

OPINION 6
RATIONALE OF SAME
SEX MARRIAGE

WORLD 9
STATE WANTED TO KILL ME IN
POLICE CUSTODY: IMRAN KHAN

MONEY 10
ECONOMY LIKELY TO LOG 6%
GROWTH NEXT FISCAL: CRISIL

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INDIA TO FACE
AUSTRALIA IN
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12 SPORT

I want to clarify in Houses 'democracy in peril': Rahul

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Embroided in a great deal of controversy for his "democracy in peril" remarks during his recent visit to London, former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Thursday claimed the whole "tamasha" around his remarks in the UK has been created by the Government to divert attention from the Adani issue.

Making his first appearance upon his return to India, Rahul asserted it is a "test of Indian democracy" as to whether he would be allowed to respond to the allegations by the BJP in Parliament.

Addressing a Press conference at the AICC headquarters, Rahul said the question before the country is whether after four BJP leaders made allegations about a Member of Parliament that person would be given the same space as them in Parliament or he would be "told to shut up".

He reiterated that the allegations have been made in Parliament by four ministers and it was "my democratic right" to have the opportunity to respond to that in Parliament. "So if Indian democracy was functioning, I would be able to say my piece in Parliament," he said.

Rahul met Speaker Om Birla urging him to allow him to speak in the Lok Sabha. "I



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi speaks during a press conference at AICC headquarters in New Delhi on Thursday
Ranjana Dimri | Pioneer

went to Parliament this morning with the idea of putting (forward) what I have said or what I feel on the floor of the House. Four ministers have raised allegations against me in Parliament, it is my right to be allowed to speak on the floor of the House," the former Congress chief said.

"I told him (the Speaker) that people from the BJP have made allegations against me and as an MP, it is my right to speak," he said, adding that the Speaker was "non-committal" and just smiled.

Rahul said he is hopeful though not very sure that he would be allowed to speak in Parliament on Friday.

Rahul said he had asked some fundamental questions about the relationship between the Prime Minister and Adani Group chairperson Gautam

Adani. The whole idea is that all those questions must not be on the table, he said.

"More importantly whose money is in these shell companies, who is this unknown person whose money is in these shell companies. As an MP, I would like to first place my statement on the floor of the House and then after that I would be happy to have a discussion with you all," Rahul said briefing the media.

"So, actually what you are seeing is a test of Indian democracy, after four BJP leaders have made allegations about an MP, is that MP is going to be given the same space that those four members were given or is he going to be told to shut up. That is what the question is before this country right now," Rahul said

Continued on Page 2

Rahul must apologise for speaking language of anti-India forces: BJP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Thursday launched a fresh salvo on Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for his "democracy under brutal attack" remark in the UK, with party leaders, including Union Ministers, demanding an apology from the former Congress president leader for "speaking the language of anti-India forces".

"We speak in the interest of the public, but all the anti-India forces and gang have the same language and line. The language spoken by Rahul Gandhi is the same language spoken by those working against India, conspired against India. He will have to apologise in Parliament. It is our duty to seek his apology," said Union Law Minister and party leader Kiren Rijiju.

Senior BJP leader Ravi Shankar Prasad said, "We will campaign across the country for an apology from Rahul Gandhi. It's his habit to speak baseless things. Not for once did he say today that he's denying his remarks made in the



Union Minister Kiren Rijiju addresses a press conference at his residence in New Delhi on Thursday
PTI

UK. How long will Rahul Gandhi mislead the country? The BJP reiterates that he said that 'America and Europe should take note of India's democratic backsliding'. It's his habit to insult the feelings of Indians by criticising Indian democracy abroad."

Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, senior BJP leader and former Union Cabinet Minister, said the on-going "deliberate disinformation drive" against Indian Parliament, Constitutional institutions and democratic values is being carried out "not by chance but by choice".

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2 Army pilots die in Cheetah crash



Wreckage of the Cheetah helicopter of Indian Army which crashed near Mandala in West Kameng district on Thursday (Left), killing both pilots — Lt Colonel VVB Reddy and Major Jayanth (top) PTI

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Two Army pilots, including a Lt Colonel and a Major, were killed on Thursday when their helicopter crashed during an operational sortie in Arunachal Pradesh.

A probe was ordered to ascertain the cause of the mishap. The deceased were identified as Lt Colonel VVB Reddy and Major Jayanth A.

Giving details here, Army officials said an Army Aviation Cheetah helicopter flying an operational sortie near Bomdila, Arunachal Pradesh,

lost contact with the Air Traffic Control) around 9.15 am.

Five search parties of the Indian Army, Sasstra Seema Bal (SSB) and Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) were immediately launched.

The wreckage of the aircraft was found near the village Banglajap, East of Mandala.

"With regret we inform that the pilot and the co-pilot of the helicopter lost their lives in the accident. An investigation is being ordered to ascertain the cause of the accident," they said.

According to reports, the Lt Colonel and Major were on

board the Cheetah moving from Senge to Missamari when the Cheetah crashed near Mandala. The ageing Cheetah and Cheetah helicopters with the IAF and the Army are in dire need of replacement, even as they form the lifeline of the forces in high-altitude areas.

There are around 200 Cheetah and Chetak helicopters in service at present.

Earlier in the day, Rohit Rajbir Singh, the superintendent of police, Special Investigation Cell (SIC), said villagers had found the crashed chopper ablaze in Dirang, and informed district officials.

CBI books Sisodia now for 'political snooping'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In fresh trouble for jailed former Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, the CBI on Thursday booked him in a new case related to alleged misuse of official position and financial impropriety in the Government's Feedback Unit (FBU) which was also used for "political snooping".

Currently, under the custody of the Enforcement Directorate, the AAP leader who is the prime accused in the snooping case. Five others were booked by the CBI on Tuesday for alleged criminal conspiracy, criminal breach of trust, forgery and relevant provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act, officials said.

The CBI booked Sisodia, 1992-batch IRS officer Suresh Kumar Jain, who was then secretary of vigilance, retired Central Industrial Security Force Deputy Inspector General Rakesh Kumar Sinha, who was working as special adviser to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Joint Director in the FBU, they said.

Besides, former Joint Deputy Director of Intelligence Bureau Pradeep Kumar Punj, who was working as Deputy Director of the Feedback Unit, retired Assistant Commandant of CISF Satish Khetrapal who was working as feedback officer, and Gopal Mohan, advisor, anti-corruption, to Kejriwal were also booked in the case, they said.

Continued on Page 2

Desi push: Centre OK's ₹70,500 crore defence purchase



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In a major boost to self-reliance in defence manufacturing, the Government on Thursday approved weapon procurement projects worth ₹70,500 crore. All the systems will be bought from Indian companies under the Buy Indian-IDD (Indigenously Designed, Developed and Manufactured) category.

The go-ahead was given against the backdrop of ongoing tension with China and to maintain operational readiness to counter Pakistan. Giving details here, Defence Ministry officials said the nod was given to the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh here. It is the apex body to approve proposals by the three Services.

The final clearance is accorded by the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) headed by the Prime Minister.

Elaborating upon the details, officials said out of the total proposals, Indian Navy proposals constitute more than ₹56,000 crore, which largely includes indigenous BrahMos missiles, Shakti Electronic Warfare (EW) systems and Utility Helicopters-Maritime.

The Navy proposes to procure 200 additional BrahMos worth over ₹15,000 crore. While this additional procurement of BrahMos missile system will enhance the maritime strike capabilities and anti-surface warfare operation, the addition of Utility Helicopters will multiply the operational readiness of the Indian Navy in the domain of Search and Rescue Operations, Casualty Evacuation and Humanitarian Assistance Disaster Relief (HADR).

Similarly, Shakti Electronic Warfare systems will equip and modernise the frontline ships to counter any Naval Operations by the adversaries.
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Govt alerts 6 States on Covid-19, H3N2; nation action ready



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Even as the Centre on Thursday specifically asked Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Telangana, Gujarat and Maharashtra to focus on testing, genome sequencing for Covid-19 samples of international passengers, and implementation of Covid-appropriate behaviour, States across the country are getting in the action mode to tackle not only Covid-19 but also H1N1 and influenza caused by H3N2 which are gradually moving northwards.

To meet the emergency, the Delhi Government is setting up isolation wards, assembling a team of doctors and stocking up on medicines; Puduicherry has closed down schools till March 26 in the light of H3N2 concerns.

Maharashtra has reported two suspected deaths due to the H3N2 virus — an MBBS student from Ahmednagar, who had tested positive for both H1N1 and H3N2, and a 74-year-old man from Nagpur who tested positive for H3N2 — and 361 H3N2 cases.
Continued on Page 2

Consulate closure: India asks Aus to act against Khalistanis

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after alleged Khalistani supporters forced the Indian Honorary Consulate in Brisbane, Australia to close down, India on Thursday said it has raised the issue with the authorities there. At least four Hindu temples have also faced acts of vandalism in the last two months by the so-called Khalistani backers.

Making India's position clear, Ministry of External Affairs Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said here, "The Consulate was halted for a little while. The issue was raised with Australian authorities and they should take action." Bagchi also said, "Prime Minister Narendra Modi already spoke about such issues when Australian Prime Minister was in India."

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese during his visit to New Delhi last week assured to curb anti-India elements in the country. He also said Australia will not tolerate any extreme actions and attacks that took



place in religious buildings, and that there is no place for such action against Hindu temples.

Expressing concern over the spate of acts of vandalism by alleged Khalistani supporters, Modi flagged the issue here during his summit level talks with Albanese and said it is a matter of regret.

Addressing the media along with Albanese after holding talks with him, Modi 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 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.

As regards the latest incident, media reports from Australia said, "Slogans were raised against Hindus calling them supremacists with Khalistan zindabad," said The Australia Today at the Indian Consulate located on Swann Road in the Taringa suburb of Brisbane.
Continued on Page 2

CAPSULE

TEJASHWI TO APPEAR BEFORE CBI ON MAR 25

New Delhi: The CBI on Thursday assured the Delhi High Court it will not arrest Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav this month, after which the politician agreed he will appear before the probe agency on March 25 for questioning in connection with land-for-jobs scam case.

BRS LEADER KAVITHA SKIPS ED SUMMONS

New Delhi: BRS leader K Kavitha on Thursday skipped the Enforcement Directorate (ED) summons here for questioning in the Delhi excise policy money laundering case and made a plea to defer the proceedings but it was rejected by the probe agency which asked her to appear on March 20.

Valley, Ladakh get lifeline back; connectivity along LAC boosted

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) on Thursday restored the strategic supply lines by throwing open the mighty Zojila Pass in a record number of 68 days.

Labeled as the crucial lifeline between the Kashmir Valley and Ladakh, the reopening of Zojila Pass, located on the Srinagar-Kargil-Leh road (NH-1) at a height of 11,650 feet, is set to boost India's defence preparedness in the Ladakh sector amid ongoing standoff with China.

Likewise, the Razdan Pass, which provides the only road connectivity between the Gurez Sector and the Kashmir Valley, has been successfully reopened after a gap of just 58 days.

Other important passes at Sadhna, Pharkiyani Gali and Zamindar Gali were kept open throughout this winter.

Speaking on the occasion at Zero Point, Zojila Pass, Lt Gen Rajeev Chaudhry, Director General Border Roads, said, "Early opening of the Zojila and Razdan Passes will facilitate the augmentation of supply of essential goods and services for people of Ladakh and Gurez Valley."

He reiterated the BRO's commitment towards nation building and service to the people. During the interaction, he said that the trial movement of vehicles was conducted successfully today, adding that the decision to open the road for civil traffic will be taken by the civil administration after

ZOJILA PASS REOPENS



the conduct of joint inspection.

Trial convoys of vehicles have been successfully passed through Zojila, thereby ensuring that the Pass remained closed for only 68 days this year as compared to 73 days last year and 160-180 days in the yesteryears.

In a written statement, the BRO said, "With the renewed focus on infrastructure development and augmentation of connectivity to the northern borders in recent years, there has been a strategic requirement of minimising the closure of Zojila Pass during winters."

It also said that the BRO ensured that the Zojila Pass was kept open for traffic till as late as January 6 this year, thereby creating a new historic prece-

dent of its kind.

The advantage which accrued by keeping Zojila open till this late can be assessed by the fact that almost 13,500 vehicles crossed the Pass between November-end 2022 and January 6.

The snow-clearing operations were launched in the first week of February. The snow-clearance teams were pushed into immediate action by Project Beacon and Project Vijayak from Sonamarg and Dras ends of Zojila.

After sustained and relentless efforts, initial connectivity across the Zojila Pass was established on March 11. Improvement and widening of the road surface has been carried out since then to facilitate safe passage of vehicles.

10K encounters in 6 yrs in UP; criminals in fear

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

More than 10,000 police encounters of criminals have taken place in Uttar Pradesh in the last six years of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath-led Government.

In terms of number of encounters, Meerut is at the top in the State with the highest number of 3,152 encounters taking place since 2017, in which 63 criminals were killed and 1,708 criminals were injured.

Besides, a brave policeman was also martyred while 401 cops were injured during the police encounters. A total of 5,967 criminals were nabbed during the action of the UP Police.

As soon as Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath took over the reins of the state, improving the law and order situation in the state became his priority. His government adopted a zero tolerance policy towards mafia and criminals and intensified



crackdown on such elements to strengthen the state's law and order. According to the available statistics, in the last six years more than 10,000 encounters of criminals took place in the state. Due to this action of the police, the state, which was once known for poor law and order and atrocities of mafias on innocent people, is today known not only in the country but abroad as a crime and fear-free state.

It is noteworthy that during the Global Investors' Summit-2023, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and veteran leaders and investors praised

the law and order situation of UP. The UP Police worked in a planned and phased manner to curb crime and crack down on criminals and encounter was the biggest strategy, which created fear among the criminals and they started fleeing the state.

The UP Police have conducted 10,713 encounters since 2017 of which the highest 3,152 were conducted by the Meerut police, followed by the Agra police which carried out 1,844 encounters in which 4,654 criminals were arrested while 14 dreaded criminals were gunned down and 55 cops were injured.

Agra is followed by Bareilly where as many as 1,497 encounters were conducted in which 3,410 criminals were arrested while seven were gunned down. During the encounters in Bareilly, 437 criminals were injured. In these operations, 296 brave police personnel were injured while one was martyred.

India aware of China funding infra projects in neighbourhood: Govt

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

As China has stepped up investment in several projects in India's neighbourhood, the Government on Thursday said it is aware of China funding infrastructure projects including in ports, highways and airports in countries in South Asia.

Minister of State for External Affairs V Muraleedharan said India is committed to developing friendly and mutually beneficial relations with all its neighbours under its 'Neighbourhood First' policy.

He was replying to a question in Rajya Sabha. Muraleedharan said the Government keeps a constant watch on all developments having a bearing on India's security and takes all necessary measures to safeguard it.

"The government is aware that China is engaging in funding of infrastructure projects in countries in South Asia, including in ports, highways, railways



and airports," Muraleedharan said. He said India is an active economic partner of its neighbours and is involved in a large number of development projects in these countries.

"India also has extensive ties with its neighbours in diverse fields including defence and security cooperation, trade and investment, education, culture and people-to-people exchanges," he said.

To a separate question, Muraleedharan said there have been instances of attacks on Indian nationals and persons of Indian origins (PIOs) in the US, the UK and Canada in the last few years and some of these attacks appeared to be racially

motivated. "According to media reports and inputs, there have been instances of attacks on Indian nationals and PIOs in the USA, UK and Canada in the last few years. Some of these attacks appear to be racially motivated," he said.

Muraleedharan said the safety and well-being of Indian nationals in foreign countries is the top priority for the government.

"Indian missions/consulates in USA, UK and Canada are constantly engaged with the local governments and the Indian community, including on measures to ensure their safety and well-being," he said.

India looks forward to working with new US envoy: Arindam

PNS/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI/WASHINGTON

Hours after US appointing Eric Garcetti as its Ambassador to New Delhi, India on Thursday said it look forward to working with him to take forward the relations. The US Embassy here was without an Ambassador since January 2021.

Making this assertion here, Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said, "We welcome the confirmation of Eric Garcetti as US Ambassador to India. We look forward to working with him to take forward our multifaceted bilateral relations."

Garcetti, President Joe Biden's close aide, is the next US Ambassador to India after the Senate confirmed his nomination late Wednesday, ending a protracted hiatus of over two years to fill the key diplomatic position. The Senate voted 52-42 to confirm the former Los Angeles mayor's nomination on Wednesday. Garcetti, 52, lost the votes of three Democrats but convinced seven Republicans to cross the aisle, winning him the job.

His nomination had been pending before the US Congress since July 2021 when he was nominated for the prestigious diplomatic posting by



Biden. Last week, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted 13-8 in favour of his nomination. "The relationship between India and the US is a strong one, and one of great strategic, economic, and cultural importance."

Founded on shared values, supported by growing economic and trade ties, and strengthened by the Indian diaspora here in the US, this partnership continues to hold significant promise for the future," said Senator Mark Warner, Co-Chair of Senate India Caucus. "As co-chair of the Senate India Caucus, I am glad that there will finally be a Senate-confirmed ambassador in New Delhi," Warner said.

Garcetti's nomination was not brought to the Senate floor for a vote during the last Congress as the ruling Democratic Party did not have enough support to get the 52-year-old close aide of Biden through.

Rahul must apologise for speaking language of anti-India forces: BJP

From Page 1

They BJP leaders alleged that Rahul had insulted the country from foreign soil by asserting that the US and European nations were oblivious that a huge chunk of democratic model had come undone in India. "India's prestige has not been attacked in such a manner before. Political differences may be there but there cannot be a graver crime than to seek interference from foreign powers. Anger prevails across the country for the grave insult Rahul Gandhi has inflicted upon what even the world acknowledges as the mother of democracy," Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi told reporters here.



THANKSGIVING

Thank you holly spirit blessings Celine.

PD(90298)C

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Priti Baisoya W/o Narendra Kumar Baisoya R/o Baraula Village, Sector 49, Noida GautamBudh Nagar, have changed my name Rinki to Priti Baisoya for all future purposes.

PD(90299)A

I want to clarify in Houses...

From Page 1

His remarks during his recent trip to the UK have rocked Parliament, with both houses failing to transact any significant business on the first four days of the Budget session's second half. Several BJP leaders including Union ministers Rajnath Singh, Piyush Goyal and Pralhad Joshi have demanded an apology from Gandhi over his remarks. During his interactions in the UK, Rahul alleged that the structures of Indian democracy are under attack and there is a "full-scale assault" on the country's institutions. He also told British parliamentarians in London that microphones are often "turned off" in Lok Sabha when an opposition member raises important issues.

My Client Shakti W/o Lt. Sh. Tuli Ram R/o H.N. 282 Jeevan Nagar Part-2 Near B.B.N High School Ballabgarh, Faridabad do hereby notify to the General Public that the above mentioned property belongs to Husband of my client and the Husband of my client has been expired on 30.10.2018 leaving behind the my client and two children namely Satish Kumar (son) and Rekha Devi (Daughter) as Legal heirs and it was also settled between the legal heirs that the property H.N. 282 Jeevan Nagar Part-2 Near B.B.N High School Ballabgarh, Faridabad be divided in equal share between Legal heirs. It is for the of general public at large.

SMT. SUNITA RAI W/O LATE PUNEET KUMAR RAI R/O FLAT NO. B-4/A, ODA FLATS, MUNIRKA, NEW DELHI-110067, is the owner of ODA HIG FLAT NO.374, ON SECOND FLOOR, POCOR-1E, SECTOR-3, SITUATED AT DHARMA, NEW DELHI. VIDE ODA FILE NO.2/11700/2009/SUB/DW. has applied for Certified Copies of documents of the aforesaid property in DDA. The original documents i.e. Original DEMAND LETTER, ALLOTMENT LETTER, POSSESSION LETTER, NOC FOR WATER & ELECTRICITY CONNECTION and SITE POSSESSION SLIP of the above said property have been lost or mislaid by me and is not traceable inspite of my best efforts. An FIR/JNCR to this effect has been lodged in the Police Station, Crime Branch, Delhi (LR No.241695/2022 dated 14.02.2022). Any person(s) claiming any rights, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents, may write/contact with above named person at above Address/Phone No. 874407/7288, within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. The person claiming any right, interest, objection with respect to this property, can personally inform or write to Deputy Director HIG (Housing) or Director (Housing), D Block, Second Floor, Vikas Saction, New Delhi. Naveen Aggarwal (Advocate), Ch.no. M-7, Near SBI, Western Wing, Tis Hazari Court, Delhi-54

Maharashtra Govt talks again with protesting farmers

PNS/PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Maharashtra Government on Thursday held another round of talks with a delegation representing thousands of farmers and tribals, who are walking towards Mumbai, in its bid to address their demands, said former MLA Jiva Gavit spearheading the long march.

The talks will be held with Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis, ministers concerned and top state officials, he said. As scores of farmers and tribals marching towards Mumbai from Nashik district in North Maharashtra entered Thane district, ministers Dada Bhuse and Atul Save met a delegation of farmers late Wednesday night.

Former legislator Gavit said the ministers have invited the delegation of farmers and tribals for a meeting with Chief minister Eknath Shinde and Deputy Chief minister Devendra Fadnavis on Thursday. "They have responded to 40 per cent of the demands," Gavit said. "Respecting the invitation extended to us, we are going to attend the meeting," Gavit said.

Mehbooba silences critics for performing pooja in Shiv temple

PTI ■ JAMMU

PDP president Mehbooba Mufti on Thursday defended her recent visit to a Shiv temple in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch and performing a ritual there, saying "we live in a country that is home to the Ganga-Jamuni tehzeeb" and there is no need to discuss the matter further.

A video of the former chief minister offering water to Shivaling inside Navgraha temple, Mandi-Ajote in Poonch on Tuesday has gone viral, drawing criticism from some quarters. "We are living in a secular country that is home to Ganga-Jamuni Tehzeeb. The temple was built by Yashpal Sharma (former PDP leader who died last year) and his sons want me to visit the place. I went inside and someone gave me a small vessel filled with water with a lot of belief and love."

"I do not want to break his heart by refusing to pour water (on the Shivaling). He asked for



Peoples Democratic Party president Mehbooba Mufti offers prayers at Navagraha temple in Poonch district PTI photo

it and I did it (out of respect for him)," Mehbooba Mufti told reporters here. Asked about some Islamic scholars from Deoband in Uttar Pradesh disliking it, she said she did not want to go into it and whether it is allowed or not in her religion.

"In our country, Hindus and Muslims live together and there are more Hindus offering 'Chadar' at Muslim shrines than Muslims themselves.

CBI books Sisodia now for 'political snooping'

From Page 1

The agency has invoked IPC sections 120-B (criminal conspiracy), 403 (dishonest misappropriation of property), 409 (criminal breach of trust by public servant), 468 (forgery), 471 (using as genuine a forged document or electronic record), 477A (falsification of accounts) besides provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act against named accused in the FIR.

The case relates to FBU set up by the Kejriwal Government to gather relevant information and actionable feedback regarding the working of various bodies under the jurisdiction of the Delhi Government and to do "trap cases" as an ears-to-ground agency to check corruption, the FIR alleged. The CBI action is an outcome of a Preliminary Enquiry (PE) which had "prima facie disclosed the offences" against the named accused. The PE was conducted by the agency on a reference from the Vigilance Department of the Delhi Government on November 4, 2016.

Consulate closure: India asks...

From Page 1

The Queensland police said it was an unauthorised gathering.

"The Indian Consulate was forced to close due to safety concerns after Sikhs for Justice targeted them with their propaganda," Sarah L. Gates, director of Hindu Human Rights, told The Australia Today.

"These thugs should not be allowed to dictate how we live our life in Australia," Parvinder Singh, a resident of Queensland who took leave from work to attend an appointment at the

Indian Consulate, told The Australia Today. Last month, Khalistani flags were found attached to the Indian Consulate in Brisbane, just days after External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's visit to Australia.

In the Rajya Sabha on Thursday, Minister of State for External Affairs V Muraleedharan said there have been instances of attacks on Indian nationals and persons of Indian origins (PIOs) in the US, the UK and Canada in the last few years and some of these

attacks appeared to be racially motivated. "According to media reports and inputs, there have been instances of attacks on Indian nationals and PIOs in the USA, UK and Canada in the last few years. Some of these attacks appear to be racially motivated," he said.

Muraleedharan said the safety and well-being of Indian nationals in foreign countries is the top priority for the Government. "Indian missions/consulates in the USA, the UK and Canada are constantly engaged with the local Governments and the Indian community, including on measures to ensure their safety and well-being," he said.

Desi push: Centre OK's ₹70,500 crore defence purchase

From Page 1

Nod was also given for Medium Speed Marine Diesel Engine under Make-I category, said officials, adding it is a significant step as, for the first time, India is venturing into the development and manufacturing of such engines indigenously.

To keep pace with the emerging technologies and counter the adversaries in the Western (Pakistan) and Northern front (China), the necessity of the new weapons and its integration with the delivery platforms was felt by the Government.

To achieve the same objectives, the DAC indicated the approval to Indian Air Force's

proposal for Long Range Stand-Off Weapon (LRSOW) which will be indigenously designed, developed and integrated on SU-30 MKI aircraft.

For Artillery modernisation, in addition to the ongoing Dhanush Gun System and K-9 Vajra-T Gun System, approval was given for procurement of 155mm/52 Caliber Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System (ATAGS) along with High Mobility Vehicles (HNVs) and Gun Towing Vehicles (GTVs).

The apex body also approved procurement of Advance Light Helicopters (ALH) MK-III from Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for the Indian Coast Guard.

The Helicopter will be able to carry a suite of surveillance sensors which will enhance the surveillance capabilities.

It will also give full night capability and Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) capability for operations of the Indian Coast Guard.

Including the latest proposals, the total approvals granted for Capital Acquisition in the Financial Year 2022-23 is over Rs 2.71 lakh crore, out of which 99 per cent of the procurement will be sourced from Indian industries.

Such quantum of indigenously procurement will galvanise the Indian industries towards achieving the goal of "Aatmanirbhar Bharat".

Govt alerts 6 States on Covid-19, H3N2; nation action ready

From Page 1

It has put its health machinery on alert and issued guidelines to tackle the virus. According to an analysis of the Covid cases reported in the March 8-14 period, nine districts across the country have recorded Covid-positivity rates of greater than or equal to 10 per cent. Pithoragarh in Uttarakhand has the highest positivity rate of 25 per cent, followed by Aizawl (16.67 per cent) in Mizoram, Shimla (14.29 per cent), Mandi (13 per cent), Solan (12.5 per cent) in Himachal Pradesh and Gir Somnath (11.76 per cent) in Gujarat.

The data shows there are 15 other districts in Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka Himachal Pradesh and J&K in which the positivity rate is hovering between 5 per cent and 10 per cent. At least three deaths related to H3N2 have been reported in India this season. Experts said that H3N2 has been responsible for some of the worst flu seasons in recent times, characterised by longer and more severe illnesses resulting in increased hospitalisations and deaths.

Delhi Govt's ₹80,000 crore Budget to focus on CapEx

Roads, double-decker flyovers, edu, health priority of Gahlot's maiden Budget

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The 2023-24 budget of the AAP Government, to be tabled in the Assembly on Tuesday, will have "the biggest" outlay of capital expenditure for infrastructure projects such as roads and double-decker flyovers in view of the forthcoming G-20 meeting in the national Capital. The Delhi Government's budget outlay is likely to be Rs 80,000 crore but the tax collection of the Government in the current and the next financial year is expected to remain as per estimates. Top sources said the Arvind Kejriwal Government's plan to beautify and modernise the national Capital's infrastructure will be the main focus of Budget 2023-24.

"The Delhi Government has plans to upgrade and beautify the entire 1,400 kilometres road network of the Public

Works Department and nearly Rs 20,000 crore will be spent over a period of 10 years on the project," sources said.

"Three double-decker flyovers will be constructed in the city with the lower deck for vehicles and the upper deck for Metro trains, the source said.

"The budget will have the biggest outlay for capital expenditure towards infrastructure projects in the last eight years of the Kejriwal Government," sources in the Delhi Government said and added that education and health will also be major focus areas.

The Budget Session of the Delhi Assembly will begin on March 17 with Lieutenant-Governor (L-G) VK Saxena addressing the House. The budget will be tabled on March 21 and it will be preceded by an Outcome Budget of the Government. Finance Minister Kailash Gahlot will present his



first budget in the Assembly. He was given charge of the department after the resignation of Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia.

The Kejriwal Government in the last eight years has completed 28 flyovers and underpasses, and another 30 flyovers, underpasses and bridges will be constructed by it,

sources said.

Officials also said that apart from health and education, the budget might have a significant outlay for infrastructure development, particularly roads, in the city. Meanwhile, the Opposition BJP has alleged that the Kejriwal Government has not fulfilled any of its budget promises.

Leader of Opposition in Delhi Assembly, Ramvir Bidhuri told The Pioneer that the BJP will corner the Government on the corruption issue. On the other hand, the AAP will raise the issue of

BJP, AAP gear up for stormy session

BJP to move no-trust motion against Govt; AAP to raise Adani issue

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Assembly Budget Session beginning from March 17 is expected to be stormy as the Opposition BJP has decided to bring a no-confidence motion against the Arvind Kejriwal Government on the first day due to its alleged involvement in graft. The BJP has also given a notice seeking extension of the session by 10 days to discuss 10 issues.

Leader of Opposition in Delhi Assembly, Ramvir Bidhuri told The Pioneer that the BJP will corner the Government on the corruption issue. On the other hand, the AAP will raise the issue of

arrest of Manish Sisodia and the Adani Group to expose the Modi Government.

Earlier, the BJP Legislature Party met to discuss the strategy to corner the ruling party in the Assembly session. MLAs Mohan Bisht, Vijender Gupta, OP Sharma, Jitendra Mahajan, Anil Bajpai, Abhay Verma and Ajay Mahawar attended the meeting.

It was discussed that two former Ministers were behind bars and the Government was allegedly involved in many scams including excise, hawala, espionage, classroom, Delhi Jal Board, advertisement, DTC and hospitals. "In such a situation, the Government has no



moral or constitutional right to be in office," said Bidhuri. Delhi BJP spokesperson Aditya Jha was also present in Press conference.

Bidhuri expressed dissatisfaction over the short duration of the Budget Session which has been called only for five days, with a two-day provision for Question Hour. "This is

killing the rights of the Legislators," Bidhuri said and added that the first Budget Session of the first Vidhan Sabha lasted for a month and four days and had 19 sittings. "BJP MLAs have demanded that the Budget Session last for 15 days and there should be provision for Question Hour daily," he said

Bhalswa landfill may be clear of all waste by March 2024: CM

Against initial target of removing 6,500 MT of waste per day, soon 12,000 MT would be removed daily, says Kejriwal

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday said that the Bhalswa landfill will be cleared of all the garbage by March 2024. The Chief Minister was informed by the officials that against the initial target of removing 6,500 metric tonnes (MT) of waste per day, soon 12,000 MT of waste would be removed daily. Kejriwal, along with Delhi Mayor Shelly Oberoi, visited the Bhalswa landfill site and reviewed the progress of garbage removal work.

Kejriwal said that work was going on at double speed and soon Delhi would be made garbage-free. He said that 11,000 MT of garbage is generated daily and there are arrangements to deal with over 8,100 MT.

"This means 2,800 MT of garbage is left. Expansion work is underway at Okhla to handle 1,000 MT of the garbage while the Bawana Waste-To-



Energy Plant will be ready by 2026 to handle 2,000 MT of garbage," Kejriwal said.

Kejriwal said 30 lakh MT of waste has been removed from the landfill since 2019 while 50 lakh MT is still lying there of which 30 lakh MT will be reduced by December this year. "If work continues like this, the site will be left with no garbage by April next year," Kejriwal said.

The Bhalswa landfill is a 28-year-old site, spread across 70 acres and is one of the three infamous garbage mountains of Delhi. The initial height of the landfill was 65 metres from the

ground level. When surveyed in 2019, it consisted of 80 lakh MT of legacy waste. Since then 24 lakh MT of fresh waste has been dumped at the site and 30.48 lakh MT of waste has been bio-mined.

Talking to the media Kejriwal said that the initial target was to remove 6,500 MT of waste per day, but on Wednesday 9,000 MT was removed and by the end of March 12,000 MT of waste will be removed daily.

He said that going by that speed Bhalswa would be cleared of all garbage by March 2024.

BJP, Cong welcome CBI's FIR against Sisodia in snooping case

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP and the Congress welcomed the CBI's FIR against former deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia in connection with an alleged snooping scandal related to the Delhi government's Feedback Unit (FBU) and demanded that the agency book Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal as well. The BJP and the Congress have alleged that the FBU was being used by the AAP government to collect political intelligence about its opponents. Delhi BJP working president Virendra Sachdeva said this is a serious issue and the agency should probe it from the angle of sedition.

"I believe it's a matter of sedition. Was it that the information of the Feedback Unit was being shared with any foreign power. The agency should also probe if the FBU was getting funds from foreign countries," he said.

Sachdeva said some people with affiliation to the ruling AAP like the special advisor to the chief minister were in the FBU which raised sus-

picion over its motive, he said. "We believe not only Manish Sisodia and some officers but Kejriwal also played a key role in functioning of the FBU and the agency should also book and arrest him," Sachdeva said.

Leader of Opposition in Delhi Assembly, Ramvir Singh Bidhuri demanded that Kejriwal should also be booked in the snooping case. The mastermind of this idea of snooping was Kejriwal. The cabinet cannot approve any proposal without the consent of the chief minister. How Kejriwal was also to go scot-free in this case. "The investigating agency must probe the role of the Kejriwal in this case," he said.

Delhi Congress vice president Jai Kishan said his party had been raising this issue for the past six months.

There should be a thorough investigation into the Feedback Unit case as people should know what exactly happened when it was functioning, he said. "We think UAPA should be slapped in this case because it is a matter of internal security. A state government cannot simply have such

a snooping unit and it is rather a prerogative of the central government," he said.

Modi plans to keep Sisodia in jail for long time: Kejriwal

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal Thursday alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi plans to 'slap several false cases' against AAP leader Manish Sisodia to keep him in jail for a long time.

His comments came after the CBI registered an FIR against Sisodia and others in connection with the Delhi Government's Feedback Unit (FBU) which has been accused of doing political snooping. "PM's plan is to slap several false cases against Manish and keep him in custody for a long period. Sad for the country!" Kejriwal said in a tweet.

Mayor doubts dogs killed siblings, awaits autopsy

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Mayor Shelly Oberoi on Thursday raised doubts over the death of two siblings in Vasant Kunj allegedly in the stray dog attacks, saying only a post-mortem will clarify "whether they were murdered or attacked by dogs." Speaking at a press conference, Oberoi listed several "loopholes" in the investigation conducted by the BJP-led MCD in the deaths attributed to stray animal-attack in the last 15 years.

"Two children died in Vasant Kunj. It is still not clear whether they were murdered or killed in the attack by stray dogs. The post mortem report is still not out. We are still waiting for the report," she said.

Over the last three days, the mayor has held several meetings with MCD officials and various NGOs associated with the civic body to discuss the menace of stray animals. "We have come to know that in the last 15 years, the issue was not tackled properly. There were several loopholes. There are 20 sterilisation cen-



tres at present, out of which only 16 are active. The procedures are also questionable. Moreover, several NGOs are associated with BJP. There was no proper infrastructure," she said.

Oberoi held an emergency meeting on Tuesday, during which she took account of the prevailing situation and heard the concerns of the department, her office said in a statement. Oberoi in the meeting instructed officials to prepare an action plan within a week to control the menace of stray dogs, it said.

The minor brothers were found dead over a span of two days in southwest Delhi's Vasant Kunj area. Seven-year-old Anand and five-year-old Aditya, his brother, lived with their parents in a slum cluster in Sindh Basti. Anand had reportedly gone missing on March 10.

Delhi-2041 Draft Master Plan to be notified by March-end

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Draft Master Plan for Delhi-2041 is likely to be notified by the end of March. The Delhi Development Authority (DDA) had earlier this month approved the draft master plan with Lt Governor VK Saxena highlighting its thrust for inclusive development, sustainability and innovative interventions such as transit-oriented development hubs, land pooling, heritage and Yamuna rejuvenation, and regeneration of the city.

"The DDA has already approved the draft Master Plan and we are in the process of sending it to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. We are hopeful that the ministry will approve it by the end of this month or by early April, following which it will be noti-



fied," said an official.

The first master plan was promulgated in 1962 under the Delhi Development Act, 1957. These plans are prepared for 20 years' perspective periods and provide a holistic framework for planned development of the city.

The draft Master Plan of Delhi - 2041 is a "strategic" and "enabling" framework to guide future growth of the city, built upon the lessons learnt from the implementation of the previous plans and based on learning from across the country with respect to implementation of various projects and schemes.

Residents of Signature View Apts offered buyback, rent or other flats

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Residents of the structurally damaged Signature View Apartments have been offered three options -- buyback, rent for the time period till the flats are reconstructed or apartments at other locations -- by the Delhi Development Authority (DDA). A meeting was also held between DDA officials and the residents on Thursday with the latter raising some queries on the options offered by the DDA.

Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena, who is also the chairman of the Delhi Development Authority, had ordered the body to redevelop the apartments in Delhi's Mukherjee Nagar and proactively support the thousands of residents facing "grave danger to life and property". As part of the rehabilitation plan, three options have been given to the residents, said a senior DDA offi-



cial.

"We have offered three options to the residents -- one is that we buy back the flats at current rates, second is that we reconstruct the flats and offer them rental for the period during which the construction is happening and the third is that we offer them DDA flats at other locations," he added.

When asked whether any deadline has been given to the residents, the official said they have asked to choose the option quickly since the building is

dangerous. "After they choose, the MCD will also be involved," he said.

Explaining the three options, he said the DDA has flats that are available to be swapped. As for the rental option, the DDA has done a market analysis of rents in Mukherjee Nagar and adjoining areas. "If they take the offer of reconstruction, we will reconstruct them as per current norms," he added.

Constructed in 2007-2009, the complex comprises 336 HIG/MIG flats.

Shortly after, however, the flats started facing construction-related issues, forcing the residents to complain to the DDA. A 2021-2022 study conducted by IIT-Delhi at the behest of DDA found the building to be structurally unsafe. The study also made a recommendation to "vacate and dismantle" the complex, the official said.

3 held for duping job seekers, impersonating as 'DCI' DSP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Police's Crime Branch has arrested three men including one who impersonated a DSP to dupe lakhs from unsuspecting people promising them a job in a 'Department of Criminal Intelligence' - a made up name - under the Ministry of Home Affairs. Ashish Chaudhary, 27, created a fake government website in the name of 'Department of Criminal Intelligence', or DCI, while his associates, Govind Kaushik, 33, and Amit Kumar, 34, helped him set up a fake training centre at Jaffarpur Kalan village, police said.

They recruited several youths for the post of constable, office assistant, clerk etc and collected around Rs 5 lakh each from them, police said. Chaudhary posed as a Deputy Superintendent of Police, Kumar posed as a Sub-Inspector of DCI, and Kaushik posed as their subordinate. They had been running the racket since 2021 and took the premises on rent in 2022.

According to police, they also promised their victims an assured promotion if they paid extra, and posting in Delhi for a little bit more.

Chaudhary told the 'recruits' that they would be undergoing a secret training to become undercover agents. He made them believe that if they disclosed this fact to anyone, they would lose their jobs. He portrayed himself as a top undercover agent of the central government, and told his victims he had been delegated the recruitment task by senior IPS officers and officials of the MHA. Fake call letters were issued by him and fake identity cards were prepared.

Special Commissioner of Police (Crime Cell) Ravindra Singh Yadav said that Chaudhary's premises were raided on the basis of a tip-off.

Eleven people in all, including one woman, were found training at the centre while Chaudhary was delivering lectures to them at the time of the raid, he said.

When he was asked about his credentials, Chaudhary said he was a DSP of the Department of Criminal Intelligence under the MHA, Yadav said. "During interrogation, he broke down and divulged that he is not even a matriculate but a conman running the fake employment racket. He cheated several candidates for the post of constable, office assistant and clerk

after collecting around Rs 5 lakh from each candidate," he added.

Kaushik and Kumar were also later arrested for helping Chaudhary in setting up a fake training centre and running the fake employment racket by bringing fresh recruits, police said.

"The candidates were told after three months that since all vacancies were filled at North Block, they will have to work at the same place for the next five years. The candidates were kept under strict discipline and protocol and always kept busy in miscellaneous activities.

Father-in-law hits woman with brick for wanting to get a job



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 26-year-old woman was severely injured after her father-in-law repeatedly hit her on her head with a brick in Northwest Delhi's Prem Nagar during an argument over getting a job. According to police, the woman wanted to work but her in-laws opposed it.

A video of the incident that took place on Wednesday went viral on social media. After a video of a man hitting a woman with a brick in the national capital went viral, the National Commission of Women (NCW) on Thursday sought

swift action from Delhi police to arrest the accused in the matter.

In the video, the woman and her father-in-law are seen arguing. He threatens her with a brick. When the woman tries to leave, he hits her on the head twice. The video shows Kajal walking in a lane in Delhi's Prem Nagar when her father-in-law approaches with a brick in his hands. He is seen confronting the woman and when she tries to leave, he repeatedly hits her in the head with the brick. Kajal tries to escape, but the man chases her with the brick, the video shows.

Plan ways to turn Delhi into 'city of flowers', L-G asks officials

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With the aim to turn the Capital into a 'City of Flowers', Delhi Lieutenant-Governor (L-G) VK Saxena directed officials to come up with a detailed action plan within the next 15 days. Saxena asked officials to ensure that Delhi is adorned with flowering plants throughout the year and told the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) to plant five lakh tulips, sourced from Jammu and Kashmir or Himachal Pradesh, in the next season. He also ordered plantation of flowering plants all across the 57-km-long embankment of the Najafgarh and Shahdara drains among others.

He reviewed the planning and preparedness of horticulture divisions of various

departments and agencies. The meeting was attended by the Chief Secretary, Chairman NDMC, Vice-Chairman DDA, Commissioner MCD and Engineer-in-Chief, PWD and their horticulture heads.

These civic agencies and departments own Delhi's parks, green stretches and roads, and undertake and execute most of the Capital's horticultural activities, an official said.

Saxena discussed the sourcing of tulips with J&K, Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh administrations and asked NDMC to source it from there rather than sourcing them from abroad. "Apart from encouraging and boosting indigenous suppliers, it will also ensure cost cutting in procurement," the official said.

Saxena also asked MCD,



DDA and NDMC who own and operate nurseries to try and achieve temperatures between 10-12 degree centigrade, in their set ups, so that tulip bulbs could be nurtured in Delhi itself. He also asked them to explore the possibility of sourcing and planting daffodils in the

forthcoming season.

The L-G was told that 15,226 parks owned by the MCD spread over 5,172 acres were all being readied for self-sustaining horticultural activities. The PWD was instructed to undertake similar activities on the central verges and side-

walks of 540 kms of roads. The DDA was similarly asked to undertake various horticultural activities, over 719 parks spread over 10,385 acres, biodiversity parks spread over 2123 acres and the Yamuna floodplains spread over 3527.60 acres owned by it.

Parl disrupted over Adani, Rahul's remark

Opp forms human chain to press for JPC probe, accuses Govt of diverting issues

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Both Houses of Parliament continued to witness disruptions on Thursday over Rahul Gandhi's 'democracy in peril' remarks, Adani Group matter and other issues. Amid ruckus in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, the proceedings were adjourned for the day.

The Opposition leaders also formed a human chain in the Parliament House premises demanding a probe by a joint parliamentary committee into alleged irregularities in the Adani Group. Carrying placards and



raising slogans, opposition lawmakers, including Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, DMK leader T R Baalu, Samajwadi Party leader Ram Gopal Yadav, National Conference patron Farooq Abdullah, Shiv Sena (Thackeray faction) leaders Priyanka Chaturvedi and Arvind Sawant, also protested against what they

called the BJP government's 'diversionary tactics'. In the Lok Sabha, TMC MPs were in the well wearing black scarves over their mouths. Congress, DMK and other opposition parties were demanding a Joint Parliamentary Committee probe into the Adani Group matter while treasury bench members were demanding Rahul Gandhi's

apology for his remarks on democracy in London. Speaker Om Birla repeatedly asked for order in the House but ruckus continued leading to adjournment for the day. In the Rajya Sabha, similar scenes were witnessed where too TMC MPs were in the well wearing black scarves over their mouths alleging that opposition

members are not allowed to speak. Deputy Chairman Hariwansh asked the protesting members to go back to their seats and let the House function. Amid pandemonium, the House was adjourned for the day. However in an unprecedented observation, the opposition members started sloganeering even before the House began for the day and Chairman Jagdeep Dhankar walked in just to adjourn till post lunch.

TMC which has been avoiding participating with Congress led Opposition protests accused the government of orchestrating disruptions in both Houses of Parliament in a bid to sidestep questions raised by the opposition parties on a slew of issues and avoid accountability. On Thursday, for the first time, the party named the Adani Group in reference to the risk exposure of LIC and SBI, an issue it has been raising for quite some time now.

ED rejects Kavitha's plea to defer action till SC ruling on her plea

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Thursday rejected BRS leader K Kavitha's plea to defer proceedings against her till the Supreme Court ruling on her petition seeking protection from arrest and summons, as it issued a fresh notice to her for questioning on March 20 in the money laundering case linked to the excise policy case.

The Telangana MLCA sent an "authorised representative" early on Thursday with a six-page petition to the Investigating Officer (IO) of the case in Delhi stating she was skipping the March 16 summons as it explicitly does not require her to appear in person. "I humbly beseech your good self that the proceedings



before the Supreme Court being sacred and sacrosanct, the outcome thereof must be awaited before any further proceedings take place with respect to the subject summons," Kavitha said in her letter sent to the ED.

"I once again request your good self that you may please defer the proceedings awaiting appropriate order(s) or direction(s) by the Hon'ble Supreme Court," she wrote.

The Supreme Court on Wednesday agreed to hear on March 24 the plea by Kavitha seeking protection from arrest and challenging the summons issued against her by the ED in this case.

Her plea was rejected in view of the ongoing investigation which is at an important phase including the requirement of her physical and document-based confrontation with other accused arrested/involved in the case, sources said.

Kavitha has been asked to appear next week on March 20, officials said.

The 44-year-old politician was first questioned in this case on March 11 and she spent close to nine hours there, following which, she was asked to depose again on March 16.

As Tejashwi ready for CBI quiz, agency tells HC 'won't arrest him'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI on Thursday assured the Delhi High Court it will not arrest Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav this month, after which he said will appear before the probe agency on March 25 for questioning in connection with a case related to the alleged land-for-jobs scam. Justice Dinesh Kumar Sharma recorded the CBI counsel's statement that the agency was not contemplating to arrest Tejashwi Yadav this month. Following the assurance, senior advocate Maninder Singh, representing Tejashwi Yadav, submitted to the court that the leader will appear on March 25 before the investigating officer at CBI headquarters in Delhi at 10:30 am.

Noting the submissions of both the sides, the high court disposed of the petition in which Tejashwi Yadav has sought quashing of summons issued to him by the CBI for



appearing before it in Delhi. RJD supremo and former Bihar Chief Minister Lalu Prasad Yadav's son Tejashwi in his plea said he has requested the investigating officer through multiple letters to allow him some time as the current Bihar assembly session will conclude on April 5.

Tejashwi Yadav's lawyer said three summons have been issued to him since February and he has requested the agency that till the budget sessions is going on, either he be allowed to appear in the CBI office in Patna or if any information or documents are required from his side then he

shall provide the same through his authorised representative in New Delhi. He said one of the co-accused was called for questioning to CBI's Delhi office but was arrested.

"My apprehension is they will do the same thing to me. Their endeavour is that I come here and they arrest me," the senior lawyer said on behalf of Tejashwi Yadav, who holds four portfolios in the Bihar government. To this, CBI's counsel D P Singh said the House does not assemble on Saturdays and Tejashwi Yadav can appear before the agency on any Saturday this month as per his convenience.

Single kit to test H3N2, Covid-19, RSV OK'd

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) on Thursday approved a novel RT-qPCR test kit by Chennai-based KRIYA Medical technologies that can detect influenza (H1N1, H3N2, Yamagata and Victoria sublineages), Covid-19, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).

The approval of the kit marketed as KRIVIDA Trivus comes amid a significant rise in these viruses. The three pathogens have similar initial symptoms but differ in how the illness progresses, how easily they spread, and how they are treated. Latest official statistics reveal of the samples tested for the week (March 5 - 11), 37 are of H3N2, 10 of Victoria, eight of Covid-19 and one of swine flu.

The KRIVIDA Trivus effectively distinguishes influenza, SARS-CoV-2 and respiratory syncytial virus, within the shortest TAT (turn-around time), — cycle time of 27 minutes, and the time taken for the result to be read can



vary between 50-60 minutes. This can enable an immediate line of treatment, the company said in a statement.

The kit can also be used in all the available RT-PCR equipment.

The ICMR evaluated the kit at National Institute of Virology, Pune, using 225 known positive samples and 85 negative samples. The overall sensitivity of KRIVIDA Trivus is 99.11 per cent and specificity is 100 per cent.

"Over the last several weeks, we have seen an increase in the number of H3N2 cases, as well as a rise in the number

of Covid-19 infections in the country. We need a test that can clearly differentiate between these infections and help doctors create the right treatment plan," said Anu Moturi, CEO and Founder, KRIYA Medical Technologies, in a statement.

"Our product is designed to detect presence or absence of all three pathogens.

The conventional RT-PCR kits which detect just the presence or absence of SARS-CoV-2 should be replaced by KRIVIDA Trivus," added Dr. Shanmuga Priya, Head of Research and Development, at the company.

AYUSH, Rural Dev Min pact to help create jobs for rural youth

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In a move that would ensure jobs to the rural youth and women in the country while at the same time equip the Ayush sector with skilled personnel, Union Ministries of Ayush and Rural Development have come together to ink a pact under the central flagship Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram e e n Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-KGY).

As part of the pact, both the ministries will collaborate in developing skilled personnel for Ayush healthcare and management sectors.

"The training imparted will be benchmarked to global standards to enable growth of skilled human resources in such sectors to serve both national and international demands," Union Ayush Minister Sarbananda Sonowal said at the event.

DDU-KGY is the flagship program of the Ministry of Rural Development.

As a part of the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), DDU-KGY aims to transform rural poor youth into economically independent and globally relevant workforce.

The MoU was signed by Dr Manoj Nesari, Advisor, Ministry of Ayush and Karma Zimpa Bhutia, Joint Secretary, Rural Skills, Ministry of Rural Development in the presence of Sonowal and Union Rural Development and Panchayati Raj minister Giriraj Singh.

"Training will be provided in collaboration with the Ayush ministry in courses -- Panchakarma technician, Panchakarma assistant, Ayurvedic masseur, Kshara Karma technician, cupping therapy assistant on a pilot basis," said the statement here.

STATE INFRASTRUCTURE & INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION OF UTTARAKHAND LTD.
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Managing Director

PUBLIC NOTICE
General public hereby informed that my Clients Sh. Bani Singh S/o Late Sohan Lal R/o Vill. Sikhaida, Palkhua Dehat, Hapur, Palkhua Post Office, Uttar Pradesh-245304 has instituted a case bearing no 42/2023 titled as "Bani Singh Vs. Smt. Pramod" in the Hon'ble Court of Ms. Preeti Moga, Civil Judge (Civ. Div.-2), Hapur Courts, Hapur, U.P. wherein the ownership rights involved in property bearing no "Factory Land & Building at Kharsa 440 Min Khat No. 00149 Village Hawal (Dhoulana Road) Pargana Dasna Tehsil & Distt. Hapur, U.P. (Near L&T training centre) measuring 6537 Sq. Mtr." are challenged and whereupon my Client has an exclusive right / title / interest being purchaser of the above said property with his own funds/earning and whereas the title of the above said property shall be resultant of the final outcome of the above said suit. It is hereby general public is informed that any person dealing with the above said Smt. Pramod or the property as mentioned above in whatsoever manner, shall do so at one's own risk, cost and consequences whereby my client shall not be responsible for the same in any manner whatsoever.

Geeta Sharma (Advocate)
Ch. No-30, Western Wing Ting Hazari Delhi-110054

Indian Navy's long-range aircraft in US to participate in 'Exercise Sea Dragon 23'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Giving a boost to its Defence ties with various countries, Indian Navy's P-8 I long range maritime reconnaissance aircraft arrived at Guam, USA on Tuesday to participate in 'Exercise Sea Dragon 23', the third edition of the coordinated multi-lateral Anti submarine warfare (ASW) exercise for Long Range Maritime reconnaissance aircraft, conducted by the US Navy.

Giving details of the drill, navy officials said here on Thursday the exercise scheduled from March 15-30 would stress on coordinated anti-submarine warfare amongst the participating countries.

The complexity and scope of these exercises has increased steadily over the past years to include advanced ASW drills.

'Exercise Sea Dragon 23' will test the capabilities of participating aircraft in tracking simulated and live underwater targets, whilst also sharing mutual expertise. The exercise would witness representation



by an Indian Navy P8I, along with P8A of the US Navy, P1 from the Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force, CP 140 from the Royal Canadian Air Force and P3C from South Korean. The exercise aims to

achieve high levels of synergy and coordination between the friendly navies, which is based on their shared values and commitment to an open, inclusive Indo-Pacific.

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Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/Traction Distribution, DRM's Office, State Entry Road, New Delhi for & on behalf of President of India, invites open e-tender under single packet system for the under noted work:-

- Name of Work with its location : Design, supply, erection, testing & commissioning of 25 Kv OHE modification work required for Up gradation of passenger facility at Delhi Sadafjung Station (DSJ) in connection with diversion of passenger trains from New Delhi Rly. Station
- Approx. Cost of work : Rs. 41,01,564.86/-
- Earnest Money Deposit : Rs. 82,000/-
- E-Tender Bid Online Submission Period : 31.03.2023
- E-Tender Bid Submission End Date & E-Tender Open Date & Time : 14.04.2023 (15.00 hrs.)
- Fund Allocation : 20536203
- Website particulars where complete details of tender documents can be seen : www.irps.gov.in

No.: 36-TRD-NDS-2022-23 Date: 16.03.2023 814/2023
Serving Customers with a Smile

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to the general public at large that Mr. Pramod Kumar S/o Mr. Daya Ram, R/o Badshapur Sarau, Ghaziabad, UP is the owner of Residential Plot No. 150, area measuring 214 sq. yds., Part of Kharsa No. 540, Situated in Govind Dham Colony within the limits of Village Matara, Pargana Dasna Tehsil & District Ghaziabad, UP. said property by virtue of Sale Deed dated 27.09.2022 executed by Mrs. Usha W/o Mr. Bijender Singh in his favour duly registered as Doc. no. 10759, Book no. 1, Vol no. 15911, Page nos. 295-326, SRO, Ghaziabad. That the following papers have been lost 1. Photocopy of Partition Deed Settlement between (i) Mrs. Kalash Infrastructure (P) Ltd. Noida, s/o Mr. Gopal (ii) Mr. Yogesh Chaudhary s/o Mr. Dinesh Singh & (iv) Mr. Subhash Kumar s/o Mr. Jugendra in respect of area measuring 17223.66 sq. mtrs., Kharsa no. 540, 2. Original Sale Deed dated 30.11.2011 executed by Mr. Yogesh Chaudhary s/o Mr. Dinesh Singh in favour of Mr. Nirodh Chaudhary s/o Mr. Sayaveer Singh in respect of said property, duly registered as Doc No. 9572 Book No. 1, Vol no. 7280 Page nos. 313-340 in SRO I Ghaziabad. Same has been lodged vide LR No. 241865/2023 dated 15.03.2023. Further Active Beta Finance Ltd. (STSL) is intending to create a registered equitable mortgage over the said property. In case if any person/financial institute/Bank/Authority/Board or any other entity have any objection/contingent or vested interest over the said property, they may contact the undersigned within 7 days of this publication. It may be further noted that after lapse of aforesaid period no claim in any manner shall be entertained and same will be considered as waived or abandoned.

Suparna Sinha, Advocate
D/3825/2014
Office: Gadi & Associates, D-148, LGF, Saket, New Delhi-110017, +91-9873663161

25% HIV patients unaware of syndrome, India yet to make self-test kit part of healthcare system: ASI

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Even as various surveys have shown that in India one in four people living with HIV do not know their HIV status, the Government is yet to make HIV self Test (HIVST) as part of the HIV healthcare system as recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

"Almost half of the countries (98) have included HIVST policies, and one-fourth nations globally (52) are routinely implementing it. Self-tests for Covid-19, pregnancy, diabetes, etc have not only proven successful in increasing the uptake of tests but also how it links to care services," said Dr Ishwar Gilada, President of 14th National Conference of AIDS Society of India (ASICON) and AIDS Society of India (ASI).

He said, "there is no reason at all to delay full scale rollout of HIV self-testing in India as well as other countries which



are missing leveraging upon this evidence-based intervention."

Gilda asserted that the self tests become all the more important as the Covid-19 pandemic had negatively impacted the pace of HIV testing. "We need to ensure that 100% of people living with HIV know their status so that they can receive full cascade of HIV care services and stay virally suppressed (undetectable viral load) - which is essential for them to live full healthy lives - as well as to end AIDS as unde-

etectable equals untransmittable," he stressed.

In 2019, the WHO had recommended HIV self-testing as part of HIV care cascade, viewing it as an important approach to address gaps in HIV diagnoses, especially among key populations. A study in India that followed WHO recommendations, found that HIVST is highly acceptable to key populations (KPs) like migrants and transgenders/truck drivers though awareness about it was limited.

In India, as on March 2022, 77% of people living with HIV knew their status, 84% of them were on antiretroviral therapy, and 85% of them had viral suppression. This translates into 55% of total people living with HIV in India being virally suppressed in 2021-22 against the target of getting 86% of them virally suppressed by 2025-26.

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

ICICI Bank
Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No-23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005

Whereas
The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction and Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules, 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	M/s. Rangriti Apparels/ Mr. Sumit Kumar/ Mr. Satish Kumar/ 033205006203	H. No. 123, 2nd Floor (With our Roof Right), H-Block, Vikas Puri, New Delhi-110018./ March 13, 2023	November 10, 2023/ Rs. 2,97,37,808.00/-	Delhi

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/ guarantor(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Date : March 17, 2023
Place : Delhi/NCR
Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

SC reserves verdict on Maha political row

Can't reinstate CM who quit before floor test: Top court



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI
Reserving for judgment after nine days of arguments in Shiv Sena split case, the Supreme Court wondered on Thursday as to how it can reinstate the Uddhav Thackeray Government in Maharashtra when the Chief Minister had put in his papers even before facing the floor test, ordered by the Governor.

as the Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh. Senior lawyer Kapil Sibal, representing the Thackeray bloc, urged a five-judge Constitution Bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud to rescind Governor B S Koshiyari's order for a floor test, a day after the apex court questioned his conduct in calling for a trust vote merely on the ground of differences between Shiv Sena MLAs. The Bench took note of the sub-

missions of senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, also appearing for Uddhav Thackeray, and quipped "So, according to you, we do what? Reinstate you? But you resigned. That's like the court being asked to reinstate a Government which has resigned before the floor test." During the day-long hearing, Singhvi referred to the sequence of events before the Thackeray Government resigned and said, "My resignation is irrelevant. Your lordships are not reinstating anyone but restoring the status quo ante." He referred to the 2016 Nabam Rebia judgment by which the top court had turned the political clock back in Arunachal Pradesh by reinstating Tuki as the Chief Minister of the State and unseated the BJP supported Kalikho Pul Government. Singhvi said, "The resignation of the ex-CM on June 29, 2022 would be irrelevant... as once the illegal act of the Governor is allowed to be implemented, the result of the trust vote was a known and foregone conclusion, and factually there was no need for the ex-CM to subject himself to it." He argued that the crux of the issue raised by Thackeray remains that the direction to hold the trust vote was an "illegal act" because the governor did so by recognising a faction of 34 legislators. The CJ told Singhvi, "No, but status quo ante would have been a logical thing to do provided that you had lost the trust vote on the floor of the house. Because, then clearly you have been ousted from power based on the trust vote, which could be set aside."

Trap to target me politically: Fadnavis in bookie case

Mumbai designer accused of bid to bribe Dy CM's wife arrested

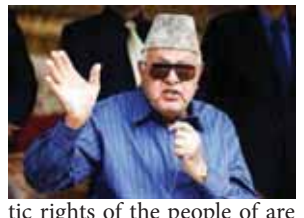


TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI
Maharashtra's Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis sought to come clean on Thursday, as the Opposition questioned him over his wife Amruta's sensational allegation that a bookie's daughter threatened her, conspired against her, and tried to bribe her of Rs 1 crore and "black-mail" her to get the latter's father off the hook in a police case. On a day when the police acted on Amruta's complaint and arrested the accused bookie Anil Jaisinghani's daughter Aniksha Jaisinghani, a "designer", and two others from the

business township of Ulhasnagar in neighbouring Thane district, the leader of the Opposition Ajit Pawar raised the issue in the State Assembly and wanted to know as to how the wife of Fadnavis, who holds the State Home portfolio, "can be targeted like this". Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee president Nana Patole demanded to know "if the state home minister is not safe, how will the people of the state be safe?". In a related development, a visiting police team from Mumbai raided the house of bookie Jaisinghani's house at Ulhasnagar where Aniksha and brother Akshan were present. Following the raid and questioning, the police took Anisha, Akshan and another relative into custody. The bookie Anil Jaisinghani — who had in the past been arrested thrice in betting case and against whom 17 cases (including the one under Prevention of Money Laundering Act) are registered — is currently absconding. Meanwhile, Fadnavis making a statement in the State Assembly on Thursday — narrated the chain of events leading to his Amruta lodging a First Information Report (FIR) against Aniksha who allegedly tried to bribe her with Rs 1 crore to husband's "intervention" get the latter's father from a police case. In the FIR, Amruta had said that Aniksha had allegedly offered to provide the former information on some bookies through which they could earn money and then directly offered Rs 1 crore as bribe to get her (Anishka's) father released in a police case.

Hold Assembly polls in J&K immediately, Opp urges EC

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU
The mainstream Opposition parties of Jammu and Kashmir led by Member Parliament Dr Farooq Abdullah of National Conference (NCP) on Thursday urged the Election Commission of India (ECI) to announce the Assembly elections immediately. The joint delegation of leaders through their memorandum, also signed by the Congress national president Mallikarjun Kharge, CPI (M) General Secretary Sitaram Yechury, NCP chief Sharad Pawar, Prof Manoj Kumar Jha, RJD MP, Ram Gopal Yadav, Samajwadi Party MP, TR Ballu DMK MP and other senior leaders of national parties, requested the election body to immediately notify the election schedule so that the democra-



tic rights of the people of are restored. Before submitting the memorandum the delegation held a session with the opposition leaders at Constitution Club in the National capital where they discussed the current situation of the State, as well as the delay in holding Assembly elections. According to the memorandum, State has been without a legislative assembly and an elected Government for the past five years now. "In defiance of the letter and spirit of the Constitution, an unrepresentative and unaccountable bureaucracy is allowed to run

Government have stated on numerous occasions that the government is ready to facilitate the conduct of assembly elections, with the Election Commission of India making the final call." It stated that the Election Commission of India has a constitutional obligation to hold assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir and any delay or denial of assembly elections would amount to a violation of the people's fundamental and democratic rights as well as a breach of constitutional obligations. "We reiterate, however, that the Assembly election would be the first and most important step towards restoring all constitutional rights guaranteed in the Indian constitution and fulfilling the political aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir," it said.

MAMATA-AKHILESH MEETING TODAY

SP, TMC common goal to oust BJP: Nanda

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA
The Samajwadi Party expects to continue its friendship with Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool Congress well beyond 2024, senior SP leader Kiranmoy Nanda has said. Making the remarks a day ahead of his party chief Akhilesh Yadav's visit to Kolkata where he is likely to meet Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, the SP leader said, "Fighting against the kind of politics that BJP represents, SP and TMC has a common goal to oust the BJP which is our main enemy... this makes us a natural ally... I think both the parties (SP and TMC) will continue to enjoy the friendly relationship even beyond 2024." Yadav is coming to Kolkata on Friday to attend the SP's two-day-long national executive from March 18 where it would discuss policies and strategies for assembly elections



in Rajasthan, Chhatisgarh and Madhya Pradesh later this year and the Lok Sabha poll in 2024. During his two-day stay in Kolkata Yadav is likely to meet Banerjee at her Kalighat residence sometime on Friday evening, sources said. Dwelling on the likely fallout of Banerjee's meeting with Yadav the Nanda — who had also been a minister in the Buddhadeb Bhattacharya Cabinet as the sole representative of SP in the erstwhile Left



Front Government — said "tomorrow's meeting between Mamata ji and Akhilesh ji is going to be significant in more ways than one." After Friday's meeting the SP would be in a position to portend its future course of action vis a vis the TMC, Nanda said. "I hope the meeting will be quite fruitful as both leaders have high regards for each other," he said. As for the SP's allegedly indifferent chemistry with the Congress Party, Nanda said that things would depend upon the future course of national politics and how it evolved. "As for the Congress things will depend upon the situation... but the general policy should be if you want to fight the BJP as a common enemy then you will have to evolve a common strategy and allow the strongest party in a particular region to take them (BJP) on." Incidentally the Bengal Chief Minister — who has often been accused of trying to weaken the Congress in States like Goa, Meghalaya and Tripura — too had been of the view that the strongest party in a region should be allowed to lead the fight against the BJP in that region. Meanwhile, in a parallel development Bengal Opposition Leader Sunendu Adhikari on Friday launched fresh attack on Mamata Banerjee and Trinamool Congress for spoiling dreams of crores of young people of State.

Kerala Assembly sees uproar over attack on UDF MLAs

PTI ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM
The Kerala Assembly on Thursday witnessed uproarious scenes as the Opposition Congress-led UDF demanded immediate action against the marshals and ruling LDF legislators who had allegedly attacked their MLAs in the House complex, following which Speaker A N Shamseer hurriedly adjourned the session for the day. As soon as the Question Hour began, the opposition members started raising slogans demanding justice from the Speaker and sought action over the scuffle that broke out outside his office on Wednesday. Leader of

Opposition in the Assembly V D Satheesan made it clear that the opposition would cooperate with House proceedings only if action is taken against those who allegedly assaulted their members including women MLAs. "We tried to stage a sit-in in front of the Speaker's office yesterday as our right to present issues under Rule 50 had been continuously denied on flimsy grounds. But, the watch-and ward staff deliberately created issues there," he said. Urging the Speaker to protect the opposition's right to raise pressing issues of people under Rule 50 during the Zero Hour, the LoP particularly demanded action against the

deputy chief marshal and two ruling front MLAs who had assaulted the UDF legislators. The Speaker, however, requested both the ruling and opposition fronts to keep themselves away from arguments for the smooth functioning of the House. "The incidents that happened before my chamber yesterday were just unfortunate and unprecedented in the history of the Assembly... It should not have happened," he said. He also told the opposition members that he had not taken any stern action even after they had placed a banner before podium, blocking his view in House, and some of their members had shot visu-

als of protests on their mobile phones in the previous days. Though the Speaker assured a detailed ruling on the scuffle later, the opposition front was not ready to cooperate with the proceedings and trooped to the well of the House with placards and sloganeering. As the noisy scenes continued, Shamseer suspended the Question Hour, took up other businesses in haste and adjourned the House for the day. As the House was adjourned early, the adjournment motion, listed for this morning by UDF legislator K K Rema on the incident, could not be taken up. Later, Satheesan told reporters out-

Navy institutes 2 awards in memory of Gen Bipin Rawat

New Delhi: As a mark of respect to late General Bipin Rawat, the first Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), the Indian Navy has announced two awards in his memory. The Navy made the announcement on the eve of the late General's

65th birth anniversary on Thursday. The first trophy would be Gen Bipin Rawat rolling trophy for the 'Women Agniveer Trainee standing first in overall order of merit. Indian Navy spokesperson Commander Vivek Madhwal said the trophy for the current year will be presented by Navy chief Admiral R Hari Kumar during the 'Passing Out Parade' of the first batch of Navy Agniveers on March 28 at the Navy's premier sailors training centre INS Chilka. PNS

70 people, 80 elephants killed in human-animal clash a year: Min

PTI ■ GUWAHATI
More than 70 people and 80 pachyderms on average die every year in human-elephant conflict in Assam, state Forest Minister Chandra Mohan Patowary said on Thursday. The state government has paid about Rs 8-9 crore in compensation for damages caused by the pachyderms, he said in the assembly. Replying to a question by Congress legislator Rekiuddin Ahmed, Patowary

said increasing human occupation of natural habitats of elephants has forced the animals to move out in search of food, which leads to conflict with man. They also come into conflict with humans during their natural migration process, he said. "As a result, more than 70 people and 80 elephants are killed on an average annually, besides causing property damage," the minister said. The elephant population in the state currently is over 5,700, he

said. The minister said 1,330 elephants have died between 2001 and 2022, with the highest number of deaths reported in 2013 when 107 pachyderms died, followed by 97 in 2016 and 92 in 2014. Among the various reasons for the deaths, 509 died of natural causes, 261 succumbed to unknown reasons, 202 were electrocuted, 102 died in train accidents, 65 due to poisoning, 40 were poached and 18 after being hit by lightning. Sharing information on the river dolphin, which was declared the state water animal in 2008, Patowary said there were 537 river dolphins in the state in 2020, according to the latest available data. Altogether 80 river dolphins have died between 2008 and 2023, with 60 killed after being trapped in fishing nets. The minister also informed the House that the total forest land in the state is 26,836 sq km, or 34.21 per cent of the state's total area, as per Forest Survey of India's 2021 report. A total of 14,373.913 hectares of encroached forest land has been cleared so far, he added.



New Okhla Industrial Development Authority
Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida-201301 (U.P.)
Website : www.noidaauthorityonline.com

E-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tenders are invited from eligible contractors/firm for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened/downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on Noida Authority's official website : www.noidaauthorityonline.com & <https://etender.up.nic.in>. Please ensure to see these websites for any changes/amendments & corrigendum etc.

A) Fresh Tender Work:-

Sl. No.	Job No	Name of work	Tender Amount (in Lacs.)
1.	65/DGM(E&M)/S r. M (E & M - II)/2022-23.	Strengthening and Annual Operation and maintenance of Fountain (04 Nos.) in Sector-44, Noida	36.84

The above tenders can be uploaded by dated 31.03.2023 up to 5.00 PM. Pre-qualification shall be opened/downloaded on dated 03.04.2023 at 11.00 AM.

B) Re-Tender Work:-

Sl. No.	Job No	Name of work	Tender Amount (in Lacs.)
1.	51/DGM(E&M)/S r. M (E & M - II)/2022-23/E.T.	SITC and Operational of Fountain at Sector-19, Noida	32.20
2.	57/DGM(E&M)/S r. M (E & M - II)/2022-23/E.T.	Providing Diesel Generation Set of Staff Quarter Sector-14A, Noida	32.60
3.	75/DGM(E&M)/S r. M (E & M - II)/2022-23/E.T.	Strengthening of Traffic Signal (06 Nos.) in Various Location in Noida.	63.12
4.	76/DGM(E&M)/S r. M (E & M - II)/2022-23/E.T.	Annual Maintenance of Traffic Signals at Various Sectors in Noida (Zone-I)	48.38

The above tenders can be uploaded by dated 23.03.2023 up to 5.00 PM. Pre-qualification shall be opened/downloaded on dated 24.03.2023 at 11.00 AM.

Dy. General Manager(E&M), NOIDA
CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA

OFFICE OF THE RECOVERY OFFICER - I, DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL LUCKNOW (GOVT. OF INDIA, MINISTRY OF FINANCE) DRC No. 123/2021. ICICI BANK LTD. V/S. GUNJAN CHANDNA & ORS.

Proclamation of sale. The under mentioned immovable property will be sold "as is where it is and whatever it is basis and subject to statutory dues, revenue and other encumbrance as law/rule" by online E-Auction through the website <https://disposalhub.com> on 18.04.2023 for recovery of dues, interest and costs as follows -

Particulars	Description of the property /Schedule of the Mortgaged Property	Reserve price	Earnest money 10%
DRC No. 123/2021 RC amount Rs. 35,35,454/- (Rupees Thirty Five Lakhs Thirty Five Thousand Four Hundred Fifty Four only) including interest @ 10% per annum from date of filing OA i.e. 10.06.2019 and Current outstanding as on 18.01.2023 is Rs. 51,98,683.65 (Rupees fifty one lakh ninety eight thousand six hundred eighty three and Paise sixty five) further amount till the loan is fully liquidated and costs.	Immovable Mortgaged Property: Flat No. 1503, 15th Floor, Palm Court Tower A2, Sector 16C, Greater Noida West -201307 UP, super area 1185 sq. feet, which is bounded as under - • South - West - Flat No. 1507 & 1508 (Opposite Side) • South-East - Flat No. 1504 (Left Side) • North-East - Open • North-West - Open Owned by Mr. Rahul Chandna and Mrs. Gunjan Chandna (Judgement Debtor No. 2 and 1)	Rs. 37,05,000/-	Rs. 3,70,500/-
Date and time of e-auction	https://disposalhub.com on 18-04-2023 between 11:00 AM to 12:00 noon with extensions of 5 minutes duration after 12:00, if required.		
Earnest Money Deposit Last date for submission of bid form with EMD	Each bidder shall deposit earnest money (EMD) @ 10% of the Reserve Price in the form of Bank Draft Payable to Recovery Officer, Debts Recovery Tribunal, Lucknow and payable at Lucknow. The said Demand Draft along with duly filled in E-Auction EMD Form (Enclosed) should reach through speed post or by hand Mr. Avinash Srivastava, Disposal Manager, ICICI Bank Ltd., 31/54, Shalimar Tower, IInd Floor, Hazratganj, Lucknow, Mob. No. - 8953652366. on or before 11-04-2023 upto 17:00 hrs positively On receipt of EMD the prospective bidders shall receive their User ID/password through their e-mail from above mentioned address. Non receipt of intimation should not be an excuse for default/non-payment. The contact no. and e-mail IDs of the service provider & CH Bank is as under: A. E-auction agency M/s. Nexxen Solutions Pvt. Ltd. Mr. Shadab, Contact No. 09910453434/ 09310029933 / 0124-4233933, having its registered office at 1st floor Gulla commercial complex, Palam Vihar Road, Near 6 Ten, Opp - C2 Gate, Gurgaon, Haryana- 122006. E-mail: eauctions@nexxen.in		
Bid Multiplier	The amount by which the bidding is to be increased shall be 10000.00 (Rs. Ten thousand only)		
Inspection of Property (s)	The parties interested may inspect the property between 11.00 A.M. to 4.00 P.M. on 04.04.2023 at the site in consultation with hand Mr. Avinash Srivastava, Disposal Manager, ICICI Bank Ltd., 31/54, Shalimar Tower, IInd Floor, Hazratganj, Lucknow, Mob. No. - 8953652366, of the CH Bank, who shall facilitate for inspection. It is in the interest of the parties interested/prospective bidders to have the inspection of property and have desired information before participating in auction.		

UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES BIDS IN PHYSICAL FORM WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED BY THE TRIBUNAL & NO ENQUIRIES WILL BE ENTERTAINED.

All intimations/correspondences between the prospective bidders and service provider will be through e-mails. Date of sending e-mail will be considered as date of intimation. If no intimation reaches, bidders are expected to take efforts to find out status from the service provider. Non receipt of intimation should not be an excuse for default/non-payment. The contact no. and e-mail IDs of the service provider & CH Bank is as under:
A. E-auction agency M/s. Nexxen Solutions Pvt. Ltd. Mr. Shadab, contact no. 09910453434/ 09310029933/0124-4233933. E-mail eauctions@nexxen.in
B. Mr. Avinash Srivastava, Disposal Manager, ICICI Bank Ltd., 31/54, Shalimar Tower, IInd Floor, Hazratganj, Lucknow, Mob No -8953652366.

Recovery Officer - I
Debts Recovery Tribunal, Lucknow



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Perils of wokeism

SVB seems to be more concerned about ethnic, gender and sexual minorities than on banking issues

Woke fads are tolerable when celebrities and publicity-hungry people indulge in virtue-signaling, but when wokeism (or any other fashionable but facts-dodging doctrine) invades something as serious as banking, the consequences can be catastrophic. The recent collapse of Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) is illustrative of this truth. The quake that resulted in the shutting down of the bank also occasioned tsunami waves which hit the Indian shores and rendered the equity investors poorer by lakhs of crores of rupees. Set up in 1983, SVB was America's 16th largest commercial bank at the time of its demise. With operations in Canada, China, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Sweden and the United Kingdom, it served every second VC-backed hi-tech company. Boom in the IT and life sciences sectors helped SVB as well; extremely low interest rates, brought down by the Fed to boost growth, also helped. Then there were also stimulus packages announced by the US Government which ran into trillions of dollars. That, along with the Ukraine war, resulted in high inflation in the US, which in turn forced the Fed to adopt a hawkish stance. Interest rates went up by 450 basis points, or 4.5 per cent, in a year. This meant that the securities bought by SVB during the low interest-rate period lost considerable value, since interest rates have an inverse relationship with bond prices. The SVB bond portfolio's yield declined to an average of 1.79 per cent return last week, which is much less than the 10-year treasury yield of around 3.9 per cent.



It needs to be mentioned here that bad debts, euphemistically called non-performing assets or NPAs, were not SVB's problem. It didn't become kaput because big tech firms went bust or defaulted. It was not a case of what is called the twin-balance-sheet problem in India: big companies taking their bankers down with them. SVB's assets, including loans, actually went up more than three times from 2019-end to March 2022, from \$71 billion to \$220 billion. Last week, S&P Global and Moody's downgraded SVB, triggering the collapse. There was a run on the bank. Signature Bank, a New York-based lender, was the collateral damage. The fall of SVB and Signature Bank is the biggest banking crisis in the US after the 2008 financial meltdown. And all this is not the result of some black swan event, of something unprecedented and unpredictable like Covid-19. The reason is simple: incompetence and flippancy. Those who run banks and corporations know that ups and downs are facts of life; they make provisions for a rainy day. They know that change is the only constant in life, that interest rates go northwards and southwards, that government policies change. They are, or ought to be, nimble-footed and focused on facts. SVB, however, seems to be more concerned about promoting ethnic, gender and sexual minorities, as evident from its board, than on banking issues. The consequences are for all to see.

PICTALK



A red-headed vulture, also known as the Asian king vulture sighted in Dudhwa National Park

Rationale of same sex marriage

These marriages could have far-reaching consequences for the society, especially on the upbringing of the kids born to such couples



PRAFULL GORADIA

The author of this piece has a far-flung extended family in Canada. Years ago, their daughter 'married' a girl of Chinese origin. They lived together happily, and still continue to do so. Although the Chinese partner met a white man at work in her office; they happened to get sexually attracted and produce two children who were brought up in that same-sex home. Subsequently, the same mother met another white man at work and produced another child. So now, the five of them stay together, schooling et al included. Does same-sex marriage, therefore, make any sense?

Marriage is defined as a union whereby men and women are joined in a special kind of social and legal dependence for the purpose of founding and maintaining a family. If it is found that two members of the same gender do not wish to marry in the normal way, but wish to be bound together for life, for succession of property and other rights, there may be another law and another name for the combination. This is necessary so that there is no confusion regarding marriage, which willy-nilly implies founding a family with children.

In Gujarat, there was an institution called "maitree karar" (and it probably still exists), which was innovated by a distinguished lawyer Mahendra Vyas. This was meant to accommodate a second lady, who would not be a wife, but would be entitled to inheritance rights. A number of couples in Gujarat have found "maitree karar" useful; no one has confused it with marriage. The children born of such an arrangement are considered legitimate in society, although their position under the law remains doubtful.

To highlight a fundamental point, same-sex cohabitation has not been envisaged by nature. Most societies looked upon this idea as a virtual crime. Imagine a person using his kidneys to digest food. The expression 'unnatural' is gentle, but it actually implies a crime against nature. Beyond this belief, same-sex combination is nothing short of legitimizing, if not encouraging, homosexuality and further



encouraging childlessness. This means further encouraging the depopulation of a society. Without playing mischief with nature, it is estimated that in the course of a hundred years, there may not be any people left in Japan; its birth rate is not keeping pace with its death rate, although many Japanese live well beyond a hundred. But merely because India has lately experienced an increase in population does not mean that such fecundity is a permanent feature of any civilization.

In this ongoing debate, the Center has opposed any move to accord legal sanction to same sex marriages in India. Decriminalization of Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code does not automatically translate into a fundamental right for same sex couples to marry, the Center's counsel has said to the Delhi High Court in an affidavit. The Center has cited the Supreme Court's earlier ruling, which has granted same sex couples the freedom to lead a dignified private life, but allows them only the "basic right to companionship so long as such companionship is consensual, free from the vice of deceit, force, or coercion, and does not result in the violation of fundamental rights of others".



TO HIGHLIGHT A FUNDAMENTAL POINT, SAME-SEX COHABITATION HAS NOT BEEN ENVISAGED BY NATURE. MOST SOCIETIES LOOKED UPON THIS IDEA AS A VIRTUAL CRIME

Around the world, a large body of growing scientific and sociological evidence points to the fact that an intact, naturally married family is best for the upbringing of children, and indeed indispensable. Only a biological family can ensure that children have access to the time and money of two adults, the mother and father. And only a proper family can provide a system of checks and balances that makes quality parenting possible. The indispensability of the biological connection to the child that both parents can provide increases the likelihood that the parents will identify with the child and be willing to sacrifice for that child. Homosexual couples, on the other hand, can only create a situation where their supposed children will have to miss either a mother or father.

If same-sex civil marriage becomes common, most same-sex couples with children would be lesbian couples. This would mean that we would have yet more children being raised apart from their fathers. Among other things, it has been found that fathers excel in reducing antisocial behavior and delinquency in boys and sexual activity in girls.

Under the pretext of modernization, with new legislation like legalizing homosexuality, let us not jettison the natural joy of producing and raising children, then hoping they would grow up and help take care of their parents in the latter's old age. This has been the pattern for centuries, especially in Asian societies. A visit to Europe would enable one to meet many single parents as well as their children. In the bigger cities on the continent, I have been to, I have been told that only about 20 percent of the people marry conventionally. The rest live together and occasionally produce children. In the event of a separation, children normally go with the mother. Several mothers in Germany have said that their children were irresponsible and non-committal towards society. I do not know how homosexuals feel and therefore will not comment on this. The point is that we need to think a lot more about various aspects of life, collective as well as individual, before legislating on same-sex marriage. We should not imitate the West, since conditions in Asia are very different.

(The writer is a well-known columnist, an author and a former member of the Rajya Sabha. The views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

HINDU RASHTRA

Sir — This is in response to the news report titled "India, a Hindu Rashtra: RSS" (March 15). Even if it is regarded that "Hindu Rashtra" is a "cultural concept"; still needs to be asked, "Who has defined the "cultural history of India"? Or what constitutes the culture of India? Is multi-religious, multicultural India "Of the Hindus, For the Hindus, By the Hindus"? What a mockery of not only the Constitution of India, but also of its secular and heterogeneous identity! RSS holds every democratic right to act as "proud Hindus"; but simply possesses no right to impose their exclusionary beliefs upon others or upon this multi-cultural polity. It is high time the organisation stop treating itself as the "guardian" or "final authority" of diverse India and refrain from uttering such distorted ideas about this nation of all.

Kajal Chatterje | Kolkata

CLIMATE CHANGE

Sir — If this is not climate change, what else is it that for the last 40 days, the cyclone named Freddie is not only active but has also hit the same place twice & thrice. The latest victim of that cyclone is Malawi in Africa. Where in the last two days, so much havoc has been caused that till now 250 people have been killed. It will take time to calculate the loss of property and infrastructure. Freddie first developed as a disturbed area within the monsoon trough on 4 February 2023. While in the Australian Area Cyclone Basin, the storm rapidly intensified and became a Category 4 severe tropical cyclone before moving into the southwest Indian Ocean basin, where it further intensified. Cyclone Freddy is the longest-lived tropical cyclone on record. After Australia, Madagascar, Mozambique and Malawi, it is not known in which coastal country the next attack of this cyclone is going to happen? In spite of witnessing, tolerating and continuously suffering from climate change, we humans are not taking any lesson from it. In the matter

Opposition's plea to ED



All the opposition parties urged the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday to initiate an investigation into the Adani Group over allegations of corrupt practices, including money laundering through shell companies. In a letter emailed to ED Director S. K. Mishra, the parties told the probe agency that "it cannot turn around and abdicate its jurisdiction". Leaders of several opposition parties were stopped by the police at Vijay Chowk as they took out a protest march from Parliament House to hand over a complaint to the Enforcement Directorate on the Adani issue.

In light of the above, the members of the opposition ask the ED director to take immediate action on the above-mentioned issues. The letter further claimed that over the last three months, several crucial pieces of evidence had been made available against the Adani Group in the public domain. "As a result, we are con-

strained to file this official complaint so that the ED is compelled to investigate a relationship that has serious implications not just for our economy but most importantly, our democracy," opposition leaders said.

The opposition leaders also alleged that this case involves serious and far-reaching charges of corporate fraud, political corruption, stock-price manipulation through fraudulent means, and the misuse/monopolization of public resources to benefit a single corporate group. The opposition leaders alleged that the Adani Group companies are accused of having established a network of offshore shell companies and offshore funds controlled by parties related to the Adani Group for the purposes of 'artificially inflating stock valuations and giving a distorted picture with regard to the group companies' financial health'. In the letter, the opposition leaders also mentioned the recovery of drugs from Mundra port in September 2021, alleging there has been absolutely no serious investigation into the company charged with running the port, on whose watch this grave crime occurred. Speaking of the debt that the Adani Group has taken from various public sector banks, the opposition leaders alleged that there is "a clear pattern of corruption, cronyism, and habitual law-breaking".

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

of carbon emissions, only lip service is going on. Nothing concrete is happening. Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshedpur

SATISH KAUSHIK'S DEATH

Sir — In connection with the veteran actor Satish Kaushik's death, the owner of the farmhouse, Vikas Balu's second wife, has leveled serious accusations against her husband, claiming his role in the death of the actor. She has also complained to the police about the matter, following which the Delhi Police has initiated an inquiry into the allegations. Delhi Police, in a statement, revealed that in actor Satish Kaushik's death case, an

inquiry has been initiated into allegations of foul play leveled by a woman. An inspector-level officer from the South West district has been asked to probe the entire matter. The woman will be called by the police to record her statement. High level company during party time leads to disastrous consequences, so we cannot rule out a mysterious murder. The actor was active on Holi Day, but death occurred the next day, all of a sudden.

CKR Nathan | Ghaziabad

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Digital marketing: Shaping the India business landscape

The importance of digital marketing was never as pronounced as now, the video edge has made it even more exciting, writes Anjali Brij

Digital marketing has revolutionized the way businesses operate in India. With over 700 million internet users, India is one of the largest digital markets in the world, making it an exciting space for businesses to expand their reach and attract new customers. In 2023, digital marketing is continuing to shape the Indian business landscape in exciting ways. The Indian digital marketing market reached a value of nearly USD 4.5 billion in 2022. The market is further expected to grow at a CAGR of 32.1% between 2023 and 2028 to reach a value of around USD 24.1 billion by 2028.



This has opened up new opportunities for entrepreneurs and small business owners to reach customers they would never have been able to access before. "My experience in the industry has taught me that in today's digitally-driven fast-paced world, it is essential to stay on top of emerging trends and technologies to remain competitive. We can put our knowledge and expertise to bring innovation to the table which will not only be good for the company, industry but the country as a whole" says Ashish Satish Naik, senior business director iCubesWire. He was earlier director of businesses at OLX India and has also worked with Times Internet and Network 18.

Another way digital marketing is shaping Indian businesses is through the use of data-driven marketing strategies. With the rise of big data and analytics, businesses can now gain insights into customer behaviour, preferences, and demographics. This allows them to create targeted campaigns that are tailored to specific audiences. Apart from this video has emerged as a powerful tool of digital marketing. "It is economical, effective and can be employed across the platforms. I think now the revenue growth would come from providing clients with innovative and effective digital solutions. The video is an emerging vertical which holds a lot of promise in years to come and we are all geared up for it" Says, Ankit Sethi, business director, iCubesWire, the company that was founded in 2010, is amongst the leading Digital Marketing Agencies in India. It has been consistently investing in R&D and business expansion. Moreover, with an aim to amplify the growth of digital startups it has earmarked \$3 million into its 'Digital Innovation Fund'.

One of the most exciting developments in digital marketing in India is the rise of social commerce. With over 400 million social media users in the country, social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook have become key channels for businesses to sell products directly to consumers. Social commerce has the potential to transform the way businesses operate in India. The growth of e-commerce in India is another area where digital marketing is playing a significant role. Digital marketing provides a range of tools and techniques that businesses can use to differentiate themselves and drive sales. This includes everything from search engine optimization (SEO) to social media advertising to influencer marketing. With its ability to democratise access to markets, provide data-driven insights, enable social commerce, support e-commerce growth, and expand global reach, digital marketing is helping businesses of all sizes and types to succeed in today's digital age.

(The writer is a business consultant)



FIRST COLUMN

INDIA-US STRATEGIC COMMERCIAL DIALOGUE

More coordination on multilateral forums would be good for both



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

India and the US resumed their bilateral commercial dialogue after a gap of three years. In their fifth ministerial-level meeting, US commerce secretary Gina Raimondo and Indian commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal focused on enhanced economic cooperation, in a new world order, facing supply chain issues in all crucial industries.

India and the US launched the strategic dialogue in 2009, which has been the primary conduit for increasing cooperation, on matters related to regional security, economic cooperation, defence and trade-related issues. In 2015, Indian PM Narendra Modi and US President Barack Obama, upgraded the US-India strategic dialogue to strategic and commercial dialogue, bringing in the focus of greater and more coordinated economic cooperation between the world's largest democracies, with a sharp focus on security and prosperity for the Indo Pacific region. Even as the defence partnership between India and the US is reaching new peaks every year, having been accelerated in the last two years, due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, these two nations continue to be engaged on security and economic issues on multilateral and plurilateral forums. After years of being non-committal, the COVID-induced impact on the economy and China's military aggression to unilaterally alter land borders with India led India to come back with renewed energy into the grouping of nations, QUAD, whose members have shared interests in an open, free, and rules-based Indo Pacific region. Meanwhile, the Biden administration also put its weight behind the QUAD grouping, elevating it to leadership-level meetings, from the level of the external affairs minister. Australia, facing a bunch of trade issues and economic bullying by China, and Japan, facing similar security threats, provide the sealing bonds to make QUAD an important forum.



It is against this background that the US India commercial dialogue took place in New Delhi last week, coming close to the QUAD foreign ministers' meeting and IPEF special negotiating round held in Delhi earlier. Both partners initiated a mid-year review mechanism for mutually agreed objectives as part of the commercial dialogue. The priority item identified, was, building supply chain resilience. According to the joint statement released after the dialogue, "These efforts will identify opportunities for growth and challenges to address in order to ensure that the U.S. and Indian semiconductor industries develop stronger connections, complementary ecosystems, and a more diverse supply chain for semiconductors."

A separate semiconductor subcommittee was created, comprising senior representatives from the US Department of Commerce and Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry from the Indian side. This sub-committee has been tasked with holding its first round of deliberations ahead of the proposed mid-year review. Aligning the outcomes from the commercial dialogue, with the just-born, cooperation framework on critical and emerging technologies, iCET (US India Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies), both nations agreed to set up India's US strategic trade dialogue. This dialogue between the US Department of Commerce and the Ministry of External Affairs, India, aims to "address export controls, explore ways of enhancing high technology commerce, and facilitate technology transfer."

The other priority sectors identified during the commercial dialogue included climate change and clean technology cooperation, an area that has attracted the attention of both the Indian Prime Minister and the US President. Inclusive digital growth and post-pandemic economic recovery for small and medium-sized enterprises were the other items to be prioritised by the commerce ministers of India and the US. These democracies realise the increased need for engagement and cooperation with trusted partners on security, technology, and trade. A coordinated approach across several multilateral forums could also be expected.

(The author is a foreign affairs commentator)

China's rising clout in the Middle East

Thaw in the Iran-Saudi Arabia relations is welcome as it would lessen the tension in the region but it would have been better had India mediated it



SIMRAN SODHI



The news that Iran and Saudi Arabia have agreed to resume their diplomatic ties sent many into a tizzy. The sense of disbelief was of course expected, as Iran and Saudi Arabia have been fighting in the Middle East region for greater influence for many years now. Their proxy wars, most notably in Yemen, have resulted in a tragic humanitarian crisis. Add to it the role of the United States, which has sanctioned and threatened Iran for years but has maintained excellent ties with the Saudis.

China, of course, is the one making the headlines here, as it brokered the talks in Beijing, and the pictures emerging from there show China holding centre stage with Iran and Saudi officials on either side. There can hardly be a debate that this is China's big moment. They have stepped into a region that until now was the domain of the US, and it has proved that China can help usher in peace where others have failed. While the US has publicly welcomed this deal, there can be little doubt about how disquieting this would be for them. The US has been trying to convince the Saudis to establish ties with Israel. Iran has been a perennial headache for them, and this turn of events doesn't suit them at all.

While reactions have poured in from various corners of the world, some cautious and some a little more euphoric, India is yet to react. The silence then tells another story. On the surface, there is renewed apprehen-



AFTER SEVEN BITTER YEARS OF HOSTILITY, THIS TRUCE COULD BRING PEACE AND STABILITY TO THE REGION AND ALSO LEND STABILITY TO THE ENERGY MARKET

sion that China has yet again stolen a march over others. Given the present situation where India-China ties are stressed and strained, this is hardly a happy scenario for India. But what also needs to be learned from this entire episode is how India seems to have missed a great opportunity to show its diplomatic finesse on the global stage. India is one of the few countries in the world today that enjoys excellent relations with both Iran and Saudi Arabia. For that matter, in the last decade or so, India's ties with the Gulf nations have seen an upward trend, and that in itself has been a commendable achievement. So with some foresight, India could have brokered this deal or maybe attempted to do so.

The problem of late in India's foreign policy, however, seems to be India's obsession with Quad diplomacy. While there is no doubt that Quad has emerged as one of the successful groupings of late and is today at the forefront as far as the Indo-Pacific is concerned, it has also resulted in a neglect of other regions and areas of diplomacy. For India, which is fast emerging as an influential voice on the world scene, this China-brokered deal will be a matter of great concern. First, it gives China a certain global positioning

as a doer. Two, it gives China space and an advantage in the Middle East region, and lastly, it helps China nudge out the US in the Middle East and claim that space for itself.

India has been developing a close relationship with the US for many years, and today this is one of the strongest partnerships India shares globally. But India must not let its entire vision of foreign affairs get dominated by an American perspective. Talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia have been going on for a while now, and they also held talks in Iraq and Oman. For India, this was an opportunity worth exploiting. But the recent attention on Ukraine and the single-minded focus on maybe playing a mediator between Russia and Ukraine overshadowed other regions and concerns. Even in the Ukraine conflict, it is China that is increasingly being seen as an important player, and the growing Russia-China nexus is a clear indication of that.

The success of this deal will become clear in the coming weeks. In the next two months, the two countries are expected to take several steps towards normalizing their ties. After seven bitter years of hostility, this truce could bring peace and stability to the region and also lend stability to the energy market.

As is expected, each actor in this deal went in with their own interests. The Saudis under Mohammed bin Salman (MBS) want to renew their focus on economic development.

It is also an indication of the Saudis' desire to move away from the overwhelming US influence and form their own foreign policy. Iran, whose economy has been struggling under US sanctions and regional isolation, sees in this an opportunity to seek Chinese investment and reduce its US footprint in the region. For China, this is its 'aha' moment. They have displaced the US from the region and stepped in to fill a vacuum while the US is busy in Ukraine and the Indo-Pacific.

For India, this is a missed opportunity and also a bit of a wake-up call. India needs to build on its own strengths and historical ties and not get pulled into an essentially Western world view. The Ukraine conflict might be the US and Europe's top priority, but with India enjoying excellent relations with both Ukraine and Russia, it needs to be looking at the rest of the world too.

(The authors is a Delhi-based journalist and foreign affairs analyst. The views expressed are personal)

Remain healthy and positive after menopause

Naturopathy and yoga can help you remain healthy after menopause, writes Babina NM

Menopause hits women when their bodies experience a change toward the cessation of menstruation and ovulation. It denotes a period when important hormonal changes are taking place in the body. Menopause might affect one woman differently than another. This natural biological process usually begins between ages 45-55 and can bring with it a host of uncomfortable symptoms such as irregular periods, vaginal dryness, decreased fertility, hot flashes, increased abdominal fat, loss of breast fullness, sleep disturbances, thinning hair, irritability, mood swings, and poor focus and memory.

Contrary to Western culture, Eastern traditions see menopause as a period of

increased wisdom and introspection. It is a normal stage of life that should be cherished and gratefully accepted. While menopause can be challenging for women on an emotional and physical level, they can manage the symptoms and create the right balance in their lives by embracing naturopathy and yoga.

In comparison to conventional prescription medications, naturopathy and natural remedies take a completely different approach. Instead of only providing short-term relief, naturopathy addresses the cause of the symptoms and lessens their intensity. The equilibrium between the sex hormones progesterone, oestrogen, and testosterone is restored via natural treatment. One also avoids the addition-



al risk of adverse medication and antidepressant side effects.

Changing one's lifestyle, which includes eating healthy food, doing yoga, getting rid of environmental contaminants, getting enough sleep, and managing chronic stress, is a crucial part of naturopathic treatment. All of these modifications also significantly and

proactively lower the risk of various illnesses, particularly those affecting the heart and bones. Here are a few things that can help:

Well-balanced Diet: Natural medicine uses food as a treatment. A well-balanced diet rich in whole foods and nutritional supplements can significantly reduce the cellular

effects of hormone imbalance. Your daily diet must contain the proper ratio of protein, complex carbohydrates, and healthy fats. At every meal, consume a lot of fruits and vegetables with green leaves. Keep an eye on how much sugar and carbohydrates are in your diet. Examine your exposure to toxins and chemicals like toluene, which is present in nail polish, and phthalates, which are present in plastic, as these can disrupt the enzymes necessary for the creation of oestrogen.

Many working women who lead busy lives find it challenging to consistently consume a balanced diet that includes all the important nutrients, which causes them to deplete their bodies of the B vitamin folate. The biologi-

cally active version of folate, Metafolin, can be used as a dietary supplement. The body can metabolise and absorb vitamin B more easily.

Herbal Remedies: A range of herbal remedies is suggested by naturopathy to help stabilise the volatility in hormone levels. Naturopathy uses the extraordinary power of plants and herbal medicines to control and prevent menopausal and perimenopausal symptoms since it believes that food is medicine. Herbs and plants can support your hormones, slow them down, or adjust them to meet the specific needs of your body because they share many molecular characteristics with human hormones. Some of the herbal medicines recommended by naturopathy include

Lady's Mantle, Black cohosh, Wild yam, Shatavari and Ashwagandha, Chasteberry, Ginseng, Red Clover and John's Wort

Yoga: The age-old science of yoga can be used to ease the transition into menopause due to its capacity to lower stress, encourage a healthy lifestyle, foster a happy outlook, and regulate and balance the endocrine and hormonal systems. A study on the relationship between stress-induced cortisol response and fat distribution in women found that, in addition to the decline in oestrogen levels, stress is another factor that raises cortisol levels, which is linked to an increase in abdominal fat. Fortunately, numerous studies have shown that yoga can improve the quality of life for

menopausal women by lowering stress and alleviating symptoms like hot flashes, weight gain, and insomnia. Some yoga asanas that can be helpful:

Adho Mukha Svanasana: The pose enhances alertness by increasing oxygen circulation in the brain.

Baddha Konasana: It is a stress-relieving, cooling asana that can be beneficial if you're experiencing hot flashes.

Naukasana: It is a core workout that works on the front and side belly muscles and helps to tone them.

Ananda Balasana: This asana is good for relaxation and also stretches the muscles in your lower back and bottom.

(The writer is Chief Medical Officer, Jindal Naturecure Institute, Bangalore)

US releases video of Russian jet dumping fuel on its drone

AP ■ KYIV

The Pentagon on Thursday released footage of what it said was a Russian aircraft pouring fuel on a U.S. Air Force surveillance drone and clipping the drone's propeller in international airspace over the Black Sea. The 42-second video shows a Russian Su-27 approaching the back of the MQ-9 drone and beginning to release fuel as it passes, the Pentagon said. Dumping the fuel appeared to be aimed at blinding its optical instruments and driving it out of the area. On a second approach, either the same jet or another Russian fighter that had been shadowing the MQ-9 struck the drone's propeller, damaging one blade, according to the U.S. military. The U.S. military said it ditched the MQ-9 Reaper in the sea after what it described as the Russian fighter making an unsafe intercept of the unmanned aerial vehicle.

The video excerpt released by the Pentagon does not show events before or after the apparent fuel-dumping confrontation. Russia said its warplanes

didn't strike the drone and claimed the unmanned aerial vehicle went down after making a sharp maneuver over the sea.

Asked Thursday if Russia would try to recover the drone debris, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters the decision was up to the military. "If they consider it necessary to do so in the Black Sea for the benefit of our interests and our security, they will do it," he said. Nikolai Patrushev, the secretary of Russia's Security Council, said Wednesday that Moscow would try to recover the drone fragments.

U.S. officials have expressed confidence that nothing of military value would remain from the drone even if Russia managed to retrieve the wreckage. While intercept attempts are not uncommon, the incident amid the war in Ukraine has raised concerns it could bring the United States and Russia closer to a direct conflict. Moscow has repeatedly voiced concern about U.S. intelligence flights close to the Crimean Peninsula, which Russia seized from Ukraine in 2014 and illegally annexed.

The top U.S. and Russian



defense and military leaders spoke Wednesday about the encounter over the Black Sea, underscoring its seriousness. The calls between U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. Mark Milley, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu and Gen. Valery Gerasimov, chief of Russian General Staff, were the first since October.

The Russian Defense Ministry said in its report of the call with Austin that Shoigu accused the U.S. of provoking the incident by ignoring flight restrictions the Kremlin had imposed because of its military operations in Ukraine. The Kremlin argues that by providing weapons to Ukraine and

sharing intelligence information with Kyiv, the U.S. and its allies have effectively become engaged in the war, which is now in its 13th month.

Russia also blamed "the intensification of intelligence activities against the interests of the Russian Federation," the Defense Ministry said. Such U.S. actions "are fraught with escalation of the situation in the Black Sea area," the ministry said, warning that Moscow "will respond in kind to all provocations." Sergei Aksenov, the Moscow-appointed head of Crimea, said he thinks Russia should act even more forcefully to put an end to the U.S. surveillance flights in the area. "I personally think that our response in such situations should be tougher," Aksenov said on his messaging app channel. "We realise that attempted attacks on Crimea have been launched with Americans' guidance. In fact, they are a warring party." The MQ-9, which has a 66-foot (20-metre) wingspan, includes a ground control station and satellite equipment. It is capable of carrying munitions, but Air Force Brig. Gen.

Israelis step up protests after Netanyahu rejects compromise

AP ■ TEL AVIV

Israeli protesters pressed ahead on Thursday with demonstrations against a contentious government plan to overhaul the judiciary, pushing back against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu after he rejected a compromise proposal that was meant to defuse the crisis.

Despite the effort by the country's figurehead president, Isaac Herzog, to seek a way out of the stalemate, the sides appeared to be further digging in. Netanyahu and his allies were set to barrel forward with their original plan despite weeks of mass protests and widespread opposition from across Israeli society and beyond as well as warnings by Herzog that Israel was headed toward an "abyss."

Protesters were kicking off a third day of disruption since the crisis began, with thousands of protesters blocking roads across the country, including briefly the main highway of the seaside metropolis of Tel Aviv. Protesters in Jerusalem drew a large red and pink streak throughout the city on streets leading to the country's Supreme Court and a small flotilla of boats was blocking the shipping lane off the coast of the north-

Netanyahu in Germany amid tensions at home, Iran worries

Berlin (AP): Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is meeting Germany's leaders Thursday on an abbreviated visit that comes in the shadow of tensions over his government's planned overhaul of Israel's judicial system and worries about Iran's nuclear programme.

Netanyahu has meetings scheduled with Chancellor Olaf Scholz and Germany's largely ceremonial president,

Frank-Walter Steinmeier, on his one-day trip to Berlin.

The prime minister's office has said he cut the length of his visit in half because of the security situation in Israel.

He delayed his departure from Israel on Wednesday as the country's figurehead president prepared to unveil a compromise proposal for overhauling the legal system, an approach that Netanyahu rejected.

ern city of Haifa.

"The elected government is doing a legislative blitz that aims to give absolute power to the executive. And absolute power to the executive with no checks and balances is simply a dictatorship. And this is what we're fighting against," said Shlomit Tassa, a protester in Tel Aviv, waving an Israeli flag.

Last week, Netanyahu had to be airlifted to the country's main international airport for an overseas state visit after protesters blocked the road leading there, holding signs that read "don't come back!"

Tens of thousands have been attending weekly protests across the country each Saturday night. The overhaul, advanced by a prime minister who is on trial for corruption and Israel's most right-wing government ever, has plunged Israel into one of its worst domestic crises.

It has sparked an uproar from top legal officials, business leaders who warn against the economic effects of the plan, and from within the country's military, its most trusted institution, where reservists have pledged not to serve under what they see as impending regime change.

Russian former mayor handed 14-day sentence

Moscow (AP): A former mayor of Russia's fourth-largest city was ordered to spend 14 days in custody on Thursday pending his trial on charges that could entail a longer prison term, part of authorities' efforts to muzzle dissent. Yevgeny Roizman, a sharp critic of the Kremlin, is one of the most visible and charismatic opposition figures in Russia.

He enjoyed broad popularity while serving as mayor of Yekaterinburg, a city of 1.5 million people in the Ural Mountains. Last year, Roizman, 60, who was the mayor from 2013 to 2018, faced accusations of discrediting the Russian military and was barred from attending public events, using the internet, telephone or mail and communicating with anyone other than his lawyers and close family pending his trial.

Police arrested Roizman on Thursday on charges of reposting material containing a reference to the organisation led by jailed Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny that was banned by authorities. Roizman rejected the accusations, telling a court in Yekaterinburg during a hearing after his detention that he wasn't even registered on that social network.

OFFICE OF THE PROJECT MANAGER, CONSTRUCTION UNIT, UTTARAKHAND PEYJAL NIGAM
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Letter No.: 703/NVIDA/134 Date: 15-03-2023

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- Estimated Cost:** - Rs. 53.78 Lakh (Without GST)
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- Date and Time of availability of Bid documents in the portal:-** 16-03-2023 (10.00hrs)
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PROJECT MANAGER

Indonesia acquits 2 cops for soccer crush

Surabaya (AP): An Indonesian court on Thursday acquitted two police officials charged with negligence leading to the deaths of 135 people in October when police fired tear gas inside a stadium, setting off a panicked run for the exits.

A third official was sentenced to 18 months in prison. The disaster in Kanjuruhan stadium in East Java's Malang city was among the world's worst sporting tragedies.

Some 43 children were among the deaths and about 580 spectators were injured. A panel

of three judges at Surabaya District Court, which was under heavy police guard, absolved police officers Pranoto and Achmadi of charges because they found no direct causal link between the defendants' actions and the deadly crowd crush. The two were released Thursday. Presiding judge Abu Achmad Sidqi Amsya said the court found that defendant Wahyu Setyo Pranoto, the Malang police head of operations, never ordered the use of tear gas at the match and knew that international soccer governing body

FIFA had advised against its use in stadiums. Amsya said the tear gas ordered by defendant Bambang Sidik Achmadi, head of crowd control, was aimed at the centre of the pitch and dissipated in the wind without hitting any spectators. "The defendant has not been proven legally and convincingly guilty," Amsya said.

He ordered that the two defendants be released from detention immediately after the decision. However, the tear gas fired into the stands under Hasdarmawan's instruction

caused a rush to six exits where many fans were crushed or suffocated and died, Amsya said.

Like many Indonesians, Hasdarmawan uses only one name. The court convicted Hasdarmawan, who was head of East Java police's mobile brigade unit at the time of the tragedy, of criminal negligence causing death and bodily harm, concluding a two-month trial in which about 140 witnesses testified. Hasdarmawan was sentenced to 18 months — far below the three years sought by prosecutors.

Poland detains 9 Russian spies

Warsaw (AP): Polish authorities said Thursday that the nation's security services have detained members of a Russian espionage ring, alleging that they were preparing acts of sabotage in Poland and had been monitoring railroad routes used for the transport of weapons into Ukraine.

Interior Minister Mariusz Kaminski said the Internal Security Agency had arrested nine people suspected of spying for Russia in the case. Three were detained on Wednesday.

He said at a news conference in Warsaw that the suspects were preparing "sabotage actions aimed at paralysing the supply of equipment, weapons and aid to Ukraine."

He said the security agents also seized cameras, electronic equipment and GPS transmitters, which the suspects planned to place on transports carrying aid to Ukraine.

Defense Minister Mariusz Blaszczak suggested that the group had entered from neighboring Belarus, a Russian ally that borders NATO member Poland.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir
Directorate of Health Services Jammu
NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

e-NIT No. DSHJ/Medical Gases/2022-23/01 Dated: 13/03/2023

On behalf of the President of India, e-bids are invited from OEM firms or their Authorized Dealers for the work mentioned below:-

S.No.	Description of work.	Earnest Money Deposit	Cost of tender document	Time of completion/Delivery	Eligibility Criteria of Bidder
1.	Rate Contract for Refilling of Empty A, B & D Type Cylinders of Oxygen as well as Nitrous Oxide (Medical Gases)	Rs.0.50 Lacs	Rs. 2000/-	15 Days from the date of issuance of Job Order.	Manufacturer or Authorized Refiller/Distributor may quote the bid.

- The NIT consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, terms & conditions, Bill of Materials can be seen/downloaded from the J&K Govt. website www.jktenders.gov.in.
- The pre-bid meeting will be held in the office chamber of Member Secretary Provisional Level Purchase Committee (CAO Director Health, Jammu) on 20/03/2023 at 11:00 AM.
- The bids shall be deposited in electronic format on the J&K Govt. website www.jktenders.gov.in.
- The hard copies of original documents along with EMD in the shape of CDR/PDR/BG should be submitted in the office of Member Secretary Provisional Level Purchase Committee (CAO Director Health, Jammu).
- The complete bidding process will be online.
- The technical bids shall be opened online in the Office of Member Secretary Provisional Level Purchase Committee (CAO Director Health, Jammu).
- In case of holidays/office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids, bids will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.
- The Financial bids of qualifying participants / tenderers shall be opened online in the Office of Member Secretary Provisional Level Purchase Committee (CAO Director Health, Jammu).
- Technical Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document through NEFT and credited to DDO Ac/No: 009701010002026 in the name of Chief Accounts Officer, Directorate Health Services, Jammu.
- The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 180 days from the date of opening of financial bids.
- The earnest money shall be forfeited, if:-
a) Any bidder/tenderer withdraws his bid/tender during the period of bid validity or makes any Modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid.
- In case of delay, 1% penalty shall be imposed per week.

Sd/-
(Dr.Saleem-Ur-Retman)
Director Health Services, Jammu.
Convener Purchase Committee
Directorate of Health Services, Jammu.

No:DIP/J-16688/22
Dated 15.03.2023

Senior Iranian official visits UAE on heels of Saudi deal

Dubai (AP): A senior Iranian official visited the United Arab Emirates on Thursday, just days after Tehran agreed to restore diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia in a Chinese-brokered deal that raised hopes of a broader rapprochement across Middle East.

Ali Shamkhani, the head of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, said his visit was a "meaningful beginning for the two countries to enter a new stage of political, economic and security relations," Iran's state-run IRNA news agency reported.

It said he was accompanied by the head of Iran's central bank and other senior officials.

He met with the president of the UAE, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, and other senior officials to discuss "opportunities for enhancing cooperation between the two countries," the UAE's official WAM news agency reported. Sunni Arab rulers in the Persian Gulf have viewed Iran with suspicion since the 1979 Islamic Revolution toppled a US-allied monarch in Tehran. Relations have worsened since the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq, as Shiite-majority Iran has spread its influence across the region and supported powerful armed proxies in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen and the Palestinian territories. In the Chinese-brokered agree-

ment, which built on talks held in Iraq in recent years, Saudi Arabia and Iran agreed to restore diplomatic ties which were severed in 2016, when Saudi Arabia executed a prominent Shiite cleric and Iranian protesters stormed its embassy in Tehran. The deal raised hopes for a lasting peace in Yemen, where Saudi Arabia has been at war with the Iran-aligned Houthi militia since 2015. That conflict has killed tens of thousands of people and pushed the Arab world's poorest country to the brink of famine.

The UAE, a close Saudi ally that also intervened in Yemen, returned its ambassador to Iran last August for the first time since 2016, as did the Gulf Arab nation of Kuwait. Dubai, a major international business hub in the UAE, is home to a large Iranian community. Suspicions still run deep, however, especially following a series of attacks on oil tankers off the coast of the UAE, as well as Saudi oil facilities, in 2019, which were widely blamed on Iran. Last year, a drone strike launched by the Iran-backed Houthi hit Abu Dhabi, hurting the UAE's reputation as a safe harbor in the volatile Middle East.

The UAE was the first of four Arab nations to normalise relations with Israel in the so-called Abraham Accords in 2020.

Wickremesinghe assures transparency, fair debt restructuring to its creditors

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe has assured the country's official bilateral creditors of transparency, equal treatment of all creditors, and equitable burden-sharing of all restructured debt in resolving the country's economic crisis.

President Wickremesinghe in an open letter addressed to the country's creditors, including India, China and Japan, said that necessary safeguards will be put in place to ensure all-around equitable burden sharing and comparability of treatment. "We also understand and acknowledge that we must ensure that appropriate safeguards are in place to ensure equitable burden sharing and comparability of treatment. To alleviate any legitimate concern on the issue, there are commitments that we can make to those of you willing to take action ahead of others," Wickremesinghe said in the letter dated March 14.

"The first of these commitments, probably the most

important one, is transparency. We commit to communicating transparently with all of you on any debt treatment terms that are agreed upon with any creditor or group of creditors, before being formalised. In the same vein, we commit to reporting regularly on our indebtedness, ensuring no financial liabilities incurred by the country are undisclosed," the letter read.

The Executive Board of the IMF is scheduled to meet on March 20 to consider Sri Lanka's request for a bailout, and if approved, the first tranche of the facility would be released shortly.

Sri Lanka would need to restore debt sustainability over a 10-year period as per the agreement with the IMF, and debt treatment remains the most critical aspect of that exercise. The IMF in September last year approved Sri Lanka a 2.9 billion dollar bailout package over 4 years pending its ability to restructure its debt with creditors — both bilateral and sovereign bondholders. Wickremesinghe

had earlier said that all of IMF's pre-conditions for the bailout have been fulfilled and the prescribed reforms like raising personal taxes and utility bills were a must for implementation. The IMF bailout process made slow progress due to the need to restructure Sri Lanka's nearly 50 billion dollar external debt. By the end of June 2022, Sri Lanka owed nearly USD 40 billion to bilateral, multilateral, and commercial loans, according to the figures released by the Treasury.

Chinese loans amounted to 20 per cent of the total debt owed and 43 per cent of the bilateral loans. The cash-strapped country in April declared its first-ever debt default in its history as the economic crisis since independence from Britain in 1948 triggered by forex shortages sparked public protests.

Months-long street protests led to the ouster of the then-president Gotabaya Rajapaksa in mid-July. Rajapaksa had started the IMF negotiations after refusing to tap the global lender for support.

SFR LIMITED
Regd. Office: The Galleria, DLF Mayur Vihar, Unit No. 236 & 237, 2nd Floor, Mayur Vihar Phase, Noida Link Road, Mayur Vihar Phase I Extn, Delhi-110091
Corporate Office: Block-C, Sector 45, Gurugram, Haryana-122 003
Tel. No (Regd office) : (+91-11) 49482870; Fax : (+91-11) 49482900
E-mail: cs@srf.com, Website: www.srf.com; CIN: L18101DL1970PLCO05197

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that Share Certificates pertaining to shares of the Company detailed below have been reported lost and request(s) for issue of duplicate Certificates in lieu thereof have been received by the Company. Shareholder(s)/Claimant(s) shall also be entitled to Bonus Shares in the ratio of (4:1) on these shares from Investor Education & Protection Fund Authority :-

Sl. No.	Folio No.	Name of the Share Holder / Legal Heir (Claimant)	Cert.No.	Dist.No. (from)	Dist.No. (to)	Lost Shares	
1	B 0002757	BHARAT MANSUKHLAL SHAH	90003257	2691226	2691250	25	
			90003257	2852175	2852185	11	
			90003257	4165131	4165144	14	
			90003258	4165145	4165148	4	
2	G 0001423	Madan Lal Moondhra (CLAIMANT)	41553	2475801	2475825	25	
			61290	3293358	3293368	11	
			118840	5074731	5074748	18	
3	S 0006196	Madan Lal Moondhra (CLAIMANT)	41550	2475726	2475750	25	
			80204	3619448	3619458	11	
			145852	5834741	5834758	18	
4	SFR0032851	SHAMMI KAPOOR (CLAIMANT)	1133540	295541574	295541973	400	
			HAR NARAIN KAPOOR (DECEASED SHAREHOLDER)				
			BELA KAPOOR (DECEASED SHAREHOLDER)				
			NIRAJ BACHKHETI (CLAIMANT)	373961	17108045	17108064	20
			NARAIN DATT BACHKHETI (DECEASED SHAREHOLDER)	522961	25127837	25127856	20
5	SFR0036797	SHAILJA BACHKHETI (DECEASED SHAREHOLDER)	90077284	9271490	9271529	40	

Any person having any claim / objection in respect of the above requests should lodge such claim / objection with the company at its Corporate Office within 15 days of the publication of this notice, failing which the company will consider to give effect to the above requests.

Public is hereby cautioned against dealing with the aforesaid share certificates.

For SFR LIMITED
Sd/-
RAJAT LAKHANPAL
Sr. VP (Corporate Compliance) & Company Secretary

Place: Gurugram
Date: 16-03-2023

Bobby Caldwell dies at age 71

New Jersey (AP): Bobby Caldwell, a soulful R&B singer and songwriter who had a major hit in 1978 with "What You Won't Do for Love" and a voice and musical style adored by generations of his fellow artists, has died, his wife said Wednesday.

Mary Caldwell told The Associated Press that he died in her arms at their home in Great Meadows, New Jersey, on Tuesday, after a long illness. He was 71. The smooth soul jam "What You Won't Do for Love" went to No. 9 on the Billboard Hot 100 and No. 6 on what was then called the Hot Selling Soul Singles chart. It became a long-term standard and career-defining hit for Caldwell, who also wrote the song.

The song was covered by artists, including Boyz II Men and Michael Bolton, and was sampled by Tupac Shakur on his posthumously released song "Do For Love." Other Caldwell songs were sampled by hip-hop artists including The Notorious B.I.G., Common, Lil Nas X and Chance the Rapper. Stories abound, many of them shared on social media after his death, of listeners being surprised to learn that Caldwell was white and not Black. Caldwell debated only in silhouette on the self-titled debut solo album on which "What You Won't Do for Love" appears. "Caldwell was the closing chapter in a generation in which record execs wanted to hide faces on album covers so perhaps maybe their artist could have a chance," Questlove said on Instagram.

Indian-American appointed USAF Asst Secy

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The Senate has confirmed Indian-American flight test engineer Ravi Chaudhary as the Assistant Secretary of Defence for the US Air Force, one of the top civilian leadership positions in the Pentagon. The Senate on Wednesday voted 65-29 to confirm the former Air Force officer's nomination with more than a dozen votes being cast by the opposition Republican Party.

Chaudhary previously served as a Senior Executive at the US Department of Transportation where he was Director of Advanced Programs and Innovation, Office of Commercial Space at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). He was responsible for the execution of advanced development and research programmes in support of the FAA's commercial space transportation mission. While at the transportation department, he also served as the executive director of the regions and centre operations,



where he looked over the integration and support of aviation operations in nine regions.

During his service in the US Air Force from 1993 to 2015, Chaudhary completed a variety of operational, engineering, and senior staff assignments. As a C-17 pilot, he conducted global flight operations, including numerous combat missions in Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as ground deployment as the director of the personnel recovery centre at multi-

national corps in Iraq. As a flight test engineer, he was responsible for flight certification of military avionics and hardware for the force's modernisation programmes supporting flight safety.

Earlier in his career, he supported space launch operations for the global positioning system (GPS) and led third-stage and flight safety activities to ensure the full operational capability of the first GPS constellation. As a systems engi-

neer, Chaudhary supported NASA's International Space Station protection activities to ensure the safety of NASA astronauts. He also served as a member of the President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders during the Obama administration. In this role, he advised the president on executive branch efforts to improve veterans' support for the AAPI community.

Chaudhary holds a Doctorate specialising in executive leadership and Innovation from the Georgetown University D.L.S. Program, an M.S. in Industrial Engineering from St. Mary's University as a NASA graduate fellow, an M.A. in Operational Arts and Military Science from Air University, and a B.S. in Aeronautical Engineering from the US Air Force Academy.

He is a graduate of the Federal Executive Institute and holds Department of Defence acquisition certifications in programme management, test and evaluation, and systems engineering.

State wanted to kill me in police custody: Imran Khan

PTI ■ LAHORE/ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's ousted prime minister Imran Khan on Thursday alleged that the state wanted to "torture and kill him in police custody," a day after Punjab police failed to arrest him in a corruption case.



Shipping containers placed outside Imran's house

Lahore (PTI): As normally returned to Lahore's Zaman Park after scuffles between security personnel and workers of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, former premier Imran Khan's supporters placed shipping containers outside the entrance of his house and equipped themselves with clubs and slings to protect

him from any further police action. Although the Rangers and police have halted the operation to arrest the 70-year-old former cricketer-turned-politician till Friday at the Lahore High Court's direction, a heavy contingent of police remained stationed on all roads leading to his residence.

Similar plan was afoot in my case. They launched the police-rangers operation to arrest him so that they could torture and kill me," he said. "My party workers also were wary of this naked fact. That is why they put up strong resistance to thwart my arrest plan," he said. Khan also disclosed how close some Rangers and police personnel were to arresting him. "During the police operation, some Rangers and police personnel managed to enter my house and (were) close to arrest me but God invoked a soft corner in them for me and they left without arresting me," Khan claimed. Khan said the government and its handlers do not want elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) provinces in 90 days and if this does not happen he will launch a struggle for the restoration of the Constitution in the country. The Election Commission of Pakistan has announced

custody. "Similar plan was afoot in my case. They launched the police-rangers operation to arrest him so that they could torture and kill me," he said. "My party workers also were wary of this naked fact. That is why they put up strong resistance to thwart my arrest plan," he said. Khan also disclosed how close some Rangers and police personnel were to arresting him. "During the police operation, some Rangers and police personnel managed to enter my house and (were) close to arrest me but God invoked a soft corner in them for me and they left without arresting me," Khan claimed. Khan said the government and its handlers do not want elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) provinces in 90 days and if this does not happen he will launch a struggle for the restoration of the Constitution in the country. The Election Commission of Pakistan has announced

April 30 and May 28 respectively for polls in Punjab and KPK after their assemblies were dissolved in January.

JUDGE DISMISSES IMRAN'S PLEA

A district court judge in Pakistan on Thursday dismissed former prime minister Imran Khan's plea to suspend non-bailable arrest warrants against him in the Toshakhana case. Additional District and Sessions Judge Zafar Iqbal on February 28 issued non-bailable arrest orders against 70-year-old Khan in the Toshakhana case about the concealment of the proceeds from the sale of state gifts. The judge directed the capital city police to bring him to court by March 18.

Khan has been in the crosshairs for buying gifts, including an expensive Graff wristwatch he had received as the premier at a discounted price from the state deposito-

ry called Toshakhana and selling them for profit.

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

Announcing the judgment, Judge Iqbal Thursday said the warrants could not be suspended on the basis of an undertaking that Khan would appear on a certain date.

He ordered the police to arrest Khan and present him on March 18 as per law. "Law is the same for everyone," the judge wrote in his judgment after three back-to-back hearings.

In another case, District and Sessions Judge Faizan Haider Gilani suspended arrest warrants against Khan in the case about threatening a female judge until March 20.

'Nuke programme safe, foolproof'

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday asserted that Pakistan's nuclear programme was "safe," "completely foolproof" and "jealously guarded" by the state, amid concerns by the international community about its safety in the debt-ridden country.

In a statement, the Prime Minister's Office noted that press releases, queries and various assertions regarding Pakistan's nuclear and missile programme were being circulated on social and print media. It said that even a "traditional routine visit" of International Atomic Energy Agency

Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi was portrayed in a "negative spotlight". "It is emphasised that Pakistan's nuclear and missile programme is a national asset, which is jealously guarded by the state. The complete programme is totally secure, foolproof and under no stress or pressure whatsoever," the statement said.

"It continues to fully serve the purpose for which this capability was developed," it added. Finance Minister Ishaq Dar earlier assured Parliament that the government would not make any compromise on the country's nuclear and missile programme despite tough

economic conditions and hurdles to secure a loan from the IMF. Pakistan's economy is in dire straits. The country is awaiting a much-needed USD 1.1 billion tranche of funding from the Washington-based International Monetary Fund (IMF). In October, US President Joe Biden raised doubts over Pakistan's nuclear arsenal, calling it "one of the most dangerous nations in the world" as it has "nuclear weapons without cohesion".

Biden's remarks, made at a Democratic Party congressional campaign committee reception, were rejected by Prime Minister Sharif as "factually incorrect and misleading".

No compromise on Pakistan's nuke, missile programme: FM

Islamabad: Pakistan's Finance Minister Ishaq Dar on Thursday assured Parliament that the government would not make any compromise on the country's nuclear and missile programme despite tough economic conditions and hurdles to secure a loan from the IMF. Pakistan's economy is in dire straits. The country is awaiting a much-needed USD 1.1 billion tranche of funding from the Washington-based International Monetary Fund (IMF).

"Let me assure you that nobody is going to compromise anything on the nuclear or the missile program of Pakistan — no way," Dar said while responding to a query by Senator Raza Rabbani.

He said that no compromise would be made on Pakistan's nuclear capability adding that the agreement signed with the IMF would be uploaded on the website of his ministry.

While addressing the House, Senator Raza Rabbani talked about the reasons for the delay in the agreement with the IMF, including its impact on the country's security.

"The question arises [...] if the delay is being made because of some sort of pressure to be exerted on Pakistan's nuclear programme," Rabbani said. PTI

Poland plans to grant Ukraine's request for fighter jets

PTI ■ WARSAW

Poland's president said Thursday that his country plans to give Ukraine around a dozen MiG-29 fighter jets, which would make it the first NATO member to fulfill the Ukrainian government's increasingly urgent requests for warplanes. President Andrzej Duda said Poland would hand over four of the Soviet-made warplanes "within the next few days" and that the rest needed servicing and would be supplied later.

The Polish word he used to describe their number can mean between 11 and 19. "They are in the last years of their functioning but they are in good working condition," Duda said of the aircraft. Duda did not say whether other countries would be making the same

move, although Slovakia has said it would send its disused MiGs to Ukraine. On Wednesday, Polish government spokesman Piotr Mueller said some other countries with MiGs also had pledged them to Kyiv, but he did not name them.

While Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has pleaded for Western supporters to share fighter jets, NATO allies have expressed hesitancy. Before Russia's full-scale invasion, Ukraine had several dozen MiG-29s it inherited in the collapse of the Soviet Union, but it's unclear how many of them remain in service after more than a year of fighting. The debate over whether to provide non-NATO country Ukraine with fighter jets was initiated over a year ago, but NATO has been wary of making the war

escalate. Duda made the announcement during a joint news conference in Warsaw with the visiting Czech president, Petr Pavel. Duda said Poland's air force would replace the planes it gives to Ukraine with South Korea-made FA-50 fighters and American-made F-35s. Poland was also the first NATO nation to hand German-made Leopard 2 tanks to Ukraine, last month.

Poland is a crucial ally in the Ukraine crisis. It is hosting thousands of American troops and is taking in more people fleeing the war in Ukraine than any other nation, in the midst of the largest European refugee crisis in decades. It has suffered invasions and occupations by Russia for centuries and still fears Russia despite being a member of NATO.

Macron uses special power to enact pension bill without vote

Paris (AP): France's government on Thursday invoked a special constitutional power to enact a contentious pension bill without a vote in parliament, in a risky move by President Emmanuel Macron. The decision was made just a few minutes before the vote was scheduled because the government had no guarantee that the bill would command a majority at the National Assembly, France's lower house of parliament.



major strikes and protests across the country since January. The move is expected

to trigger a quick no-confidence motion in Macron's government.

Yellen to tell Cong US banking system 'remains sound'

Washington (AP): A week after the second-largest bank collapse in U.S. history, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen is set to tell the Senate Finance Committee that the nation's banking system "remains sound" and Americans "can feel confident" about their deposits.

observers have criticised as a bank "bailout". "The government took decisive and forceful actions to strengthen public confidence" in the U.S. banking system, Yellen says in prepared testimony released before her appearance.

a week, Silicon Valley Bank, based in Santa Clara, California, failed after depositors rushed to withdraw money amid anxiety over the bank's health. Then, regulators convened over the weekend and announced that New York-based Signature Bank also failed.

Yellen will be the first Biden administration official to face lawmakers over the decision to protect uninsured money at two failed regional banks, a move that some

members of the Committee that our banking system remains sound, and that Americans can feel confident that their deposits will be there when they need them." In less than

They ensured all depositors, including those holding uninsured funds exceeding \$250,000, were protected by federal deposit insurance.

UN-backed inquiry accuses Russia of war crimes in Ukraine

AP ■ GENEVA

Russian attacks against civilians in Ukraine, including systematic torture and killing in occupied regions, amount to war crimes and possibly crimes against humanity, according to a report from a U.N.-backed inquiry released Thursday. The sweeping human rights report, released a year to the day after a Russian airstrike on a theatre in Mariupol killed hundreds sheltering inside, marked a highly unusual condemnation of a member of the U.N. Security Council.

Among potential crimes against humanity, the report cited repeated attacks targeting Ukrainian infrastructure since the fall that left hundreds of thousands without heat and electricity during the coldest months, as well as the "systematic and widespread" use of torture across multiple regions under Russian occupation.

A commission of inquiry is the most powerful tool used by the U.N.-backed Human Rights Council to scrutinise abuses and violations around the world.

The investigation released Thursday was set up during an urgent debate shortly after Russia's invasion

last year. The commission's three members are independent human rights experts, and its staff gets support and funding from the council and the U.N. human rights office.

The report's authors noted a "small number" of apparent violations by Ukrainian forces, including one they said was under criminal investigation by Ukrainian authorities, but reserved the vast majority of their report for allegations against Russia. Russia did not respond to the inquiry's appeals for information.

Most of the abuses highlighted by the investigation were already well known, but the findings come with the imprimatur of the international community: The experts work under a mandate overwhelmingly created last year by the Human Rights Council, which brings together the governments of 47 U.N. member countries.

Ultimately, the report may add to efforts to boost accountability for crimes committed in the war — whether by the International Criminal Court or by some individual countries that have taken on the right to apply "universal jurisdiction" to prosecute atrocities, wherever they may take place.

'US spreading disinformation'

Beijing (AP): China accused the United States on Thursday of spreading disinformation and suppressing TikTok following reports that the Biden administration was calling for its Chinese owners to sell their stakes in the popular video-sharing app. The U.S. has yet to present evidence that TikTok threatens its national security and was using the excuse of data security to abuse its power to suppress foreign companies, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin told reporters at a daily briefing.

Journal that said the Committee on Foreign Investment in the U.S., part of the Treasury Department, was threatening a U.S. ban on the app unless its owners, Beijing-based ByteDance Ltd., divested. "If protecting national security is the objective, divestment doesn't solve the problem: A change in ownership would not impose any new restrictions on data flows or access," TikTok spokesperson Maureen Shanahan said. Shanahan said TikTok was already answering concerns through "transparent, U.S.-based protection of U.S. user data and systems, with robust third-party monitoring, vetting, and verification." The Journal report cited anonymous "people familiar with the matter." The Treasury Department and the White House's National Security Council declined to comment.

UK bans TikTok on govt devices over security concerns

PTI ■ LONDON

TikTok will be banned from UK government phones amid security concerns around the Chinese-owned social media video app, Cabinet Office minister Oliver Dowden announced in Parliament on Thursday. The ban brings the UK in line with the US, Canada and the European Union (EU) and also India — which banned TikTok entirely from the country, even as the company strongly denies sharing user data with the Chinese government.

following advice from our cyber security experts," he said.

The ban follows a security review which looked at the potential vulnerability of government data from social media apps on devices and the risks around how sensitive information could be accessed and used by some platforms.

Beyond a "precautionary" ban on TikTok, the Cabinet Office said that given the potentially sensitive nature of information which is stored on government devices, government policy on the management of third-party applications will be strengthened. Currently, there is limited use of TikTok within the government and a limited need for staff to use the app on work devices, the ministry said.

TikTok requires users to give permission for the app to access data stored on the device, which is then collected and stored by the company. Allowing such permissions gives the company access to a range of data on the device,

including contacts, user content, and geolocation data. The UK government said, along with international partners, it is concerned about the way in which this data may be used.

The ban on government devices will apply to government corporate devices within all government departments. The ban does not extend to personal devices for government employees, ministers or the general public. However, they have been asked to be aware of each social media platform's data policies when considering downloading and using them.

The Cabinet Office said specific exemptions for the use of TikTok on government devices are being put in place where required for work purposes. Exemptions will only be granted by security teams on a case-by-case basis, with ministerial clearance as appropriate, and with security mitigations put in place.

PUBLIC NOTICE: Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of our client that Mrs. Kamlesh is the owner of Plot No. 12/A, area measuring 51 Sq. Yds., out of Khosra No. 23, situated in the Colony Known as West Sagar Pur, in the area of Village Nasirpur, New Delhi, vide GPA, ATS & Will dated 05.01.2001. All persons are hereby informed that above mentioned owner has decided to sell the said property to a person who intends to obtain loan from our client against the said property, if any body has any objection/upon the ownership of above owner of the said floor, its sale/mortgage/litigation, and any other objections, kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.

Public Notice: This is to inform General Public that Mrs. Saindee Kaur & Dr. Jasbir Singh acquired the First Floor Front Side Flat 'sala' flat of built-up property bearing No. K/12 A, total area measuring 350 sq. yards, situated Green Park Extn. Delhi vide Sale Deed dated 11.11.2011. (Doc. No. 5739). Unfortunately, Mrs. Saindee Kaur died and leaving behind her legal heirs namely (1) Mr. Gagandeep Singh, (2) Mr. Karnal Jyoti and (3) Mr. Ritu Singh intending to sell above said property to Mr. Rohit Jain & Mrs. Aneta Jain and further Mr. Rohit Jain & Mrs. Aneta Jain intend to create a credit mortgage in respect of the said property in favour of our client LIC FIRST Bank Limited. Further, if any person, body, individual, institution having any claim, title, interest and/or objection in respect of or against or relating to or touching upon said property or part of the property by way of sale, exchange, lease, lien, mortgage, charge, encumbrance, gift, trust, easement, maintenance, inheritance, testamentary disposition or otherwise or having in their custody any title, documents pertaining to the said property shall communicate the same to the undersigned at below mentioned address within 10 days from the publication of this notice with documentary evidence in support thereof, failing which all the claims, of such person shall be considered to have been waived and abandoned. Any objections raised after the completion of the 10 days shall not be binding upon the said property or our client & in case anyone has any objection, the same may be raised within 10 days of the publication to Mr. Munesh Dhevanir Mr. Suchir Jain (Advocates), Law Ventures North, Unit no 907, 9th Floor, GCATL Tower, (E-60), Near Jai Subhash Place, Delhi-110034 or contact at 9869071721/9228836111.

PUBLIC NOTICE: My client Mr. Siddharth Bansal and Mrs. Gunjan Bansal intends to purchase Freehold Residential Entire First Floor of Builtup Property No. 161-D/101 Old No. 7709 and New No. 6678), measuring 156 Sq. Yards, situated in Ward No. 12, Kamla Nagar, Northern City Extn., Scheme No. 1, Subz/Manodi, Delhi-110007 from Mr. Subhash Chand Gupta and Mr. Anil Kumar Gupta (present owner) and original Sale Deed dated 08.10.1958 in favour of Shri Damodar Dass and Smt. Rukmani Devi have been lost/misplaced, and my clients is mortgaging the same to LIC HFL. If anybody including Bank, Financial Institutions, persons, relative has any claim, right, interest whatsoever in the said property shall inform within 15 days to the undersigned with documentary evidence. In the event of no response to this notice, then our client shall presume that title of the said property is unencumbered and clear.

Karnal Singh, Advocate, K-8, Basement, Jungpura Extension New Delhi Contact No. 9811163363 & 9953683363

PUBLIC NOTICE: This is to inform public in general that Kotak Mahindra bank Ltd has organized an auction in below mention respect of Vehicles. VEHICLES FOR SALE

- 1) SML_SMLSUPER REG. NO. UP14HT7119 - YOM 2019 MINIMUM RESERVE PRICE 577836
- 2) SML_SMLSARTAJP REG. NO. UP14HT7909 - YOM 2019 MINIMUM RESERVE PRICE 485000

UNDER HYPOTHECATION WITH M/S KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK IS UNDER SALE IN ITS "AS WHERE IS CONDITION" INTERESTED PARTIES CAN GIVE THEIR QUOTATIONS (ONLINE/OFFLINE) WITHIN 15 DAYS FROM THIS PAPER PUBLICATION I.E. ON OR BEFORE 01.04.2023 (PLEASE NOTE THAT CLOSING AUCTION DATE WOULD NOT BE A WEEKLY OFF / HOLIDAY).

PARADIP PORT AUTHORITY PARADIP-754142, ODISHA (INDIA) (An autonomous body under Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways, Govt. of India) No. AD/RSC-I-21/16/2019(PT-II)/597 Dated, the 15th March, 2023 Advertisement Applications are invited from Indian Nationals for engagement of 01 (one) Tug-in-Charge (Engine) on contractual basis in Paradip Port Authority. For further details, visit our website: https://paradipport.gov.in/career.aspx

verka THE PUNJAB STATE COOPERATIVE MILK PRODUCERS FEDERATION LTD. SCO 153-155, SECTOR 34-A, CHANDIGARH-160022. EPABX No. 0172-5041812, 66 Notice Inviting e Tender RFP for Selection of system integrator (SI) for rollout of SAP S/4 HANA in Verka Jalandhar Dairy by Verka Head Office, Chandigarh. Incharge (Purchase)

PUNJAB REMOTE SENSING CENTRE (PRSC) PAU CAMPUS, LUDHIANA - 141004 NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER PRSC, Ludhiana intends to invite bids through E-Tendering under Two Bid System i.e. Technical Bid and Financial Bid for supply and installation of server, storage and networking systems on e-Procurement portal of the Government of Punjab i.e. https://eproc.punjab.gov.in

JAMMU AND KASHMIR POLICE DISTRICT POLICE HEADQUARTERS JAMMU 0191-2561578 (O), 0191-254780 (F), email-sspjammu@jkpolice.gov.in

LOOK OUT NOTICE Learned Munsiff/ Judicial Magistrate 1st Class Jammu passed order dated 28.02.2023, directed that one Deepak Rathore S/O Pardeep Rathore R/O L 980, Sangam Vihar, New Delhi, involved in case FIR No. 03/2023 U/S 307/353/457/380/511 IPC of P/S Nagrota, remanded in Police custody up to 13.3.2023 as there is one from his family to take care of him or furnish bail, but the accused shall remain in Psychiatrist Diseases Hospital for further treatment under the supervision of IC District Jail, Amphalla. The Hon'ble Court further directed to continue disseminating information on social media platforms.

Pursuant to the directions of Hon'ble Court, photograph of above named person is being circulated to all the States / Union Territories Chiefs of Police for further circulation / wide publicity in their respective States / UTs. Besides, aforesaid look-out notice with photograph of the person is being published for wide publicity, for the information of Police establishments/public in general. If anybody is having any clue related to the whereabouts / family members/relatives of above named person, kindly inform / communicate the same on the below mentioned contact/Telephone numbers. Description Roll :- Name: Deepak Rathore S/O: Pardeep Rathore Address: L 980, Sangam Vihar, New Delhi Age: 25 Years Complexion: Wheatish Height: 5 feet Build: Normal Face: Oval Dress: Brown hood, Gray Paint

Economy likely to log 6% growth next fiscal: Crisil

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The economy is likely to log in 6 per cent growth next fiscal, in line with consensus estimates, driven by an increased capex by the private sector, rating agency Crisil said on Thursday. The private sector capex is expected to deliver double-digit revenue growth for the second year on the trot, it added.

The economy is projected to grow 7 per cent this fiscal, according to the official forecast, but many private forecasters have a lower outlook, ranging from 6.5 to 6.9 per cent.

The agency also sees the economy averaging 6.8 per cent growth over the next five fiscals.

Crisil further said it expects the corporate revenue to log in double-digit rise again next fiscal.

In its annual growth forecast, Crisil Chief Economist DK Joshi said a complex interplay of geopolitical events, stubbornly high inflation and sharp rate hikes to counter that have turned the global environment gloomier.

On the domestic front, the peak impact of the rate hikes — 250 basis points since May 2022, which has pushed interest rates above pre-Covid levels, will play out more in the next fiscal.

Retail inflation is expected to average 5 per cent in FY24 from 6.8 per cent in FY23, owing to the high-base effect and some softening of crude and commodity prices, Joshi said.

However, a good rabi harvest would help cool food inflation, provided the monsoons are normal while the slowing economy should moderate core inflation.

However, he said risks to inflation are tilted upward, given the ongoing heat wave and the World Meteorological Organization's prediction that an El Nino warming is likely over the next couple of months.

Amish Mehta, the agency's managing director, said the medium-term growth prospects are healthier, and over the next five fiscals, the GDP is expected to grow at 6.8 per cent annually, "with the next fiscal delivering 6



per cent, driven by capital and productivity increases".

He also pointed to the increasing sustainability footprint of capex.

At present, nearly 9 per cent of infrastructure and industrial capex is green, he said, expecting this number to rise to 15 per cent.

On the external sector, Joshi said the country's external vulnerability is expected to decline with a narrower current account deficit (CAD) and modest short-term external debt.

While CAD is expected to narrow to 2.4 per cent of GDP or USD

8 billion next fiscal from an estimated 3 per cent of USD 100 billion this fiscal, its financing may face challenges as foreign portfolio flows remain volatile and external commercial borrowings are less attractive.

In the corporate sector, Joshi said, revenue growth is expected to touch double-digits in fiscal 2024 despite a global slowdown and interest rate hikes. This will be driven by a 10-12 per cent growth in revenue for non-commodity sectors despite the cooling prices.

In fiscal 2023, India Inc booked 16-18 per cent year-on-year growth in revenues after the commodity supercycle boost in fiscal 2022. Revenue increase this fiscal has been led by an estimated 18-20 per cent rise in non-commodity segments, with commodities recording an anaemic 5-7 per cent growth coming off a high base, he said.

Similarly, the operating margin is expected to improve by 120-170 bps in fiscal 2024, aided by benign commodity prices, the full effect of price hikes taken in fiscal 2023 and volume growth.

Next fiscal will also see a more broad-based margin expansion with margins improving across sectors as cooling commodity prices reduce costs, while revenue gets a lift from volume expansion, Joshi noted.

On the industrial capex side, Suresh Krishnamurthy, a senior director with the agency, said infrastructure spending will drive overall capex by 12-16 per cent next fiscal.

Overall industrial capex is seen rising to nearly Rs 5.7 lakh crore on average between fiscals 2023 and 2027, compared to Rs 3.7 lakh crore in the past five fiscals. Nearly half of this incremental capex is being driven by the production-linked incentive scheme and new-age sectors, said Krishnamurthy.

According to Hetal Gandhi, a director with the agency, merchandise exports are expected to grow at a tepid 2-4 per cent next fiscal and 5-7 per cent growth this fiscal, with the PLI scheme supporting demand owing to global supply chain diversification and friend-shoring strategies.

Sensex snaps 5-day losing streak on value-buying

Nifty nears 17k level

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The domestic equity market on Thursday snapped the five-day losing streak as the benchmark Sensex recouped its lost ground and closed 78 points higher on fag-end value buying in banking, energy and financial stocks.



A positive opening in the European market helped investor sentiments even as clouds hovered over the health of the global banking system amid Credit Suisse woes and bank failures in the US.

Halting its five-day losing streak, the 30-share BSE benchmark rose 78.94 points or 0.14 per cent to close at 57,634.84 points, with 17 of its constituents ending in the green. During the session, it touched a high of 57,887.46 points and a low of 57,158.69 points.

The 50-share NSE Nifty advanced 13.45 points or 0.08 per cent to settle at 16,985.60 points. As many as Nifty 32 stocks closed in the green.

Equity benchmarks bounced back to end in the positive territory after trading lower for the most part of the volatile session.

"With the turbulence at Credit Suisse and ahead of the ECB policy announcement, investors' attention has switched

to developments in the European market. Consistently unfavourable signs in global markets are encouraging investors to move to safe havens such as the dollar and gold, while FIIs are withdrawing funds from the domestic market in response to the Indian rupee's depreciation.

"Though the SVB & Credit Suisse crisis has eased, the market lacks the confidence to hold positions on contagion fears," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

Nestle India was the biggest gainer in the Sensex pack, rising 2.54 per cent, followed by Asian Paints, HUL, Titan, Sun Pharma, SBI, PowerGrid and Bajaj Finserv.

On the other hand, Tata Steel, IndusInd Bank, Bharti Airtel, Infosys, Wipro, HCL Tech and Reliance were among the losers, slipping up to 3.31 per cent. Among sectoral indices, power gained 1.13 per cent, oil&gas rose

'India can navigate well financial market turmoil'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Kotak Mahindra Bank CEO Uday Kotak said on Thursday that with macro factors turning positive, India can "navigate well" the current turmoil in the global financial market and stand out.

India, he said, will benefit from low oil prices in the international market and the country's current account deficit (CAD) is expected to decline to below 2 per cent in 2023-24.

The global markets have roiled over the last week after two banks in the United States

went belly up.

"Even as the global turmoil continues in financial markets, the macro factors are turning better for India. The current account deficit looks below 2.5 per cent in FY 23 and going below 2 per cent in FY 24. Lower oil helps. If we walk our talk and navigate well, India can stand out in this turbulence," Kotak tweeted.

Signature Bank, New York, which lent mostly to the crypto industry, was shut down by the regulators on Sunday after there was a run on their deposits.

Besides, the failure of Silicon



Financial Protection and Innovation, which later appointed the FDIC as its receiver.

SVB was deeply entrenched in the tech startup ecosystem and the default bank for many high-flying startups. Its abrupt fall marked one of the largest bank failures since the 2008 global financial crisis. The bank failed after clients — many of them venture capital firms and VC-backed companies that the bank had cultivated over time — began pulling out their deposits, creating a run on the bank.

Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran on

Thursday said global uncertainty has been rising after the recent developments in the United States and governments, businesses and individuals should keep 'margins of safety' in fiscal, corporate and savings account planning.

He said the global growth estimates of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) given in January look outdated, and countries will have to watch what the developments in the US over the last week would do to confidence, bank lending growth and the subsequent chain effects.

Petrol, diesel sales drop after Feb fireworks

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's fuel demand fell in the first half of March after posting a record growth in the previous month, preliminary industry data showed on Thursday.

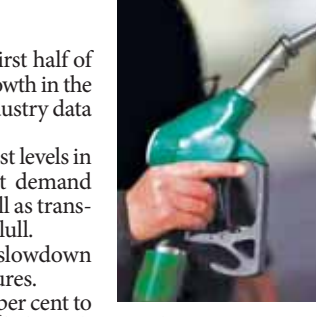
Fuel sales soared to the highest levels in February on the back of robust demand from the agriculture sector as well as transport picking up after the winter lull.

March saw the seasonal slowdown kicking in with rise in temperatures.

Petrol sales decreased by 1.4 per cent to 1.22 million tonnes in the first half of March when compared with the same period of last year. Sales fell 0.5 per cent month-on-month, the data showed.

Diesel, the most consumed fuel in the country, saw demand slip 10.2 per cent to 3.18 million tonnes during March 1 to 15 when compared with 3.54 million tonnes sales in the same period a year back. Month-on-month the demand was down 4.6 per cent.

During the first half of February, petrol consumption had jumped by almost 18 per cent year-on-year while diesel sales were up



nearly 25 per cent.

The consumption of petrol in the first half of March was 16.4 per cent more than Covid-marred first half of March 2021 and almost 23 per cent more than in the same period of 2020.

Diesel consumption was up 11.5 per cent over the first half of March 2021 and 20.2 per cent higher than 2020.

While cold conditions slowed truck movements in January, the onset of spring had revived demand in February.

With the continued opening of the aviation sector, India's overall passenger traf-

fic at airports inched closer to pre-Covid levels.

Reflecting the trend, jet fuel (ATF) demand jumped 19.2 per cent to 2,94,900 tonnes during the first half of March when compared to the same period last year. It was 35.6 per cent higher than March 2021 but 8.2 per cent lower than March 2020. Month-on-month sales were almost flat.

Sources said while domestic air travel is back to pre-Covid levels, international traffic is lagging because of continued restrictions in some countries.

India's recovery has continued to gain momentum in recent months but has been accompanied by elevated inflation. This slowed the momentum a bit. The country's oil demand had been rising steadily since the easing of COVID-19 restrictions.

Cooking gas LPG sales fell 9.7 per cent year-on-year to 1.18 million tonnes in March 1-15. LPG consumption was 7.1 per cent higher than in March 2021 and 3.6 per cent more than in March 2020.

Month-on-month, the demand dropped 15.10 when compared to 1.39 million tonnes of LPG consum



Rupee falls 12 paise to 82.77 against \$

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee fell for the fourth day in a row on Thursday and depreciated by 12 paise to 82.77 (provisional) against the US dollar amid mixed global equity market cues and foreign fund outflows.

Traders said positive sentiments in the domestic equity market and weaker dollar, however, resisted the decline in the Indian currency.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the domestic unit opened lower at 82.77 against the dollar. It traded between 82.60 and 82.80 levels, and settled at 82.77 (provisional) against the American currency, registering a fall of 12 paise against its previous close.

This is the fourth consecutive day of decline in the rupee. On Wednesday, the rupee settled at 82.65 against the US dollar.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, fell 0.25 per cent to 104.38.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude futures rose 1.23 per cent to USD 74.60 per barrel.

On the domestic equity market front, the 30-share BSE Sensex rose 78.94 points or 0.14 per cent to 57,634.84 points while the broader NSE Nifty rose 13.45 points or 0.08 per cent to 16,985.60 points.

On Thursday, Asian and European shares were trading on a mixed note against the backdrop of concerns over the health of the global banking system in the wake of bank failures in the US and problems at Swiss major Credit Suisse.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) remained net sellers in the domestic capital market on Wednesday as they offloaded shares worth Rs 1,271.25 crore, according to exchange data.

Urban Extension Road Project to be completed by Sept, says Gadkari

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Urban Extension Road Project (UER-II), being constructed at an estimated cost of Rs 7,716 crore as part of the Delhi decongestion plan, will be completed and inaugurated by September this year, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari said on Thursday.

The national capital's third ring road is proposed to be developed in five packages.

Gadkari inspected the progress of the Urban Extension

Road Project (UER-II) with Lt Governor of Delhi Vinai Kumar Saxena, Member of Parliament Hans Raj Hans, Parvesh Sahib Singh Verma and other higher officials.

"We are developing UER-II as a component of the Delhi Decongestion Plan. The project involves the construction of UER-II in five different packages with costs of Rs 7,716 Crore.

"...60 per cent work of the UER II project has been completed. The project will be completed and inaugurated in the



next six months," Gadkari said while briefing the media.

The road transport and highways minister said as part of this project, the National Highways Authority of India

(NHAI) is utilising 20 lakh tonne of plastic garbage sourced from the Ghazipur landfill.

NH-344M (package 1-3) will serve as an additional western ring road in Delhi, lessening the travel duration from 2 hours to 20 minutes to IGI Airport, offering an alternative route for traffic from West/South Delhi, and Gurgaon heading towards NH-44, Chandigarh, Punjab and J&K.

It also connects to the proposed IICC in Dwarka, improving traffic flow in Delhi.

Microfinance loan disbursals rise 19% to ₹77,877 cr in Q3: MFIN

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Loan disbursals by microfinance companies increased 19 per cent to Rs 77,877 crore during December quarter 2022-23, said the MFIN Micrometer.

The total microfinance loan portfolio increased to Rs 3.21 lakh crore as on December 31, 2022, the report said.

"Microfinance loan disbursals during Q3 FY 22-23 improved to Rs 77,877 crore as compared to the same quarter of last financial year (Rs - 65,392 crore). 189 lakh loans were disbursed during Q3 FY 22-23 as against 165 lakh in Q3 FY 21-22, indicating higher ticket size of new loans," it said.

It further said that as on December 31, 2022, the microfinance industry served 6.4 crore unique borrowers, through 12.6 crore loan accounts.

"The overall microfinance industry currently has a total Gross Loan Portfolio (GLP) of Rs 3,21,584 crore. GLP as on December 31, 2022, showed an increase of 25.2 per cent YoY over Rs 2,56,058 crore as on December 31, 2021," the report said. As per the 44th issue of MFIN Micrometer, 83 NBFC-MFIs were the largest provider of micro-credit with a loan amount outstanding of Rs 1,23,386 crore, accounting for 38.5 per cent to total industry portfolio.

Atta prices down ₹6-8 per kg in last two months

On Centre's move to sell 50 lakh tonne in open mkt: Flour Millers body



Roller Flour Millers' Federation of India (RFMI) on Thursday said prices of wheat and wheat flour (atta) have come down by Rs 6-8 per kg in the last two months, following the government's decision to sell grain in the open market.

The association said the wheat production is estimated at around 106-110 million tonnes in 2022-23 crop year. It also demanded that the export ban on wheat and wheat products, including atta (wheat flour), maida (fine wheat flour) and suji (semolina) should continue during the 2023-24 fiscal, according to a statement.

RFMI noted that the government's decision to launch Open Market Sales Scheme (OMSS) on January 25 has resulted in a reduction in prices of wheat and wheat products by Rs 600-800 per quintal pan-India basis.

According to Roller Flour Millers' Federation, atta prices are currently hovering around Rs 2,600-3,000 per quintal vis-a-vis Rs 3,400-3,800 per quintal in the mid of January 2023. The Centre is selling 50 lakh tonnes in the open market to cool down prices.

Out of this, 45 lakh tonnes are meant for bulk consumers, including flour millers.

The federation said that as per its initial findings of ongoing survey of wheat crop for the upcoming season, the area under the wheat cultivation is about 343.23 lakh hectares. Despite early onset of summer, the federation expects a record harvest between 106 million tonnes and 110 million tonnes.

The record production in tandem with cooling off prices of wheat will enable the government to procure targeted 340 lakh tonnes of wheat, it said.

Due to lesser domestic availability of wheat in the market, domestic prices of wheat went up to Rs 3,200-3,600 a quintal in January 2023 before the Centre announced the OMSS to arrest the rising prices.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

IGIA ADJUDGED BEST AIRPORT IN INDIA, SOUTH ASIA
New Delhi: Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) has been adjudged the Best Airport in India and South Asia, for the fifth time in a row and has been awarded a 4-star rating, by Skytrax. The Airport operated and managed by Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL), a GMR Airports Infrastructure Limited (GIL) led consortium, has also bettered its global ranking to 36 in 2023 from 37 in 2022.

GOLD JUMPS ₹380; SILVER DECLINES ₹90
New Delhi: Gold price jumped ₹380 to ₹57,450 per 10 grams in the national Capital on Thursday amid gains in rates of the precious metal overseas, according to HDFC Securities. In the previous trade, the yellow metal had ended at ₹57,070 per 10 grams. Silver, however, declined ₹90 to ₹66,535 per kilogramme. "Spot gold prices in the Delhi markets traded at ₹57,450 per 10 grams, up ₹380 per 10 grams," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst - Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

TCS CEO GOPINATHAN QUILTS, KRITHIVASAN NAMED CEO
New Delhi: IT major TCS CEO Rajesh Gopinathan has resigned, and the company nominated its global head of the BFSI division K Krithivasan as the CEO Designate with immediate effect, the firm said on Thursday. Gopinathan will continue with the company till September 15, 2023, to provide transition and support to his successor. TCS has nominated its current President and Global Head of the Banking, Financial Services, and Insurance (BFSI) Business Group K Krithivasan as CEO Designate with immediate effect.

6 Adani group stocks end higher, two firms hit upper circuit

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Stocks of six Adani group companies out of the ten listed entities ended in the green territory on Thursday amid a positive trend in the broader equity markets. At the end of the session, the six group firms were settled in the green, while four closed in the red. The shares of Adani Green Energy spurted 5 per cent to settle at Rs 777.95, and Adani Transmission climbed 4.84 per cent to close at Rs 976.05 on the BSE. The scrips of these companies hit their upper price bands on the exchange.

The market valuation of Adani Green Energy increased by Rs 5,860.92 crore to Rs 1.23 lakh crore, and that of Adani

Transmission jumped by Rs 5,025.29 crore to Rs 1.08 lakh crore. Ambuja Cements climbed 3.74 per cent to close at Rs 378.60, ACC rose 0.73 per cent to settle at Rs 1,753.15, and Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ) ended on a flat note at Rs 679.15 each share. Also, the shares of flagship firm Adani Enterprises Ltd (AEL) gained 0.21 per cent to settle at Rs 1,842.60 apiece on the bourse.

However, shares of Adani Total Gas plunged 3.31 per cent to close at Rs 888.45, NDTV declined 2.31 per cent to end at Rs 209.10, Adani Power dived 1.68 per cent to close at Rs 198.75 and Adani Wilmar fell 1.35 per cent to settle at Rs 420.95 each share on the BSE.

BENZEMA TAKES REAL PAST REDS

AP ■ MADRID

Karim Benzema struck for Real Madrid to clinch a 1-0 win over Liverpool and qualification for the Champions League quarter-finals on Wednesday 6-2 on aggregate.

After the wild last 16 first leg clash at Anfield in February left Madrid sitting pretty with a three-goal advantage, Liverpool coach Jürgen Klopp said his side only had a one per cent chance of turning the tie around.

They stemmed the bleeding at the Santiago Bernabeu but never looked like mounting a stirring comeback of the type they managed against Barcelona in 2019, or AC Milan in the 2005 final.

Madrid have now knocked Liverpool out of the Champions League in three consecutive seasons, including beating them in last year's final.

"It was a complicated game but from the start we showed we wanted to go through, and we are in the quarter-finals," Benzema told Movistar.

"Suffering is part of today's football. Everyone wants more, but sometimes you have to suffer in a game — the most important thing is to win and go through."

The 14-time record winners showed the nous to keep Liverpool at arm's length, with defenders Eder Militao and Antonio Rudiger determined to shut out the visitors, along with goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois.

Reigning champions Madrid could have significantly stretched their lead, save for a series of superb stops by Liverpool stopper Alisson Becker and some unusually profligate finishing.

In the first leg, Madrid were lethal, with Vinicius Junior and Benzema netting twice each — neither were as decisive.

Yet eventually they combined for Madrid's winner after 78 minutes, with Vinicius slipping as he tried to shoot, but hooking the ball into Benzema's path for a simple tap-in.

Madrid's only worry was seeing their captain limp off after his goal amid an injury-hit season — Benzema said it was only a blow on the shin and Carlo Ancelotti confirmed he would be fit to face Barcelona in the Clásico on Sunday.

"Madrid were in control of the whole game, Ali had to make two sensational saves to keep us in the game," Klopp told reporters.

"Madrid were outstanding and that's why the better team went through to the next round."



Madrid full of confidence in CL: Ancelotti

AP ■ MADRID

Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti said his team were full of confidence after reaching the Champions League quarter-finals on Wednesday.

Madrid are aiming to win the Champions League for the sixth time in 10 seasons and Ancelotti believes his team's remarkable run to glory last season has given them a lot of confidence.

Los Blancos pulled off stunning comebacks against Paris Saint-Germain, Chelsea and Manchester City, before beating Liverpool in the final.



Even in the last 16 first-leg clash with Jürgen Klopp's Reds, Madrid fell two goals behind before roaring to a 5-2 win.

"We have a lot more confidence, because of what happened last year, it gave us a lot of confidence," Ancelotti told reporters.

"We saw that in this tie, against a strong team, we did well in the two games."

"But later, with confidence alone, we don't reach the semi-finals. We have to play surprising football ... as always, the Champions League is very complicated and we have to compete until the end."

NO MAGIC

Liverpool, deeply inconsistent in this campaign, took heart from their 7-0 thrashing of Manchester United in the Premier League, but could not produce the same magic under the Bernabeu lights.

Klopp started with Diogo Jota alongside his usual attacking trio of Mohamed Salah, Darwin Nunez and Cody Gakpo, deploying as much firepower as he could to try and mount a comeback.

The first chance of the game fell to Nunez but Courtois thwarted the Uruguayan, who was fed by Salah.

At the other end Madrid sliced open Liverpool on various occasions, and Alisson made a stunning save to deny Vinicius from point-blank range.

Eduardo Camavinga crashed a long-range effort against the crossbar, with Alisson getting his fingertips to it.

The Brazilian goalkeeper made further saves from Vinicius, Fede Valverde and Benzema as Madrid controlled the game.

Camavinga impressed in midfield and eventually helped create Benzema's goal, with a driven pass forward in the build-up.

"I told him a few small details, like how I know that the two Liverpool centre-backs play open, there's space in the middle, and that's how we scored the goal," added Benzema.

The striker has now scored seven times in the Champions League against Liverpool, more than any other player.

Benzema is key to Madrid's bid to lift the trophy for a sixth time in 10 seasons, if he can stay fit.

Madrid played classic Liverpool anthem "You'll Never Walk Alone" at the end of the game, at once a classy touch but also showing Liverpool never made them truly uncomfortable.

Ancelotti said Madrid were full of belief after their remarkable run to the final last season.

"We have a lot more confidence, because of what happened last year, it gave us a lot of confidence," said the Italian.

"We saw that in this tie, against a strong team, we did well in the two games."

"But later, with confidence alone, we don't reach the semi-finals. We have to play surprising football ... as always, the Champions League is very complicated and we have to compete until the end."



Osimhen fires Napoli into CL last-eight

AP ■ NAPLES

Victor Osimhen says Napoli are dreaming of Champions League glory after his brace shot the Serie A leaders to a 3-0 win over Eintracht Frankfurt and into the quarter-finals for the first time in their history on Wednesday.

Nigeria striker Osimhen struck either side of half-time to ensure no slip-ups in Naples and help his team secure a straightforward, and deserved, 5-0 aggregate win.

Piotr Zielinski added Napoli's third from the penalty spot on a perfect night for southern Italy's biggest club, who Osimhen believes can go all the way.

"It's amazing to make history with this win," said Osimhen to Amazon Prime.

"We will keep on dreaming, we have the squad to do so (win the Champions League). I think we are on the right path. We have a great coach. We will see what the future holds for us, I think we have a good chance."

Luciano Spalletti's side are close to securing their first Serie A title in over three decades and an already remarkable season got even better with a place in Friday's draw for the last eight of Europe's top club competition.

They have been powered to an almost certain domestic triumph and a deep run in Europe by the red-hot Osimhen, who has now netted 23 times in all competitions for possibly the continent's most exciting team.

However Spalletti was less bullish about Napoli's chances

than Osimhen, replying with a curt "no" when asked if he was flattered by Pep Guardiola saying his side were the best in Europe.

"It's a game that people play to put pressure on other teams, it's a game that everyone knows by now," said an irritated Spalletti.

Eintracht were without suspended France forward Randal Kolo Muani following his sending off in the first leg and the Bundesliga outfit did very little to trouble Napoli.

Oliver Glasner's side head out of the competition on a night in which their fans were involved in serious disorder after travelling to Naples despite no tickets for away fans being put on sale.

EIGHT ARRESTED

Three German football fans and five locals were arrested following clashes with police in Naples before and after Napoli's Champions League win over Eintracht Frankfurt, a local official said on Thursday.

Six police officers were injured in the violence on Wednesday evening, according to Alessandro Giuliano, who is responsible for public safety in Naples.

Police were in the process of identifying 470 German fans who stayed in the city, and were scouring images to establish those responsible for the disorder, he told a press conference.

Dozens of supporters of Atalanta also joined forces with supporters of the German side, with whom they are twinned.



Brighton beat Palace to improve Euro hopes

AP ■ LONDON

Brighton bolstered their bid to qualify for Europe with a 1-0 win in their Premier League derby against Crystal Palace, while Brentford pushed Southampton deeper into relegation trouble on Wednesday.

Roberto De Zerbi's side earned their first victory in eight league meetings with bitter rivals Palace thanks to Solly March's goal at the rain-soaked Amex Stadium.

Seventh-placed Brighton moved level on points with the six-placed Liverpool, with the Seagulls holding a game in hand.

As it stands, sixth place will guarantee qualification for next season's European Conference League, although that will drop to seventh if Manchester City or Manchester United win the FA Cup.

It is shaping up to be a memorable season for Brighton, who host fourth-tier Grimsby in the FA Cup quarter-finals on Sunday.

In contrast, their old enemies Palace saw their winless streak reach 12 games in all competitions as they await their first victory in 2023.

"The most important thing is the fans understood our style of play and in England this is a great challenge," De Zerbi said.

"The players believe in our style. We didn't play our best game but if you win it is better."

Palace remain three points clear of the relegation zone.

Patrick Vieira's team had failed to have a shot on target in each of their past three Premier League games, the first instance of that happening since the statistic was first recorded in 2003-04.

Palace's dismal streak finally ended early in the first half as Wilfried Zaha's shot forced Jason Steele to save.

Vieira was forced to hand teenage goalkeeper Joseph

Whitworth his professional debut after Vicente Guaita sustained a late injury.

At 19 years and 15 days, Whitworth was the youngest keeper to appear in the Premier League since 18-year-old Ben Alnwick in 2005 for Sunderland against Tottenham.

But there was no fairytale for youth academy graduate Whitworth, a boyhood Palace fan, as his weak attempted save allowed March's low strike to squirm into the net in the 15th minute.

March's goal came just 24 hours after De Zerbi said the midfielder deserves a place in the England squad, with Gareth Southgate naming his selection on Thursday for the Euro 2024 qualifiers against Italy and Ukraine.

There was a five-minute delay in the second half when a power failure plunged the stadium into darkness, but even that break couldn't rattle Brighton as the high-flying Seagulls continued their ascent.

Just across the south coast at St Mary's, bottom of the table Southampton slumped to a 2-0 defeat against Brentford, who sit one place behind Brighton and have their own European ambitions.

Brentford lost for the first time in 13 Premier League matches against Everton last weekend.

But they bounced back as Ivan Toney struck in the 32nd minute with his 16th league goal this term, this one a tap-in after Christian Norgaard headed Bryan Mbeumo's corner across the six-yard box.

Yoane Wissa grabbed Brentford's second goal deep into stoppage time with a clinical finish from the edge of the area.

Southampton are two points from safety and have played a game more than all the teams just above them in the fight for survival.

Infantino re-elected FIFA president until 2027

AP ■ KIGALI

Gianni Infantino has been re-elected as president of FIFA until 2027 after standing unopposed at the congress of world football's governing body on Thursday. The 52-year-old Swiss lawyer, who succeeded the disgraced Sepp Blatter in 2016, was waved in for a third term by acclamation, just as he was four years ago, by delegates from the 211 member federations.

"To all those who love me, and I know there are so many, and also those who hate me, I know there are a few: I love you all," Infantino told delegates in the Rwandan capital, where the voting system did not register the number of dissident voices.

While FIFA statutes currently limit a president to a maximum of three four-year terms,



Infantino has already prepared the ground to stay until 2031, declaring in December that his first three years at the helm did not count as a full term.

Infantino, who staunchly defended Qatar's hosting of last

year's World Cup as the Gulf state's treatment of migrant workers, women and the LGBTQ community came under the spotlight, has overseen the expansion of the men's and women's World Cup and huge

increases in FIFA revenues.

Norwegian Football Federation president Lise Klaveness had said she would not support Infantino and tabled a proposal to discuss at the congress "FIFA's responsibilities to remedy human rights abuses" in relation to the Qatar World Cup and future tournaments.

On Wednesday, the German FA president, Bernd Neundorff said the organisation would not back Infantino for reelection, citing lack of transparency from FIFA and insufficient explanations of "why certain decisions are made and who was involved in them".

However, Infantino's mainly European-based opponents were not able to put forward a candidate to stand against the man who was once Michel Platini's number two at UEFA.

Indian men's hockey team climb to No 4 in rankings

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian men's hockey team jumped two places to fourth in the latest FIH rankings on the back of its rare back-to-back wins against world champions Germany and Australia in the Pro League matches in Rourkela.

Significantly, India moved ahead of hockey powerhouse Australia, who dropped one place to fifth.

Germany, who were on top spot after winning World Cup title in Odisha in January, also slipped two places to third spot after losing back-to-back matches to India.

India won all their four matches — two each against Germany and Australia — in their FIH Pro League matches played at the Birsa Munda Stadium, the

world's largest all-seater venue.

This is less than two months after India made a shocking last 16 exit in the World Cup held here and in Bhubaneswar in January.

India won both the double-legged matches against Germany 3-2 and 6-3 while they beat Australia 5-4 and 4-3 in penalty shootout (after 2-2 in regulation time) in the first and second games.

Not only the all-win performance took India to the top of the FIH Pro League points table, the side led by Harmanpreet Singh jumped two places from earlier sixth to fourth in the latest FIH rankings.

The Netherlands, who won bronze in the World Cup, are at the top spot while runners-up Belgium occupy the second place in the latest rankings.



"These things (world ranking) don't matter to us so much. We don't keep this in mind when we play. Our only priority was to convert our chances and keep the pressure on the opponent," India captain Harmanpreet Singh said.

"Some of the youngsters who got an opportunity to show their talent also stood up to the occasion and did very well for themselves as well as the team," said Harmanpreet, who is currently the leading goal-scorer in the ongoing FIH Pro League with 11 goals, ahead of Belgium's Alexander Hendrickx (six goals).

The 21,000-capacity Birsa Munda Stadium has turned out to be a fortress for the Indian team remained unbeaten in eight matches. The Indian team has won seven and drawn once at the venue.

Medvedev allays fitness fears to reach Indian Wells semis

AP ■ INDIAN WELLS

Daniil Medvedev's sore right ankle wasn't a factor on Wednesday as he beat Alejandro Davidovich Fokina 6-3, 7-5 to reach the semi-finals in Indian Wells, where Aryna Sabalenka and Frances Tiafoe raced into the final four.

Medvedev showed little ill effect from the twisted ankle he suffered in a three-set battle against Alexander Zverev a day earlier as he pushed his ATP match winning streak to 18 straight.

He booked a semi-final clash with 16th-ranked American Tiafoe, who beat 2021 Indian Wells winner Cameron Norrie 6-4, 6-4.

Australian Open champion Sabalenka, still building on her maiden Grand Slam title in Melbourne, overpowered Coco Gauff 6-4, 6-0 to advance at the combined WTA and ATP Masters 1000 event.

Sabalenka will face 2022 runner-up Maria Sakkari after the seventh-

ranked Greek defeated two-time Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitova 4-6, 7-5, 6-1.

Medvedev arrived in the California desert riding high after nabbing titles at Rotterdam, Doha and Dubai in three weeks.

Long a critic of the slow hard courts of the Indian Wells Tennis Garden, he was through to the quarters for the first time after hanging on to beat Zverev despite rolling his ankle.

"I'm actually happy the ankle didn't hurt much because when I warmed up it was hurting pretty bad," Medvedev said. "I couldn't move well on the warmup."

"I tried to warm it up as long as possible and take one painkiller so that probably helped and I was actually feeling better and better during the match," added the former US Open champion, who has two days off before he takes on Tiafoe.

"Daniil has been winning many tournaments, many consecutive



matches and you can see how solid he is on the court," Davidovich Fokina said.

"It was a very unpleasant match with the wind," he added. "We both had break chances, he took his chance and I didn't, but the level is there."

SABALENKA ON SONG

Sabalenka, ranked second in the world, roared past Gauff 6-4, 6-0, turning the tables on a player who had won three of their four prior encounters.

Sabalenka was in full command of her serve, and her thunderous ground strokes left Gauff with few options.

The Belarusian fired five aces and a total of 18 winners, closing out the match without facing a break point with three straight unreturnable serves.

She said she's a different player than she was when she lost to Gauff in Toronto last year -- and since she

won her second title of the year at the Australian Open.

"I think I'm more calm on court, and I'm able to control my emotions, which help me to stay in the game no matter what, and just fight for every point," Sabalenka said.

Sabalenka will face a battle-tested opponent in Sakkari, who has been taken to three sets in all four matches this week.

Tiafoe, who has reached his first Masters 1000 semi without dropping a set, made it clear he's looking further than the final four.

"It's great, but it's the semis," Tiafoe said. "The job's not done."

Tiafoe had broken Norrie twice in the second set to serve for the match at 5-2.

He was broken himself, but made no mistake on his next opportunity as he finished it off with a love game. "At the end, it got a little tricky, but it was pretty one-way traffic and I am really happy with where my game is at," he said.

INDIA TO FACE AUS IN 1ST ODI TODAY

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Star all-rounder Hardik Pandya's leadership skills and India's overall World Cup preparedness will be under focus when the home side begin their three-match ODI series against Australia here on Friday.

Pandya will captain the Indian team in the absence of regular skipper Rohit Sharma, who is unavailable for the first ODI at the Wankhede Stadium due to family commitments.

The day-night match will be Pandya's first as captain in an ODI, though he is the regular India skipper in the T20 format. He is also the designated vice-captain for the ODI series.

Collectively as a team, the focus will shift from winning the four-match Test series for the Border-Gavaskar Trophy and qualifying for the World Test Championships final in June against the same opponents — Australia — to starting preparations for the 50-over World Cup the country is hosting later this year.

Keeping in mind that India had won the title the last time the country hosted the tournament — with MS Dhoni's team winning the trophy in 2011 — similar expectations will be from Sharma and company.

The expectations will be particularly high because the Indian team is a different beast in any format while playing at home. Moreover, the unwanted record of not doing well enough in the knockout matches of the ICC housing this group of players, the team will be desperate to turn things around.

India will also look to make the most of the incredible start they have had in ODIs at home this year, winning all six matches in total — against Sri Lanka and New Zealand in two separate series.

With 567 runs and three centuries in just six ODIs, and averaging 113.40,



Shubman Gill has made a cracking start to the World Cup year and Sharma's absence in the first match will put more limelight on the right-handed batter, who is coming off a quality Test century against Australia in the fourth and final match in Ahmedabad.

Batting maestro Virat Kohli had left the lean patch in white-ball cricket far behind, and his 338 runs in six matches at 67.60 indicate that the run-machine can be expected to add more

to the 75 centuries that he has accumulated in international cricket so far.

Kohli's battle with Australia leg-spinner Adam Zampa is one of the match-ups to watch out for, with the bowler having had considerable success against the star India batter.

Kuldeep Yadav and Yuzvendra Chahal bowled in tandem in the nets during an optional training session on Wednesday here, and the two leg-spinners can form a vital weapon in India's

attack given their knack of taking wickets and past record of domination in white-ball cricket.

With 11 wickets in five matches, Kuldeep has so far been India's best spinner, while among fast bowlers, Mohammed Siraj is far ahead with 14 scalps in as many outings.

The Indians will be wary of the fact that the five-time World Cup winners Australia have enough firepower in their ranks to pull off wins, despite the

absence of regular captain Pat Cummins who has decided to be with his family after the passing of her mother.

Cummins' absence will be felt by the visiting team as it also looks to finalise its preparations for the World Cup in October-November this year.

Like he did in the last two matches of the Test series, the wily Steve Smith will lead Australia in the ODI series as well. While Cummins and Josh Hazlewood are not available for this ODI series, veteran batter David Warner and all-rounder Ashton Agar, who both had returned home during the Test series, are back in India with the national squad.

Australia also have not played any ODI cricket in three-and-a-half months of this year, with their focus being trained completely on the WTC final berth.

With that objective achieved, the visiting side will want to approach these three ODIs with the best possible opportunity to prepare for challenges ahead under Smith.

Australia will also draw inspiration from the fact that the last time they played here, they had handed India a 10-wicket defeat with Warner and Aaron Finch — now retired — hitting unbeaten centuries.

THE TEAMS (FROM)

India: Hardik Pandya (captain), Shubman Gill, Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, Suryakumar Yadav, K L Rahul, Ishan Kishan (wk), Ravindra Jadeja, Kuldeep Yadav, Washington Sundar, Yuzvendra Chahal, Mohd Shami, Mohd Siraj, Umran Malik, Shardul Thakur, Axar Patel, Jaydev Unadkat.

Australia: Steven Smith (captain), David Warner, Travis Head, Marnus Labuschagne, Mitchell Marsh, Marcus Stoinis, Alex Carey, Glenn Maxwell, Cameron Green, Josh Inglis, Sean Abbott, Ashton Agar, Mitchell Starc, Nathan Ellis, Adam Zampa.



WARNER TO LEAD DELHI CAPITALS IN IPL 2023

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Veteran Australia batter David Warner was on Thursday named as captain of Delhi Capitals for the upcoming Indian Premier League (IPL) season in the absence of Rishabh Pant, who is currently undergoing rehabilitation after a car crash.

India all-rounder Axar Patel will be the vice-captain of the Delhi team, a role he performed last year also. IPL 2023 begins on March 31.

DC also announced former India captain and Ex BCCI chief Sourav Ganguly as the franchise's Director of Cricket. Ganguly has been associated with Delhi Capitals in the past too, in the role of mentor, during the 2019 season.

"Rishabh has been a terrific leader for Delhi Capitals, and we're all going to miss having him around. I would like to thank the management for the faith and trust they've

always shown in me," Warner said in a release.

The naming of Warner as DC captain was on expected lines after Pant — who led the team from 2021 season — met with a horrific car accident in late December and successfully underwent a knee ligament tear surgery in Mumbai.

Warner is currently in India for Australia's ODI leg of the tour which begins in Mumbai on Friday. He is one of IPL's most prolific batters with 5881 runs from 162 matches in the 13 seasons that he has featured since 2009. He has an average of 42.01, strike rate of 140.69 and has hit four hundreds and 55 fifties.

Warner began his IPL stint with the Delhi franchise in 2009 — when it was Delhi Daredevils then — and remained part of the team till 2013. He was the interim captain of the team for a couple of matches in 2013, before being bought by Sunrisers Hyderabad next year.

All-rounders important for balance of team ahead of ODI WC: Marsh



PTI ■ MUMBAI

Mitchell Marsh feels having more all-rounders will provide Australia 'flexibility and depth', which will be crucial as they look to experiment with their line-up in the ODI series, keeping in mind the 50-over World Cup in India.

India will host the ICC ODI World Cup in October-November this year and the three-match ODI series, beginning here on Friday between the top-ranked hosts and the second-placed Australian side, will provide both the teams a chance to bolster their preparations.

Warner and the left-arm spin bowling all-rounder have rejoined Australia's squad in India ahead of the ODI series.

"He is still coming back from his elbow injury, there is no rushing him back unless he is 100 per cent fit," Marsh said.

Warner also reportedly suffered minor bruising during the team's practice session for the opening ODI with the ball crashing into his thigh off an inside edge.

Marsh expects the series as well as the upcoming World Cup in India to be a high-scoring affair.

"I think we'll see that (big

genuine batters, and it gives you the ability to either set really big totals or chase big totals."

Marsh said explosive opening batter David Warner, who returned home after the second Test in New Delhi following a hairline fracture in his left elbow, will play in the first ODI only if he is 100 per cent fit.

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Warner also reportedly suffered minor bruising during the team's practice session for the opening ODI with the ball crashing into his thigh off an inside edge.

Marsh expects the series as well as the upcoming World Cup in India to be a high-scoring affair.

"I think we'll see that (big

totals) in this series, hopefully there'll be a lot of runs scored, and looking forward to the World Cup, just the way cricket is played here in the white-ball format, you'll have to chase or make big scores.

"The more flexibility and depth you can have with your batting line-up, I think it will be really important.

"It is going to be a high scoring World Cup ... From my experience it is nice to have options to go to, to change things up, try and change the momentum of the games, the more options the better." Marsh said while Australia will look to experiment, the focus will be on winning the series and not think too far ahead at the World Cup.

"I think it is really important for us to focus on winning this series. Anytime we play for Australia it is important to have that mindset, as every team would be doing now over the next six months or so, building towards the World Cup.

"We might just play a few different lineups, experimenting with a few guys but the mindset is to come here and win the series. Obviously we have got a fair bit of experience playing here which is great so hopefully it will be a few good games for us."

The 31-year-old said beating India in their own backyard is going to be really challenging.

"It is always a difficult place to win. The Indian one-day team is outstanding and they play very well at home. But I think we have also got a very good side and it is going to be a great contest.

"Hopefully we can play some good cricket, entertain some big crowds and win a few games for Australia."

I had no belief, tank was empty: Kohli on quitting IPL captaincy

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Star India batter Virat Kohli has opened up on his decision to step down as skipper of Royal Challengers Bangalore after 2021 season, saying he had no "belief" and his "tank was absolutely empty" towards the end of his IPL captaincy tenure.

RCB had a horror run in 2019 when they lost six games in a row to eventual finish at the bottom of the IPL table. They were wooden spooners in the 2017 edition as well.

Kohli quit as RCB captain after the 2021 season with South Africa's Faf du Plessis taking over the reins.

"The time when my captaincy tenure was coming to an end here, I was left with no belief, to be very honest. I was gone, the tank was absolutely empty," Kohli said during his motivational speech to the RCB women's team ahead of their clash against UP Warriorz in the WPL on Wednesday.

"But that was my own perspective,



that was me just an individual saying that I have seen so much of this, I can't just manage it, handle it anymore."

RCB had made it to the playoffs in the 2020 edition for the first time since 2016 season and also reached the knockouts in the next two editions.

"But the next season, new people came in, they had new ideas, there was another opportunity. They were excited, may be as an individual I wasn't that

excited. But they created the energy and we reached the playoffs three years in a row," Kohli said.

"Now we start every season with the excitement that was before and I feel excited now, the person who was not up to the mark. So it is a collective responsibility, if someone is feeling down as well, the others can pull them up."

Kohli's decision to quit RCB captaincy came after he had made up his mind

to step down as India's T20 skipper, following the 2021 T20 World Cup. He was later removed as ODI captain and soon after quit as Test captain as well. The 34-year-old from Delhi said there has been phases in his career when he felt insecure and tried to save his reputation.

"...I have needed constant reminders, even from youngsters, because they have a fresh perspective. I have been under pressure because I have played for so long, I have been insecure, I have tried my performances, my reputation like 'Oh I am Virat Kohli, I have to perform in every game. I can't afford to get out'.

"But these youngsters come and tell me, 'why didn't you hit the ball?' and I was like, 'he is right'. I couldn't think about it because I am so caught up with me, me, me and what I should do and how people are looking at me and all that stuff that I forgot how to play the game."

Kohli recently cracked a superb 186 against Australia in the drawn fourth and final Test, ending a three-year wait to get to his 28th Test century.

England batter Will ruled out of IPL

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

England batter Will Jacks has been ruled out of the upcoming edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL) due to an injury while doing national duty in Bangladesh.

The 24-year-old Jacks, who was bought for Rs 3.2 crores by Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) at the IPL auction in December last, suffered a muscle injury while fielding during England's second ODI against Bangladesh in Mirpur earlier this month, according to a report in ESPNcricinfo. ...After scans earlier this week and consultation with a specialist, he has been forced to pull out of the IPL," the report said.

The injury may affect his chances of earning selection in England's ODI squad for the World Cup later this year.



RCB is currently in discussions with Michael Bracewell of New Zealand as Jacks' potential replacement, the report said.

Jacks made his England debuts in all three formats this year, winning his T20I and Test caps in Pakistan before playing his first ODI in Bangladesh.

The injury may affect his chances of earning selection in England's ODI squad for the World Cup later this year.



Last-gasp defeat motivates Sri Lanka for 2nd NZ Test

AP ■ WELLINGTON

Captain Dimuth Karunaratne says Sri Lanka will use their agonising last-gasp defeat to New Zealand as motivation when the second Test starts on Friday in Wellington.

Kane Williamson sealed a thrilling New Zealand win by running a bye as the first Test went to the final ball in Christchurch.

The hosts' two-wicket triumph scuppered Sri Lanka's chances of making the World Test Championship final, handing the spot to India, who will face Australia.

"Unfortunately we aren't in a position to progress (to the final), but it's a two-Test series and we have to play for our pride," Karunaratne told reporters on Thursday.

"I can see the boys in the dressing room still want to win

this match and draw the series." Karunaratne knows his team paid a heavy price for fielding errors in Christchurch, particularly when danger man Williamson was dropped on 33. He went on to make a match-winning century.

"There were small things we couldn't do well, that is the only concern, but we're trying to correct the mistakes," said Karunaratne.

The Sri Lankan skipper says his seam bowlers can cause problems for Williamson and New Zealand's top order.

Asitha Fernando took seven wickets in the first Test. "We can challenge the Kiwi top batters every time, even some of their players said that they didn't expect that kind of bowling pressure from the Sri Lankans," said Karunaratne.

The second Test is at Wellington's Basin Reserve,

scene of the hosts' memorable one-run win over England last month which squared that two-Test series.

"We had great crowds last time we were here and got people talking about Test cricket," said captain Tim Southee, whose Black Caps are chasing a third straight Test win.

Showers and high winds are forecast on Friday and Southee will decide his team after inspecting the green wicket.

"We'll have a final look in the morning as there is a bit of weather around," he added.

All-rounder Doug Bracewell has been added to the New Zealand squad as cover for Neil Wagner, who is sidelined after finishing the first Test with a back and hamstring injury.

Southee expects Sri Lanka to put up another stern test. "They are a quality side, as we saw in Christchurch," he said.

Indian players OK with workload management calls: Hardik

PTI ■ MUMBAI

India all-rounder and stand-in captain for the first ODI here against Australia, Hardik Pandya said on Thursday that bilateral series are as competitive as ICC tournaments and brooding over failures in past global competitions is an exercise in futility.

India have usually done well in bilateral series — both home and away — but have been failing regularly in ICC tournaments for close to a decade now, with the most recent disappointment being the semi-final defeat to England in the T20 World Cup in Australia last year.

Pandya said the team had not tried anything new to change the trend and the focus has been on learning from bilateral fixtures.

"I don't think we have tried anything new. We will be trying to be a little brave which I think in the last couple of series we have done quite well," the all-rounder told the media here at the Wankhede Stadium.

"All these bilaterals are as challenging, they can get as close to the wire as they can. That is the only way we are going to learn and start playing under pressure of knockouts (in ICC tournaments). (But) we don't need to look at that right now, the past is past and we are hoping for the best things to come," Pandya added.

Pandya, who is also the vice-captain of the Indian side for the three-match series against Australia, said the players are comfortable with workload-related calls made by the man-

agement.

"We have to have faith in our strength and conditioning coaches. I am a guy who trusts his team. These calls of workload, who should play when, who should not play, that is completely on the guys who are professionals and it is their call," Pandya said.

"All these guys are confident that if they miss out on some matches, then they miss out. It's okay. That's the confidence we have. If someone misses out because of workload management, this management has shown confidence and trust in the players. I think that's the reason players who have gone out have come back with a lot of security," he added.

The 29-year-old all-rounder said he is ready to share what-

er workload comes along with the other bowlers. "Whatever the situation requires, I will do it," he said when asked if he was ready to bowl a full quota of 10 overs.

Pandya opined that ODI matches are more settled and give teams a longer duration to execute their plans. "ODIs are just an extension of the T20 game in which you have to make a lot of changes. You have to be at it because every over, every ball changes the game. In ODIs you have more set plans, once you start something, the same plan could be going on for six overs. It is just (about) how we can control that period," he said.

Pandya also said the Indian players are used to competing in the Indian Premier League, especially when the tournament is

around a major bilateral series. The third ODI against Australia will be played on March 22 in Chennai, while the IPL 2023 begins on March 31.

"We all are professionals and this is not the first time we are playing the IPL. This is going to be my ninth or 10th and almost everyone has been around for far too long. Playing for the country is a different honour and pride so that does not even come into question," he said.

"To be very honest, I had to think about this question for the first time because I don't think any individual has got this thought of motivating more because the IPL is around. IPL is IPL, how we take it series by series, even the IPL will be the same," the all-rounder explained.