WORLD 5

4 KILLED WHILE COLLECTING

FREE FLOUR IN PAK

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# Even if jailed, will fight on: Rahul Nitu, Saweety world

Addressing his first Press conference after his disqualification from the Lok Sabha, a combative Rahul Gandhi on Saturday said he would continue to defend democracy in the country even if he is disqualified from Parliament for life or jailed and claimed that a "panic-stricken" Government has handed the Opposition a "big weapon" by disqualifying him.

Rahul claimed that the action against him was taken because Prime Minister Narendra Modi was "scared" of his next speech in Parliament on the Adani issue and alleged that the "whole game" is to distract people from the issue and the panic the Government is feeling over the matter.

Rahul was disqualified from the Lok Sabha on Friday, a day after a court in Gujarat's Surat convicted him in a 2019 defamation case.

The disqualification will bar Rahul (52), a four-time MP, from contesting polls for eight years unless a higher court stays his conviction

He said he would continue to ask questions on the Adani issue, adding the moot questions remain that who invested ₹20,000 crore in Adani shell firms and what is the businessman's relationship with the prime minister. He vowed he will keep raising these ques-

Asserting that "democracy has finished in this country", the former Congress chief claimed that he never sought foreign intervention in his remarks made in the UK and accused Union Ministers of against him in Parliament to which he said he wanted to respond but was not

He also said the BJP is trying to divert the issue by alleging that he had insulted OBCs and he would continue to ask what is Modi's relationship with businessman Gautam

"I am here defending the democratic voice of the Indian people, I will continue to do that. I am not scared of these



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi addresses a press conference at the AICC headquarters in New Delhi on Saturday

threats, of these disqualifications, allegations, prison sentences. I am not scared of them. These people don't understand me yet, I am not scared of them,' he said, attacking the BIP. ing the BJP.

"Disqualify me for life, put me inside jail, I will keep going. I will not stop," he said, noting that it makes no difference to him. "I have been disqualified because the Prime Minister is scared of my next speech. I have seen it in his eyes. So he is terrified of the next speech that is going to come and does not want that speech to be in Parliament," the former Congress chief alleged at the 30-minute Press conference, flanked by Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, Chhattisgarh CM Bhupesh Baghel and party general sec-retaries Jairam Ramesh and K C Venugopal.

He claimed that his attack on Adani was the reason for distraction through allegations and now disqualification. Rahul, when asked if he was worried. I am excited, I am happy that they have given me the best gift that they could give

# Legal recourse or paint Rahul as martyr? Cong mulls cash-in-on plan

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA

Several theories within the Congress are doing the rounds on how to "encash" the disqualification of Rahul Gandhi as Lok Sabha member in elections. While a section of the party think tank is of the opinion that let "Rahul be allowed to become a 'political martyr' and lead the 2024 Lok Sabha" another group has been contemplating to field Priyanka Gandhi from Wayanad which Rahul represented till Friday morning.

"Another theory working is to fight back legally and retain the Lok Sabha berth as it is, and statements or speech by BJP leaders and get cases registered at least in the Congress and its alliance State Governments,

said senior party leader and a member of the Rajya Sabha. Congress legal luminaries led by team like Abhishek

Manu Singhvi, P Chidambaram, Vivek Tankha, Pramod Tiwari, have done a few round of deliberations in the last 48 hours over the prospect to deal with the conviction ruling in Surat court in Gujarat. Sources said the Congress is also working to rope in their former party colleague and a legal eagle Kapil Sibal now in the Rajya Sabha backed by the Samajwadi Party.

Sibal took a swipe at two BJP Ministers for accusing Rahul of insulting OBCs with 2019, saying they were "insulting" people's intelligence by making such an "absurd alle-

# Rahul lies, defames PM: BJP

BIP spokesperson Ravishankar Prasad on Saturday alleged that the Congress did not press into service its battery of lawyers to immediately obtain a stay on Rahul Gandhi's conviction by a court in Surat with a view to portray the Congress leader as "martyr" and "encashing" the issue in the upcoming Assembly Karnataka.

Talking to reporters here soon after Rahul's Press consoon after Rahul's Press conference alleging that he has been targeted by the BJP to divert attention from the "Modi-Adani" row, Prasad accused the former Congress president of "lying" and "defaming" Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The BJP leader gave a list of projects which the business

of projects which the business tycoon Gautam Adani had signed in many countries, including in Australia and Indonesia, "when the Congress under Manohan Singh was in power at the Centre".

Reminding Rahul that he and his mother are on bail in the National Herald case, Prasad alleged that Rahul is trying to tarnish the fair name of the Prime Minister.

"Doesn't he

"Doesn't he teels ashamed?", the BJP said.
Prasad said Rahul has been accusing businessman Adani "without any proof". He was, though, also quick to add "we are not defending Adani".
He said Adani "has bagged Ps 65 000 crore projects in the

Rs 65,000 crore projects in the Congress-ruled Rajasthan and that of Rs 15,000 crore in West Bengal.".

become "frustrated" as "people are not voting for his party" "He is not respecting peoples mandate," said Prasad.

# 'I am not scared of threats, disqualifications, allegations, prison sentences' boxing champions

Nitu Ghanghas (48kg) and the seasoned Saweety Boora (81kg) etched their names in Indian boxing history as they were crowned world champions after notching contrasting wins at the marquee tournament here on Saturday.

Commonwealth Games gold medallist Nitu put up a stupendous performance to see off Mongolia's Lutsaikhan Altansetseg 5-0 and claim the title in the minimum weight category in front of a packed crowd, with Beijing Olympics bronze medallist and Nitu's idol Vijender Singh also present. Saweety made it two out

of two for the hosts as she warded off a challenge from two-time medallist China's Wang Lina. In the first bout, Nitu started off aggressively and used her combination of punches to land jabs and nooks effectively.

The 22-year-old Bhiwani boxer was able to take the first round 5-0. She began the second round with a series of straight jabs. When Altansetseg

attacked, the Indian south-paw countered with right hooks. The two boxers played from a close range and indulged in a lot of holding in a fast-paced bout with Nitu being given a penalty deduction for clinching towards the end of the

second round.

Despite Altansetseg's strong comeback in the round, Nitu managed to take it 3-2. In the final three minutes, Nitu started from afar but soon ditched the strategy and reverted to playing from a close range, as Altansetseg was also given a point deduction for clinch-

Nitu has been in indomitable form in the tournament, winning her first three bouts by RSC (referee stops contest).

Against Alua Balkibekova, who knocked her out in the last edition in the quarterfinal stage, she skilfully adapted to negate the Kazakh's strong suit.
"I had decided to play

aggressively today before the bout and I feel very happy (after the victory). I am proud of myself and my family and would like to thank my coaches, especially my head coach Bhaskar sir," Nitu said. "This medal means a

lot to me. I have worked for this for 12 years. My family's financial problems will be solved after this victory. We will use the prize money to pay off our loans," added Nitu, whose father took three years leave from work to support his daugh-Fighting the last bout of

the day, Saweety, the 2014 silver medallist, was able to change the colour of her medal.

World Championships, in New Delhi on Saturday





Saweety Boora celebrates her win over China's Wang Lina during the final match in 81 kg category at the 2023 IBA Women's Boxing World Championships, in New Delhi on Saturday. (Bottom) India's Nitu Ghanghas poses with Gold medal during award Mongolia's Lutsaikhan Altansetseg in 48 kg category at the 2023 IBA Women's Boxing

# FM reviews PSBs' financial health amid US banking failure

### Asks bankers to be vigilant of rate risks

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $F_{ ext{Sitharaman on Saturday}}^{ ext{inance Minister Nirmala}}$ reviewed the performance of public sector banks (PSBs) on various financial health parameters and their resilience in the wake of the current global financial scenario emanating from the failure of

international banks in the US and Europe. She urged the banks to

remain vigilant about the interest rate risks and regularly undertake stress tests. During the two hours

meeting with MDs and CEOs of PSBs, an open discussion was held on the global scenario amid the failure of the Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) and Signature Bank (SB),



along with the issues leading to the crisis in Credit Suisse.

The meeting was also attended by Minister of State for Finance Bhagwat Karad, Financial Services Secretary Vivek Joshi and other senior officials, an official statement said. She also discussed the developing and immediate external global financial stress from both short and longterm perspectives.

During the PSB review meeting, she emphasised that the banks should undertake due diligence and adhere to the regulatory framework by focusing on risk management and diversification of deposits and assets base

# CAPSULE

23 PEOPLE KILLED BY US MISSISSIPPI TORNADOES Rolling Fork (US): Emergency

officials in Mississippi said 23 people have been killed by tornadoes that tore through the state on Friday night, destroying buildings and knocking out power as severe weather that roduced hail the size of gol balls moved through several southern states. The Mississippi **Emergency Management** Agency confirmed 23 deaths with dozens of injuries and four people missing.

ADVISORY ON INFLUENZA RESPIRATORY ILLNESS New Delhi: Amid rising cases of

Covid-19 across the country, the Centre on Saturday issued a joint advisory underlining to keep a close watch on the evolving causes of diseases such as Influenza Like Illness (ILI) and Severe Acute Respiratory Illness (SARI)

1 KILLED, 4 INJURED IN J&K FACTORY BLAST

Samba(Jammu): A person was killed and four others were injured in a blast that took place in a scrap factory in Jammu and Kashmir's Samba district on Saturday, official sources said The factory was located in the Baribrahamana area, they said Those injured have been hospitalised

# Cong sees K'taka as ATM to fill its leaders coffers: Modi said it looks at Karnataka as an

PTI CHIKKABALLAPURA/ DAVANGERE/BENGALURU

In poll-bound Karnataka, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday made a strong pitch for the return of the ruling BJP, and lashed out at politics of manipulation and addressed a public rally at Davanagere after getting yet another rousing reception in his seventh visit to the

The PM wrapped up a busy day of public engagements that also included a tribute to the legendary Mokshagundam Visvesvaraya

and a Metro rail ride on a new route that Modi inaugurated. In yet another stinging attack on the Congress, he "ATM" to fill the coffers of its Seeking a resounding man-

date for a successive stint for the BJP in Karnataka, Modi said a stable government led by the saffron party was the need of the hour for the State's fast paced development

Stressing that Karnataka should be brought out of the "politics of manipulation", he said BJP wants to make the State a driving force of developed India, while the Congress looks at it as "an ATM that fills the treasury of its leaders".

This visit of the Prime Minister — his seventh to Karnataka this year — gains stable government is need significance as the Election Commission is expected to Davangere headquarters.

announce the poll schedule for Assembly elections, due by May, in the next few days. On Saturday, the PM also

inaugurated Sri Madhusudan Sai Institute of Medical Sciences and Research in Chikkaballapura district, and Whitefield (Kadugodi) to Krishnarajapura Metro Line of Bangalore Metro in Bengaluru. He took a Metro ride after buying a ticket. "Karnataka has seen a long

period of opportunistic and selfish coalition governments, Karnataka has faced losses due to such governments So, for the fast paced development of Karnataka, BJP's full majority, stable government is needed," Modi tol a mega rally in

# **Land-for-jobs: CBI quizzes** Tejashwi, ED grills Misa

PNS NEW DELHI

nvestigation agencies on Saturday questioned Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav and his MP sister Misa Bharti in connection with the railways land-for-jobs case here, officials said.

While Tejashwi was quizzed by the CBI for more than eight hours, the ED questioned Bharti for over six hours, they said.

Slamming the BJP over the questioning of the two RJD leaders, Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra alleged the ruling party wants to finish off the

Opposition and expressed solidarity saying, "We are all unit-ed against the attack on democ-



RJD eader Misa Bharti arrives at the ED office for questioning in connection

# Indian-Americans march against Khalistani vandals

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE / AGENCIES NEW DELHI SAN FRANCISCO

Putting up a show of solidarity against Khalistan extremists, several Indian Americans carried a support march and waved the tri-colour. The march late on Friday was undertaken to condemn the attack on the Indian consulate in San Francisco. The alleged Khalistani supporters had vandalised the consulate last Sunday.

Regretting the violence, many Indian-American community members attended the support march outside its consulate in San Francisco for



movement A huge crowd of Indian

Americans turned up for the peace rally. Criticising the destructive elements of Sikh separatism, the Indian-American community chanted "Vande Mataram" and other slogans while dancing and holding the US flag along with tricolour. Local police ensured there were no incidents of violence as few

also in the crowd chanting separatist slogans. On Sunday last, Khalistani

sympathisers vandalised the consulate building and installed flags in support of the separatist movement, which were later removed by the consulate staff. The incident evoked sharp reactions from the NRIs who called for strict action against the guilty.

The Indian diaspora in London, too, had registered a strong protest against the pulling down of tri colour by the Khalistan supporters at the Indian High Commission in UK by gathering outside the office demanding strict action Khalistani supporters were on Tuesday.

### **Usha, Mithali, Rawat's** daughter to witness **Agniveers' passout** PNS NEW DELHI of close to 2,600 Agniveers including 273 women. In

Queen of Indian track and field PT Usha, former Indian women team captain Mithali Raj and daughters of late General Bipin Rawat, the first Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) will be present on the historic day on March 28 when the first ever batch of Agniveers pass out from Navy's training institute INS Chilka.

As first reported in *The Pioneer* on Friday, the Passing Out Parade (POP) of the first batch of Agniveers is scheduled at INS Chilka on March

The POP marks the successful completion of training

another first, the parade will take place post sunset unlike in the morning as done earlier. Navy chief Admiral Hari Kumar will be the chief guest

and the Reviewing Officer of the Passing out Parade, navy officials said here on Saturday The successful trainees would be deployed on frontline warships for their sea training. The Agnipath recruitment

scheme to transform the armed forces to fight modern day war was launched on June 14 last year. The Navy selected 2,600 Agniveers and their training commenced in November last year.

# **Union Home Minister Amit Shah woos voters in Chhindwara**

**STAFF REPORTER** ■ BHOPAL

nion Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday slammed the Congress for its treatment of tribals and the downtrodden and said only the Bharatiya Janata Party can provide security and prosperity to the country and also ensure welfare of the poor.

Speaking at a gathering in Chhindwara, the bastion of Madhya Pradesh Congress chief Kamal Nath for almost 50 years now, Shah asked people to vote overwhelmingly for the BJP in the Assembly polls to be held in the state later this year and the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

Training his guns on Nath, the Union minister said the former did nothing for the people of the state when he was

chief minister between December 2018 and March 2020 but "indulged in corrup-

"Previous Congress governments did not care for the tribals, the poor and those from the Other Backward Classes. Only the BJP can provide security, prosperity and ensure welfare of the poor. Prime Minister Narendra Modi cares for the respect of tribals, whom the Congress has

neglected for years," Shah said.
"A woman from a poor tribal family, Droupadi Murmu, is now the honourable President of India after 75 years (of Independence) due to the efforts of PM Modi," he

The PM had also announced nationwide celebration of legendary tribal leader Birsa Munda's birth NDA rule), the Union gov-

anniversary on November 15 last year as 'Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas', the Union Home

Minister said. "The Congress has always talked about the downtrodden but did nothing for them. PM Modi gave constitutional status to the OBC Commission after coming to power in 2014 and laid the foundation for their respect. Only the BJP has cared for the respect of tribals and OBCs," Shah asserted.

After the formation of the NDA government in 2014, PM Modi said the BJP's regime was that of the poor, the downtrodden, Dalits, tribals and OBCs, while the Congress, which gave the slogan of 'garibi hatao', (eradicate poverty) did nothing for them, Shah

"In the last nine years (of

ernment has worked to trans-Shah alleged several crore form the lives of 80 crore rupees were paid in advance poor people. Bank accounts without following laid down had been opened for 60 crore procedures in a dam concitizens, 13 crore persons got struction work in which names gas cylinders and 10 crore of people close to the Congress families saw toilets getting leader cropped up. built in their homes. Three "He had promised to give crore people got their own houses. More than 60 crore

allowance to unemployed (youth) during the last Assembly polls but no one got it. Instead, he abandoned the welfare schemes launched by Shivraj Singh Chouhan," said Shah, who listed many "unfulfilled promises" of Nath. Shah said the BJP govern-

of Rs 5 lakh," Shah said.

"PM Modi got 130 crore people vaccinated for free to protect them from coronment had made a budgetary allocation of Rs 34,000 crore for Chhindwara and spoke of multi-crore central projects sanctioned for the region. Some 35-40 per cent of people from the Chhindwara region are from the tribal communi-



Union Home Minister Amit Shah with students during his visit to a school in naxal hit area at Potkapalli Forwarding Operating

# Health Society in Gwalior leads to over all development

**PNS** GWALIOR

octors, officers, journalists and social workers came together on World TB Day to take a pledge to eradicate TB from the country.

On the occasion of World Tuberculosis Day, Family Planning Association of India, Aapki Apni Awaaz Sanstha and International Center of Media Excellence (ICOM) organized a public awareness program in the auditorium of Cancer Hospital

today.

GRMC Dean Dr. Akshay
Nigam, ICOME Director Dr. Keshav Pandey, TB Campaign Nodal Officer Prabal Pratap Singh, IMA President Dr. Rahul Sapra, FPAI Branch Manager Dr. Neelam Dixit, Cancer Hospital Director Dr. BR Srivastava, Director of Goonj Dr. JS Sikarwar and Additional SP Rajesh Dandoutia were the speakers during the program.

Dr. Gunjan Srivastava pre-



sented a presentation about TB disease, its various symptoms and remedies of it. TB and Chest specialist Dr Rishi K Mangal said that according to WHO, TB is one of the deadliest killer diseases

in the world right now. Every day 4100 people lose their lives from TB. He added that while it is true that about thirty thousand people fall in its to panic as the disease can be prevented and cured through proper treatment.

Senior journalist Dr. Pandey said that the special purpose of celebrating TB Day is to tell people about TB and also inform them about the impact of TB on their health, society and the country's economy. Pandey added that the campaign will be grip every day, there is no need meaningful only if it is brought

to the ground level by involving everybody. He also said that only a healthy society can pave the way for a developed nation.

people are reaping the benefits of Ayushman Bharat health

scheme, which has a coverage

avirus. Modiji has ensured the

poor get five kilograms of

rations free every month at

their doorsteps," he added. Attacking Nath, the Union

Home minister said, "Instead

of doing something new (dur-

ing his tenure as CM), Kamal

Nath indulged in corruption."

Additional SP Shri Dandautia said that any disease can be avoided by awareness. He added that proper awareness, especially among the economically weaker section is the need of the hour.

Director of Cancer Hospital, Dr. Srivastava said that TB is a serious infectious disease which first affects the lungs. The bacteria that causes tuberculosis can spread through the air through coughs and sneezes and infect other people as well. In such a situation, it becomes necessary that this disease should be stopped by making people aware about it.

The program was coordinated by RJ Kalpana while the vote of thanks was expressed by Akshendra Kushwaha of FPAI. Harish Pal of Good patient Care was the chief organiser of the

# SISTech organises annual cultural fest

**STAFF REPORTER** BHOPAL

agar Institute of Science and Technology, Gandhi Nagar organized its twoday Annual Techno Cultural Fest - Sagar Fiesta with great fervor at its campus. The two fest witnessed a series of tech - cultural events and competitions showcasing rich talent of SISTecian's.

Sagar Fiesta witnessed the presence of over 1500 + students at its campus participating in grand tech competitions of clash of codies, battleground mobile mayhem, quiz competition civiq, aakar, electro spark, electro buzz, the tech act, robo race, best from waste - junkyard, business and startup ideas sharkk tankk, treasure hunt the rummage, rubik cube competition abhikalp and many more. The cultural fiesta comptitions attracted students on Sagar Sahitya, samwaad - the all-political the audience.

party meet, singing competition at Ninaad, Dance-pe-Chance, the choreographed Ojas along with the distinct event on Calligraphy Workshop by Shubha Madvaiya, Freelance Artist and Art Educator, Art fusion connecting all socially with Nukkad Natak spreading the message of Water Conservation and highlighting Women@G20. The main attraction of Sagar Fiesta was the Vionnet the fashion show in which students participated in ramp walking redefining the colors in attractive attires. The vionnet theme was expressions with color in which students in colorful traditional, Ethnic, Western, Indo-Western, Greek, Egyptian, Tribal art etc. attire in different colors indicated various messages of women empowerment, friendship, peace, love, happiness, sustainability etc. to

Sagar Fiesta witnessed the presence of Shri Sudhir Kumar Agrawal Founder Chairman Sagar Group inaugurating the event with 56 felicitating the students. Addressing the gathering he guided students to remain focused on whatever they do and to have a never give up attitude to rise in life. The delicious and sumptuous food brought down the rising temperature of the annual fest. The fest concluded with an award distribution ceremony to all the winners of the competitions with Akhlesh Chaudhury of the Electronics Engineering Branch bagging the Student-of-the-Year

Shri Siddharth Sudhir Agrawal, Managing Director, Sagar Group, said that "Congratulations to the entire team of SISTec for the successful execution of Sagar Fiesta - Annual Techno Cultural Fest.

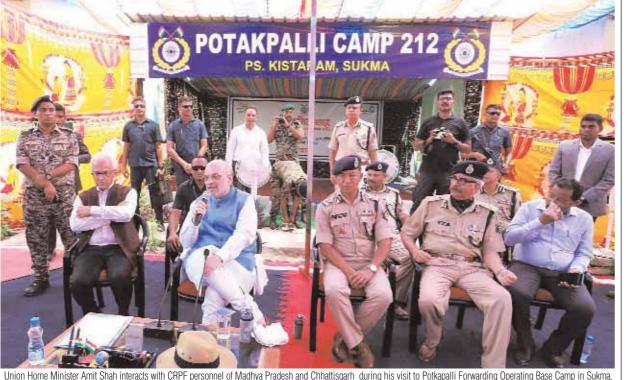
CM plants saplings of Peepal, Guava

**STAFF REPORTER** ■ BHOPAL

hief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan plant-✓ed saplings of peepal, guava and jamun in the garden located at Shyamala Hills. The organizer of Swarna Kranti Malvi Kalyan Samiti, Bhopal, P.L. Soni, besides Pramod Soni, Lachhiram Soni, Rajesh Soni, Babulal Soni, Anil Soni, Surendra Soni, Lakhan Lal Soni, Swati Soni, Neha Soni

and Varnika Soni participated in the plantation.

Along with Chief
Minister Chouhan, Sanatan Dagdi, Vimal, Deepak, Imran Khan and Umesh Yadav of television channel Khabar Madhya Pradesh also planted saplings. Abhay Sharma and Jitendra Sharma of television channel News State MP-CG planted saplings on completion of 5 years of the channel.



# Children Park beautification campaign launched

**STAFF REPORTER** BHOPAL

eeping in view the convenience of the residents of BHEL Industrial Township and the people living in the surrounding area, Vinay Nigam, Executive Director, BHEL, Bhopal and Jhansi inaugurated the beautification cam-paign of Children Park, paign of Children rains, Barkheda in a program held today at the park. On this occasion, Navita Nigam, President, BHEL Ladies Club, along with other office bearers of the club, Avinash (HR & Logistics) and other General Managers, employees, representatives of various trade unions and residents of township were present.

The park located in BHEL Industrial Township has been a center of attraction among the residents, the citizens of Bhopal and the chil-



flower plants, Gulmohar trees, statues of various legends of India, Sumo wrestler statue for children, Laxman Jhula, artificial lake and most of all children's chhuk-chhuk car i.e. mini train in the park has been enticing not only for children but also for adults. In the past years, due to

movement of children and people in this park was negligible resulting in the famous park and playground in Bhopal being deprived of the commotion of children and tourists. BHEL Management and Executive Director has decided to revive this impor-

of children and tourists along with its beautification and restoration of children's entertainment facilities, so that the children can again enjoy during the coming summer vacations.

Keeping this in mind, Vinay Nigam inaugurated the mini train for children along with the formal inauguration of this garden today. Children and tourists welcomed it with open arms and

The total length of the track is about 1 km and the train has a total seating capacity of 24 children. The fare per child for traveling in this train is Rs 20 only. During this time the children and tourists welcomed it with open heart and enjoyed the

## A BSc student girl allegedly raped by her Insta friend

**Chetan had** 

himself as a

businessman.

talking on the

phone and later

**Both started** 

developed a

relationship

tion has been started.

The police suspect that the details on the ID made

over Instagram was fake

and other details shared by

the accused with the victim

was also fake. The mobile

number used by the

accused could help in track-

ing the accused.

the phone.

described

**STAFF REPORTER** ■ BHOPAL

shoka Garden police have booked a youth who sexually assaulted and exploited a BSC student in Ashoka Garden area; the accused is vet to be arrested.

According to police a 21-year-old girl originally from Sehore is pursuing B.Sc from Bhopal. She lives in the Ashoka Garden area with a rented room. About two years ago, she had befriended an ID made on Instagram by the name Chetan Sharma.

Chetan had described himself as a businessman. Both started talking on the phone and later developed a relationship. On October 20, the accused was staying at Leela Hotel Ashoka Garden area. He called the girl student to meet.

After some time the student reached the hotel, the accused found her alone and raped her. On protesting, she was silenced by promising to get married

After this he met the girl several times and continued to sexually exploit CM pays tributes to Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi

**STAFF REPORTER** ■ BHOPAL

hief Minister Shivra Singh Chouhan paid dtributes to freedom fighter and doyen of Indian journalism, respected Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi on his death anniversary. Chief Minister Chouhan offered garlands on his portrait in the auditorium located at the residence office and paid obei-

her. Recently the girl called him and asked him to Reverend Ganesh Shankar 'Vidyarthi' was born marry her. On this the on 26 October 1890 in accused refused and start-Allahabad. He was a fearlessed abusing the student on fair journalist, social worker and freedom fighter. His name The student reached the is immortal in the history of

police station and lodged a the freedom movement. case against the accused. Vidyarthi ji gave sleepless The girl student does not nights to the British rule in even know from which India with the power of his writing. With his pen and place the accused is a resispeech, he supported and secdent. In such a situation, the onded non-violent ideas and arrest of the accused could not be done and investigarevolutionaries alike.

In his short life, he raised his voice against the inhuman system. He joined revolutionary newspapers like 'Karmayogi' and 'Swarajya'and also wrote his articles in them. He was the editor of 'Pratap'. He had to suffer a lot due to his revolutionary journalism.

# Street dog brutally beaten, pet lovers report to Kolar police

**STAFF REPORTER** ■ BHOPAL

A case of brutally beating a street dog (stray dog) was reported by pet lover with Kotwali police after two men thrashed street dogs with sticks and kicks.

Due to the beating the dog's back broke after which pet lovers have complained to the police station after the video surfaced of the beating. A demand has been made to register an FIR against the

Pet lover Kavita Bhavnani has complained in Kotwali police station. Kavita told the police that on the evening of March 24, a video came on her mobile. In which the street dog was mercilessly thrashed. When she went to the spot with his companions, it was found that the dog's back was broken after being kicked and it was badly injured.

Jabran Khan's men beat up the dog. After investigation, strict action should be taken against the guilty. Kavita is associated with Pet Lovers organization.

**Due to the** beating the dog's back broke after which pet lovers have complained to the police station after the video surfaced of the beating

Many pet lovers including Srivastava, Dushyant, Paras were also with them during the com-

The video of beating of street dogs has come to the fore, which is being told near Iqbal Maidan at 10.22 pm on March 23. This video was captured in the CCTV camera installed in a nearby shop. In this, a young man with a cloth wrapped around his face beats the dog with kicks. He fell while hitting. Apart from this, another young man is seen running after

the dog with a stick.

# Excise Commissioner visits Indore flying squad

tant and attractive garden



**STAFF REPORTER** BHOPAL

¬he excise commissioner of MP OP Shrivastava visited Indore Divisional flying squad office on saturday and reviewed the preparation and disposal of liquor shops in Indore and ujjain division. DCE Indore Division Mukesh Nema DCE Ujjain Division Sanjay Tiwari and ACE Indore Manish Khare were also

Excise commissioner O P Shrivastava also met with the liquor contractors and listened to thier problems. Later he visited the foreign liquor warehouse at Nemawar road and country made liquor warehouse at lasudia area.

When The Pioneer brought in his knowledge about the information received from the public about the liquor smuggling being going on from GGL and J K distilleries without permit in trucks from pithampur Dhar and going to Dhar Jhabua and Alirajpur district the excise commissioner OP Shrivastava said he will get it checked and also the junior officer of ADEO rank Devesh Chaturvedi is Posted as DEO since 5 years of GGL distilleries while the senior officers of DEO level are not given chance.

Although every possible care and caution has been taken to avoid errors or omissions, this publication is being sold on the condition and understanding that information given in this publication is merely for reference and must not be taken as having authority of or binding in any way on the writers, editors, publishers, and printers and sellers who do not owe any responsibility for any damage or loss to any person, a purchaser of this publication or not for the result of any action taken on the basis of this work. All disputes are advised and requested to verify and seek appropriate advice to satisfy themselves about the veracity of any kind of advertisement before responding to any contents published in this newspaper. The printer, publisher, editor and any employee of the Pioneer Group's will not be held responsible for any kind of claim made by the advertisers of the products & services and shall not be made responsible for any kind of loss, consequences and further product-related damages on such advertisements

Printed and published by Syed Naved Alam on behalf of CMYK Printech Limited and Printed at "SHRI BALAJI PRINTERS" Plot No.137,138,139 Sector I Special Industrial Area Govindpura Bhopal - 462023, (M.P.) and published at 152 Saif Complex - 2nd Floor, M.P. Nagar, Zone 1, Bhopal-462011 (M.P.), Telephone: 0755-2550977, Mob.: 09893130364.
Officiating Executive Editor: Vijay Prakash Singh, RNI Regn. No. MPENG/2004/13703, Regd. No. L-2/BPLON/41/2006-2008, AIR SURCHARGE of Re. 1.00 East: Calcutta, Ranchi, Bhubaneswar, North Leh West: Mumbai & Ahmedabad South: Bangalore & Chennai. Central: Khajuraho, Delhi Office: 100k Milap Bhawan, 8/A Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi-110 002, Phone: 011-40110455, Communication Office: F-31, Sector 6, NOIDA, Gautam Budh Nagar-201301, U.P. Phone: 0120-4879900, Mumbai Office: Devendra Adhikari Mobile No.: 09867575933, 09892829259, Lucknow Office: 4th Floor, Sahara Shopping Centre, Faizabad Road, Lucknow 226 016. Telephones: 0522-2346443,

### BHOPAL | SUNDAY | MARCH 26, 2023

# It is necessary to progress with tolerance for society: Guv

**STAFF REPORTER** ■ BHOPAL

overnor Mangubhai Patel has said that the Jean Patel has said the youth should progress with tolerance along with career building. Along with their career, they should also develop the society. Use your education for your own progress as well as for the progress of the society and the country.

Governor Patel said that the scope and responsibility of the youth should be much wider than career, because the main aim of education is to become a better human being. The Governor said that being big in life is a good thing, but being good is even bigger. Governor Patel was addressing the convocation ceremony of Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya in Indore today.

happy by participating in the convocation ceremony of the university. This convocation ceremony is a joyous occasion for all the students, teachers and family members. It is a matter of great pride for us that this university is named after Lokmata Devi Ahilya Bai Holkar, who attained divinity by sacrificing everything for the welfare of the people. I remember and bow pay homage to her.

The Governor congratulated all the students who received the degrees, gold and silver medals and also wished the students a bright future.

Governor Patel said that the number of girls among the recipients of research, degrees and medals is more than boys is a reflection of the developed and inclusive New India under the leadership of Prime

Minister Narendra Modi. It is a matter of happiness and pride for all. In the National Education Policy, Prime Minister Modi has given students the opportunity to touch the eternal heights of success with enthusiasm by giving them the opportunity of education free from any restriction.

The Governor said that the

students should dream big for building a new India and a new world. He said that universities should become centres of thought for resolving the present problems and future challenges of the world community. He said that due to today's consumerist concept of development and civilization, the challenges of pollution, climate change and life style diseases are taking a more formidable form. Students and teachers should be alert, active and present solutions for many problems and challenges before the human society like war, unrest, terrorism, insecurity of women and inequality. Governor Patel said that our country is a country that adopts new and deep thoughts, where the thoughts of the oldest Vedas and Upanishads, Lord Mahavir and Buddha are still alive. That is why even today, from Silicon Valley to Sydney and even in modern work areas, Indians have made a respectable place all over the world. Youths should respect and welcome different languages and cultures, but always stay connected to their roots. Because, staying connected with your roots is the lifeline of the future, it gives creativity.

Chairman of All India Council for Technical Education T.G. Sitaram said

that research and exploration are very important in today's era and the universities of the country are paying special attention in this direction. He called upon the youth to pay special attention to research and exploration in their education. He said that it is a great pleasure to participate in the convocation ceremony of the country's prestigious Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya. This university is constantly making new achievements in the academic

Member of Parliament Shankar Lalwani said that in the coming times, India will once again attain the status of world guru. Youth will play an important role in making India a world leader again. The Vice Chancellor of Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya Renu Jain gave the welcome address.



60-year-old man hit by speeding train, dies at Habibganj crossing **STAFF REPORTER** ■ BHOPAL Ramesh used to

60-year-old man A died after being hit by speeding train at Habibganj railway crossing on Friday; man committed suicide or it was an accident is under investigation.

The deceased identified as Ramesh Chandra Verma was found dead at railway tracks and on the receipt a police team reached the spot and started investiga-

Ramesh used to work as a house contractor and left home in search of work in the afternoon, said the fam-

After the preliminary investigation the body was sent for the post mortem and the police have registered a case under section 174 of the CrPC and have started further investiga-

The circumstantial evidences suggests that the deceased died accidentally but to ascertain it at the moment is not possible and could be confirmed after receiving the post mortem Jabalpur: Cattle rearers were

work as a house contractor and left home in search of work in the afternoon. said the family

Meanwhile, a 46-yearold man who was injured after his bike was hit by a truck died on Friday at Eithkhedi; two others were also injured and escaped the accident. According to the police

Guddu Kushawaha along with his two friends were injured after their bike was hit at Eithkhedi. The two friends took

Guddu to house in an injured state from where he was taken to JP hospital and later referred to Hamidia hospital where he died during treatment.

After the preliminary investigation the body was sent for the post mortem and the police have registered a case under section 304 A of the CrPC and have started further investigatheir self-help groups.

Address of the

Borrower/Guarantor

/Proprietor/Mortgagor

Cattle, live stock distributed

provided with 30 goats and 3 goats of advanced breed, 30 cattle breeders of Lavas along with 20 cattle breeders, fish seeds of Rohu, Katla and Mrigal species were distributed. On March 24, 2023, accord-

ing to the objectives of Vice-Chancellor Prof. (Col) Sita Prasad Tiwari of Nanaji Deshmukh Veterinary Science University, Jabalpur, 4 villages Bijegaon, Khamaria, Surangwahi have been adopted under the project in Narayanganj tehsil of Mandla district today.

Vice-Chancellor Tiwari, who

is presiding over this program, said cattle rearers that by doubling their income through integrated farming system, cattle rearers will move towards selfreliance, along with income like fisheries along with animal husbandry. Emphasized the point of encouraging small enterprise development for women beneficiaries of Scheduled Tribes through medium.

Director Education, Nanaji Deshmukh Veterinary Science University, Dr. Sunil Nayak, present in the program, gave information to the cattle rearers about the balanced management of animal feed and animal nutrition, as well as told how women can earn income throughout the year through

Lawayers' strike continues in the State

**STAFF REPORTER** ■ BHOPAL

¬he ongoing lawyers' strike continues across the state. Today there will be a general convention of Advocates' Associations at the District Advocate's Association office in Bhopal. Presidents and office bearers of advocates associations of 32 districts of the state participated in it. Meanwhile, the President

of Bhopal District Bar Association said that the strike will continue till the order issued by the High Court on January 5 is withdrawn. A delegation of the State Bar Council has met the judges of the Supreme Court on Saturday. However, no decision has

yet been given by the delegation regarding the strike. PC Kothari warned that if the demands are not met, the lawyers will march to Jabalpur.

On Friday, the High Court, taking suo motu cognizance of the statewide strike by the advocates, ordered them to return to work immediately. The double bench of Chief Justice Ravi Malimath and Justice Vishal Mishra made it clear in the order that if the order is not followed, this attitude will be considered

On Friday, the **High Court,** taking suo motu cognizance of the statewide strike by the advocates, ordered them to return to work **immediately** 

disobedient, along with contempt action will be taken against the advocates. The High Court said that we are extremely shocked, worried and saddened by the kind of things that have come to the After the order of the

High Court came to the fore, President of Bhopal District Bar Association, Dr. PC Kothari issued a message to the lawyers of Bhopal saying that I request all of you not to be confused-frightened by any kind of administrative letter or any order. Be Being the Bhopal District Bar President, am standing with eight thousand lawyers. If such a situation arises then I am ready to go to jail. Will abstain from work on Saturday also. There will be a general meeting on Monday, a decision will

Date of

Notice

Possession

Outstanding

demand notice

and Fifty Five only

+ interest

and other

expenses

Authorised Officer, Indian Bank

as on the

Date of

# इंडियन बैंक 🛝 🤽 Indian Bank

Branch

Name

Zonal office: Jai Stambh Chowk, Satna Ph. 07672-414418, 414406

APPENDIX IV [Rule-8(1)] POSSESSION-NOTICE (For Immovable Properties)

Date of

Where As, the undersigned being Authorized Officer of the Indian bank under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under 13 (12) read with Rule 8 and 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, the Authorized Officer issued a demand notice on the dates noted against each account as mention hereinafter, calling upon them to repay the amount within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The Borrowers/Guarantor having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given the Borrowers/Guarantor and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property/ies described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13 (4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 & 9 of the said Rules on the dates mentioned against each account. The Borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the Property/ies and any dealing with the property/ies will be subject to the charge of Indian Bank for the amounts and Interest thereon mentioned against each account herein below: -

Description of the Immovable

Property and Boundaries

	. 101 (50.50)				demand notice
Sidhi Branch	Borrower - M/s Rajpoot Agency  1. (Prop./Mortgagor) Shri Vinod Singh S/o Shri Surya Narayan Singh  2.Guarantor/Mortgagor Smt. Jyotima Singh W/o Shri Vinod Singh  3. Shri Surya Narayan Singh S/o Late Lavsharan Singh  4. Smt Janki Singh W/o Shri Surya Narayan Singh S/o Late Lavsharan Singh  4. Smt Janki Singh W/o Shri Surya Narayan Singh All residing at Priyadarshini Nagar Housing Board Colony Jamodi Sidhi-486661	(Registered Lease Deed No 1300 Dated 14.08.2012, Additional Book A-1, Volume 3263 at Page 181 to 188 executed amount M P Housing Board Bhopal and Janki Singh)  Bounded as under - North: HIG Plot No 403, South: HIG Plot No 405, East: Private Land, West: Road  2. Property Owner - Shri Surya Narayan Singh S/o Late Lavsharan Singh  EM of residential Plot No 405 Area 1985.20 Sqft, Situated over Mauza- Jamodi, Priyadarshini Nagar Sidhi.  (Registered Lease Deed No 2572 Dated 18.01.2013 Additional Book No A-1 Volume 3320 Pages 86 to 92 executed among MP Housing Board Bhopal and Surya Narayan Singh)  Bounded as under - North: HIG Plot No 404, South: HIG	22.12.2022	22.03.2023	Rs. 97,98,045/- (Rupees Ninty Seven Lakh Ninty Eight Thousand and Forty Five only + interest and other expenses
		EM of Residential Plot Situated at Arazi No 457/6, Area 5760 Sqft, Village- Karodiya Dakshin Tola, PHN 29, Tehsil-Gopad Banas.  (Registered Sale Deed No 456 Dated 27.05.1999 Additional Book No A-1 Volume 1834 Pages 81 to 83)  Bounded as under - North :- Land of Vendor then Govt, South :- Plot No Bghola, East :- Plot of Mukteshwar Singh, West:-way 10 ft  4. Property Owner - Smt Jyotima Singh W/o Shri Vinod Singh EM of Residential Plot No 206 and Construction thereon, Area 144 Sqmtr Situated at Mauza- Jamodi Priyadarshini Nagar Sidhi.  (Registered Sale Deed No 1943 Dated 13.12.2004 Additional Book No A-1 Volume 2427 Pages 85 to 90)  Bounded as under - North :- MIG Plot No 205, South :- MIG Plot No 207, East :- Road, West :- MIG House Under Construction  5. Property Owner - Shri Vinod Singh S/o Shri Surya Narayan Singh EM of Residential Plot No 207 and Construction thereon Area 144 Sq.mtr. Situated at Mauza - Jamodi Priyadarshini Nagar Sidhi.  (Registered Sale Deed No 1942 Dated 13.12.2004 Additional Book No A-1 Volume 2427 Pages 79 to 84)  Bounded as under - North :- MIG Plot No 206, South :- MIG Plot No 208, East :- Road, West :- MIG House Under Construction			
	Rice Mill (Prop Shri	1. Property Owner - M/s Shri Sai Rice Mill (PropShri Saurabh Verma S/o Shri Ramesh Verma All that part and parcel of land and building ground floor Situated at Arazi Khasra — 166, Area - 0.080 Hect (8720 Sqft) at Village- Dhankhori, PH-Dhankhori, RIC-Gandhigram, Tehsil-Gopad Banas, District-Sidhi, Madhya Pradesh.	07.01.2023	22.03.2023	Rs. 29,74,555/- (Rupees Twenty Nine Lakh Seventy Four Thousand and Five Hundred

(Registered Sale Deed No MP418412018A1592741 dated

Bounded as under - North: Plot of Ramesh Pandey, South

Land of Vanshmani Prasad & Satte Prashad, East-PMGSY Road, West: Land of Ram Pati Sharma



# Shivraj attacks Cong leader Rahul Gandhi over his disqualification

**STAFF REPORTER** BHOPAL

fter Congress leader Rahul Gandhi was disqualified Parliament in a defamation case, the issue has heated up the political circles across the country. Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has made a big attack on Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on this issue.

Chouhan said on Saturday that today the problem of the country is the Congress and the problem of the Congress is

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan was talking to the media in the regular press briefing on Saturday. Chauhan has also tweeted in this regard. Chouhan said that today the Congress people are sitting with their mouths locked. Rahul Gandhi ji, why didn't you restrain yourself when you said derogatory things about Modi ji, Modi caste? You insulted OBCs. Who



gave you the right to insult OBCs? Is it a sin to be born in a backward class?

The Chief Minister said should be put on your mouth when you insulted the judiciary. You said that I am unfortunately an MP. Insulted the Parliament. The whole of India saw the manner in which you winked after saying something while being a Member of Parliament. Is this the dignity of

Shivraj Singh said that Rahul ji, you have been giving controversial statements earlier

also. You made fun of the youth of Punjab and UP, calling the temple goers molesters. You also raised questions on the surgical strike and the army. When Manmohan Singh was the Prime Minister, you had insulted him by tearing the ordinance.

The CM said that Rahul ji, why didn't you and the Congressmen face this lock? Today they are doing the gimmick of locking their mouths in a demonstration. The right thing is that today Congress is the problem for the country and Congress's problem is Rahul

Here, in Madhya Pradesh's Bhopal, Congress workers performed a unique demonstration by locking their mouths. Many women were also involved in this. Along with this, a black band was also tied on the face. The woman activist questioned that when Rahul Gandhi was given a month's time by the Surat court, why was there such a hurry to cancel the member-

## MORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY G2

E-Tendering Tender Notice for and behalf of President of India invite sealed "Open Tender" through on Line (E Tendering) for the following work.

Description of work: Mandatory Energy Audit of Traction Services in North Centra Railways, E-Tender No.: JHS-TD-TENDER 2022-02R2 Approx Cost (Rs.): 575000.00 Earnest Money/Bid Security (Rs.) 11500.00 Date of closing Tender: 18.04.2023 15.00 pm. Date of completion/period fr issue acceptance letter: 02 Months.

15.00 hrs. on 18.04.2023 For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways websit ww.ireps.gov.in

### NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY Dated: 24.03.2023

**TENDER NOTICE** 

For and on behalf of President of India, the Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (Gen) North Central Railway, Jhansi invites open tenders through online (E-Tendering) for the following work:-

Description of work	Tender Value	Bid Security
Electical work for : Soft upgradation of	Rs.	Rs.
orchha station under Amrit Bharat	49,70,560/-	99,400/-
scheme.	Only	Only

Tender No.: JHS-ELG-W-T-24-2022-23

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 Railwa vebsite http://www.ireps.gov.in 456/23 (D)

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

	NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY	G2
F. C. T.	JHANSI DIVISION	
	E-Tendering Tender Notice	
2r Divie	ional Electrical Engineer (Traction Distribution) N.C. Pailway	Ihanei for

and behalf of President of India invites sealed "Open Tender" through on Line (E-Tendering) for the following work.

E-Tender No.	Description of work	Approx Cost (₹)	Earnest Money/ Bid Security (₹)
JHS-TD- TENDER- 2022-12R	Difficion	₹ 6037747.69	₹ 120800.00

Date of closing Tender:18.04.2023 15.00 pm

Tender online can be submitted up to 15.00 hrs on 18.04.2023.

website www.ireps.gov.in Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRD) North Central Railway, Jhansi 450/23 (ADM)

Date of completion/period from issue acceptance letter: 09 Months · For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railway

**NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY** L. No. JHS-Dy.CEE-WS-T-05-2022-23-R2 E-Tendering 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

Description of work		Tender value	Bid Security
Jhansi Workshop: Provision of power distribution cables of sizes 44 300 & 185 sqmm to feed power supcable laying in RCC cable trench.	00,	₹ 64,35,816/- Only	₹1,28,700/- Only
Tender No.	JHS-DyCEE-WS-T-05-22-23R2		05-22-23R2
Completion period	pletion period 06 months		
Closing date of tender	24.04.2023 (upto 15.00 Hrs.)		
Tenderer will submit the tender onlin			

website http://www.ireps.gov.in. 452/23(DG) 🛐 North central railways 💆 @CPRONCR 🤚 @north central railway 🌐 www.ncr.india

VIPPY SPINPRO LTD. CIN: L01710MP1992PLC007043 Regd. Office: 414, City Center, 570, M.G. Road, Indore-452 001 (M.P.) Works Office: 14-A. Industrial Area, A.B. Road, Dewas-455 001 (M.P.) Phone: 91-7272-258251, 52, 405352, Fax: 91-7272-400121 Email: admin@vippyspinpro.com, Website: www.vippyspinpro.com

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the following Share Certificate(s) issued by the Company are informed to have been lost or misplaced and the registered holder thereof claimant has applied to the Company for issue of Duplicate

S. No.	Name of Share Holder	No. of Shares		Share Certificate No.	Distinctive No.
1.	Shorya Singhal	100	32980	16315	1631401-1631500

60, Electronic Complex, Pardeshipura, Indore-452010 (M.P.) Within 15 days of publication of this notice, after which no claims will be entertained and the Company will proceed to issue Duplicate Share

ANKIT CONSULTANCY PVT. LTD.

Pulkit Maheshwari Date: 25.03.2023

Company Secretary & Compliance Officer

For Vippy Spinpro Ltd.

Date: 26.03.2023 Place: Sidhi (M.P.)

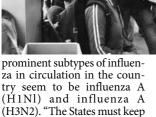
Gandhi Chowk, Kotaha,

Sidhi M. P. - 486661

# **Covid surge: Centre raises concern at low testing by States, UTs**

 $E^{\text{ven as the Covid cases are}}_{\text{climbing up gradually in some parts of the country,}}$ States and UTs seem to have lowered their guard with the Centre on Saturday raising concern at low level and insufficient testing by States and UTs compared to the standards prescribed by WHO i.e 140 tests per million. It also asked them to keep a close watch on the evolving etiologies (causes of diseases) of Influenza Like Illness (lLl) and Severe Acute Respiratory Illness (SARI)

In an advisory issued jointly by DG, Indian Council of Medical Research, Dr Rajiv Bahl and Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan, the Centre pointed out that India usually sees a seasonal rise in influenza cases from January to March & again from August to October. Presently, the most



a watch on these causes of dis-

"A gradual but sustained increase in the trajectory of Covid-19 cases in the country has been witnessed since mid-February 2023. As on date, most of the active cases in the country are largely being reported by a few states like Kerala (26.4 per cent), Maharashtra (21.7 per cent), Gujarat (13.9 per cent), Karnataka (8.6 per cent) and Tamil Nadu (6.3 per cent).

"While the rates of hospitalisation and death due to the disease remains low, largely because of the significant coverage achieved in terms of Covid-19 vaccination rates by all states/UTs, this gradual rise in cases needs reinvigorated public health actions to contain the surge," said the advisory. The states have been told that Covid and influenza share a number of similarities in terms of mode of transmission, high risk population, clinical signs and symptoms. While this may present a clinical dilemma for the attending doctors in terms of diagnosis, this also renders both these diseases easily preventable by following simple public health measures like avoiding overcrowded and poorly ventilated settings, wearing a mask in crowded & closed settings, advisory reads.
The States have also been

advised to take a stock of hospital preparedness including drugs, beds including lCU beds; medical equipment, medical oxygen, capacity building of human resource on existing guidelines as well as vaccination coverage. "Testing at the level of dis-

tricts & blocks also varies, with

some states heavily relying on

the less sensitive rapid antigen tests. Hence it is critical to maintain optimum testing for But SARS-CoV-2's effect Covid-19, equitably distributed across the states," said the

# 'Virus may alter DNA in infected patients'

The virus that causes Covid-19, may alter DNA in the patients it infects. This not only explains immunological symptoms after infection, but also potentially links to long Covid,

researchers have said. In a study published in the Nature Microbiology, they said that the genetic materials in the cells of the human body are stored in a structure called chromatin. Some viruses of other categories have been reported to hijack or change our chromatin so that they can successfully reproduce in our

on chromatin was not known. "This particular finding is quite unique and has not been seen



McGovern Medical School at University of Texas-Houston. In this study, researchers used leading-edge methods and comprehensively characterised the chromatin archi-

Associate Professor in the

Department of Biochemistry

and Molecular Biology of the

tecture in human cells after a Covid-19 infection. They found that many well-formed chromatin architectures of a normal cell become de-organised after infection

For example, there is one type of chromatin architecture termed A/B compartments that can be analogous to the yin and yang portions of our chromatin. "After SARS-CoV-2 infection, we found that the yin and yang portions of the chromatin lose their nor-

Misa questioned by

ED, Tejashwi by CBI in

together. Such mixing may be a reason for some key genes to change in infected cells, including a crucial inflammation gene, interleukin-6, that can cause cytokine storm in severe Covid-19 patients," Li said.
In addition, the study pub-

lished in the journal found that chemical modifications on chromatin were also altered by SARS-CoV-2. "The changes of chemical modifications of chromatin were known to exert long-term effects on gene expression and phenotypes. Therefore, our finding may provide an unrealised new perspective to understand the viral impacts on host chromatin that can be associated with long Covid," added Xiaoyi Yuan, from the McGovern Medical

# Army Chief presents 'President's Standards' to 4 Armoured Regiments

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■

Army Chief General Manoj Pande on Saturday presented the prestigious 'President's Standards' or 'Nishan' to four Armoured Regiments of the Indian Army, namely 49 Armoured Regiment, 51 Armoured Regiment, 53 Armoured Regiment and 54 Armoured Regiment during an impressive Standards Presentation Parade held at Suratgarh Military Station in Rajasthan.

The Armoured Corps is one of the premier combat arms of the Indian Army. Since Independence, the valour, courage and fortitude shown by the Armoured Regiments during the wars have been exceptional, officials said here.

Pande reviewed the Standard presentation parade and appreciated the rich lega-



cy of valour, sacrifice and traditions displayed by the Armoured Corps in war and in

The Army Chief in his address commended the Regiments who received the prestigious President's Standards, for their exemplary

service and conveyed his best wishes to the ranks and families. He also brought out that the modern and professional Indian Mechanised Forces are always ready to meet the future challenges and stand committed to guard the nation against

# India, US will boosting ties, says Indian envoy to US

SERVICE/AGENCIES ■ NEW

Tndia and US will work towards further strengthening their bilateral ties, Indian Ambassador to Washington Taranjit Singh Sandhu said soon after meeting the new US ambassador to New Delhi Eric Garcetti. He was sworn in as the next envoy to India late

The meeting between the two envoys took place hours after Garcetti's oath taking ceremony in Washington. Garcetti, President Joe Biden's close aide, was officially sworn in as the US Ambassador to India by Vice President Kamala Harris, ending over two years of delay to fill one of Washington's most critical diplomatic positions.

"Congratulated @ericgarcetti on his swearing-in as



the Ambassador of America to India," Sandhu tweeted after the

"As he prepares to depart for India, we discussed some immediate priorities in deepening the bilateral partnership, in line with our Leaders' vision," Sandhu said. He said he looked forward to working with Garcetti.

The US Embassy in India has been without an ambassador since January 2021, the longest stretch in the history of US-India relations that the

post has sat vacant, since Kenneth Juster, the last US envoy in New Delhi, stepped down after the change of government in America.

The US Senate confirmed Garcetti's nomination earlier this month, ending a protracted hiatus of over two years to fill the key diplomatic position. Garcetti's nomination was pending before the US Congress since July 2021 when he was nominated by President Joe Biden.

Garcetti's daughter Maya held the Hebrew Bible during the swearing-in ceremony. The ceremony was attended by his close family members, including wife Amy Wakeland, father Gil Garcetti, mother Sukey Garcetti and mother-in-law Dee Wakeland.

"I cannot wait to serve," Garcetti said, when asked about his new diplomatic assign-

stock of the passenger ameni-

ties at Baramulla Railway

ment works to be done at

inspected the dry fruit stall of

"One Station One Product". He appreciated the local dry

Station. The Minister dis

land-for-jobs scam case

While the CBI on Saturday questioned Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav at its headquarters here for eight hours in the land-for-jobs 'scam', the Enforcement Directorate grilled his sister and MP Misa Bharti in the connected money laundering case for seven hours.

Earlier, Yadav had skipped summons thrice.

Yadav arrived at the agency's office at around 10;30 AM and left at 8 PM. He also took a break for lunch for nearly 90 minutes.

Bharti reached the ED office at around 11 AM and left around 7 PM with an hourlong lunch break.

During Yadav's questioning, the investigators pointed questions relating to his financial transactions, including his purported links to AB Exports Private Limited and AK Infosystems Pvt Ltd. Both these companies are alleged to be beneficial companies in the alleged scam.

Last week, the CBI assured the Delhi High Court that Yadav would not be arrested this month. On March 15, a special CBI court had granted Prasad Yadav, mother Rabri Devi, sister Misa Bharti and others in the case.

The CBI's probe is part of an ongoing investigation into documents and evidence that emerged after the initial charge sheet was submitted, as well as the alleged involvement of accused persons that could



during Lalu Prasad's tenure as railway Minister from 2004 to 2009, favourite candidates were appointed in violation of norms

and procedures without any

advertisement or public notice.

The agency further claimed that substitutes from Patna were appointed in various zonal railways in Mumbai, Jabalpur, Kolkata, Jaipur, and Hajipur. In return, the candidates, directly or through their family members, allegedly sold land to Prasad's family and its associates at highly-discounted

Likewise, the ED quizzed Bharti, 46, is a Rajya Sabha MP of the Rashtriya Janta Dal after she reached the agency headquarters at around 11 AM following which her statement Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

Both the agencies recently initiated action in the case, with the CBI questioning Lalu Prasad Yadav and his wife and former Bihar Chief Minister Rabri Devi and the ED carrying out raids against the RJD chief's family under PMLA.

in their respective languages.

Tamil Nadu for their excellent

performance during the pan-

demic in delivering justice to

the people, he said judicial

infrastructure in Tamil Nadu

was comparatively better than

Puducherry and found that

the kind of work being done to

improve the judicial infra-

structure was possible only when the judiciary and gov-

ernment worked together in

understanding the issues and

tions, he said last year the gov-

ernment had allotted Rs 9,000

Talking about fund alloca-

Recently, he visited

in many States in India.

Lauding the courts in

# USBRL project will be completed by Jan-Feb 2024: Vaishnav

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■

Union Minister of Railways, Communications, Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnav Saturday announced the Udhampur-Line (USBRL) project will be completed by Jan-Feb 2024.

The Union Minister also said after connecting with the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla train service, a specially built Vande Bharat train will be introduced in the rail section.

Addressing media persons



at Srinagar Railway Station the the railway section and took Union Minister said that the budget allocation for USBRL was about Rs 800 crore per year before 2014, which has been cussed with the concerned increased to Rs 6,000 crore in railway officers the develop-The Minister also visited Baramulla Railway Station.

Budgam Railway Station and He also interacted with cedures related to the maintenance of trains at Carriage & Wagon Depot, Budgam.

Ashwini Vaishnaw also undertook a journey from Budgam Railway Station to Baramulla Railway Station by special inspection car. He also made a detailed overview of the safety and security of

fruits of Baramulla and purchased them using the digital mode of payment. The Parcel Office was also inaugurated at Srinagar Railway Station in the presence of the Union Minister.

# Differences between Govt, judiciary

 $D_{ ext{the government and judi-}}^{ ext{enying any clash between}}$ ciary as speculated in the media, Union Law and Justice Minister Kiren Rijiju on Saturday contended that differences were inevitable in a democracy but they should not be construed as confrontation

The Minister inaugurated the Chief Judicial Magistrate court, Mayiladuthurai, in the presence of Chief Justice of Îndia Justice D Y Chandrachud, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin and Acting Chief Justice of Madras High Court Justice T Raja here.
"We have differences, but it

doesn't mean there is confrontation. It sends a wrong message across the world. "I want to make it clear that

there is no problem between different organs of the State. There are signs of robust democratic actions, which are not a crisis," he emphasised.

Pointing to some media reports of alleged differences between the government and the Supreme Court or the legislature and judiciary, the Union Minister said, "we must understand that we are in a democracy. There are bound to be certain differences in terms of some outlook but you can't have conflicting posi-



tions. This doesn't mean confrontation. We are the largest democracy in the world."

The Centre would support the Indian judiciary to be independent, he said, and called upon the bench and the bar being two sides of the same coin - to work together to ensure that the court complex is not divided. "One can't exist without the other. Court must have proper decorum and conducive atmosphere."

He further said, "everybody can't think alike."
"We are not ruled by a dic-

tatorial king, so the difference of opinion can't be termed as a crisis in Indian democracy. We can criticise each other but when it comes to national interest we must be one," he stressed. His Ministry was involved

in developing a common core

vocubaulary where Indian lan-

guages will have certain com-

mon usages, purely technical in

nature, soon, to ensure that

common people receive orders

crore for district and other courts in the State, and his department was pushing hard for utilisation of funds so that more could be sought.

tried to solve them.

"In some States, I realised that requirement of court and understanding of government has some shortcomings," Rijiju

# India pushing for TB vaccines to eliminate infection by 2025

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

 $F^{aced\ with\ the\ target\ to}_{achieve\ Tuberculosis\ (TB)}$ elimination by 2025, India is pushing for expediting, manufacturing and introduction of potential TB vaccines at the UN High Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage (UHC) slated September this

"TB vaccine is needed urgently", Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said while highlighting the crucial importance of TB vaccine in the global fight against the disease. Speaking at the 36th Board Meeting of STOP TB Partnership on Saturday, he urged its officials to take up the matter of need for TB vaccines at the UN High Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage in September this

"We have seen the unwavering commitment of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to end TB in India. We are ready to lead from the front and be the voice of the Global South in the collaborative fight against TB," said Mandaviya.

Addressing the gathering, Dr Mandaviya stated that "India has identified 3 impor-

tant health priorities under the G20 Presidency. All of these are focused on universal health coverage and relevant to our sponse for TB elimination".

Dr Mandaviya emphasized that effort is on not only to rebound from Covid but also bring innovative strategies like the Pradhan Mantri TB Mukt Bharat Abhiyaan which has become a one-of-a-kind movement in the world. Executive Director of the

Stop TB Partnership Dr Lucica Ditiu emphasized that "India has a pivotal role in eliminating TB because India's progress will drive the world. She also praised India for

"doing very sophisticated modelling with their Ni-kshay data."
"Their innovations, ideas

and strategies for bringing healthcare closer to people is something that the whole world can emulate", she stated. The Stop TB Partnership Board also appreciated India's estimation of TB burden developed with in-country

evidence. An "Accountability Report of TB-affected Communities & Civil Society: Priorities to Close the Deadly Divide" was also launched at the event.

# Septuagenarian's odyssey in law knows no bound

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■

 $W^{
m hile}$  the youth of the country study for earning a livelihood, S D Parameswaran, the septuagenarian from Ernakulam is engaged in studies for the sake of studying. Seventy two year old Parameswaran did his college, Government Law College, Thrissur, proud by passing out in the three-year LLB course with all As and enrolling as a lawyer in Kerala High Court early this week. The fact that all his classmates were young enough to be his grandchildren did not deter him from waking up at 3 in the morning, complete his studies and homework for the day and travel 80 km to Thrissur by train to attend daily classes.

For Parameswaran, who had retired from the Department of Atomic Energy as General Manager of Indian Rare Earths Ltd, life itself was a challenge. Though he passed out of the matriculation class with top honors, his poor parents could not afford to send him for higher education.

Those were the days when typists and stenographers were very much in demand. I managed to excel in stenography and with the meagre income from that job, joined in the higher secondary class and then in Regional Engineering College,

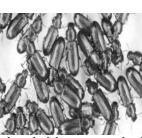
# Secrets of beetles' survival revealed

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Ever wondered how beetles, commonly found pests like grain weevil and red flour beetles which eat their way through thousands of tons of food globally, manage to survive even in extremely dry environments? Scientists have now found that secrets lie in their rear ends as they have the ability to open their rectums and take up water from food and moist air and convert it into fluid.

"Besides being able to suck water out of the air, beetles are also extremely effective at extracting liquid from food. Even dry grain, which may consist of 1-2 percent water, can contribute to a beetle's fluid balance," said the researchers after investigating the molecular and physiological processes underlying the ability of beetles to survive their entire lives without drinking any liquid water

whatsoever. The new collaborative study by researchers from the University of Copenhagen and the University of Edinburgh explains just how. Beyond helping to explain how beetles thrive in environments where few other animals can survive, the knowledge could eventually be used for more target-



ed and delicate control of global pests such as the grain weevil and red flour beetle.

Insect pests eat their way through thousands of tons of food around the world every year. Food security in developing nations is particularly affected by animal species like the grain weevil and red flour beetle which have specialized in surviving in extremely dry environments, granaries included, for thousands of years.

"We ĥave shed new light

on the molecular mechanisms that allow beetles to absorb water rectally. Insects are particularly sensitive to changes in their water balance. As such, this knowledge can be used to develop more targeted methods to combat beetle species which destroy our food production, without killing other animals or harming humans and nature," says Associate Professor Kenneth Veland Halberg of the Department of Biology, who led the research.

# **Pro-Khalistan groups protest at London's Parliament Square**

A small group of protesters carrying pro-Khalistan flags and banners in support of Khalistani leader Amritpal Singh gathered at Parliament Square here on Saturday, as part of similar protests in Canada and

Banners for the so-called "Protest against the discriminatory actions by Indian police forces against Bhai Amritpal Singh and other innocent Sikhs" had been circulating on social media, along with similar protests called in the cities of Toronto, Vancouver, Indianapolis and

The protest in London comes days after a planned demonstration outside the Indian High Commission in London on Wednesday when protesters hurled coloured flares and water bottles towards

They have since taken to social media to allege that the objects were hurled by the Indian mission instead, allegations which have been countered by India order at the Indian mission last Sunday, when pro-Khalistan extremists smashed windows and also attempted to pull down the Tricolour from its flagpole at the mission. India has registered a strong protest with the UK government and the issue was also raised in the House of Commons earlier this week

"We strongly condemn the vandalism and violent acts that took place outside the Indian High Commission in London. It was a completely unacceptable action against the High Commission and its staff," Leader of the Commons Penny Mordaunt

"There is ongoing work with the Metropolitan Police to review the protection measures around the High

# 'Canada closely following developments in Punjab

anada is "very closely" following the Udevelopments in Punjab and will continue to address the concerns of the community, Foreign Minister Melanie Joly has said amid Punjab Police's crackdown on radical preacher Amritpal Singh.

Joly was answering a question from Indo-Canadian MP Iqwinder S Gaheer in the House of Commons on Thursday.

'We are aware of the evolving situation in Punjab, and we are following it very closely. We look forward to a return to a more stable situation," she said.

"Canadians can always count on the Government of Canada to make sure that we will continue to address the concerns of many members of the community," she added. Gaheer said he had heard about the ongoing mass suspension of Internet services in Punjab and asked Joly to update the House about the situation in

Responding to questions about for-eign leaders and parliamentarians commenting on the action against Amritpal Singh, External Affairs Ministry spokesman Arindam Bagchi urged people residing abroad not to believe "inaccurate and motivated narratives" that are being circulated by some elements on

Commission, and any changes will be made to ensure the safety and security of its staff so that they can go about their business, serving both this country and India,"

Four killed while collecting free flour in Pak

long hours," he said.

Police on the other hand
Pleo baton-charged the people where the people are losing their lives to get free flour.

Multan, Muzaffargarh and

Faisalabad cities during the

last few days," a Punjab gov-

ernment senior officer told

occurred due to the huge rush

of people and lack of facilities

at the distribution points set up

by the government to distrib-

ute free flour among the citi-

stampede and the other two

died after getting exhausted

while standing in queue for

"Two of them died due to

He said the incidents

"Authorities in Punjab are undertaking operations to nab a fugitive. Information regarding that operation is being shared by authorities concerned on a regular basis," the spokesman said in New Delhi. Authorities in Punjab last week suspended internet and SMS services in the state following the police crackdown against elements of Waris Punjab De,' headed by the radical preacher. Police in Punjab are still searching for Amritpal Singh.

Earlier on Wednesday Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said in the House of Commons: "We are looking forward to a swift return to a more stable situation." Canada has also seen a rise in anti-India activities recently by Khalistan supporters who have vandalised some Hindu temples. A Ram Mandir in Mississauga was defaced by 'Khalistani extremists' with anti-India graffiti on February 13, drawing a strong reaction from the Indian Consulate in Toronto.

"We strongly condemn the defacing of Ram Mandir in Mississauga with anti-India graffiti. We have requested Canadian authorities to investigate the incident and take prompt action on perpetrators," India's Consulate in Toronto had tweet-

It followed UK Foreign Secretary James Cleverly's statement to condemn the unacceptable acts of violence and an assurance to conduct a security review at the Indian mission in London.

And this is because of the bad

policies of this government of

looters and thieves," PTI

Punjab president Dr Yasmin

Seeing the gross mismanagement at the free distribu-

tion of flour points, Prime

Minister Shehbaz Sharif has

started visiting such points.
On Saturday he visited

Sargodha city and inspected

the free flour points.
Sharif checked the quality

and weight of the flour bags

trict administration to facilitate

especially elderly people at the flour distribution points.

He also directed the dis-

and talked to people.

Rashid told PTI.

# Eric Garcetti sworn in as US Ambassador to India

Eric Garcetti, President Joe Biden's close aide, was officially sworn in as the US Ambassador to India by Vice President Kamala Harris, ending over two years of delay to fill one of Washington's most critical diplomatic positions. Garcetti's daughter Maya

held the Hebrew Bible during the swearing-in ceremony on Friday, which was presided by Vice President Harris.

Garcetti raised his right hand while Harris performed the ceremony, and family members cheered when the two longtime friends shook

The ceremony was attended by his close family members, including wife Amy Wakeland, father Gil Garcetti, mother Sukey Garcetti and mother-inlaw Dee Wakeland. "It feels great. Can't wait to

serve," Garcetti, 52, said when asked about his new diplomat-

**Tornadoes kill 23** 

Emergency officials in Emississippi said 23 people have been killed by tornadoes

that tore through the state on

Friday night, destroying buildings and knocking out power as

severe weather that produced hail the size of golf balls moved

through several southern states.

Management Agency con-

firmed there had been 23

deaths as of 6:20 am on

Saturday with dozens of

injuries and four people miss-

Twitter post that search and

rescue teams from numerous

local and state agencies were

deployed along with personnel

to assist those impacted by the

tornadoes. The National

Weather Service confirmed a

tornado caused damage about

60 miles (96 kilometers) north-

City and Rolling Fork report-

ed destruction as the tornado

swept northeast at 70 mph

(113 kph) without weakening,

racing towards Alabama

through towns including

Winona and Amory into the

The rural towns of Silver

east of Jackson, Mississippi.

The agency said in a

ing throughout the state.

The Mississippi Emergency

in Mississippi

AP ■ ROLLING FORK

"I'm so honoured the vice

# Indian envoy talks partnership

**PTI** ■ WASHINGTON

ndia's envoy here Taranjit Singh Sandhu met the newly-appointed Ambassador to India, Eric Garcetti, and discussed with him immediate priorities in deepening the bilateral strategic partnership. The meeting took place soon after Garcetti was sworn on Friday in as the next US envoy to India.

Garcetti, President Joe Biden's close aide, was officially sworn in as the US Ambassador to India by Vice President Kamala Harris, ending over two years of delay to fill one of Washington's most critical diplomatic positions.

president did this," he said. Second Gentleman Doug Emhoff also attended the event.

Former Mayor of Los Angeles Garcetti's nomination was pending before the US

"Congratulated @ericgarcetti on his swearing-in as the Ambassador of America to India," Indian Ambassador to Washington Sandhu tweeted

"As he prepares to depart for India, we discussed some immediate priorities in deepening the bilateral partnership, in line with our Leaders' vision," Sandhu said.

after the meeting on Friday.

Congress since July 2021 when he was nominated by President

The Senate voted 52 to 42 to confirm Garcetti earlier this

Kenneth Juster, the last US envoy in New Delhi, stepped down after the change of government in America. stalled amid concerns by some

working with Garcetti.

has been without an ambas-

sador since January 2021, the

longest stretch in the history

of US-India relations that the

post has sat vacant, since

The US Embassy in India

lawmakers that he had not adequately handled allegations of sexual assault and harass-

# ment against a former senior 'Russia defensive

in east Ukraine'

The top commander of Ukraine's military said on Saturday that his forces are pushing back against Russian troops in the long and grind-ing battle for the town of Bakhmut, and British military intelligence says Russia appears to be moving to a defensive strategy in eastern Ukraine. The Bakhmut direction is

the most difficult. Thanks to the titanic efforts of the defense forces, the situation is being stabilized," Gen. Valerii Zaluzhnyi said in a post on Telegram giving a synopsis of a telephone call with Adm. Sir Tony Radakin, Britain's chief of defense staff.

The seven-month battle for Bakhmut, where Russian forces have closed in on three sides, is the longest clash of the war, with Russia deploying both regular soldiers and fighters of the mercenary Wagner Group.

Russian forces must go through Bakhmut to push

# Pennsylvania chocolate plant blast kills five, six missing



WEST READING: An explosion at a chocolate factory in Pennsylvania on Friday killed five people and left six people missing, authorities said.

Several other people were injured by the explosion at the RM Palmer Co. plant, said West Reading Borough Police Department Chief of Police Wayne Holben, who did not confirm the exact number of The explosion just before 5

pm sent a plume of black smoke into the air, destroying one building and damaging a neigh-bouring building that included apartments.

"It's pretty levelled," West Reading Borough Mayor Samantha Kaag said of the explosion site. "The building in the front, with the church and

the apartments, the explosion was so big that it moved that building four feet forward." The cause of the blast in the

community about 60 miles (96 kilometers) northwest of Philadelphia was under investigation, Holden told reporters. Eight people were taken to

Reading Hospital Friday evening, Tower Health spokeswoman Jessica Bezler said. Two people were admitted in fair condition and five were

being treated and would be released, she said in an email. One patient was transferred to another facility, but Bezler provided no further details. Kaag said people were asked to move back about a

block in each direction from the

site of the explosion but no evac-

uations were ordered.

deeper into parts of the eastern Donbas region, though Western officials say that the capture of the city would have limited impact on the course of

### province to beat the sky-rocketing inflation. Four elderly people died and several fainted in a bid to

At least four elderly people have died in the last few

days while trying to collect free

flour from the government

distribution points in Pakistan's Punjab province,

The deaths were reported

after several people flocked to

the government distribution

points after the cash-strapped

Pakistani government intro-

duced a free flour scheme for

the poor especially in Punjab

officials said on Saturday.

# GLOBE

### **GAEKWAD REAPPOINTED WASHINGTON:** A prominent Indian American businessman and community leader was on Friday reappointed by Florida Governor Ron DeSantis to the board of trustees of the prestigious University of Florida. Today, Governor Ron DeSantis announced the reappointment of Digvijay "Danny" Gaekwad to the University of Central Florida Board of Trustees," the Governor's office said in a

statement.

**GRENADE, KNIFE IN BERLIN** BERLIN: German police said on Saturday that they have arrested a 61-year-old man after three people were wounded in a hand grenade and knife attack in Berlin Police said the attacker detonated the grenade in the entrance of an apartment building in the Reinickendorf neighborhood of the German capital on Friday night, wounding two women, aged 42 and 48, and a 61-year-old man.

### KING CHARLES HONOURS **QUEEN'S PALLBEARERS**

LONDON: Britain's King Charles III on Saturday recognised in a special Demise honours list the eight pallbearers who carried the late Queen Elizabeth II's coffin at her funeral last year. The British soldiers, who were selected to be pallbearers from the King's Company of 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards – known as the Queen's Company previously - have been awarded the silver Royal Victorian Medal.

### **INTEL CO-FOUNDER MOORE DIES AT 94** SAN FRANCISCO: Gordon Moore, the Intel Corp. co-

founder who set the breakneck pace of progress in the digital age with a simple 1965 prediction of how quickly engineers would boost the capacity of computer chips. has died. He was 94. Moore died on Friday at his home in Hawaii according to Intel and the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation.

# Biden: Will protect our personnel in Syria

seeking free flour to force

The people have criticised

them to stand in the queue.

the lack of proper arrange-

ments by the district adminis-

tration at these distribution

points and the short supply of

flour points early in the morn-

ing and have to wait for a long

Imran Khan's Pakistan

Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party

has condemned the deaths

and criticised the policy.

time in queues.

Most of them arrive at the

Former prime minister

respond "forcefully" to protect its personnel after U.S. forces retaliated with airstrikes on sites in Syria used by groups affiliated with Iran's Revolutionary Guard following a suspected Iranian-linked attack Thursday that killed a US contractor and wounded seven other Americans in northeast Syria.

The United States does not, does not seek conflict with Iran," Biden said in Ottawa, Canada, where he is on a state visit. But he said Iran and its proxies should be prepared for the US "to act forcefully to protect our people. That's exactly what happened last night." Activists said the US bombing killed at least four

late tensions across the wider Middle East, whose rival powers have made steps toward détente in recent days after years of turmoil.

The Pentagon said a drone attack on a US base Thursday killed a contractor and injured five US troops and another contractor. That was followed by two simultaneous attacks on US forces in Syria on Friday, according to US officials.

The officials said that based on preliminary information, there was a rocket attack Friday at a Conoco plant, and one ÚS service member was injured but is in stable condition. At about the same time, several drones were launched at Green Village, where US People. troops are also vascu. One off the while it's not the first time cial said all but one of the

the US and Iran have traded drones were shot down, and strikes in Syria, the attacks and there were no US injuries Dresident Joe Biden said the US response threaten to there. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to dis cuss military operations.

Two Syrian opposition

activist groups reported a new wave of airstrikes on eastern Syria that hit positions of Iranbacked militias after rockets were fired at a Conoco gas plant that has a base housing American troops. Several US officials, however, said the US did not launch any attacks late Friday, and it wasn't clear if the activists were referring to the attack on US forces at Green Village. US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said the American intelligence community had determined the drone in Thursday's attack on

US officials said that conclusion was based on recovered debris and intelligence threat streams.

was of Iranian origin.

has expressed concern to China over any provision of lethal aid to support Russia in its war against Ukraine during a meeting with her Chinese counter-

Her press office on Saturday detailed Mahuta's cautionary remarks in Beijing, days after Chinese President Xi Jinping concluded his trip to Moscow, a

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client Sh. **MAHAVIR** S/o Sh. Hira Lal R/o 13A/2, Gali No.21A, Prem Nagar Road, Baljeet Nagar, Patel Nagar, Central, Delhi-

110008, have severed all their relations and

debarred their daughter namely Pooja W/o

Sh. Ravi Kumar from their all moveable and

mmovable properties due to their bad

behavior. They are out of the control of my

clients and is misbehaving with my clients

My clients are not responsible/ liable for any

acts, deeds and things done by above

SANJEEV DWIVEDI (Advocate)

Gajanand Block Tis Hazari Court ND-54

11:00 a.m.

named Pooia since today

warm affair in which Xi and

Mahuta's four-day trip, which began Wednesday, was the first made by a New Zealand foreign minister to Beijing since 2018 but it came at an awkward time as Xi visited Moscow the same week to give Putin a diplomatic boost after the International Criminal Court said it wants to put him on trial for alleged war crimes.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform to all concern that WG. CDR NARESH CHANDER CHOUDHRY (RETD. S/O LATE DR. GURBUX RAI CHOWDHRY R/O 30, SECTOR-36A, CHANDIGARH, who is the riginal allottee of Type-A. Residential Flat earing No. Q-386, GROUND FLOOR, Car arking Space No. Q-5/11, situated in BLOCK Q, Jalvayu Vihar, Sector-21, NOIDA, Distt Sautam Budh Nagar, U.P., had sold the said operty on General Power of Attorney basis to RS. ARTI LAKHINA W/O SH. SUNIL KUMAN LAKHINA, R/O Q-386, JALVAYU VIHAR SECTOR-21, NOIDA, U.P., which is registered on dated 25-1-1999, and the Agreement to Sel was executed, which was not Registered. So it is formed to all concerned that the said flat in ling to the transferred in favour of SH. SUNI AKHINA S/O SH HEMBAJI AKHINA R/O O 386, JALVAYU VIHAR, SECTOR-21, NOIDA U.P. on basis of General Power of attorney. any one has/have any objection he/she may file his/her objection along with the sufficient proof in the Group Housing Department of Noida authority within 15 days from the date of ublication of this Notice

MRS. ARTI LAKHINA

# **PUBLIC NOTICE**

Be it known to all that my client Mrs. Kalika Agarwal w/o Shri Rahul Agarwal R/o 16, Transit Camp, Central Delhi-110055 is purchasing and has entered an Agreement t Sale & Purchase for Flat No. A-203 Rosewood Apartments, Mayur Vihar Phase-Extension, Delhi-110091 from Mr. Dhira Agarwal S/o Shri S.K. Agarwal R/o A-203, Rosewood Apartments, Mayur Vihar Phase-I Extension, Delhi-110091. Original Gift Deed pertaining to the above mentioned Flat is misplaced / lost for which FIR LR No 1046586/2022, dated 04/12/2022 was lodged. Any person(s) or entity(ies) institute(s) / Bank(s) / NBFC(s) having an right / title / claim or interest in the said property by way of sale, inheritance. ssession, succession, mortgage, lien ease, gift, relinquishment, decree or order of any Court of Law or otherwise howsoever in respect of the same shall intimate the objection in writing to the undersigned with the supporting document thereof within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice or else any such claims by any one shall not be considered and shall deem to have bene waved and or abandoned, surrendered relinquished, released, forfeited and/or waived and it will be deemed that the Property as described is free and clear of all claim charges, encumbrances and my client sha proceed to conclude the negotiation and no claim shall be entertained thereafter. Signed for and on behalf of

MJ-Shalok Associates, Chamber No. 463 Civil Wing, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi-110054, Email: sj301268@yahoo.co.in

**NZ** voices concern to China over aid to Russia On the Ukraine war, ed saying in the report. Russian President Vladimir Mahuta reiterated her govern-

> counterpart Qin Gang. She also told Qin's predecessor Wang Yi, now the Chinese Communist Party's most senior foreign policy official, that peace and prosperity are the expectations of all parties, according to China's official news agency Xinhua. New Zealand supports political settlement of disputes

through dialogue, she was quot-

Wang said the pressing task New Zealand Foreign Putin praised each other and ment's condemnation of is to achieve a ceasefire and China would continue to play a constructive role to promote a political settlement, the agency added. During the meeting with Qin, Mahuta also raised concerns over the human rights situation in Xinjiang, the erosion of freedoms in Hong Kong, disputes in the South China Sea and increasing tensions in the Taiwan Strait, her press office said.

# CIN - U67100MH2007PLC174759 Seas create, values protect Registered Office : Edelweiss House, Off CST Road, Kalina, Mumbai 400098 +91 22 4088 6090 / 6620 3149 APPENDIX IV-A [See proviso to rule 8(6) r/w proviso to Rule 9(1)]

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY Public Notice for E-auction sale of immovable property under the Securitisation and

Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to rule 8(6) r/w proviso to Rule 9(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and Borrower & guarantor in particular

that the immovable property described herein below ("Secured Asset"), mortgaged to Edelweiss Asset Reconstruction Company Limited acting in its capacity as Trustee of EARC Trust SC-30, ("EARC"), the physical possession of which has been taken by Authorised Officer of EARC on October 31, 2022, will be sold by way of E-Auction on April 13, 2023 at 12:00 Noon with unlimited extension of 5 Minutes each through e-Auction Agency M/s e-Procurement Technologies Limited (Auction Tiger) on the website/portal https://edelweissarc.auctiontiger.net on "As is where is", "As is what is", "Whatever there is" and "No Recourse" basis for recovery of aggregate dues of Rs. 505,29,95,872.25/- (Rupees Five Hundred Five Crores Twenty Nine Lac Ninety Five Thousand Eight Hundred Seventy Two and Twenty Five Paise Only) being due as on August 23,2022, together with interest at contractual rates and other costs and expenses thereon to EARC from KLG SYSTEL LIMITED (in Liquidation) ("Borrower") and Mr. Kumud Goel and Ms. Pushpa Lata Goel ("Guarantors").

### The Description of Secured Asset, Reserve Price and Earnest Money Deposit for **Description of Secured Asset**

All that piece and parcel of Industrial plot of land being Plot No. 24, admeasuring 1000 sq. mtr. in Sector 18, Electronics City, Gurgaon , Haryana along with all the building/structure being thereon (total built-up structure - 15,750 Sq. Ft.) and bounded as follows: North: Access Road, South: Plot No. 22, East: Access Road West: Plot No. 23

### Reserve Price Rs.11,47,50,000/- Earnest Money Deposit Rs.1,14,75,000/-

	OTHER IMPORTANT DETAILS
Site Inspection	29/03/2023 to 10/04/2023, between 11:00 am to 4:00 pm
Document Verification	On working days between 03/04/2023 to 10/04/2023.
Bid Document Purchase	On working days between 10/04/2023 and 11/04/2023.
EMD amount payment	By 2pm on 12/04/2023
Last Date of submission of bid document	By 5pm on 12/04/2023
Commencement of e-auction sale	12 Noon on 13/04/2023
Bank details	Ac No. 0004103000054719, IFSC No. IBKL0000004 IDBI Bank, Mittal Court, Nariman Point, Mumbai.
Officer contact details	7506642534
	Meghraj.deshmukh@edelweissarc.in

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Date: 26.03.2023 **Authorized Officer** 

# Harris' Africa trip to strengthen US ties WASHINGTON: Vice President Kamala Harris

will try to deepen and reframe US relationships in Africa during a weeklong trip that is the latest and highest profile outreach by the Biden administration as it moves to counter Chin's Harris, who is traveling with her husband,

Doug Emhoff, plans to visit Ghana, Tanzania and Zambia, focusing on economic development, climate change, food security and a rising youth population. She is scheduled to arrive in Accra, Ghana's capital, on Sunday. "For too long, the US foreign policy estab-

lishment has treated Africa like some kind of extra credit project and not part of the core curriculum," said Michelle Gavin, an Africa expect at the Council on Foreign Relations and a former US ambassador to Botswana. "I see a big effort to change that thinking now. But it takes

In Africa, Harris will be closely watched as the first person of color and first woman to serve as America's vice president.

Her mother was born in India and her father was born in Jamaica; Harris was raised in California. "Everybody is excited about Kamala Harris,"

said Idayat Hassan, director of the Centre for Democracy and Development in Abuja, Nigeria. "You can be anything that you can think of — that's what she represents to many कार्यालय अधिशासी अभियन्ता, केन्द्रीय भण्डार, उत्तराखण्ड जल संस्थान, जल भवन, 'बी' ब्लाक, नेहरु कालोनी, देहरादून

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ई-निविदा सूचना

उत्तराखण्ड जल संस्थान की ओर से केन्द्रीय भण्डार, देहरादून द्वारा निम्न कार्यों हेतु ई–निविदा, टू–बिड सिस्टम (तकनीकी बिड एवं कार्मिशियल बिड) आधार पर निम्नानुसार आमंत्रित की जाती हैं।

ई-निविदा सूचना ई-निविदा ई-निविदा प्रपत्र तकनीकी बिड प्रि–बिड मीटिंग की तिथि एवं हाउनलोड करने अपलोड करने की क्र.सं. 7 अनुसार मूल की प्रारंभ एवं अंतिम करने की अंतिम जाने की तिथि कार्य विवरण धनराशि रू करने की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय तिथि एवं समय तिथि व समय एवं समय

वार्षिक दर अनुबन्ध पर, Tamper proof water meters (inferential type) as per standard confirming to IS:779:1994/IS:2373-1981/ISO: 4064 with ISI or EEC/MID certification mark shall be with protection class of IP68 with 2 years warranty anywhere in Uttarakhand की आपूर्ति 28.03.2023 | 06.04.2023 from 11:00 a.m. to 10.04.2023 10.04.2023 120 upto 5:00 p.m. from 10.04.2023 11:00 a.m. upto 5:00 p.m.

अर्हता:- 1. ISI or EEC/MID certification mark license for water meters and factory as per standard confirming to IS:779:1994/IS:2373-1981/ISO: 4064 certificate holder or dealers authorized by the manufacturer are allowed to participate in this tender. The Joint Venture are Authorised dealer should have MOU with manufacturer with assured minimum quantity 3. The preference will be given to the water meter manufacturers. Manufacturer must have supplied minimum 50,000 water meters to government/semi govt/PSU in last seven years ie 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22.

4. Production unit of the manufacturer should be established in India confirming to IS:779:1994/IS:2373-1981/ISO: 4064 with ISI or EEC/MID certification mark shall be with protection class of IP68 with 2 years warranty anywhere in Uttarakhand की आपूर्ति। 28.03.2023 06.04.2023 from 10.04.2023 11.04.2023 03.04.2023

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Production unit of the manufacturer should be established in India

निविदा से सम्बन्धित समस्त जानकारियां व शर्ते उत्तराखण्ड की वेबसाइट www.uktenders.gov.in एव भागीय वैबसाईट http://ujs.uk.gov.in पर ऑन लाइन देखी / प्राप्त की जा सकती हैं। अधिशासी अभियन्त

# Frame policy on e-vehicles, **Parliament panel tells Govt**

Aparliamentary panel has furged the government to frame a comprehensive national policy on electric vehicles (EV) by incorporating the elements of successful state models and international best prac-

These best practices should be based on charging infrastructure, battery swapping, battery waste management and recycling, public awareness in addition to the demand and supply side incentives such as lower GST, waiving road tax, registration fee, hire-purchase scheme at discounted interest rates by financial institutions for buying EVs, it said.

This would serve as a guid ing policy to all states and ensure a comprehensive and uniform growth of the EV sector. It has also recommended that a roadmap for setting up of solar charging stations should be prepared in a timebound manner to reduce the dependence on electricity generated by using coal, to remain true to the green mobility objective. The Committee on Estimates, in its report on "Evaluation of Electric Vehicles Policy", which was tabled in Parliament on Friday, further noted that the "Removal of



government support would result in price escalation of EVs significantly.

The committee finds that a large number of start-ups are also involved in this field, which may have to shut down once the FAME II (second part of the scheme on promo-tion of electric vehicles called Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles) is closed.

It is therefore recommended that the government should extend the FAME-II scheme beyond its current March 31, 2024 timeline by an

more time to evaluate the effectiveness of the scheme and to make necessary adjustments/ modifications to promote the electric vehicles (EVs).'

The high level panel further suggested to the Heavy Industries Ministry (the nodal department for electric vehicles' promotion) that along with EVs and hybrid vehicles, it should also promote other technologies like flex fuel vehi-cles, hydrogen ICE, and hydrogen fuel cell vehicles among others with greater emphasis for mobility transition. The

mended that the ministry should coordinate with other ministries and charging infrastructure operators, to frame a comprehensive plan for rollout of a nationwide public charging network.

It also urged upon the ministry to consider offering purchase subsidies and cashincentive schemes for scrapping or exchanging petrol and diesel vehicles for electric vehicles, as it would not only lead to faster adoption of EVs but also have a major impact on controlling CO2 emissions.

# Jio installs 1 lakh towers to roll out India's fastest, deepest penetration of 5G network

Billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Jio has installed close to 1 lakh telecom towers, nearly 5 times of its nearest competition, to roll out India's fastest and deepest penetration 5G telecom network to provide

ultra-high speed internet, according to latest DoT data.

The latest daily status report from Department of Telecommunications' (DoT) National EMF Portal shows Jio has installed 99,897 BTS (base transceiver station) across 2 fretransceiver station) across 2 frequencies it owns (700 MHz and 3,500 MHz). In comparison, Bharti Airtel has 22,219 BTS.

Additionally, for every base station, Jio has 3 cell sites while Airtel has 2, the March 23 report said.

The more tower and cell sites means faster speed. According to the February 28 report of Ookla, the global leader in network intelligence and connectivity insights, Jio's top median speed is 506 Mbps (megabytes per second) as compared to 268 Mbps of Airtel. "5G has been in place in India for over four months and already it's having a tremendous impact on the state of mobile in the country," Ookla said in the report.

"Speedtest Intelligence data shows that median download speeds across India increased

5G launch, from a 13.87 Mbps median download speed in September 2022 to 29.85 Mbps in January 2023."

5G performance has increased across early 5G adopters in most of the telecom circles, Kolkata achieved the fastest median 5G download speeds in January 2023 at above 500 Mbps.

"Jio experienced a top median 5G download speed of 506.25 Mbps in Kolkata, while Airtel of 268.89 Mbps in Delhi," it said. Airtel and Jio have ambitious targets in terms of 5G network rollout. "From 5G networks' inception, 5G availability across 5G-capable devices has steadily increased, reaching 8.0 per cent for Airtel

and 5.1 per cent for Jio," it said. India has over half a billion internet users, making it the second-largest online market worldwide, just behind China. 5G telecom services were launched in October 2022. "Jio's USD 25 billion investment

seems to be paying off.
In January 2023 Jio achieved median 5G download speeds above 400 Mbps across ten telecom circles. Jio's True 5G network is based on a 5G Standalone (5G SA), which

doesn't rely on a 4G LTE net-

"While Jio's initial 5G speeds fluctuated massively from low single-digit to speeds well above 800 Mbps, which pointed to the operator recalibrating its networks, Jio's 5G performance has stabilized over

the past four months.

In January 2023, Jio's 5G early adopters experienced speeds ranging from 246.49

Mbps median download speed in Himschal Pradesh to 506.25 in Himachal Pradesh to 506.25 Mbps in Kolkata," Ookla said.

In comparison, "Airtel's 5G early adopters experienced speeds ranging from a 78.13 Mbps median download speed in Kolkata to 268.89 Mbps in Delhi," it added.

Last month, Akash Ambani, chairman of Reliance Jio, had at a post budget webinar of Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology stated that India's largest telecom company will undertake the fastest 5G rollout in the

Reliance Jio is a step-down subsidiary of Reliance Industries which is helmed by his father, Mukesh Ambani, Bharti Airtel had on Friday stated that its ultra-fast 5G service is available to customers in 500 cities in the country. "Airtel added 235 cities to its network, making it one of the largest

# Climate change threatening tea sector globally: ITA

PTI KOLKATA

eading planters body Indian Leading planters body \_\_\_\_\_\_
Tea Association (ITA) said climate change is threatening the industry globally which is resulting in lower yields and rise in production costs.

A spokesman of ITA said climate change is also threatening the long-term viability of tea industry, which is also causing increasing pest infestations making pesticide residue management surfacing as a major challenge.

To mitigate this, ITA said that the industry needs to adopt a multi-faceted to address the climate change issue by way of sustainable farming practices and reduc-

tion in carbon footprint. In this context, the association maintained the industry involving all the stakeholders to invest in research to come out with mitigating solutions. There has also been a decline in rainfall and increase in temperature in the tea cultivating regions for the last several years, ITA said.

According to the association, future projections indicate a substantial reduction in suitability in tea cultivation in areas where the crop is grown.

The other major area where work is needed to be done by the industry is that optimisation in the use of chemical fertilisers and greater use of renewable energy. In the latest data compiled by Tea



Board, production in January 2023 in the country was 13.43

million kilogramme as against

# Cabinet approves MSP for raw jute for FY 2023-24

The Cabinet Committee on **▲** Economic Affairs has given Support Price (MSP) for raw jute for 2023-24 season, based on recommendations of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP).

The MSP of raw jute (TD-3 equivalent to earlier TD-5 grade) has been fixed at Rs 5,050 per quintal for 2023-24 season. This would ensure a return of 63.20 per cent over the all India weighted average cost of production. The announced MSP of raw jute for



2023-24 season is in line with the principle of fixing the MSP at a level of at least 1.5 times all India weighted average cost of

the government in the Budget 2018-19. It assures a minimum of 50 per cent as margin of profit. It is one of the important and progressive steps towards ensuring better remunerative returns to the jute growers and to incentivise quality jute fibre, said offi-

The Jute Corporation of India (JCI) will continue as Central government nodal agency to undertake price support operations and the losses incurred, if any, in such operations, will be fully reimbursed by the Central government.

# Speed up PDS staff selection for quality food grains: Parl Panel

IANS NEW DELHI

Parliamentary panel has Adesired the Food and Distribution Department to expedite the process of revival of posts and new recruitments to raise the number of inspection and sample analysis to ensure delivery of good quality foodgrains to the ultimate beneficiaries.

"The Committee, while reiterating their original recommendation, desire the Department to expedite the process of revival of posts and new recruitments to raise the number of inspection and sample analysis thereby ensuring delivery of good quality foodgrains to ultimate beneficiaries and preventing storage losses of foodgrains," said a Action Taken report by the Standing Committee on Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.

Earlier, in their original report, it had observed that the



number of inspection and sample analysis should be increased to ensure good quality of foodgrains to beneficiaries and to prevent storage losses. "The Department in their Action Taken Reply has stated that increasing the frequency of inspections visits and sample analysis is subjected to availability of adequate staff. To achieve this, the Division is in the process of revival of posts, promotion and new recruitment on priority basis.

The Department has also informed that they have already formulated a SOP for storage loss/gain for stored goods. The Committee feel that raising

the number of inspections and sample analysis will have a significant effect on the quality of food grains," said the report. As per the report, the Ministry in its action taken reply has said: "The Storage & Research Division, D/o Food and Public Distribution has a mandate to ensure good quality foodgrains provided to the beneficiaries through various social security programmes.

"In pursuance to this, officer/official of QCC of S&R Division conducts inspection of various Food Storage Depots (FSDs) of FCI/state agencies, Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC), State Warehousing Corporations (SWC), Rice Mills (RMs) Fair Price Shops (FPS), Rail Heads & Truck Heads, etc. Prior to 2018, the inspections of FPS were conducted only after receipt of any references/complaints. Presently, FPS inspections were included under targeted activities during 2020."

# 23K techies laid off in 82 desi startups

IANS NEW DELHI

s layoffs continue to deep-As layous continue to any more than 23,000 employees have been laid off by at least 82 startups in India, and the list is only growing, the media reported.

According to a report in Inc42, 19 edtech startups, including four unicorns, have alone sacked more than 8,460 employees to date. The startups that lead the layoff tally include BYJU'S, Ola, OYO, Meesho, MPL, LivSpace, Innovaccer, Udaan, Unacademy and

Vedantu, among others. Home interiors and renovation platform Livspace this week laid off at least 100 employees as part of cost-cutting measures. Last week, SaaS platform for online stores Dukaan laid off nearly 30 per cent of its workforce, or around 60 employees — its second layoff in about six months.

# | BPCL opens 19 EV fast-charging corridors in Karnataka, Kerala, TN

PTI ■ KOCHI

 $B_{\text{Corporation}}^{\text{harat}} \ \ _{\text{Limited}}^{\text{Petroleum}}$ (BPCL) has announced that it has launched 19 EV fast-charging corridors along 15 highways in Karnataka, Kerala and

At approximately every 100 km on the corridors, one can find an EV fast-charging station, a top BPCL official said at an event here on Friday. "The fast-charging stations have been installed between 110 fuel stations which have been divided into various electric

corridors. **BPCL** Executive Director Incharge (Retail) P S Ravi said the company had launched three corridors with 19 fuel stations in Kerala, six corridors with 33 fuel stations in Karnataka and 10 corridors with 58 fuel stations in Tamil Nadu. "It takes just 30 minutes to charge an EV, giving a driving range of up to 125 km at our fuel stations. Therefore we have maintained a distance of

100 km between two charging stations," Pushp Kumar Nayar, Head of Retail in the South, said at the launch.

Ravi said the fast chargers were easy to use and could be self-operated without any manual assistance, even though support staff would be available if needed.

"BPCL has digitised the entire EV charger locator, charger operations and transaction process through the HelloBPCL app for an online hassle-free and transparent user experience," Ravi added.

The company has launched EV corridors connecting important religious and tourist destinations with cities, such as Tirupati in Andhra Pradesh and Bandipur National Park in Karnataka, Guruvayoor and Kadampuzha temples in Kerala, Vallarpadam National shrine of Basilica at Kochi, Koratty and Markaz Knowledge City in Thrissur, Kanyakumari and Meenakshi Amman Temple in Madurai

### **BUSINESS BRIEF**

AIIMS TO GET WAITING HALL, BHOOMI POOJAN HELD

and their attendees, a Waiting Hall will soon come up in the premises of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) New Delhi. The hall will be built by Dhanuka Group as a part of its corporate social responsibility



initiatives. The Bhoomi Poojan of the hall was performed today in the august presence of Dr. M. Sreenivas, Director, AIIMS; Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel, Chairman, National Green Tribunal (NGT) and RG. Agarwal, Chairman, Dhanuka Group. The 80x80 meter size facility is being built near Community Centre in the AIIMS premises and expected to bring major relief to waiting patients and accompanying relatives and well-wishers. It is likely to be completed in four months and will have an attached washroom, drinking water facility and a canteen facility for refreshment. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Sreenivas said, "It's a model example of a corporate helping a public institution in bringing facilities for our people. AIIMS is known worldwide for its excellent medical treatment and healthcare. This facility (waiting room) will bring major respite for waiting patients and accompanying relatives/well-wishers.

# Murgappa, Premji to acquire Lotus Surgicals for ₹348 cr

Chennai: Murugappa Group's engineering firm Tube Investments of India and (TII) Azim Premji's private equity fund Premji Invest announced on Saturday that together they would be acquiring Lotus Surgicals, a maker of wound closure products, for a sum of Rs 348 crore. Tube Investments will invest Rs 233 crore for 67 per cent stake, while Premji Invest will pick up the remaining 33 per cent at Rs 115 crore

of Lotus Surgicals. "Tube Investments and Premji Invest on Saturday signed a share purchase agreement to acquire 100 per cent equity capital of Lotus Surgicals Pvt Ltd from India Medical Consumables Holdings Ltd, a Samara Capital entity, and other shareholders", a statement released here said. The two companies are partnering for the acquisition with the objec-

tive of setting up a medical

from the existing shareholders



affordable price points, the statement added. Plans for scaling up the platoform include organic and inorganic acquisitions. "The acquisition of Lotus Surgicals Pvt Ltd marks our

entry into the med-tech business. We believe that the Indian medical industry is expected to be one of the fastest growing sectors driven by both demand and supply side factors," TII executive chairman M A M Arunachalam said.

# ChatGPT has power to change healthcare: Report

IANS NEW DELHI

OpenAI's ChatGPT, which can write original prose and chat with human fluency, holds the potential to completely change healthcare, according to a report on Thursday.

The report by Global Data, a data and analytics company, said that the revolutionary technology is coming faster than most people in the industry currently recognise.

It estimates the total Artificial Intelligence (AI) market will be worth \$383.3 billion in 2030, with a robust 21 per cent compound annual growth rate (CAGR) from 2022 to 2030."ChatGPT can be used to assist doctors with bureaucrat-



ic tasks such as writing patient letters so doctors can spend more time on patient interaction. More importantly, chatbots have the potential to increase the effectiveness and accuracy of the processes for preventive care, symptom iden-

care," said Tina Deng, Principal Medical Devices Analyst at GlobalData, in a statement. AI integration into chatbots and virtual assistants can motivate and interact with patients. It can review a patient's symp-

diagnostic advice and different options like virtual check-ins or face-to-face visits with a healthcare professional. This can reduce the work-

load for hospital staff, increase the efficiency of patient flow, and save healthcare costs. During the Covid-19 pandemic, chatbots have been developed for contactless screening of Covid-19 symptoms in healthcare institutions and to help answer questions from the public.

Chatbots can answer patient queries about medical products and share brand news customers. Pharmaceutical and medical device companies can benefit

from using AI-enabled virtual

service processes and give patients round-the-clock atten-Additionally, chatbots can

be used for social purposes, increasing patient engagement. Chatbots offer advice on how to maintain health after treatment. They send automated reminders to take medications and re-visit information. Meanwhile, a recent study

in the Iournal of The National Cancer Institute Cancer Spectrum, showed that when it comes to answering people's questions about cancer, especially regarding myths and misconceptions, ChatGPT was found 97 per cent accurate in providing the correct information. The AI was so accurate

unaware whether the answers came from ChatGPT or the National Cancer Institute. However, the usage of chatbots in patient care and medical research raises several ethical concerns. As massive patient data is

fed into machine learning to improve the accuracy of chatbots, patient information is vulnerable. The information provided by chatbots might be more inaccurate and mislead ing, depending on the sources fed into the chatbots. "Regardless of the risks, AIpowered chatbots will be used widely in the healthcare industry. More regulations are expected to govern the health uses of chatbots,"Deng said.

# I HAVE PLANNED A SPECIAL DELIVERY FOR THIS IPL, SAYS SHIVAM

ujarat Titans fast bowler Shivam Mavi says in a developing a "special delivery" for the upcoming IPL.

There is still some work left Shivam Mavi says he is on it before it is executed.

"I have planned a special delivery for this IPL, will not mention here what it is but hopefully I am able to execute it and then I will talk about it. I am at 99 per cent with it, the work is still in progress," he said.

Mavi also said the defending champions have overcome the challenge of having a weak bench strength in their maiden season last year, and is confident of a strong show with the bat late in the order.

"You would have witnessed that (lower order) batting has become very important for all teams in the last 1-2 years, irrespective of the teams whether it is your country or IPL or any domestic side.

"If you are able to execute 2-3 hits then it is very beneficial to your side. I am backing myself to score say 30-35 runs towards



the end with the tail-end batters," Mavi told media during an interaction on Saturday evening.

have worked hard to bolster The 24-year-old right-arm their bench strength this season. fast bowler Mavi, who was ear-"Honestly there is no pres-

lier a part of the Kolkata Knight sure (on Gujarat Titans). The Riders camp, said Gujarat Titans kind of cricket we played last year wherein everyone played their respective roles, similarly, this year too we would want to

also have bolstered our bench strength, we felt we lacked on this front so we worked on it," he

play our roles. But this year we

Mavi added that the fringe bowlers along with youngsters will look to impress in the IPL to earn a place in the national

"The bowlers aim to try and perform here and get a berth with the national side. My aim is to do whatever I can for the team in terms of my performance. I do not think of things too far ahead. I just focus on whatever is ahead of me," he

Mavi said he has worked hard on his fitness to overcome some major issues, and his overall game has improved having played domestic cricket regular-

"I have focussed a lot on my batting over the last two years, I have improved a lot as well. I am trying to work as hard as possible to be useful to my team. I have focussed on managing my workload. Since I am able to maintain that, I am

playing cricket regularly," he

He added, "I have worked on my hitting. I always used to bat well but could not hit those sixes easily. I have worked very hard on that and have got some good returns too. I have also put in a lot of work on my fitness. My glutes and core were weak, but now I am feeling very

Heaping praise on his franchise and India T20I captain Hardik Pandya, Mavi said, "Hardik bhai never pressurises young players; he only backs them. There is a very light environment in the Gujarat camp and whenever a youngster comes in, he experiences a free setup. When the atmosphere is good then players are naturally able to perform."

Mavi also praised Gujarat Titans coach and former India player Ashish Nehra for his policy of players-first.

"He gives you a free hand, you are required to go to the field and utilise your time well. If you want to rest then you take a rest

"It is not in our hands no?", she continued. "It is in the hands of the officials. You can

led their respective teams into

the final of the five-team tour-

nament after 20 league games

hoped that the WPL is a start of

something special in Indian

the success of national side and

hoped the same for WPL.

Both the captains who have

talk to them," Kaur added.



# All-rounders will play big part because of 'Impact Player' rule: RCB's Hesson

**PTI** ■ BENGALURU

Royal Challengers Bangalore's director of cricket Mike Hesson likes the newly-introduced 'Impact Player' rule and feels all-rounders will have a bigger role to play this IPL because of the innovation.

Under the 'Impact Player' rule, a batter or bowler can be replaced in the middle of the game as per match situation, in

order to make it more exciting.
"I think we heard about the Impact Player before the auction, so obviously we looked at it and thought about how can we maximise it. Potential for the allrounder to play a big part. So actually there is some strategy involved in it," Hesson said in a video posted on RCB's twitter

"I quite like it... I actually thought it brought a little intrigue. You could introduce the player anytime. So whether the batter is being dismissed or not... It was a nice development." The Kiwi, however, was of

handle.

cricket. Lanning said Australia's the view that two different team WBBL has played a big role in sheets at the toss is set to negate the Impact Player rule quite a bit.

"It<sup>†</sup>s a substitute ruÎe. So you name at the toss whether you have a batting eleven which will obviously be stronger," Hesson

"And if you bat first you will swap out a batter and bring in an extra bowler so vice versa and the other way around. So after the toss, you give them your batting 11 and bowling 11. So it's not an impact rule now it's a sub-

Teams can also review wide and no balls in the upcoming IPL, and Hesson said it's a welcome move. "It is already being used in

WPL I think the more people

become used to it the more instinctively they will look to challenge I think it's a good rule.
"I guess what you don't want is (for it to) be the umpire's decision to be the highlight of the game" he said

the game," he said.

"It removes that (confusion) of whether it's a waisthigh no ball or whether it's called a wide when flicked pads or vice versa actually. All the players and spectators want is as many decisions right as possible to take a bit pressure off the umpire which I think is a good thing."

Talking about other rules to be introduced in this year's IPL, Hesson said: "So if you don't complete your 19th over by the time you have to bring an extra fielder inside the circle.

"That rule has been in place in other tournaments around the world and will be here for the first time in the IPL. There won't be as many discussions between the batter and the bowler. It is a

RCB will open their campaign against five-time champions Mumbai Indians at the Chinnaswamy Stadium here on

good rule?

# My left leg has healed but will take months to be fit: Maxwell

**PTI** ■ BENGALURU

ce Australia and Royal Challengers Bangalore 🖊 all-rounder Ğlenn Maxwell has said that while the injury to his left leg had healed, it'll take a "number of months" before he is back to full fitness as he prepares for the upcoming edition of the IPL.

The RCB player had suffered a broken left fibula in a horrific mishap during a friend's birthday party days after Australia were knocked out of the T20 World Cup at home in

November last year.

The grievous injuries required urgent surgery and a long period of rehabilitation.

Maxwell returned to the ODI side, which won the three-match corios against India 2.1 match series against India 2-1 recently, and the cricketer is now looking forward to playing for RCB on its home turf, the Chinnaswamy Stadium, after

In a video posted by RCB on social media ahead of the IPL season, scheduled to commence on Mar 31, Maxwell, said, "The leg's okay. It's going to be a number of months before I'm 100 per

The 34-year-old added that he is hopeful of doing the job for RCB following his recovery from the injury.

"Hopefully it's (leg) good enough to get through the tournament and still do the job." With IPL 2023 set to return

to the home-and-away format after two years of playing in biobubbles due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Maxwell said he was pumped up to play in front of the home fans. "Finally getting back after a

couple of years (of playing inside bio-bubbles). It's pretty exciting and I'm pretty pumped to play in front of our home fans," added Maxwell, one of the three players retained by RCB ahead of IPL 2022. He had contributed 301

runs and taken six wickets in 13 matches during the previous edi-

# Players did not put boundary ropes, says Harmanpreet on short WPL boundary limits

ndia and Mumbai Indians captain Harmanpreet Kaur on Saturday declined to comment on the issue of short boundary in the Women's Premier League (WPL), saying that administrators and not players should be deciding on The inaugural WPL began

earlier this month on the directive from the BCCI that the boundary limits should be brought in, five metres lesser than last month's T20 World Cup to a maximum 60 metres.

The decision was to facilitate more high-scoring games and entertainment for crowds in the stadiums and watching elsewhere in terms of more boundaries and sixes.

ormer Australia Test skip-

per Tim Paine has indicated that has in

up a coaching job following his

retirement from all forms of

cricket recently.
Paine, who captained

Australia in 23 Tests following

his elevation to the post in the

wake of the 2018 ball-tampering

saga in Cape Town, had stepped

down as skipper days before the

start of the 2021-22 Ashes series

at home when he was accused of

sending lewd text messages to a

Cricket Tasmania official earli-

domestic career game for

Tasmania against Queensland in

Sheffield Shield here last week.

when you move on from some-

thing that you love doing and

you care deeply about, but I'll still

be involved in the game of

cricket," Paine was quoted as say-

Paine, 38, played his last

"It's an emotional time

er on in his career.

ed that he is likely to take

**PTI** ■ HOBART

Ex-Australia skipper

role post retirement

Paine hints at coaching

WPL 2023 -- the DY Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai and the Brabourne Stadium -- witnessed boundaries being brought in as close as 42-44 metres, with plenty of batters making most of the opportunity and scores in excess of 200 being notched up with ease at

While the high scores did dry up as the pitches tired out gradually, becoming slow and assisting spin bowlers, batters still enjoyed success on shorter boundary limits.

At one stage, New Zealand d Royal Challengers Bangalore all-rounder Sophie Devine even made a plea for pushing back the boundary lim-

Ahead of the final on

ing by cricket.Com.Au, hinting

he would explore possibilities of

The wicketkeeper-batter, who had retreated into a shell for

more than a year following the sexting scandal, had returned to

play for Tasmania last year

despite not having a state con-

more year with Tassie

(Tasmania) and finish on a pos-

itive note with some good mem-

ories," said Paine, who played 35

Tests and an equal number of

"I just wanted to have one

making a career in coaching.



Sunday here at the Brabourne Stadium, Mumbai Indians captain Kaur shot back when the topic came up, although in jest, saying that players are not the ones to decide if boundary limits should be increased from next season onwards.

"Ham logo ne thodi na

rope lagaya hai. Jinhone rope lagaya hai aap unko poocho na. (We did not put the boundary ropes in place. You can ask whoever has done that)," Kaur replied laughing during her ioint media conference with Delhi Capitals' Meg Lanning ahead of the WPL final on

"WBBL has played a massive role in the development of cricket in Australia and around the world as well. It provides great opportunities to players and exposes everybody to pressure situations in big games, the need to perform when it really

# matters," Lanning said. New Zealand beat Sri Lanka by 198 runs in 1st one-day match

AP AUCKLAND

Harry Shipley took 5-31 as Sri Lanka was bowled out for 76 on Saturday to lose the first one-day international against New Zealand by 198 runs.

New Zealand made 274 batting first on a drop-in pitch at Eden Park and Sri Lanka was dismissed for its lowest-ever ODI total against New Zealand, its fifth-lowest in all one-day internationals. Sri Lanka lost its first two

wickets at 14, its third at 20 and its fourth and fifth at 31 as its innings unraveled inside the first 10 overs. When a break was taken after 14.2 overs to honor victims,

rescuers and recovery workers involved in Cyclone Gabrielle which battered New Zealand's North Island on Feb. 14, Sri Lanka was 49-7. Wickets continued to fall steadily and when Sri Lanka was

all out after only 19.5 overs, it

was for the second lowest one-

day international total at Eden Park. Angelo Mathews, who was playing his first ODI in two years, was one of only three Sri Lanka batsmen to reach double

Sri Lanka's first wicket fell to runout in the sixth over. Shipley took his first wicket in spectacular style when his

Pathum Nissanka jagged back through the batter's shot and uprooted his leg stump.

He also dismissed Kusal Mendis (0), Charith Asalanka (9), Chamika Karunaratne 11 and captain Dasun Shanaka for a first-ball duck. Shipley was playing his first match for New Zealand in New Zealand after making his debut in India late

"It was pretty cool, not what I was expecting to do when I came to the ground," Shipley said. "The batters said there was enough there and the score we had on the board was going to be tricky so that gave us confidence to go out there and do

Shanaka said his team went

out to bat confident that New Zealand's total was "chaseable" at Eden Park which is noted for

its short boundaries. The way we started, I thought it was going to be a very good game," he said. "The way Shipley bowled, the movement he got and the bounce was responsible for the things that happened tonight so credit should be given to him."

New Zealand wouldn't have been confident when its innings ended at 274, not a massive score by Eden Park standards. Finn Allen top-scored with 51 and Rachin Ravindra made 49 on debut as New Zealand posted what seemed a moderate total.

South Africa-born opener Chad Bowes, on debut at 30, struck the first ball of the match and his international career for four to announce that intention. But after reaching 108-2 in the 19th over, New Zealand lost three wickets for 44 runs, its momentum slowed and couldn't be entirely recovered.

# P Warriorz rue Sciver-Brunt's dropped catch after loss to Mumbai Indians

**PTI** MUMBAI

Warriorz captain Alyssa Healy on Friday rued allrounder Nat Sciver-Brunt's dropped catch early on in her innings as the batter went on to score an unbeaten 38-ball 72 to power Mumbai Indians to a 72run win in the Women's Premier League Eliminator game.

Sophie Ecclestone spilled a regulation catch at mid-on when Sciver-Brunt was just starting out. The Mumbai Indians allrounder made the most of the reprieve by striking nine fours and two sixes to guide her team to 182 for 4. UP Warriors were then dismissed for 110 in 17.4 overs, with Isabelle Wong taking a stunning hat-trick.

"We dropped her (Nat) on

six and she went on to make a 20-ball 50. I will back our decision to bowl first, it is something that we have done really well this whole tournament. I will back our ability in that regard," Healy said after Mumbai Indians advance to the final.

"We have got a lot of spinners, it (wicket) was taking a lot of turn. So, I think defending on that wicket would have been even harder. I still back our decision there, it got a little bit away from us. At the end, I thought 170-odd was a par score, we just needed to bat well but we quite did not do that," said the Australian.

Healy admitted the UP Warriorz needed to work on their fielding, which was an area of concern during the inau-



gural WPL season. She also pointed out inconsistency in the top order during their cam-

paign.
"It has probably been the tale of our season, losing early wickets in clumps, you cannot get any momentum in your chase. They (MI) bowled pretty well and had better execution as a batting group. We will reflect on that, probably, as a top three or four. We were not consistently great throughout the whole tournament. If you are going to win a tournament you are going to bank on your top-three to make the heap of runs, and we were not able to do that," Healy said.

The UP Warriorz captain said it was a difficult decision exclude a world-class fast bowler like Shabnim Ismail from the XI,

adding the team was hoping the spinners would get the job done. "T-Mag (Tahlia McGrath)

was probably a (pace bowling) option but I backed our spinners to do the job nine times out of 10. We probably did not execute quite as much at the back end. It is really hard to have someone like Shabnim Ismail sitting on the bench for us, but, at the moment the way we are set up, we need the extra batting. I bet the six bowlers that we used tonight (Friday) to get the job done more often than not. They executed for 15 out of 20 overs and it got away from us towards the end," Healy said. Wong, who returned figures of 4-0-15-4 including the first WPL hat-trick, said it was cru-

cial for her to execute her plans

there (among the best)," Wong said. "When I'm not out bowling well, I look back at my 24 balls (and see) which ones I want to have a go at again. How many did I not execute and want to have a go at again? In terms of those balls, it (hat-trick) will be right up there," she said.
"I made a conscious effort to

execute it. There have been a few moments in the past when I have been in similar situations where I am too much in the moment or like you said, hyperactivity, to actually focus on it and execute. I was trying to become quite clear at the end of my bowling mark. I wanted to bowl a yorker and nail it, but missed it a little bit," she said about her hart-















शिवराज सिंह चौहान मुख्यमंत्री, मध्यप्रदेश

# मध्यप्रदेशकी सिंचाई समता में अभ्तप्रविवृद्धि

- पिछले ३ साल में ६ लाख हेक्टेयर से अधिक की नई सिंचाई क्षमता विकसित
- नर्मदा कछार की ₹ 24 हजार 500 करोड़ से अधिक लागत की 5 लाख 50 हजार हेक्टेयर से अधिक की सिंचाई क्षमता वाली 12 परियोजनाओं के निर्माण की शुरुआत
- र ४४ हजार ६०० करोड़ से अधिक लागत की केन-बेतवा लिंक परियोजना
- देश की पहली वृहद प्रेशराइज्ड पाइप सिंचाई परियोजनाएँ-मोहनपुरा, कुंडालिया। अनुमानित ₹ 8500 करोड़ की लागत (2,85,000 हेक्टेयर सिंचाई की क्षमता, इस वर्ष 1,25,000 हेक्टेयर में सिंचाई)



सिंचाई क्षमता



March 26, 2023

# a Common the pioneer of the pioneer

The predator wants your silence. It feeds their power, entitlement and they want it to feed your shame





# ROBOTS & RITUALS

# Robots are performing rituals — some devotees fear they'll replace worshippers, writes HOLLY WALTERS.

t isn't just artists and teachers who are losing sleep over advances in automation and artificial intelligence. Robots are being brought into Hinduism's holiest rituals – and not all worshippers are happy about it.

In 2017, a technology firm in India introduced a robotic arm to perform "aarti," a ritual in which a devotee offers an oil lamp to the deity to symbolise the removal of darkness. This particular robot was unveiled at the Ganpati festival, a yearly gathering of millions of people in which an icon of Ganesha, the elephant-headed god, is taken out in a procession and immersed in the Mula-Mutha river in Pune in central India.

Ever since, that robotic aarti arm has inspired several prototypes, a few of which continue to regularly perform the ritual across India today, along with a variety of other religious robots throughout East Asia and South Asia. Robotic rituals even now include an animatronic temple elephant in Kerala on India's southern coast.

Yet this kind of religious robotic usage has led to increasing debates about the use of AI and robotic technology in devotion and worship. Some devotees and priests feel that this represents a new horizon in human innovation that will lead to the betterment of society, while others worry that using robots to replace practitioners is a bad omen for the future.

As an anthropologist who specialises in religion, however, I focus less on the theology of robotics and more on what people actually say and do when it comes to their spiritual practices. My current work on religious robots primarily centers on the notion of "divine object-persons," where otherwise inanimate things are viewed as having a living, conscious essence.

My work also looks at the uneasiness Hindus and Buddhists express about ritual-performing automatons replacing people and whether those automatons actually might make better devotees.

### RITUAL AUTOMATION IS NOT NEW

Ritual automation, or at least the idea of robotic spiritual practice, isn't new in South Asian religions.

Historically, this has included anything from special pots that drip water continuously for bathing rituals that Hindus routinely perform for their deity icons, called abhisheka, to wind-powered Buddhist prayer wheels — the kinds often seen in yoga studios and supply stores.

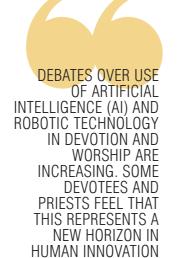
While the contemporary version of automated ritual might look like downloading a phone app that chants mantras without the need for any prayer object at all, such as a mala or rosary, these new versions of ritual-performing robots have prompted complicated conversations.

Thaneswar Sarmah, a Sanskrit scholar and literary critic, argues that the first Hindu robot appeared in the stories of King Manu, the first king of the human race in Hindu belief.

Manu's mother, Saranyu – herself the daughter of a great architect – built an animate statue to perfectly perform all of her household chores and ritual obligations.

Folklorist Adrienne Mayorremarks similarly that religious stories about mechanized icons from Hindu epics, such as the mechanical war chariots of the Hindu engineer god Visvakarman, are often viewed as the progenitors of religious robots

Furthermore, these stories are sometimes interpreted by modern-day nationalists as evidence that ancient India has previously invented everything from spacecraft to missiles.



THAT WILL LEAD TO

ETY, WHILE OTHERS

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BETTERMENT OF SOCI-





### MODERN TRADITIONS OR TRADITIONALLY MODERN?

However, the recent use of AI and robotics in religious practice is leading to concerns among Hindus and Buddhists about the kind of future to which automation could lead. In some instances, the debate among Hindus is about whether automated religion promises the arrival of humanity into a bright, new, technological future or if it is simply evidence of the coming apocalypse.

In other cases, there are concerns that the proliferation of robots might lead to greater numbers of people leaving religious practice as temples begin to rely more on automation than on practitioners to care for their deities. Some of these concerns stem from the fact that many religions, both in South Asia and globally, have seen significant decreases in the number of young people willing to dedicate their lives to spiritual education and practice over the past few decades. Furthermore, with many families living in a diaspora scattered across the world, priests or "pandits" are often serving smaller and smaller communities

But if the answer to the problem of fewer ritual specialists is more

robots, people still question whether ritual automation will benefit them. They also question the concurrent use of robotic deities to embody and personify the divine, since these icons are programmed by people and therefore reflect the religious views of their engineers.

### DOING RIGHT BY RELIGION

Scholars often note that these concerns all tend to reflect one pervasive theme — an underlying anxiety that, somehow, the robots are better at worshipping gods than humans are. They can also raise inner conflicts about the meaning of life and

one's place in the universe.

For Hindus and Buddhists, the rise of ritual automation is especially concerning because their traditions emphasise what religion scholars refer to as orthopraxy, where greater importance is placed on correct ethical and liturgical behaviour than on specific beliefs in religious doctrines. In other words, perfecting what you do in terms of your religious practice is viewed as more necessary to spiritual advancement than whatever it is you personally believe.

This also means that automated rituals appear on a spectrum that

progresses from human ritual fallibility to robotic ritual perfection. In short, the robot can do your religion better than you can because robots, unlike people, are spiritually incorruptible.

This not only makes robots attractive replacements for dwindling priesthoods but also explains their increasing use in everyday contexts: People use them because no one worries about the robot getting it wrong, and they are often better than nothing when the options for ritual performance are limited.

### SAVED BY A ROBOT

In the end, turning to a robot for religious restoration in modern Hinduism or Buddhism might seem futuristic, but it belongs very much to the present moment. It tells us that Hinduism, Buddhism and other religions in South Asia are increasingly being imagined as post- or transhuman: deploying technological ingenuity to transcend human weaknesses because robots don't get tired, forget what they're supposed to say, fall asleep or leave.

More specifically, this means that robotic automation is being used to perfect ritual practices in East Asia and South Asia – especially in India and Japan – beyond what would be possible for a human devotee, by linking impossibly consistent and flawless ritual accomplishment with an idea of better religion.

Modern robotics might then feel like a particular kind of cultural paradox, where the best kind of religion is the one that eventually involves no humans at all. But in this circularity of humans creating robots, robots becoming gods, and gods becoming human, we've only managed to, once again, re-imagine our-

selves.

(AP/The Conversation)

health 10

# TB: CURABLE & PREVENTABLE

TB, a chronic lung disease, is preventable and largely treatable if detected in time. The lack of awareness, stigma, fear, incomplete TB regimen and difficulties managing adverse drug reactions are killing three persons every minute. A report by THE HEALTH PIONEER.

In India, it is estimated that the five risk factors to which TB cases are mainly attributed are: undernourishment (7,38,000), harmful use of alcohol (2,58,000), smoking (1,10,000), diabetes (1,05,000) and HIV (93,000), as per a report from the Union Health Ministry which was released by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on World TB Day on March 24.

These risk factors together account for 44 percent of the total estimated incident TB in India which aims to eliminate the infectious disease by 2025, five years ahead of the global Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target of 2030.

The number of tuberculosis (TB) cases being reported, which had reached a trough in 2020 because of the Covid pandemic, has started picking up again but is yet to reach the 2019 level of 176.2 cases per lakh population, as per the 'India TB report 2023'.

It shows that notifications

for the disease currently stand at 172 cases per lakh population.

"The year 2022 marks a milestone year for TB surveillance efforts in India, with a record high notification of 24.2 lakh cases; an increase of 13 per cent as compared to 2021," said the report, which is part of the Pradhan Mantri TB Mukt Bharat Abhiyan — the government's programme to eliminate the disease. The total number of MDR/RR (multidrug-resistant or rifampicin-resistant tuberculosis) TB cases diagnosed in 2022 is 63,801, it said.

"Sustaining the momentum of finding missed TB patients by strengthening casefinding efforts (both passive and active case finding) led to the above achievement under the programme. ," the report

India made tuberculosis a 'notifiable' disease in 2012, making it mandatory for cases to be reported to government authorities. At 26 per cent, India has the highest burden of tuberculosis and the rule was to ensure that no case falls out of the system.

Nikshay Poshan Yojana has been launched to provide nutritional support of Rs 500 a month for the disease.

If your child has TB disease, they may have fever, tired-

ness, sweating at night time

and weight loss. If they have

TB disease in the lungs, your

child will have coughing and

chest pain. Symptoms of TB

disease in other parts of the

body depend on the affected

Who is at risk for TB infec-

tion?

Here's what parents should

Children and teens at



DOCTORSPEAK

ty in delivering antibiotics to

the infected area. As a result,

doctors often recommend a

more extended duration of

antibiotic therapy, along with

the use of immobilization

devices to prevent further

damage to the affected bones

therapy, patients with bone

and spine TB may also

Ín addition to antibiotic

A part from lungs, TB can ly 1-2% of all TB cases in the country. body parts such as lymph nodes, pleura, abdomen, genitourinary tract, skin, joints and bones, or meninges. The problem of detecting TB in these body parts also remains a challenge like in genital organs.



Senior Consultant - Spine Surgeon at Indian Spinal Injuries Centre, Delhi Of all the TB cases, bone

and spine TB-- also known as osteoarticular TB-- constitute a significant portion, accounting for approximateBone and spine TB

occurs when Mycobacterium tuberculosis bacteria infect the bones and joints. The disease primarily affects the spine, causing a condition called Pott's disease. It can also affect the long bones of the limbs, hip, and knee joints. The incidence of bone and spine TB in India is high, primarily due to the country's large population, poor sanitation, and inadequate access to healthcare. The disease is more prevalent in rural areas, where access to medical care is limited, and people often live in crowded and unhygienic conditions.

spine TB involves a combination of antibiotics taken over a period of six to nine months, with some patients requiring surgery for the removal of the affected tissue.

The treatment of bone

Treatment of bone and

require nutritional support to promote healing and reduce the risk of further complications. Follow-up care is essential to monitor the patient's response to treat-ment and identify any adverse reactions to medication. Bone and spine TB remains a significant public health challenge in India. With improved access to healthcare, sanitation, and

public education, the incidence of the disease can be

reduced. Early diagnosis and

appropriate treatment

remain the key to the suc-

DR JB SHARMA, Professor, Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, AIIMS,

Tuberculosis can be a major factor in infertility among women. However, since the patients don't show many symptoms, it results in delay in early detection of TB in the uterus or fallopian tubes. If a patient suffers from irregularity in the menstrual cycle either it gets stopped or doesn't happen as per cycle or is unable to conceive for a long time, then there are chances that she may have TB in the could be the woman may have had a history of TB in the past, during childhood.

cause for concern.

Around 30 per cent of the population already has the TB bacteria in their bodies. The

bacteria start to multiply in

viduals... If nutrition balance is

maintained, there is only a 10

per cent chance in one's life-

time to contract the TB dis-

patients with active TB do not

access diagnostic services,

while catastrophic costs asso-

ciated with hospitalization

are a barrier to access for seri-

ally the product of the exagger-

ated concept of contagiousness

ditions, pollution, and low nutrition levels along with the

high incidence rate mean most

Indians carry the bacteria but

can fend off the disease while

their immunity levels are good.

It's for this reason that any dip

in TB notifications is usually a

TB-related stigma is gener-

India's crowded living con-

An estimated 32%

ease," say doctors..

ously ill patients

and fear of infection

immunocompromised indi-

The prime hurdle to tackling TB in the genital organs of women is its complexity in nature and the minimal symptoms that can be detected in the early stages.

Because there is no X-ray for genital organs, it is difficult to detect TB in the first attempt and must rely on three to four parameters for further investi-

While a woman can get completely cured of TB if that happens in her genital organs but conceiving is not always so easy. Around 50-60% of infertile women detected early with TB have a chance of 30-40% pregnancy, and 25-30% can achieve pregnancy through IVF. If the ovaries are healthy then one can also opt for surrogacy unless TB has damaged those too.

If a woman is detected early and under medication for six months, then she has high chances of conceiving.

### **NEWSBRIEFS**

### LACK OF QUALIFIED WORKFORCE HURDLE TO 'WELLNESS FOR ALL'

Making healthcare affordable, accessible and available to all can help one attain the Sustainable Development Goal of ensuring a healthy life and promoting wellbeing for all promoting wellbeing for all age groups, Bhubaneswar Kalita, chairperson of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Health and Family Welfare said on Wodnesday. Wednesday.

"Our main challenge is the lack of a diversified and qualified workforce and we must work towards improving the status quo as the workforce is the soul of our healthcare system," Kalita said at 'Illness To Wellness' Summit, organized by ASSOCHAM, one of the apex trade associations of India. There should also be a focus on improving women's health for the larger interest of families, communities and nations in order to reduce the burden on public healthcare infrastructure and spending, he said.

The key objective of the two-day summit was to initiate a dialogue on promoting and building a 'New India-Healthy India'. Anil Rajput, chairperson, ASSOCHAM National CSR Council, said India is at the cusp of an exciting and transformative time as it aims to reach USD 26 trillion in economic prosperity in its 'Amrit

### **'NAVYA KITS' FOR** ADOLESCENT GIRLS

To help young girls navigate puberty - which is often a time of significant physical and emotional upheaval -Centre for Catalyzing Change (C3) has been working in five schools of Pataudi district, Haryana. The initiative is supported by Open Text, and has been equipping over 1000 ado-lescent girls with life skills, digital and financial literacy, and information on menstrual health and hygiene.

C3 introduced an unique, first-of-its-kind resource -'Navya Kits' - to the girls under this intervention. A collection of products and information that would help these young girls understand and manage their periods and dispel myths and taboos surrounding menstruation, these Navya Kits containing six reusable pads (that would last up to 2 years), a hot water bottle for menstrual pain management, a diary with interactive information on menstrual hygiene and taboos, and a detergent bottle that will their pads. To further supplement wider usage and safe disposal of sanitary napkins, C3 has also begun setting up incinerators in all of the five schools in which the initiative has been running.

Vandana Nair, Lead, Adolescent and Young People Program at C3, "said by providing them with accurate information and resources, we can help these girls understand and manage their menstrual cycle and dispel any myths or taboos surrounding menstruation.'

Dr Tanaya Narendra, popularly known as Dr Cuterus, an

Instagram influencer with over a million followers and author, said "The initiative aims to improve the knowledge of adolescents on life skills, health and wellness, emotional and mental wellbeing, and gender, through participatory processes and digital technology. The program will also link adolescents with appropriate services to address their health needs."

### FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND ROBOTIC TRAINING FACILITY FOR HEALTH-CARE PROFESSIONALS AT AIIMS, DELHI SOON

The AIIMS, Delhi, and India Medtronic Pvt Ltd have signed a pact to co-create and develop a robotic training facility at the premier hospital, which had already floated an expression of interest to establish its campus.

Notably, this is the first-of-its-kind robotic training facility for healthcare professionals in a government setup in India and also the first faculty-led procedural training centre in the Asia-Pacific region.

The public medical research university and hospi-

tal in New Delhi said that it will train healthcare professionals on robotic-associated minimally invasive surgeries through technical and procedural training.

The implementation of a robotic surgery training for the surgery training for

robotic surgery training facility will enrich the clinical community and analysis munity and enhance patient outcomes by utilizing procedural and evidence-based medical education activities.

### SHORTAGE OF DIALYSIS CENTRES, MANPOWER TAKING TOLL ON KIDNEY PATIENTS: EY-NATHEALTH REPORT

Lack of access to dialysis centres and machines and skilled workforce among others needs is leaving the patients of kidney ailments at the receiving end, according to a report by Ernst & Young (EY) in collaboration with the Healthcare Federation of (Nathealth).

Nearly 2.2 lakh patients develop ESRD annually in India, leading to an additional dialysis demand of 3.4 crore treatment sessions while there are just around 5,000 existing dialysis centres and 3,340 nephrologists. While there are two major types of complementary treatments hemodialysis (HD) and peritoneal dialysis (PD), almost 94 per cent of the dialysis patients in India are on HD treatment.

The report has suggested access to standalone dialysis centres through PPP and non-PPP channels, optimising use of human resources by maintaining standards and mitigating other costs, resolving empanelment delays through provision of default deemed approved status and increasing reimbursement rates considering the overall cost of treatment to providers.

For wider adaptability of PD treatment, it favored PPP mode for PD treatment delivery with private service providers providing consumables and public sector providing care among others.

### and spine TB poses unique challenges due to the difficulcessful management of bone and spine TB in India. genital organs. Another reason

Are living in a household with an adult who has active tuberculosis

Were born in a country that has a high prevalence of

Are visiting a country where TB is endemic and who have extended contact with people who live there Some groups of children

have a high risk of severe disease if they become infected. higher risk include those who: These include:

Children who are younger than 4 years old, or teenagers who have started puberty

Children who have a problem with their immune system (including those who are infected with HIV, or take medications that will decrease their body's immune

Tuberculosis usually is spread when an infected adult cough.

How does TB spread?

coughs the bacteria into the air. These germs are inhaled by the child or teen, who then becomes infected.

Children younger than about 12 years old with TB of the lungs rarely infect other people. This is because young children tend to have very few bacteria in their mucus secretions. Also, their coughs typically do not spread germs as effectively as when adults

Signs and symptoms of TB disease in children

and adolescents exposed to tuberculosis don't become ill. When the bacteria reach their lungs, the body's immune system attacks the germs and prevents further spread. This symptom-free infection can only be identified by a positive blood test or skin test. However, even if your child has a symptom-free infection, they still must be treated. This is to

reduce the risk that, in the future, the infection will worsen into disease. Occasionally, in a small number of children Fortunately, most children or teens without proper treatment, the infection does progress. It can cause fever, fatigue, irritability, a persistent cough, weakness, heavy and fast breathing, night sweats, swollen glands, weight loss, and poor growth.

> How is TB diagnosed? If your child is at risk for

getting TB or having severe disease, they should be tested.

# Patients Will Have to Wait for New TB Drug Therapy

On World TB Day on March 24, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the roll out of a shorter three-month course on preventive treatment towards achieving the goal of TB elimination by 2025, five years before the global goal 2030. But given that the jury is out on the effectiveness of the new regimen on the Indian population, the public launch of the new prevention programme is not likely to happen very soon, finds ARCHANA JYOTI

The proposed new regimen that the Prime Minister was referring to is BPaL (Bedaquiline, Pretomanid and Linezolid) and BPaLM (Bedaquiline, Pretomanid, Linezolid and Moxifloxacin), which includes a maximum of three to four drugs daily. While BPaL is for pre- Extensively-Drug-Resistant (pre-XDR) ŤB patients, BPaLM is for multidrug-resistant TB patients.

The new treatment which cures highly drug-resistant strains of tuberculosis will drastically shorten the treatment period—from existing 18-to-24 months' regimen to six months.

Clearly, with the treatment involving five pills of the three drugs daily taken over just six months—it makes easier to administer. This compares to between 30 and 40 drugs that multiple-drug resistant TB patients take each day for up to

However, while several countries including South Africa have already launched the shorter treatment therapy as recommended by the WHO, in India and the Prime Minister has raised hopes of several TB patients in India waiting for the new regimen, actual public launch is expected to happen only in 2025, if experts are to be "An ongoing ICMR study is

evaluating the BPaL regimen in many centres across the country, including my hospital. Preliminary results are expected to be shared in 2024 and by 2025 we will have the final results to be able to roll out this regimen," Dr Surya Kant, Head of the Respiratory Medicine Department at King George's Medical University (KGMU) disclosed to a news agency

Overall, there are 13 clinical trial sites in five states in the country which are conducting the BPaL regimen for pre-Extensively-Drug-Resistant (pre-XDR) patients. A total, 400 patients are enrolled in the trial, which started in October

2021 and is presently in the analysis stage.

A senior official from the Union Health Ministry explained that, "Given the degree of resistance in India, we have to be sure that BPaL results can be sustained and reinfections won't happen. Hence, ICMR is waiting for the trials to be completed."

BPaL was developed by non-for-profit outfit TB Alliance and was first approved in the US in 2019.

The new WHO guidelines now recognize that the vast majority of patients with drug-resistant TB can be cured with a highly efficacious, safe, and affordable all oral, sixmonth regimen. The next challenge is for all countries, especially those with high burdens of DR-TB, to rapidly adopt this new standard to make treatment much easier for patients to take and save lives," according to TB Alliance president Mel Spigelman.

"In high TB burden coun-



Given the degree of resistance in India, we have to be sure that **BPaL** results can be sustained and reinfections won't happen. Hence, ICMR is waiting for the trials to be completed

tries including India, the availability of a 6-month all-oral regimen for the treatment of people with drug resistant TB can be a game-changer in ensuring that more patients can start and complete treatment sooner, with better outcomes and lesser side-effects," agreed Dr Animesh Sinha, HIV/TB/Hepatitis Advisor at Médecins Sans Frontières/Doctors Without Borders (MSF) UK.

DR-TB patients have two issues with the present regimen-adherence to a prolonged course of treatment and multidrug toxicity, often contributing to the poor adherence.

The multiple drug toxicity includes side-effects like hearing loss, peripheral neuropathy, renal problems, depression and suicidal tendencies. Adherence to the treatment with this drug toxicity becomes a huge problem for many patients, as it is a prolonged treatment course.

"Results of the TB PRACTECAL clinical trial

(Pragmatic Clinical Trial for more effective, less toxic MDR-TB treatment regimen) show that the all oral six-month long BPaLM regimen was found to be effective in 89% of the patients (regardless of their HIV status) with rifampicin resistant TB of the lungs, as compared to less than 60% efficacy of the almost 24 month long standard of care regimen. Patients on BPaLM also had fewer side effects as compared to those on standard of care", Sinha added. "Those who do not have

fluoroquinolone resistance can receive BPaLM regimen and those who are later found to have fluoroguinolone resistance, can be given BPaL regimen for the rest of their treatment", pointed out Leena Menghaney of MSF Access Campaign.

Toxicity related to Linezolid, one of the medicines used in these regimens, is of concern. But reducing the dosage and duration of linezolpatient friendly and less toxic, without affecting their high efficacy, she added. India remains one of the

id has made the regimens more

top 30 high TB burden countries and one of the 10 countries that have a high burden of all three: TB, HIV-associated TB and MDR-TB and rifampicin-resistant TB. India saw a 13 percent increase in tuberculosis cases in 2022 compared to 2021, according to the annual India TB report released Friday. TB, a chronic lung disease

is preventable and largely treatable if detected and treated in time. However, tuberculosis continues to be the top infectious killer, causing over 1.6 million deaths each year while last year there were more than half a million drug resistant TB cases in the world. More than 10 million cases

are recorded every year. The disease has worsened as it has become increasingly resistant to available medicines.



# Credibility of China as peacekeeper under lens

Vladimir Putin, the President of the Russian Federation, is facing an arrest warrant from the International Criminal Court (ICC), based in The Hague. The primary purpose of the ICC order is to make Putin accountable for the alleged atrocities he committed in the war against Ukraine. The ICC decision is historic in the sense that for the first time, the leader of a permanent member of the UN Security Council (UNSC) has been directly indicted.

Meanwhile, the US leadership is simply urging China to influence Putin to stop war crimes in Ukraine. Spokesman of the National Security Council of the White House John Kirby called on Chinese President Xi Jinping to persuade Putin to withdraw troops from Ukraine. Kirby added that a ceasefire would not be sufficient to stop the mindless violence. He said, "We hope President Xi will press President Putin to cease bombing Ukrainian cities, hospitals and schools." It is significant at this juncture that the sole "superpower" has indicated its willingness to work together with China to prevent a likely Third World War. Although, many say it has already begun with the Russia-Ukraine War.

However, the request has come at a time when Washington has intensified its attack on Chinese expansion, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region. Washington's profound distrust in the Chinese leadership as displayed in the recent assertions is counterproductive. In such a situation, the US's hope that China will be successful in stopping Putin from further war crimes in Ukraine is misplaced. Washington is of the opinion that China will press Russia for a ceasefire. But this will eventually allow the mighty Russian troops to stay inside the occupied territories of Ukraine as long as they want. This will only help Moscow consolidate its position within the sovereign territory of



Volunteers and cynologists search for bodies of killed Ukrainian and Russian soldiers near a damaged Russian tank in the Kharkiv region, Ukraine on March 24 (Roman Chop via AP)

President's visit to Russia mean

at this time? It is equally impor-

tant and critical for the US and

the western world to under-

stand what China wants from

the current geopolitical shift. It

is certain that once Washington

seriously gauges Beijing's core

concerns at the world stage, it

would be much easier for its

policy makers to handle the

Asian dragon. Unless it is taken

care of, the misunderstanding

and probably gross miscalcu-

lation might take place between

China and the US, particular-

ly in the Asia-Pacific region.

For now, it seems, both the

nations can easily avoid the his-

toric Thucydides Trap that led

Athens and Sparta to a bloody

Further, this again will simply legitimise Putin's occupation of significant portions of Ukraine. It is clear that such a move will be suicidal and will once again embolden Putin to gather more strength to push Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy into a corner. In fact, this offers the tiring Russian forces, along with the Wagner mercenaries, to plan better and learn from the initial mistakes that Moscow made while trying to occupy the capital city of Kyiv and some other critical pockets. Certainly, a ceasefire will allow Russia to target the Ukrainian soldiers much better and also provide enough legroom for Kyiv to marshal more resources to halt the

advancing Russian Army. Truly, a ceasefire does not lead this bloody war to an end.

That means Beijing pushing Moscow for a ceasefire will simply provide Putin another chance to continue his war game and challenge the US-led NATO alliance in Europe. It is a big question for Xi whether his 12-point agenda will be good enough to persuade Putin to withdraw from the Ukrainian war theatre. It is again doubtful whether China's new role of peacemaker will be acceptable to the international community at a time when that country is only becoming aggressive both towards its neighbours and many others in the Asia-Pacific

What does the Chinese During all these strategic

manoeuvring, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida visited Ukraine and met Zelenskyy. This signalled how the US-led alliance is putting up against the bloody war launched by Putin. Kishida's tour also demonstrated how strongly the US's allies are exerting pressure on Russia. Unlike what Russian policy makers thought, this war has made NATO stronger in Europe. Further, this misstep of the Russian strongman has reunited the liberal allies all around the world against authoritarian leaders. In case such a situation emerges even in Asia, most of the American allies will marshall forces against China

Now it is worth knowing

what Putin is accused of by the ICC? First of all, the Russian strongman is accused of unlawfully deporting and transferring children from various occupied areas of Ukraine to the Russian Federation. It is widely learnt that it is done by violating the historic Rome Statute of which Russia is a signatory. However, Russia after signing the Statute in 2000 refused to ratify the agreement to become a member. Russia withdrew from the Rome Statute in 2016 when the ICC classified its Crimea annexation as an occupation. Interestingly, Ukraine is not a state party to the Rome Statute. But in the past, Ukraine accepted the jurisdiction of the ICC in response to alleged war crimes that took place in its territory. This treaty is the only legal instrument that finally led to the establishment of the ICC. It was adopted at a diplomatic conference in Rome on July 17, 1998. But it came into force on July 1, 2002. Since then the ICC has been in the limelight while trying to book Ugandan warlord Joseph Rao Kony for forming a children's army to fight his rebels. His notorious Lord's Resistance Army, a Christian fundamentalist organisation to mobilise people in his favour. The ICC rightly under-

lines that Putin committed war crimes directly, jointly with others and or through others. Further, Putin failed to exercise control over civilian and military subordinates in the war field. The court also highlighted that Putin might have allowed them to carry out these heinous crimes. The ICC has jurisdiction over international crimes such as crimes against humanity, genocide and war crimes.

It is also noteworthy that the ICC issued another arrest warrant for the Russian Federation's Commissioner for Children Rights, named Maria Alekseyevna Lvova-Belova, highlighting the same rights violations. According to the ICC, such forced child transfers and deportations from war

zones are a continued process. In fact, the Conflict Observatory brought to light that Moscow has already shifted nearly 6,000 children from Ukraine to Russia since the beginning of the war. However Russian officials strongly deny such claims by various human rights groups. Rather Moscow is of the opinion that it has been making all efforts to secure the safety and welfare of all affected, including the children in the war zones.

But the reality is that it is too difficult to prosecute a war criminal. Earlier President Biden called Putin a "war criminal" pointing at the massacre at Bucha in Ukraine in March 2022. This tragedy was all about the mass murder of civilians and prisoners of war by Russian soldiers while trying to capture the city which is an oblast of the capital city of Kyiv.

So far history shows that it has been too hard to investigate war crimes. Often it becomes a Herculean task to prosecute war criminals as many of them used to be army commanders, generals or state heads in many countries. And the tragedy is that no single international law, document or any such treaty codifies all war crimes. Further, the rules of war have been changed and expanded since the Geneva Conventions of 1949 following the Second World War.

Therefore, now the ball is neither in the court of the ICC nor in the US. Rather, it is a very tricky question of how to prosecute Putin at the ICC. Labelling charges against him are well taken. But Russia's international backers like China will solidly stand behind Putin to prevent any such attempt to stop any international legal actions against Russia and Putin. The US-led liberal West needs to devise new strategies to corner Russia.

(The writer is the Head of the Department of Arts and Humanities at Geeta University, Panipat)

Will Xi Jinping's 12-point agenda be good enough to persuade **Putin to** withdraw from the Ukrainian war theatre. It is doubtful whether China's new role of peacemaker will be acceptable to the international community at a time when that country is only becoming aggressive both towards its neighbours and many others in the Asia-Pacific region



MAKHAN SAIKIA

### **PERSPECTIVE**

# Xi offers lifeline to Putin to curb US influence

While profiting handsomely from Moscow's desperate situation, Beijing would be certain to ramp up its support if it sees Russia dangerously weakened. Although Moscow increasingly looks like a junior partner to Beijing, Xi is likely to offer strong backing to Putin in efforts to reshape the world to try to limit US domination, writes VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV

during Chinese President Xi Jinping's tightly scripted visit to Moscow: Standing in the doorway of the Grand Kremlin Palace, he told Russian President Vladimir Putin that the two of them were "witnessing the changes that haven't been seen in more than a century, and we are pushing them

The remarks — caught on a Kremlin camera over a bodyguard's shoulder - offered a rare glimpse into Xi's ambitions and his relationship with Russia after more than a year of fighting in Ukraine.

While Moscow increasingly looks like a junior partner to Beijing, Xi is likely to offer a strong lifeline to Putin, his key partner in efforts to reshape the world to try to limit

Xi's unusually blunt statement capped more than 10 hours of Kremlin talks, which ended with long declarations filled with florid rhetoric about expanding the "comprehensive partnership and strategic cooperation" between Russia and China, pledges to champion a multilateral approach to global affairs and criticism of Washington.

In his concluding statement, Putin hailed the Chinese proposal for a settlement in Ukraine, which the West had all but rejected as a non-starter. The Russian leader also rolled

Tt was a revealing moment out a slew of initiatives that cemented his country's role as a key source of energy and other raw materials for China's giant economy. He proposed building new energy pipelines, invited the Chinese to fill the niche left after the exodus of Western businesses, and vowed to boost the export of agricultural products to China.

Xi remained tight-lipped, "I agree," Putin responded. avoiding any firm commitments regarding specific projects and mostly sticking to general and vague rhetoric

about expanding ties.

"A lot of things that
Vladimir Putin would have liked to happen did not, in fact, happen," Rana Mitter, professor of Chinese history and politics at Oxford University, told The Associated Press. "There was no point at which Xi explicitly said that he accepted Russia's position on the Ukraine war over the position of Ukraine."

In fact, there was "a sense that China was reserving for itself the right to step away from a complete endorsement" of the Russian position, Mitter

Moscow and Beijing said they would increase contacts between their militaries and stage more joint sea and air patrols and drills, but there wasn't even the slightest hint from China about helping Russia with weapons, as the US.

and other Western allies feared.



Chinese President Xi Jinping shakes hands with Russian President Vladimir Putin as he leaves after their dinner at The Palace of the Facets in Moscow

committee, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said China so far has heeded strong US warnings against providing lethal material support for Russia in Ukraine. "We have not seen them cross that -

cross that line," he said. A top analyst at the US Speaking before a Senate Defense Intelligence Agency

said Beijing wants to be seen as a peacemaker and diplomatic

"So I think China would be very reluctant to be seen openly supporting Russia with lethal aid," said Doug Wade, head of the DIA's China mission group. "It would undermine their whole narrative about their

role in the world that they're trying so hard to sell."

US National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby described the Putin-Xi relationship as "a marriage of convenience," in which they pool efforts to challenge US leadership, and the Russians "certainly are the junior part-

ner." He added at a briefing earlier this week that Putin sees Xi as "a lifeline of sorts" amid the

fighting in Ukraine. Many commentators argued that the summit marked Putin's failure to win any specific aid from Beijing and cemented Russia's increasingly subordinate role in the alliance with China.

"China's domination of Russia is complete," tweeted Sam Greene, professor in Russian politics at King's College London. "While there were undoubtedly agreements we are not meant to know about, there is no indication here of a significant increase in military support for Russia nor even of a willingness on Xi's part to ramp up diplomatic support. A swing and a miss

for Putin." After more than a year of fighting in Ukraine and bruising Western sanctions, Russia's dependence on China has increased significantly. Facing Western restrictions on its oil, gas and other exports, Russia has shifted its energy flows to China and sharply expanded other exports, resulting in a 30 per cent hike in bilateral trade.

Western price caps on Russia's oil forced Moscow to offer it to China and other customers at a sharp discount, but despite those lower prices, the vast Chinese market ensured a stable flow of oil revenue to the Kremlin's coffers.

As long as Russia can trade

with China and other Asian states, it will face no danger of running out of money or being forced to concede on the battlefield, said Chris Weafer, CEO of the consulting firm

Macro-Advisory. While profiting handsomely from Moscow's desperate situation, Beijing would be certain to ramp up its support if it sees Russia danger-

ously weakened. "The nightmare scenario for China is that collapse of Russia militarily leads to collapse of the regime and installment of some pro-Western government," said Alexander Gabuev, a senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment.

Gabuev argued that Beijing would be unlikely to provide any direct military assistance to Moscow anytime soon simply because it doesn't feel the pressing need to do so. "Russia is not doing great on the battlefield, but it's obviously not losing it, so the need to support the Russian military efforts so far is questionable from both sides," he said.

More than ammunition, tanks and rockets, Russia badly needs China's help in skirting Western sanctions to maintain the flow of high-tech components for its weapons industries and other economic sectors. Sergei Markov, a pro-Kremlin political analyst, predicted that China could be expected to act more resolutely to help Russia

"Russia doesn't need weapons from China," Markov wrote on his messaging app channel. "It needs microchips and components, and they will

come." Some observers say that while Beijing has been coy about supporting Moscow, it has vital interest in shoring up its ally to avoid being left alone in any potential confrontation

with the United States. Mikhail Korostikov, an expert on Russia-China ties, said in a commentary for the Carnegie Endowment that China has been closely watching Russia's experience in facing massive Western sanctions. "For Beijing, a close study and partial use of instruments and decisions used by Russia is a reasonable course in a situation when China's confrontation with the West looks inevitable,"

Korostikov noted that while Moscow's dependence on Beijing is growing, China's room for manoeuvering is also shrinking. "There is no alternative to Russia as a partner providing resources that China will critically need in case of an escalation in its confrontation with the West," he said. "It helps balance the situation and allows Moscow to hope that Beijing will not overuse its newlyacquired economic levers."

(The writer has covered Russia and other former Soviet nations for The AP since 1992)























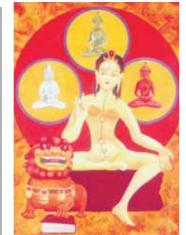




### ARIES March 21-April 19

Your anxiety is apparent in all your work. When it comes to your health, trust your instincts. Get a second opinion if a diagnosis doesn't feel right. Those who use alcohol or drugs should avoid or take a break from intoxication at this time. You need to be a more caring and generous person at work. People turn to you for assistance; your buddy or colleague may want financial assistance from you. This is the moment to make long-term investments. Your generosity and kindness will make you a good name. There is anguish and grief in the relationship. For the relationship to survive, both sides must be willing to work on and acknowledge it. Now is the moment to stop and

Lucky number 12 Lucky colour Yellow Lucky day Wednesday



### **LEO** July 23-Aug 22

It will be beneficial if you pay attention to your health this week. The week begins with creative energy, and you feel lively, swift, and joyful. Yet, as the week develops, various health concerns may arise that require your quick attention. There is a solution for everything. Be optimistic; everything will work out. Professionally, if you are not committed to your work, you may have to pay for it. They are observing you and providing up-to-the-minute information to higher authorities. You may be questioned about your discrepancies in tasks and finances. This is a very emotional phase in your relationship. Things can quickly turn sour and awkward. Take a rest if necessary. Pick your battles wisely, and always treat your partner as

Lucky number 17 Lucky colour Magenta Lucky day Friday



### **SAGITTARIUS** Nov 22-Dec 21

This week will be difficult for you in terms of your health. Panicking at this point will just make matters worse. Every crisis is followed by the promise of a good time. That all relies on what you do about it. Be upbeat about it and seek assistance from others. Meditation will be quite beneficial. Things may not be looking well in terms of a career. You are nearing the end of a project or assignment when you are confronted with another problem or task at work. You must be resilient and not be frightened by those who want to bring you down. On a personal level, you will have disagreements with people. You must understand that honest communication with your partner may help you settle all of your disagreements.

Lucky number 10 Lucky colour Brown Lucky day Tuesday



### **TAURUS** April 20-May 20

This week, your health and vigor should be excellent. If you need to change your behaviors to safeguard your health, now is an excellent moment to do so. Beginning with small goals, such as a daily walk, might lead to a healthier and stronger you. Spend time balancing your body, mind, and soul. On the job front, there might be a monetary loss or a condition of unemployment. Your anxieties, addictions, and other unpleasant urges may be causing a toxic environment around you. You are depressed and have a negative outlook on life. Be optimistic; now is the time to learn from your mistakes. On the personal front, your situation is favorable, particularly for an ongoing romance. Your partnership will enter a lighter, more balanced phase in which you will respect each other as equals.

Lucky number 11 Lucky colour Pastel Blue Lucky day Thursday



### VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

This week, health requires care, and so do follow-up workouts for people with significant illnesses. You could finally find it within yourself to stop certain harmful habits that you are aware are unhealthy. Take care of yourself first; only then will you be able to properly care for others. This week, you may receive some excellent news at work. You could get a call about a job with a better viewpoint, benefits, and facilities. Individuals who are waiting for posting may be able to travel to their selected location. This week brings monetary rewards for business people. Relationships are not as nice as you expected. You must try. Give your thoughts and opinions to your loved ones in a way that they may be readily accepted; else, they may be rejected.

Lucky number 20 Lucky colour Mauve Lucky day Monday



### CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

This week has some excellent news for you. Even if you are dealing with major health issues, a cheerful attitude may do miracles. If you believe something is amiss with your physical being, make sure you have access to medical care. Believe your intuition. On the job front, there is joy and celebration. You are going to see the fruits of your labor and efforts. If you're looking for work, you'll find something better than you could have imagined. Your contributions are recognized and respected. In terms of your relationship, your spouse's attitude may irritate you, and you may feel unhappy and lonely. You may have a sense of isolation. Extend your horizons and try to think positively.

Lucky number 22 Lucky colour Grey **Lucky day** Friday



### **GEMINI** May 21-June 20

Despite the strain and stress this week, you stay calm and composed. Your support system is your unlimited energy and stamina. You must channel your enthusiasm into something productive. Your health is still fine, and you have control over your sensory delights. On the professional front, your dedication and determination will help you reach your goals; otherwise, you will face several obstacles and delays in your job. At times of crisis, your harsh judgments will give you the strength to proceed and set out the plan. Take the advice of a senior person who understands your limitations and is close to you. This week, you may confront pushback from close friends and family members. Family rifts and disagreements are expected. Be a little gentle and more compassionate.

Lucky number 10 Lucky colour Off-white Lucky day Monday



### LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

This week, you are restricted in terms of your health. Fear, worry, and negative thoughts are interfering with your ability to live a normal life. You must strike a balance between your body, mind, and soul. When one's thoughts are negative or filled with anxiety, one's health suffers. If you meditate and listen to your body's voice, 50% of your issues will solve themselves. On the job front, you may experience an unexpected setback or unfairness. The post you've been eyeing may be filled by another candidate of comparable caliber. The dilemma of whether to stay in the current one or join the new one will prevail. On the relationship front, make an effort to stay connected in order to keep the spark alive.

Lucky number 31 Lucky colour Red Lucky day Wednesday



### **AQUARIUS** Jan 20-Feb 18

You may be feeling good about your health this week. You should be full of energy and a sense of hope for the future. Consider your regular frame of thought, and keep in mind that your attitude impacts your health Maintain an optimistic attitude. You are now in a position to mentor others and share your spiritual insights. On the professional front, you are approaching the point where professional achievement and recognition are firmly within your reach. Make every effort to be organized and productive. This will reward you. It is not the time to gamble or take chances. In personal concerns, good fortune will follow you. If you're already in a relationship, it could deepen and improve. You are emotionally content.

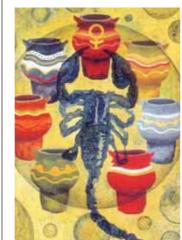
Lucky number 1 Lucky colour Indigo Lucky day Friday



### **CANCER** June 21-July 22

You are depressed and gloomy this week because things are not going your way. There are several additional health conditions that have you worried. Don't be too tense; this is only a passing phase. All tests will pass. The most serious illness is the strain. You are likely to advance professionally. There will be money, status, and honor on the line. Business owners may make a lot of money. You schedule time for healing and massage therapy. This has been a rather decent emotional week. Romance is on the cards for the new love. Married partners must be concerned with and understand one other's sentiments. There is a communication gap that must be addressed since it is the primary cause of distance and isolation.

Lucky number 9 Lucky colour Orange Laucky day Saturday



### SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

This week, your health is likely to be good. You will be brimming with energy and passion. Nonetheless, be cautious when exercising because minor sprains or strains are possible. If you've been neglecting your health, it's time to get back on track. In the job, you may come across a man of influence and leadership abilities who would like to mentor you. His presence is required to point you in the proper route. If you've been dealing with difficulties, now is the moment to take command of the issue. You will be incredibly goal-oriented and visionary. This week will be spectacular in terms of relationships. Now is a moment to follow

Lucky number 3 Lucky colour Peach Lucky day Saturday



### PISCES Feb 19-March 20

This week, your health difficulties will be resolved. You are probably aware that health is extremely essential and requires special care and attention. The saying "prevention is better than cure" applies to you well. You attend healing therapy sessions and seminars and put them into practice in your life. On the professional front, you must break free from the self-imposed constraints that are obstructing your career growth. In some situations, you must be fluent and quick-witted, yet your mental confusion and dualism prevent you from doing so. Reduce your spending. Keep your eyes and ears open for chances that come your way. On the personal front, commitments are not made to be broken; if you do, you may suffer the cost in terms of

Lucky number 14 Lucky colour Green Lucky day Thursday

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Purified mind alone can be happy



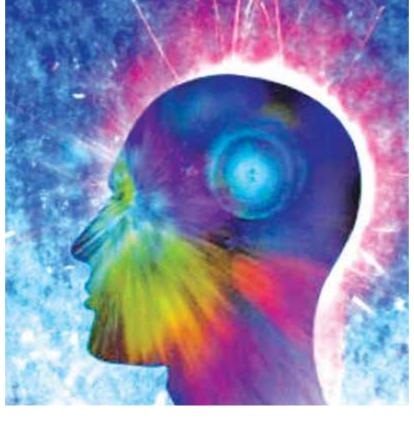
### **ASTRO**TURF BHARAT BHUSHAN PADMADEO

e all wish to be ever happy. People seek happiness varied ways. Whenever some desire is fulfilled, one becomes happy. Many of the unfulfilled desires may still keep hounding. Fresh desires keep arising. Many of them bring unpleasant and therefore frustrating experiences. So, ordinarily, happiness is temporary. It is in this backdrop that philosophers and learned ones have been deliberating over ways and means to secure permanent happiness since ages. They offer varying meaning and ground for securing happiness such as cultivation of moral and intellectual virtues; becoming desireless; contentment; welfare; dignity of individual; higher fulfilment of human capacities; and balanced emo-

If we look at human construct and the chemistry of mind, securing permanent happiness doesn't seem to be an easy task. Kashmir Shaivism suggests that human beings are born with 6 constitutional limitations. First, limited creativity. One cannot service even existential needs by oneself. So, one has to share the resources made available by others. Second, limited knowledge. Therefore, one lacks a holistic understanding of the dynamics of life. That

tional frame of mind.

makes one fallible. Third, for the above reasons, one is born with an inherent sense of 'want'. That breeds in a sense of desire, lust, possessiveness, having related psychological limitations. Fourth, limitation of time, whereby one looks at events in terms of past, present, and future. Often, carry over effect of past memories keep hounding us. We get caught up in the pleasant or painful experiences of the past Also, we keep speculating about future. In the process, we fail to put in our best towards the callings of the present, and with obvious consequences. Fifth, limitation of space that accounts for varied appearances physical, culture, lingual, and religious. That brings in a sense of divide making us opinionated. It, thus, tempts us getting into comparison mode, which doesn't allow us relating to people around on even terms. Sixth, the law of causation, which binds us to causeeffect chain. It has a carryover effect not simply in life ahead in immediate terms, but could stretch on to even the next life. The choices we make, and the ground we thus create, sets the terms of future. As people go through varied experiences in life, their carryover effect would also differ. Accordingly, everybody is born unique, manifesting vary-



ing mind-traits, often in conflict with others. The world, thus, becomes a natural breeding ground for conflict of thoughts and interests.

For the above reasons, we are all born ignorant, our minds preconditioned one way or the other. Consequently, ordinary mortals are said to have access to hardly 5 to 7 percent of the mind space. More than that is subject to conscious efforts. That limits the scope of our vision. We, thus, fail to look at issues in hand in the right perspective due, and with obvious consequences. It may not be out of place to mention here that human mind, which drives all actions on our part, is guided by a sense of dual perception. That makes one vulnerable to internal conflicts and difference of opinion with others. Now coming to the chemistry of mind, one keeps flirting with random thoughts, most of them inconsequential and even negative. That keeps us so much involved that it hardly allows mind-space necessary to objectively process fresh thoughts. If that would not be enough, ahamkara (the sense of 'I') further compounds our problem. Identifying with inherent mind trends, it takes them as their end game. It doesn't allow looking beyond for a reality

check or finding out a better option if any. Also, it doesn't allow digesting contrarian views. In this backdrop, the idealistic framework offered by logicians won't help, unless we address our limiting tendencies from the root level.

What then is the way forward? Eastern mystics take the view that inner-wellbeing alone can ensure a smooth run of life, but for which securing happiness in the living world would not be possible. They suggest turning our attention inwards to identify, acknowledge, and address the limiting tendencies of mind through fresh educative inputs and expand the scope of vision. With an expanded vision, one looks at things with an open mind without any precondition whatsoever, which will let us view things in the right perspective due. That will help making right choices in life. With a purified mind, if you explore the eternal and living realities of life, you may know how and where you fit into the complex game plan of the world. Life may then turn into a pleasant experi-

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