

WORLD 5

XI's CONFIDANT LI QIANG
NAMED NEW PREMIER

MONEY 6

TEXTILE EXPORTS SHOWING
GROWTH SIGN, SAYS GOYAL

SPORT 8

SOUTH AFRICA BEAT
WEST INDIES IN 2ND TEST

NEW DELHI, SUNDAY MARCH 12, 2023; PAGES 12 ₹4

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Govt will nurture
artisans: ModiKaushal Yojana aimed at handholding artisans
neglected even after Independence, says PM

Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses a post-budget webinar on 'PM Vishwakarma Kaushal Samman', on Saturday PTI

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Saying that the PM Vishwakarma Kaushal Yojana is aimed at "handholding of artisans and people associated with small businesses", Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday regretted that they were "neglected even after the Independence".

He was addressing a post-Budget webinar on the subject of PM Vishwakarma Kaushal Samman. This was the last of 12 post-Budget webinars organised by the Government.

The Prime Minister said the scheme is intended to empower many classes of artisans, including carpenters, ironsmiths, sculptors and masons.

"Artisans, who are an integral part of society, have been adapting to the changing times to fulfill the needs of the society that were ignored," Modi said. Even after India's Independence, the Prime

Minister pointed out, there was "no intervention" from the Government to work for their betterment and as a result, many traditional ways of skill and craftsmanship were abandoned by the families so that they could make a living elsewhere.

"Small artisans play an important role in the production of local crafts," he said, adding that in ancient India they were in their own ways contributing to the exports of the country.

Modi lamented that artisans "have been ignored for a long time," and their work was considered non-significant during the long years of slavery. The PM Vishwakarma Yojana, he said, focuses on "empowering them" by handholding different sections.

Modi underlined that this working class have conserved their craft of using traditional methods for centuries. They are making a mark with their extraordinary skills and unique

creations, he added.

"Skilled craftsmen are symbols of the true spirit of self-reliant India and our Government considers such people as Vishwakarma of new India."

He explained that the PM Vishwakarma Kaushal Samman Yojana is initiated especially for them. The focus remains on those skilled craftsmen from villages and towns who make a living by working with their own hands.

Modi said that today's webinar is dedicated to the skill and expertise of the crores of Indians.

Referring to skilling and creating job opportunities for crores of youth through the Skill India Mission and the Kaushal Rozgar Kendra, the Prime Minister emphasised the need for a specific and targeted approach. PM Vishwakarma Kaushal Samman Yojana or PM Vishwakarma, he said, is a result of this thinking.

ED finds ₹600 cr after raids on Lalu's kin

Tejashwi skips
date with CBI in
land-for-jobs
case probe

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Searches in the land-for-jobs 'scam' earlier this week resulted in detection of 'Proceeds of Crime' to the tune of ₹600 crore which is in the form of immovable properties worth ₹350 crore and transactions of ₹250 crore routed through various benamidaars.

Based on the specific Intelligence inputs, searches were conducted at 24 locations at various places in Delhi-NCR, Patna, Mumbai and Ranchi in the Railways land-for-job scam, the ED said in a statement.

"Searches resulted in recovery of unaccounted cash of ₹1 crore, foreign currency including \$1,900, 540 gm gold bullion and more than 1.5 kg of gold jewellery (worth ₹1.25 crore approximately), several other incriminating documents including various property documents, sale deeds etc, held



in the names of family members and benamidaars indicating illegal accretion of huge land bank and electronic devices," it said.

In another development, Tejashwi Yadav, son of Lalu Prasad and Deputy CM of Bihar did not appear before the CBI for questioning on Saturday in the land-for-jobs 'scam' citing personal reasons. The CBI had summoned him on Saturday after he had skipped the previous date on March 4, officials said. He has cited personal reasons for not attending the questioning session, following which the agency is likely to give him another date.

After the recent questioning of his parents, Tejashwi

Yadav had alleged that investigation agencies were acting against political opponents of the ruling BJP at the Centre.

The CBI has filed a charge sheet in the land-for-jobs case against Prasad, Rabri Devi and 14 others under charges of criminal conspiracy and provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act, and all the accused have been summoned on March 15 by a special court here. The officials said the fresh round of questioning is taking place as part of "further investigation" on the basis of fresh inputs gathered by it during its ongoing probe.

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Rumours: Tejashwi
on ED's findings

PTI ■ PATNA

Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav on Saturday dubbed as "rumours" the claim of the ED that proceeds of crime amounting to ₹600 crore were detected during searches.

He said the BJP will be left embarrassed if he made public the panchnama the ED signed after the raids. See P2

ED grills Kavitha for
9 hrs but no arrest

BRS MLC K Kavitha at the Enforcement Directorate office in connection with the Delhi excise policy case, in New Delhi on Saturday PTI

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Saturday grilled Bharat Rashtia Samithi (BRS) leader K Kavitha for nine hours but did not arrest her in connection with a money laundering case linked to the alleged irregularities in the now-scrapped Delhi excise policy.

The 44-year-old daughter of Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao left the ED's headquarters here at about 8 PM after nine hours of questioning and recording her statement under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), officials said.

Kavitha had reached the agency's office around 11 AM from her father's official residence on Tughlak Road, located about 1.5 km away.

The BRS leader will be summoned again on March 16 for further questioning in the case, they said.

There was a heavy presence of Delhi Police, with the

Central paramilitary forces personnel barricading the ED office even as the supporters of the BRS leader staged a protest. It is alleged that the Delhi Government's excise policy for 2021-22 to grant licences to liquor traders allowed cartels and favoured certain dealers who had allegedly paid bribes for it.

The policy was subsequently scrapped and the Delhi Lieutenant-Governor recommended a CBI probe. After the CBI registered a case in the matter, the ED recorded its own complaint under the PMLA.

The ED had asked Kavitha to depose on March 9, but she had sought a fresh date due to her scheduled day-long hunger strike here on Friday seeking the passage of the long-pending Women's Reservation Bill in the Budget Session of Parliament.

The BRS MLC is understood to have been confronted with the evidence gathered in the case so far, sources said.

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66% income of 7 parties in 2021-22
from unknown sources, says ADR

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

An analysis of the income-tax return (ITR) and donation statements filed with the Election Commission (EC) shows that the sources of funding of national political parties remain largely unknown. More than 66 per cent of the total income of seven national political parties cannot be traced and are from 'unknown' sources, which accounted for a whopping 83 per cent in 2021-22.

According to the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR), the BJP declared ₹1161.0484 crore as income from unknown sources which is 53.45 per cent of the total income of national parties from unknown sources (₹2172.231 crore) in 2021-22. This income of the BJP is ₹149.8658 crore more than the aggregate of income from



unknown sources declared by the other six national parties (₹1011.1826 crore).

The Trinamool Congress (TMC) declared ₹528 crore as income from unknown sources which is 24.31 per cent of the total income of national parties from unknown sources. Between 2004-05 and 2021-22, the national parties collected

₹17,249.45 crore from unknown sources, it said.

"It is to be noted that the TMC's total donations as per the audit report are ₹38 lakh (excluding donations via electoral bonds) but the party has declared donations worth ₹43 lakh in the donations statement."

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I was sexually
assaulted by father
in childhood, says
DCW chief Maliwal

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Commission of Women (DCW) chief Swati Maliwal on Saturday said she was sexually assaulted by her father in her childhood.

Speaking to reporters after the DCW International Women's Day Awards ceremony here where 100 women were honoured, Maliwal said she faced abuse till the time she was in Class IV.

"I was sexually assaulted by my father when I was a child. I was very small at that time. My father used to beat me up and I used to hide under the bed to save myself," she said.

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It's uphill task to get
Kashmir at centre of
UN agenda: BilawalPIONEER NEWS SERVICE |
AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI |
UNITED NATIONS

As ties between the two nations remain frosty, Pakistan Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto has said his country faces an "uphill task" to get the Kashmir issue into the "centre" of the agenda of the United Nations.

Also, he fumbled as he went on to refer to India, describing it first as "our friend" before using the term "neighbouring country."

Coming to the issue of Kashmir, Bilawal said late Friday, "You're also right to note that we face a particularly uphill task to try and get Kashmir into the centre of the agenda at the United Nations," at a Press conference in the United Nations.

He made these remarks while responding to a question that drew parallels between the situation in Palestine with Kashmir.

Pakistan rakes up the issue of Jammu & Kashmir at every UN forum and platform, irrespective of the topic or agenda

being discussed.

However, it fails to get any traction or support for its agenda from the wider UN membership that considers Kashmir to be a bilateral issue between India and Pakistan.

"And whenever the issue of Kashmir is brought up, our friends within, with... Our friend... our... Our... neighbouring countries, strongly object, vociferously object and they perpetuate a post-fact narrative where they try to claim that this is not a dispute for the United Nations, that this is not a disputed territory recognised for the international community," Bilawal said.

Tensions between India and Pakistan spiked after New Delhi abrogated Article 370 of the Constitution to revoke the special status of Jammu & Kashmir on August 5, 2019.

India has categorically told the international community that the scrapping of Article 370 was an internal matter. It also advised Pakistan to accept the reality and stop all anti-India propaganda.

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Scientists seek treaty to end space
pollutionWith satellites
set to zoom to
60K, they cite
need to keep
Earth's orbit
clear of debris

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Alarmed that the number of satellites in orbit expected to zoom from existing 9,000 to over 60,000 by 2030 and join already more than 100 trillion untracked pieces of old satellites circling the planet, scientists are now pushing for a



legally-binding treaty to ensure the Earth's orbit isn't polluted by the future expansion of the global space industry.

The scientists noted that satellite technology can be helpful in providing a huge range of social and environ-

mental benefits, but there are fears that the predicted growth of the industry could make large parts of the Earth's orbit unusable as has happened with the ocean where plastic pollution has become a menace.

Writing in the journal

Science, an international collaboration of experts in fields including satellite technology and ocean plastic pollution say this demonstrates the urgent need for global consensus on how best to govern the Earth's orbit.

The demand for a legal pact comes after nearly 200 countries agreed to a treaty to protect the High Seas after a 20-year process.

While acknowledging that a number of industries and countries are starting to focus on satellite sustainability, any agreement, they add, should include measures to implement producer and user responsibility for satellites and debris, from the time they launch onwards.

Continued on Page 2

3 held over attack
on Left, Cong
MPs in Tripura

PTI ■ AGARTALA

Three people were arrested in connection with the attack on a parliamentary delegation of the Left and the Congress parties in Tripura's Sepahijala district, police said on Saturday.

The delegation, comprising Left and Congress MPs, was attacked in Nehalchandranagar, a border village of Bishalgarh subdivision, on Friday when it was visiting areas affected by post-poll violence.

"Three persons have been arrested so far, and steps are being taken to apprehend the others involved in the attack."

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Visitors during the inauguration of the G20 Flower Festival at Central Park of Connaught Place, in New Delhi on Saturday PTI

Opp parties to meet EC for early polls in J&K

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

Several Opposition leaders led by the National Conference president and former Chief Minister Dr Farooq Abdullah on Saturday unanimously decided to knock at the doorstep of the Election Commission of India for holding early Assembly polls in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. The Opposition leaders have also decided to meet leaders belonging to the different political parties to plead their case for early restoration of statehood to J&K.

Addressing media persons here at his residence after chairing a meeting of leaders belonging to different political parties Dr Abdullah told reporters, “Very soon we are going to knock at the doorstep of the Election Commission of India demanding early Assembly polls”. “We will also extend a formal invitation to several national leaders to accompany us to the office of Chief Election Commissioner” added Dr Abdullah. The Assembly elections were last held in J&k in 2014.

Referring to the statements of the Prime Minister and the Union Home Minister over



Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) president Farooq Abdullah chairs an all-party meeting at his residence, in Jammu on Saturday

the prevailing security situation in Jammu and Kashmir, Dr Abdullah asked, “if on one hand these leaders claim that J&k is witnessing an era of peace then why Assembly elections are not taking place”. “We are living in a democratic country. It is high time the Assembly polls should be held here in Jammu and Kashmir”,he added.

When asked whether the delegation of opposition leaders are also expected to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Union Home Minister Amit Shath in New Delhi, Dr Abdullah said the final decision will be taken by the leaders after meeting the national lead-

ers in New Delhi.

During the meeting with the political leaders at his residence in Jammu Dr Abdullah also deliberated on issues of public importance including rising unrest among the unemployed youth and stalemate over holding entrance examinations by a black listed company to fill different vacancies.

Late in the evening these leaders also extended their support to the ongoing protests by the JKSSB aspirants and participated in the candle march against the black listed company roped in by the JKSSB for holding recruitment examinations.

‘Rumours’, says Tejashwi on ED claims that ₹600 cr ‘proceeds of crime’ detected during raids

PTI ■ PATNA

Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav on Saturday dubbed as “rumours” the claim of the Enforcement Directorate that proceeds of crime amounting to ₹600 crore were detected during searches on premises owned by him and close family members.

The RJD leader, who is currently away in Delhi beside his wife who is expecting their first child, also said the BJP will be left embarrassed if he made public the “panchnama” (seizure list) signed after the raids.

“Just recall, in 2007, transactions worth ₹8,000 crore, including a mall and hundreds of land plots, were alleged”, tweeted Yadav, in an obvious reference to the alleged land-for-hotels scam pertaining to his father Lalu Prasad’s tenure as the railway minister.

Now facing the heat in the land-for-jobs ‘scam’ pertaining to, roughly, the same period, Yadav also recalled his name being linked to a mall seized in Gurugram, which turned out to be owned by a private company.

The RJD had threatened legal action against media outlets for “wrongly” reporting that Yadav, the party supremo’s son and heir apparent, owned



the commercial establishment.

“The BJP Government (at the Centre) spreading rumours again”, quoting sources. It should have asked its spin doctors to first settle the account on the previous operations, before coming up with the new tale of ₹600 crore”, the RJD leader said.

Earlier in the day, the Enforcement Directorate said it has seized “unaccounted cash” of ₹1 crore and “detected proceeds of crime worth ₹600 crore” after it raided RJD chief Lalu Prasad’s family in connection with a money laundering case linked to the railways land-for-jobs ‘scam’.

“Let them make public the panchnama (seizure list) signed after the raids. If we do so on our own, think of the embarrassment that these BJP leaders will have to face”, added Yadav, who peppered his two tweets with quite a few smiles to assert that he was taking it all on the chin.

Sena (UBT) leader’s aide Kadam sent to ED custody till Mar 15 in money laundering case

PTI ■ MUMBAI

A day after his arrest, a special court here on Saturday remanded Sadanand Kadam, considered a close associate of Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Anil Parab, in the Enforcement Directorate (ED) custody till March 15 in an alleged money laundering case pertaining to a resort in Maharashtra’s Ratnagiri district.

In January this year, the ED had attached this beach resort — Sai Resort — at Dapoli in Ratnagiri worth more than Rs 10 crore as part of a money laundering probe against Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) leader and former state minister Parab and others in a case linked to alleged violation of coastal regulation zone provisions in its construction.

The ED arrested Kadam, a Mumbai-based cable operator, here on Friday night. It produced him before a special holiday court of judge S M Tapkire. The court remanded him in ED’s custody till March 15.

Parab, a three-time Shiv Sena legislator in the Maharashtra Legislative Council, the Upper House of the legislature, had earlier denied his association with this resort. He was questioned by the federal agency in this case earlier. The money laundering case stems from a com-



plaint filed by the Union environment and forest ministry against Anil Parab, Sai Resort, Sea Conch Resort and some others for alleged violation of the Environment (Protection)

Act apart from a linked state police FIR against the former minister and others for “deceiving and causing loss to the state government” of Maharashtra”.

Scientists...

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“Commercial costs should also be considered when looking at ways to incentivise accountability. Such considerations are consistent with current proposals to address ocean plastic pollution as countries begin negotiations for the Global Plastics Treaty,” they said.

The experts also believe that unless action is taken immediately, large parts of our planet’s immediate surroundings risk the same fate as the High Seas where insubstantial governance has led to over-fishing, habitat destruction, deep-sea mining exploration, and plastic pollution.

The article was co-authored by researchers from the University of Plymouth, Arribada Initiative, The

University of Texas at Austin, California Institute of Technology, NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Spaceport Cornwall, and ZSL (Zoological Society of London).

Dr Imogen Napper, Research Fellow at the University of Plymouth, led the newly-published study with funding from the National Geographical Society.

She said: “The issue of plastic pollution, and many of the other challenges facing our ocean, is now attracting global attention. However, there has been limited collaborative action and implementation has been slow.

“Now we are in a similar situation with the accumulation of space debris. Taking into consideration what we have learnt from the high seas, we can avoid making the same mistakes and work collectively to prevent a tragedy of the commons in space.”

3 held over attack on Left, Cong MPs in Tripura..

From Page 1

“An FIR has been filed in connection with the incident,” a senior police officer told PTI.

Security forces have been deployed in the area, he said, adding that senior officers were overseeing the situation. “Chief Minister Manik Saha, who is currently in Delhi, spoke to DGP Amitabh Ranjan, and asked him to arrest all the accused persons, irrespective of their political colours,” another official said.

The CPI(M) said the joint team of the Left and the Congress were visiting various violence-hit areas of West Tripura, Sepahijala and Khowai on Friday.

“Once the delegation, comprising CPI(M) MP E Karim and Congress MP Abdul Khaliq and AICC general secretary Ajay Kumar, landed at Nehalchandrangar market, they were attacked by miscreants raising slogans of ‘Bharat Mata Ki Jai’. One vehicle was severely damaged, while two more cars were also vandalised,” senior CPI(M) leader Rakhal Majumder said. At least 20 shops were set on fire in the area on Wednesday night.

Police said none of the eight members of the team were injured in the attack, and two-three vehicles with leaders of the Left parties and the Congress on board were vandalised. The team is expected to stay in the state till March 12 after which it will submit a report, and the issue will be raised in Parliament, CPI MP Binoy Viswam said.

Uphill task...

From Page 1

India has told Pakistan that it desires normal neighbourly relations with Islamabad in an environment free of terror, hostility and violence.

Bilawal said “while we do find it difficult to get the truth across, we are persistent in our efforts” and added that at every opportunity, whether it is in the UN Security Council or other events, he makes the effort to mention both the plight of the people of Palestine and of Kashmir.

“I think your parallel is very justified. There are many similarities between the plight of the people of Kashmir and the plight of the people of Palestine. I think it’s fair to say that both issues remain unaddressed by the United Nations and we’d like to see an extra focus not only on Palestine but also on Kashmir”, he added.

Bilawal was addressing the media on the outcome of the Women in Islam Conference and Commemoration of the First Islamophobia Day, on the sidelines of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).

Was sexually assaulted by...

From Page 1

“While hiding under the bed, I used to think how I will teach a lesson to such men who abuse women and children, and how I can help women get their rights”, she said.

Narrating her ordeal, Maliwal said her father would grab her by her braid and slam her against the wall, leading to severe bleeding. “This happened till I was in Class IV, after which we left him,” she recalled.

Recently, actor-turned-politician BJP’s Khushbu Sundar - National Commission for Women (NCW) member - said she was sexually abused by her father at the age of 8.

Maliwal said she believes that when a person goes through such challenges in life, they are able to understand the pain of others, and become passionate enough to change the system.

“I think the same happened with me, and our other awardees also must have a similar story. Our awardees have inspired us to live life positively despite the struggle,” she said.

Maliwal became the chairperson of the DCW in 2015 as the Aam Aadmi Party formed the Government in Delhi. Before leading DCW, she worked as the adviser of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal.

Maliwal was married to Naveen Jaihind, former Haryana AAP chief. They got divorced in 2020.

Among the prominent faces who won the awards were Indian tennis star Sania Mirza, Indian U-19 cricketer Soniya Mendhiya and International Hockey player Mumtaz Khan.

Also, Kejriwal honoured the families of martyr Nishant Malik and Rifleman Manoj Bhati who lost their life in the line of duty fighting terrorists. On this occasion, Kejriwal felicitated the winners of the DCW International Women’s Day Awards.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The general public is hereby informed by this legal notice that my clients **Mr. Javed Raza S/o. Late Habib Raza and Mrs. Rana Raza W/o. Mr. Javed Raza** both residents of S-7/22, opposite Safina Imambada, Jogabai extension, Jamia Nagar, Batla House, Okhla, New Delhi-110025 **disowned and disinherited their son namely Junaid Raza** aged about 23 years from all their moveable and immoveable properties as he is residing separately and not obeying my clients, and my clients had broken all the relations with him. Anybody dealing with him shall do it at the cost risk and consequences of their own, And my clients shall have no concern with them.

Mohd. Talha (Advocate)
16-A, Uday Park, 230-E, 1st floor, Masjid Moth, New Delhi-110049

66% of income of 7 national parties in 2021-22 from unknown...

From Page 1

Hence, there is a discrepancy in the party’s statement for FY 2021-22,” the ADR said.

The seven parties — BJP, Congress, TMC, NCP, CPI, CPI(M) and the National People’s Party — collected ₹2,172 crore from unknown sources in 2021-22.

The total income of these national political parties was ₹3289.34 crore in 2021-22 and total income of political parties from known donors (details of donors as available from contribution report submitted by parties to the EC and analysed by the ADR) is ₹780.774 crore, which is 23.74 per cent of the total income of the parties.

The ADR said the income from unknown sources was 66.04 per cent of their total income. And, ₹1,811.94 crore or 83.41 per cent of the income from unknown sources came through electoral bonds, it said. The “unknown” sources are income declared in the annual audit report by these parties but without giving the source of income, according to the ADR.

Total income of political parties from other known sources (sale of assets, membership fees, bank interest, sale of publications, party levy etc) is ₹336.335 crore, or 10.22 per cent of the total income.

The ADR data said the combined income of the Congress and NCP from sale of coupons between 2004-05 and 2021-22 stands at ₹4,398.51 crore.

At present, political parties

are not required to reveal the name of individuals or organisations giving less than ₹20,000 and those who donate via electoral bonds.

The ADR stated such unknown sources include donations via electoral bonds, sale of coupons, relief fund, miscellaneous income, voluntary contributions, and contribution from meetings/morchas.

The CPI has declared donations through levy, membership fee, party funds and election funds.

The ADR data further shows that between 2004-05 and 2021-22, the national parties collected ₹17,249.45 cr from unknown sources.

The BSP declared that it did not receive any funds from voluntary contributions from unknown sources of income.

As a result, more than 65 per cent of the funds cannot be traced and are from ‘unknown’ sources.

The ADR has recommended that since a very large percentage of the income of political parties cannot be traced to the original donor, full details of all donors should be made available for public scrutiny under the RTI.

Some countries where this is done include Bhutan, Nepal, Germany, France, Italy, Brazil, Bulgaria, the US and Japan.

In none of these countries, it is possible for more than 65 per cent of the source of funds to be unknown, but at present it is so in India.

ED grills Kavitha...

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According to the ED, the “south group” comprises Sarath Reddy (promoter of Aurobindo Pharma), Magunta Srinivasulu Reddy (YSR Congress MP from the Ongole Lok Sabha

seat in Andhra Pradesh), his son Raghav Magunta, Kavitha and others.

The ED also alleged in the remand papers of the arrested Hyderabad-based businessman and accused Arun Ramchandran Pillai that he “represented the *benami* investments” of Kavitha in the case.

She was earlier questioned by the CBI. The ED has so far arrested 12 suspects in the case, including former Delhi

Deputy Chief Minister and AAP leader Manish Sisodia.

It has also recorded the statement of Butchi Babu, a chartered accountant allegedly linked to Kavitha, where he said “there was political understanding between K Kavitha and the chief minister [Arvind Kejriwal] and the deputy chief minister [Sisodia]. In that process, K Kavitha also met Vijay Nair on March 19-20, 2021”.



JHARKHAND STATE SPORTS PROMOTION SOCIETY
(A CCL- State Govt. of Jharkhand Joint Initiative)
C/o Mega Sports Complex, Khelgaon, Hotwar, Ranchi- 835217
Registration under Sports Act No.519, Registration under GST No. 20AAACJ1C1Z9
OUR MISSION- OLYMPIC GOLD, Contact :-8987784136



Ref. No. JSSPS/Civil/-tender/2022-23/418-27 Dated 28.02.2023
Notice Inviting Tender , NIT No. 08 of 22-23
1. Tenders are invited on-line under two part system on the website <https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in> from the eligible bidders having Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) issued from any agency authorized by Controller of Certifying Authority (CCA), Govt. of India and which can be traced up to the chain of trust to the Root Certificate of CCA, for the following work::

Description of work	Location	Estimated Cost of Work (Including GST), (In Rs.)	Earnest Money (In Rs.)	Period of Completion (In Days)
AMC for day to day repair & maintenance works for a period of 24 months at MSC, Hotwar , Ranchi.	Mega Sports complex, Khelgaon, Ranchi	2,54,57,705.80	3,18,300.00	730

Note: The bid documents will be available on the website(s) and can be downloaded by the bidder up to the bid submission end date.

(i) **For Site visit of location of work, the prospective bidder(s) may contact Nasir Towheed , Dy. Manager (C)/ JSSPS, Mobile no:- 9771919385**

Tender inviting authority		Contact Person(s)/Tender Dealing Officer(s)	
GM(TA)/Member (Civil)/JSSPS, Mobile no: 9431392787		Dy. Manager (C)/JSSPS, Mobile no: 9771919385	

2.Time Schedule of Tender:

Sl. No.	Particulars	Date	Time
a.	Tender e-Publication date	09.03.2023	18.00 Hours
b.	Document download start date	10.03.2023	10.00 Hours
c.	Document download end date	27.03.2023	15.00 Hours
d.	Bid Submission start date	10.03.2023	10.00 Hours
e.	Bid submission end date	27.03.2023	15.00 Hours
f.	Start date for seeking Clarification on-line	10.03.2023	10.00 Hours
g.	Last date for seeking Clarification on-line	21.03.2023	17.00 Hours
h.	Date of Pre-bid meeting (if any)	-	NA
i.	Last date of receipt of EMD through DD / BC at the office of CEO, JSSPS, Ranchi	27.03.2023	15.00 Hours
j.	Technical Bid (Cover I) opening date	28.03.2023	15.00 Hours
k.	Price Bid (Cover II) opening date	To be notified later	

PR 292253Art Culture Sports and Youth Affairs(22-23)#D

GM (TA)/ Member (Civil), LMC, JSSPS

LG flags poor condition of water treatment plant

In letter to Kejriwal, Saxena pointed out inaction by DJB in cleaning, desilting Wazirabad Water Treatment Plant

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

In a fresh round of friction between Delhi Lieutenant-Governor (L-G) VK Saxena and the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), the former has written to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, flagging the miserable hygiene and sanitary conditions at Wazirabad Water Treatment Plant (WTP) that supplies drinking water to large parts of the national Capital.

In his letter, L-G Saxena also flagged gross inaction on part of the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) in cleaning/desilting the pond reservoir behind the Wazirabad barrage, which supplies water to Wazirabad and Chandrawal Water Treatment Plants.

The L-G has asked Kejriwal to immediate start desilting of storage ponds and start criminal proceedings against officials for dereliction of duty and criminal misconduct for this gross negligence. This comes after the L-

G visited the facility on Saturday and expressed his concern seeing the worsening condition of the plant.

According to a note sent to Kejriwal, the L-G highlighted that despite a desilting contract being in place since 2013, no desilting took place resulting in the depth of the pond reducing from 4.26 Mtrs to a mere 0.42 Mtrs during the last 8 years. Presently, 10 lakh cum silt has been gathered in the storage ponds of WTP, which needs to be cleaned immediately.

"What kind of water is being supplied to the people of Delhi and what is its quality and is it really potable. Aren't we playing with the health and life of people of Delhi by supplying them contaminated water? Is this justified in the National Capital of the country? Can Delhi afford to lose out on 9, 12,500 million gallons of water only because DJB did not desilt/clean its storage ponds?," Saxena questioned.

"The pond had a capacity to hold 250 million gallons of water, but it has now gotten reduced due to siltation only 93 percent and can now holds only 16 million gallons. Frequent water shortage in the City including the one that recently took place before Holi, on account of Wazirabad and Chandrawal WTPs not being operational fully, is solely due to this reason and not due to the Haryana Excuses that AAP makes to fool the people," the LG said.

"The plant itself is marred by rusted and trash ridden reservoirs, corroded pipelines, silt covered equipment and power guzzling water pumps. On the other hand, the 500 meter x 500 meter x 4.26 meter pondage area behind the Wazirabad Barrage, from where the WTP picks up water for treatment and supply to the city is choked with silt, which in turn reduces its capacity of holding about 250 million gallons of water, by as much as

90% as informed by DJB officials at the time of inspection," reads the note.

"What is astonishing is the fact that despite a contract for desilting being there in place since as early as October, 2013, to remove about 7.79 lakh Cum of silt within 08 months, no desilting whatsoever, took place since 30 th June, 2018, the Member (Water), DJB present there informed. It was informed that desilting in two tranches between 08.10.2013 - 01.08.2014 and 2015 2018 resulted in removal of approximately 5 lakh Cum and 1.15 lakh Cum of silt respectively".

"Work of desilting was stopped due to an NGT stay order in September, 2014 and was restarted after the stay was lifted in 2015. It is worth underlining here that while in about 09 months during 2013-14, 05 lakh Cum silt was removed, after lifting of the stay by Hon'ble NGT, in the period between 2015 - 2018, just 1.1 Cum of silt



was removed. Even thereafter, despite no works happening, it took the DJB about 04 years to terminate the contract in as late as February, 2022," Saxena mentioned in the note.

"All this while, the pond over a period of 08 years or so kept getting re-silted and shrunk. Of

the 6.1 lakh Cum silt removed between the above mentioned dates, 'good' silt amounting to about 3 lakh Cum was sold by the contractor and the remaining silt was left at site, which thereafter, reclogged the pondage area. In addition to this, natural siltation also kept taking place



and progressively led to further shrinking of the pond, thereby proportionately reducing Delhi's capacity to hold and store water so essential to maintaining its supply, especially during time susceptible to shortage".

"We are now faced with a situation wherein silt amounting

to about 10 lakh Cum is yet again clogging the pondage area, reducing its holding capacity by 93.40%, to mere 16 million gallons instead of its capacity of 250 million gallons, which is equivalent to about 1/3rd of the city's daily requirements," LG said.

Sisodia getting VVIP treatment in jail, alleges conman Sukesh

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Jailed conman Sukesh Chandrasekhar has written a letter to Delhi Lieutenant-Governor (L-G) Vinai Kumar Saxena, alleging Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader and former Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia is getting VVIP treatment in jail.

"This his jail had "...wooden flooring and all amenities" including "an exclusive large garden to walk around, a special badminton court, and a dining area", said Sukesh adding such amenities so far have been given only to "high profile" inmates.

The letter comes even as, even as Sisodia has sent a message from the Tihar jail, saying imprisonment may pose difficulties for him but it cannot break his spirit.

"Saheb, you can trouble me by putting me in jail, but you cannot break my spirit. The British rulers also troubled the freedom fighters but their spirits did not break -- Manish Sisodia's message from jail," read a tweet in Hindi from the AAP leader's official Twitter handle.

"Sisodia is lodged in Ward No. 9 of Jail-1, which is a VVIP ward in all of Tihar Jail. It's a special ward for high-profile VIP prisoners", Sukesh claimed in the letter. "Mr Sisodia is being well taken care of in the VVIP ward, and



all these allegations are well planned and orchestrated by Kejriwal, Satyender Jain and the jail administration," the letter further read. Sukesh further alleged that the jail administration is completely like "puppets" in the hands of the AAP as Jain still controls the jail staff irrespective of the multiple scrutinies.

This ward has till date housed VIP/high profile inmates like Suborotho Roy of Sahara, Kalmadi, Amar Singh, A Raja and recently Sanjay Chandra of Unitech, and I myself was lodged in the said ward from 2017/2018 on the instructions of Jain," he alleged, adding that "only few old inmates and sevadars" had been lodged with Sisodia "for his comfort" instead of gangsters or "serious criminals" as alleged by AAP.

Further, Sukesh also alleged that Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal is spreading lies about Sisodia's security that he is being kept in jail with gangsters, unsafe etc.

"I humbly submit that all the stories are false in nature, just to play a victim in public at large and in media, and fool everyone, as the reality is totally opposite," Sukesh wrote to the L-G. Asking L-G Saxena to intervene and initiate an inquiry into the "VVVIP" facilities allegedly being extended to Sisodia, Sukesh also sought protection.

Earlier during his appearance in Patiala House Court on Friday, he alleged that Kejriwal would be the next to be arrested for liquor policy.

Sukesh has been leveling allegations against AAP and its leaders in an alleged money laundering case.

"Kejriwal is a wazir (kingspin). I will expose each one. There will be more arrests in liquor policy case. Kejriwal is doing his job well... I have nothing to do with liquor policy." On being asked about the arrest of AAP leader Manish Sisodia he said, "Truth has prevailed, and next will be Kejriwal."

Police recover medicines from farmhouse where actor Kaushik attended party day before death



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a new twist in the death of veteran actor-director Satish Kaushik, the Delhi Police on Saturday visited the farmhouse where the veteran actor stayed and recovered some 'medicines' from there. The police are probing the death case of the actor and are waiting for a detailed post-mortem report.

According to sources, the probing team recovered some 'medicines' from the farmhouse. "A party was organised in the farmhouse, which belonged to an industrialist," the Delhi Police sources said, adding that the organizer industrialist is also wanted in some case.

"Police are going through the guest list to find out who were present in the farmhouse," they added.

The actor, who celebrated Holi just two days before his death in Mumbai with Javed-Farhan Akhtar, Shibani Dandekar, Tanvi Azmi, Ali Fazal-Richa Chadha and many others then flew to Delhi to join some other friends the next day.

It is said Satish was staying at a well-known industrialist's farmhouse, when he began feeling uneasy during the Holi celebrations. He was rushed to a prominent hospital in Gurugram where he was declared "brought dead on arrival". Kaushik's post-mortem examination was conducted at Delhi's Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital.

Kaushik, whose directing credits include "Tere Naam" and "Mujhe Kuch Kehna Hai", is survived by wife Shashi and daughter Vanshika.

BJP accuses Govt of 'step-motherly treatment' to Trans Yamuna areas



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi BJP on Saturday attacked the AAP Government, alleging that not constituting the Trans Yamuna Area Development Board (TYADB) has denied people living in unauthorised colonies there basic amenities.

This "step-motherly treatment" of the Arvind Kejriwal dispensation towards residents of the area in east Delhi has left them without good roads and water supply, the party alleged. Delhi BJP working president Virendra Sachdeva told a press conference that not constituting the board was not only part of a "well-planned conspiracy" but also "dirty politics".

In all the unauthorised colonies across the Yamuna, the condition of roads is bad and there is no water facility, but Kejriwal is indulging in politics of "hatred and discrimination", he alleged and pointed out

that there are 16 assembly constituencies in the Trans Yamuna area.

MLA Abhay Verma, who was also present at the press conference along with Sachdeva and leader of opposition in the assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri, said it is regrettable that instead of giving the board its financial share for the area's development, "the Kejriwal government has splashed funds for its political glorification".

Bidhuri said that when the budget of the Delhi government was Rs.25000 crore, the Trans Yamuna Development Board was given Rs.200 crore per year and now when the budget has become Rs.75000 crore why the board is being given the same amount. He demanded from the Kejriwal government that for the last three years, Rs 1500 crore should be given for the development of the Trans Yamuna

area of Delhi and also Rs 600 crore should be made available to the Trans Yamuna Development Board in the budget of 2023-24, so that the Trans Yamuna area gets all around development.

"The Kejriwal government did not constitute the Trans Yamuna Area Development Board in the last three years due to which the people living across the Yamuna have been denied development work," the party's Delhi unit said in a statement after the press conference.

"If the people of Delhi are forced to live a hellish life, then they are not concerned about it, because, after the formation of the board, the Kejriwal government will have to pay money every year (to it), which is not acceptable to Kejriwal," it said and accused the government of step-motherly treatment towards people in the Trans Yamuna area.

3 held for harassing, groping Japanese woman on Holi



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Three people, including a juvenile, were apprehended for allegedly harassing and groping a Japanese woman here on Holi.

A video of the incident, which went viral on social media, showed a group of youths smearing colour on the woman, who appeared uncomfortable. It also showed one of them smashing an egg on her head. Though the woman did not lodge a complaint, the police have taken cognisance of the video.

The video was shot on March 8, when Holi was celebrated, in Paharganj area. The girl was staying in Paharganj and left for Bangladesh on Friday, according to police. In a tweet, the woman said she didn't know it was a serious situation.

"I have just arrived in Bangladesh. I'm really sorry

that I didn't know it was a serious situation. I am fine in mind and body. I will explain more tomorrow," she said. Deputy Commissioner of Police (Central) Sanjay Kumar Sain said people seen in the video have been identified.

Three people, including a juvenile, have been apprehended and are being questioned. They have confessed to their involvement in the incident as seen in the video. They all are residents of an area near Paharganj, he said.

A police official said the accused have been bound down, which means they will have to appear before police to join the investigation whenever required. Action has been initiated against the accused under the Delhi Police Act.

However, the further course of action will be decided on the basis of the merits of the case and in accordance with the woman's complaint, if any, the police said.

750-km Cyclothon for clean Yamuna gets support from 200 Army veterans



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Atulya Ganga's 750-km Yamuna Cyclothon gets a roaring participation in Delhi-NCR as 200 Army veterans pledge to rejuvenate Yamuna river.

The bravehearts commenced their journey from the origin of the river, Yamunotri, and made their way in Delhi, from National War Memorial to Sunder Nursery. Participants from all walks of life, especially the youth joined this cyclothon as a testimony of their commitment towards saving the Yamuna.

They first set their voyage by traversing 5,530 km on foot for the river Ganges, then carved their way by pedaling 2,800 km during Ganga Cyclothon 2022.

Unstoppable as ever, they

are now set to conserve Yamuna.

Yamuna Cyclothon, a 750-km long path, is an initiative connecting Yamunotri in Uttarakhand to Agra in Uttar Pradesh, while focusing on the survival of trees & plants on the terrains of the river Yamuna. It is an endeavour by Atulya Ganga to connect with youth, raise awareness and seek their partnership, fight the silent enemy of the country 'Plastic and Pollution', and protect the dying rivers.

Gopal Sharma, Founder Atulya Ganga Trust, high-spirited on the mission of purifying rivers, enunciated, "We have not done justice to our rivers. Polluting rivers is the worst thing that one can do for future generations. Yamuna needs us! All of us must come together & join hands to revive Yamuna."

Man stabbed to death by sister's ex-husband

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 40-year-old man was stabbed to death by his sister's former husband in east Delhi's Kalyanpuri area on Saturday, police said.

The incident happened in Block 44 in Kalyanvaas, they said, adding that the deceased has been identified as Neeraj.

According to police, the victim's relatives have alleged that the former husband of Neeraj's sister, who had come from Uttarakhand, was behind the incident.

They told police that he attacked Neeraj, his wife Vimal (38) and his mother Sunita (60) at their residence in east Delhi and fled from the spot, police said.

The victim, who was taken to hospital by his son Vineet, was declared brought dead by the doctors, a senior police officer said, adding the injured are being treated.

The CCTV footage of cameras in the area is being checked, police said.

A case has been registered and efforts are on to nab the accused, they said.

In another incident, a 21-year-old man was stabbed to death in Trilokpuri area in east Delhi on Saturday afternoon.

'Yamuna choked on way to city because of illegal sand mining'

Capital getting industrial water from Haryana, says Saurabh

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Jal Board Chairman and Water Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj Saturday alleged that the illegal sand mining in Haryana was blocking the supply of Yamuna's water towards the national capital and asked the LG to take note of the matter.

The Minister's allegation came on the heels of a letter Delhi Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena wrote to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal flagging the 'miserable hygiene and sanitary conditions' at the Wazirabad Water Treatment Plant which supplies drinking water to large parts of the national capital.

Reacting to the charges, Bharadwaj said illegal sand mining in Haryana has been blocking the supply of Yamuna water towards Delhi, and Haryana is instead releasing industrial wastewater towards



Delhi. He invited the LG on a joint inspection of illegal sand mining blocks in Haryana.

"People of Delhi feel extremely sad the LG is playing dirty politics over sensitive issue of water supply in Delhi. Either he is unaware of the facts or he is deliberately doing cheap politics."

"The issue raised by him is due to the inefficiency and inaction of Haryana govt because of which the people of Delhi are suffering. The LG is trying to pass the buck of BJP ruled Haryana Govt's fault on Delhi government," he said in a statement.

The Minister in his capacity as DJB Vice Chairman had visited Wazirabad WTP and pond last week to show reduced level of water in the Wazirabad pond.

To achieve full production from Wazirabad and Chandrawal WTP, Wazirabad

pond level should be 674.5 feet. "For last few weeks the pond level has touched bottom level of the pond at 671.4 feet. This has adversely affected production of WTPs at Chandrawal and Wazirabad. Latest production of Chandrawal is 90 MGD against normal production of 100 MGD while Wazirabad is producing 90 MGD against a usual production of 135 MGD.

"This shortage has impacted water supply all over Delhi as raw water is being diverted from other WTPs like Haiderpur, Dwarka, Nangloi, and Okhla.

"The water which is accumulated in Wazirabad pond is nothing but industrial waste from Haryana drains. The accumulated water is not useful for any purpose due to very high levels of pollutants, especially ammonia," the statement said.

Explaining further, the politician said that even deepening of Wazirabad pond cannot solve the issue of contamination because it would increase chances of contamination of groundwater aquifer.

Wazirabad and Chandrawal WTPs have been receiving contaminated water for the past many years causing the mechanical equipment to corrode frequently, Bhardwaj had said last week.

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DL8SAQ1399,	DL4SAA4153,	DL6SGW465,
DL1SH6823,	DL4SAB87831,	DL4SAG0495,
DL8S52940,	DL4SAQ3301,	UP16A0099,
DL6ST4055,	MH15K09076,	DL4SAG3295,
DL4SY5727,	DL4SAB9993,	DL291559,
DL8SU4540,	DL9C81398,	DNM17355,
DL9CS1351,	DL2CN0655,	DL4SAB4626,
DL1S1C0900,	DL3CAJ3093,	DL4SAG9507,
MAT607161,	JH09FO911,	DL4SAM2603,
CWF31288,	MA3FCAC121,	DL4SAB8287,
UP12H4667,	S0264531,	DL4SAP1784,
DL7CH0466,	DD2025231,	PB9807658,
UP16N9833,	DL4SAS760,	DL4SAU8319,

Australia won't tolerate attacks on religious buildings: Oz PM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed regret over recent acts of vandalism against Hindu temples by alleged Khalistani supporters in Australia, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese on Saturday said here his country will not tolerate such actions.

Assuring safety to the Indian community in his country, the visiting Prime Minister also said the full force of law will bring the perpetrators of such crimes to book.

Australia has witnessed at

least four incidents of vandalism in different cities in the last two months. Modi flagged the issue during summit with Albanese here on Friday and said, "It is a matter of regret that reports of attacks on temples have come regularly from Australia over the past few weeks. It is natural that such news worries everyone in India, disturbs our mind."

"I conveyed these feelings and concerns to Prime Minister Albanese and he has assured me that the safety of the Indian community is of special priority for him. Our teams will be in regular contact on this matter, and will



cooperate as much as possible," he said.

The Indian Embassy in Australia had repeatedly urged the local Government to bring the perpetrators of such crimes to book. External

Affairs Minister S Jaishankar had also taken up these acts with his Australian counterpart Penny Wong during his visit to Sydney last month.

Making his country's stand clear, Albanese said

here during a Press conference Australia will not tolerate any extreme actions and attacks that took place in religious buildings, and there is no place for such action against Hindu temples.

Responding to a media query about the assurances that the Australian Prime Minister gave to his Indian counterpart, Albanese said, "I gave him the assurance that Australia is a country that respects people's faith. That we don't tolerate the sort of extreme actions and attacks that we've seen on religious buildings, be they Hindu temples, mosques, synagogues, or churches. This has

no place in Australia."

"And we will take every action through our police and also our security agencies to make sure that anyone responsible for this faces the full force of the law. We're a tolerant multicultural nation, and there is no place in Australia for this activity," the statement quoted him saying.

Last week, a prominent Hindu temple, Shree Laxmi Narayan Temple, in Brisbane was attacked by pro-Khalistan supporters. This was the fourth incident of vandalism against Hindu temples in two months in Australia.

On January 23, the walls

of the revered ISCKON temple in Melbourne's Albert Park were vandalised with graffiti "Hindustan Murdabad."

On January 16, the historic Shri Shiva Vishnu Temple in Carrum Downs, Victoria, was vandalised in a similar manner.

On January 12, the Swaminarayan temple in Melbourne was defaced by 'anti-social elements' with anti-India graffiti.

India has repeatedly condemned the vandalism against the Hindu temples in Australia and has raised the issue with the Australian government.

Forces halt flying Dhruv ALH after chopper mishap

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The three Services have temporarily suspended flying Dhruv advanced light helicopters (ALH) after a helicopter crashed into the sea off Mumbai on March 8.

Flying operations will resume soon after the experts are able to pinpoint the cause of the mishap and rectify the fault, sources said here on Saturday.

The Dhruv helicopters, manufactured by the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), are used for ferrying personnel and material and are used extensively by the army, IAF, navy and Coast Guard. During the incident, two days back, the Navy Dhruv on a routine flying mission off Mumbai experienced a sudden loss of power and rapid loss of



height.

The pilot carried out controlled ditching over water and all three aircrews exited the helicopter safely and were recovered as part of a swift rescue operation. The ditched helicopter had deployed its emergency flotation gear and efforts are underway to salvage it.

"HAL had already initiated steps and will closely work

with the customers to ensure that the Helicopters fleet is fully operational," HAL officials told ANI.

The HAL is manufacturing these helicopters since 2002 and more than 330 helicopters, at present, are in service. The versatile helicopter is deployed in Siachen glacier and is capable in flying at very high altitudes besides in all other terrains.

Centre raises concern over gradual increase in Covid positivity rate amid rising H3N2 cases

Pitches for more surveillance

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Amid a rise in cases of A seasonal influenza subtype H3N2, the Centre on Saturday expressed concern over a gradual increase in the Covid-19 positivity rate in some states and said it needed to be promptly addressed.

The Centre requested all states and Union territories to follow operational guidelines for integrated surveillance of respiratory pathogens presenting as cases of influenza-like illness (ILI) or severe acute respiratory infection (SARI).

The states were also requested to take a stock of hospital preparedness such as availability of drugs and medical oxygen, vaccination coverage against COVID-19 and influenza.

"While the COVID-19 trajectory has decreased substantially in last few months, the gradual rise in COVID-19 test positivity rates in some states is a concerning issue that needs to be promptly addressed," Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said in a letter to states and UTs on Saturday.

Despite low number of new cases, equally low number of hospitalisations and significant advances made in terms of COVID-19 vaccination coverage, Bhushan said, there is a need to remain vigilant and focus on the five-fold strategy of test, track, treat, vaccination and adherence to Covid-appropriate behaviour.



In light of rising trend in other ILIs and SARIs being witnessed in some states and UTs across the country, a meeting was held recently to review the current situation with the central ministries, departments and organisations concerned.

While influenza is an annual seasonal occurrence, in the present season, a variety of weather conditions and behavioural reasons -- less than adequate attention to personal hygiene, coughing without adequate protection, closed indoor gatherings of people, etc. -- make the environment conducive to circulation of a number of viral respiratory pathogens like Influenza A (H1N1, H3N2 etc.) and adenoviruses, he mentioned.

Under the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), as reported by states and UTs, an increasing trend of ILI/SARI is being observed across the country, Bhushan stated.

Further, according to integrated sentinel based surveillance of ILI and SARI, an upswing of Influenza A is

observed since the latter half of December last.

"Of particular concern is preponderance of Influenza A (H3N2) being detected in the samples being analysed in various labs. It should also be kept in mind that young children, old age people and people suffering from co-morbidities are particularly at risk and vulnerable to H1N1, H3N2, adenoviruses, etc," he said.

Additionally, since January 1, as per testing of respiratory samples being undertaken by various viral research and diagnostic labs (VRDLs), almost 25.4 per cent of the samples have tested positive for adenoviruses, he said.

While most of these agents typically cause a similar mild and often self-limiting illness manifesting acute respiratory infection with fever and cough, in some cases, particularly old age people, people with obesity and other co-morbidities as well as pregnant females, those infected may suffer from a more severe manifestation of these diseases requiring hospitalisation, Bhushan underlined.

Govt indulging in politics of 'suppressing' unyielding voices of Opp: Priyanka after CBI summons Tejashwi

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Saturday alleged that the BJP-led government is indulging in politics of "suppressing" the unyielding voices of the Opposition, and claimed that the action by probe agencies against Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav was part of this.

Her attack on the government came after the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) summoned Tejashwi Yadav to appear for questioning in connection with the alleged land-for-jobs scam.

In a tweet in Hindi, Priyanka Gandhi said, "Why is the BJP government so scared of the vocal voices of the Opposition?"

She alleged that by adopting all possible means, the government is indulging in politics of "suppressing" the unyielding voices of the Opposition. "The action of agencies on Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav ji is inspired by this politics," the Congress general secretary alleged.

"The public is watching everything, and will take all this into account," Priyanka Gandhi said.

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge on Friday had accused the Narendra Modi government of making "sinister attempts to kill democracy" by misusing probe agencies against Opposition leaders, as he slammed the Centre over the Enforcement Directorate searches on the premises of former Bihar chief minister and RJD supremo Lalu Prasad



BJP's goal is to finish Opp to turn India into autocracy: Chadha

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi's ruling Aam Aadmi Party, whose senior leaders Manish Sisodia and Satyendar Jain have been arrested in unrelated cases, on Saturday accused the BJP-led Centre of misusing the Central probe agencies to finish the Opposition and turn India into an autocracy.

Addressing a press conference, AAP Rajya Sabha MP and national spokesperson Raghav Chadha claimed that Sisodia was set to get bail but CBI deliberately did not let its lawyer appear before the court and a next date for hearing was fixed as a result.

"In the meantime, ED also made up its mind to arrest Sisodia in the same case to ask the same questions based on the same evidence," he charged. "This is a textbook example of abuse of law. Probe agencies are abusing the process of law."

Sisodia, the former deputy

chief minister of Delhi, was arrested by CBI on February 26 in connection with alleged corruption in the formulation and implementation of the now-scrapped Delhi excise policy for 2021-22.

On March 9, a day before Sisodia's bail plea was to come up for hearing before a CBI court, the Enforcement Directorate arrested him on money laundering charges in the excise policy case. Later, the ED got his custody till March 17.

Jain was arrested in May

last year by the ED in connection with a money laundering case. Both the leaders are currently lodged in Delhi's Tihar Jail.

On Saturday, Chadha alleged that since 2014, 95 per cent of the cases registered by CBI are against opposition parties.

Sharing numbers, he said 30 cases have been

Xi's confidant Li Qiang named new Premier

PTI ■ BEIJING

China's parliament on Saturday confirmed President Xi Jinping's trusted ally Li Qiang as the new Premier to revive the world's second-largest economy hit by three years of 'zero-Covid' restrictions and worsening relations with the West.

Li Qiang, 63, succeeds Li Keqiang, 67, who held the post for the last 10 years.

The annual session of the National People's Congress (NPC), a largely ceremonial body which routinely passes the proposals of the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC), approved Li Qiang's candidature after his name was proposed by Xi himself.

However, his "election" unlike that of Xi was not unanimous. He was endorsed by 2,936 of the 2,947 NPC members who attended Saturday's meeting, with three voting against and eight abstaining, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post newspaper reported.

After the voting, Xi signed a Presidential decree appointing Li Qiang as Premier following which he took a pledge of allegiance to the Constitution.

Later Xi shook hands with



Newly elected Premier Li Qiang, center left, shakes hands with Chinese President Xi Jinping as former Premier Li Keqiang, at right, applauds during a session of China's National People's Congress (NPC) at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Saturday

Li Qiang in brief video clips shown on national television.

After that Li Keqiang too shook hands with Li Qiang in what appears to be a smooth transfer of power considering that the outgoing Premier maintained a low profile in recent years apparently unhappy over the erosion of his power following the dramatic rise of Xi's stature in the last ten years equating himself with party founder Mao Zedong.

Later Xi shook hands with Li Keqiang and exchanged pleasantries apparently bidding goodbye as he headed to his retirement from politics.

Li Keqiang, a contender along with Xi in the race for the Presidency in 2012, opted to retire last year apparently unhappy over the President's big push to consolidate his power deftly using the massive crackdown against corruption and hold on the military.

He was regarded as a less powerful Premier in comparison to his predecessors.

Li Qiang, stated to be a pro-business politician in Xi's inner circle, will be the number two ranked official of the CPC and the government after Xi, who on Friday was confirmed as President and the

head of the military for an unprecedented third five-year term. Xi, 69, is the only leader after the party founder Mao Zedong to have more than two five-year tenures and he is widely expected to be in power for lifelong. Bilateral ties between China and some of the major western nations, especially with the US, are at their lowest point in decades, leading to escalating tensions in technology and investment.

Li Qiang worked with Xi in his early years during his provincial stints before he shifted to the central government as Vice President. He headed the party in Shanghai, China's largest modern business hub.

However, his handling of the last year's COVID outbreak, keeping the city of over 26 million under lockdown for about two months, drew sharp criticism at home and abroad as it resulted in heavy hardships for the population.

Li Qiang, who remained a close ally of Xi, is expected to galvanise the private sector as well as foreign investments into the world's second-largest economy, dispelling the impression that the government, which resorted to crack-

down against top business houses like Alibaba in the last

few years, is reverting to the state-owned enterprises.

In his annual work report, Li Keqiang on March 5 proposed about five per cent growth rate target for the economy, the lowest in decades.

Considering the Chinese economy registered a three per cent GDP last year its lowest in decades, Li Qiang's focus will be to shoulder the responsibility of shoring up the economy to previous levels of growth, defusing immediate risks, tapping into long-term growth potential and elevating China into a high-income economy during his tenure.

Li Qiang is scheduled to hold his first annual press conference on March 13 on the last day of the NPC session, which will be watched at home and abroad during which he was expected to outline his plan to revitalise the Chinese economy and tackle other challenges like a demographic crisis, technological bottlenecks and the US crackdown on China's high-tech.

"Li Qiang's biggest challenge will be reviving the Chinese economy this year," said Ava Shen, China and Northeast Asia associate at Eurasia Group, a political risk consultancy.

No hidden agenda, China on hosting Iran-Saudi talks

AP ■ BEIJING

After hosting talks at which Iran and Saudi Arabia agreed to reestablish diplomatic relations, China said on Saturday it has no hidden motives and isn't trying to fill any "vacuum" in the Middle East.

The agreement announced on Friday to reestablish Iran-Saudi ties and reopen embassies after seven years was seen as a major diplomatic victory for China, as Gulf Arab states perceive the United States as reducing its presence in the Middle East.

The Foreign Ministry quoted an unidentified spokesperson as saying China "pursues no selfish interest whatsoever" and opposes geopolitical competition in the region. China will continue to support Mideast countries in "resolving differences through dialogue and consultation to jointly promote lasting peace and stability," the spokesperson said.

"We respect the stature of Middle East countries as the masters of this region and oppose geopolitical competition in the Middle East," said the statement posted on the Foreign Ministry's website.

"China has no intention to and will not seek to fill so-called vacuum or put up exclusive blocs," it said, in an apparent reference to the US "China will continue to contribute its insights and proposals to realising peace and tranquility in the Middle East and play its role as a responsible major country in this process."

Following Friday's announcement, China's senior diplomat Wang Yi said the agreement showed China was a "reliable mediator" that had "faithfully fulfilled its duties as the host."

Notably, Wang also stated that "this world has more than just the Ukraine question and there are still many issues

Agreement will ease regional tension: Syria

Damascus (AP): Syria on Saturday welcomed the agreement reached between Iran and Saudi Arabia to reestablish diplomatic relations and reopen their embassies saying it will lead to more stability in the region.

Iran has been a main backer of President Bashar Assad's government, while Saudi Arabia supports opposition fighters trying to remove him from power.

The deal was struck in Beijing amid China's ceremonial National People's Congress. It represents a major diplomatic victory for the Chinese as Gulf Arab states perceive the United States to be slowly withdrawing from the wider Middle East.

It also comes as diplomats have been trying to end Yemen's lengthy conflict, in which both Iran and Saudi Arabia are deeply entrenched. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has wanted to normalise relations with Saudi Arabia, but the deal with Iran, Israel's arch-rival, will complicate that.

It also could make Israel feel more alone if it decides to carry out a military strike against Iran's nuclear program as it creeps closer to weapons-grade levels.

Syria's Foreign Ministry welcomed the agreement in a statement calling it an "important step that will lead to strengthening security and stability in the region."

affecting peace and people's lives."

China has been heavily

criticised for failing to condemn Russia's invasion and for accusing the US and NATO of provoking the conflict.

A Chinese proposal calling for a cease-fire and peace negotiations between Russia and Ukraine went nowhere, largely because of China's perceived backing of Russia.

However, in the Middle East, China is viewed as a neutral party, with strong ties to both Iran and Saudi Arabia, as well as Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

China last month hosted Iran's hard-line President Ebrahim Raisi, and is a top purchaser of Saudi oil.

Chinese leader Xi Jinping visited Riyadh in December for meetings with oil-rich Gulf Arab nations crucial to China's energy supplies, and China's special envoy for the Middle East — a position specially created in 2002 — has made frequent trips to the region.

China sells drones and other weaponry to countries in the region, but nowhere on the scale of the United States.

In coordination with fellow authoritarian state Russia, China has sought to steadily chip away at the US-led Western liberal order, taking advantage of opportunities when Washington's attention has strayed.

Earlier, it moved aggressively to build ties in the South Pacific, signing a security agreement with the Solomon Islands that could see Chinese naval ships and security forces taking up a presence in the country.

The US, Australia and others moved swiftly to shore up ties in the Pacific, and China's efforts to ink similar agreements with other island nations ultimately foundered.

Xi, whose administration in recent days has warned of "conflict and confrontation" with the US, was credited in a trilateral statement with facilitating the Iran-Saudi talks.

1 killed, 5 injured in Afghan press award bombing

AP ■ JALALABAD

A bomb exploded on Saturday during an award ceremony for journalists in Afghanistan's Mazar-e-Sharif city, killing at least one person and wounded five others, a Taliban police spokesman said.

The blast occurred at the Tabian Farhang centre in Mazar-e-Sharif, the capital of Balkh province, as journalists gathered for the award event at 11 am, said Mohammad Asif Waziri, the Taliban-appointed spokesman for Balkh police.

It came two days after a bomb in Mazar-e-Sharif killed the provincial governor, Daud Muzmal, and two others. Four were wounded.

The identity of the fatality in



An injured man lies down after a bomb blast in Mazar-e-Sharif, the capital city of Balkh province, in northern Afghanistan on Saturday

Saturday's blast was not immediately known but journalists were among the five wounded. They included Najeeb Faryad, a reporter for Aryana News television station, who said he felt like something hit him in the back, followed by a deafening sound before he fell to the ground.

No one has immediately claimed responsibility for the attack, but the regional affiliate of the Islamic State in Khorasan Province — is a key rival of the Taliban.

The militant group has increased its attacks in Afghanistan since the Taliban takeover of the country in August 2021. Targets have included Taliban patrols and members of Afghanistan's Shiite minority.

GLOBE TROTTER

NEW AIR FORCE ONE TO STAY BLUE AND WHITE

WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden is sticking with a blue-and-white colour scheme for the exterior of the replacement Air Force One aircraft, the first of which is expected to be delivered in four years. The Air Force said late Friday that the light blue on the new model of the modified 747s that transport the president will be a little bit deeper and more modern in tone than the robin's egg blue on the versions of the aircraft currently in use.

SIKH LEADER ARRESTED FOR PLANNING TO BURN CALIFORNIA GURDWARA

NEW YORK: A 60-year-old Indian-origin Sikh man has been arrested in the US for allegedly attempting to hire people to shoot multiple people and burn down a prominent Gurdwara in California, according to media reports. Rajvir Raj Singh Gill, a former Bakersfield City Council candidate, was arrested on March 4 for allegedly targeting one of Bakersfield's largest Sikh places of worship, Gurdwara Shaheed Baba Deep Singh Ji Khalsa Darbar, and burning down the property, bakersfield.com portal reported.

HONG KONG ACTIVISTS JAILED

HONG KONG: Three former organisers of Hong Kong's annual vigil in remembrance of victims of China's 1989 crackdown on pro-democracy protests were jailed Saturday for four and a half months for failing to provide authorities with information on the group in accordance with a national security law. Chow Hang-tung, Tang Ngok-kwan and Tsui Hon-kwong were arrested in 2021 during a crackdown on the city's pro-democracy movement following massive protests more than three years ago.

IS KILLED MORE THAN 35 'CHRISTIANS' IN CONGO

DAKAR: The Islamic State group has issued a statement claiming responsibility for killing more than 35 people and wounding dozens in eastern Congo. In the statement, posted Friday by Aamaq, the militants' news agency, it said it killed "Christians" with guns and knives and destroyed their property in Mukondi village in North Kivu province. It also published a photo of the houses on fire.

UK: Russian advance in Bakhmut could come with heavy losses

AP ■ KYIV

Russian forces have made progress in the front-line hotspot of Bakhmut, a key target of Moscow's months long campaign in eastern Ukraine that has resulted in staggering casualties, but their assault will be difficult to sustain without further harsh losses, UK military officials said in an assessment on Saturday. The UK defence ministry said in the latest of its regular Twitter updates that units from the Kremlin-controlled paramilitary Wagner Group have captured most of eastern Bakhmut, with a river flowing through the city center now marking the front line.

However, the update added, it will be "highly challenging" for Wagner forces to push ahead, as Ukraine has destroyed key



A Ukrainian paratrooper of the 80 Air Assault brigade prepares a self propelled howitzer 2s1 at the frontline near Bakhmut on Friday

bridges over the river, while Ukrainian sniper fire from fortified buildings further west has made the thin strip of open ground in the center "a killing zone." At the same time, Ukrainian troops and supply lines in the mining city remain vulnerable to "continued Russian attempts to outflank the defend-

ers from the north and south," as Russian forces try to close in on them in a pincer movement, the ministry said.

Meanwhile, Russian military bloggers and other pro-Kremlin Telegram accounts on Friday claimed that Russian forces have entered a metal processing plant in northwestern Bakhmut. A Washington-based think tank late on Friday also referenced geolocated footage showing Russian forces within 800 metres of the AZOM plant, a heavily built-up and fortified complex. The Institute for the Study of War assessed that Moscow's apparent focus on capturing the plant, rather than opting for a "wider encirclement of western Bakhmut" by attempting to take nearby villages, is likely to bring a further wave of Russian casualties.

Indonesia's Merapi volcano erupts

PTI ■ MOUNT MERAPI

Indonesia's Mount Merapi erupted on Saturday with avalanches of searing gas clouds and lava, forcing authorities to halt tourism and mining activities on the slopes of the country's most active volcano.

Merapi, on the densely populated island of Java, unleashed clouds of hot ash and a mixture of rock, lava and gas that travelled up to 7 kilometres (4.3 miles) down its slopes.

A column of hot clouds rose 100 metres (yards) into the air, said the National Disaster Management Agency's spokesman Abdul Muhari.

The eruption throughout the day blocked out the sun and blanketed several villages with falling ash. No casualties have been reported.

It was Merapi's biggest lava flow since authorities raised the alert level to the second-highest in November 2020, said Hanik Humaida, the head of Yogyakarta's Volcanology and Geological Hazard Mitigation Center.



posed by lava. Tourism and mining activities were halted.

The 2,968-metre (9,737-foot) mountain is about 30 kilometres (18 miles) from Yogyakarta, an ancient centre of Javanese culture and the seat of royal dynasties going back centuries. About a quarter million people live within 10 kilometres (6 miles) of the volcano. Merapi is the most active of more than 120 active volcanoes in Indonesia and has repeatedly erupted with lava and gas clouds recently. Its last major eruption in 2010 killed 347 people and displaced 20,000 villagers.

Indonesia, an archipelago of 270 million people, is prone to earthquakes and volcanic activity because it sits along the "Ring of Fire," a horseshoe-shaped series of seismic fault lines around the Pacific Ocean.

Caste battle moves to Toronto

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

After Seattle in the United States, the caste battle has now reached Toronto in Canada where the two sides -- one favouring a ban on caste-based discrimination and the other opposing any such move -- have started fighting it out in a district school. Last month, Seattle became the first US city to outlaw caste discrimination after its local council overwhelmingly passed a resolution moved by an Indian-American politician and economist to add caste to its non-discrimination policy. The resolution moved by Kshama Sawant, an upper-caste Hindu, was approved by the Seattle City Council by six to one vote. The results of the vote could have far-reaching implications on the issue of caste discrimination in the US.

Proponents of caste discrimination were successful in bringing the motion for consideration before the Toronto District School Board (TDSB). The board at its meeting on March 8, referred it to the Ontario Human Rights Commission as a neutral observer to study and assess the issue. In doing so, the board noted that it does not have enough expertise on this issue.

Biden appoints two Indian-Americans to trade committee

Washington (PTI): US President Joe Biden on Friday named two Indian-Americans -- Revathi Advaiti, CEO of Flex, and Manish Bapna, CEO of the Natural Resources Defence Council -- to the Advisory Committee for Trade Policy and Negotiations.

On Friday, Biden announced his intent to appoint 14 people to the Advisory Committee, which provides overall policy advice to the United States Trade Representative on matters of development, implementation, and administration of the US trade policy. Among these include negotiating objectives and bargaining positions before entering into trade agreements, the impact of the implementa-

tion of trade agreements, matters concerning the operation of any trade agreement once entered into, and other matters arising in connection with the development, implementation, and administration of the trade policy of the United States, the White House said.

Revathi Advaiti is CEO of Flex, "the global manufacturing partner of choice that helps a diverse customer base design and build products to improve the world".

Since assuming the role in 2019, Advaiti has been responsible for architecting the company's strategic direction and leading Flex through a transformation that is defining a new era in manufacturing, the White House said.

NOTICE INVITING TENDER
SSA-33029/1/2022-TT-SSA/V138795/2023
Mission Director, Samagra Shiksha Axom , Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam invites following bids through GeM portal.
1. GEM/2023/B/3214684 Date : 02-03-2023 for Pupils Comprehensive Progress Report Card.
Interested bidder may visit GeM portal and submit their bid on GeM portal accordingly.
Sd/-Mission Director
Samagra Shiksha, Assam
Kahilipara, Guwahati-19
Janasanyog/CF/4808/22

UJVN LTD.
(A Govt. of Jharkhand Enterprise)
H.O. "UJJWAL", Maharani Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun-248006
Phone: 0135- 2763508 Fax 0135-2763507
CIN No: U40101UR2001SGC025866 Website: www.ujvn.com
CORRIGENDUM (TIME EXTENSION) Dt. 10.03.2023
Due dates of e-tender No. 25/EE(M&G)/DKN/2022-23 for "Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 36 kV Isolators at 132/33 kV Switchyard of Dhakrani Power Station" invitedby the Office of Executive Engineer (M&G), Dhakrani Power House, Dhakrani, Dehradunis hereby extended as follows:
Last date for downloading of bid documents: 15/03/2023 upto 15:00Hrs
Last Date for uploading of bid : 15/03/2023upto 15:00 Hrs
Last Date for submission of Documents in Hard Copy :18/03/2023 upto 12:00 Hrs
Date of opening of bids: 18/03/2023, 15:00 Hrs
For fuller & further details of tender, kindly visit e- procurement portal <http://ukttenders.gov.in> Executive Engineer (M&G)
"AVOID WASTEFUL USE OF ELECTRICITY"

निविदा नोटिस
सर्वसाधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि पानीपत जिला मुख्यालय पर लघु सचिवालय/कोर्ट काम्पलेक्स के साईकल/स्कूटर/कार/ जीप स्टैंड को ठेके पर देने के लिए वर्ष 2023-24 यानि 01.04.2023 से 31.03.2024 तक के लिए खुली बोली दिनांक 14.03.2023 को दोपहर 12 बजे कार्फेस हॉल, द्वितीय तल, लघु सचिवालय, जी.टी. रोड, पानीपत में की जाएगी। बोली देने वाले को दिनांक 13.03.2023 से पूर्व जिला नज़रत शाखा उपायुक्त कार्यालय, पानीपत प्रथम तल कमरा नं. 109 में मु0 1,00,000/- रुपये की धरोहर राशि का डिमांड, झुफ्फ/नकद उपायुक्त, पानीपत के नाम जमा करवाना होगा। निविदा की शर्तें किसी भी कार्य दिवस को जिला नज़रत शाखा उपायुक्त कार्यालय, पानीपत प्रथम तल, कमरा नं. 109 से प्राप्त की जा सकती हैं। बोली को स्वीकार/अस्वीकार करने का अन्तिम/पूर्ण अधिकार उपायुक्त पानीपत को होगा।
उपायुक्त, पानीपत

Sri Lanka uses Indian aid to print textbooks

Colombo (PTI): Sri Lanka has used over USD 10 million from India's assistance of USD 1 billion to print nearly half of the textbooks for its four million young students, the Indian High Commission here said on Saturday. India announced a USD 1 billion line of credit to Sri Lanka last year as part of its financial assistance to help the country deal with its economic crisis.

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY MADRAS
Chennai - 600 036
Admission to M.Tech. Programme 2023-24
Applications are invited for admission to the M.Tech. programme for the Academic Year 2023-24 commencing from July 2023, as per the following schedule:

Programme	Mode of Application	M.Tech. Admission portal opens	Portal closes on the given last date	Website
M.Tech. (Regular)	Online	17 th March 2023	7 th April 2023 (at 23.59 hrs.)	http://mtechadm.iitm.ac.in
M.Tech. (Sponsored)		17 th March 2023	(at 23.59 hrs.)	https://mtechspons.iitm.ac.in

Seats are reserved for SC/ST/OBC(Non-creamy layer)/ PwD/ EWS (Economically Weaker Section) as per Government of India rules. **Please visit the above websites for online applications, information brochures and further details.**
Date : 12.03.2023 Deputy Registrar (Courses)

राष्ट्रीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान, कुरुक्षेत्र
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
(Under the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India)
KURUKSHETRA-136119 (HARYANA)
Advt. No.08/2023
Walk-In-Interview
National Institute of Technology, Kurukshetra requires qualified and experienced persons for engagement as Training & Placement Officer, Multi Tasking Staff (Driver) on contract basis and Dental Surgeon on part-time basis. Interested candidates may appear for Walk-in-Interview as per the schedule in the Board Room, Golden Jubilee Administrative Building of the Institute along with Bio-Data, original certificates, one set of attested copies of certificates, a recent Passport size photograph and an original identity card. The candidates may report for verification of documents as per the schedule available on the website of the Institute.
For more details, please visit our website: www.nitkkr.ac.in.
Sd/-
Registrar Incharge

ग्रेटर नौएडा औद्योगिक विकास प्रधिकरण
सार्वजनिक सूचना
ग्रेटर नौएडा औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण को अर्न्तगत M/s Panchsheel Buildtech Pvt. Ltd. मूखण्ड संख्या-जीएच-01ए, सेक्टर-16 ग्रेटर नौएडा पर (Group Housing Project) का अधिमोग प्रमाण पत्र हेतु दिनांक 17.10.2022 को ऑनलाईन आवेदन संख्या-सीसी-5553 के माध्यम से (Tower-E1, E2, E3, E4, E5, 16 Villas & Commercial) आवेदन किया गया है।
1. तत्कम में U.P. Apartment Act-2010, Amendment 2016 in Section-4 Sub Section-B के अर्न्तगत परियोजना के आवंटियों से आपत्ति/सुझाव आमंत्रित किये जाने का प्रावधान है। इस संबंध में विकासकर्ता द्वारा प्रस्तुत कार्यपुर्ति मानचित्र एवं Declarations of UP Apartment Act 2010 परीक्षण किसी भी कार्यदिवस में सुबह 9:30 से साय 6 बजे के मध्य नियोजन विभाग में तथा प्रधिकरण की वेबसाईट पर किया जा सकता है।
अतः उपरोक्त परियोजना के आवंटियों द्वारा **Completion Map** एवं **Declarations of UP Apartment Act 2010** के संबंध में सूचना प्रकाशित करने के 30 दिनों के अन्तर आपत्तिया / सुझाव आमंत्रित की जाती है। उपरोक्त के निहितार्थ अपनी आपत्तिया लिखित से अपने आवेदन पत्र, नाम, पता एवं दूरभाष नम्बर के साथ कार्यालय समय व कार्यदिवस में ग्रेटर नौएडा प्राधिकरण के मुख्य प्रशासनिक कार्यालय, मूखण्ड संख्या-1, नॉलेज पार्क-4, ग्रेटर नौएडा में स्थित प्रमारी महाप्रबन्धक नियोजन को सम्बोधित करते हुए सूचना प्रकाशित होने के 30 दिवसों के अन्तर जमा कराया जा सकता है।
प्रमारी महाप्रबन्धक (नियो0/वास्तु0)

Textile exports showing growth sign, says Goyal

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The country's textiles exports have started showing signs of growth after getting impacted due to issues like problems of foreign exchange in many countries and large inventories due to Russia-Ukraine war, Union minister Piyush Goyal said on Saturday.

The textiles minister also expressed hope that exports of cotton and yarn would start reigniting from April.

"Textiles exports have a twin problem. Many countries are facing foreign exchange problems post Ukraine conflict, due to which many destinations have cut down non-essential imports," he told reporters here.

Citing an example, he said an Indian consignment of 100 containers to Egypt came back as the African nation did not have foreign exchange to pay for it.

Many countries are not accepting non-essential goods from outside their territory, he added.

Another reason was that, he said, post-Covid there was a lot of pent-up demands, people were purchasing in large quantities of products like textiles and gems and jewellery.

But soon after the Ukraine conflict, inflation went up by



leaps and bounds and due to the growing inflation and the stress in economies and "we saw" inventories getting piled up and people slowed down their procurements, he said.

"I have been engaged with export promotion councils regularly and the latest information is that most of the inventories are now consumed, economies are starting to get back into shape. I think the world has kind of learnt to live with the challenges and crisis...And the figures also seem to suggest that the exports are up again," Goyal told reporters here.

He was replying to a question about the reason behind dip in textiles exports.

On dip in cotton and yarn

exports, he explained that the outbound shipments were "all-time high" last year due to inflation.

This year due to the international problems, prices are "quite suppressed" and because of that there was a dip in exports of cotton and yarn.

"We hope to see that also reigniting from April 1," he added. Ready-made garments of all textiles dipped by about 3.5 per cent in January to \$ 1.5 billion. However, during April-January this fiscal, it rose by 5.22 per cent to \$13.4 billion.

Exports of cotton yarn, fabrics, made-ups and handloom products dipped by 28.7 per cent to \$ 9 billion during April-January this fiscal.

NITI Aayog ties up with Oz science agency for cooperation on innovations

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission and Australia's national science agency Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) have joined hands to encourage cooperation on innovations in areas of national challenges and shared priorities, an official statement said on Saturday.

The Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) and CSIRO have signed a letter of intent to drive innovation activities in areas of national challenges and shared priorities of both countries, the statement said.

The move came after Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese during his visit to India met Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi on 10th March.

The meeting between the two prime ministers spanned across areas of mutual interest and explored avenues of strengthening bilateral engagement in a range of key areas with innovation as one key item, it added.

The statement said the letter of intent between AIM and CSIRO calls for a greater collaboration in areas of mutual interest and strategic priorities and serves as a general framework for cooperation intended to facilitate the development of



more programme-specific interventions.

One of the programmes, India Australia Innovation and Technology Challenge (IA-ITC), intends to leverage the complementary capabilities and resources of the innovation ecosystem of both the countries, it added.

The IA-ITC builds on the success of the India Australia Circular Economy (IACE) hackathon 2021, which witnessed university students, startups, and SMEs from both India and Australia develop innovative tech-based solutions for circularity in food system value chain.

Chintan Vaishnav, Mission Director - AIM, NITI Aayog, said this partnership and the IA-ITC programme in particular is an exciting opportunity for India and Australia to collaborate at different levels of the ecosystem involving startups, SMEs, business incubators and accelerators, VCs and the industry.

Forex reserves rose by \$1.46 bn to \$562.4 bn in March, says RBI

PTI ■ MUMBAI

India's foreign exchange Reserves rose by \$1.46 billion to \$ 562.4 billion as of March 3, arresting the four successive weeks of fall, the Reserve Bank of India said.

The forex reserves had fallen by \$15.8 billion during the preceding four weeks. In the previous week ending February 24, the reserves had declined by \$325 million to \$560.942 billion, and the week before by a whopping \$5.68 billion, showed the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) data.

The worst drop was in the week to February 10 when the reserves plunged by a steep \$8.32 billion to \$566.95 billion.

The reserves have been falling as the rupee has been under pressure and the monetary authority has been taking measures to defend the currency from extreme volatility. In 2022 the cost of defending a falling rupee was over \$115 billion of the reserves.

In October 2021, the forex kitty had reached an all-time high of \$ 645 billion.

During the week ending March 3, the accretion was primarily due to the increase in the value of the foreign currency assets, the largest component of the reserves, to the tune of \$ 1.2 billion to \$ 497.1 billion, according to the Weekly Statistical Supplement released



by the RBI on Friday.

This led to a revaluation of the foreign assets and dollar buying by the central bank.

During the reporting week, the rupee strengthened against the American dollar by almost 1per cent as domestic and overseas investment flows boosted the unit.

The latest forex inflow was led by the US private equity fund GQG pumping in \$ 1.9 billion in to the troubled Adani group. The inflow came after around \$ 800 billion of FPI (Foreign Portfolio Investors) selling in equities and debt.

Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves.

Gold reserves gained by \$28.2 million to reach \$ 41.79 billion.

The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) fell \$ 18 million to \$ 18.10 billion.

The country's reserve position with the IMF was down \$36 million to \$ 5.062 billion in the reporting week, according to the RBI data.

Sebi resolves 2,672 complaints through SCORES platform in Feb

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A total of 2,672 complaints against companies and market intermediaries received through capital markets regulator Sebi's SCORES platform were disposed of in February, according to Sebi data.

At the beginning of February, as many as 2,603 complaints were pending and 2,321 fresh complaints were received during the month, the data released by Sebi on Friday showed.

These complaints were related to refunds, allotment, redemption and interest, among others.

The regulator noted that there were seven complaints as of February 2023, which were pending for more than three months. These complaints were related to research analyst, investment adviser, corporate governance/ listing conditions, non-demat, remat and transfer/dividend/rights/redemption.



The average resolution time for a complaint is 30 days, it added.

In a separate public notice, Sebi mentioned six entities against whom complaints have been pending for more than three months on SCORES as of February 2023.

These are Grovalue Financial Services, Analysewise Investment Advisors, Kaushal Mehta, Caledonian Jute and Industries, International Housing Finance Corporation and Brightcom Group Ltd.

SCORES is a redressal grievance system that was launched by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) in June 2011.

Net direct tax collection reaches ₹13.73 L cr, 83% of revised estimate for FY23

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Net direct tax collection up to March this fiscal grew 17 per cent to reach ₹13.73 lakh crore, which is 83 per cent of the revised target for the full financial year, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said on Saturday.

The growth in direct tax mop-up, which comprises personal income tax and corporate taxes, was driven by PIT collections. On a gross basis, the collection grew 22.58 per cent to ₹16.68 lakh crore.

Refunds amounting to ₹2.95 lakh crore have been issued during April 1, 2022 to March 10, 2023, which are 59.44 per cent higher than refunds issued during the same period in the preceding year.

Direct tax collection, net of refunds, stands at ₹13.73 lakh crore which is 16.78 per cent



higher than the net collections for the corresponding period of last year.

This collection is 96.67 per cent of the total budget estimates and 83.19 per cent of the total revised estimates of direct taxes for the financial year 2022-23, the CBDT said in a statement.

After adjustment of refunds, the net growth in CIT (Corporate Income Tax) collections is 13.62 per cent and that in PIT (Personal Income Tax) collections including STT (Securities Transaction Tax) is 20.06 per cent, it said.

IDFC Mutual Fund to be rebranded as Bandhan MF from Monday

PTI ■ KOLKATA

The Bandhan Financial Holdings-led consortium is set to launch a new brand identity for IDFC Mutual Fund, which will be effective from March 13, a statement said on Saturday.

As a result, the fund house's schemes will be renamed, with the word 'Bandhan' replacing 'IDFC' in each of them.

The new brand logo will also be unveiled, closely resembling the Bandhan Bank logo, but with additional colours and styling, the statement said.

Regulators had objected to the use of Bandhan Bank logo for mutual fund operations.

IDFC Asset Management Company was acquired by the consortium, which comprises Bandhan Financial Holdings Limited, GIC, and ChrysCapital.

Bandhan holds 60 per cent of the acquired entity, with control of operations, while the other two will hold 20 per cent



each in the AMC.

BFHL will be the sponsor of the mutual fund.

The underlying investment strategy, processes, and team will remain the same, so investors can benefit from the same high-quality investment approach that the fund house is reputed for, the statement said.

The new brand identity is expected to help the company strengthen its market position and boost investor confidence in its offerings. The company will also continue to focus on providing innovative and client-centric solutions to meet the evolving needs of its customers.

Godrej Industries plans to raise ₹1K crore via bonds

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Godrej Industries, part of Godrej Group, plans to raise ₹1,000 crore through an issue of bonds on a private placement basis.

"The management committee of the board of directors of the company has on March 10, 2023, inter alia, approved the placement memorandum/ information memorandum for issuance of up to one lakh rated, listed, unsecured, redeemable, NCDs (Non-Convertible Debentures) having face value of Rs one lakh only each, aggregating up to Rs 1,000 crore on private place-



ment basis," said Godrej Industries in a late-night regulatory filing on Friday.

The issue has been divided into two tranches of 25,000 NCDs with a face value of Rs 1 lakh each.

Each series will have an aggregate nominal value of up to ₹250 crore with an option to retain over-subscription up to ₹250 crore aggregating up to ₹500 crore.

Godrej Industries operates in the businesses of Oleochemicals, surfactants, finance & investments and estate management.

It has substantial interests in several industries, including property development, oil palm plantation, animal feeds and agri-products, poultry, personal care and household care, etc., through its subsidiaries, associate companies and joint ventures.

SKA Group to put ₹140 cr to develop high-street retail project in Ghaziabad

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Realty firm SKA Group on Saturday said it will invest ₹140 crore to develop a commercial project at Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh.

The project 'SKA Arcadia' will have around 2.5 lakh square feet of high-street retail spaces. Delhi-NCR based SKA Group has majorly focused on development of affordable group housing projects in Ghaziabad, Noida and Greater Noida.

This will be SKA's first commercial project.

"The project cost is Rs 140 crore. It will be funded through company resources and bank funding," said Sanjay Sharma, Director, SKA Group.

He said there is strong demand for high-street retail projects in Ghaziabad.

The project is expected to be delivered by December 2025. Its RERA approval came in December 2022.

For generating footfalls in the retail project, the company is banking on people residing in an integrated township Wave City and other group housing societies.

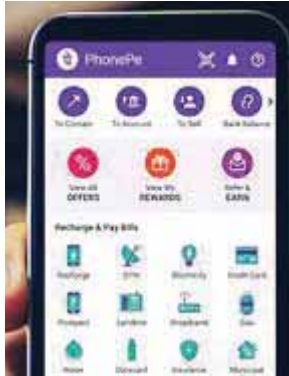
PhonePe reaches \$1 tn annualised payment value run rate; gets payment aggregator licence

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Digital payments platform PhonePe has achieved an annualised total payment value run rate of \$1 trillion, or ₹84 lakh crore, mainly on account of its lead in UPI transactions, the company said on Saturday.

The company claims to have digitised over 35 million offline merchants spread across tier 2, 3, 4 cities and beyond, covering 99 per cent pin codes in the country.

"We are delighted to reach the \$ 1-trillion annualised TPV run rate. We look forward to turbo-charging the next wave of growth for UPI payments in



India with offerings like 'UPI lite', 'UPI international' and 'credit on UPI' to enable greater financial inclusion for Indians,"

PhonePe head of consumer business Sonika Chandra said in a statement.

The company said that the growth is backed by its leadership in the UPI space where it holds over 50 per cent market share by value.

"The company has also received an in-principle approval for its PA (payment aggregator) licence from the RBI," the statement said.

PhonePe is making significant investments in new businesses like insurance and wealth management, while also enabling the next wave of growth for UPI payments in the country, the statement said.

Vaishnav meets Digital Min of Japan, discusses co-operation in emerging tech, India's digital public infrastructure

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

IT and Communications Minister Ashwini Vaishnav met Japan's Minister for Digital Transformation Taro Kono and discussed cooperation in emerging technologies, India's digital public infrastructure and indigenous telecom stack.

"Met the Digital Minister of Japan, Mr @konotarom and discussed cooperation in emerging technologies & India's digital public infrastructure and India telecom stack," Vaishnav tweeted.



The Japanese minister appreciated India's digital payments system and development of the county's telecom stack. He also noted the vibrant innovation ecosystem in India that has led to a high number of patents in emerging technologies such as 6G.

FSSAI warns traders, FBOs not to use prohibited calcium carbide for artificial ripening of fruits

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Food regulator FSSAI has warned traders, fruit handlers and food business operators (FBOs) not to use prohibited calcium carbide for artificial ripening of fruits and said strict actions will be taken against the users.

The regulator asked them to use approved material like ethylene in a proper manner.

In a statement, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) said it has already prohibited the use of calcium carbide also known as



'Masala' as a ripening agent for artificial ripening of the fruits as per the provision in sub-regulation of Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restrictions on Sales) Regulation, 2011.

Acetylene gas released from calcium carbide is equally harmful to handlers, it said. "It has been brought to the

notice of FSSAI that the traders/handlers are still indulging in use of prohibited material i.e. Calcium carbide or are using the approved sources of ethylene gas in an incorrect manner like dipping the fruits in ripening agent solutions which may render the fruits unsafe for human consumption," the statement said.

FSSAI directed that all the traders'/fruits handlers'/FBOs' operating ripening chambers are directed to strictly comply with the directions and refrain from using any prohibited material.

36% of senior positions in India's mid-market held by women: Report

New Delhi: At least 36 per cent of senior management positions are now being held by women in India's mid-market businesses, a report revealed.

With 36 per cent of women in leadership roles, India is ahead of the BRICS (34 per cent) and G7 (30 per cent) averages. "Sadly, 5 per cent of mid-market businesses in India still don't have any women in senior leadership roles," according to Grant Thornton's International Business Report.

Brakes India unveils specially designed brake pads for EVs

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Manufacturers of braking equipment for automotive and non-automotive applications, Brakes India has unveiled ZAP brake pads with advanced friction technology for electric vehicles, the company said on Saturday.

The ZAP brake pads with enhanced corrosion protection and quiet braking has been specifically designed and formulated to suit the requirements of the customers of battery operated vehicles.

"The market for electric



vehicles is growing exponentially. Tapping this opportunity and understanding the customer needs, we have launched ZAP for a few leading electric vehicles, which will soon be expanded across other EV models," company vice-president and head (aftermarket business) S Sujit Nayak said.

REAL MOVE CLOSER TO BARCA

AP ■ MADRID

Vinicius Junior scored a fine solo goal as Real Madrid came from behind to beat Espanyol 3-1 and cut Barcelona's lead to six points at the top of La Liga on Saturday.

Joselu had sent the visitors ahead early on at the Santiago Bernabeu but Vinicius produced a surging run and lethal finish to pull the champions level.

Eder Militao's header completed the turnaround and Madrid could have added more goals in the second half, with Rodrygo hitting the crossbar from a free-kick.

Eventually Marco Asensio tucked away the third in stoppage time after a fine run and pass from defender Nacho Fernandez.

Barcelona visit Athletic Bilbao on Sunday night to try and restore their advantage, ahead of the Clasico at Camp Nou on March 19.

With Karim Benzema out with an ankle issue, although poised to return for the Champions League last 16 second leg clash with Liverpool on Wednesday, Carlo Ancelotti selected Rodrygo up front in his place.

The coach also opted to play Eduardo Camavinga out of position at left-back again and the French midfielder's mistake helped the visitors move ahead after eight minutes.

Camavinga misjudged a long ball which he allowed to reach Ruben Sanchez, who crossed for striker Joselu to smash



into the top corner.

Stirred by Espanyol's goal, Madrid quickly improved in the early afternoon spring sun, and Vinicius fired them level with a superb solo effort of his own.

The Brazilian winger cut inside from the left and drove home to net his 19th goal of the season across all competitions.

Militao headed the champions in front before the break, meeting a sumptuous Aurelien Tchouameni cross, which the midfielder served up with the outside of his boot.

Vinicius blasted over as Madrid looked to press home their advantage and the Brazilian was also knocked to the floor off the ball by Oscar Gil, who was booked.

The forward has been targeted by opposition defenders in recent months and Vinicius appeared winded after Gil's bodycheck.

Rodrygo came closest to extending Madrid's lead when he curled a free-kick over the wall but it struck the crossbar.

Espanyol could not trouble Thibaut Courtois in the final stages, with Martin Braithwaite directing a header a long way off target.

Vinicius was warmly applauded by Madrid fans as he was taken off late on, with Ancelotti giving another brief cameo to young forward Alvaro Rodriguez.

However it was another substitute, Asensio, who wrapped up the win with a cool finish after Nacho's uncharacteristic dribble forward into attack.

Karim Benzema disputes 'liar' Deschamps' claim over WC fitness



AP ■ MADRID

Karim Benzema has responded to Didier Deschamps' claim that the striker told him "he wouldn't have been ready" to play at the World Cup because of an injury by implying the France coach was a "liar".

The Real Madrid forward pulled out of the France squad with an injured left thigh on the eve of the tournament and departed their team hotel in Qatar soon afterwards.

Benzema returned to training with his club on December 10, four days before France played Morocco in the World Cup semi-finals.

"Karim told me himself that he wouldn't have been

ready," Deschamps told the Parisien newspaper in an interview published on Saturday.

"When Karim got injured, our doctor accompanied him to the Aspetar clinic to undergo an MRI," said Deschamps.

"Karim passed on the results to someone who follows him in Madrid and who also gave him an opinion. When he came back to the hotel, it was already gone midnight.

"I met Karim in his room with our doctor who had come to give me the report from the scan... Karim was hurt because this World Cup meant a lot to him. He told me, 'It's over.'"

"We stayed together for about 20 minutes," added Deschamps. "When leaving I told him, 'Karim, there's no

rush. Organise your return with the team manager.' When I woke up I found out he was gone. It's his decision, he won't tell you otherwise, I understand and respect it."

Benzema, who announced his international retirement the day after France lost the World Cup final on penalties to Argentina, appeared to dispute Deschamps' version of events on social media.

The Ballon d'Or winner posted on Instagram a screenshot of Deschamps' remarks accompanied by the phrase "but what audacity" and a clown emoji.

He also shared the video of a popular French influencer, who repeats the words "liar, you are a liar", while again addressing Deschamps.

Benzema's hasty departure from Qatar had fuelled speculation of a rift between him and the rest of the squad as well as Deschamps.

The injury was just the latest chapter in Benzema's complicated and turbulent history with Les Bleus, which saw him frozen out of the team for five and a half years because of his involvement in a blackmail scandal over a sextape involving his former teammate Mathieu Valbuena.

He also had numerous run-ins with Deschamps over the years with the player, who is of Algerian descent, at one stage hinting the France coach was being "racist" in keeping him out.



In your excellence, world saw glimpse of India's sporting prowess: Modi to Sania

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

"In your excellence, the world saw a glimpse of India's sporting prowess," Prime Minister Narendra Modi told Sania Mirza while congratulating the legendary athlete for her glorious career in which she illustrated that "more women can pursue tennis and excel in it".

Sania, who won six Grand Slam titles in her career, bid adieu to the game last month in Dubai, where she played her final tournament.

In his congratulatory message to Sania, the PM conveyed that Sania has left an indelible mark on Indian sports, inspiring the coming generation of athletes.

Sania posted the letter, dated March 9, on her Twitter handle.

"Tennis lovers will find it difficult to fathom that you will not be playing professionally now onwards," wrote Modi.

"...In your excellence, the world saw a glimpse of India's sporting prowess. When you began playing, India's tennis landscape was very different. What you did was to illustrate that more women can pursue tennis and excel in it.

"But, beyond that, your success also gave strength to several other women who wanted to pursue a career in sports but for some reason or the other were hesitant to do so," wrote the PM.

Sania thanked the PM for the gesture.

"I would like to thank you Honorable Prime Minister @narendramodi ji for such kind and inspiring words. I have always taken great pride in representing our country to the best of my ability and will continue to do whatever I can to make India proud. Thank you for your support," said Sania, formerly ranked world No.1 in doubles.

The PM wrote that Sania's success filled every Indian's heart with pride. "When you announced a 'Life Update' on 13th January, you wonderfully expressed your journey from a six-year-old who had to literally fight her way to the (tennis) courts to a world class tennis player in the subsequent years.

"You wrote about how the biggest honour for you has been to win medals for India. I can say that you are India's pride, whose success has filled hearts and minds of every Indian with utmost joy," Modi wrote.

The PM also recollected the time Sania went through a tumultuous phase, when a wrist injury almost jeopardised her career, before she emerged a strong double player.

"Due to twists of fate, you had to cope with injuries but these setbacks only strengthened your resolve and you overcame these challenges with flying colours."

Salah misses penalty as Bournemouth shock Liverpool

AP ■ BOURNEMOUTH

Mohamed Salah missed a penalty as Liverpool came back down to earth with a bump in their shock 1-0 defeat at struggling Bournemouth on Saturday.

Jurgen Klopp's side travelled to Dean Court in high spirits after their historic 7-0 thrashing of arch rivals Manchester United last weekend.

But Liverpool's hopes of using that remarkable result as a springboard to push for a top four finish in the Premier League were given a brutal reality check on the south coast.

Philip Billing punished woeful Liverpool defending to put the struggling hosts ahead early on and Salah blew the chance to equalise when he fired wide from a second half spot-kick.

Salah became Liverpool's record scorer in the Premier League era when he netted twice against United.

But the Egypt star's failure to add to his total of 130 condemned Liverpool to a first defeat in their last six league games.

Fifth-placed Liverpool appeared to use up all their goals in the United demolition and their toothless display left them three points behind Tottenham ahead of the north Londoners' game against Nottingham Forest later on Saturday.

Apart from the damage done to Liverpool's top four bid, it was hardly ideal preparation for Wednesday's Champions League last 16 second leg at Real Madrid, where the Reds need a miracle in the Spanish capital to overturn a 5-2 deficit.

Losing to a Bournemouth side that started the day bottom of the table and lost 9-0 at Liverpool in August was the latest indignity in a troubled season for Klopp's men which has featured shock losses against Brighton, Brentford and Wolves.

Bournemouth scored the second-fastest goal in Premier League history at Arsenal last weekend, but still blew a two-goal lead in a painful last-gasp defeat against the leaders.

It was Liverpool who made the fast start this time and Virgil van Dijk's header was arrowing towards the top corner until Bournemouth midfielder Jefferson Lerma cleared off the line.

Bournemouth should have capitalised on that escape moments later when Dominic Solanke's pass sent Dango Ouattara clean through on goal.

But as Ouattara rounded Liverpool keeper Alisson Becker, his touch took him too wide and he could only shoot into the side-netting.

Ouattara again threatened Liverpool with his pace but once more he could not



provide the finishing touch as Van Dijk got back for a last-ditch block.

Liverpool's high defensive line was creaking and Ouattara finally helped puncture it in the 28th minute.

Racing onto a pass down the right flank, Ouattara shrugged off Van Dijk's weak challenge and whipped over a low cross that Billing finished from close-range as Liverpool's sluggish defenders failed to react.

Van Dijk had a chance to make amends for his part in Liverpool's shameful defending when he climbed to meet Robertson's cross, but the Dutch centre-back headed wide with the goal at his mercy.

Klopp responded to Liverpool's lethargic performance by sending on Diogo Jota for Harvey Elliott at half-time.

It took just three minutes for Jota to make his presence felt with a curler that Neto pushed away at full stretch.

Jota was the catalyst for Liverpool's 69th minute penalty.

Picked out by James Milner's cross, Jota rose highest at the far post for a goal-bound header that was blocked by Adam Smith's outstretched arm.

The spot-kick was awarded after a VAR check, but Salah let Bournemouth off the hook as he blazed his effort woefully wide.

Thompson topples Tsitsipas at Indian Wells

AP ■ INDIAN WELLS

Unseeded Australian Jordan Thompson grabbed one of the biggest wins of his career on Friday, ousting third-ranked Stefanos Tsitsipas 7-6 (7/0), 4-6, 7-6 (7/5) to reach the third round of the Indian Wells WTA and ATP Masters.

Thompson next faces Chilean qualifier Alejandro Tabilo, who hung on to beat American Maxime Cressy 7-6 (7/3), 7-6 (15/13).

Tsitsipas and women's second seed Aryna Sabalenka — playing just her second tournament since winning the Australian Open — headlined Friday's second-round action.

Sabalenka moved smoothly into the third round with a 6-2, 6-0 victory over Evgeniya Rodina, who was playing her eighth match since a return to competition at last year's US Open after three years away from the game.

Sabalenka, still barred from

playing under her native flag of Belarus because of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, next faces Ukraine's Lesia Tsurenko, who beat 29th-seeded Croatian Donna Vekic 2-6, 6-2, 6-2.

In other women's matches, last year's runner-up Maria



Sakkari salvaged Greek pride with a battling 2-6, 6-4, 6-0 victory over American Shelby Rogers.

Fifth-seeded Daniil Medvedev, fresh off three straight ATP victories Rotterdam, Doha and Dubai, continued his red-hot

form with a 6-4, 6-3 victory over American Brandon Nakashima.

Third-seeded Casper Ruud, former champion Cameron Norrie and 12th-seeded Alexander Zverev all eased into the third round with straight-sets victories. For Ruud, a 6-2, 6-3 victory over former top-10 Argentinian Diego Schwartzman was a confidence-boosting win in a season in which he had so far failed to advance past the second round in three tour-level tournaments he had played.

For Norrie, however, a 6-2, 6-4 victory over Taiwanese qualifier Wu Tung-lin marked a continuation of the form that saw him reach finals last month in Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro, falling to Carlos Alcaraz in the first and beating him in the second.

Germany's Zverev, attempting to rebuild his career after surgery for ankle ligament damage suffered at the French Open last year, breezed past Argentina's Pedro Cachin 6-3, 6-1.



Celtic break Hearts again to reach Scottish Cup semis

AP ■ GLASGOW

Celtic stayed on course for a domestic treble after cruising to a 3-0 Scottish Cup quarter-final win at Hearts on Saturday.

Hearts are on track to finish third in the Premiership behind Celtic and Rangers for the second consecutive season.

But the gulf between the Old Firm and the rest only appears to be growing as they were beaten by Ange Postecoglou's men for a second time in four days.

Celtic have already retained the League Cup and are nine points clear of Rangers in the league title fight.

An early strike from Aaron Mooy put the Scottish champions on course for the last four.

Kyogo Furuhashi then took his tally for the season to 26 with a delightful backheel finish from

Alistair Johnston's cross just before half-time.

The visitors eased off after the break, but still grabbed a third 10 minutes from time when Cameron Carter-Vickers headed in Matt O'Riley's free kick.

"We started really strong and knew we had to. When you come to Tynecastle, you don't want their crowd to get up too much," said Postecoglou.

"We got our goal and over-all controlled the game well."

Rangers are the only other top-flight team left in the competition ahead of their quarter-final clash against Raith Rovers on Sunday.

Second-tier Inverness are through to the last four after beating Kilmarnock 2-1 on Friday. League One Falkirk take on Ayr United of the Championship in the other quarter-final on Monday.

IOA report on abuse charge against WFI chief soon: Usha

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The committee formed by the Indian Olympic Association to probe sexual abuse allegations against sidelined WFI chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh is yet to submit its report and IOA president P T Usha said it is taking time since "it is a sensitive issue".

The IOA had on January 20 formed a seven-member committee headed by the legendary boxer MC Mary Kom to investigate the allegations of sexual harassment against the WFI president by some of the country's top wrestlers.



"It (report) is not finalised, it is going on. We have met the players (wrestlers). The (IOA) committee will finalise and give the report to the IOA later," Usha said.

"It is a sensitive issue and it has to be done in a good way. Very soon we will do that," she said when asked if there is any deadline for submitting the report.

"It happened when (just after) we took charge. It was with ministry earlier. Both the ministry and IOA have constituted committees."

The IOA panel was formed

after the agitating wrestlers, including the likes of Bajrang Punia, Sakshi Malik, Vinesh Phogat, Deepak Punia and Ravi Dahiya, had demanded the formation of an enquiry committee to probe the allegations against Singh.

The government had formed an oversight committee also under Mary Kom to probe the charges levelled by the wrestlers.

Singh had appeared before the oversight committee of the government on February 28 and had outrightly rejected all the charges.

Gill, Virat headline India's strong reply

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

Shubman Gill gave ample display of his immense talent with a stylish hundred but India's batting unit didn't fully press home the advantage, ending the third day at 289 for three against Australia in the fourth Test, here Saturday.

Gill, who batted for nearly six hours scored a chanceless 128 off 235 balls, hit 12 sweetly-timed boundaries apart from a lofted six off Nathan Lyon to justify his selection in playing XI ahead of KL Rahul but India scored only 256 runs in 90 overs. The hosts are still 191 runs behind Australia's first innings total of 480.

Leading the series 2-1, India need a 3-1 series win to qualify for the World Test Championship final.

All eyes will be on Virat Kohli (59 batting off 128 balls), who looked purposeful and confident during his two hour plus stay at the crease, on the third day. There was no celebration after completion of his 29th half-century in Test cricket. The pace of his partnership with Ravindra Jadeja (16 batting, 54 balls) will set the narrative for the final couple of days.

The Indian team management is probably mulling batting the entire fourth day and try to get a lead in excess of 150 in order to unleash the spinners on the final day, when significant turn will be on offer.

As of now, the pitch continues to be firm but also on the slower side. As the SG Test ball gets older, scoring becomes increasingly difficult and Australia took a cue from India. Till 93 overs were bowled, Steve Smith didn't take the second new ball, preventing India from getting some easy runs.

But the day certainly belonged to Gill, who is currently going through a purple patch in his career. In a space of less than two months (since January 15, 2023), he has scored five international hundreds across three formats.

The pleasing aspect of his batting is how languid he is as he holds the shape when he drives through the off-side. He can also play the sweep and reverse sweep effectively without taking any unnecessary risk.

Gauging the slowness of



the track, Gill was standing well outside his crease.

The purpose was to meet the deliveries early as staying inside the crease would mean the ball would take an extra second to reach and in turn stroke-making would be difficult.

That was the reason, he scored his first 40 to 45 runs quickly but once Australian skipper Smith got a hang, he got Alex Carey to stand up to the stumps to pacer Cameron Green in order to stop him from converting back of the length deliveries into half volleys.

Gill was stuck in 70s for a long time before he upped the ante to reach the nervous 90s. He first stepped out and hit the ball

During my lean phase, I was putting myself under too much pressure: Gill

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

Shubman Gill doesn't have a problem if he gets dismissed while playing his natural attacking game but what bothered him was getting out while playing a defensive shot which doesn't come naturally to him.

Enjoying a golden run, Gill has now hit five hundreds across formats in just under two months and if the run is extended to three months, the count is six. It comprises two Test hundreds, three ODI tons including a double and a T20I hundred.

So what did he tell himself during the lean patch?

"There was phase in the middle when I was scoring 40s and 50s (52 and 44 against New Zealand in 2021) and getting out and when I played the one-off fifth Test in England, I scored some 20 odd (17) and I got out early in that innings," Gill recalled that not-so-great phase in his 15-Test career.

"I got a feeling that as soon as I was getting set, I was getting over defensive and over cautious. I was thinking now that I have got set, I will have to



I bowled better than in Indore: Lyon

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Nathan Lyon may have got just a single wicket after sending down 30-odd overs on the day but he feels that his effort on Saturday during India's first innings was way better than his 11-wicket match haul in Indore on a track designed for spinners.

"It's more of a patient game. When the pitch is like Indore... I felt like I bowled better today than what I did in Indore. And it's just coming down to doing your basics well enough for long enough," Lyon said.

For him, Tests like these are decided in the last half an hour and right now it is on even keel. "Where are we in the game? I think it's pretty even to be honest with you, we know in this part of the world, games can speed up quite quickly, so it's about being patient for long periods of time and not chasing the game," the veteran off-spinner said.

Lyon is confident that there will be a result with two days left in the game.

"Tomorrow is a new day. We had (89 overs) on that wicket today. With the warmer weather here hopefully there's still a result in this game. We've just got to bowl well in the morning and get the pressure in their change room," Lyon opined.

The Australian team will do



well to dig deep into their experiences of playing in Pakistan last year.

"Yeah 100 per cent," Lyon said.

"These are the type of Test matches that are won in the last half an hour of day five, and these are the type of Test matches you want to be a part of. The hard grind with a potential great reward at the end of it. They're challenging, but we're all up for a challenge, and it's a

proper grind, good Test cricket."

Lyon has now seen two good knocks from Shubman Gill against Australia. While Brisbane by sheer magnitude of the effort remains a better effort, 128 at Motera wouldn't be far behind as it was a different sort of knock.

"I felt the way Shubman played was exceptional to be honest. His defence was there but he was also quite proactive and wanted to look to score.

over Lyon's head for a boundary before playing a paddle scoop over to complete his ton.

The hallmark of a great batter is adaptability and that is where Gill is a cut above his peers. On tracks with pace, one would find him stay beside the line of the ball and try to ride the bounce. On sub-continental track, he would get his full body behind the line of the ball.

He did step out time and again to disturb Lyon's (1/75) line. Todd Murphy (1/45) was easily the best Australian spinner on the day. Australian skipper Smith didn't do anything wrong tactically but not giving Matt Kuhnemann (1/43) any spell between lunch and tea was a bit surprising after he had got Indian captain Rohit Sharma (35 off 58 balls) in the morning session.

Earlier, Sharma looked in good flow as he pulled Mitchell Starc behind square for a six and ran well between the wickets during the 21-over stand with Gill. The mode of dismissal was disappointing as the delivery from Kuhnemann wasn't a wicket-taking one. It was pitched short and Sharma could have hit it anywhere but his uppish back-foot punch found Marnus Labuschagne at short extra-cover.

In case of Cheteshwar Pujara (42 off 121 balls), the stand of 113 was significant but he also got stuck in the post lunch session and a bit more intent from him during that phase could have seen India scoring 300 runs for the day.



Green will be world's best all rounder by a long way: Kim

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Former Australian captain Kim Hughes sees Cameron Green becoming the best all-rounder in the world.

Green struck his maiden Test hundred in the final game of the Border-Gavaskar trophy at Ahmedabad. "I've said for a number of years now that provided he keeps himself fit, he'll be the world's best all-rounder by a long way. I've got absolutely no doubt about that," Hughes, who has tracked Green's career ever since he was a teenager, told the Sydney Morning Herald.

"His bowling action is so easy. And I don't mean a one-day allrounder. There are lots of blokes that can bat a bit and bowl a bit. But he will be good enough to bat in any side in the world. If he was just a batter he could bat at four and if he was just a bowler he could open the bowling."

The 23-year-old had

missed the first two Tests due to a finger injury. As far as Green's batting goes, Hughes loves his backfoot play.

"The thing with him is he's one of the few players in the world that can play well off the backfoot. That's the art of batting. Good bowlers don't bowl you half-volleys.

"I've taught him the basics and he's got lovely balance." What makes Green stand out is his ability to learn quickly, feels Hughes.

"He picks things up very, very quickly," said Hughes. "And he was just a natural with his hand-eye coordination. There are some things when you're that good that you're born with, and he has got that God-given talent.

"But the other thing I like about him particularly is that he's a very humble person. Very respectful. He was a very good listener. And it's been great to see him carry on and take things in his stride."

bat as long as possible. I was putting myself under too much pressure and that is not my game. "Once I get set, then I get into a sort of rhythm and that's my game. So I had to tell myself that if I get dismissed while playing my natural game, then it is fine. But problem was I was getting out playing the type of game that doesn't come naturally to me," he explained.

The root cause was trying to play defensive game even when he felt set. "If I get out trying to play a shot after getting set, I can accept that dismissal,

because that's a shot and my execution wasn't proper. But if I get out playing a game which isn't my style then it became unacceptable to me," he was very precise in his thought process. The key was to not put pressure on himself.

"So I had to tell myself that. I shouldn't put too much pressure on myself when a situation like this arises next time, that I must convert now that I am set. I needed to keep it a bit free-flowing. It was more about mental make up and I focussed on that primarily."

Smriti needs a chance to find her feet: Perry

PTI ■ MUMBAI

WPL's most expensive buy Smriti Mandhana may be going through a lean patch with Royal Challengers Bangalore making a horror start, but the legendary Ellyse Perry backed her skipper saying she just needs a chance to "find her feet" in the T20 competition.

Mandhana, who was bought for Rs 3.4 crore in the inaugural WPL auction, has scored 35, 23, 18 and 4 as RCB suffered four straight losses in the tournament so far.

"Knowing Smriti and how proud and responsible she is for her own game, there's probably no more pressure on her than what she is putting on herself," Perry said after they endured their fourth loss on the trot with a 10-wicket hammering by UP Warriorz here on Friday.

The Indian team vice-captain is leading a star-studded RCB side with the likes of Perry, Sophie Devine and Heather Knight playing under her.

Perry, the six-time T20 World Cup winner, hoped the Indian would overcome this phase and come out with a "better version" of herself.

"It's a ginormous task to



come into a brand new competition and play with a group of players that she has never played with before and try and make that all gel in a matter of a couple of days since she joined the group," the 32-year-old said.

"I think she's a great captain too. She just needs a chance to find her feet in the tournament and she will no doubt. But the bigger picture (is), it's just going to mean we are going to see an even better version of Smriti after this.

"There's so much that she has learned from this competition already, both as a captain and as a batter, to make her even better in the future. She's only a youngster right."

South Africa win by 284 runs as West Indies collapse

AP ■ JOHANNESBURG

South Africa's bowlers ripped through the West Indies batting as the hosts completed a 284-run win on the fourth day of the second Test at the Wanderers Stadium in Johannesburg on Saturday.

The West Indies were bowled out for 106 after being set to make 391 to win.

South Africa won the two-match World Test Championship series 2-0.

The match was effectively won and lost in 8.1 overs leading up to lunch when the West Indies crashed to 34 for six.

Fast bowler Kagiso Rabada struck twice in three balls and sparked the collapse after opening batsmen Kraigg Brathwaite and Tagenarine Chanderpaul survived the first 10 overs, putting on 21 runs.

Rabada dismissed Brathwaite for the seventh time in successive innings when he trapped the West Indian captain leg

before wicket for 18 with a ball which kept low.

Two balls later Raymon Reifer gloved a catch down the leg side to wicketkeeper Heinrich Klaasen.

Spinners Simon Harmer and Keshav Maharaj also took two wickets each as the West Indies lost six wickets for 13 runs.

Off-spinner Harmer shared the new ball with Rabada and extracted extravagant turn, having Chanderpaul caught at second slip after the left-hander had faced 36 balls and scored only two runs.

Roston Chase, Jermaine Blackwood and Kyle Mayers all fell cheaply with South Africa's only setback coming after Maharaj won a successful appeal for leg before wicket against Mayers in the last over before lunch.

In celebrating, the left-arm spinner collapsed and was stretcheder off the field with a left ankle tendon injury.

Maharaj was taken for a scan. With



all-rounder Wiaan Mulder suffering a right index finger injury, which also required a scan, South Africa were effectively down to three frontline bowlers. The West Indies batting, though, had already been wrecked.

Mulder returned after lunch but was not required to bowl.

Joshua Da Silva, Jason Holder and Alzarri Joseph all played some aggressive strokes after lunch as the last four wickets yielded 72 runs before the match ended soon after the afternoon drinks break.

There had been concerns about Rabada's fitness after he suffered back pain during the first innings but he showed no signs of discomfort during a hostile seven-over spell.

South Africa were bowled out for 321 earlier, with captain Temba Bavuma adding only one run to his overnight 171 before he was caught at deep square leg off Holder.

Mitchell & Tickner lead NZ fightback



AP ■ CHRISTCHURCH

A stubborn century from Daryl Mitchell, a blazing 72 from Matt Henry and three wickets to Blair Tickner swung the momentum New Zealand's way in the first Test against Sri Lanka on Saturday.

Sri Lanka had claimed the initiative on the first two days of the Christchurch Test but were 83 for three in their second innings at stumps on day three, a lead of 65 runs.

New Zealand have "swung the game to their side," Sri Lanka assistant coach Naveed Nawaz conceded.

Angelo Mathews was not out on 20, with Prabhath Jayasuriya also at the crease on two, and Nawaz suggested Sri Lanka would need at least 200 more runs.

"Daryl Mitchell and Matt Henry, the partnership, took the game away from us," he said.

"But we have to back ourselves that a couple of our batsmen will go in there and get stuck in and get some big runs to swing the game back to our side.

"Its a good wicket to bat on and gives a little bit to the fast bowlers still so I suppose anything above 275-300 would be a good score."

New Zealand earlier recovered from 151 for five to be all out for 373, an 18-run lead, after a dogged 102 from Mitchell and

Henry's swashbuckling performance that included 58 runs from boundaries.

Tickner claimed the wickets of captain Dimuth Karunaratne for 17, Oshada Fernando for 28 and Kusal Mendis for 14 in the 38 overs before stumps to finish with three wickets for 28 runs off 10 overs.

Sri Lanka, who need to sweep the two-Test series to keep their hopes of making the World Test Championship final alive, had ripped through the New Zealand top order.

But Mitchell, who has so often been New Zealand's saviour in his 17-Test career, refused to give in as he toiled through 193 deliveries for his eighth century.

The 31-year-old right-hander, son of former All Blacks player and coach John Mitchell, lifted his average to a remarkable 58 from 25 innings.

He put on 54 for the sixth wicket with Michael Bracewell, a further 47 with Tim Southee and 55 with Henry.

Mitchell leapt in the air when he reached his century, waved his bat and received a hug from Henry to celebrate. He added only two more runs before was caught behind off Lahiru Kumara and New Zealand were 291-8.

Henry then exploded with his personal-best 72, which included 10 fours and three sixes.

I rarely get recognised. It's always a shock when someone notices me. I always think they must be confusing me with someone else
— Anna Kendrick



THE FEAR REMAINS

Three years into the pandemic, it's clear COVID won't fix itself. Here's what we need to focus on next, write MICHAEL TOOLE and BRENDAN CRABB

On March 11 2020 the World Health Organisation classified COVID as a pandemic. Three years on, it remains just that. As much as we don't want it to be, and as much as it is off the front pages, COVID is still very much with us. But how bad has it really been? And, more importantly, what have we learned that could help us accelerate a real and sustained exit?

COVID HAS HIT US HARD

There was a slow initial global response to what we now call SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID. This allowed the virus to get a foothold, contributing to unexpectedly rapid viral evolution. Three years into the pandemic, with the removal of almost all mitigation measures in most countries, it's clear the virus has hit the world very hard. So far, almost 681 million infections and more than 6.8 million deaths have been reported. This is perhaps best visualised by its impact on life expectancy. There were sharp declines seen across the world in 2020 and 2021, reversing 70 years of largely uninterrupted progress. The excess mortality driving this drop in life expectancy has continued. This includes in Australia, where over 20,000 more lives than the historical average are estimated to have been lost in 2022.

NOT JUST COVID DEATHS

The indirect impacts on the health systems in rich and poor countries alike continue to be substantial. Disruptions to health services have led to increases in stillbirths, maternal mortality and post-natal depression. Routine child immunisation coverage has decreased. Crucial malaria, tuberculosis and HIV programmes have been disrupted. A paper out this week highlights the severe impact of the pandemic on mental health globally.

THEN THERE'S LONG COVID

Meanwhile, more evidence of long COVID has emerged around the world. At least 65 million people were estimated to be experiencing this debilitating syndrome by the end of 2022. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare estimates 5-10% of people who are infected with SARS-CoV-2 will develop long COVID, with symptoms persisting more than three months. That's between 550,000 and 1.1 million Australians, based on the more than 11 million cases reported so far.

COVID HIGHLIGHTED INEQUALITIES

The pandemic has also had a huge economic impact, both directly and indirectly. The United States alone spent US\$4 trillion on its response. Economists have estimated the pan-

“WE CANNOT ASSUME THERE WILL BE A NATURAL EXIT TO THE PANDEMIC, WHERE THE VIRUS REACHES SOME BENIGN ENDEMICITY, A HARMLESS PRESENCE IN THE BACKGROUND”

dem will contribute an average 0.75% reduction in GDP in countries with high infection rates and high productivity in 2025. Studies in the United Kingdom, US and Australia show COVID has had a disproportionate impact – including higher death rates – in disadvantaged communities and ethnic minorities. The causes range from high exposure in low-paid jobs to inadequate access to health care. And poorer countries have fared terribly on all fronts from COVID, including inequitable access to vaccines. THERE'S NO END IN SIGHT We cannot assume there will be a natural exit to the pandemic, where the virus reaches some benign endemicity, a harmless presence in the background. In fact, there is little indication anything like that is imminent. In Australia, since the beginning of January, more than 235,000 COVID cases have been reported, almost as many as in 2020 and 2021 combined. Since the start of January, there have been 2,351 COVID-related deaths, more than twice as many as in the whole of 2020 and around the same as in the whole of 2021. What needs to happen next? The future response can be practically distilled into three overlapping actions.

- **Politicians need to be frank** Our political leaders need to communicate frankly with the public that the pandemic is not over. They need to stress we still have an exceptional problem on our hands with acute disease as well as worrying concerns about long COVID. It's crucial politicians acknowledge sufferers and those who have died. They need to do this while delivering the good news that addressing COVID does not require lockdowns or mandates. If our politicians did this, the public would be more likely to have their booster vaccines, get tested and treated, and adopt measures such as improving indoor ventilation and wearing high-quality masks. The health system also needs to be greatly strengthened to deal with long COVID.
- **Adopt new knowledge and technology** We should be focusing on the science and be ready to adopt new knowledge and products rapidly. Just a few days ago we had trials of a promising new approach to treat long COVID with the diabetes drug metformin. There is also intriguing research that has identified persistent infection as a potential underlying cause of organ damage and disease after COVID and in long COVID. This suggests anti-viral drugs such as Paxlovid may have an important role to play in reducing the impact of chronic disease. Many types of new COVID vaccines are being trialled, such as versions administered by nasal sprays, which may be game changers.
- **Avoiding infections is still important** Suppressing the virus is still important. We still can and should reduce the burden of newly acquired COVID and, therefore, long COVID. We have the tools to do this. We need full recognition that COVID is transmitted largely through the air. As this just-published article in the journal Nature discusses, there are things we can do right now to ensure we all breathe air that is safer, not just from SARS-CoV-2 but from other respiratory viruses.

The virus won't fix itself As we enter the fourth year of the pandemic, we must not leave it up to the virus to fix itself. The biggest lesson of the past three years is there's little chance that is going to work, at least without an intolerably high cost. Rather, we can end the pandemic by choice. We know what to do. But we are simply not doing it. (The Conversation)

Michael Toole is Associate Principal Research Fellow, Burnet Institute and Brendan Crabb is Director and CEO, Burnet Institute.

RARE DISEASES: NO LONGER RARE

Like in many countries, in India too patients with rare diseases are struggling for equitable access to diagnosis, healthcare, social care and opportunity all through their life. Stigma and lack of awareness about the disease, even among health providers, just add to their agony. Though the Government framed the much-awaited Rare Disease National Policy 2021, many gaps remain to be plugged, patients and experts tell ARCHANA JYOTI

On Sunday ie March 11, 2023, Organization for Rare Diseases India (ORDI), a not-for-profit organization, is organizing a RaceFor7 event at the AIIMS, Delhi. It is a 7-km walk/run/cycle symbolising 7,000 known rare diseases, the average of 7 years it takes to diagnose a rare disease and the 70 million estimated rare disease patients in India. "The aim is to create aware-



ness, sensitizing the government agencies as well as the industry and NGOs, to bring them together to work for the sector besieged with umpteen challenges," says Co-founder and Executive Director of ORDI, **Prasanna Kumar Shirol**.

Rare diseases currently affect 5% of the World's population. Around 72% of the rare diseases are genetic in nature, while others are due to bacterial or viral infections, allergies, environmental causes or rare cancers. Since, 70% of genetic rare diseases start in childhood, survival rate is less in view of lack of timely diagnosis and treatment.

There are an estimated 200 rare cancers and 1 in 5 cancers is rare. The WHO defines rare diseases as those debilitating lifelong diseases that have a prevalence of 1 or less per 1000 population. The most commonly reported among these disorders are hemophilias, thalassemia, sickle cell anaemias, primary immunodeficiencies, lysosomal storage diseases, cystic fibrosis, muscular dystrophies, small molecule diseases, skeletal dysplasias etc.

Most of the 7000 rare diseases can be grouped under Rare Autoimmune Disorders, Rare Blood Diseases, Rare Bacterial Infections, Rare Heart Diseases, Rare Neurological Disorders, Rare Cancers, Rare Musculoskeletal Diseases, Rare Genetic Disorders, Rare Connective Tissue Disorders, Rare Newborn Diseases and several more.

Shirol laments that, "despite diagnostic technological advancements in various disorders, awareness of these conditions at the grassroots level is still required for timely referral, which can facilitate early diagnosis and timely initiation of therapy which is available for a few but evolving very rapidly."



Prof. Ramaiah Muthyala, President & CEO of the Indian Organization for Rare Diseases



(IORD) is not very happy with the national policy, calling it inadequate to serve the needs of rare disease patients. It is drafted by borrowing the US definition of rare diseases, he says.

"To have a definition suitable to our country, one must know the prevalence or count of rare disease patients in India." Though the ICMR has started the registry for the patients, it will take its own time before the process starts yielding benefits to the overwhelmed families.

Doing its bit in the direction, the IORD has started a pilot project in collaboration with the Telangana Government to make an approximate count of rare disease patients. Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) workers have been roped-in to do the job.

"They have first-hand knowledge related to individual health-related matters. Preliminary results are very encouraging and received worldwide attention. They evinced



keen interest to adopt similar approaches to determine the prevalence of rare diseases," Muthyala explains.

Samir Sethi, Chairman of the ORDI Advocacy Committee and President Indian Rett Syndrome Foundation strongly feels that indigenous drug development for the rare diseases can somewhat help in readdressing the issue in drug availability.

"The Policy states that pharmaceutical industries would be encouraged to develop drugs for rare diseases. The Pharmaceuticals Department will be roped in to cre-

PROVIDING RAY OF HOPE...

- The Centre has 11 designated Center of Excellence (CoEs) for treating rare diseases in the country. These are Kerala's Sree Avittam Thirunal Hospital (SAT) hospital, Government Medical College, Thiruvananthapuram, AIIMS, Delhi, Maulana Azad Medical College (MAMC), Delhi, Sanjay Gandhi Postgraduate Institute of Medical Sciences, Lucknow, Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER), Chandigarh & Center for DNA Fingerprinting & Diagnostics, Hyderabad. The other five include King Edward (VII) Memorial Hospital and Seth Gordhandas Sunderdas Medical College, Mumbai, Institute of Post Graduate Medical Education and Research, Calcutta, Centre for Human Genetics (CHG), Bangalore, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Jodhpur and the Institute of Child Health, Egmore, Chennai.
- Started last December with less than 10 patients, the medical genetics department at Post Graduate Institute of

Child Health (PGICH), Noida is now treating over 1,600 children with rare genetic diseases.

PGICH is one of the ICMR collaborating centers for the National Rare Disease registry.

- The Department of Biotechnology, under Union Ministry of Science and Technology has set up Nidan Kendras under the Unique Methods of Management and Treatment of Inherited Disorders (UMMID) project for genetic testing and counselling services. These Nidan Kendras perform screening, genetic testing and counselling for rare diseases.
- Recently, the Karnataka Government launched a research and training unit for rare diseases. It will strengthen diagnosis, counselling and treatment, including developing the service facility for prenatal diagnosis for early identification of genetic disorders in pregnancy, genetic counselling facilities for around 2,500 families with rare disorders, to be evaluated annually.

ate a conducive policy framework for domestic pharmaceutical companies to focus on the research development and manufacturing of indigenous drugs for curing rare diseases", he says.

Muthyala points out that, generic orphan drugs, about 350 APIs are manufactured by Indian pharma and all are being exported. "They are formulated elsewhere and come back into India at an exorbitant price and import license requirement. As a result, none of them is easily accessible for Indian rare disease patients," he notes. Though the Government has recently released around Rs 22 crore for treatment of 134 patients with rare diseases, it is not enough, the experts rue.

Dr Neerja Gupta, Additional



Professor, division of genetics, department of pediatrics, AIIMS, Delhi talks about how even though

CoEs have been set up, teething problems remain. For instance, "patients still don't know where to go...they always first come to OPD and from there, they are directed to go CoEs but there still exist gaps. For instance, patients still don't know where to go...they always first come to OPD and from there, they are directed to go for the nearest centre of excellence.

"The current financial benefit is solving the problem, but not for all. Majority of the patients are on supportive management for rare diseases and the costs of the drugs are quite high as they need to be procured from abroad," she added.

Take the case of Ayushmaan (24) and Abhimanyu (22) who suffer from Cystic Fibrosis, a life-limiting genetic condition where mucus clogs up the airways. They shared that their families are doling out huge money for their drugs and supporting treatment management. "Although some rare diseases are covered under some health insurance, there is a long waiting period. Also, we are covered under the PWD Act that can ensure jobs for us," they say, underlining that they too can lead a better life if given necessitated support.

However, forget about the treatment, even the diagnosis of such diseases are not timely leading to increased sufferings of the patient. In case the treatment is available, it is very expensive. For example, the treatment of Gaucher Disease can easily go beyond Rs 40 lakh. Similarly, the treatment of Pompe can cost more than Rs 35 lakh.

Moreover, rare diseases are mostly chronic in nature. Thus, their treatment will go on for a long time, which means a lot of money.

Moreover, patients may be required to go through regular diagnostic tests and put on medications for a long time. Since very few pharmaceutical firms across the world manufacture drugs for the treatment of rare diseases, they are highly expensive. This is the reason why rare diseases are also known as 'orphan diseases' and the drugs used in their treatment are referred to as 'orphan drugs'.

Abhimanyu says that till now supportive treatment management is being covered under the CGHS card of his father, a government employee. But once I attain a certain age as per the government criteria, I will be out of that support net, he reveals, worried about his future.

There is a lack of awareness about rare diseases in the general public as well as in the medical fraternity. Many doctors lack appropriate training and awareness to be able to correctly and timely diagnose and treat these conditions.

In addition, two to three misdiagnoses are typical before arriving at a final diagnosis. Delay in diagnosis or a wrong diagnosis increases the suffering of the patients exponentially. Even when suspected, the facilities and expertise for diagnosis and management are available only in very few centers in the country, doctors say.

India is home to around 5-10 crore patients with rare diseases. But many die in want of timely diagnosis and treatment. The number of patients in the country could be more than what has been estimated as many children die without proper diagnosis and treatment for rare genetic disorders,



ders, says **Dr Mayank Nilay**, Assistant Professor of medical genetics at medical genetics department at Post Graduate Institute of Child Health PGICH, Noida, Uttar Pradesh.

"Nearly 30% of rare disease patients in the country die before five years of age," he notes and adds that lifestyle changes, late marriage

and environmental modifications can also lead to such rare disorders. Prenatal testing of couples can help analyse chances for such rare diseases and avoid them.

"Early diagnosis and treatment leads to better outcomes for these patients. Sadly, due to lack of awareness among physicians and the masses, diagnosis is often delayed in our country, leading to irreversible losses. Screening of newborn children and couples for such rare disorders is very important," Dr Nilay adds.



Sarika Modi from IEM (inborn errors of metabolism) Support Charitable Trust spoke about how 18 per cent GST and the 100 per cent custom duties levied on life saving food and medicines are unnecessarily adding to the woes of the affected families of patients with IEMs. IEMs also known as congenital metabolic diseases or inherited metabolic disorders are rare genetic (inherited) disorders in which the body cannot properly turn food into energy.

Modern therapies for rare diseases, including gene editing, gene therapy, ASOs, RNAi, mRNA, and ERT are highly promising but unaffordable and inaccessible to the patient community. Although a small percentage of rare disease patients need expensive drugs, others can be managed by alternate therapies such as diet, medical foods, AYUSH, social support, and medical devices, which improves the quality of life," Muthyala sums up.

HEALTH BRIEFS



PREVENTING DIABETES IN PREGNANCY NEED OF THE HOUR: DR JITENDRA SINGH

Expressing concern that Type-2 Diabetes has assumed epidemic proportions in the country, Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh has stressed on steps to effective-

ly check the occurrence of diabetes in pregnant women to prevent passing the disease to future generations.

"It is a well-known fact that a woman who gets gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM) is likely to pass on to her progeny a higher preponderance to develop Type-2 diabetes and that too at a relatively younger age," Dr Singh, a diabetologist, said while addressing the Annual Conference of DIPSI (Diabetes in Pregnancy Study Group of India) held recently.

In an alarming situation like this, unless we can effectively prevent the occurrence of diabetes in pregnant women, it may not be possible

to break the chain of Type-2 Diabetes Mellitus getting passed from generation to generation and thus affecting the future generations, he said.

Singh, a founder member of DIPSI, had a special word of appreciation for Dr V. Seshiah who devoted his life to this cause.

Nearly half a century ago, Dr Seshiah and his team had recommended conducting a "spot test" for blood sugar in every pregnant woman and today a "single procedure test in pregnancy" developed by the same team has been accepted worldwide as reliable and effective for future management.

Seshiah has now moved on to primordial prevention of diabetes in pregnant women, Singh said, adding that the success of this will not only help in controlling the epidemic of diabetes in India.

ONE STROKE DEATH EVERY 4 MINUTES IN INDIA: TOP NEUROLOGIST

About 1,85,000 strokes occur every year in India with nearly one stroke every 40 seconds and one stroke death every 4 minutes, top neurologist **Dr M V Padma Srivastava** has said.

"India bore the maximum burden of stroke with 68.6 per cent incidence of stroke, 70.9% stroke deaths and 77.7% disability adjusted life years



(DALYs) lost," she said at an event organised at the Sir Ganga Ram Hospital to celebrate International Women's Day.

In spite of these alarming figures, the doctor flagged concerns that many Indian

hospitals lack the necessary infrastructure and do not deliver adequate stroke care.

American pharmaceutical Eli Lilly has stated that its solanezumab drug did not slow cognitive decline nor reduced risk of progression to symptomatic Alzheimer's disease. Solanezumab was designed to target amyloid protein that floats in brain fluid before it deposits on the brain as plaque. But the trial showed that it did not clear plaque or halt accumulation of amyloid in participants treated with the drug, the

drug maker said. The results can have a significant effect on approximately 315 million people globally who have pre-clinical Alzheimer's disease – the earliest stages of the disease – and have not yet shown clinical symptoms. "The findings indicate that amyloid is a key driver of cognitive decline at the preclinical stage of Alzheimer's disease. Solanezumab did not substantially impact amyloid plaque burden in the brain, and unfortunately did not slow cognitive decline," said Reisa Sperling, neurologist at the Brigham and Women's Hospital, Harvard Medical School, in a statement.

China factor in India-US relationship

It is a historic moment as the US Senate has passed a resolution, which aims at the hegemonic designs of China against India, and declares with all terse lingo the fact that Arunachal Pradesh is an inseparable part of the Indian territory. The resolution can shred the rationale (of some sections) that the US national interest is antithetical to India. The natty nom de plume of activism finds a fulsome fruition with the American riposte thus setting right the myriad gaps in the US foreign policy. Let's live in the contemporary context.

One can delve into the larger diplomatic and political standpoints undertaken by the United State's administration vis-a-vis the American policy on the People's Republic of China. Tanvi Madan writes in the Brookings Institution's paper that, "the People's Republic of China has shaped the US-India relationship since it came into existence in 1949. Fifty five years ago, for example, a senator from Massachusetts argued that there was a 'struggle between India and China for the economic and political leadership of the East, for the respect of all Asia, for the opportunity to demonstrate whose way of life is better'. He asserted that it was crucial that the US helps India win that contest with China."

Thus, in a manner, some significant part of the fulcrum of the India-US relations and their repeated stand-offs vis-a-vis Kashmir and Pakistan revolved around the American takes on Beijing's political denomination. Several other American establishments too expressed the grave reality that going by realpolitik, China needed to be contained in the now contested Asiatic space, defined by the South China Sea quandary and the Quad, by strengthening ties with New Delhi, and as an attendant fact, through facilitating India's ascent in the larger international system.

The larger landscape of global polity too witnessed the idiom that the uncertain and the unpredictable behaviour of Beijing made the rest of the comity of nations, including



India and the United States, wary of the so-called propagated "peaceful rise" of the Chinese hegemon. Also, the nom de plume of shared democratic values and a free and open society glued together the aims, objectives and the national interests of both India and the United States in a deftly intertwined manner. Thus, the need to conjoin as a political, diplomatic, economic and military conglomerate became the apparent order of the day. Thus was erected the strategic and diplomatic edifice of the much deliberated and talked about quadrilateral dialogue or the group of Quad which does not openly segregate China as a special target akin to the

civilised nomenclature given by Putin to the rabid Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Still, the Chinese heft and agglomeration of weaponry and technology, along with the menacing modernisation of its warring capacities, is enough cause for worry for both New Delhi and Washington. Taiwan happens to be a key conflict hotbed where in going by a70s bilateral understanding any threat to the existence of Taiwan as a sovereign entity will be repulsed by the American military heft and attendant might. In the same manner, nations such as Japan and South Korea, which happen to be American allies, too have raised umpteen hackles

concerning the aggressive manoeuvres and posturing of the Han Middle Kingdom. Thus, along with the Chinese arm-twisting at the Indian borders, the South China Sea might become the future battle-ground in the real sense of the term subsuming minor "Operational incidents".

Earlier on, the previous New Delhi dispensations would take a great deal of care before excluding and sequestering a belligerent Beijing. All care was taken by New Delhi to balance out China and the US, but still the Chinese establishment condemns and expresses its "concern" at the closing in of ranks and the rising contours of "allyhood" between India

and the US since the days of summitry between President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Shark Tank, Madison Square Garden, and the stately and grandiose Motera stadium summitry in Gujarat.

During the pandemic and much before that furlough, the growing strain between China and the United States made life and realpolitik very difficult for most of the nations in the global community. As New Delhi made diplomatic strides with its diplomatic tightrope between Moscow and Washington in the context of the Ukraine war, the myriad nations in the orient too had to contend with the Sino-US

conflict punctuated with an all pervasive trade war which shook the value and supply chains of the world.

Kevin Rudd writes, "Any effort to look ahead at Sino-American relations in 2023 will uncover a landscape of uncertainties. There is not only the paramount strategic goal of maintaining peace across the Taiwan Strait but also China's often fraught relations with other powers such as Japan, South Korea, Australia, India, and Europe, as well as its ties to wayward friends such as Russia. And beyond these, there is the question of whether the Chinese economy lands safely or crashes in the year ahead." Thus, not only for the

India-US strategic and defence partnership bordering on to "allyhood", the entire world seethes with frenzy at the future trade relationship between the US and China, which definitely has seen a closing in between India and the United States much to the strategic and geo-economic advantage of India.

Efforts such as the Bali Summitry of G-20 in November 2022 need to be undertaken much more often as in a geo-economically interdependent and largely intertwined world, sequestration in the name of taking the dead donkeys out of the closet need not be the order of the day. Diplomatic promiscuity is the order of the day much in tandem with the facets of "Reformed Multilateralism" and the end of unipolarity. Still, India remains a flashpoint in the US-Sino relationship. Still, the floating of the bipartisan resolution in the US Senate on the India-China relationship is not a flash in the pan. New Delhi has been striving diplomatically to decouple the Chinese since the times of the Trump and Modi summit.

And the fact that the resolution was introduced by Senator Jeff Merkely, who happens to be a Democrat, reflects and sheds enough light on the diplomatic success that New Delhi has achieved in the context of the LAC fracas between the border forces and positioning of India and China. The declaration that the US recognises the McMahon line as the international boundary between China and Arunachal Pradesh as an integral part of India itself is a feat of its kind. We are not propagating the idea that India should toe American line always, but what needs to be comprehended by both India and the US is the pertinent politics that containment and encirclement of China for deterrence objectives will go a long way into stabilising relations between the triumvirate of New Delhi, Washington, Beijing.

(The writer teaches at International Relations and International Organisations, Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi)



MANAN DWIVEDI

PERSPECTIVE

Female labour force participation in India

Policymakers should be more concerned about whether women can access better employment or establish their own businesses, and take advantage of new labour market opportunities as the country grows



SATYAM BHARTI

India's female labour participation rate, or the percentage of women who are employed, has remained low over the past three decades despite the country's fast economic growth, decreased fertility, and increased education of women.

Women are less likely to actively seek employment or work for pay. Just over 50 per cent of women worldwide participate in the labour force, compared to 80 per cent of men. Women are also less likely to hold formal jobs and have fewer prospects for professional advancement or business growth. The Covid-19 pandemic may be contributing to the widening of these gender discrepancies. Women's decisions about whether and how to enter the labour market are influenced by a variety of economic and social factors that interact in a complex way both at the macro and domestic levels.

Studies from all across the world indicate that urbanisation, economic growth, cyclical effects, fertility rates, and the average marriage age are some of the most important contributors. In addition to these issues, social norms governing women's positions in public life continue to have an impact on outcomes.

The Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) data (2020-21) shows that the female labour force participation rate has increased in the rural areas, while it has slightly gone down in the urban areas. The overall female labour force partici-

ipation rate in India increased by 8.5 per cent to 24.1 per cent in 2020-21 from 22.2 per cent in 2019-20. The female labour force in rural areas has grown by 12.3 per cent to 27.0 per cent from 24.1 per cent in 2019-20, while the participation rate of females in urban areas has decreased by 0.4 per cent to 18.6 per cent from the previous year.

Social expectations regarding the gendered division of domestic labour concerns about a woman's family status if she works, a higher increase in women's home productivity relative to their market productivity with an increase in their education levels, and a lack of job opportunities close to their homes are some of the factors that support the low levels of urban women in the labour market.

India has made tremendous progress in enhancing access to education for girls as more and more women of working age enroll in secondary schools.

The nature of the country's economic growth, however, has meant that a few jobs, particularly in rural areas, have been generated in fields that could easily accommodate women. Although not enough jobs were created, household earnings did rise, which may have had a detrimental effect on women's engagement, especially in supplementary activities because of shifting preferences.

Last but not least, although the majorities of women in



Students participate in marathon ahead of the International Women's Day in Hyderabad on March 6, 2023

AP

India work and contribute to the economy in some form, a sizable amount of their labour is not documented or taken into account in official statistics, resulting in an underreporting of women's labour.

In India, a disproportionately large percentage of women claim that their pri-

mary activity is taking care of the home. As per PLFS 2020-21, 35.2 per cent of Indian females in rural areas and 45.8 per cent of Indian females in urban areas are involved in domestic duties.

Therefore, the inaccurate measurement could impact the participation rate's trend as

well as its level. An inclusive and sustainable development process must include women's participation in the labour force and access to decent jobs. Women continue to encounter numerous obstacles when trying to enter the workforce and find decent employment.

They also disproportion-

ately struggle with issues like discrimination, wage parity, access to employment, choice of employment, working conditions, employment security, and juggling the competing demands of work and family obligations.

In addition, women make up a large portion of the infor-

mal economy, which is where they face the highest danger of exploitation and the least amount of official protection.

Taking into account these findings, policymakers in India and the rest of the region should adopt a comprehensive strategy to improve the labour market outcomes for women by enhancing access to and the relevance of education and training programs, developing skills, gaining access to child care, protecting pregnant women, and providing safe and accessible transportation, in addition to promoting a growth pattern that generates job opportunities.

Policymakers should be more concerned about whether women can access better employment or establish their own businesses, and take advantage of new labour market opportunities as the country grows, in addition to traditional labour force participation rates.

In order to create a policy framework that encourages and facilitates women's participation, it is important to be aware of the "gender-specific" challenges that most women confront. Contextually appropriate gender-responsive policies must be created.

(The writer is an Indian Economic Service officer posted at the Ministry of Labour and Employment. The views expressed in the article are of the author alone, and doesn't represent the views of the Ministry or the Government of India)

