delay in the IMF funding as he blamed the then government of Imran Khan for agreeing on tough conditions to get the funding.

Separately, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said that Pakistan's nuclear programme was being "jealously guarded by the state".

Pakistan has been hosting the IMF mission since early February to negotiate the terms of the deal, including the adoption of policy measures to manage its fiscal deficit ahead of the annual budget due around June.

'No such thing as Palestinian people'

Tel Aviv (AP): A firebrand Israeli minister claimed there's "no such thing" as a Palestinian people as Israel's new coalition government, its most hard-line ever, plowed ahead on Monday with a part of its plan to overhaul the judiciary. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's coalition said it was pushing a key part of the overhaul — which would give the coalition control over who becomes a justice or a judge — before the parliament takes a monthlong holiday break next week.

The development came a day after an Israeli and Palestinian delegation at a meeting in Egypt, mediated by Egyptian, Jordanian and U.S. officials, pledged to take steps to lower tensions roiling the region ahead of a sensitive holiday season. It reflected the limited influence the Biden administration appears to have over Israel's new far-right government and raised questions about attempts to lower tensions, both inside Israel and with the Palestinians, ahead of a sensitive holiday season. As the negotiators were issuing a joint communique, Israeli Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich delivered a speech in Paris saying the notion of a Palestinian people was artificial."There is no such thing as a Palestinian nation. There is no Palestinian history. There is no Palestinian language," he said in France late Sunday. He spoke at a lectern draped with what appeared to be a map of Israel that included the occupied West Bank and parts of Jordan. Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh said Smotrich's remarks were "conclusive evidence of the extremist, racist Zionist ideology that governs the parties of the current Israeli government."

A far-right settler leader who opposes Palestinian statehood, Smotrich has a history of offensive statements against the Palestinians. Last month, he called for the Palestinian town of Hawara in the West Bank to be "erased" after radical Jewish settlers rampaged through the town in response to a shooting attack that killed two Israelis.

Amazon to lay off 9,000 more employees

New York (AP): Amazon plans to eliminate 9,000 more jobs in the next few weeks, CEO Andy Jassy said in a memo to staff on Monday.

The job cuts would mark the second largest round of layoffs in the company's history, adding to the 18,000 employees the company said it would lay off in January.

In the memo, Jassy said the second phase of the company's annual planning process completed this month and led to the additional job cuts. He said Amazon will still hire in some strategic areas. "Some may ask why we didn't announce these role reductions with the ones we announced a couple months ago. The short answer is that not all of the teams were done with their analyses in the late fall; and rather than rush through these assessments without the appropriate diligence, we chose to share these decisions as we've made them so people had the information as soon as possible," Jassy said.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Known to General public that my client **ANAND KUMAR** is purchasing property i.e **PROPERTY BEARING NO-RZ-B-75,(THREE FLOOR) NORTHERN SIDE AREA 100 SQ YARDS OUT OF KHASRA NO-31/4 SITUATED IN THE AREA OF VILLAGE DABRI DELHI STATE DELHI COLONY KNOWN AS BABRI EXTN. NEW DELHI-110045.**,from **Sh.Satyavir Singh** and mortgaging with Aditya Birla Housing Finance Ltd. **and Sh. Satyavir Singh** don't have original **Probate of will executed by Smt. Jaswanti Devi in favour of Sh. Satyavir Singh** And If any person is having any objection, right or claim in respect of the said property in capacity in any manner or said mortgage then he may contact the undersign within 8 days of publication of this Notice.

AD REM LEGAL SOLUTION
Ch. No. 760, Dwaka Court Sector-10, Dwarka, New Delhi-75
M:- 9899013918

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of our client that Mrs. Sangita Jain is the owner of Built up First floor, without roof rights, L Type, having area measuring 60 Sq., Yds., "said floor" part of Property bearing No. WA-106, Old Plot No. 23, out of Khasra No. 178, Situated at abadi Gali No. 16, WA Block, Shakarpur, in the area of Village Shakurpur Khas, Delhi, vide GPA, ATS & Will dated 22.04.2010. All persons are hereby informed that above mentioned owner wants to sell the said property to a person who intends to obtain loan from our client against the said property, if anybody has any objection/s upon the ownership of above owner over the said floor, its sale/mortgage/litigation, and any other objections, kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.

Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants)
200, IInd Floor, 23, Shivaji Marg, Moti Nagar, N. Delhi-15
Ph : 011-41112527-28 kumarassociates.advocate@gmail.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

The public at large is hereby informed that property bearing number R- 14 /1 34, Raj Nagar, situated in Dist Ghaziabad, UP, PIN 201 002, measuring 288.10 Square Meters is mortgaged with the State Bank of India, SME Branch, Sector 18, Noida, Dist Gautam Buddh Nagar since 2013.It is further informed to the public at large that Original Allotment Letter and Original Possession Letter issued in the name of Shri Chetan Swarup S/o Late Shri Tulsi Ram by Ghaziabad Development Authority are not traceable in the records. Any person dealing with the said property in the name of bona-fide owner Shri Chetan Swarup shall be doing so at his own risk and our client shall not be responsible.

Pawan Kumar Tyagi (Advocate)
Ch. No. 346, District & Sesion Noida, Court, Gautam Greater Budh Nagar.

LOST & FOUND

I, Nikita Arora D/o Lajpat Arora, R/o 87A, HIG Flats, Express View Apartment Pocket-B, Sector-105, Noida my Original Document Receipt No. 046, dated 16th July 2016, in the name of my mother Late. Seema Arora having an area of 495 Sq.feet, 45.187 Sq.mt. of Anandam Suites & Omaxe Eternity Vrindavan District Mathura Uttar Pradesh unit Number ASV/14/001 Pin Code 281121, Developer M/s. Kansal Infraplanner Pvt.Ltd. bought from whose Registered Office is B- 3/252, 253 Ground Floor Sector-6 Rohini Delhi-110065 Whereas Factually Lost Somewhere Whose Complaint/Fir In E- station Lucknow Police Station Fir/Station Dairy No.20230000158003 Dated 18/03/2023 have registered.

UJVN LIMITED
H.O.: "UJJWAL', Maharani Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun-248006
Telephone.: 0135 -2763508, 2763808 Fax 2763507,
CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025866, Website: www.ujvnl.com

पत्रांक सं. 262 दिनांक 20.03.2023

Tender Extension Notice

Due to unavoidable circumstances the Office of the Executive Engineer (E&M) SHP, UJVN Limited, Rishikesh hereby extends the date of bids invitation for E-Tender No 01/GM(SHP)/UJVNL/2022-23 As per details given below:
Last date for submission of Tender 28/03/2023 to 17:00 Hrs
Date of Opening of tenders 29/03/2023 to 11:30 Hrs
Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal "http://uktenders.gov.in"

Executive Engineer (E&M) (SHP)Rishikesh

"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

EASTERN COALFIELDS LIMITED
(A Subsidiary of Coal India Limited)

"All the tenders issued by CIL and its subsidiaries for procurement of Goods, Works & Services are available on **i)** Website of Coal India Limited: **www.coalindia.in**, **ii)** Website of ECL: **www.easterncoal.nic.in**, **iii)** CIL e-Procurement Portal: **https://coalindia tenders.nic.in**, **iv)** Central Public Procurement Portal:**https://eprocure.gov.in**. In addition, procurement is also done through GeM Portal: **https://gem.gov.in**".

(By Order)
ECL

ECL's Website : www.easterncoal.gov.in

INDAG RUBBER LIMITED
(CIN: L74899DL1978PLC009038)
Regd. Office: Khemka House ,11, Community Centre Saket, New Delhi-110017.
Phone: 011-26963172/73 , 26863310, 26961211, 41664818, Fax No. : 011-26856350
E-mail Id:- info@indagrubber.com,Website: www.indagrubber.com

NOTICE

{For the Attention of Equity Shareholders of the Company}

Compulsory Transfer of Equity Shares of the Company to the DEMAT Account of the Investor Education and Protection Fund (IEPF) Authority.

Notice is published in pursuance of section 124(6) of the Companies Act, 2013 read with the Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (Accounting, Audit, Transfer and Refund) Rules, 2016 ("the said Rules") notified by Ministry of Corporate Affairs as amended from time to time and Regulation 39 (4) of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015.

The Rules, inter alia, require the Company to transfer all the shares in respect of which Dividend has not been claimed by the Shareholders during the last 7 consecutive years starting from the Final Dividend of the financial year 2015-2016, to the demat account of the Investor Education and Protection Fund (IEPF) Authority set up by the Central Government within 30 days from the due date of transfer i.e July 2,2023 , in the manner as prescribed in the said Rules.

Accordingly, the Company has sent individual communications to the concerned shareholders whose shares are liable to be transferred to the demat account of the IEPF Authority in compliance of the said Rules, at their latest available address advising them to claim their dividends expeditiously. The Company has uploaded the complete details of such shareholders and their folio number or DPID- Client ID on its website i.e. www.indagrubber.com. This Notice shall be deemed to be the adequate notice in respect of issue of new Share Certificate(s) by the Company on behalf of those Shareholders who hold Shares in physical form, for the purpose of transfer of their Shares to the DEMAT Account of the IEPF Authority in the manner as prescribed in the said Rules.

Concerned shareholders may note that, any further dividend, including other corporate benefits, on such shares shall be credited to the IEPF Account of the IEPF Authority. Upon credit of such shares to the said Demat account, no claim shall lie against the company in respect of the unclaimed dividend amount and such shares transferred to IEPF Account. However, shareholders may claim back the shares credited along with the unclaimed dividend amount from the IEPF Authority after following the procedure given under the IEPF Rules. The procedure for claiming the same is available at www.mca.gov.in and www.iepf.gov.in.

For any further information/ clarification on this matter, the concerned shareholder may write to the Company at Indag Rubber Limited, Khemka House, 11, Community Centre, Saket, New Delhi-110017, Tel.: 011-26963172-73. Email-info@indagrubber.com or contact the Company's Registrar and Share Transfer Agent - Skyline Financial Services Pvt. Limited at D-153/A, 1st Floor, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase-I, New Delhi-110020 Tel.: 011-26812682-83. email-admin@skylinerta.com.

By order of the Board
For Indag Rubber Limited
Sd/-
Company Secretary

Date: March 20, 2023
Place: New Delhi

Top Af Taliban leader issues decree against nepotism

Islamabad (AP): The supreme leader of the Taliban has issued a decree against nepotism, barring officials in Afghanistan's Taliban administration from hiring relatives in government positions. The shadowy leader, Mullah Hibatullah Akhundzada, also ordered all Taliban officials to sack their sons and other relatives who are already working in their administration. The decree was posted late on Saturday on the Taliban government's Twitter account.

"It is an order to all officials in the ministries, departments and independent authorities that no one is allowed to appoint family members or relatives in government positions," the decree said. The tweet did not elaborate on the reasons behind the decree but it followed rumours that many Taliban officials have appointed their sons and relatives in high-ranking government positions rather than professionals or those with experience needed for the posts Taliban government spokesmen were not immediately available on Monday to elaborate on the order or provide further details. The Taliban seized power in Afghanistan in mid-August 2021 amid the chaotic departure of U.S. and NATO troops after 20 years. Despite initial promises of a more moderate stance, the Taliban gradually reimposed their harsh interpretation of Islamic law, or Sharia, as they did during their previous rule of Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001. Girls are now barred from school beyond the sixth grade and women are banned from working, studying, travelling without a male companion, and even going to parks, gyms or bath houses.

Kenya Opp leads anti-Govt protests

AP ■ NAOROBI

At least three Kenyan legislators and several protesters have been arrested in protests in Kenya's capital, Nairobi, organised by the opposition demanding the resignation of President William Ruto.Hundreds of demonstrators spread across the city have not managed to reach the designated meeting point in the central business district as police dispersed them with teargas through the morning. The opposition called for protests against Ruto who they say was not validly elected in the August 2022 elections. They are also blaming Ruto's administration for the rising cost of living. Nairobi police boss Adamson Bungei said those arrested in the protests would be released after paying cash bail. Bungei had over the weekend said police had denied the opposition permission to hold their protests and that any congregation would be illegal. Opposition leader Raila Odinga

on Sunday insisted that protests would proceed as planned and demonstrators would march to State House, the official residence of the president. Odinga said Kenyan citizens have a constitutional right to demonstrate and the role of the police is to protect them after they issue a notification in advance. Police have been heavily deployed to State House with motorists and pedestrians being stopped from accessing the road there. Most shops in Nairobi's central business district closed on Monday as business owners feared looting.

The leaders who have been arrested include the senate minority leader Stewart Madzayo and members of parliament Opiyo Wandati and Amina Mnyazi. Other legislators who had turned up at the designated meeting point in the city were dispersed by the police with teargas.

They retreated to parliament buildings where they announced that protests would continue through the afternoon. Kenya's opposition has in the past held violent demonstrations in which people have died.

Archeologists uncover 'oldest pearling town' in UAE

Siniyah Island: Archaeologists said Monday they have found the oldest pearling town in the Persian Gulf on an island off one of the northern sheikhdoms of the United Arab Emirates. Artifacts found in this town on Siniyah Island in Umm al-Quwain, likely once home to thousands of people and hundreds of homes, date as far back as the region's pre-Islamic history in the late 6th century. While older pearling towns have been mentioned in historical texts, this represents the first time archaeologists say they have physically found one from this ancient era across the nations of the Persian Gulf.

"This is the oldest example of that kind of very specifically Khaleeji pearling town," said Timothy Power, an associate professor of archaeology at the United Arab Emirates University, using a word that means "Gulf" in Arabic. "It's the spiritual ancestor of towns like Dubai." The pearling town sits on Siniyah Island, which shields the Khor al-Beida marshlands in Umm al-Quwain, an emirate some 50 kilometers (30 miles) northeast of Dubai along the coast of the Persian Gulf. The island, whose name means "flashing lights" likely due to the effect of the white-hot sun overhead, already has seen archaeologists discover an ancient Christian monastery dating back as many as 1,400 years.

The town sits directly south of that monastery on one of the curling fingers of the island and stretches across some 12 hectares (143,500 square yards). There, archaeologists found a variety of homes made of beach rock and lime mortar, ranging from cramped quarters to more sprawling homes with courtyards, suggesting a social stratification, Power said. The site also bears signs of year-round habitation, unlike other pearling operations run in seasonal spots in the region.

"The houses are crammed in there, cheek by jowl," he added. "The key thing there is permanence. People are living there all year around."

In the homes, archaeologists have discovered loose pearls and diving weights, which the free divers used to quickly drop down to the seabed while relying only on their held breath.

The town predates the rise of Islam across the Arabian Peninsula, making its residents likely Christians. Islam's Prophet Muhammad was born around 570 and died in 632 after conquering Mecca in present-day Saudi Arabia.

Umm al-Quwain's Department of Tourism and Archaeology, UAE University, the Italian Archaeological Mission in the emirate and the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World at New York University all took part in the excavation. Umm al-Quwain, the least-populated emirate in the UAE, plans to build a visitor's center at the site. Today, the area near the marshland is more known for the low-cost liquor store at the emirate's Barracuda Beach Resort. In recent months, authorities have demolished a hulking, Soviet-era cargo plane linked to a Russian gunrunner known as the "Merchant of Death" as it builds a bridge to Siniyah Island for a $675 million real estate development. Authorities hope that development, as well as other building, will grow the emirate's economy. However, even this ancient site bears lessons for the Emirates.

PSU banks' gross NPA declines to 5.53%, profit of ₹70,167 cr in April-Dec made

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government has taken various reforms following which asset quality of public sector banks has improved significantly with gross NPA ratio declining from the peak of 14.6 per cent in March 2018 to 5.53 per cent in December 2022, Parliament was informed on Monday.

All PSBs are in profit with aggregate profit being Rs 66,543 crore in 2021-22, and that further increased to Rs 70,167 crore in first nine months of current financial year, Minister of State for Finance Bhagwat K Karad said in a written reply to Lok Sabha.

At the same time, resilience has increased with provision coverage ratio of PSBs rising from 46 per cent to 89.9 per cent in December 2022, he said, adding capital adequacy ratio of PSBs improved significantly from 11.5 per cent in March 2015 to 14.5 per cent in December 2022.

Total market cap of PSBs (excluding IDBI Bank, which was categorised as private sector bank in January 2019) increased from Rs 4.52 lakh crore in March 2018 to Rs 10.63 lakh crore in December 2022, he said.

Karad also said banks, earlier placed under Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework by RBI, have made significant improvement.

Talking about various measures taken to improve the financial health of PSBs, Karad said, the government implemented a comprehensive 4R strategy of Recognising NPAs transparently, Resolution and recovery, Recapitalising PSBs, and Reforms in the financial ecosystem.

Major banking reforms undertaken by the government over the last eight years addressed credit discipline, responsible lending and improved governance, besides adoption of technology, amalgamation of banks, and maintaining general confidence of bankers, he said.

In reply to another question, Karad said, as per the information provided by Ministry of Road Transport & Highways (MoRTH), the total estimated vehicle fleet is 30.48 crore (excluding data from Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Lakshadweep), of which 16.54 crore vehicles are uninsured.

Replying to another question, Karad said the government since 2016 has given 'in-principle' approval for strategic disinvestment of 36 cases of public sector enterprises (PSEs) and/or subsidiaries/ units/ joint ventures of PSEs/ banks.

Of the 36 cases, 33 are being handled by Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) and 3 cases are being handled by the respective Administrative Ministry/Department, he said.

"Out of the 33 cases being handled by DIPAM, strategic disinvestment transactions have been completed in 10 cases; 5 PSEs are under consideration for closure; 1 case is held up due to litigation, 1 case is under Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP) in NCLT and 2 transactions are under review for feasibility," he said, adding, remaining 14 transactions are at various stages.

In other PSEs, where the government continues to retain control, disinvestment through minority stake sale is carried out through various SEBI-approved methods such as initial public offer (IPO), offer for sale (OFS), buyback of shares etc. From time to time based on prevailing market conditions and investor interest, he said.

The modernisation and capacity expansion of PSEs are taken up by the respective boards of PSEs under the administrative control of different ministries, he added.

Nine Adani group stocks end lower; snaps 2-day winning streak

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Nine out of ten listed companies of the Adani group closed with losses on Monday, snapping two-day of gains amid an across-the-board sell-off in the broader market.

While some Adani stocks hit their lowest circuit prices, flagship Adani Enterprises Ltd declined 3.84 per cent to close at Rs 1,805.10 on BSE. The flagship commanded a market capitalisation of Rs 2.05 lakh crore. The stock was the second biggest loser among Nifty stocks, dropping by 3.44 per cent.

Adani Total Gas plunged 4.99 per cent to end at Rs 853.10, Adani Power tumbled 4.83 per cent to close at Rs 190.30 and Adani Transmission went lower by 1.49 per cent to settle at Rs 1,009.60 per share. The three stocks hit their lower price bands on the exchange before recovering some ground.

Shares of Ambuja Cements nosedived 3.37 per cent to close at Rs 365.50, Adani Wilmar fell 3.16 per cent to end at Rs 413.85, NDTV dived 3.11 per cent to settle at Rs 199.30 and ACC declined 1.84 per cent to end at Rs 1,697.05 on the BSE.

Also, shares of Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ) fell 1.96 per cent to end at Rs 666.75 apiece on the bourse.

However, Adani Green Energy climbed 3.91 per cent to settle at Rs 848.75 per share. The company's market valuation rose to Rs 1.34 lakh crore.

The BSE Sensex benchmark plunged 360.95 points or 0.62 per cent to settle at 57,628.95 points. The broader NSE Nifty fell 111.65 points or 0.65 per cent to close at 16,988.40.

On Friday, seven Adani group companies had settled higher.

Last week, NSE and BSE announced that two Adani group stocks — Adani Green Energy and NDTV — will be moved to the first stage of the long-term additional surveillance measures (ASM) framework from Monday.

The move also comes close on the heels of the two exchanges excluding Adani Enterprises, Adani Power and Adani Wilmar under the short-term ASM.

After taking a beating on the bourses, following the report by US-based short seller Hindenburg Research, many of the group stocks have recovered some lost ground. However, amid sluggish broader market trends, the group's stocks have declined in the last few trading sessions.

The report had made a litany of allegations, including fraudulent transactions and share-price manipulation, against it. The group has dismissed the charges as lies, saying it complies with all laws and disclosure requirements.

PSUs asked to issue LoCs based on their financial strength

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Finance Ministry has asked central public sector undertakings (CPSUs) to issue letters of comfort (LoCs) on the basis of their own financial strength so that no liability devolves on the Government of India.

The Office Memorandum dated March 20, 2023, has been issued following a request from some CPSUs in the oil and power sector seeking relaxation with regard to the issuance of LoCs.

"In view of requirements, it has been decided that CPSUs may issue LoCs on its own financial strength and all such LoCs shall only be issued after specifically inserting the following clause — under no circumstances, the liability under this Letter of Comfort shall devolve on the Government of India," the memorandum said.

Under the provision of the fiscal responsibility law, the budget requires to provide details of guarantees given by the government.

It further clarified that ministries and departments will not issue any letters of comfort as specified under the Office Memorandum dated March 31, 2022 on behalf of the Government of India.

Issuance of LoCs based on own financial strength is a part of regular business practice.

It enables these entities to raise resources at competitive rates for their capex or working capital needs as well as furthering the business interests of their joint ventures or subsidiaries or Group companies.

Credit Suisse, UBS shares plunge after takeover announcement

AP ■ GENEVA

Shares of Credit Suisse plunged 63 per cent in early trading Monday after the announcement that banking giant UBS would buy its troubled rival for almost USD 3.25 billion in a deal orchestrated by regulators to stave off further market-shaking turmoil in the global banking system.

UBS shares were down 14 per cent in early trading on the Swiss stock exchange.

Swiss authorities urged UBS to take over its smaller rival after a plan for Credit Suisse to borrow up to 50 billion francs (USD 54 billion) failed to reassure investors and the bank's customers.

Shares of Credit Suisse and other banks plunged after the failure of two banks in the US raised questions about other potentially shaky global financial institutions.

Credit Suisse is among 30 financial institutions known as globally systemically important banks, and authorities worried about the fallout if it were to fail.

The deal was "one of great breadth for the stability of international finance," Swiss President Alain Berset said as he announced it Sunday night. "An uncontrolled collapse of Credit Suisse would lead to incalculable consequences for the country and the international financial system."

Switzerland's executive branch, a seven-member governing body that includes Berset, passed an emergency ordinance allowing the merger to go through without shareholder approval.

Markets remain jittery despite the best efforts of regulators to restore calm. Global stock markets sank Monday, with Hong Kong's main index sliding more than 3 per cent. Market benchmarks in Frankfurt and Paris opened down more than 1 per cent. Shanghai, Tokyo and Sydney also declined. Wall Street futures were off 1 per cent. Oil prices plunged more than USD 2 per barrel.

Credit Suisse Chairman Axel Lehmann called the sale to UBS "a clear turning point."

"It is a historic, sad and very challenging day for Credit Suisse, for Switzerland and for the global financial markets," Lehmann said, adding that the focus is now on the future and on Credit Suisse's 50,000 employees, 17,000 in Switzerland.

Following news of the Swiss deal, the world's central banks announced coordinated moves to stabilize banks, including access to a lending facility for banks to borrow US dollars if they need them, a practice widely used during the 2008 crisis.

Three months after Lehman Brothers collapsed in September of 2008, such swap lines had been tapped for USD 580 billion. Swap lines also were rolled out during market turmoil in the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Today is one of the most significant days in European banking since 2008, with far-reaching repercussions for the industry," said Max Georgiou, an analyst at Third Bridge. "These events could alter the course of not only European banking but also the wealth management industry more generally."

Colm Kelleher, the UBS chairman, hailed "enormous opportunities" from the takeover and highlighted his bank's "conservative risk culture" — a subtle swipe at Credit Suisse's reputation for more swashbuckling gambles in search of bigger returns. He said the combined group would create a wealth manager with over USD 5 trillion in total invested assets.

UBS officials said they plan to sell off parts of Credit Suisse or reduce the bank's size.

Swiss Finance Minister Karin Keller-Sutter said the council "regrets that the bank, which was once a model institution in Switzerland and part of our strong location, was able to get into this situation at all."

Sensex, Nifty close lower amid global equity rout on banking crisis worries

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark Sensex declined by 360 points while the Nifty closed below the 17,000-level on Monday due to a sell-off in financials, IT and capital goods shares amid a global rout in equities on lingering worries over the banking crisis.

Snapping its two-day gaining streak, the 30-share BSE Sensex declined by 360.95 points or 0.62 per cent to close at 57,628.95 as 23 of its stocks ended in the red. The index tanked more than 900 points to touch a low of 57,084.91 before recovering some losses at the fag end.

The broader Nifty of the NSE plunged by 111.65 points or 0.65 per cent to close below the 17,000-level at 16,988.40. As many as 40 Nifty stocks declined while 10 advanced.

Analysts said investors fretted over the US banking crisis even as Federal Reserve and other central banks took efforts to ease a fast-growing banking crisis.

Investors were also concerned ahead of a Federal Reserve meeting to decide on more possible interest rate hikes.

"The fear of contagion of the financial crisis has kept investors away from the equity markets as the global market faces numerous hurdles. Despite Swiss regulators' intervention to protect the global financial system, investor sentiment remained shaky," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

Banking giant UBS is acquiring crisis-ridden Credit Suisse for around USD 3.25 billion in a deal arranged by Swiss regulators to avoid further turmoil in the global banking system.

The move failed to calm jittery investors as Credit Suisse tanked 63 per cent and UBS sank 14 per cent on Swiss bourses. Credit Suisse is among 30 institutions known as globally systemically important banks.

NoBroker enters Dubai to tap NRI's property demand; aims to help buy-sell of ₹2,000 cr

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Proptech unicorn NoBroker on Monday said it has opened an office in Dubai to tap demand from non-resident Indians (NRIs) and is expecting to facilitate transaction of properties worth Rs 2,000 crore in the first year.

The firm has opened the branch office in the Business Bay spread over 1,500 square feet.

Saurabh Garg, Co-founder & Chief Business Officer of NoBroker, said it has hired 10 people to provide services to NRI's who are looking to buy properties in India and plans to recruit more employees.

The company has opened office to cater to the demand coming from the NRIs who are looking to purchase a property in India.

"We are looking at doing business worth Rs 2,000 crore in the first year," Garg said.

NoBroker has been catering to NRI demand from international markets such as the UAE, Singapore, Australia, and the US.

Given the volumes of queries and interest in the Indian residential sector from the NRI community, the company has decided to station its representatives closer to the customers to address the same.

"The NRI interest in the Indian residential sector had peaked during Covid and is still quite strong. We realised that customers feel more confident about their purchase decisions when dealing with a company representative in person," Garg said.

NoBroker works with grade A builders and has a robust primary sales vertical.

"Buyers are comfortable using a portal for online property discovery. But before making the final purchase of a new property where the house is not already constructed, buyers have a lot of queries, and the physical presence of a company representative helps," the firm said.

Samsung to invest in smart manufacturing capabilities, research and development in India

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Korean electronics major Samsung will invest in setting up smart manufacturing capabilities at its mobile phone plant in Noida to make production more competitive, the company's global head for mobile business said here on Monday.

Samsung Electronics President and Head of Mobile eXperience Business T M Roh, in response to a PTI query on the company's investment plan in India, said that the company will continue to invest in research and development facilities in the country.

"We will continue our investment to bring the optimised and or smart factory to the Noida facilities. We will continue our investment there. I believe that our investment for the smart factory will bring competitiveness in the production," Roh said.

The company started a manufacturing and R&D centre in India in 1996 and now has close to 70,000 employees in the country.

Samsung now has its second biggest manufacturing facility in the world at Noida and biggest research and development centre at Bengaluru in India.

The company this year started manufacturing its premium Galaxy S23 series in India.

"Samsung India has been focussing on make in India, make for India. We are not only meeting the domestic need but also use it as a hub for export," Roh said.

He said the company is collaborating with local vendors in India for mobile chargers and components like mechanics.

"It could not have been possible to be competitive without collaboration with local partners. The technology collaboration will continue with local partners. We have products for export, which are done in close collaboration with local vendors. In the case of OLED display manufacturing, we have been closely working with local vendors," Roh said.

Samsung has around 10,000 employees at its R&D centres across India, out of which the largest base of close to 3,500 is located at its Bengaluru centre.

Toxic work culture, excessive pressure main reason of quiet quitting for most Gen Z: Report

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Nearly half of Gen Z respondents consider toxic work culture and excessive work pressure as the trigger for quiet quitting, a report said on Monday.

Over 48 per cent of Gen Z, those born in mid-to-late 1990s and the early 2010s, attribute toxic work culture as the primary cause for quiet quitting, while a mere 6 per cent believe it to be a result of extended office timings, according to a report - Quiet Quitting and its Effect on Organisational Work Structure - by Kolkata based staffing firm Genius Consultants.

Notably, it revealed that 23 per cent of the respondents blame office politics and excessive work pressure for the issue.

Quiet quitting is a term which is used for those employees who put no more effort into their jobs than absolutely necessary.

According to the report 'Quiet Quitting' has led to a new trend - Bare Minimum Mondays, where the employees specially the Gen Z tend to put in bare minimum efforts on the work front on the first day of the week.

The report, Quiet Quitting and its Effect on Organisational Work Structure, is based on an online survey among 1,928 employees across sectors.

It further revealed that over 54 per cent of India Inc are aware of the term 'Quiet Quitting' and 74 per cent of the respondents believed that the quiet quitting culture is distressing the work environment.

In current times, the workforce perceives their job as more than just a means to an end, namely a source of income, said the report.

"Given the current situation, both the 'quiet quitting culture' and the 'Bare Minimum Mondays' are co-related and can have adverse effects on organisations, and when coupled with layoffs, can aggravate the issue further. It's imperative for companies to address this issue proactively to foster a culture of engagement, motivation, and resilience in the face of adversity. We believe such surveys are critical to gather insightful perspectives on ongoing issues," Genius Consultants CMD R P Yadav said.

The report found that despite the trend of quiet quitting and layoffs, 43 per cent of respondents believed that the problem can be mitigated through better employee benefits.

PE/VC investments nearly halve in Feb 2023: Report

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Investments by private equity and venture capital funds declined by 44 per cent to USD 3.7 billion in February compared to the same period a year ago, a report said on Monday.

The bets by the long-term investors were 13 per cent lower when compared to the investments in the preceding month of January, the report by industry lobby Indian Venture and Alternate Capital Association and consultancy firm EY, said.

"…rising global recession concerns, increasing cost of capital and mismatch in valuation expectations between sellers and investors are turning out to be major impediments in the deployment of capital," EY's partner Vivek Soni said.

He added that the recent events in the global financial world after the failure of SVB and the contagion spreading to other mid-market US banks catering to the technology sector has added to the overall uncertainty, and "may discourage investors from making bold bets in the immediate term".

The venture investing industry poured in USD 6.6 billion into companies in February 2022, while the same stood at USD 4.314 billion in January 2023.

In volume terms, the number of deals dropped by 60 per cent in February with 55 transactions getting recorded as against 139 in the year-ago period, the report said, adding that there were 75 deals in January 2023.

From a sectoral perspective, real estate led by bagging USD 2.4 billion of the overall USD 3.7 billion in investments with the USD 1.9 billion funding announcement by an arm of CDPQ and Temasek to set up an investment platform for office properties in India being at the top.

There were only nine large deals of USD 100 million or more announced in February, aggregating to USD 3 billion in overall such commitments.

February 2023 recorded 11 exits worth USD 731 million compared to USD 1.4 billion recorded in February 2022 across 13 deals, and USD 898 million recorded across 20 deals in January 2023, it said.

Funds dedicated to India raised USD 881 million as compared to USD 347 million in the year-ago period, it said, adding that Kotak Alternate Assets' USD 590 million for a data centre fund was the largest.

Clasico Brands UK Issues trademark infringement notice to Third Unicorn Ltd

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Cläsico Brands UK Ltd. recently issued a legal notice to Third Unicorn Private Limited and its shareholders with respect to infringement of the trademark MINISTRY OF CRICKET, which is owned by Cläsico in various countries, including India.

Clásico Brands is a global company having its roots in all 5 continents of the world and operates in the personal and home care category with self-owned brands as well as global license franchisees. It owns production facilities are located across Europe, Asia, Middle East & Latin America.Third Unicorn is a tech start-up by Ashneer Grover. Madhuri Jain Grover and Aseem Ghavri are the Co-founders of Third Unicorn.

BACKGROUND TO MINISTRY OF CRICKET

Mr. Ajay Bindroo, the founder of Clasico Brands, had conceptualized and adopted the brand MINISTRY OF CRICKET as far back as the year 2014, and had begun to take steps to register this trademark around the world from the year 2019. Cläsico is about to launch business operations under the brand MINISTRY OF CRICKET in the very near future under the entrepreneurship of Bindroo.

Barca snatch Clasico win over Madrid

AP ■ BARCELONA

Barcelona snatched a 2-1 Clasico win over Real Madrid with Franck Kessie's late goal Sunday to move 12 points clear at the top of La Liga. The victory dents Madrid's ambitions of retaining the title and leaves the Catalans close to lifting the trophy for the first time since 2019.

Carlo Ancelotti's Real took the lead through a Ronald Araujo own goal but Barcelona pulled level when Sergi Roberto tucked home just before half-time. Both sides had chances to win the game and Marco Asensio struck for Madrid, but the goal was ruled offside by VAR, before Alejandro Balde set up Kessie in the 92nd minute.

"We came from a Marco Asensio goal that we didn't know was offside and from losing, we scored Franck's goal, and the truth is it tastes a bit better, winning like that in the last minute," Sergi Roberto told Movistar.

"There are a lot of games left and you can never give Madrid up for dead. 12 points is a tricky distance to have to go, but it's up to us, and that is good."

The build-up to the match was overshadowed by Barcelona's corruption charge in the "Caso Negreira" refereeing scandal.

Madrid joined Spanish prosecutors' complaint against Barcelona last week and their president Florentino Perez snubbed the game for the first time in over 20 years, amid rising tensions between the two Spanish giants.

That fed the match's intensity, both on and off the pitch, in Xavi's sixth Clasico as Barcelona coach but only his first at Camp Nou.

Xavi asked fans to make the stadium a pressure cooker and they responded, selling it out, whistling Madrid in possession and conjuring one of the best atmospheres of the season.

Madrid did not manage a single shot on target in their Copa del Rey semi-final first leg defeat by Barcelona earlier in March, but Karim Benzema stung Marc-Andre ter Stegen's palms inside the first minute.

Robert Lewandowski responded at the other end by testing Thibaut Courtois as the veteran marksmen exchanged shots. When Barcelona conceded the opening goal of the game, it was friendly fire. Araujo deflected Vinicius' cross in at the near post, with Ter Stegen helpless.

Araujo, playing at right-back to counteract the Brazilian, has enjoyed his duels with Vinicius in the past but this time the winger triumphed, albeit fortuitously. Barcelona supporters became enraged by his emphatic celebration in front of them. It was the first goal from open play Barcelona have conceded at Camp Nou in La Liga all season long, and only the second strike at home and ninth overall.

COMEBACK CHARGE

Barcelona complained defender Nacho, already booked, should have been sent off for a hand-off on Raphinha.

The hosts did not get their wish, but were building up steam and found the breakthrough just before half-time, from an unlikely source.

Selected in place of injured midfielder Pedri, Sergi Roberto was in the right place at the right time to control a loose ball in the box and arc it beyond Courtois.

Barcelona had significantly more possession than in their cup win over Madrid and significantly more chances.

Lewandowski sent a deflected piledriver narrowly wide as Madrid wobbled, prompting Carlo Ancelotti to roll the dice and bring on Rodrygo and Ferland Mendy.

It almost paid instant dividends as Madrid robbed Sergio Busquets and Rodrygo lashed inches over the bar.

Madrid substitute Asensio fired home what might have been the winner but the goal was ruled out for offside after a nervy wait for VAR instruction.

Barcelona seemed content with the draw but Kessie's last-gasp strike sparked wild celebrations at Camp Nou.

Asked if Madrid's hopes of defending the title were over, Courtois told Movistar: "Yes, we have to be honest, we will keep fighting until the end but it's (12 points) now, we have the better head-to-head, but they have to lose four games and we have to win them all.

"Nothing is impossible but it's very difficult."

Leverkusen shock Bayern to keep Dortmund top

AP ■ BERLIN

Argentina's World Cup winner Exequiel Palacios struck twice from the spot as Bayer Leverkusen blew the Bundesliga title race wide open with a shock 2-1 win over Bayern Munich on Sunday.

With a little help from VAR, Leverkusen came from behind to hand coach Xabi Alonso a famous win on his first reunion with former club Bayern and keep the champions from regaining top spot.

"It's an unbelievable feeling. I'm so proud of the way we played today," said Alonso, who played for Bayern from 2014 to 2017.

Bayern are a point behind leaders Borussia Dortmund and the two sides set to meet in the next round of games on April 1.

"That is now a must-win game for us, because it will be very difficult to win the title otherwise," said Bayern coach Julian Nagelsmann.

"It was a deserved defeat today. Apart from the last 10 minutes, they were the better team," he added.

Bayern sporting director Hasan Salihamidzic was scathing in his criticism of the performance.

"We let ourselves be overrun by a team who played in midweek. That's not what it means to be Bayern Munich," he said.

"VAR was a lifesaver today and it was a perfect example of how the system should work," said referee Tobias Stieler.

The win also kept Leverkusen afloat in the race for Europe, with Alonso's side now just three points adrift of sixth.

Elsewhere, Union Berlin gave their Champions League hopes a boost as a rare goal from Rani Khedira helped them to a 2-0 win over Bundesliga top-six rivals Eintracht Frankfurt.

Khedira — the brother of 2014 World Cup winner Sami — stabbed in the opener to score only his seventh goal in 194 Bundesliga appearances and lift Union back into third place.

"It's also my first goal for Union so I am very happy," Khedira told Dazn. "Today was much more about mentality than about tactics."

Rennes cut PSG's lead in Ligue 1

AP ■ PARIS

Paris Saint-Germain's march towards another Ligue 1 title was slowed on Sunday as they went down 2-0 at home to Rennes, a result that allowed Marseille to close the gap on the leaders to seven points with 10 games remaining.

Kylian Mbappe had an effort disallowed for offside before Karl Toko-Ekambi put Rennes in front with a magnificent strike right on half-time.

Arnaud Kalimuendo made it 2-0 three minutes after the restart against his former club, as PSG — faced with a defensive injury crisis — slumped to a first home league defeat of the campaign.

It is the Parisians' fourth Ligue 1 loss this season, all of them in 2023, and the second time they have been beaten by Rennes. They also lost when the teams last met in Brittany in January. Marseille responded by winning 2-1 away to Reims later, with Alexis Sanchez scoring twice.

"A defeat is always upsetting. Obviously I can't be happy with the way the match went but in the context, with the number of players we had out, we knew we were going to have difficult moments in defence," said PSG coach Christophe Galtier.

PSG only have a ninth Ligue 1 title in 11 seasons left to play for after being knocked out of the Champions League in the last 16 by Bayern Munich.

Galtier has insisted that the prospect of what would be a French record 11th top-flight title is sufficient motivation for his team, but their performance indicated otherwise.

"The objective is to win the league. Will this defeat mean the board will consider my future? Maybe. But everything needs to be put into context," Galtier added when asked about his position. "There are no excuses but there are reasons for it."

The result allowed Rennes to reclaim fifth place from Lille in the fight for European qualification.

"To beat Paris twice in the same season says something about us. If we are capable of taking six points out of six against such a team, it means we have progress to make so we can do that in 90 percent of our matches," said Rennes coach Bruno Genesio.

Alcaraz routs Medvedev for Indian Wells title

AP ■ INDIAN WELLS

Spain's Carlos Alcaraz swept past Daniil Medvedev 6-3, 6-2 on Sunday to win the Indian Wells ATP Masters 1000 and secure his return to number one in the world.

US Open champion Alcaraz ended Medvedev's 19-match winning streak, denying him a fourth title in as many tournaments to ensure he will supplant Australian Open champion Novak Djokovic atop the rankings.

"It feels amazing to lift the trophy here, to recover the No. 1," Alcaraz said. "I would say this has been the perfect tournament."

Serbia's Djokovic, barred from entering the United States because he hasn't been vaccinated against Covid-19, sat out Indian Wells and will miss the Miami Open starting this week, where Alcaraz is the defending champion.

Alcaraz, 19, who became the youngest world number one ever after his triumph at Flushing Meadows last year, claimed his third Masters 1000 title and joined compatriot Rafael Nadal as the only players to win at least three as a teenager. Nadal won six before turning 20.

He was unstoppable on Stadium Court, breaking through what he'd called the "wall" of Medvedev's formidable defenses.

Medvedev, coming off titles in Rotterdam, Doha and Dubai, could find no answer as Alcaraz fired winners from all over the court, defying the windy conditions.

"Daniil obviously didn't play at his best level, but I'm very happy for my performance and how I played this tournament."

He said the big change in him since a semi-final defeat to Nadal last year at Indian Wells was his comfort level on the game's biggest stages.

"I think my tennis didn't improve so much since last year. What I improve a lot is to not take the pressure, just to play relaxed. That, for me, is the most important thing.

"That's why I show a great level, because I feel like I have no pressure. I enjoy."

Medvedev certainly wasn't able to ratchet up the pressure on him.

A stinging backhand winner gave Alcaraz an early break in the opening set as he raced to a 3-0 lead.

He gave himself a set point with a sharply angled forehand volley and sealed it with an unreturnable serve, then won the first 10 points of the second set on the way to a 4-0 lead.

He didn't face a break point as he polished it off in one hour and 11 minutes, a diving volley winner giving him match point that he converted with another service winner.

"I expected a tougher match," he said. "Against him is always a tactic match, and I did perfect today. That's why it looks easy — but it wasn't."

Alcaraz has returned to number one despite a late start to the year. Injury forced him to miss the Australian Open, where Djokovic claimed a record-equalling 22nd Grand Slam title.

Since launching his season in February Alcaraz has won a title in Buenos Aires and reached the final in Rio de Janeiro. But to stay at the top he'll have to successfully defend his Miami title over the course of the next two weeks.

Medvedev, a former world number one and US Open winner himself, was disappointed that he didn't play his best, but pleased to get past the fourth round at Indian Wells for the first time, despite twisting his ankle in a win over Alexander Zverev and cutting his thumb in another tumble against Alejandro Davidovich Fokina.

"Why didn't I play my best? I don't know. Maybe it was his ball. Maybe it was the wind, was pretty windy today, and for him it was easier to go through this wind, and that's normal.

"But the week was amazing," added Medvedev never a fan of the slow hard courts of Indian Wells.

"I had a pretty toxic relationship with the courts here," he said during the trophy ceremony as he reeled off a long list of those to thank.

RYBAKINA BEATS SABALENKA TO WIN WOMEN'S TITLE

AP ■ INDIAN WELLS

Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina edged Aryna Sabalenka 7-6 (13/11), 6-4 on Sunday to win the Indian Wells WTA title and avenge her loss to the Belarusian in the Australian Open final.

Kazakhstan's Rybakina, the world number 10 who ousted top-ranked defending champion Iga Swiatek in the semi-finals, followed up with her first victory over second-ranked Sabalenka in five career meetings.

Rybakina, projected to rise to seventh in the world, handed Sabalenka just her second defeat of the year, denying her a third title to go with a win in Adelaide that presaged her first Grand Slam triumph at Melbourne.

"It's actually the first time it goes my way," Rybakina said as she accepted the trophy, a smiling Sabalenka leaning to the microphone to interject, "I will make sure it was the last one."

"We'll see next time," Rybakina laughed.

Perez leads Red Bull sweep in Saudi Arabian GP

AP ■ JEDDAH

Red Bull's Sergio Perez flexed his street circuit muscles with dramatic effect on Sunday by storming to victory ahead of team-mate Max Verstappen at the Saudi Arabian Grand Prix.

While the top two were clear cut, the next two places remained in confusion long after the race had finished with Fernando Alonso first stripped of third place and then reinstated in the early hours of Monday morning.

Perez, a 33-year-old Mexican, came home 5.355 seconds clear of the defending double world champion as Red Bull reeled off a masterful one-two triumph, the Dutchman having stormed through the field from 15th on the grid.

Verstappen also clocked the fastest lap of the race on the final lap to retain his lead of the embryonic drivers' championship, snatching it back from Perez as they duelled at high speed.

It was Perez's fifth career win having previously triumphed in Monte Carlo and Singapore to earn his reputation as a 'street fighter'.

"It turned out to be tougher than expected," he said. "The safety car tried to take the victory from us again here, but not this year! The team did a great job. Now we must keep pushing." Verstappen was eliminated from qualifying after a driveshaft failure. "It wasn't easy to get through the field," he said. "We settled for second so it's a good recovery in the end."

Two-time world champion Alonso finished a stirring third on track for Aston Martin to claim a 100th podium finish on his record-extending 357th start.

That place was initially taken from him. He had received a five-second penalty for starting outside his grid position. When he tried to serve it during a pit stop, stewards ruled a jack had touched the car too soon and they hit Alonso with a 10-second penalty.

George Russell rose to third for Mercedes.

But Aston Martin requested a review and showed stewards videos of similar incidents that went unpunished. Stewards accepted that it was not clear the offence had broken Formula One rules and lifted the punishment. Alonso was back to third followed by the two Mercedes cars of Russell and Lewis Hamilton.

Next were the Ferraris of Carlos Sainz and Charles Leclerc, who started 12th. Esteban Ocon and his Alpine teammate Pierre Gasly occupied the next two places.

कार्यालय कलेक्टर, जिला इन्दौर (म.प्र.)

क्रमांक/542/अ.क.री./का.से./2023 इन्दौर, दिनांक 20.03.2023

:: विज्ञप्ति ::

मध्यप्रदेश पंचायत राज एवं ग्राम स्वराज अधिनियम 1993 (क्रमांक 1 सन् 1994) और उसके अधीन बनाए गए मध्यप्रदेश ग्राम पंचायत (कालोनियों का विकास) नियम 2014 के अधीन एतद् द्वारा ग्राम-सोलसिन्दा तहसील-सांवेर जिला-इन्दौर में आवासीय भूखण्डीय विकास प्रयोजन हेतु कालोनी विकसित करने की अनुज्ञा दी जाती है :-

अ क्र	कालोनाईजर का नाम व पता	स्थान जहां के लिये विकास अनुमति जारी की गई है	धरोहर के रूप में बंधक रखे गये भूखंडो का विवरण
1	2	3	4
1	मेसर्स के. एन. जी. इण्टरप्राईजेस तर्फे पार्टनर श्री निपुण गर्ग पिता श्री महेन्द्र कुमार गर्ग पता :- डी-27, अपटाउन, अपोलो डी.बी. सिटी, निपानिया, जिला-इन्दौर (म.प्र.) कालोनी का नाम **सांवरिया सिटी**	ग्राम-सोलसिन्दा तहसील-सांवेर जिला-इन्दौर स्थित भूमि खसरा नंबर 358/5/1 रकबा 0.373 हे., खसरा नंबर 358/6 रकबा 0.347 हे., खसरा नंबर 359/1/2 रकबा 0.253 हे., खसरा नंबर 359/6 रकबा 0.012 हे., खसरा नंबर 359/7 रकबा 0.259 हे., खसरा नंबर 359/8 रकबा 0.061 हे., खसरा नंबर 361/1/1 रकबा 0.253 हे. कुल किता 7 कुल रकबा 1.558 हे. भूमि पर।	बंधकनामा पंजीकरण क्रमांक एमपी179092022ए11132365 इन्दौर दिनांक 16.11.2022 एवं संशोधित बंधकनामा क्र. एमपी 79092023ए11532742 दिनांक 28.02.2023 से भूखण्ड क्रं. 48 से 50 तक (3 भूखण्ड), 62 से 68 तक (7 भूखण्ड), 73 से 75 तक (3 भूखण्ड) एवं 92 से 109 तक (18 भूखण्ड) इस प्रकार कुल 31 भूखण्ड जिनका कुल क्षेत्रफल 2592.93 वर्गमीटर भूमि है।

उपरोक्त कालम नंबर-4 में उल्लेखित 31 भूखंड इस कार्यालय में धरोहर के रूम में बंधक रखे गये है अत: सर्व साधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि उपरोक्त भूखंडो का क्रय, विक्रय आगामी आदेश तक नही किया जावेगा।

(सक्षम प्राधिकारी द्वारा अनुमोदित)

प्रभारी अधिकारी
कॉलोनी सेल, इन्दौर

नरेन्द्र मोदी
प्रधानमंत्री

शिवराज सिंह चौहान
मुख्यमंत्री, मध्यप्रदेश

भोपाल को गर्व है
अंतर्राष्ट्रीय आयोजन की मेजबानी पर

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ISSF

21-27 MARCH 2023

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मुख्य अतिथि

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मुख्यमंत्री, मध्यप्रदेश

गरिमामयी उपस्थिति

यशोधरा राजे सिंधिया
मंत्री, खेल और युवा कल्याण, तकनीकी शिक्षा, कौशल विकास एवं रोजगार विभाग, मध्यप्रदेश

एवं

लुचिआनो रॉसी
अध्यक्ष, इंटरनेशनल शूटिंग स्पोर्ट फेडरेशन (ISSF)

21 मार्च 2023 | सायं 5.30 बजे
कुशाभाऊ ठाकरे इंटरनेशनल कन्वेंशन सेंटर, भोपाल

30 देशों से अनेक उत्कृष्ट खिलाड़ी
शूटिंग इवेंट रोज़ प्रातः 9 से अपराह्न 3:30 बजे तक

प्रतियोगिता स्थल– मध्यप्रदेश राज्य शूटिंग अकादमी, गोरेगांव, भोपाल

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खेल और युवा कल्याण विभाग, मध्यप्रदेश

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