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

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

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

Rahul was disqualified from the Lok Sabha on Friday, a day after a Surat court convicted him in a defamation case for his "all thieves have Modi as the common surname" remark in 2019. The disqualification will bar the four-time MP from contesting polls for eight years unless a higher court stays his conviction

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

raising these questions.
Asserting that "democracy has finished in this country the former Congress chief claimed he never sought foreign intervention in his remarks made in the UK and accused Union Ministers of "lying" in Parliament.

He also said the BJP is trying to divert the issue by alleging that he had insulted OBCs with his "all thieves have Modi as the common surname'

"I am here defending the democratic voice of the Indian people, I will continue to do threats, of these disqualifications, allegations, prison sentences. I am not scared of them. These people don't



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

understand me yet, I am not scared of them," he said.
"Disqualify me for life, put me inside jail, I will keep going. I will not stop," he said.
"I have been disqualified because the Prime Minister is scared of my next speech. I

scared of my next speech. I have seen it in his eyes. So he is terrified of the next speech that is going to come and does not want that speech to be in Parliament," Rahul alleged at the 30-minute Press conference, flanked by Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, Chhattisgarh CM Bhupesh Baghel and party general secretaries Jairam Ramesh and K C Venugonal Venugopal.

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

He said when somebody is guilty of something, they want to distract everybody's attention. "If you catch a thief, the it, the second thing he says is 'look there, look there...' That is

what the BJP is doing." Continued on Page 2

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

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA

Several theories within the Congress are doing the rounds on how to "encash" the disqualification of Rahul Gandhi as a Lok Sabha member in elections.

While a section of the party think tank is of the opinion that "Rahul be allowed to become a "political martyr" and lead the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, another group has been contemplating to field Priyanka Gandhi Vadra from Wayanad which Rahul represented till

Friday morning. "Another theory working is to fight back legally and retain simultaneously dig out similar statements or speech by BJP leaders and get cases registered at least in the Congress and its

alliance State Governments," said senior party leader and a member of the Rajya Sabha.

Congress legal luminaries like Abhishek Manu Singhvi, P Chidambaram, Vivek Tankha Pramod Tiwari, have done a few round of deliberations in the last 48 hours over the prospect to deal with the conviction by the Surat court.

Sources said the Congress is also working to rope in their former party colleague and legal eagle Kapil Sibal now in the Rajya Sabha backed by the

Samajwadi Party.
Sibal took a swipe at two BJP Ministers for accusing Rahul of insulting OBCs with his "Modi surname" remark in people's intelligence by making such an "absurd alle-

PNS NEW DELHI

Continued on Page 2

nvestigation agencies on

Saturday questioned Bihar Deputy Chief Minister

Tejashwi Yadav and his MP sis-

ter Misa Bharti in connection

with the railways land-for-jobs

While Tejashwi was

Slamming the BJP over

guizzed by the CBI for more

than eight hours, the ED ques-

tioned Bharti for over six hours,

the questioning of the two

RJD leaders, Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi

Vadra alleged the ruling party wants to finish off the

case here, officials said.

they said.

Land-for-jobs: CBI quizzes

Tejashwi, ED grills Misa

Rahul lies, defames PM: BJP

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

Talking to reporters here soon after Rahul's Press conference alleging that he has been targeted by the BJP to been targeted by the BJP to divert attention from the "Modi-Adani" row, Prasad accused the former Congress president of "lying" and "defaming" Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The BJP leader gave a list of projects which the business tycoon Gautam Adani had signed in many countries.

signed in many countries, including in Australia and Indonesia, "when the Congress under Manohan Singh was in power at the Centre".

Reminding Rahul that he

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

"Doesn't he feels ashamed?", the BJP said. Prasad said Rahul has been

accusing businessman Adani "without any proof". He was, though, also quick to add "we are not defending Adani". He said Adani "has bagged

₹65,000 crore projects in the Congress-ruled Rajasthan and that of ₹15,000 crore in West

Prasad said Rahul has ple are not voting for his party' "He is not respecting peoples mandate," said Prasad.

Continued on Page 2

Opposition and expressed sol-

idarity saying, "We are all unit-

ed against the attack on democ-

RJD leader Misa Bharti arrives at the

ED office for questioning in connection

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

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

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

Saweety made it two out of two for the hosts as she warded off a challenge from two-time medallist China's Wang Lina. In the first bout, Nitu started off aggressively and used her combination of punches to land jabs and hooks effectively. The 22-year-old Bhiwani

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

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

Asks bankers

to be vigilant

of rate risks

 $F_{ ext{Sitharaman on Saturday}}^{ ext{inance Minister Nirmala}}$

reviewed the performance of

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

and Europe.

undertake stress tests.

During the two hours

meeting with MDs and CEOs

of PSBs, an open discussion

was held on the global scenario

amid the failure of the Silicon

Vallev Bank (SVB) and

Signature Bank (SB), along

with the issues leading to the

FM reviews PSBs'

US banking failure

financial health amid

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

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

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

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

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

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

Continued on Page 2 Saturday





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

CAPSULE

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

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

ADVISORY ON INFLUENZA RESPIRATORY ILLNESS New Delhi: Amid rising cases of Covid-19 across the country, the

Centre on Saturday issued a joint advisory underlining to keen a close watch on the evolving causes of diseases such as Influenza Like Illness (ILI) and Severe Acute Respiratory Illness (SARI)

1 KILLED, 4 INJURED IN J&K FACTORY BLAST Samba (Jammu): A person was

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

crisis in Credit Suisse.

The meeting was also attended by Minister of State public sector banks (PSBs) on various financial health parafor Finance Bhagwat Karad, Financial Services Secretary meters and their resilience in the wake of the current global Vivek Joshi and other senior financial scenario emanating from the failure of some officials, an official statement international banks in the US said. She also discussed the developing and immediate She urged the banks to external global financial stress from both short and longremain vigilant about the interest rate risks and regularly term perspectives.

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

Continued on Page 2

Cong sees K'taka as ATM to fill its leaders' coffers: Modi

PTI ■ CHIKKABALLAPURA/ DAVANGERE/BENGALURU

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

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

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

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

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

the treasury of its leaders". This visit of the Prime Minister — his seventh to Karnataka this year — gains significance as the Election

Commission is expected to

announce the poll schedule

for Assembly elections, due by May, in the next few days.

On Saturday, the PM also inaugurated Sri Madhusudan Sai Institute of Medical Sciences and Research in Chikkaballapura district, and Whitefield (Kadugodi) to Krishnarajapura Metro Line of Bangalore Metro in Bengaluru. He took a Metro ride after buying a ticket.

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

Continued on Page 2



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE / **AGENCIES** NEW DELHI SAN FRANCISCO

 $P_{\text{darity against Khalistan}}^{\text{utting up a show of soli-}}$ extremists, several Indian Americans carried a support march and waved the tricolour. The march late on Friday was undertaken to condemn the attack on the Indian consulate in San Francisco. The alleged Khalistani supporters had vandalised the consulate last Sunday.

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



against Khalistani vandals

movement. A huge crowd of Indian

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

the guilty.

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

chanting separatist slogans. On Sunday last, Khalistani sympathisers vandalised the consulate building and installed

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

The POP marks the suc-

cessful completion of training Continued on Page 2 of close to 2,600 Agniveers

Usha, Mithali, Rawat's daughters to witness **Agniveers' passout** including 273 women. In another first, the parade will PNS NEW DELHI

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

As first reported in *The Pioneer* on Friday, the Passing Out Parade (POP) of the first batch of Agniveers is scheduled at INS Chilka on March 28.

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

take place post sunset unlike in

Navy chief Admiral Hari

the morning as done earlier.

Kumar will be the chief guest

and the Reviewing Officer of

the Passing out Parade, navy

officials said here on Saturday

The successful trainees would

be deployed on frontline war-

ships for their sea training.

Continued on Page 2

'SC has played important role in protection of human rights'

The apex court has played a very important role in the protection and promotion of human rights in India, Supreme Court judge Hima Kohli said here on Saturday.

She was speaking at the 11th Justice P N Bhagwati International Moot Court Competition on Human Rights at New Law College, Bharati Vidyapeeth University. "The Supreme Court of India, being the highest court of the land, has played a vital role in preserving, protecting and promoting human rights in India.

Over the years, several landmark judgments have been pronounced to strengthen and amplify the very definition of human rights," Justice Kohli said. Speaking about some such impactful decisions, she mentioned the case of Maneka Gandhi Vs Union of India (1978) where the petitioner



had challenged the denial of passport to her. "The sevenjudge constitution bench declared that the right to travel abroad is an element of the right to life and personal liberty, and this right could not be curtailed without following the due process of law," the judge noted.

In recent years, the judiciary has been at the forefront of protecting citizens' rights, particularly in cases relating to civil liberties, environmental protection and gender justice,

Justice Kohli said. "Just last month, on February 2, in the case of P Vs Union of India & Anr. (2023), the Supreme Court exercised its extraordinary constitutional powers to help a young woman who wanted to abort her late-stage pregnancy, by arranging for the delivery of the baby at AIIMS, Delhi, and with the consent of the mother, directed that the child be given for adoption to a couple registered with the government-run Central Adoption Resources Agency (CARA)," she said.

The judgment brought to the fore the importance of protecting the human rights of women and their reproductive rights, and also that of recognizing the rights of unborn foetuses, Justice Kohli said.

Human rights violations take place in many forms including arbitrary detention, torture, extra-judicial killings and discrimination, and these

in times of crises such as armed conflict, natural disasters and pandemics, she said. Such crises often lead to the displacement of large sections of the population, increased violence and violation of human

rights, she noted. The present century has witnessed the rise of authoritarianism, global threat of terrorism and rapid technological advances that have all posed challenges to the protection and promotion of human

rights, Justice Kohli said. "Though technological advancements are meant to promote, rather than undermine human rights, misuse of artificial intelligence, facial recognition and unauthorized collection of biometric data, exploitation of social media platforms have raised serious concerns about privacy, surveillance and discrimination,"

G20 delegates reach Arunachal, likely to visit Tawang today

Over 50 international delegates reached Arunachal Pradesh on Saturday to participate in a G20 meeting. After landing at the Hollongi airport, they travelled to Itanagar where they visited an exhibition in which various tribal arts and cultures were showcased, besides budding innovators of the state exhibiting their inno-

After attending a meeting, the delegates visited Thupten Gatseling Monastery. After enjoying a cultural musical performance at the monastery, the delegates visited the Jawaharlal Nehru State Museum where they were briefed about the history and rich culture of the northeastern state. In the evening, the delegates witnessed a cultural programme at the state assembly. Γhe delegates, which include

countries and international organisations, are likely to visit Tawang, bordering China, on Sunday but it depends on the weather condition, sources From there, they would travel to Guwahati in

Khandu said the G20 meeting in the state is a geo-political and diplomatic event that is a testimony to the spirit of brotherhood encompassed by the mantra of 'One Earth, One Family and One Future'. For centuries the people of Arunachal Pradesh are living

Chief Minister Pema

with nature, he said. While the world has come together to find a solution to climate change, Arunachal Pradesh being the carbon-negative state of India has taken up various initiatives to fight the situation by adopting the Pakke

NCR PULSE

EVENTS FOR DIVYANGS ORGANISED

accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability, the National Gallery of Modern Arts (NGMA), has been in the forefront in organising events and exclusively curated shows for the differently abled children. On World Down Syndrome Awareness Day on Tuesday, it organised a painting and pottery workshop for them which was guided by Gurugram based Shaurya Mehrotra, potter and artist with Down Syndrome. Director NGMA, Temsunaro Jamir Tripathi said that "NGMA is actively involving civil society for public awareness and establishing a voice for people with special needs... The workshops aim to give a platform to express themselves creatively and showcase their abilities and ideas," she added.

50TH ANNIV OF INDIA-KOREA TIES: EVENT HELD

NEW DELHI: The Embassy of the Republic of Korea and Korean Cultural Centre India, together with the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism, organised a cultural exchange event in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of diplomatic ties between Korea and India. The opening ceremony of the special exhibition titled "An Encounter with Korean Traditional Buddhist Culture in India, the Land of Buddha" was held at National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA). The exhibition which will remain open till 30th April 2023, showcases the media art of international acclaim Buddhist painting scrolls called 'Gwae Bul', a symbol of traditional Korean Buddhist rituals .Korean traditional lanterns of 'Yeondeunghoe', a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity and various photo works with the theme of temple stay.

ISRAEL DONATES INDIA DRIP IRRIGATION SYSTEM

NEW DELHI: On World Water Day on Wednesday, the Embassy of Israel in India donated an Israeli-invented technology and Made-innational capital. Naor Gilon, Ambassador of Israel to India said that 'We are looking forward to collaborating with NDMC to transform this park into a water-efficient park." The initiative aimed to encourage water efficiency and teach young children about water conservation





A combination of pictures shows the Akshardham Temple during Earth Hour and before observing the Earth Hour in New Delhi on Saturday

Rahul lying, defaming PM, says Prasad

From Page1
The former Union
Minister also charged Rahul with having been "abusive, not critical" in his utterances about the Modi surname which led to the defamation suit. Prasad said it is not only Rahul but 32 people in the past have been disqualified under the same

"You will not have another law and be treated differently," said the BJP leader. Prasad alleged that Rahul is trying to "portray himself a martyr and use it in the Karnataka Assembly poll".

Prasad also wondered as why the Congress is not appealing in the court against Rahul's conviction as they did in the case of their spokesperson Pawan Khera despite having a battery of legal eagles in the

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

From Page1 Sibal was a Union Minister during the Manmohan Singh led UPA Governments and on two occasions he has recently come out in support of Rahul including the Delhi Police turning at Rahul's residence for details regarding the "sexual harassment victims" speech made during the 'Bharat Jodo

"The legal battle will need to be fought in Gujarat alone, as is the requirement, and that may take quite a long time," sources said. A party leader said the Election Commission may announce a by-election in Waynad next month to fill the vacancy arising out of the disqualification of Rahul and thus it could set Priyanka to take a plunge into electoral politics. Currently, she is the AICC national general secretary and

she has been credited for the Congress win in Himachal Pradesh Assembly elections.

Soon after disqualification of her brother, Priyanka launched a sharp attack on the BJP and Modi Government dispensation for the kind of slur thrown at the Nehru-Gandhi family ever since Modi team is

Within the Congress, Priyanka is being keenly watched out for her "sharp articulation and unapologetic counterattack". As of now speculation are rife that Priyanka would take a plunge into elections from Rae Bareli in Uttar Pradesh, a Lok Sabha constituency represented by her mother and longest serving president of the Congress Sonia Gandhi. Sonia is not likely to contest the next Parliamentary elections, and Priyanka is

legacy, as the seat was once represented by Feroze Gandhi, her grandfather. The Congress may be keen to get the Gandhi family member to retain the seat in Kerala, as the BJP is stepping up efforts to wean away the Christian vote base to

expected to inherit the family

A large number of Congress leaders are exploring that if Priyanka theory works then she would lead in Parliament while Rahul who just concluded his four-month Bharat Jodo Yatra will work for the Opposition.

enter the State politics. Kerala

remains one of the few strong-

holds of Congress.

Several Opposition leaders have rallied behind Rahul after his disqualification and hit out at the Government, accusing it of targeting political oppo-

Nitu, Saweety world...

The Haryana boxer looked to attack as soon as the match started but couldn't connect any of her punches as Wang used her sharp reflexes to dodge. But then Saweety connected a strong straight jab to the delight of the crowd. She continued to attack to edge out her opponent 3-2 in the first two rounds. It was an ugly bout as both boxers were clinching and trying to throw each other on the canvas.

In the third, Saweety mixed attack with defence. She ducked, dodged and sidestepped, avoiding Wang's punches to take the round 4-1. The bout was sent for a review with Saweety emerging on top. "I am thrilled after fulfilling my dream of becoming the world champion. The bout went well and I was able to execute my planning perfectly. My performance in the tournament got better as the bouts progressed, with my body also responding well," the triumphant Saweety said.

This title can be considered Saweety's revival because, after winning the Worlds and Asian silver in 2014 and 2015, she fell off the radar. She missed out on a chance to compete at the Tokyo Olympics as well. She then went on to win the Asian Championships bronze in 2021 followed by the gold in 2022.

The two join an elite list that includes six-time champion Mary Kom (2002, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2010 and 2018), Sarita Devi (2006), Jenny RL (2006), Lekha KC (2006) and Nikhat Zareen (2022). Hosts India are on course to match their best-ever performance in terms of gold medals won with reigning champion Nikhat Zareen and Olympic medallist Lovlina Borgohain set to take the ring on Sunday. India had won four golds in the 2006 edition which they had hosted in Delhi. It was also their best performance in terms of total medals (8).

Usha, Mithali, Rawat's daughters to witness Agniveers' passout

As part of their transformation to Sea Warriors, the Agniveers underwent 16 weeks of ab-initio training at INS Chilka. The training encompassed academic, service and outdoor

During the POP, deserving Agniveers will be presented awards by the Chief Guest in various categories. This year onwards, acknowledging the contribution of the first Chief of Defence Staff, the Late General Bipin Rawat towards the transformational Agnipath scheme, the Indian Navy has instituted the General Bipin Rawat Rolling Trophy for the 'Woman Agniveer Trainee Standing First in Overall Order of Merit. This trophy will be presented General Rawat's daughters.

P T Usha, Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), popularly known as the 'Queen of Indian Track and Field' and 'Payyoli Express' is a recipient of the Padma Shri award and President of the Indian Olympics Association(IOA).

Mithali Raj, former captain of the Indian women's Cricket team is the recipient of Padma Shri, Arjuna Award and Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna awards The eminent Veterans who would be present to motivate the Passing Out Agniveers include Chiman Singh, a war hero of the 1971 Indo-Pak War who was awarded the Maha Vir Chakra.

Cong sees K'taka as ATM to fill its leaders coffers: Modi

bad shape or not? Do you want a strong and stable government or not? Do you want a government with full majority or not? The first job should be to bring Karnataka out of the politics of manipulation and take it forward at a fast pace," Modi said.

Karnataka is BJP's full majority, strong and stable government, it is a necessity for the bright future of Karnataka," he said at the public meeting which marked the culmination of BJP's state-wide 'Vijay Sankapla Yatre' ahead of Assembly polls.

"The need of the hour for

'Vijaya Sankalpa Yatre', had begun earlier this month from four different directions across the state, in specially designed vehicles or "rathas" and have covered all 224 Assembly segto serve you and do something for you, İ will need BJP's strong government in Karnataka, and you will have to make BJP win and bring in its strong govern-ment." Cautioning that Congress leaders start wandering with a "bag of false guarantees" ahead of elections, he said they made false promises ahead of polls in Himachal Pradesh, but the assurances did not find a mention in their

recent budget there. "Can we trust Congress that makes false promises? Should they be allowed to step inside Karnataka or should they be thrown out?" he asked, adding the people of Karnataka should be cautious and should not give the party an opportunity "to play their game". Alleging that Congress does not

ments. Asking people if they have any positive agenda for the "When no one gets full want him to serve them and country and Karnataka, Modi and even publicly say "Modi teri kabr kudegi" (Modi, your grave will be dug), but they don't know people of Karnataka are saying "Modi tera Kamal khilega" (Modi your lotus will bloom), a reference to BJP's syombol.

At Davangere, Modi entered the rally venue in a specially designed vehicle, which made its way to the stage, passing through the pathway made amidst the crowd gathered under the huge pandal.

People showered flower petals on the Prime Minister, who was accompanied by Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, BJP veteran leader B S Yediyurappa and BJP state unit President Nalin Kumar Kateel, on the vehicle, as it passed near them.

FM reviews PSBs' financial health amid US banking failure

The finance minister underlined that PSBs must look at business models closely to identify stress points, including concentration risks and adverse exposures, the statement said, adding that she also exhorted PSBs to use this opportunity to frame detailed crisis management and com-

The chiefs of PSBs apprised Sitharaman that they follow the best corporate governance practices, adhere to regulatory norms, ensure prudent liquidity management and continue to focus on having robust asset-liability and risk management.

Further, she was also informed by the PSBs that they are vigilant of developments in the global banking sector and are taking all possible steps to safeguard themselves from any potential finan-

All the major financial parameters indicate stable and resilient PSBs with robust financial health,

it added. The minister also stressed that PSBs must leverage the full potential of branches opened in International Financial Services Centres in GIFT City Gujarat to identify international oppor-

tunities, including prospects related to Persons of Indian Órigin (PIOs). She asked banks to take focused measures to attract deposits, given the steps taken by the

government to reduce the tax arbitrage in some debt instruments and pivot their strengthened financial position to support the credit needs of the growing economy.

The minister asked banks to focus on credit outreach in states where the credit offtake is lower than the national average, particularly in the northeast and eastern parts of the country, and enhance business presence in new and emerging areas like One District One Product (ODOP), e-NAM and drones. She said PSBs should promote the Mahila Samman Bachat Patra, announced in the Budget, through special drives and campaigns and also focus on increasing brick-and-mortar banking presence in border and coastal areas.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Under the instructions from and on behalf of my client Hans Raj Madaan S/o Late Sh. Lal Chand Resident of 1/10, 3rd Floor, Indira Vikas, Near Nirankari School, Delhi This is to inform that general public that my client is the owner of property bearing No. G-120, consisting of ground floor, with its roof rights upto sky built on land measuring area 150 sq. yds. Out of khasra No.727, situated in the area of Village Bhalswa, Jahangir Puri, Gali No.4, Shrachanand Colony, Delhi-110042 and same was purchased by my client from K.S. Muhtiar S/o Bhuri Singh through relevant documents on dated 11.03.1993 and out of which 25 sq. yds. has been sold out by my client.

client. My client has not entered into any type of sale, transfer, Will, mortgage etc. regarding the above said property. If anybody claim the above mentioned property of my client through any attested or registered claim to be executed by me in near future, the same shall be treated as null and void. Moreover, after my death, my family member ie. my wife Vinita Madaan and my two sons namely. Paras Madaan and Chirag Madaan, shall be the owner of my all properties including the above mentioned property. shall be the owner of my all properties including the above mentioned property. If any person deals with the above said property arme will be illegal and shall be treated as null and void as my client have never given any consent for any kind of dealing with the above mentioned property. If any person deal or fail to comply the above said condition for the above mentioned property then he/she will be liable to face the consequence at his/her own risk and my client will not be responsible for any such claim or illedal activity.

cláimor illegal activity.

DUSHYANT NAYAK (ADVOCATE)

CHAMBER NO M-8 & 9, NEAR SBI

WESTERN WING TIS HAZÁRI COURT

DELHI-110054, MOB-9811053567

Even if jailed, will fight on: Rahul

THE PIONEER O CHANGE OF NAME

I, Rajesh Kishanlal Sharma S/o Kishanlal Sharma, R/o -2604 Cleo County, Sector-121, Noida, Gautam Nagar, 201301, Pradesh, Changed my name to Rajesh Sharma for all future

purposes.

PD(90305)A

guilty of something, they want to distract everybody's attention. "If you catch a thief, the first thing he says is 'I didn't do it, the second thing he says is 'look there, look there...' That is what the BJP is doing." Asking where the money into Adani group has come as Adani does not generate this type of money and that money has come from someone," he said all this drama -OBC, disqualification, antinational, is being orchestrated to distract from the panic that prime minister is feeling that his relationship with Adani is going to be exposed.

"That relationship is going to be exposed. Nobody is going to stop that. It is going to happen, because the Opposition is going to find that answer," he said. Asked if

he was hopeful that his membership would be restored, Rahul said, "I am not interested in hope. (Whether) I get my membership back or not, I will do my job. Even if they permanently disqualify me I will do my job, if they reinstate me, I will do my job. It does not matter to me whether I am in Parliament or outside it. I have to do my 'tapasya' and I will keep doing it," he said.

The Congress leader also thanked Opposition parties for extending support to him and asserted that going forward, all of them will work together. Asked about the consequences of his disqualifica-

tion, Rahul said the Opposition

will benefit the most from this

"panic reaction of Prime Minister Modi". "They got into

panic mode that the truth will

come out. They have handed over the biggest weapon to the Opposition because people have a question on their mind... And question is why is the prime minister saving this corrupt person," Rahul alleged. He said he will continue to fight for the truth in the country and to defend the democratic nature of this country. "I will do whatever I have

to do to defend the democratic nature of the country. What does that mean? It means defending the institutions of the country, defending the voice of the poor people of the country, it means telling the people of this country the truth about people like Mr Adani who are basically exploiting the relationship with the Prime Minister," Rahul said. He alleged that for the BJP-led time.

Government, "country is Adani and Adani is country". Asked about the BJP's charge that his 2019 remarks that were the centre of the defamation case were an insult to OBCs, Rahul said he has always talked about brotherhood and the issue was not about OBCs but about Adani and his ties the Government.

In response to another question, Rahul said, "My name is not Savarkar, my name is Gandhi, Gandhi does not offer apology to anyone." Asked about the defamation case in which he was convicted, Rahul said it is a legal matter he will not comment on it.

He also said attacks are being made on democracy in the country and examples of it keep manifesting from time to

Indian-Americans march against Khalistani vandals

A statue of Mahatma Gandhi in Canada was spray painted with pro-Khalistan and anti-India graffiti on Thursday, the latest in a string of such incidents.

The vandalism occurred near the City Hall in the town of Hamilton, in the province of Ontario. Meanwhile in Canberra, Khalistan supporters gathered outside Australian parliament to protest against police crackdown on radical preacher Amritpal Singh and his associates in Puniab.

On Monday, India lodged a strong protest with the US Charge d'Affaires in Delhi over the consulate attack. The US government was also asked to take necessary steps to avoid the occurrence of similar incidents in future, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said.

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Labour Welfare Board new flashpoint between LG, CM

LG asks city Govt to send names for labour welfare board, or explain why it can't

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In yet another flashpoint between the two, Delhi LG VK Saxena has asked the AAP Government to reconstitute the Labour Welfare Board appointing suitable members or communicate opinion on the matter so that it could be referred to the President, sources said.

No immediate reaction could be had from the AAP on the matter.

The LG and AAP government have had many rows in the past several months including the one over probes



ordered by Saxena on complaints of corruption and the issue of sending teachers for training to Finland.

The labour welfare body remains without an executive board even after two years due to an impasse over eligibility criteria for appointment of the members.

"The LG has asked for the Board to be constituted with members who have domain expertise in labour welfare or send the file to him for expressing difference of opinion," sources at LG office said. The AAP government sat on a file meant for re-constitution of the Delhi Labour Welfare Board (DLWB) for more than 14 months, between June, 2021 and September, 2022 and finally sent the proposal with names for approval of the Lt Governor on September 12, 2022, they

The names proposed by the then labour minister, Manish Sisodia, and approved by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal were not as per the criteria for selection of such members, sources at LG Office said.

The members nominated to the Board, instead of being domain experts in labour welfare, were picked from among vaccination camp organisers, RWA presidents and individuals distributing food during Covid pandemic,

The Lt Governor returned the file to the Chief Minister on November 21 2022, with observations advising the Labour department to submit a panel of names for appointment after a thorough background check on their suitability and experience in related fields.

"Members of this Board perform important functions of welfare of labourers and therefore, it is important that such members must possess sufficient experience in the field of labour welfare. "Such nominated members must demonstrate skill and expertise which reveal their capabilities to contribute to the cause of labour welfare," the LG had observed.

In the proposed list, most of the nominees, especially nine of the 17 do not have appropriate experience or domain knowledge to effectively contribute for welfare activities and also it is difficult to ascertain if nominations of others are commensurate with the spirit of the law,

Spl meeting for civic budget to be held on Mar 28: MCD

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Aspecial meeting has been convened at the MCD headquarters on March 28 to discuss and deliberate on the civic budget, officials said on Saturday. As required by norms, the civic budget is to be cleared by March 31.

The MCD passed the "schedule of taxes" in the civic budget for 2023-24 on February 15.

But, the remaining budget process was stalled as the standing committee of the civic body is yet to be elected.

The Municipal Corporation of Delhi is "exploring options" to have the remainder of the civic budget cleared by March 31, official sources said on Friday.

The MCD on Saturday said in a statement, the special budget meeting" of MCD for budget proposals for the revised estimates for the year 2022-2023 and 2023-2024



would be held on Tuesday at Aruna Asaf Ali Meeting Hall at

2 pm.
Earlier, the MCD had also written to the Delhi government to seek permission to call a special session for clearing the budget before March end.

If the entire budget doesn't get passed by March 31, things may "get into a limbo", a source said on Friday.

The allocations made to various departments in a civic budget is key to proper civic functioning.

The "schedule of taxes"

was passed by the special officer of the MCD, whose office ceased to exist after the election

Excise policy case: Court defers Sisodia's bail plea hearing till April 5

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Acourt on Saturday Aadjourned till April 5 the hearing on the bail plea of AAP leader Manish Sisodia, who has been arrested by the ED in a money laundering case linked to alleged irregularities in implementing the nowscrapped excise policy in

Special Judge MK Nagpal adjourned the hearing after Sisodia's counsel sought more time to prepare a detailed response to ED's submission on the bail plea.

Sisodia moved the bail plea on Tuesday and the court sought the Enforcement Directorate's response by March 25.

On Wednesday, after seven days of questioning by the ED, the court sent him to 14day judicial custody.

Chirag Dilli flyover may open to public by April 1, rain delayed repair work

The ongoing repair work on Chirag Dilli flyover was delayed by a couple of days due to recent rain in the city, an official said on Saturday.

Public Works Department (PWD) Minister Atishi have directed officials to ensure opening it for traffic by April The minister in her second

visit of the flyover on Saturday, second in last one week, also directed them to keep one lane of the flyover open for traffic during repair work.

She observed during the visit that maintenance work was running 2 days behind the scheduled date of completion



The PWD minister instructed the officials to expedite the maintenance work on the first part of the flyover and prepare to open it for traffic by

April 1," said a Delhi government statement. Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal is closely monitoring the maintenance work of the Chirag Dilli flyover, Atishi said. "Our priority is to get the people of Delhi trafficfree. PWD is working on a war footing in this direction and will complete the maintenance work of the Chirag Dilli flyover soon so that people can get relief from traffic," she stated.

During the joint inspection with the officials of PŴD and Delhi Police, she instructed the officials to make an action plan for better traffic management during the maintenance of both phases of work.

Maintenance work is going on at the Chirag Delhi flyover and a part of the flyover has been closed for traffic, leading to an increase in traffic jams.

According to PWD officials, the maintenance work was supposed to be completed

with bullet wound in chest in Vikaspuri

STAFF REPORTER

A head constable was found dead Saturday with a bullet wound at the third battal ion campus in Vikaspuri area, police said.

According to them, Abhay, a head constable of Delhi police, was found with a bullet injury in his chest around 3.15 pm. The bullet was fired from his service weapon, they said. Proceeding under section 174 of CrPC has been initiated to ascertain whether it was an accidental

Cop found dead | City received highest single-day rain in March in 3 years: IMD

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi received 12.2 mm of rainfall in a 24-hour period ending at 8.30 am on Saturday, the highest in a day in March in three years, according to the Ladio March in three years. ing to the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

The city's maximum temperature settled at 30.4 degrees Celsius, normal during the

The Safdarjung observatory, Delhi's primary weather station, recorded 12.2 mm rainfall between 8.30 am on Friday and 8.30 am on Saturday. The air quality of the national capital improved to satisfactory level as the Air Quality Index (AQI) at 6 pm was recorded at 80.



below the season's average, the The relative humidity oscil-

'poor", 301 and 400 "very

poor", and 401 and 500

minimum temperature of 15.3

degrees Celsius, two notches

"severe".The city recorded a

lated between 85 per cent and 54 per cent, it added.

The weatherman has forecast a partly cloudy sky for Monday and the maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to settle around 31 and 15 degrees Celsius, respec-Heavy rain lashed parts of

the national capital on Friday

Covid cases: Mock drill at city Govt hospitals today to check preparedness

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi government-run hospitals will conduct a mock drill on Sunday to assess their preparedness to deal with any eventuality in view of rising COVID-19 and seasonal influenza cases.

order to this effect was issued to medical superintendents, medical directors and chief district medical officers (CDMOs) by the Delhi health department on Friday. "All the MS/MDs and

CDMOs of all the hospitals of Delhi government are hereby requested to hold a mock drill on 26.03.2023 (Sunday) to check the preparedness of health, infrastructure, and logistics including availability of oxygen, so as to prepare for any eventuality, especially in view of increasing ĆOVID-19 and influenza type cases," according to the order.

The mock drill must be conducted by all the hospitals of the Delhi government and a report be submitted by



March 26 evening or March 27 morning, furnishing details on a list of parameters mentioned in an earlier order dated March 23, it says.

Sources said the drill is expected to begin in the morn-Delhi has seen an increase

in the number of Covid cases over the last few days amid a sharp rise in H3N2 influenza cases in the country.

The national capital

recorded 152 coronavirus cases with an increased positivity rate of 6.66 per cent on Friday.

Delhi had logged 117 Covid cases with a positivity rate of 4.95 per cent on

Thursday. According to the March 23 order, in view of the daily upsurge in COVID-19 cases being witnessed in Delhi since the last few weeks, medical directors, medical superintendents, administrators of all government and private hospitals must ensure that all equipment such as ventilators, bi-pap, oxygen con-centrators, PSA, etc. Are in functional condition.

All severe acute respiratory illness (SARI) and five per cent of influenza like illness (ILI) patients should be tested for COVID-19 as well as seasonal influenza H1N1/H3N2, the March 23 order stated.

Case filed against people for circulating message to remove Indian flag from Pragati Maidan

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has registered a case against unidentified people for recording and circulating an audio message containing the flag from Pragati Maidan, the venue for high profile G-20 meet in September.

The case was registered at the complaint of a man who received the pre-recorded message on his phone when he arrived at the Delhi air-

In the message, the alleged Khalistan supporter was talking about taking over Pragati Maidan and removing the Indian flag. Later, the person also allegedly talked about 'Waris Punjab De' chief Amritpal Singh, they said.

A case under sections 153 (provocation with intent to cause riot), 153A (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion etc) and 505 (statements conducing to public mischief) of



registered at IGI Airport Police Station, they said.

The case has been transferred to the Special Cell unit of the Delhi Police, they added. Singh, the radical preacher, is on the run after the Punjab Police arrested several of his supporters in a major crackdown that began weeks after the group stormed the Ajnala Police Station near Amritsar to secure the release of an arrested associate.

The episode had raised fears over the possibility of the return of Khalistani militancy to the state that borders

Won't let conspiracy to stop power subsidy succeed, says Kejriwal

STAFF REPORTER IN NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday asserted that his Government would not let the "conspiracy" to stop the power subsidy succeed and said he would defend like a rock the rights of the people of Delhi.

A day after Power Minister Atishi alleged in the Delhi Assembly that officials were trying to stop the power subsidy scheme at the behest of Lietenant-Governor VK Saxena, Kejriwal warned him not to complain later about "dignities" being breached.

Earlier this week, Saxena in an apparent reference to his relationship with the AAP dispensation that has been aggressively attacking him over a range of issues - had said that the "dignity of speech" was breached in recent times. While alleging that there is conspiracy to stop the power subsidy scheme introduced by his Government in Delhi, Kejriwal



tweeted in Hindi, "Still they say Kejriwal fights a lot."

"Conspiracies are being hatched to stop (the) free electricity (scheme) in Delhi. But we will not allow their conspiracy to succeed. Kejriwal will be found standing like a rock for the rights of the people of Delhi. LG saheb, please do not say later that dignities are being

breached," Kejriwal said.
Amid allegations of officials obstructing the Delhi government's electricity subsidy scheme at the behest of Saxena Assembly Speaker Ram Niwas Goel on Friday referred the matter to the Standing Committee on Public Facilities.

Laxmi Nagar spa raided for prostitution

being run from a spa and massage centre in east Delhi's Laxmi Nagar with the arrest of two people, a senior officer said on Saturday. Police raided a place called True Bliss Spa in V3S Mall on Friday

The spa operators charged Rs 1,000 from him

after the decoy gave them a missed call and apprehended

Farmhouse in Chhattarpur sealed for non-payment of ₹1.09 crore property tax



STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The Municipal Corporation I of Delhi on Saturday said it has "sealed" a farmhouse in the Chhattarpur area for alleged non-payment of property tax amounting to nearly Rs 1.09 crore.

The taxpayer "failed to pay the outstanding tax dues since 2004-05, despite being given ample opportunities by the MCD to pay outstanding dues", the civic body said in a

lar action against big tax defaulters for "sealing/attachment of farm houses/other properties in various areas", it The MCD in the ongoing

The MCD is taking simi-

drive to crackdown on property tax defaulters has "sealed/attached one farm house today in DLF Chhatterpur area located in south Delhi. Approximately Rs 1.09 crore of property tax is outstanding against the prop-

Conman Sukesh writes mushy letter to Jacqueline from jail

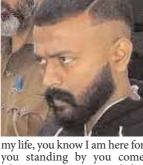
STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

C ukesh Chandrashekhar, who Ois lodged in Mandoli jail here in connection with several frauds, wrote a letter to Bollywood actress Jacqueline Fernandez on his birthday and confessed his love for her.

He said that he was missing her on his birthday and referred to her as a "beautiful "My Bomma, I miss you a

ton on this day of my birthday, I miss your energy around me, I have no words, but I know your love for me is never ending, is all over me. I know what is in your beautiful heart. I don't need proof and that's all that matters to me, baby. But I must admit, I am missing you, you know how much I love you my botta bomma," he wrote in

The letter further said, You and your love is the bestest gift which is priceless in



you standing by you come what may. Love you my baby thank you for giving me your heart. I also thank all my supporters and friends for all your wishes on my birthday. I have received hundreds of letters greetings. I feel blessed, thank

Chandrashekhar is accused of cheating many people, including high-profile individuals such as former Fortis Healthcare promoter Shivinder Mohan Singh's wife Aditi Singh.

Two held for duping people on promise of high returns in Bitcoins



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

wo men were arrested for Two men were arrested for allegedly duping people on the pretext of high returns in Bitcoins, police said on Saturday.

The accused have been identified as Jatin Kumar Dhall (28), a resident of Rohini Sector-28, and Anshul Arora (33), a resident of Noida Extension, Uttar Pradesh, they said.

The accused came in con-

tact with each other through

a Telegram group, police said. A complaint was received from the wealth manager of a private bank alleging that in September 2022, an unidentified person contact him on Instagram and asked him to invest money in Bitcoin which would yield very high returns, police said. The complainant transferred Rs 90,000 on the assurance that he would get Rs 2,50,000 within three hours, they said.

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A³⁴-year-old cab driver was arrested for allegedly killing a woman for not agreeing to marry him, police said

east Delhi's New Ashok Nagar

Mukhiya, the accused is a resident of Madhubani in Bihar and works as a cab driver.

adding that Mukhiya presently lives in Chirag Delhi with his family and his wife works as a maid.

police officer said.

The autopsy report revealed that the victim had suffered head injuries along

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI The Delhi Police has bust-

sending a decoy customer.

after bargaining and showed him nine women and asked him to choose one of them. The customer was charged Rs 2,000 extra for sex, police A team raided the place

a 24-year-old Ram Sagar, a resident of Jhilmil Colony, and a 20-year-old Deepak, who lives in Vishwas Nagar, a senior police officer said.

Cabbie murders woman for not marrying him

on Saturday.

The incident took place in Identified as Shiv Shankar

He is married and has four children, police said,

Police received information about the murder on February 26 and reached the spot where the body of a 30year-old woman was found lying on the floor, a senior

mouth, suggesting smothering, the officer said. During the investigation, a friend of the victim informed

police that a taxi driver was

forcing her to marry him. The

friend of the victim had nei-

ther met the person nor seen

with a few others in her inner

his picture, the officer said. On checking the CCTV footage of the nearby area, police spotted a man behaving suspiciously. He was seen entering the lane at 7.13 pm and coming out at 7.27 pm, Deputy Commissioner of Police (east) Amrutha

Guguloth said. The husband of the victim told police that he had received a call around a month ago where the caller threatened him to leave his wife, they said, adding that the caller had also affixed some pamphlets mentioning his and her wife's phone number with derogatory remarks

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

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

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



za in circulation in the country seem to be influenza A (H1Nl) and influenza A (H3N2). "The States must keep a watch on these causes of dis-

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

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

closed settings, advisory reads. The States have also been advised to take a stock of hospital preparedness including drugs, beds including ICU beds; medical equipment, medical oxygen, capacity building of human resource on existing guidelines as well as vaccination coverage. "Testing at the level of dis-

tricts & blocks also varies, with

some states heavily relying on

the less sensitive rapid antigen tests. Hence it is critical to maintain optimum testing for Covid-19, equitably distributed across the states," said the

'Virus may alter DNA in infected patients'

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

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

But SARS-CoV-2's effect on chromatin was not known. "This particular finding is quite unique and has not been seen



its severe impacts on human health." said Wenbo Li, Associate Professor in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology of the McGovern Medical School at University of Texas-Houston. In this study, researchers used leading-edge methods

and comprehensively charac-

terised the chromatin archi-

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

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

Misa questioned by

ED, Tejashwi by CBI

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

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

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

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

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

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

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



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

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

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

India, US will boost ties, says Indian envoy to US PIONEER NEWS POST has sat to

SERVICE/AGENCIES NEW DELHI/WASHINGTON

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

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

"Congratulated @ericgarcetti on his swearing-in as



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

stock of the passenger ameni-

ties at Baramulla Railway

Station. The Minister dis

railway officers the develop-

ment works to be done at

inspected the dry fruit stall of

"One Station One Product".

He appreciated the local dry

fruits of Baramulla and pur-

in land-for-jobs case

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

Earlier, Yadav had skipped summons thrice.

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

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

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

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

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



not be completed by the time the initial chargesheet was

The CBI has alleged that during Lalu Prasad's tenure as railway Minister from 2004 to 2009, favourite candidates were appointed in violation of norms and procedures without any advertisement or public notice.

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

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

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

USBRL project will be completed by Jan-Feb, says Vaishnav

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

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

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

Addressing media persons



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

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

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

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

accused persons that could Differences between Govt, judiciary

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

the Chief Judicial Magistrate court, Mayiladuthurai, in the presence of Chief Justice of Îndia Justice D Y Chandrachud, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin and Acting Chief Justice of Madras High Court Justice T Raja

"We have differences, but it doesn't mean there is confrontation. It sends a wrong message across the world.

"I want to make it clear that there is no problem between different organs of the State. There are signs of robust democratic actions, which are not a crisis," he emphasised.

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



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

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

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

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

His Ministry was involved in developing a common core vocubaulary where Indian languages will have certain common usages, purely technical in nature, soon, to ensure that common people receive orders

Lauding the courts in Tamil Nadu for their excellent performance during the pandemic in delivering justice to the people, he said judicial infrastructure in Tamil Nadu was comparatively better than in many States in India.

Recently, he visited Puducherry and found that the kind of work being done to improve the judicial infrastructure was possible only when the judiciary and government worked together in understanding the issues and tried to solve them.

Talking about fund allocations, he said last year the government had allotted Rs 9,000 crore for district and other courts in the State, and his department was pushing hard for utilisation of funds so that more could be sought.

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

India pushing for TB vaccines to eliminate infection by 2025

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

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

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

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

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

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

Stop TB Partnership Dr Lucica

Ditiu emphasized that "India

has a pivotal role in eliminat-

ing TB because India's progress will drive the world. She also praised India for "doing very sophisticated modelling with their Ni-kshay

data."

"Their innovations, ideas and strategies for bringing healthcare closer to people is something that the whole world can emulate", she stated.

The Stop TB Partnership Board also appreciated India's estimation of TB burden developed with in-country evidence.

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

Septuagenarian's odyssey in law knows no bound

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

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

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

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

Secrets of beetles' survival revealed

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ **NEW DELHI**

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

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

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



global pests such as the grain weevil and red flour beetle.

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

"We ĥave shed new light

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

Pro-Khalistan groups protest at London's Parliament Square

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

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

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

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

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

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

At least four elderly people have died in the last few

days while trying to collect free

flour from the government

distribution points in Pakistan's Punjab province,

The deaths were reported

after several people flocked to

the government distribution

points after the cash-strapped

Pakistani government intro-

duced a free flour scheme for

the poor especially in Punjab

province to beat the sky-rock-

eting inflation.

Four elderly people died

and several fainted in a bid to

officials said on Saturday.

'Canada closely following developments in Punjab'

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

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

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

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

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

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

Four killed while collecting free flour in Pak

long hours," he said.

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

"This is today's Pakistan where the people are losing their lives to get free flour.

Multan, Muzaffargarh and

Faisalabad cities during the

last few days," a Punjab gov-

ernment senior officer told

occurred due to the huge rush

of people and lack of facilities

at the distribution points set up

by the government to distrib-

ute free flour among the citi-

stampede and the other two

died after getting exhausted

while standing in queue for

"Two of them died due to

He said the incidents

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

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

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

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

And this is because of the bad

policies of this government of

looters and thieves," PTI

Punjab president Dr Yasmin

agement at the free distribu-

tion of flour points, Prime

Minister Shehbaz Sharif has

started visiting such points.
On Saturday he visited

Sargodha city and inspected

the free flour points.
Sharif checked the quality

and weight of the flour bags

trict administration to facilitate

especially elderly people at

the flour distribution points.

He also directed the dis-

and talked to people.

Seeing the gross misman-

Rashid told PTI.

Eric Garcetti sworn in as US Ambassador to India

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

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

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

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

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

"I'm so honoured the vice

Tornadoes kill 23

Emergency officials in Mississippi said 23 people

have been killed by tornadoes

that tore through the state on

Friday night, destroying buildings and knocking out power as

severe weather that produced hail the size of golf balls moved through several southern states.

Management Agency con-firmed there had been 23

deaths as of 6:20 am on

Saturday with dozens of

injuries and four people miss-

Twitter post that search and

rescue teams from numerous

local and state agencies were

deployed along with personnel

to assist those impacted by the

tornadoes. The National

Weather Service confirmed a

tornado caused damage about

60 miles (96 kilometers) north-

City and Rolling Fork report-

ed destruction as the tornado

swept northeast at 70 mph

(113 kph) without weakening,

racing towards Alabama

through towns including Winona and Amory into the

The rural towns of Silver

east of Jackson, Mississippi.

The agency said in a

ing throughout the state.

The Mississippi Emergency

in Mississippi

AP ■ ROLLING FORK

Indian envoy talks partnership

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

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

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

president did this," he said. Second Gentleman Doug

Emhoff also attended the event. Former Mayor of Los Angeles Garcetti's nomination was pending before the US

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

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

He said he looked forward working with Garcetti. The US Embassy in India

has been without an ambassador since January 2021, the longest stretch in the history of US-India relations that the post has sat vacant, since Kenneth Juster, the last US envoy in New Delhi, stepped down after the change of government in America.

Congress since July 2021 when he was nominated by President

The Senate voted 52 to 42 to confirm Garcetti earlier this

stalled amid concerns by some lawmakers that he had not adequately handled allegations of sexual assault and harassment against a former senior

'Russia defensive in east Ukraine'

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

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

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

Russian forces must go through Bakhmut to push deeper into parts of the eastern Donbas region, though Western officials say that the capture of the city would have limited impact on the course of

Pennsylvania chocolate plant blast kills five, six missing



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

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

The explosion just before 5 pm sent a plume of black smoke into the air, destroying one building and damaging a neigh-bouring building that included apartments.

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

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

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

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

being treated and would be released, she said in an email. One patient was transferred to another facility, but Bezler provided no further details.

Kaag said people were asked to move back about a block in each direction from the site of the explosion but no evacuations were ordered.

GLOBE

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

Board of Trustees," the

statement.

Governor's office said in a

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

KING CHARLES HONOURS **QUEEN'S PALLBEARERS**

and a 61-year-old man.

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

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

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

Biden: Will protect our personnel in Syria

seeking free flour to force

The people have criticised

them to stand in the queue.

the lack of proper arrange-

ments by the district adminis-

tration at these distribution

points and the short supply of

flour points early in the morning and have to wait for a long

Imran Khan's Pakistan

Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party

has condemned the deaths

and criticised the policy.

time in queues.

Most of them arrive at the

Former prime minister

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

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

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

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

The officials said that based on preliminary information, there was a rocket attack Friday at a Conoco plant, and one ÚS service member was injured but is in stable condition. At about the same time. several drones were launched at Green Village, where US people. troops are also based. One of the Cial said all but one of the

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

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

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

was of Iranian origin.

NZ voices concern to China over aid to Russia

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

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

110008, have severed all their relations and

behavior. They are out of the control of my

clients and is misbehaving with my clients

My clients are not responsible/ liable for any

SANJEEV DWIVEDI (Advocate)

warm affair in which Xi and Russian President Vladimir Mahuta reiterated her govern-Mahuta's four-day trip,

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client Sh. **MAHAVIR** S/o Sh. Hira Lal R/o 13A/2, Gali No.21A, Prem Nagar Road, Baljeet Nagar, Patel Nagar, Central, Delhi-This is to inform to all concern that WG. CDR NARESH_CHANDER_CHOUDHRY_(RETD. 130, SECTOR-36A, CHANDIGARH, who is the iginal allottee of Type-A. Residential Flat earing No. Q-386, GROUND FLOOR, Car debarred their daughter namely Pooja W/o Sh. Ravi Kumar from their all moveable and Parking Space No. Q-5/11, situated in BLOCK D. Jalvayu Vihar, Sector-21, NOIDA, Distt Bautam Budh Nagar, U.P., had sold the said mmovable properties due to their bad roperty on General Power of Attorney basis to IRS. ARTI LAKHINA W/O SH. SUNIL KUMAN LAKHINA, R/O Q-386, JALVAYU VIHAR SECTOR-21, NOIDA, U.P., which is registered on dated 25-1-1999, and the Agreement to Sel was executed, which was not Registered. So it is acts, deeds and things done by above formed to all concerned that the said flat Gajanand Block Tis Hazari Court ND-54 AKHINA S/O SH HEMRAJI AKHINA R/O O 386, JALVAYU VIHAR, SECTOR-21, NOIDA U.P. on basis of General Power of attorney. ny one has/have any objection he/she may file is/her objection along with the sufficient proof the Group Housing Department of Noida uthority within 15 days from the date of

MRS. ARTI LAKHINA

ublication of this Notice

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

Civil Wing, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi-110054

New Zealand Foreign Putin praised each other and ment's condemnation of is to achieve a ceasefire and counterpart Qin Gang.

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

On the Ukraine war, ed saying in the report.

Wang said the pressing task China would continue to play a constructive role to promote a political settlement, the agency added. During the meeting with Qin, Mahuta also raised concerns over the human rights situation in Xinjiang, the erosion of freedoms in Hong Kong, disputes in the South China Sea and increasing tensions in the Taiwan Strait, her press office said.

CIN - U67100MH2007PLC174759 | Ideas create. values protecting | Ideas create. values | Ideas create. values protecting | Ideas create. values | Ideas create. value APPENDIX IV-A [See proviso to rule 8(6) r/w proviso to Rule 9(1)] E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

Public Notice for E-auction sale of immovable property under the Securitisation and

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

that the immovable property described herein below ("Secured Asset"), mortgaged to Edelweiss Asset Reconstruction Company Limited acting in its capacity as Trustee of EARC Trust SC-30, ("EARC"), the physical possession of which has been taken by Authorised Officer of EARC on October 31, 2022, will be sold by way of E-Auction on April 13, 2023 at 12:00 Noon with unlimited extension of 5 Minutes each through e-Auction Agency M/s e-Procurement Technologies Limited (Auction Tiger) on the website/portal https://edelweissarc.auctiontiger.net on "As is where is", "As is what is", "Whatever there is" and "No Recourse" basis for recovery of aggregate dues of Rs. 505,29,95,872.25/- (Rupees Five Hundred Five Crores Twenty Nine Lac Ninety Five Thousand Eight Hundred Seventy Two and Twenty Five Paise Only) being due as on August 23.2022, together with interest at contractual rates and other costs and expenses thereon to EARC from KLG SYSTEL LIMITED (in Liquidation) ("Borrower") and Mr. Kumud Goel and Ms. Pushpa Lata Goel ("Guarantors").

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

All that piece and parcel of Industrial plot of land being Plot No. 24, admeasuring 1000 sq.

mtr. in Sector 18, Electronics City, Gurgaon , Haryana along with all the building/structures being thereon (total built-up structure - 15,750 Sq. Ft.) and bounded as follows :North: ccess Road, South: Plot No. 22, East: Access Road West: Plot No. 23 Reserve Price Rs.11,47,50,000/- Earnest Money Deposit Rs.1,14,75,000/-

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

the Secured Creditor's website i.e. www.edelweissarc.in/Propertysale Date: 26.03.2023

Authorized Officer

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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ई-निविदा सूचना

named Pooia since today

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

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to IS:779:1994/IS:2373-1981/ISO: 4064 with ISI or EEC/MID certification mark shall be with protection class of IP68 with 2 years warranty anywhere in Uttarakhand की आपूर्ति। 10.04.2023 28.03.2023 120 upto 5:00 p.m. from 10.04.2023 11:00 a.m. upto 5:00 p.m.

अर्हता:- 1. ISI or EEC/MID certification mark license for water meters and factory as per standard confirming to IS:779:1994/IS:2373-1981/ISO: 4064 certificate holder or dealers authorized by the manufacturer are allowed to participate in this tender. The Joint Venture are Authorised dealer should have MOU with manufacturer with assured minimum quantity

3. The preference will be given to the water meter manufacturers. Manufacturer must have supplied minimum 50,000 water meters to government/semi govt/PSU in last seven years in 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22. 4. Production unit of the manufacturer should be established in India confirming to IS:779:1994/IS:2373-1981/ISO: 4064 with ISI or EEC/MID certification mark shall be with protection class of IP68 with 2 years warranty anywhere in Uttarakhand की आपूर्ति।

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28.03.2023 11:00 a.m. to 10.04.2023 11:00 a.m. to 10.04.2023 11:00 a.m. 11:00 a.m. 11:00 a.m. अर्हता:-- 1. ISI or EEC/MID certification mark license for water meters and factory as per standard confirming to IS:779:1994/IS:2373-1981/ISO: 4064 certificate holder or dealers authorized by the manufacturer are allowed to participate in this tender. The Joint Venture are 2. Authorised dealer should have MOU with manufacturer with assured minimum quantity

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as described is free and clear of all claims charges, encumbrances and my client sha proceed to conclude the negotiation and no

MJ-Shalok Associates, Chamber No. 463 Email: sj301268@yahoo.co.in

03.04.2023

claim shall be entertained thereafter. Signed for and on behalf of

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

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

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

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



government support would result in price escalation of EVs significantly.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

doesn't rely on a 4G LTE net-

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

the past four months.

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

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

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

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

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

Climate change threatening tea sector globally: ITA

PTI KOLKATA

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

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

that the industry needs to adopt a multi-faceted to address the climate change issue by way of sustainable farming practices and reduc-

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

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

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



Board, production in January 2023 in the country was 13.43

million kilogramme as against 16.22 million kilogramme in

the same month of last calen-

Cabinet approves MSP for raw jute for FY 2023-24

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

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



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

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

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

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

IANS NEW DELHI

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

23K techies laid off in 82 desi startups

IANS NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

PTI ■ KOCHI

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

BUSINESS BRIEF

AIIMS TO GET WAITING HALL, BHOOMI POOJAN HELD

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



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

Murgappa, Premji to acquire Lotus Surgicals for ₹348 cr

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

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



scaling up the platoform

include organic and inorganic

acquisitions.

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

ChatGPT has power to change healthcare: Report

IANS NEW DELHI

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

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

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



letters so doctors can spend care," said Tina Deng, Principal more time on patient interac-Medical Devices Analyst at tion. More importantly, chat-GlobalData, in a statement. AI bots have the potential to integration into chatbots and increase the effectiveness and virtual assistants can motivate accuracy of the processes for and interact with patients. It preventive care, symptom idencan review a patient's symp-

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

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

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

from using AI-enabled virtual

patients round-the-clock atten-Additionally, chatbots can be used for social purposes,

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

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

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

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

Shooter Manu wins India's 7th medal

lympian shooter Manu Bhaker clinched the 25m pistol bronze medal at the ISSF Pistol/Rifle World Cup to take India's medal tally to seven, including a gold, here on Saturday.

Bhaker, the multiple World Cup medal winner, had shot 290 in the precision round on Friday and entered the second day of the competition well placed for the rapid round.

In the rapid round on Saturday, she again shot three superb series of 98, 99 and 97 to aggregate 294 and advance to the ranking round placed third.

Another Indian, Esha Singh, who had shot 292 in precision, scored 289 in rapid to aggregate 581 and advance to the ranking round placed eighth. In the ranking match 1, Bhaker qualified for the medal round as the third qualifier with an aggregate of 14 points, along with Germany's Doreen Vennekamp (14 points), while Esha was eliminated.

Two shooters from ranking match — China's Ziyue Du and Yaxuan Xiong — qualified for the medal round with 12



points each, to make up the quartet vying for the top posi-

In a tough medal match, Bhaker was no match for Doreen (30 points) and Ziyue Du (29 points) who won the

gold and silver, while the Indian could aggregate only 20 points to finish her campaign with a

This is the first medal in the ongoing World Cup for Bhaker, who had failed to impress in her

favourite event, air pistol, on the opening day of the competition, finishing 16th with 568 points.

China continued their domination in the tournament, winning a sixth gold medal out of the eight decided so far. The final competition day comes up on Sunday with two more finals left to be played -- the women's 3P and the men's 25m rapid fire

Aishwary finishes fourth

Om's rear-guard action propels him into tied second

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Du Linshu won the first

medal event of competition on day four, defeating Hungary's

Istvan Peni 16-10 in the men's 3P gold medal clash.

Seasoned Swiss 3P specialist Jan Lochbihler won the

bronze when he edged out home favourite Aishwary

Tomar in the top eight ranking

round with a score of 407.4

while Aishwary, courtesy three

five-shot series in the 40s in the

final standing position, fin-

Du topped the round with 410.7 while Istvan was second

with 408.2. The Indian had

earlier topped the 60-shot qual-

ification round with a score of

-- six gold, two silver and two bronze. India is placed second

Germany is third with one

old and one silver each while

Hungary is fourth with two sil-

ver medals. Azerbaijan,

Kazakhstan, USA and Switzerland are the other medal

four bronze medals.

ished with a score of 405.5.

He finished the 40-shot

Om Prakash Chouhan fired a 66 to zoom 11 spots to tied second with a card of 13-under 203 while emerging as the highest-placed Indian at the USD 300,000 Duncan Taylor Black Bull Challenge here on Saturday. Italy's Lorenzo Scalise shot the third day's best score of seven-under 65 to take a twoshot lead at 15-under 201 at the Karnataka Golf Association (KGA) course.

Chouhan was in a four-way tie for the second spot along with Spain's Victor Pastor (67), England's Ashley Chesters (68) and Sweden's Rikard Karlberg (69). Aman Raj (71) was the second Indian in the top-10. He was placed tied ninth at 10-under

Lorenzo Scalise (68-68-65), on his first trip to India, has posted only one bogey in his last 591. China now has 10 medals 54 holes. The 27-year-old from Monza, who currently sits in 10th position on the Road to with the lone gold won by Sarabjot Singh in the men's 10m air pistol and one silver and Mallorca Rankings, was pleased with every part of his game as he went error-free.

Scalise said, "I hit it great off the tee and put myself into some great positions. My putting was very good, and I only left myself short sided once. "I've started the season well

and my aim is to be in contention every week because you



throughout the year if you want to finish in the top 20 and get your DP World Tour card."

Chouhan (70-67-66), a seven-time winner on the PGTI, had a quiet start with just one birdie on the front-nine. The Mhow-based Chouhan then began to gather steam with birdie-eagle on the 10th and 11th making a 16-feet conversion on the latter.

Chouhan then stumbled with a double-bogey on the 12th where he found the hazard. He then came up with a fantastic rear-guard action by sinking long-distance birdie putts on the 14th, 16th, 17th and 18th to rise into contention.

The 36-year-old Chouhan said, "After a good start, the double-bogey on the 12th was quite disappointing but fortunately I didn't let that affect my game. I was pleased with the very strong finish. "I've been working on the mental aspect of my game as errors on the course used to affect me a lot in the past.

Satwik-Chirag duo enters semi-final of Swiss Open

Dynamic Indian doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty has entered the semi-finals of the Swiss Open Super Series 300 badminton event defeating the Danish pair of Jeppe Bay and Lasse Molhede in three hardfought games.

On Friday night, the Indian pair fought off the challenge in 54 minutes, winning 15-21, 21-11, 21-14.

The victory came after a hard-fought 84-minute quarter-final battle and now they will face the Malaysian pair of Ong Yew Sin and Teo Ee Yi late on Saturday night. Satwik-Chirag are the only

Indian contenders left in a tournament where the likes of PV Sindhu and Lakshya Sen suffered early defeats.

a great start as they lost the first game easily at 15-21. The duo did pull things up in the middle of the game, reducing the deficit to just one point as they trailed

Manika, Sreeja

move up with

Top-seeded Manika Batra and second-seeded Sreeja

Akula, also the defending champion, made short work of

their respective opponents in

women's singles to enter the

Round of 32 in the 84th Senior National Table Tennis

Championships here on

Other seeded players, including Reeth Rishya, Diya

Chitale, Sutirtha Mukherjee,

Anusha Kutumbale, Swastika

Ghosh and Prapti Sen scored

easy wins to join the leaders in

the race for the crown and the

were the matches that went

down to the wire, including the

one between former national

champion Ankita Das from PSPB and Pelf from

Chandigarh and between

Shamini Kumareshan, also a

former national champion, and Deshna Vanshika from

Though Ankita advanced, Shamini could not.

and conceded two of the first three games to the Chandigarh

qualifier. But the inexperi-

enced Pelf, too, suffered in the

next and allowed the Olympian

Yet, Pelf made another des-

perate attempt to go ahead of

her known rival before suc-

cumbing to the pressure and

to restore parity.

Ankita did not begin well

But what aroused interest

other seeds

PTI ■ JAMMU

Saturday.

top prize purse.

Karnataka



However, the Danish pair won six consecutive points to wrap up the first game with ease.

The Indian pair picked up the tempo in the second game as they quickly got a seven-point cushion of 11-4 at the halfway break. They extended the lead to 10 points by the time parity was

The third game started on an even keel but the Indians were fantastic at the net as they first got an 11-7 lead and then maintained a seven-point advantage till the end of the

A tournament win will be a good comeback for the pair after a disappointing early round exit at the All England Championships.

New Bayern Munich coach Thomas Tuchel acknowl-

edged on Saturday that he faces a challenging start to his new job after his surprise hir-

AP ■ MUNICH

Nagelsmann.

Dortmund on April 1.

PTI ■ IMPHAL

 $F^{ormer\ India\ star\ Renedy}_{Singh\ is\ hoping\ that\ his\ foot-}$ ball-crazy home state of Manipur gets to host more national team matches in the near future.

Manipur, which has been providing footballers to the national team for the longest time, is hosting its first international competition in the form of the ongoing tri-nation tournament involving India, Myanmar and Kyrgyzstan.

The seven Manipuris in the current Indian team are lucky to experience something that one of the state's greatest players, Renedy couldn't while representing the Blue Tigers.

"I was part of the national team for 12 years, but I never got to play even one match over here," said Renedy, the former midfielder who donned the India jersey 66 times between 1998 and 2011. Renedy was the star performer in many of India's memorable triumphs, including the LG Cup in Vietnam, the in the Nehru Cup, but never had the opportunity to play for the national team in front of his home crowd in Manipur.

"I feel 25-30 thousand people turning up for India's first

I hope Manipur gets more national team matches in future: Renedy



match in Manipur is a big thing. Manipuri players, and I hope we get more matches in the future," Renedy said. "In this state, football has always been number one. It's not cricket here in the

most number of footballers, and we are still working hard to produce more. In every locality and community, you will see kids playing football. If the academies in Manipur keep

"As we all know, we're one of working, I'm sure we'll contin-

Speaking of academies, Renedy himself is a coach at the Classic Football Academy, one of Manipur's best, and one which is increasingly making its

mark at the national level.

CFA started as Renedy Football School in 2018 before being renamed three years ago. "We just became the Hero

U-17 Youth Cup champions. Our U-21 squad qualified for the Manipur state league and won the Shaheed Manoranjan Singh Memorial Tournament, beating former champions Sagolband United 7-0," Renedy said proudly. Rigorous competition at the youth level is a big reason why youth level is a big reason why Manipur stands out in terms of churning out national team players. "There are many academies in Manipur with former players as coaches who are also working hard. Our rivalry and competition will only help Indian football," he claimed.

As a coach, Renedy spends

As a coach, Renedy spends a lot of time analysing his team's matches. So in attendance at the natural for him to make some assessments. "Our players are fit, fast and well-built, but the only thing I want to see is them being more comfortable with the ball,"



PTI ■ HONG KONG

rain-hit match

reev Milkha Singh showed that he remains a force to reckon with and was the leading Indian alongside two youngsters — Veer Ahlawat and S Chikkarangappa — on the third day of World City Championship which has now been reduced to 54 holes.

Lightning and rain stopped the third round at 11.48 local time at the Hong Kong Golf Club and play was unable to restart again as the inclement

weather persisted.

Jeev, who now plays on the
Senior Tours in Japan and
Europe, followed his second round 4-under 66 with another strong display as he was 2-

under through eight holes in the third round.

With four Open slots available at the event, Jeev may well fancy his chances. At 5-under he is tied 11th with Ahlawat and Chikka.

Bidding to become the first player from Hong Kong to win an Asian Tour event and qualify for The Open, Taichi Kho was l-under through two holes and was 13-under and last week's winner in DGC Open Miguel Tabuena (1-over through two) was 9-under.

Four other players are at 7under and another four at 6under, while the three top Indians with six others are at 5under.

Other Indians are Gaganjeet Bhullar (66) who is among the few who have completed their third round. He is 4-under and tied 20th. He is alongside SSP Chawrasia at 1-under through eight holes. Chawrasia has a total

Shiv Kapur has a total of 3under with six holes to play, while Karandeep Kochhar ĥas a 1-under total with two holes to play. Honey Baisoya is 3-over

Tuchel ready for tough start at Bayern after surprise move



with many Bayern players currently away with their national teams and then seven games Bayern wanted him to take in the first 22 days of April. charge immediately, "it "I was relatively naive in occurred to me that it actualthe first conversation (with ly begins right away with Bayern). In the first 30 seconds Dortmund with an interna-I didn't know what we were tional break beforehand."

Bayern against Dortmund is "the" game in German soccer, he added. Tuchel said the

move came as a surprise and that as recently as on Tuesday

Tuchel hasn't worked in

he had no contact with Bayern.

He imagined his next job

would be outside of Germany,

he added, but that he had been

following Bayern's season with

Germany since 2017. When he left, the only major trophy he'd won was the German Cup with Dortmund. He returns having won two French titles at Paris Saint-Germain and the Champions League and Club World Cup with Chelsea.

Bayern can still win three titles this season - the Bundesliga, the German Cup and the Champions League.

Consistency is a concern after Bayern chief executive Oliver Kahn highlighted that as a reason for getting rid of Nagelsmann.

Bayern is likely to be looking for Tuchel to get the best out of players like Leroy Sané and Serge Gnabry, whose form has dropped off this season, and Sadio Mané, who has rarely been at his best in an injury-disrupted season since joining from Liverpool.



Mexico hopes to host Summer Olympics in 2036 or 2040

Mexico has declared its desire to host the Summer Olympics in 2036 or 2040 and says it already has most of the sports infrastructure required. Interest in hosting the 2036 Olympics had earlier been expressed by officials in countries including Egypt, England, India, Indonesia, Qatar and South Korea.

Mexico City hosted the Summer Games in 1968.

Mexican Foreign Relations Secretary Marcelo Ebrard and

Mexican Olympic Committee president María José Alcalá met Friday with IOC president Thomas Bach. Ebrard delivered a letter of intent to Bach.

A city or region wasn't specified but Ebrard and Alcalá said a committee would be formed to support the initiative. Last October, International Olympic Committee director general Christophe De Kepper said they were talking to "10 interested NOCs and regions across four continents" regarding potential candidacies for future Summer Games.

Mané scores on return to action with Senegal Haller, who scored to help his country Diallo eventually delivered one. Sabaly scored the first goal in the Salah took his goal with a first-time

Sadio Mané put his World Cup disappointment behind him by scoring on his return to international action as Senegal swept past Mozambique 5-1 in African Cup of Nations qualifying.

Mané darted behind the defense to

discussing or what it was

Once it became clear

about," Tuchel said.

poke home a pass by Youssouf Sabaly with his left foot for the reigning African champion's second goal in Dakar on Friday.

Mohamed Salah netted Egypt's

opener in a 2-0 win over Malawi. And there was also a successful return for Ivory Coast striker Sébastien

beat Comoros 3-1 in his first international since his comeback after receiving treatment for testicular cancer. Mané smiled as he celebrated his

goal with teammates, who had to do without their star player at the World Cup last year after he was injured just before the tournament.

Without Mané, Senegal was knocked out by England in the round of 16 at the World Cup. But the convincing win over Mozambique, Mané's first game for Senegal since before the World Cup, kept the Cup of Nations titleholder at the top of Group L with



three wins from three and on course to qualify for the continental championship next year in Ivory Coast.

ninth minute, Mané made it two in the 16th, and Iliman Ndiaye and Boulaye Dia ensured Senegal led 4-0 at halftime.

Habib Diallo sent a diving header in for the fifth with two minutes to go.

Gildo Vilanculos got Mozambique's only goal when he headed a parry by Alfred Gomis straight back past the Senegal goalkeeper to make it 4-1 early in the second half.

Senegal didn't allow that to threaten its dominance and controlled the rest of the game, with Mané at one point urging his team not to settle for 4-1 and go forward in search of more goals.

shot from a cross in the 20th minute to give Egypt the lead against Malawi in Cairo. Omar Marmoush was credited with the second but his low shot took a wicked deflection off a Malawi

Charles Thom. Egypt had 21 shots to Malawi's five and 75% possession, and the win revived the record seven-time African champion's qualifying campaign after it lost to Ethiopia in the last round to slip to the bottom of Group D on goal

defender and looped over goalkeeper of 4-under.

with four holes to play.

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

ujarat Titans fast bowler Shivam Mavi says he is Shivam Mavi says ne is developing a "special delivery" for the upcoming IPL. There is still some work left

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

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

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

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



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

The 24-year-old right-arm fast bowler Mavi, who was ear-

lier a part of the Kolkata Knight Riders camp, said Gujarat Titans have worked hard to bolster their bench strength this season.

"Honestly there is no pres-

sure (on Gujarat Titans). The kind of cricket we played last year wherein everyone played their respective roles, similarly, this year too we would want to

play our roles. But this year we also have bolstered our bench strength, we felt we lacked on this front so we worked on it," he

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

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

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

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

playing cricket regularly," he

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

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

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

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

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

led their respective teams into

the final of the five-team tour-

nament after 20 league games

hoped that the WPL is a start of

something special in Indian

cricket. Lanning said Australia's

WBBL has played a big role in

the success of national side and

"WBBL has played a mas-

Both the captains who have

talk to them," Kaur added.

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

PTI ■ BENGALURU

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

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

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

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

The Kiwi, however, was of the view that two different team sheets at the toss is set to negate the Impact Player rule quite a bit.

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

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

and no balls in the upcoming IPL, and Hesson said it's a welcome move. "It is already being used in WPL I think the more people

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

the game," he said.

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

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

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

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

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

PTI ■ BENGALURU

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

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

November last year.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

He had contributed 301 runs and taken six wickets in 13 matches during the previous edi-

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

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

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

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

Ex-Australia skipper

Paine hints at coaching

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

While the high scores did

dry up as the pitches tired out gradually, becoming slow and assisting spin bowlers, batters still enjoyed success on shorter boundary limits. At one stage, New Zealand d Royal Challengers

Bangalore all-rounder Sophie Devine even made a plea for pushing back the boundary lim-

Ahead of the final on

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

"Ham logo ne thodi na

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

hoped the same for WPL. sive role in the development of cricket in Australia and around the world as well. It provides great opportunities to players and exposes everybody to pressure situations in big games, the need to perform when it really

matters," Lanning said.

role post retirement

PTI ■ HOBART

ormer Australia Test skipper Tim Paine has indicated that has in ed that he is likely to take up a coaching job following his retirement from all forms of cricket recently.
Paine, who captained

Australia in 23 Tests following his elevation to the post in the wake of the 2018 ball-tampering saga in Cape Town, had stepped down as skipper days before the start of the 2021-22 Ashes series at home when he was accused of sending lewd text messages to a Cricket Tasmania official earlier on in his career.

Paine, 38, played his last domestic career game for Tasmania against Queensland in Sheffield Shield here last week.

"It's an emotional time when you move on from something that you love doing and you care deeply about, but I'll still be involved in the game of cricket," Paine was quoted as say-



ing by cricket.Com.Au, hinting he would explore possibilities of making a career in coaching.

The wicketkeeper-batter, who had retreated into a shell for more than a year following the sexting scandal, had returned to play for Tasmania last year despite not having a state con-

"I just wanted to have one more year with Tassie (Tasmania) and finish on a positive note with some good memories," said Paine, who played 35 Tests and an equal number of

New Zealand beat Sri Lanka by 198 runs in 1st one-day match

AP AUCKLAND

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

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

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

after 14.2 overs to honor victims, rescuers and recovery workers involved in Cyclone Gabrielle which battered New Zealand's North Island on Feb. 14, Sri Lanka was 49-7. Wickets continued to fall

steadily and when Sri Lanka was all out after only 19.5 overs, it was for the second lowest one-



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

Sri Lanka's first wicket fell to runout in the sixth over. Shipley took his first wicket in spectacular style when his Pathum Nissanka jagged back through the batter's shot and uprooted his leg stump.

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

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

Shanaka said his team went

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

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

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

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

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

PTI MUMBAI

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

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

"We dropped her (Nat) on

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

was probably a (pace bowling) option but I backed our spinners to do the job nine times out of 10. We probably did not execute quite as much at the back end. It is really hard to have someone like Shabnim Ismail sitting on the bench for us, but, at the moment the way we are set up, we need the extra batting. I bet the six bowlers that we used tonight (Friday) to get the job done more often than not. They executed for 15 out of 20 overs and it got away from us towards the end," Healy said. Wong, who returned figures of 4-0-15-4 including the first WPL hat-trick, said it was crucial for her to execute her plans there (among the best)," Wong said. "When I'm not out bowling well, I look back at my 24 balls (and see) which ones I want to have a go at again. How many did I not execute and want to have a go at again? In terms of those balls, it (hat-trick) will be right up there," she said.
"I made a conscious effort to

execute it. There have been a few moments in the past when I have been in similar situations where I am too much in the moment or like you said, hyperactivity, to actually focus on it and execute. I was trying to become quite clear at the end of my bowling mark. I wanted to bowl a yorker and nail it, but missed it a little bit," she said about her hartNew Delhi, March 26, 2023

the pioneer

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





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

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

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

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

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

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

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

RITUAL AUTOMATION IS NOT NEW

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

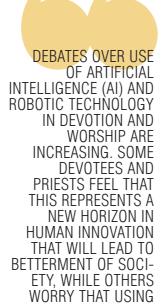
Historically, this has included anything from special pots that drip water continuously for bathing rituals that Hindus routinely perform for their deity icons, called abhisheka, to wind-powered Buddhist prayer wheels — the kinds often seen in yoga studios and supply stores.

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

Thaneswar Sarmah, a Sanskrit scholar and literary critic, argues that the first Hindu robot appeared in the stories of King Manu, the first king of the human race in Hindu belief. Manu's mother, Saranyu - herself the daughter of a great architect - built an animate statue to perfectly perform all of her household chores and ritual obligations.

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

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



ROBOTS TO REPLACE

PRACTITIONERS IS A

BAD OMEN FOR THE





MODERN TRADITIONS OR TRADITIONALLY MODERN?

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

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

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

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

DOING RIGHT BY RELIGION

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

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

This also means that automated rituals appear on a spectrum that

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

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

SAVED BY A ROBOT

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

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

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

(AP/The Conversation)

TB: CURABLE & PREVENTABLE

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

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

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

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

It shows that notifications

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

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

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

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

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

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

ness, sweating at night time

and weight loss. If they have

TB disease in the lungs, your

child will have coughing and

chest pain. Symptoms of TB

disease in other parts of the

body depend on the affected

Who is at risk for TB infec-

tion?

Here's what parents should

Children and teens at



Around 30 per cent of the population already has the TB bacteria in their bodies. The bacteria start to multiply in immunocompromised individuals... If nutrition balance is maintained, there is only a 10 per cent chance in one's lifetime to contract the TB disease," say doctors..

An estimated 32% patients with active TB do not access diagnostic services, while catastrophic costs associated with hospitalization are a barrier to access for seriously ill patients

TB-related stigma is generally the product of the exaggerated concept of contagiousness and fear of infection

India's crowded living conditions, pollution, and low nutrition levels along with the high incidence rate mean most Indians carry the bacteria but can fend off the disease while their immunity levels are good. It's for this reason that any dip in TB notifications is usually a cause for concern.

DOCTORSPEAK

ty in delivering antibiotics to

the infected area. As a result,

doctors often recommend a

more extended duration of

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



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

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

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

spine TB involves a combination of antibiotics taken over a period of six to nine

months, with some patients requiring surgery for the removal of the affected tissue. The treatment of bone

antibiotic therapy, along with the use of immobilization devices to prevent further damage to the affected bones Ín addition to antibiotic therapy, patients with bone and spine TB may also require nutritional support to promote healing and reduce the risk of further complications. Follow-up care is essential to monitor the

and Gynaecology, AIIMS, patient's response to treatment and identify any Tuberculosis can be a major factor in infertility adverse reactions to medicaamong women. However, since tion. Bone and spine TB the patients don't show many remains a significant public symptoms, it results in delay in health challenge in India. With improved access to early detection of TB in the uterus or fallopian tubes. If a patient suffers from irregularhealthcare, sanitation, and public education, the incidence of the disease can be ity in the menstrual cycle either it gets stopped or doesreduced. Early diagnosis and n't happen as per cycle or is appropriate treatment unable to conceive for a long remain the key to the suctime, then there are chances cessful management of bone and spine TB in India. that she may have TB in the genital organs. Another reason

DR JB SHARMA, Professor,

Department of Obstetrics

could be the woman may have had a history of TB in the past, during childhood. The prime hurdle to tackling TB in the genital organs of women is its complexity in

nature and the minimal symptoms that can be detected in the early stages. Because there is no X-ray for genital organs, it is difficult to detect TB in the first attempt

and must rely on three to four parameters for further investi-While a woman can get completely cured of TB if that happens in her genital organs but conceiving is not always so easy. Around 50-60% of infer-

tile women detected early with TB have a chance of 30-40% pregnancy, and 25-30% can achieve pregnancy through IVF. If the ovaries are healthy then one can also opt for surrogacy unless TB has damaged those too.

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

NEWSBRIEFS

LACK OF QUALIFIED WORKFORCE HURDLE TO 'WELLNESS FOR ALL'

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

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

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

'NAVYA KITS' FOR ADOLESCENT GIRLS

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

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

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

Dr Tanaya Narendra, popularly known as Dr Cuterus, an

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

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

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

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

The public medical research university and hospi-

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

and spine TB poses unique challenges due to the difficul-

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

Were born in a country that has a high prevalence of

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

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

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

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

Tuberculosis usually is spread when an infected adult cough.

How does TB spread?

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

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

Signs and symptoms of TB disease in children

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

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

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

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

Patients Will Have to Wait for New TB Drug Therapy

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2021 and is presently in the analysis stage.

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

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

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

"In high TB burden coun-



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

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

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

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

"Results of the TB PRACTECAL clinical trial

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

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

Toxicity related to Linezolid, one of the medicines used in these regimens, is of concern. But reducing the dosage and duration of linezolid has made the regimens more patient friendly and less toxic, without affecting their high efficacy, she added.

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

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

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

Credibility of China as peacekeeper under lens

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

What does the Chinese During all these strategic

President's visit to Russia mean manoeuvring, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida visitat this time? It is equally important and critical for the US and ed Ukraine and met Zelenskyy. This signalled how the US-led the western world to understand what China wants from alliance is putting up against the bloody war launched by the current geopolitical shift. It is certain that once Washington Putin. Kishida's tour also demonstrated how strongly seriously gauges Beijing's core concerns at the world stage, it the US's allies are exerting would be much easier for its pressure on Russia. Unlike policy makers to handle the what Russian policy makers Asian dragon. Unless it is taken thought, this war has made care of, the misunderstanding NATO stronger in Europe. and probably gross miscalcu-Further, this misstep of the lation might take place between Russian strongman has reunit-China and the US, particulared the liberal allies all around ly in the Asia-Pacific region. the world against authoritari-For now, it seems, both the an leaders. In case such a situnations can easily avoid the hisation emerges even in Asia, toric Thucydides Trap that led most of the American allies will marshall forces against China Athens and Sparta to a bloody

Now it is worth knowing

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



region

MAKHAN SAIKIA

PERSPECTIVE

Xi offers lifeline to Putin to curb US influence

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

about expanding ties.

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

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

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

and other Western allies feared.



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

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

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

said Beijing wants to be seen as a peacemaker and diplomatic

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

As long as Russia can trade

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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























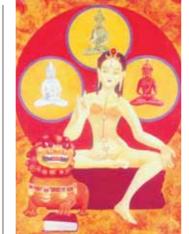




ARIES March 21-April 19

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

Lucky number 12 Lucky colour Yellow Lucky day Wednesday



LEO July 23-Aug 22

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

Lucky number 17 Lucky colour Magenta Lucky day Friday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

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

Lucky number 10 Lucky colour Brown Lucky day Tuesday



TAURUS April 20-May 20

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

Lucky number 11 Lucky colour Pastel Blue Lucky day Thursday



VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

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

Lucky number 20 Lucky colour Mauve Lucky day Monday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

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

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



GEMINI May 21-June 20

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

Lucky number 10 Lucky colour Off-white Lucky day Monday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

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

Lucky number 31 Lucky colour Red Lucky day Wednesday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

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

Lucky number 1 Lucky colour Indigo Lucky day Friday



CANCER June 21-July 22

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

Lucky number 9 Lucky colour Orange Laucky day Saturday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

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

Lucky number 3 Lucky colour Peach Lucky day Saturday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20

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

Lucky number 14 Lucky colour Green Lucky day Thursday

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Purified mind alone can be happy



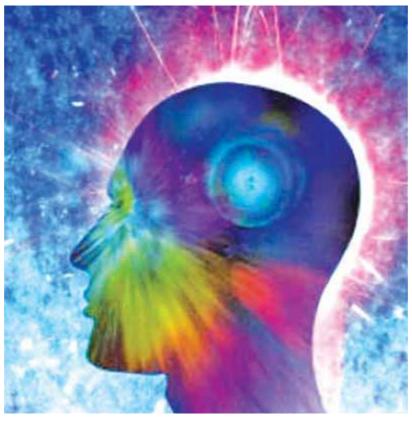
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BHARAT BHUSHAN PADMADEO

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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