CITY 3

CM: INDIA HOME TO SPIRITUAL

ANCESTORS OF KOREANS

OPINION 6

SIKHS HOLD TIRANGA IN

HIGH ESTEEM

WORLD 9

CHINA, RUSSIA TO COUNTER US'

INDO-PACIFIC STRATEGY

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> RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADA

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PM reviews Covid, influenza situation

Modi stresses on genome sequencing, observing strict Covid protocols PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI**

A mid a spike in influenza Aand Covid-19 cases in some pockets in the country in the past two weeks, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday chaired a high-level meeting and directed officials to enhance genome sequencing while also empha-sising on Covid-appropriate behaviour.

India has recorded 1,134 new coronavirus cases, while the active cases increased to 7,026, according to Union Health Ministry data updated on Wednesday. The death toll climbed to 5,30,813 with five deaths. One death each has deaths. One death each has been reported in Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Gujarat and Maharashtra while one fatality was reconciled by Kerala, the data updated at 8 am stated. The number of districts with 10 per cent or more Covid-positivity has gone up to 14 during tivity has gone up to 14 during March 12-18 against nine in the March 8-14 week. Modi chaired the meeting to assess



the Covid-19 and influenza situation in the country in terms of preparedness of health infrastructure and logistics, status of the vaccination campaign, emergence of new Covid-19 variants and influen-za types and their public health implications for the country, a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said.

During the meeting, a comprehensive presentation was made covering the global Covid situation, including the rising cases, by Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan. The Prime Minister was briefed that a slight rise in new cases that a slight rise in new cases is being witnessed in some pockets in the country with average daily cases reported as 888 and weekly positivity reported as 0.98 per cent in the week ending March 22. However, 1.08 lakh daily average cases have been reported. age cases have been reported globally during the same week.

The action taken on the directions given by Modi dur-ing the last Covid review held on December 22, 2022 was also briefed, the statement said.

He was informed that availability and prices of 20 main Covid drugs, 12 other drugs, eight buffer drugs and one influenza drug is being monitored. monitored.

A mock drill was also conducted on December 27, 2022 in 22,000 hospitals, and many remedial measures taken by hospitals thereafter.

The Prime Minister was also apprised on the influenza situation in the country particularly with respect to the higher number of cases of H1N1 and H3N2 being noted in the last few months. Modi directed officials to

Modi directed officials to enhance whole genome sequencing of positive samples with the designated INSACOG genome sequencing laborato-ries. This will support tracking of newer variants, if any, and timely response, the PMO said.

umely response, the PMO said.

He emphasised Covidappropriate behavior, including
wearing of masks in hospital
premises by all — patients,
health professionals and health workers. He also stressed that wearing of masks is advisable when senior citizens and those with co-morbidities visit crowded areas, the statement

Flares, bottles hurled at Indian Mission

High Commission in London responds to stir by pro-Khalistan protesters by putting up bigger Tricolour

PTI/PNS ■ LONDON/NEW DELHI

Around 2,000 protesters Waving Khalistan flags descended upon the Indian High Commission here on Wednesday for a planned demonstration and hurled objects and chanted slogans amid a heightened security presence and barricades.



Protesters gathered outside a heavily guarded Indian High Commission in London.

Indian Commission countered by unfurling an additional

High humongous Tricolour on the red by roof of its building, which seemed to rile the protesters

further who then hurled coloured flares and water bot-

ing and at police officers and media covering the protest.
Scotland Yard reacted by

further blockading the area outside India House and several additional uniformed and mounted officers on horseback were deployed immediately to the area.

Unlike the violent disorder on Sunday when India House came under attack, the protesters were barricaded across the road with uniformed officers standing guard and patrolling the area throughout. The protesters, including tur-baned men, and some women and children, had been bused in from different parts of the UK and chanted pro-Khalistan slogans. The organisers used mikes to make anti-India speeches and attack the Punjab

Continued on Page 8

'Mission Shakti serving as example for other states'

PNS LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that the Mission Shakti campaign has not only been successful in realising objec-tives like women safety, selfreliance and empowerment but it has also been recognised by other states and is serving as an

Flagging off the 'Mahila Sashaktikaran' rally marking the onset of Navratri in Balrampur on Wednesday, the CM said: "I offer my obeisance to the goddess on the beginning of the auspicious festival

of Navratri. Devipatan Shaktipeeth has its own great-Shaktipeeth has its own greatness. The devotees come here from far-off places during Navratri to pay obeisance to the deity." Yogi pointed out that the Uttar Pradesh Police had started a campaign under Mission Shakti in 2020. "As Navratri commences today, LIP Police commences today, UP Police have started two programmes. The first rally will start from this holy abode of Maa Pateshwari in Balrampur and reach Lalitpur in Bundelkhand. The second yatra will start from Maa Vindhyavasini Dham and reach Gautam Buddha Nagar," he said.



"On Ram Navami, the first vatra will culminate in Lalitpur and the second in Gautam Buddha Nagar. The rally will promote awareness of issues related to women's safety, dignity and self-reliance," he added. On the occasion, the chief minister expressed love and care for children. The local women heads also pre-sented mementos to the chief minister. District panchayat president Aarti Tiwari, MLA Kailash Shukla, and many other women representatives and administration and police officers were present on the occa-

CAPSULE

RAILWAYS RESTORE AC 3-TIER ECONOMY FARE New Delhi: Railways on Wednesday issued an order to restore the fare for AC 3-tier economy class travel which had been withdrawn in November last year when it was merged with AC 3-tier. Despite the restoration in price, Railways

will continue offering linen to passengers, the order indicated. MUKESH AMBANI IS RICHEST INDIAN AGAIN Mumbai: Gautam Adani's fortunes have suffered a severe

setback on concerns over corporate governance and accounting fraud, leading to Reliance Industries' Mukesh Ambani replacing the Ahmedabad-based industrialist as the richest Indian. Adani lost Rs 3.000 crore of wealth every week over the last year and his overall networth is down 60 per cent from its peak, as per the M3M Hurun Global Rich List, which pegged Adani's overall fortune at \$53 billion as of mid-March.

ISRO: CHANDRAYAAN 3, ADITYA L1 SOON

Ahmedabad: Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) chairman S Somanath on Wednesday said the launch of Chandrayaan-3, India's third lunar mission, and the first solar mission Aditya L1 will possibly happen by the middle of 2023. ISRO is also discussing a possible mission to the Moon in alliance with the Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency.

Take early action on Judges' appointment'

Collegium worried over Centre holding back recommended names as it hurts their seniority

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI**

holding or overlooking the names recommended for appointment as judges, saying this disturbs the seniority of the candidates, and asked the Government to take "necessary action" for elevation of those recommended earlier. The Collegium, headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud, said a notification for the elevation of persons recommended earlier in point of time should be issued at the earliest.

The Collegium was expressing displeasure on the non-appointment of John Sathyan and Ramaswamy Neelakandan in Madras High Court and also reiterated Harpreet Singh Brar's appointment as Judge in Punjab and Haryana High Court.

The Collegium voiced its

concern in a resolution dated March 21 in which it recommended the names of four



district judges for appointment as judges of the Madras High Court. The Collegium, which comprises Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul and KM Joseph, recommended the names of R Sakthivel, P Dhanabal, Chinnasamy Kumarappan, and K Rajasekar.

"By its resolution dated 17 January 2023, the Collegium of the Supreme Court recommended the appointment of Ramaswamy Neelakandan, advocate practising before the Madras High Court, as a judge of the High Court. As on March 31, 2023, Ramaswamy Neelakandan was 48.07 years of age while K Rajasekar on that date was 47.09 years of age. Neelakandan, who is a member of the Bar, has been recom-mended earlier in point of time and must be appointed before Rajasekar is appointed. Otherwise, Rajasekar, who is a



The Supreme Court on Wednesday agreed to constitute a special Bench to hear a plea against the remission of sentence of 11 convicts in the Bilkis Bano gang-rape case. A Bench of Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices PS Narasimha and JB Pardiwala assured Bano, represented through her lawyer Shobha Gupta, that the new Bench will be formed.

Gupta mentioned the mat-

SC to set up Bench to hear plea against remission to Bilkis' rapists



ter for urgent hearing and said that a new Bench needs to be constituted. "I will have a Bench constituted. Will look at it this evening," the CJI said. Earlier, on January 24, the hearing on Bano's plea challenging the remission of sentence of 11 convicts in the gang-rape case by the Gujarat Government could not be held in the top court as the Judges concerned were hearing a matter related to passive euthanasia as part of a five-Judge Constitution Bench.

All 11 convicts were grantjudicial officer and younger Continued on Page 8 August 15, last year. ed remission and released on

QR code on tomb keeps son's memories alive

Family of Kerala doc designed a Web page with his videos linked to the QR code

PTI ■ THRISSUR (KERALA)

A QR code placed on a tomb-stone at a church in Kerala's Thrissur helps one to relive and reminisce on the creative work rendered by a doctor, who died young at just 26. The parents of Dr Ivin Francis decided to place the QR code on the tomb of the youngster at St Joseph Church, Kuriyachira in the central Kerala district to give people a glimpse

into his world as they can watch videos of his performances by scanning the code. His family from Kuriyachira has designed a web page containing all the works of Ivin and linked it with the QR code.

Son of Francis, an officer with a private company in Oman, and Leena, principal of the Indian School in Oman, Ivin was well-versed in music and sports, and found time for it along with his medical course. He was popular among the community with his performances.

Ivin's unfortunate death came in 2021 when he collapsed and died while playing bad-minton. "We wanted his life to be a motivation for everyone and that is how we thought of placing a QR code on his tomb,"



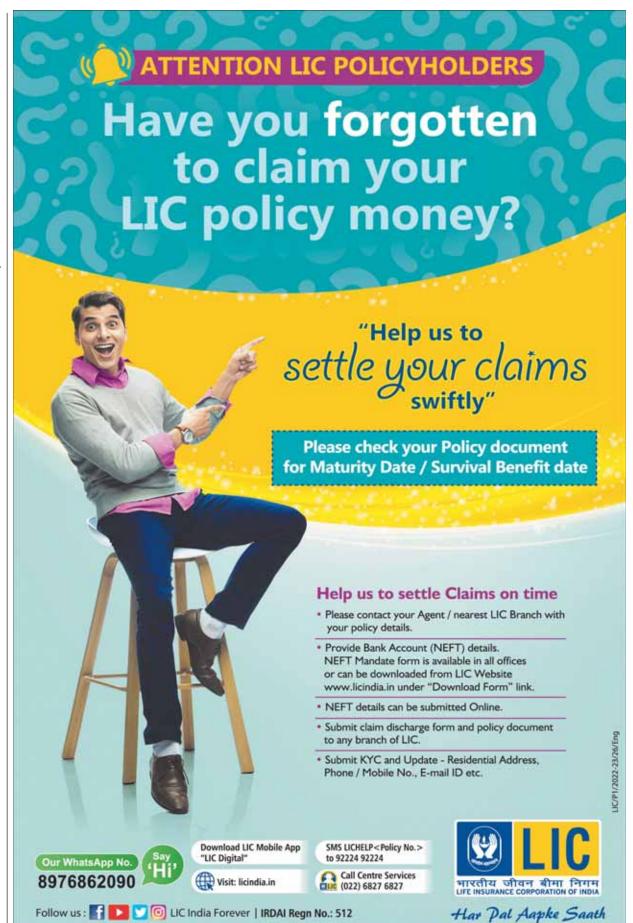
Francis said. Ivin had created profiles of people using QR codes and his parents also decided to do the same for him. "He also used to send me a lot of QR codes for information," the father said. He said the idea of placing a QR code was of Ivin's sister Evelyn

"My daughter told me that just writing something about Ivin on the tomb will not be suf-

ficient to portray what all he did. We thought he may not be satisfied with just that. So, she said we can have a QR code linked to his profile and place it on the tomb. So, people who scan the code will know what was he and what all he could do. She created the site and QR code in 10

days," Francis said. The doting father said his daughter had asked him not to inscribe anything on the tomb when he ordered it. "She created the site and QR code and asked me whether that could be printed on the marble tomb. So I asked the maker, and he said it can be printed," Francis said.

He said, "Now, people who visit the grave can just scan the QR code and can know what sort of a person Ivin was."



BEWARE OF SPURIOUS PHONE CALLS AND FICTITIOUS / FRAUDULENT OFFERS, IRDAI is not involved in activities like selling insurance policies, announcing bonus or investment of premiums. Public receiving such phone calls are requested to lodge a police complaint.



Sodomy attempt led to truck driver's murder; 2 arrested

wo youths were arrested on Wednesday in connection with the murder of a 60-year-old truck driver, Harpinder Singh of Punjab, in PGI police station area. Police claimed that the motive for murder was the victim's attempt to sodomise one of the accused.

Those arrested were identified as Rohit Kumar (19) and Kamal (26), both of Sitapur district. The police also claimed to have recovered the murder weapon and a keychain from the possession of the accused.

The police said that the accused had been invited by



Harpinder to work as conductors. Kamal, the prime accused, said they partied with Harpinder who later attempted to sodomise Rohit. He said he and Rohit killed Harpinder with a blunt object and then dumped it in

the thickets. "Harpinder caught

POLICE CLAIMED TO HAVE RECOVERED THE MURDER WEAPON AND A **KEYCHAIN FROM** THE POSSESSION OF THE ACCUSED

hold of Rahul indecently and Rahul, in an attempt to free himself, hit him with the iron rod. ADCP Syed Ali Abbas said the accused drove the truck to another location and abandoned it before fleeing the scene. "The accused also the victim's mobile truck owner tracked the vehicle, which was parked at another location, through the GPS system and alerted another driver Onkar. Onkar reached the scene and found Harpinder lying dead inside the driver's cabin," the ADCP said.

Harpinder had ferried goods to the company's warehouse on Bijnor road on March 15 night and parked the truck on the road as there was little space in the warehouse. Behind his truck, two other trucks of the company were also parked. Harpinder was in contact with the accused whom he had offered a job as conductors.



Devotees, led by former Mayor Sanyukta Bhatia, offering 'arghya' to the rising sun to welcome the Vikram Samvat 2080 at Kudia Ghat in Lucknow on Wednesday

Case lodged against realtors for failing to appear before court

PNS LUCKNOW

sub-inspector Asub-inspector
Hazratganj Kotwali lodged an FIR against realtors and brother duo Paresh Rastogi and Piyush Rastogi for failing to appear before a court. In his complaint, SI Vinay Kumar Tiwari said the case was lodged by Kailash Chand Meena of Ashiyana (Sector H) and he was conducting a probe into a case of fraud and criminal breach of trust against the Rastogi brothers, whose office is located in Hazratganj.

The court had issued a non-bailable warrant as also a notice for attachment of property, which was pasted on the house of the accused. However, the accused did not appear before the court and this indicated that they were disobeying the court order," the SI said.

A woman was duped of over Rs 47,000 by an unidentified accused on the pretext of facilitating appointment at a prominent hospital in Ashiyana on March 19. As per reports, Shruti Singh of Rajini Khand in Ashiyana was looking for an appointment at a prominent hospital in the locality and she dialled a mobile number which she found through

Google search. "I got a call from a man who asked me to click the link he had sent me on WhatsApp and fill in the details. This way, I ended up mentioning my PIN and a little later, my bank account was debited with a sum of Rs 21,000," the complainant said.

She said the man called her again and said that the appointment could not be fixed due to some technical glitch. he asked her to click the link from another phone. "I gave him my mother's mobile number and he sent a link on that. A sum of Rs 26,625 was deducted from my mother's bank

Building collapse: Engineers, officials indicted in probe

PNS LUCKNOW

The collapse of the five-sto-📘 ried Alaya Apartment building on Jopling Road was a man-made disaster, and the earthquake had no role to play in that. It was disclosed in a probe set up by the state government under the chairmanship of Lucknow Divisional Commissioner Roshan Jacob immediately after the incident on January 24. Lucknow Development Authority Vice-Chairman Indramani Tripathi was also a member of the probe

It may sound bizarre, but no blueprint was submitted for approval at the start of the construction. Besides, there was no status report, which is a document describing the nature of the building and other details determining the longevity of the structure. The construction of the housing complex was started in 2010 and the possession was handed over to buyers in 2013. The findings further said that the main cause of the building collapse was the repair of pillars which was going on. The findings specifically said that the cause of collapse was

not the earthquake.

The LDA VC had ordered demolition of the building in the first week of September last year, but the developers moved court seeking a stay which was

granted for the time being.

Three persons, including two women, were killed and several others injured while dozens became homeless. The findings will be forwarded to the state government for further action against the developers, officers and engineers in

Youth accused of molestation drowns in pond during scuffle with girl's kin outside the village. Soon people armed with lathis and brickbats came face to face en into a pond during a scuffle between rival groups over the alleged molestation from both sides. The situation became

of a girl in the Kotwali area here, has drowned, police said on Wednesday.

The body of the youth identified as Jasim (23) was fished out two hours later with the help of divers and has been sent postmortem examination, Superintendent of Police (SP) Dinesh Kumar Singh said. He said a fight broke out between two parties on Tuesday night over the alleged molestation of a girl in the Kewadi village of the Kotwali area here during which the youth fell into a nearby pond. Police said after returning from school on Tuesday afternoon the girl had complained to her family members that Jasim had molested her.

between the youth and the girl's family

serious as those involved in the incident belonged to different communities, police said. In the meanwhile, the family members of the youth vandalised the girl's house following which senior officials rushed to the spot with police personnel,

they said. Jasim's family has alleged that the opposite party threw him into the pond after beating him and also pelted stones at him. They said he drowned because he could not get out, whereas the girl's family has accused Jasim of issuing threats and alleged that earlier too he had been involved in similar cases of molestation.

: Jasim had molested her. His body was recovered from the At night an altercation took place pond at around 10 pm and sent for postmortem, police said. On the complaint

of murder against four of the girl's relatives and detained seven other people. A police force has been deployed as a precautionary measure in the village, officials

BOY DIES OF ELECTROCUTION

Saharanpur: A 17-year-old boy died of electrocution after he came in contact with a live wire in the Nakur area here, police said on Wednesday.

Deepak had gone to his sister's place in Naugav Rajapur village two days ago. On Tuesday, he went to take bath and came in contact with the live wire of a water pump and suffered an electric shock, Superintendent of Police (Rural) Sagar Jain said. He was rushed to a hospital and doctors there declared him as brought dead,

NOTICE

I Varsha Gupta D/o Shri Anil Gupta Residence 113/30 Swaroop Nagar, Kanpur -208002 I have changed my name from Varsha Akash Agarwal to Varsha Gupta In future for all purpose.

NOTICE

Father's name is mentioned as RAMNATH RAI in my passport number W 8287180, which is wrong. My father's correct name is RAMNATH BHATT. Sunil Kumar Bhatt S/o Ramnath Bhatt, Telma Jalaluddinpur, Bilthra Road, Ballia (U.P.).

NOTICE

Prabhjot Singh resident at K-225 Aashiana Colony, Lucknow declare that the date of birth of My Son Bikram Bir Singh is 31.12.2005 instead of 31.12.2006, which is wrong printed in the mark sheet which has been sworn in front of the Notary through a Affidavit.

सूचना

दिनांक 22.03.2023 में प्रकाशित स्चना में विजयकान्त दुबे पुत्र यमुनाप्रसाद दुबे निवासी वी-703 शिप्रा अपार्टमेंट गोमतीनगर विस्तार लखनऊ में पुत्री सुषमा दुबे के नाम से फ्लैट स्थित टी-16/1103, के स्थान पर टी-16/1130 त्रुटिवश प्रकाशित हो गया है जब कि सही टी-16 / 1103 है।

सूचना

वंसल इलेक्ट्रिकल प्राइवेट लिमिटेड, TIN No- 09441500011 पता 16/50, CIVIL LINES KANPUR NAGAR UP- का F- Y- 2017- 2018 का 10 नग फॉर्म 38 खो गए है कंपनी चाहती है फॉर्म 38 के 10 नग जो खो गए है उसका जो भी प्रयोग करे उस पर सेल्स टैक्स विभाग दंडात्मक कार्यवाही किए जाये!

01: 2750152, 02:2750153 03 :2750154, 04 :2750155 05 :4158833, 06 :4158834 07:-4158835, 08:-8167701 09:-8167702, 10:-8167703

NOTICE

I Shahid Ali have changed my minor son name from Ismail to Mohammad Ismail S/o Shahid Ali, R/o: 46, Pansariyan, Kannauj known in near future.

NOTICE

I have changed my name from Ankit to Ankit Kumar S/o Raipugadhi, Ajgain, Unnao for all

मेरा नाम Kadir Ahmad था अब Kadeer Ahmad Siddiqui पुत्र Mujib Ulla Siddiqi निवासी 14 / 11 अजीतगंज कालोनी कानपुर कर लिया है। इसी नाम से जाना जाये।

NOTICE

I have change name from Meera Rajy Singh to Meera Singh W/o Nand Kumar Singh R/o 4/276 A-1, Parvati Bagla Road, Tilak Nagar Kanpur for all future purpose.

NOTICE

Vimla W/o Raj Kumar R/o : Sarde Gopalpur, Kanpur Nagar (U.P.) have changed my name to Shyamkali for all purpose Both Vimla & Shyamkali are same & one person only

NOTICE

I have changed my name from Shahana Begum to Shahana Parveen W/o Irshad Khan, R/o-116/71, Sayyad Nagar Rawatpur Gaon, Kanpur Nagar. Now I should be known by this name only.

NOTICE

In my Passport No. H 1250208 my name written as Ruksana Qayum, whereas my correct name is Rukashana Rashid. Please correct accordingly. Rukashana Rashid W/o Syed. Mohammad Rashid Munir B-4 Sarvodayanagar, Indiranagar, Lucknow.

Docs discuss strategies to eliminate TB

lobally, TB incidence is falling at Jabout 2% per year and between 2015 and 2020, the cumulative reduction was 11%. This was over half way to the 'End TB Strategy' milestone of 20% reduction between 2015 and 2020. An estimated 6.6 crore lives were saved through tuberculosis diagnosis and treatment between 2000 and 2020. By 2022, US \$130 crore were spent annually for TB prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care to achieve the global target agreed at the United Nations high-level meeting on tuberculosis since

ical care medicine, King George's Medical University, organised a one-day

update on tuberculosis. The update was attended by various prominent pulmonologists and medical students from the city. King George's Medical University Vice-Chancellor Dr Bipin Puri emphasised on the strategies being adopted to eliminate TB in India by 2025.

Head of department, pulmonary and critical care medicine Dr Ved Prakash threw light on the management of drug-sensitive TB. He emphasised on the need for early initiation of treatment and completion of antitubercular regimen. He also stressed on the need for HIV testing in tuberculosis patients and their appropriate management.

Head of microbiology department On the occasion of World TB Day, Dr Amita Jain spoke on newer diagnosquick diagnosis of tuberculosis.

Surya Kant explained the important role of medical colleges in the fight against tuberculosis and achieving the goal of 'End TB' under the National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme.

It was said that a total of 15 lakh people died of TB in 2020 (including 2,14,000 people with HIV). Worldwide, TB is the 13th leading cause of death and the second leading infectious killer after Covid-19 (above HIV/AIDS).

In 2020, about one crore people fell ill with TB worldwide, including 11 lakh children. In the same year, 86% cases came from 30 high TB burden countries, with India leading the count. Multidrug-resistant TB remains a public health crisis and a health security with drug-resistant tuberculosis Head of respiratory medicine Dr accessed treatment in 2020.

International MSME Business Conclave-2023 on March 25

Lucknow (PNS): The Indian Industries Association (IIA) is organising 'International MSME Business Conclave-2023' at a city hotel on March 25 with ambassadors and diplomats of 20 countries.

It will be the first time that ambassadors and diplomats of 20 countries are brought under one roof and on one platform by any industrial association in the country to support micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

The main objectives of organis-

ing this conclave are to explore export opportunities for Indian MSME products, to increase the bilateral investment, and to exchange business delegations. As many as 250

participants from India and abroad will be participating in the conclave and few excellent products of MSME will also be displayed. Diplomats from all 20 countries will make presentations on the opportunities for import/export, investment and technology transfer in the respective countries in the conclave. There will be a panel discussion and a questionanswer session with the delegates participating in the conclave. IIA will also explore possibilities of exchange of delegations of entrepreneurs to each other countries during and after this conclave with all the participating countries. Therefore, participatopportunity for MSME entrepre-

Youngsters showing interest in books on entrepreneurship

large number of books on Aentrepreneurship are being picked up by youngsters at the Lucknow Book Fair running at the Charbagh. Pravesh, incharge of the stall by Omsun Publications from Chandigarh, said all kinds of books are available, including fiction, non-fiction and encyclopaedias.

"Since there is so much buzz about startups, the youths are showing interest in these books, as everyone nowadays has an entrepreneurial idea which they want to convert into a startup. "There is a

huge collection that we have on entrepreneurship such as keys of success, business mindset, books of IIMs and how one can expand their startup. There is a certain section of the society which is showing keen interest in these books," he said. The book which is selling the most is 'Doglapan' by Ashneer Grover, who became famous after 'Shark Tank' season 1. Pravesh said another book

on entrepreneurship is 'Entrepreneurial Negotiations' by Samuel Dinnar and Lawrence Susskind. It deals with understanding and managing the relationships that

ial success. Yet another title is 'Get Better At Getting Better' by Chandramouli.

'We also have on display special titles such as 'Rise of Devas'. Launched recently, it is selling like hot cakes in the various book fairs which we have visited. In Lucknow, the people are getting aware of this book. This is

basically a mythological book and a story on Akhand Bharat, written by Mayank Agarwal. It's a work of fiction and gives the story of India from the top to the toe, and is written in English," Pravesh pointed

Kids with Down syndrome need to be treated with love, care: Dhiman

PNS LUCKNOW

World Down Syndrome Day was observed by the department of medical genetics at Sanjay Gandhi Post-Graduate Institute of Medical Science and was attended in large number by children and adults having down syndrome along with

their parents. Down syndrome occurs due to presence of three copies of chromosome number 21 and that's why the day is observed on the third month of year. The theme for this

year is 'With us, not for us'. The event was presided over by SGPGI director Dr R Dhiman, who was impressed by the talent shown by the children with Down syndrome. He said they should be treated with love and care. Head of the department of medical genetics Dr

Shubha R Phadke, who has been associated with the diagnosis and regular follow-up of children with Down syndrome for the last three decades, organised this event and spoke about the importance of imparting equality

and dignity to individuals

with Down syndrome. The children with Down syndrome put up a fantastic display of their talent by doing a ramp walk and dancing to the beats of popular songs. Swati Sharma from Rainbow School spoke about the various activities performed by children with down syndrome. A panel discussion organised by Dr Somya, Haseena and Pooja was the highlight of the day as the adolescents with Down syndrome spoke about their likes, dislikes and aspirations.

CITYBRIEFS

DIVINE EDUCATION CONFERENCE

Value-based education of children is possible only through divine education, and therefore, prayers should be held in schools and at home to make the atmosphere peaceful and harmonious, CMS founder Jagdish Gandhi said while addressing parents and guardians at the Divine Education Conference of school's Asharfabad campus on Wednesday. Students made cultural presentations, leaving their parents enthralled. The students who won prizes in the annual examination and in various other competitions were also awarded. Meanwhile, City Montessori School, Rajajipuram Campus I, felicitated the meritorious students at the 'Divine Education Conference' on Wednesday. The students were overjoyed as they were honoured with citations and medals. The meritorious students of classes VI to XI,who had won prizes in the annual exams, various competitive exams, cultural programmes and sports competitions were felicitated.

INAUGURATED

CMS founder Jagdish Gandhi on Wednesday inaugurated the newly-constructed building of schools Aliganj Campus-II. This building is designed, especially for the tiny-tots of pre-primary and primary classes. A large number of parents present on the occasion expressed happiness. Open Day celebration of the campus was also organised and the students appeared full



of zest as they displayed their talent through a variety of cultural presentations on stage.

HOCKEY STADIUM The hockey stadium, built in the Modern Rail Coach Factory, was renamed as Rani's girls' hockey turf to honour all the women players of Indian women's team who performed brilliantly in the semi-finals of the Tokyo Olympics 2020. The stadium was recognised by the International Hockey Federation in March 2021. Ít was constructed in 2019 at a cost of about Rs 5 crore. The stadium was renamed on the occasion of the 80th All-India Railway Hockey Men's

Championship-2023.

Mou SIGNED

An MoU has been signed between Khwaia Moinuddin Chishti Language University and Breakthrough Trust. Vice-Chancellor NB Singh said that in today's era, this MoU has a special role. "It will not only benefit the girl students but also promote gender sensitisation among students," he said. The university, in collaboration with Breakthrough Trust, will organise various workshops and camps on important issues like capacity building and gender sensitisation, which will create awareness about gender discrimination



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CM: India home to spiritual Yogi visits Maa Pateshwari temple ancestors of Koreans

 E^{ven} as the diplomatic relations between India and South Korea complete halfcentenary, the spiritual ties between the two go back to centuries because India is not 'foreign' but 'home' to spiritual ancestors of the Koreans, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said at the felicitation ceremony of Jogye Sangh.

The function was held on the completion of the 43-day 'padyatra' of Buddhist pilgrimages by Jogye Sangh of South Korea on the completion of 50 years of diplomatic relations between India and South

About 108 Buddhist pilgrims from the Republic of Korea walked over 1,100 kms in over 43 days as part of the walking pilgrimage organised by Sangwol Society of South

Speaking on the occasion, Yogi said: "Lord Gautam Buddha had started his Dhamma Yatra from Sarnath by giving his first sermons. I congratulate you on completing your 43-day pilgrimage. The 'padyatra' is being organised to strengthen the relations between the two countries on the completion of half-century of the diplomatic relations between India and South Korea. When saints make efforts to deepen the relations,

its meaning becomes divine."

Lord Buddha's meditation tradition entered Korea through his disciple Huineng in

"Shravasti, the origin of your meditation tradition Seon, is where your journey came to an end. In this sense, you have not come abroad but to the home of your spiritual ances-



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath felicitating a pilgrim of Jogye Sangh of South Korea on Wednesday

tors," Yogi said.

The group of monks travelled on foot along the entire Buddhist circuit, including Lumbini, Nepal, the birthplace of Lord Buddha, to Kushinagar, the place of Mahaparinirvana.

Yogi said: "Both India and South Korea celebrate independence on August 15. India got the opportunity to chair the G20 summit in its 'Azadi ka Amrit Kaal'. This year, the theme of G20 is 'One Earth, One Family, One Future'; it connects us with the spirit of 'Vasudhaiva

Kutumbhakam." "Buddha's preaching embrace friendship, oneness, compassion, and humility. India is the centre of reverence and faith for the Buddhist society of the world," the CM added. He went on to say that many places associated with the life of Mahatma Buddha are in Uttar Pradesh.

"Lord Buddha had delivered his first sermon in Sarnath while in Shravasti, he spent most of his 'varshavaas', and Kushinagar is his place of 'Mahaparinirvana," Yogi noted.

"Lucknow is surrounded by the aura of Lord Buddha from all sides. Shanti Upvan Buddha Vihar is in UP and so is the International Buddhist inspires the entire mankind to Research Institute. As the inter-

national airport has become operational in Kushinagar, the development of an airport in Shravasti is also underway on a war footing. The state government is going to set up an agriculture and technology university named after Mahatma Buddha in Kushinagar itself. The relations between India and South Korea are scaling new heights under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi," he said.

The chief minister added that the mutual trade between and Delhi. India and South Korea is \$28 billion, in which India exports goods worth \$9 billion and imports worth \$19 billion from

On the first day of Chaitra Navratri, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath visited and offered prayers at the Maa Pateshwari temple in Tulsipur in Balrampur district. The chief minister prayed for a happy, healthy and prosperous Uttar Pradesh.

Extending his wishes to people of the state on the occasion of Navratri and Hindu New Year, Yogi said that 'Vikram Samvat 2080' should bring prosperity to the lives of people of the state. The chief minister then went to the 'gaushala', where he fed jaggery to cows. He also interacted with children in the temple premises and gave them chocolates. In the last five days, the chief minister has visited several districts of the state and taken stock of the development works. He has also paid obeisance to the deities. Earlier on Saturday, Yogi visited Kashi Vishwanath and Baba Kala Bhairay temples in Varanasi and on Sunday, he went on a tour of Ayodhya and visited Ramlala and Hanumangarhi.



Gorakhpur Link E-way to be operational soon

PNS LUCKNOW

The 92-km-long Gorakhpur Link Expressway, that connects the city with Purvanchal Expressway, will soon be thrown open for public. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had in February set a deadline of December for the completion of Gorakhpur Link Expressway. The project, work for which commenced in February 2020, will cost Rs 5,877 crore, including the cost of land.

So far, more than 62 per cent of the construction work has been completed. The expressway, once complete, will ensure hassle-free movement of vehicular traffic from Gorakhpur to Lucknow, Agra

While clearing and grubbing work is completed, activities related to civil work, including granular sub-base (GSB), wet mix macadam

Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party (SBSP) president Om Prakash Rajbhar said on

Wednesday that the BSP and Congress were

finished in UP and that his party would

leave the Samajwadi Party behind in terms

of strength of the organisation and work-

Lok Sabha elections but before that, we will

check our strength in the civic polls. The

party will register victory in the city and

panchayat elections," he said in a review meeting held here on Wednesday.

the movements it had carried out raising

people's aspirations. "These movements

have given us an identity and the party lead-

ers and workers will continue to raise pub-

"The SBSP will play a major role in the

PNS LUCKNOW

macadam (DBM), are currently underway on the main carriageway. The four-lane (expandable to six lanes) expressway begins at Jaitpur on NH-27 in Gorakhpur district and links with the Purvanchal Expressway near Salarpur in Azamgarh district. The accesscontrolled expressway spans across four districts -Gorakhpur, Sant Kabir Nagar, Ambedkar Nagar, and Azamgarh.

Uttar Pradesh Expressway Development Authority (UPEIDA), the nodal agency, is executing this project in engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) mode. The project has been divided into two packages for implementation. While one company is developing the 47-km-long package-1 of the project, package-2 with a length of 43.03 km is being built by another com-

two toll plazas, three ramp plazas, seven flyovers, 16 vehicular underpasses, 50 light vehicular underpasses, 35 pedestrian underpasses, seven major bridges, 27 minor bridges and 389 culverts are also being constructed. The Siliguri in West Bengal. Gorakhpur Link Expressway will also be linked to Varanasi

The expressway is expected to be helpful as an industrial corridor to connect various production units. Keeping this in mind, the latest budget has made an allocation of Rs 200 crore for the Industrial Corridor along the Gorakhpur-

through a separate link road, a

UPEIDA spokesperson said.

link Expressway. Gorakhpur, known for its handloom and terracotta craft, is on a transformational journey. The city, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's hometown received special attention in infrastructure development.

Apart from Gorakhpur Link Expressway, the Central government has granted its approval to a Greenfield Expressway from Gorakhpur to

The six-lane 520-km-long Greenfield Expressway will run from Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh to Siliguri in West Bengal via north Bihar. Around 85 km of the expressway will pass through Gorakhpur, Deoria and Kushinagar districts in Uttar Pradesh before entering Bihar where it will run for 416 kms and end in West Bengal after covering a length of 19 kms. Being developed at a cost of Rs 25,000 crore, it will provide a direct link for the outbound traffic from northeast region towards northern India, including the national located in the north-eastern capital, Punjab and Haryana.

SP will challenge BJP's hegemony in 2024: AKY | SBSP will leave SP behind: Rajbhar

PNS LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav said on Wednesday that his party would challenge the hegemony of the ruling BJP in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. He also said that the SP would contest all the 80 Lok Sabha seats in the state.

Yadav also hit out at the BJP-led state government and alleged that it was against farmers. He said other political parties should decide their respective roles ahead of the general elections next year. He hat the RIP govern selectively targeting the leaders of the Samajwadi Party and its associates.

"Azam Khan is being victimised by the Yogi Adityanath government as he is a senior leader of the Samajwadi Party," Yadav said while addressing mediapersons

here on Wednesday.

"The SP will lead UP's opposition alliance in the Lok Sabha elections," said Yaday, who returned to Lucknow after attending the two-day national executive meeting of the party in Kolkata.

He said that the SP would play a major role in the opposition alliance in UP. "In the upcoming assembly elections in various states, the SP will field candidates where it has a presence. The party will contest the assembly elections with alliance partners in those states. The SP chief had recently visited Telangana to participate in the Bharatiya Rashtra Samithi (BRS) rally organised by K Chandrashekhar Rao.

He also visited Tamil Nadu to participate in MK Stalin's birthday programme.

Alleging that the BJP-led government in UP was against farmers, he said the arrears of farmers have not been cleared so far. Yadav also said that the state government should give compensation to farmers who have faced losses due to damage to their crops in the recent unseasonal rains and hailstorm.



Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav addressing a press conference in Lucknow on Wednesday Pioneer

...takes jibe at Tourism Minister

Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav on Wednesday took a jibe at UP Tourism Minister Jaiveer Singh, saving the latter played a key role in the victory of Dimple Yadav in the bypoll to Mainpuri Lok Sabha seat in November last year.

'Jaiveer Singh is the tourism minister. He is unpredictable and as a tourist, he can stray in any direction," Yadav said. Jaiveer Singh was elected to the UP assembly from Mainpuri Sadar, a segment of the Mainpuri Lok Sabha seat.

Mainpuri is the stronghold of the added.

Samajwadi Party and its founder Mulayam Singh Yadav held this seat.

Retaliating to the jibe, Jaiveer Singh said: "People of Uttar Pradesh have rejected the Samajwadi Party many times since the 2014 Lok Sabha elections. In fact, people of UP have sent Akhilesh Yadav on permanent tourism to political oblivion."

"Akhilesh Yadav is nervous and has lost his balance as BJP has won all the elections in all the cooperative societies in Mainpuri. The electoral setback has unnerved Akhilesh Yadav, forcing him to make reckless statements," the minister

for kidnapping online friend

Bahraich (PTI): A 20year-old woman was arrested for allegedly kidnapping a teenage girl she had befriended on a social media platform four years ago, police said on Wednesday.

Jova alias Tabassum Fatima had taken the girl whom she called her best friend to her residence in Bihar.

lured the minor to accompany her after reaching her village in Gangwal in the Visheshwarganj police station area a few days

teen's father filed a complaint against Tabassum on March 16 following which a police team was sent to Bihar. The girl was recovered from Jova's possession with the help of Bihar Police and both of them were brought to Bahraich.

On Tuesday, the accused was arrested and sent to jail and the girl was handed over to her family members after a medical examination. Tabassum has told police that it was the girl who had called her from Bihar as a friend and she had taken her for a trip. Prima facie it does not appear to be a case of human trafficking but the police is probing all aspects of

Meanwhile, two labourers were killed and another injured when their motorcycle fell into a well here, police said on Wednesday. Dilbar (30), Shakir (28) and Harun (27), who worked in a brick kiln, were returning home after shopping on Tuesday night when the motorcycle driver lost control



lic issues because the party can connect He said his party has revolved around with voters through these campaigns. Along with UP, the SBSP has a big identity in Bihar. Due to the party's increased strength in Bihar, it will contest the elec-

"The SBSP is a big advocate of free education and if the party comes to power, it will provide free education to children as is done in Telangana. We demand free electricity as in Delhi and Punjab. If these two states can do it, why not UP? Similarly, children should be given free treatment in state-run hospitals," he said.

Targeting the SP and BSP, Rajbhar said these parties were in power for 20 years, but did not conduct caste census. "Caste census will be conducted as soon as the SBSP government is formed," he added.

the meeting SP leader Kashyap joined the party. National chief general secretary Arvind Rajbhar and national chief spokesperson Arun Rajbhar were among those who attended the meet-

Authorised Officer - UCO Bank

Woman arrested

The woman identified as

According to police, she

the matter seriously, he added.

and the vehicle fell into the well.

Date: 22-03-2023

ZONAL OFFICE : DHANSHREE COMPLEX, 1st FLOOR D-63/8-1M, TULSIPUR, MAHMOORGANJ, VARANASI

POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Properties)

The undersigned being the authorised officer of the UCO Bank, under the Securitization and Reconstruction o Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 (Act No. 54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued **60 Days** Demand Notice dated mentioned against each accounts calling upon the respective borrower/s to repay the an as mentioned against each accounts within 60 days from date of notice (s) date of receipt of the said notice (s).

The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property/ies described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 and 9 of the said rules on this Date mention

Name of Ac/Borrower/Owner of Property & Address	Description of mortgaged property	Demand Date Possession Date	Out Standing
Mahendra Kumar S/o late Sukhlal, 216, Lukerganj, Allahabad. Guarantor: Late Rani Devi W/o Late Sukh lal, 216, Lukerganj, Allahabad.		17-03-2023	9,98,014.00/- (Rupees Nine Lakh Ninet) Eight Thousans Fourteer Rupees Only) Interest & Othe Charges.
Borrower: Mr. Pradeep Kumar S/o Mr. Naresh. R/o: village and post- Puramufti. Dist Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh: 211011 of our Pritam Nagar.	All part and parcel of part of Arazi no. 871 measuring an area of 58.55 sq mt. situated in Mauza-Bamrauli, Pargana and Tehsil- Sadar, District- Allahabad registered in the name of Pradeep Kumar s/o Naresh registered on 10.07.2014 Bahi no. 01. Zild no 8510. Pages 247-268 a serial no. 5584, Sub-Registrar Office, Sadar Allahabad (U.P.). Boundaries: North: 20ft wide kaccha rasta, South: Part of Arazi, East: Part of Arazi, West: Plot of Sunil Kumar.	17-03-2023	6,10,210.56/- (Rupees Six Lakh Ter Thousand Two Hundred ter Rupees Only) - Interest & Othe Charges.
Borrower: M/s Bidisha Enterprises Proprietor Mrs Ruby Sanyal W/o Late Braj Kishor Sanyal, R/o. 105/39, Jawahar Lal Nehru Road, George Town, Allahabad.	All part and parcel of the House no 105/39 on Bhukhand Sankhya 7. Upkhand Sankhya 7/14, George Town, measuring an area of 2363.72 sq Mt situated at Muhalla Jawahar Lal Nehru Road, Tehsil- Sadar. Distt-Allahabad (U.P.) standing in the name of Late Bani Prasad Sanyal S/o Late Narsingh Prasad Sanyal and registered vide Serial No-4868, Bahi No-1. Zild No-6143, Page no-135 to 154 dated 04-11-2008. Boundaries: North: 20 Feet wide Internal Road, South: House No 107/41 Thereafter Magh Mela Godown, East: Land related to master plan after IT Jawahar Lal Nehru Road, West: Part portion of Nazul (Now free hold) Bhukhand 7.	17-03-2023	40,51,037.77I- (Fourty Lakt Fifty One Thousand Thirty Seven Rupees and Seventy Seven Paise Only) + Interes &Other Charges

Vehicle runs over 4 in Sultanpur Sultanpur (PTI): Three persons

were killed and one other was seriously injured after a four-wheeler allegedly ran over them near Arjo Ishipur village on Chanda-Kadipur road on Wednesday, police said. The incident took place in the

Chanda Kotwali area of this Uttar Pradesh district in which the vehicle hit four pedestrians, killing two women on the spot, they said. The two seriously injured were

admitted to the district hospital where one of them later died, they said, adding that the bodies have been sent for post-mortem examina-DM Jasjit Kaur and Superintendent of Police (SP) Somen

Burma reached the district hospital and inquired about the incident. SP Somen Burma said the deceased have been identified as Sadkul Nisha (45), Mahrulnisha (62) and Jhabbu Yadav alias Pradhan Yadav (65) and the injured as Deepak

Pandey (35).

UP lauded for sustainable and inclusive sanitation

Pradesh for tackling the challenge of providing sustainable and inclusive sanitation, director-general of Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) Sunita Narain said even as the United Nations has launched a global campaign called 'Be the Change' to mark the World Water Day, India is already showcasing real action on the ground and it is led by Uttar Pradesh. She was speaking at a national workshop jointly organised by CSE, UP's Urban Development department, and Swachh Bharat Mission here on Wednesday. On the occasion, CSE released a series of reports based on ground studies on water and sanitation management in Uttar Pradesh.

Urban Development Minister Arvind Kumar Sharma said: "World Water Day and our deliberations and discussions on this day are important because we are living today in a time of great crisis in terms of water - a crisis of availability and access, of quality, of lack of sanitation and proper wastewater management, and upsetting of the water cycle due to climate change.

Shankar Mishra, who also addressed the workshop, said: "There is no 'waste' water - we only have 'used' water. Reduce, reuse and recycle should be the mantra of our life. We need to treat and reuse all the water. Since 2014, India has remained committed and on course to a paradigm change in water and sanitation management. Sanitation is a public movement in our country today." In Uttar Pradesh, home to 230 million

people, 95 per cent of its cities and towns are totally dependent on non-sewered sanitation systems. Only 31 towns out of 734 in the state have partial sewerage systems that manage to treat just 40 per cent of the sewage generated. Depinder Kapur from CSE said this is the reason why sustainable and inclusive scientific management of faecal sludge and septage is a priority for UP. The state's poor are largely dependent on on-site sanitation systems, therefore, providing an effective and affordable septage management system will generate significant social, environmental and public health outcomes.

Governor's appeal to focus on water conservation



Governor Anandiben Patel along with medal winners during the 37th convocation function of CSJMU, Kanpur on Wednesday

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Vovernor Anandiben Patel Gwhile chairing the 37th convocation of the Chhatrapati Shahu Ji Maharaj University (CSJMU) on Wednesday laid the foundation of 21 development works and appealed to students and faculty to focus majorly on water conservation. She then filled the 'kalash' with water. She was assisted by the guest of honour president and spiritual guru of Parmarth Niketan, Haridwar, Swami Chidanand Saraswati. Higher Education Minister Yogendra Upadhyaya and State Minister for Higher Education Rajni Tiwari were present on the

Addressing the gathering the governor appealed to students to ensure that they become employment giver rather than employment seeker and ensure they contributed in the development of the country. She said the youth

were valuable human resource of any country and thus had to focus on studies and ensure that they excelled and reached out far and wide to spread the name of the country. She said today the intellectual talent of India was creating ripples across the world.

The governor then felicitated student Radha Gupta, with Chancellor's Medal along with six more medals. She then handed over 91 medals to 59 students for their outstanding

performance. Later she also felicitated 30 school students and women of 25 Anganwadi centres. Vice-Chancellor Prof Vinay Pathak read out the university report and emphasised on the need for research work. Higher Education Minister Upadhyaya said every effort was being made to ensure that talent was not deprived of opportunity to pursue higher studies. A large number of BJP elected representative were present at the function.

History-sheeter's property worth ₹30 cr confiscated

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE KANPUR

Police have confiscated property worth ₹30 crore belonging to history-sheeter Shauquat Pahalwan, an aide of the Samajwadi Party MLA Irfan Solanki lodged in Maharajganj jail, here on Wednesday. Police have so far confiscated the properties worth around ₹50 crore in Kanpur, Ghaziabad and Noida belonging to the MLA Irfan Solanki and his gang members Irfan Solanki is implicated in a Gangster case of arson, securing possession on a plot and running at large on the basis of



Police confiscating the property of Shauquat Pahalwan on Wednesday.

fake documents with gang and Shauquat Pahalwan. Later, members Rizwan Solanki, three other accused - Hazi

Mohd Sharif, Israil Atewala Ajjan, Mannu Rehman and

Murslin alias Bholu - were also included in the FIR lodged under the Gangster Act. In this context, police had been confiscating the properties of MLA and his aides for the past several days. On Wednesday, the property worth ₹30 crore belonging to Shauquat Pahalwan in CB-CID office campus, Civil Lines, under Gwaltoli police station area was also seized. The police have sealed the entire area of Shauquat's property built on 1,163 sq metre land, the market and government value of which was stated to be ₹30 crore and ₹6.45 crore respectively.

Work culture in OPF praised

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE KANPUR

The Yantra India Limited CMD Rajiv Puri while inspecting the exhibition hall of the Ordnance Parachute Factory (OPF), unit of Gliders India Limited, praised the work culture in OPF and said it is no exaggeration to state that the basic infrastructure here was world class which had constantly pushed the products to the topmost rungs of success ladder. He said it was a quality production unit which had carved a niche for itself in producing world class defence products. He was accorded a warm welcome by General



Yantra India Limited CMD Rajiv Puri inspecting the exhibition hall of the Ordnance Parachute Factory.

Balasubramaniam. He then inspected the P2 Shop and P6 production unit where he took keen interest in the products

manufactured there and praised them for producing world class products. He said in the changing times the products manufactured by OPF were commendable. Balasubramaniam said the

entire team of officials and the technical staff were totally devoted to the production of high class quality products and for this they were mentally and physically devoted. He said today OPF was among the few best defence production units in India which were on par with the world defence units. He said it was the devotion and dedication of the team that it has constantly been upgrading its quality . Joint GMs S Bannerjee, and KS Charak, Vivek Gupta, works manager, Roopesh Kumar and several others were present.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE KANPUR

To spread awareness among MSMEs, start-ups, prospective entrepreneurs, faculty members and students, MSME, Government of India in collaboration with IIT Kanpur organised a two-day IPR training programme titled "IP Yatra". This training programme related to patents, designs, copyrights, trademarks and technology transfer was held at the Outreach Auditorium. The inauguration ceremony of the event kicked off with the lighting of lamp in the presence of eminent guest of honors, V K Verma, Joint Director, MSME and Sunil Kumar Agnihotri, Assistant Director, MSME, Prof Ankush Sharma, Professor-In-Charge, Startup Innovation and Incubation Centre (SIIC), IIT Kanpur and Prof J G Rao, Associate Dean, Research and Development, IIT Kanpur. More than 500 participants from more than 20 institutions registered for the train-

ing programme, which included startup founders, faculty members and students from HBTU, Rama University, Chandrashekhar Azad University of Agriculture and Technology (CSA University), government polytechnic colleges, CSIR Institutes and CSJM University. Prof JG Rao commended the efforts of MSME and IIT Kanpur in organising the programme which will benefit the inventors and entrepreneurs in securing their ideas. He also facilitated the visit of the participants to the centres and laboratories of IIT Kanpur so that they can get a broad overview. Prof. Ankush Sharma emphasised upon the need to secure the inventions by filing IPRs and also highlighted IIT Kanpur's achievements in filing the highest IPRs and technology transfer transactions in the institute's history in the recent years, leading to start-up formation and creation of jobs and revenues. It has been a constant endeavour for IIT Kanpur to collaborate with various agencies to enlighten the people

by organising such events and programmes The IP Yatra Programme was envisioned with the aim to spread IPR awareness and knowledge among the youth, covering topics such as how to secure an innovative idea and put that into use to build successful businesses. The topics of the sessions encompassed the significance of intellectual property rights and formalities of IPR filing in India such as patent specifications and prior art search, copyright and trademark protection, design registration, technology transfer and protecting business from imitation, infringement and counterfeiting. The training programme also hosted a talk by an expert from Denmark Patent Office to highlight comparison analysis of the EU and Indian IP Ecosystems and practical approach to the IP strategy when internationalising to foreign markets. Eleven speakers having expertise in relevant topics had been invited from various universities such as CSIMU law firms, Patent Office, New Delhi, Legal Cell and IPR cell of IIT Kanpur.

Two killed as bike falls into well



Police along with fire brigade rescuing labourers from the well in Thanagaon, Makhi, Unnao

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

uncontrolled bike suddenly fell into a well in a village under Makhi police station area of Unnao on Tuesday evening. All the labourers were returning from duty in a brick kiln. With the help of fire brigade, both the bodies were recovered from the well while the injured was sent to the district hospital. Dilwar (30) son of Ismail of Rakehari, Dhaurahara police station, Lakhimpur Kheri, Sakir (25) son of Akhtiyar of Munnalal Purwa and Harun (35), son of Razzak of Hidayat Nagar, were employed in a brick kiln near Thanagaon for the past several years. Around 5 pm on Tuesday they had gone to buy vegetables from the market. On return, Dilawar was driving the bike. Due to higher speed he lost control over the bike which suddenly fell into a well around 500 metres away from the brick kiln. While

falling into the well, Harun suming the poisonous subcaught hold of the surrounding bush and hung to it. When they I while the condition of cried for help, villagers rushed self and mother, I am going rescued Harun Meanwhile, Circle Officer (CO) Rishi Kant Shukla along with Makhi SHO Ramasrey Chaudhary and fire brigade reached the spot. They took out two other labourers - Dilawar and Sakir - from the well after a lot of effort and sent them to the district hospital where the doctors declared them dead. The CO said there was water in the well where villagers used to perform religious rituals. The deceased Dilawar had arrived in the village with wife, Madhuri and children Tarannum (10), Jishan (8) and Tabassum (6) while Sakir lived in the brick kiln with wife Rasitun Bano and two children Nirshad and Irshad. In another incident a

newly-wed woman committed suicide by consuming poisonous substance in Sajeti police station area late on Tuesday evening. After con-

stance, she informed her brother on phone "take care of yournow I love you all On brother's information her husband rushed to spot and took his wife to Ghatampur CHC where doctors declared her dead. Police sent the body for autopsy. Naresh of Kyotara village, Sajeti, said he was married to Vandana of Bhaura village, Bharua Sumerpur, three months ago. Late on Tuesday evening, when Naresh had gone to field with family members, Vandana was alone in the house. She consumed poisonous substance under mysteriously circumstances and informed her brother. Naresh then informed Vandana's kin about the incident. Station House Officer (SHO) Pawan Kumar said the body had been sent for an autopsy. On the basis of the complaint and autopsy report further action will be taken in

the matter. Meanwhile a tractor dri- outpost.

ver committed suicide by jumping before a speeding train on Banda-Kanpur railway track in Hamirpur on Wednesday. The police sent the body for an autopsy. He was identified as Shiv Prasad Pal (30) of Kiswahi village under Sisolar police station area. He used to drive the tractor of his brother-in-law Rambabu Pal's nephew Alok Pal by living with them in Kundaura village. Patyora outpost incharge Pramod Yadav said eyewitness informed that Shiv Prasad Pal died after falling from the train whereas police did not recover any train ticket from him. Alok Pal said Shiv Pal's wife had gone to live with her father in Delhi for the past several months while his son (8) and daughter (5) were living with their grandnot clear whether he committed suicide or died after falling from the moving train.

In yet another incident, an electrician, returning after having dinner in a hotel, was killed when his scooty rammed into a stationary wood-laden tractor-trolley laden with the on the highway in Hamirpur late on Tuesday night. He was identified as Sushil Dhuria (25), son of Santosh Dhuria of Kamlesh Tiraha, Chand Chowk, Bharuwa Sumerpur. As Santosh was not wearing helmet, he succumbed to his injury on the spot. He is survived by wife Sangeeta, sons Vedant (4), Shyam (three months) and elderly parents. Station House Officer (SHO) Ramasrey Saroj said the trac-tor-trolley had been impounded and parked at Factory Area

Religious leaders support TB-free drive

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

 $E_{\text{make the country tuberculosis (TB)-}}$ free by 2025. In this direction, the religious leaders of different communities from the district have appealed to the public. Along with this, they have also given messages to cooperate in the Prime Minister's TB-Mukt Bharat Abhiyan. Acharya Tek Narayan Upadhyay, senior priest of Shri Kashi Vishwanath temple said, "The body is home to many diseases but if it is thoroughly examined and treated, it can be cured. TB is also a serious disease and if it is not diagnosed and treated timely, it can affect some others. Therefore, on seeing the symptoms, one should immediately go to the nearest medical units for examination and treatment. With complete treatment TB is completely curable." He also appealed to the people to be alert from TB but do not be

APPENDIX IV-A

[See proviso to Rule 8(6)] Sale Notice for sale of Immovable Property

E-Auction Sale Notice for sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and

Guarantor(s) that the below described Immovable Property mortgaged to Indiabulls

Housing Finance Ltd. [CIN: L65922DL2005PLC136029] ("Secured Creditor"), the

constructive possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of the

Secured Creditor, will be sold on "as is where is", "as is what is" and "whatever there is"

(Rupees Thirty Seven Lakh Seventy Thousand Nine Hundred Seventy Nine only)

pending towards Loan Account No. HLAPALI00422816, by way of outstanding principal,

arrears (including accrued late charges) and interest till 14.03.2023 with applicable future

interest in terms of the Loan Agreement and other related loan document(s) w.e.f.

15.03.2023 along with legal expenses and other charges due to the Secured Creditor from

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

PROPERTY NO. 1/04 (CONSTRUCTED OVER TWO PLOTS), HAVING AREA OF 20.06

SQ. METERS & 20.06 SQ. METERS, I.E. TOTAL AREA IS 40.12 SQ. METERS,

SITUATED NEAR CHHARRA ADDA FLYOVER, PARGANA & TEHSIL KOIL, DISTRICT

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided on the

website of the Secured Creditor i.e. www.indiabullshomeloans.com. For bidding, log on to

Three Lakh only) i.e. equivalent to 10% of the Reserve Price.

BOUNDARIES OF FIRST PART OF HOUSE ARE AS FOLLOWS:

WEST: ROAD 4 FT. 6 INCH WIDE INSIDE MEASURING 26 FT.

NORTH: PLOT OF RAJ KUMAR INSIDE MEASURING 8.3 FT.

SOUTH: PLOT OF RAKESH INSIDE MEASURING 8.3 FT.

EAST: PLOT OF BHOORA INSIDE MEASURING 26 FT.

ALIGARH, ALIGARH-202001, UTTAR PRADESH.

with proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

afraid of its patients. "Help them and cooperate with the government to make a TB free India," he said. Maulana Abdul Batin Nomani, Muftie-Banaras and Imam of Shahi Jama Masjid Gyanvapi said, "Health is important for everyone. Any kind of disease makes a person weak. Similarly, TB is a serious disease, due to which the immunity of a person decreases but if regular and complete treatment is done on the appearance of symptoms and confirmation of TB in the test, then it can be completely cured. TB patients are also given ₹500 every month during treatment by the government." He also appealed to the public to take advantage of the health services by joining this campaign of the government, Father Majoo Mathew, a Christian leader, said, "TB is a serious disease which grows by hiding it. If any person is coughing for more than two weeks, coughing up blood with sputum, night sweats and fever, then in this situation the person should be examined at the near-

est government health centre as soon as possible. After this, the course of medicine should be completed on the advice of the doctor. Investigation, diagnosis, treatment and consultation service is available free of cost in all government hospitals. TB is not incurable. If its complete treatment is done on time, it can be completely cured." Granthi Dharamveer Singh of Gurdwara Nichibagh said, "It is also necessary to remove discrimination, myths and misconceptions against TB patients in the society. Due to the fear of discrimination, TB patients do not come forward for their investigation and treatment, due to which that infected patient can make 10 to 15 people around him or his family. That's why it is most important that on seeing the symptoms of TB, one should get it checked immediately and get it treated completely. The drug should not be missed even for a sin-gle day during the course of treatment."

Winners awarded

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Under the auspices of Divisional Women's Welfare Organisation (DWWO) of North Eastern Railway (NER), a prize distribution programme was held to give the awards to the winners basis on 24.04.2023 from 02.00 P.M. to 04.00 P.M., for recovery of Rs. 37,70,979/of on-spot drawing, painting and essay competitions organised on the occasion of International Women's Day at NER Officers' Club, Lahartara here on Tuesday. The pro-MUNESH KUMAR (PROPRIETOR, SHIVA SWEETS & DOODH BHANDAR) and gramme was held under the chairmanship of Divisional The Reserve Price of the Immovable Property will be Rs. 30,00,000/- (Rupees Thirty Railway Manager (DRM) Lakh only) and the Earnest Money Deposit ("EMD") will be Rs. 3,00,000/- (Rupees Ramashray Pandey while it was inaugurated by the Chairperson of DWWO Sujata Pandey by lighting the lamp. Vice chairpersons of DWWO Basu Srivastava, Anjana Agnihotri, Aparna Yadav, treasurer Namrata Singh and members of the Executive Committee Preeti Kesharwani, Ritika Singh, Sarita Kesharwani, the participants and their relatives were also present. In the award distribution function, at the divisional headquarter level, the participants have received six awards while at the divisional level, 18 children got first, second, third

positions in all three groups (6-



12 consolation awards. The awards were given to the winners by DWWO Chairperson Sujata Pandey, along with the DRM Ramashray Pandey. Showing affection towards all the participants, Sujata Pandey urged them to continue practicing their talents and expressed hope that the children of other railway employees would also get inspired by this and do more excellent work in the field of art and skill. The DRM Ramashray Pandey appreciated the winners for their talents and encouraged them to be alert and ready for their goal. The programme was conducted by chief welfare inspector Rahul Bhatt and the vote of thanks was proposed by DWWO chairperson Sujata Pandey.

Seminar on Down's syndrome

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE KANPUR

Genetic specialist, Dr Poonam Singh Gambhir, while addressing a seminar on Down's syndrome organised by the IAP-Kanpur Unit at the GSVM Medical College auditorium on Tuesday said it was one of the most prevalent inherited birth diseases, affecting around on in every 830 live births. She said every year, approximately 1.3 lakh children in India were born with this condition.

She said Down Syndrome remained the most common chromosomal condition and was caused by trisomy 21 and the person had three copies of chromosome 21, instead of the usual two copies, in all cells. She said this was caused by abnormal cell division during the development of the sperm cell or the egg cell. She said there was no single, standard treatment for Down Syndrome and treatments were based on each person's physical and intellectual needs, strengths, and limitations.



IAP-Kanpur organising a seminar on 'Downs Syndrome' at GSVM Medical College.

Dr Poonam said people with Down syndrome tended to have certain physical features in common like eyes slant up at the outer corner, small ears, flat nose, protruding tongue, tiny spots in the coloured part of the eyes and short neck. She said they had small hands and feet and remained short statured with loose joints and weak muscle tone. She said people with Down syndrome had heart problems and trouble hearing and seeing. Addressing the session noted paediatrician, Dr Roopa Dalmia said children, teens with Down syndrome also needed the same regular medical care as those without the condition, from well-baby visits and routine vaccinations as infants to reproductive counselling and cardiovascular care later in life. She said like other people, they also benefit from regular physical activity and social activities. She mooted early intervention and educational therapy,drugs and supplements and assistive devices. She said research indicated that early intervention improved outcomes for children with Down syndrome and assistance can begin shortly after birth and often continues until a child reached age three or four as after that age, most children receive interventions and treatment through their local school district. Prominent present on the occasion were Dr Shailendra Gautam, Dr Neena Gupta, Dr VN Tripathi, Dr Devendra Awasthi, Dr Pratibha Singh and umpteen resident doctors, patients and

Date: 17.03.2023 Place: ALIGARH

www.auctionfocus.in

MEERA DEVI @ MIRA DEVI.

AUTHORISED OFFICER **INDIABULLS HOUSING FINANCE LTD.** 9, 9-12, 12-15 age groups), while

Kashi first Indian city to have ropeway for public transport

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

This holy city of Kashi will be I the first city in the country to have a ropeway for public transport and only third after Bolivia and Mexico in the world. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is going to give a ropeway project to his parliamentary constituency here on March 24 when he will lay the foundation stone of the same. The ropeway will run from Varanasi Junction (Cantt) railway station to Godowlia crossing. With this scheme worth Rs 644.49 crore, it will be easy to go to Kashi Vishwanath temple and Dashashwamedh Ghat while facing acute traffic jams. After widening of National Highway and construction of Ring Road, flyovers and Railway over bridges (ROBs) in the city, now a rope-

people as well as domestic and foreign tourists.

Varanasi, which is also called the 'Gateway of Eastern India, is developing rapidly. Everyday new dimensions of development are being added in the city. Vice Chairman (VC) of Varanasi Development Authority (VDA) Abhishek Goyal said that the country's first public transport ropeway will be run between Varanasi Cantt to Godowlia in the first phase. Due to the narrowness of the roads in the old areas of Kashi and the continuous increase in the traffic pressure. there is often a situation of jam here, posing a lot of troubles to the local people apart from Indian and foreign tourists, he

Anurag Tripathi, project director of National Highway way in the congested area will Logistics Pvt Ltd, said that

Mexico, India will be the third country in the world and Varanasi will be the first city where a ropeway will be used for public transport. He said that this is a pilot project and it will be jointly constructed by Swiss company Bertholet and National Highway Logistics Private Limited (NHLPL). He said that there would be a total of five stations from Cantt station to Godowlia crossing in which stations will be built at Cantt railway station, Kashi Vidyapeeth, Rathyatra, Girjaghar and Godowlia cross-

According to him, the total distance of the ropeway will be 3.8 kilometres which will be covered in about 16 minutes. About 150 trolley cars will run from a height of about 50 metres. A trolley can carry 10 passengers. Trolleys will be

available for passengers at an interval of every one and a half to two minutes. About 3,000 people will be able to travel in one direction in one hour which means about 6,000 people will be able to come in one hour from both directions. The operation of the ropeway will be 16 hours. The ropeway will be ready within two years, will be ready within two years, he said, adding that the work of land acquisition, wire and pipe shifting is going on fast. "Glimpses of Kashi's art, religion and culture will be seen

at all the stations built for the ropeway. Kashi's heritage can also be seen on the ropeway trolley. Roadways bus stand is near to Cantt railway station. Therefore, the construction of the ropeway station at Cantt station will provide a lot of convenience to both the passengers travelling by train and bus," he

The festivity picked up

Chaitra Navratri: Devotees throng main temples

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE PRAYAGRAJ

Devotees in large number visited the main temples to offer obeisance to the goddess Shailputri, the first form of Goddess Durga on the first day of Chatira Navratri here on Wednesday. The largest number of men and women was seen at the Alop Shamkari Devi, Alopi Devi, Kalyani Devi and Lalita Devi temples that were most revered goddess temples in Prayagraj.

Majority of devotees were witnessed standing for hours to have a 'darshan' of Goddess

have a 'darshan' of Goddess Shailputri Devi located at Kajjakpur area. They also performed the 'abhishek'.

The devotees also set up urns ('kalash') in their houses to worship all the ninth incarnations of Goddess Durga. Along with keeping a fast on this pious day, devotees took a holy dip in the confluence of Ganga, Yamuna and mythical

All the temples were specially decorated for the nine day Navratri festival. From early morning, long queues were seen outside temples.

Mankameshwar temple and Hanumant Niketan in Civil Lines. Keeping in mind the



large number of devotees

thronging these temples, dis-

trict administration had beefed

up security arrangements in

and around the temples

premises with barricading

Top brass in the Police

Devotees offer prayers to Goddess Alop Shamkari Devi on the first day of nine days Navratri at Alope Devi temple in Pravagrai on Wednesday

department had also held a

meeting with the members of

the temples a day before to

maintain traffic movement.

The CCTV cameras had also

been arranged near the premis-

es of almost all the temples for

security purpose.

STF officers inspect Modi's tour venues

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The officers of Special Task Force (STF) visited different venues where during his visit on March 24, the Prime Minister Narendra Modi will attend functions. After arriving here a day ago the STF officers held a meeting at Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport, Babatpur and reviewed all the arrangements. During the day, they visited Sampurnanand Sanskrit University (SSU) where the PM will address a public meeting apart from giving a gift of Rs 1181.78 crore to his parliamentary constituency. The PM will lay the foundation stones of nine projects including a ropeway worth Rs 1592.49 and inaugurate 20 projects worth Rs 189.41 crore.

As during the last few days, the city had received heavy rains with thunderstorm/ hailstorm causing heavy losses not only to the farmers but also damaged property apart from claiming two lives on Tuesday night. Besides, it caused heavy damages to the recently constructed tent city across the river Ganga. It also affected the preparations at the SSU venue. Meanwhile, senior administrative and police officers also rehearsal of landing of copters visited there to ensure all the at the Police Lines helipad and preparations at SSU in case of the work of barricading and reather conditions



STF personnel inspecting Modi's public meeting venue at SSU in Varanasi on Wednesday.

The STF personnel also visited Rudraksha Convention Centre where the PM will attend a programme to be held on World Tuberculosis (TB) Day which will also be attended by the Union Health Minister and others. The Air Force helicopters made a

routes from where the motorcade of Modi will pass through have been intensified.

Meanwhile, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) have also intensified their campaigning on the second day of their three-day drive ahead of PM's visit, the party workers of all the seven frontal units including Yuva Morcha, Mahila Morcha, Pichada Verg Morch, SC and ST units and others took out

motorcycle processions in different areas. They passed through various main routes and big crossings to create awareness among the people to make the SSU meeting a grand success. A day earlier, the party had launched a massive cleanliness drive and they will also do the same on Thursday when they will offer their shramdaan at different wards, maths, temples and public parl

Show-cause notice pasted on house of Guddu Muslim

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE PRAYAGRAJ

A show-cause notice has been pasted on the house of Guddu Muslim at Manja Chaqniratul locality in Chakia locality. Guddu Muslim is carrying Rs 5 lakh cash reward and is wanted by the police in connection with Umesh Pal and two of his police gunners killing case.

Guddu was the one among the five key assailants involved the February 24 Dhoomanganj shootout incident. His photograph while hurling bombs was also captured in the CCTV footage. The notice directs the house owner to present the required documents before the authorities of Pravagraj Development Authority (PDA) on March 25 constructed without getting the map sanctioned from the agency concerned. On failure the PDA authorities seal or raze

notice was in fact issued on March 10.

with fasting and observance of

made a beeline at several tem-

including

A large number of devotees

rituals and temple visits.

A senior PDA official preferring anonymity said that the notice has been served to Guddu Muslim by the zonal officer, Zone -2 of Prayagraj Development Authority, Prayagraj under the Section 27 (1) of Úttar Pradesh Urban Planning and Development Act 1973. The zonal officer in the notice served to Guddu Muslim and one another, Chandbibi, directed to show relevant papers and documents for construction of the house (measuring 13x45 feet) at Mauia Chagniratul or else the house would be sealed or razed.

Meanwhile police have now started investigating those who helped mafia Atiq Ahmed and his brother Ashraf in the police have prepared a list of names of such people who helped the mafia. The PDA is now probing the Atiq Ahmed's

the house. Officials said the helpers. Illegal properties of 50 people have been identified.

In the police investigation, it is learnt that before the murder, every activity of Umesh Pal was being monitored. Asad was taking information from people doing recce every moment, the day Umesh was going to be killed, people doing the recce were active since morning. Asad was being informed about every movement of Umesh. When Umesh left the court, the car of those who did the recce also got behind. Asad was listening every moment live as to which intersection did Umesh's car turn. Among those who were entrusted with the responsibility of recce, the most prominent name is that of Dhumanganj's Niyaz Ahmed. Niyaz attended all the meetings related to in Chakia. Niyaz followed Umesh to the court. He kept

Jayantipur Dhumnangaj Mohd Sajar is the neighbour of Umesh Pal. Asad chose him because he kept informing about Umesh's every activity. For this Asad gave him an iPhone. Mohd Sajar was told that he would inform about Umesh's activities only through

internet calling.
Sajar used to tell everyday that at what time Umesh left, who was with him and what time did he came back On the fateful day of the murder also, Sajar had given complete information about Umesh. Arshad aka Arshad Katra of Katra area used to attend all the meetings related to Umesh's murder held at Atiq's house. Rakesh Kumar alias Lala of Paschim Sharira of Kaushambi, used to do work as a munshi at Atig's house for the last 19 years. He used to maintain the accounts of Atia After the murder, Shaista and Asad had also given Rakesh the responsibility of hiding the weapons and cash.

Heavy rush at temples in Kashi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

Heavy rush of devotees thronged various temples goddesses including Mukhnirmalika Gauri (Ghai Ghat), Shailputri (near Alaipur) and Durga Mandir (Durgakund) here on the first day of Vasantik Navratri on Wednesday. As this holy city has separate temples of all the nine Devis and nine Gauris where the devotees offer prayers on different days of Shardiya and Vasantik Navratra respectively and as per tradition, the rush should be at Mukhnirmalika Gauri temple but thousands of devotees also reached Shailputri and Durgakund.



Devotees offering prayers at Shailputri Mandir on first day of Navratri in Varanasi

Gauri is a small temple, a long in Ghai Ghat area but as usual,

Though Mukhnirmalika line of devotees was seen there

thousands thronged Shailputri which generally see rush of devotees on the first day of both the Navratris. The biggest temple of goddess, Durga Mandir sees a rush of devotees throughout both the Navratris generally. Even on the first day, long lines of devotees were seen as after overnight rains, the weather conditions remained pleasant during the day though there was bright sunshine. Meanwhile, a good number of people also visited Vindhyachal in Mirzapur district, about 65 kilometres from here, to offer prayers at Maa Vindhyavasini Devi. Rush was also seen at the old Durga Mandir at Ramnagar and Sheetla Mata temple at

Arghya to rising sun marks beginning of Navsvatsar

VARANASI (PNS): Hundreds of people including scores of batuks (Sanskrit students) offered arghya to the rising sun on Wednesday to mark the beginning of Navsvatsar (New Year as per Hindu Calendar). On the occasion, the main attraction was seen at Shankaracharya Ghat near Kedar Ghat where the Shankaracharya of Jyotish

Peeth Swami Avimukteshwaranand Saraswati and many other dignitaries were also present. The batuks also displayed Surya Namaskar. Later, the Shankaracharya gave a message to Sanatani Hindus of the world in the New Year (Vikram Samvat-2080). Besides, he also released Sanatani Panchang

peethas. Meanwhile, at Assi Ghat, a programme to welcome Mohale. Navsvatsar was welwas also performed.

the New Year in Sanatan way was organised in association with Kusum Mohle Smriti Sanatan Nyas on the call of former Mayor Ram Gopal comed amidst the presence of several dignitaries who offered Ganga water to Lord Bhaskar (Sun) and wished for the welfare of the country, society and the whole world. On the occasion, along with Havan Pujan, a grand aarti of Maa Ganga and Bhagwan Bhaskar While congratulating the

people on the occasion, Mohale said that the Sanatan tradition would be enriched by the New Year's greeting programme in with the blessings of Kashi, the capital of religion Shankaracharyas of all the four and culture. "On the one hand,

where the Hindu society will be more strongly connected to the roots of its glorious past and on the other hand, the new generation will be familiar with Sanatani culture," he said, adding that the inspiration for this programme has been derived from the concept of the MP from Kashi and the Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Former Vice-Chancellor of BHU Prof GC Tripathi, Dr Vibha Mishra, writer Dr Neerja Madhay, Prof Shraddhanand, Dr Jitendra Nath Mishra, Dr Ashwani Tandon, Padma Shri Prof Saroj Chooramani, exporter Ashok Gupta, assistant director (Tourism) Amit Gupta and any others were also

Besides, the activists of Namami Gange and 137 CETF Battalion (Territorial Army)

39 Gorkha Rifles Ganga Task Force welcomed the Hindu New Year by performing aarti and offering Arghya to Lord Sun. As soon as the sun rose at the Dashashwamedh Ghat, prayers were offered for protection of nature, peace and prosperity in the country and the participants offered arghya. Regional coordinator of Namami Gange (Kashi) Rajesh Shukla said that the New Year also gives us an opportunity to introduce and preserve our rich cultural heritage. Sushil Guhani, Company Commandant, Ganga Task Force said that public participation has to be ensured for pure and clean water. Subedar Shivendra Singh, Namami Gange's city co-convenor Bina

others were also present.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The UP Secondary
Education Board has decided to do away with 30 per cent reduction in the syllabus that was followed by it during Corona period and students will now be taught complete syllabus from the upcoming academic session (2023-24).

From the new session starting April 1, the entire syllabus will be implemented in all subjects from classes 9 to 12, said UP Board Secretary, Divya Kant Shukla.

"During the last two years, due to Covid-19, regular teaching and learning in schools were disrupted. For this reason, keeping in view the interest of the students, the course committee had recommended reduction in 30 per cent of the course. Now, with situation returning to normal, 100 per cent syllabus will be implemented from the new session," Shukla said.

POLLUTION GANGA: Despite spending huge funds and orders of the court, the water of Ganga river is not getting clean. Barring Prayagraj, in many districts of the state, the pollution in Ganga is higher than the set norms.

Water of Ganga is considered suitable for bathing if it has a biological oxygen demand (BOD) of less than three milligrams per litre.

However, according to the report of the Uttar Pradesh Pollution Control Board (January 2023), Ganga water is fit for bathing only in Prayagraj. From Kannauj to Varanasi, the BOD of Ganga is higher than the norm of 3 mg/l barring The BOD level in Ganga at

upstream (Rasoolabad ghat) was 2.70 mg/l and remains below 3mg/l throughout its 4.40mg/l. The BOD in Ganga flow. It was 2.60mg/l downstream (Sangam) and 2.80 at Sirsa after meeting the Tamsa

telling Asad where Umesh's

car reached. A resident of

The quality of water in river Ganga is quite pure at Vindhyachal (Mirzapur) where the reading was 2.40mg/l as mentioned in the UPPCB report. However, the quality of water deteriorates alarmingly downstream of Mirzapur where it was measured at 3.70mg/l. The quality of water of the holy river upstream of Varanasi is well within the given norms. The reading, as recorded upstream of the river at Varanasi was 2.30 but the same was 3.50 as recorded downstream of the river at Varanasi. The BOD of Ganga is 4.10mg/l at Golaghat and rises to 4.20mg/l at Jajmau of Kanpur and further deteriorates downstream (Jana Village) and was recorded at

UP Board to do away with 30 pc reduction in syllabus at Dalmau remains high at 3.90mg/l and at Kalakankar (Pratapgrah), it was 3.80mg/l.

According to the report, the water of Ganga was quite clean from Bijnor to Badaun. According to the Pollution Control Board, the BOD of the Ganga at Hapur is just 0.60 mg/l. The BOD in Bijnor is 1.20 mg per litre, Bulandshahr 2.20, Badaun 1.30 and Farrukhabad has BOD 2.90 mg per litre. At Prayagraj, the initiative of the Municipal Prayagraj Corporation (PMC), taken in reducing the pollution, has played a vital role.

"The bio-remedial method taken by us while treating the water fairly reduces the pollutants in the river and thus the quality of water in the holy river remains well within the norms", said Municipal Commissioner Chandra Mohan Garg.

'Path sanchalan' taken out

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

shetriya pracharak RSS Anil Kumar while addressing the gathering on the eve of Varsh Pratipada on Tuesday as a keynote speaker said Dr Hedgewar was a visionary who kept the nation at top and founded the organisation RSS dedicated to the nation. He said Dr Hedgewar never cared for criticism and went ahead to spread the ideology of Sanatan

According to Anil Kumar the ideology of RSS was based on nationalism. He concluded Gupta, Pushpalata Verma and his address by saying we were confident that the day is not far

when our nation will get the status of super power in the world with the ability to lead the humanity.

After the address of the RSS leader a long 'path sancha-lan' (route march) was taken out by the workers in uniform. Sharad Chand, Dharma Raj Singh, Pratosh Kumar, Dheeraj Kumar, Pawan Kumar and others were present.

PROGRAMME: SDM (Chunar) Navneet Sehra during a programme organised under the aegis of PIB said fake news items are a danger to any system and it is the prime duty of media houses to check it in the larger interest of the society. He said not only gov-

ernment officials but media also should be equally responsible towards their duties because a fake news could prove detrimental to the society as well as system.

The programme was also addressed by Dr Bala Lakhendra from BHU and Prashant Kakkad of PIB Varanasi.

The programme was attended by more than 50 rural news reporters who threw light over the problems during reporting. The vote of thanks was proposed by Sameer

MEETING: Akash Dubey became the new president of Mirzapur Press Club Trust on Tuesday. In a meeting of the organisation the members discussed about its new body for the year 2023-2024. Veteran journalist Manoj Shukla also spoke on the occasion.

As per the unanimous decision Akash Dubey was declared the president and JP Patel the secretary. Among those present were Amaresh Mishra, Pramod Singh, Dr Rajesh Mishra, Raj Kumar Upadhyay, Akhilesh Mishra, Ramlal Sahni and Samar Sharma. Jayendra Chaturvedi, Sameer Verma, Satish Raghuvanshi, Anuj Srivastawa, Neeraj Singh, Pawan Kumar Tiwari and others congratulated the new office-bearers.

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

Already engaged

A prominent US conservative academic says BJP is the most important foreign political party in the world

The Bharatiya Janata Party and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh rarely figure in public discourse of Western countries. And when it does, it is generally for criticism. However, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's nine years in office, and his Government's persistent emphasis on its Hindu core, seem to have changed that. Evidently, those who matter in government and decision- and opinion-making are shedding their blinkers to have a closer look at the Sangh Parivar. The blinkers, needless to say, were often manufactured at the facilities (academia, the mainstream media, et al) run by the Left-liberal establishment. But it looks like the important people in the West want to have a 360-degree view of the saffron family, especially the BJP. This is the reason that a prominent conservative academic, in an opinion piece in the prominent conservative newspaper Wall Street Journal, chose to state that the BJP



"is, from the standpoint of American national interests, the most important foreign political party in the world. It may also be the least understood." The author Walter Russell Mead is "convinced that Americans and Westerners generally need to engage much more deeply with a complex and powerful movement [Hindutva]." It may be mentioned here that Mead is a well-known critic of China. Three years ago, he wrote an article with the self-explanatory headline, 'China Is the Real Sick Man of Asia,' in WSJ. Unsurprisingly, the Chinese Government was incensed; it even expelled three WSJ journalists.

Mead, who teaches at New York's Bard College, is quite bullish not just about India but also the BJP.

which "is headed for a repeat victory in 2024." India is emerging both as a leading economic power and, along with Japan, as the linchpin of American strategy in the Indo-Pacific, he wrote. Therefore, for the foreseeable future the BJP will be calling the shots in a country without whose help American efforts to balance rising Chinese power are likely to fall short. Mead is not exactly a cheerleader of the BJP. He talked about the anti-Government journalists who "can face harassment and worse." He also talks about "anti-conversion laws as well as occasional outbursts of mob violence." Yet, he doesn't find the BJP beyond the pale, for the party may reject many ideas and priorities of Western liberalism, "it embraces key features of modernity" (emphasis added). Further, he is appreciative of the saffron party which "combines a basically pro-market economic stance with populist rhetoric and traditionalist values." This is also a trait that American conservatives generally admire. The WSJ article should not be seen as just an academic's exuberance; the West's deeper engagement with Modi's India was written all over Air India's 70-billion deal to buy 470 aircraft. This could not have been possible without the consent of the big boys and girls of global finance and of politics. Indo-Western engagement has already begun.



Sikhs hold Tiranga in high esteem

Reckless politics by earlier governments created conditions that bred an insurgency movement but Sikhs have always saluted the Tiranga

ealthy politics is all about disagreements (irrespective of the fact that every ruling dispensation would suggest otherwise), and so it should always be. Dissent and disagreement with a government and its perceived policies is not the same as rebelling against the nation. History is instructive that often dissent against the government can be the highest form of patriotism e.g., dissent against Emergency in 1975. However, something is sacrosanct and beyond the realm of either political usurpation or conversely destruction. These are the foundational 'Ideas of India' as enshrined in the holy book of the land i.e., the Constitution and the defined symbols within, the most sacred of them being the national flag, Tiranga or Tricolour.

Recent images of a Khalistani supporter attempting to pull down the Tiranga at the Indian High Commission in London, were simply deplorable beyond words. The shameful act militated against the inert sense of patriotism that ought to beset all Indians, irrespective of their partisan loyalties, personal identities, and disaffections. That it came from a member of a community that has given more blood and lives to protect the integrity, sovereignty, and dignity of India since time immemorial, made it even more hurtful and unbelievable.

Contrast this recent image with that of the valourous Sikh warriors (8 Sikh Regiment - the irrepressible 'Chardhikala' battalion) who battled their way to the top of Tiger Hill in the Kargil War. These fierce Khalsa warriors with unmatched josh and daredevilry reached atop the Tiger Hill and flew the Tiranga – the price to pay for flying that Tiranga was one officer, four junior commissioned officers and 30 jawans of 8 Sikh who went down fighting and charging with a war cry that sent shivers down the spine of the enemies, 'Bole So Nihal Sat Sri Akal'! To defend their commitment to the flag, their forefathers had refused to surrender and came down fighting to the last man in earlier battles like Saragarhi. There is no surprise the latter day Sikh Regiment (along with Sikh Light Infantry) has continued to



be one of the most decorated regiments of the Indian Army due to its fiery traditions. 1st Battalion of the Sikh Regiment, later the 4th Mechanised Regiment, is considered the Commonwealth's most decorated battalion with 245 preindependence and 82 postindependence gallantry awards. Martial Sikhs need no certificate of patriotism. Those who seek to besmirch its fine history written in blood and sacrifice, don't behoove or represent the community's unflinching standards and ethos for eons!

Sikhs may be about 1.7% of the national population but they are almost 20% of the recipients of the highest gallantry award i.e., Param Vir Chakra (with the National Emblem of India in the centre, surrounded by four copies of the Vajra). These men willingly put themselves in the line of fire to defend the Tiranga. They are Lance Naik Karam Singh, Subedar Joginder Singh, Flying Officer Nirmal Jit Singh Sekhon and Hony Capt Major Bana Singh.

is the mainstay of the Sikh community and they have had many socio-economic concerns with various dispensations since independence (like any region or ethnicity). Reckless politics by earlier



RECENT IMAGES OF A KHALISTANI SUPPORTER ATTEMPTING TO PULL DOWN THE TIRANGA AT THE INDIAN HIGH COMMISSION IN LONDON WERE SIMPLY **DEPLORABLE BEYOND WORDS**

governments created conditions that bred an insurgency movement, but that didn't imply that every Sikh who had a genuine grievance against the government wanted to secede or become a Khalistani (as is instinctively and thoughtlessly attributed today). At the height of militancy in 1987, then Naib Subedar Bana Singh of 8th JAKLI had led an impossible assault and wrested control of an almost impregnable peak in Siachen Glacier. Such is the cloth from which the Sikh community is cut - societal and political differences aside, a nation first

and foremost, always! Like many proud Veterans who had guarded the nation with their lives and were later participating in the Farmers Protest a few years back, little did they know that they would be abused as Khalistanis, 'antinationals' by people who would never come remotely close to making the sacrifices that these men and women had made, and even by some never claim to represent the among them, who were mis- clan of defenders of the nation guided and truly condemnable. Larger citizenry did not differentiate (unlike in the 80's) and the dispensation encouraged the wrongful narrative that a Khalistani flag had replaced the Tiranga at Red Fort - it hadn't

replaced the Tiranga and the flag hoisted on the said pole was the sacred Nishan Sahib and not the Khalistani flag. But politics of disparagement ensued and wrongfully diminished a patriotic community, as truth may not have been able to generate the much-needed polarisation!

As a result, the PVC awardee Hony Capt Bana Singh voiced his disapproval of the Agnipath scheme and even walked with an opposition leader on his Bharat Jodo Yatra - the logic of the proud Indians - "This is our country, and we have to address what issues there are". He rightfully delinked his right to dissent from any suggestions of disagreeing with the 'Idea of India'. Instead, he owned and sought to protect the 'India', which he was proud of by dissenting. Today all his tweets are signed off by emoticons of a folded hand and the Tiranga! The person who sought to remove the Tiranga from the building in London could and its Tiranga. This is i.e., the most patriotic, gallant and noblest Sikhs.

(The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Åndaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry. The

views expressed are personal)

Legal remedies for crimes against women



Underreporting of crimes against women makes it difficult to assess the correct prevalence of such crimes and provide relief

omestic violence and crimes against women have been a persistent problem in many countries, including India. Despite various initiatives and measures taken by governments and civil society organizations, these issues continue to affect women in our society. The victims of such crimes often find themselves in a vulnerable position, not aware of their legal rights and reme-

Domestic violence is defined as any behaviour that is designed to control or dominate an intimate partner, including physical violence, sexual violence, emotional abuse, and economic abuse. It is a serious violation of human rights and can have devastating consequences for the victim's physical, emotional, and mental well-being.

One of the primary reasons for the persistence of these issues is the patriarchal nature of Indian society. Women are often viewed as inferior to men and are expected to conform to societal norms and expectations. This mindset has led to the normalization of violence against women and the belief that women are responsible for their own safety.

One of the most effective legal remedies for victims of domestic violence is obtaining a restraining order or protection order. A restraining order is a court order that prohibits the abuser from contacting or coming near the victim or their children. The order can be obtained by filing a petition in court and providing evidence of abuse. Once the order is issued, the abuser can be arrested and charged with a criminal offence if they violate the

Another significant legal remedy for victims of domestic violence is obtaining a divorce or separation. In many cases, the victim may need to obtain a restraining order before filing for divorce or separation to protect themfurther harm. Divorce or separation can provide victims with the legal right to seek financial support and custody of their children. The divorce may also provide for the division of property and assets acquired during the mar-

One big reason for the persistence of these issues is the under-reporting of crimes against women. Many women are hesitant to report such crimes due to fear of retaliation, social stigma, and lack of trust in the justice system. This under-reporting not only makes it difficult for victims to seek legal remedies but also makes it challenging for authorities to tackle these issues effectively.Crimes against women such as rape, sexual harassment, and trafficking constitute serious offences that can have longlasting consequences for the victim. Victims of these crimes can seek legal remedies to hold the perpetrator accountable and obtain compensation for the harm they have suffered. It is not that we do not have laws though

their implementation leaves

selves and their children from number of crimes identified under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) for instance, Rape (sec.376 IPC), Kidnapping & abduction (sec.363 – 373 IPC), Dowry Deaths (sec.302/304-B of IPC), torture, both mental and physical (sec.498-A of IPC), Molestation (sec.354 of IPC), Sexual harassment (sec.509 of IPC) (referred to in the past as Eve-teasing), Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986, Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 and last but not the least, Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005. Unfortunately, the actual number of such crime is never known as women shy away from reporting it.

Victims can also seek legal remedies through civil lawsuits, which can provide compensation for the harm they have suffered, including medical expenses, lost income, and emotional distress. It is imperative for women to be aware of their constitutional rights and seek help from law enforcement agencies and civil society organizations.

much to be desired. The in the Delhi High court)

(The writer is an advocate

WORRYING SIGNS IN PUNJAB

Sir — The drama surrounding the Punjab Police manhunt for fugitive radical preacher Amritpal Singh which has entered its third day, and the spurt in pro-Khalistani activity in countries abroad have brought back memories of 1984 and the Operation Bluestar misadventure that culminated in the assassination of Indira Gandhi. The preacher's supporters filing a habeas corpus petition in the Punjab and Haryana High Court, claiming that he has been spirited away by the police, has only muddied the waters. There is no room for error in the efforts to rein in anti-India elements that threaten to destabilise Punjab.

The reign of terror that prevailed under the Khalistani militants during the eighties must surely haunt all sane individuals in the state. It took many years for Punjab to regain at least part of its lost glory. India cannot afford a re-run of those times when militancy claimed so many lives and almost destroyed the prospects of a state that was once the food bowl of the nation. CK Subramaniam | Mumbai

UNSEASONAL RAINS AND FOOD SECURITY

Sir — Incidentally, agriculture in India still thrives only on seasonal rain. The farmer, even today, patiently awaits the annual monsoon. But if that rain is unseasonal, it becomes a disaster. In recent days, farmers have been concerned about the rains caused by western disturbances.

At a time when the wheat harvest has ripened in the fields and the farmer is getting ready to pick up the grain from the barns at the market. Likewise, mustard has also ripened. Due to unusual rainfall in many Northern Indian states over the past few days, wheat and mustard crops have been severely damaged. When the mustard seed was ready, it was dispersed because of hail. Furthermore, the mustard which had reached the mandis got wet because of the rain. In fact, because of rising temperatures due to global warming in recent years, there has been a rapid shift in weather patterns.

By and large, clouds of crisis are Sir — It is very imperative for all of us to

Parliament logjam continues

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

alyanii Shankar's piece 'Reforming Parliament: Charity begins athome' (Thee Pioneer, March 21) assumes a good deal of significance given the acrimony between the Opposition and the Treasury Benchess getting fiercer and in turn leading to the repeated suspensions of Parliamentary proceedings in both Houses-to the detriment of the Exchequer. This time. it is the allegedly defamatory comments Congress leader Rahul Gandhi recently made about the Modi government in the United

the House of Representatives. Legislators from the ruling regime want to make Mr Gandhi come to the House and apologize. Contrarily, the Opposition leaders are adamant on their demand for a probe into the Adani-Hindenburg

This resulted in a controversy that stalled

issue by the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC). Ironically, these gratuitous adjournments are commonplace in all regimes and have adverse bearing on the precious time of the Members of the Houses as well as on the taxpayers' hard-earned money. Revere columnist's observation that in a matured over-year democracy like India, what matters most is the smooth functioning of the Parliament. For that to happen, some pragmatic and corrective measures are needed

Zeeshaan I Kazipet

threatening our food chain. The frequency, timing and quality of precipitation has shifted. The rains are heavy and short-lived. In the past, sudden temperature rises prior to time were considered harmful to wheat crops. Last year, despite a full harvest, wheat grain remained low because of an early increase in temperature. Therefore, productivity declined, and the farmer suffered.

Rain is expected to fall for a few more days because of western disturbances. In such a situation, where immediate relief is required for farmers, the central and state governments must promote advancing research and research for crops. This will assist farmers in preventing the damage

caused by the effects of global warming. This crisis will turn off the next generation of farmers. A country with a population of 140 million may face a food crisis in the coming decades. For that, farreaching policies must be implemented

Abhijit Roy | Jamshedpur

EXCESSIVE SALT IS DANGEROUS

consume salt in food according to taste and need. Without salt, food is tasteless and bland. Nevertheless, excessive salt consumption causes death all over the world. Recently a report from the World Health Organization has explained why salt is proving fatal. According to this WHO report, every year around 20 lakh people around the world die because of eating too much salt. At present the average use of salt per person in the world is 10.8 grams. While the WHO has set a maximum limit of 5 grams per person's consumption of salt.

That means we are consuming double the amount of salt. These figures are proof that it is healthy to take salt in limited quantities, not according to taste. If we all reduce the amount of salt, the number of deaths due to heart diseases worldwide every year can be brought down. WHO estimates that consuming less salt can save the lives of 22 lakh people by 2025 and about 70 lakh lives can be saved by 2030.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

ROBOTIC AUTOMATION IS THE FUTURE

It will be the main driver of growth in the e-commerce



•he face of robotics is quickly changing due to new technologies like edge computing, cloud computing, Al and machine learning. Every industry is experiencing a change as a result of the use of robots. For example, robots are used in restaurants to prepare food, in manufacturing to perform tasks like picking and placing, pelletizing, and material movement. They are also used in supply chains and warehouses to perform every conceivable task from sorting to inventory management until the product is ready for delivery.

Industries all over the world have been integrating robotics and automation into their operations because of the introduction of the latest cutting-edge technologies to increase corporate productivity, efficiency, and marketability. The e-commerce sector has grown exponentially during the last two to three years. According to Statista, global retail e-commerce sales were over 5.2 trillion dollars in 2021 and are projected to increase to 8.1 trillion dollars

The disruption of the supply chain caused by the rise in e-commerce sales has driven businesses to find more innovative ways to meet customer demand for speedy delivery.

Increased demand for e-commerce sales in turn drives up the need for faster delivery, packing, shipping, inventory management, and supply chain management. Advanced and automated warehouses can help meet this demand. The need for automated warehouses has increased significantly in the last couple of years. The global market for warehouse automation systems, which was estimated to be worth \$21.7 billion in 2021, is expected to grow to \$93 billion by 2031, according to Allied Market Research.



In warehouses, robots have a crucial job to do. The employment of robots in warehouses helps with time-consuming and arduous chores like picking stuff up off the floor or sorting products by size, shape, or colour. Most often used in warehouses are piece-picking robots, automated guided vehicles (AGVs), collaborative robots, sorting and shuttle robots.

Inventory management plays an extremely important role in warehouse management. Automated storage and retrieval systems (AS/RS) are most frequently used for inventory control and on-demand product storage and retrieval. They are used to expedite material handling and order fulfilment procedures.

Automated robotics systems with AI capabilities aid companies in boosting the effectiveness and speed of supply chain operations. These Al-enabled systems have grown considerably as a result of technological breakthroughs; they now learn from both existing systems and the surrounding system. Robotic systems are becoming quicker, better, and more adaptable thanks to AI and machine learning, which is beneficial for e-commerce fulfilment operations.

Increased demand for online shopping and shifting customer expectations for quicker deliveries are the main causes of the rise in demand for warehouse automation. Emerging technologies like 5G, Al, ML, edge computing, and sophisticated robots will help the e-commerce sector develop at a phenomenal rate in the years to come...

(The writer is cofounder and CEO of Addverb Technologies)

Moral compass is critical for democracy



Elected representatives must ensure proper and well-informed debates and discussions in Parliament and Assemblies



he manner the Indian Parliament conducted itself in the second half of the Budget session in March 2023 inflicts considerable disquiet amongst all those who revere it as a pious institu-tion that could transform the lives of every Indian and give dignity and better life to those who deserve support and handholding because of exclusion and sufferings inflicted for generations due to historical, social and cultural constraints.

Could such an assembly of responsi-

ble people afford to waste their time for weeks together? They all are—officially—honourable individuals who are guardians of the Constitution; they are policymakers and lawmakers of the nation. The global image of India is changing fast; it is being viewed with considerable interest; there are high hopes in the international community. The last decade has convinced the powers that be that India is emerging as a self-confident nation; it is no more cowed down by its belligerent neighbours India is no more willing to suffer 'thousand cuts' and terrorist attacks. The new-found sense of national pride could be seen in practically every home and hearth in India, in its farms and fields, across the high-end research labs bringing out innovations in areas, extending from artificial intelligence to space

India has enhanced its pace of change with full confidence and self-assurance. It has to make course corrections as well and must recall the Mahatma. 'The Lonely Pilgrim (Gandhiji's Noakhali pilgrimage), a compilation by Manubahan, contains the essence of how Gandhi realised that the national service has nowadays come to mean striving for a big name, according to many now, through which one can get a notice in the papers or is photographed—which is better—or secure ministership as a reward for going to jail.

So everyone wants to grab power in order to rise to a ministership in the end. But how can even good ministers do any notable work without the people's support? The country does require ministers, but a minister can adorn his post only if he deserves it, Gandhi said. He observed, in



THE 75+ **GENERATION** OF INDIANS HAS SEEN AND **OBSERVED THE DECLINE OF** MORAL AND **HUMANISTIC** VALUES IN THE **POLITICAL** SPHERE, AND THE CONSEQUENT **DETERIORATIO** N OF THE **CREDIBILITY** OF LEADERS, **ELECTED** REPRESENTATI VES, AND THOSE IN **OFFICE**

(Professor Rajput works *in education, social* cohesion and religious

this very context, the presence of 'selfish stinginess' and reiterated that "we must, therefore, train our-politicians becoming elected repairs analyse the extent to which their selves to keep national interest always before us." And this was not the first time he was referred to ministers.

On September 18, 1938, when provincial governments had spent just ten months in 'power', things were not much different! The Mahatma received a letter from a citizen, indicating that the main purpose of the "Congress ministry appears to us to be to worship your idol in public and break it in secret; to worship the symbols of Imperialism in secret and denounce them in public, to play the malefactor towards their opponents when they cannot conquer by truthful and legitimate meth-

Gandhi had condensed this part." The letter writer had also tative and those represented. included a sentence which after 85 years appears prophetic: "The government of a people cannot be run by the common argument of promised boons and by corrupting the electorate with hope."

The lesson to be drawn is clear: the mere scent of power coming to ministers made them leave no stone unturned to shake the moral foundation of good government. In this particular instance, the letter-writer found it strange why Gandhi's "soul should not revolt against such a predatory Ministry for creation of which the moral responsibility is entirely yours".

After over seven decades of Independence, India has more ex-ministers than serving ministers. The taste of having savoured power—exceptions apart—has been highly intoxicating. We have 'Lok-Sewaks' who swear by the name of Mahatma Gandhi but have amassed wealth by means that could be beyond the comprehension of the finest of economists.

resentatives, ministers and chief ministers. In fact, most panchas and sarpanchas of village panchayats have proved to be good learners from politicians.

The issue before the nation is: why are the elected representatives losing credibility among those who elect them and put them in the saddle of power?

The manner democracy is being conducted was most crudely exposed in the recent election of the mayor of Delhi, which presented a shocking spectacle for every-one who feels a sense of pride in Indian democracy. The entire country witnessed it, as did the world. I found it shameful. Sadly enough, one could cite numerous such instances that have led to the in a democracy. How could India after "toning down the bitterest disaffection between the represen-

> On May 12, 1920, Gandhi said: "If I seem to take part in politics, it is only because politics today encircle us like the coils of a snake from which one cannot get out no matter how one tries. I wish to wrestle with the snake..." He did, and created a model of giving people a voice, a non-violent approach that helped not only India but so many other nations to throw away the yoke of imperialism, the caste system and apartheid. In one word, he made people

> trust the moral force. On September 7, 1920, it was so articulated by Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore: "We need all the moral force which Mahatma Gandhi represents, and which he alone in the world can represent." It was this moral force that every Indian was supposed to comprehend, internalise and put to practice.

> Obviously, the representatives of people at every stage were—and are—supposed to be the prime torchbearers of the legacy of

self-introspection; they must conduct is contributing to the national cause, strengthening democracy, and helping the amelioration of the miseries from the life of the 'last man in the line.'

The 75+ generation of Indians has seen and observed the decline of moral and humanistic values in the political sphere, and the consequent deterioration of the credibility of leaders, elected representatives, and those in office. It adversely impacts the very vitals of democracy, its institutions and, above all, the people and their con-

Ministers are put behind bars, but continue to receive all the perks and privileges of the post and position. It is an unheard-of situation ignore resignations on moral grounds credibility—like those of TT Krishnamachari, KD Malaviya and Lal Bahadur Shastri?

This generation of elderly citizens often recalls Gandhi and his in-depth comprehension of a free person and a free nation. He acknowledged that the superficial study of the British Parliament had made him think that all power percolates to the people from parliaments. It was not so, he himself realised: "The truth is that power resides in the people and it is entrusted for the time being to those whom they may choose as their representatives. Parliaments have no power or even existence independently of the people."

One earnestly hopes that the elected representatives realise the source of their power—the people—and ensure proper and wellinformed debates and discussions in Parliament and Assemblies. Following the moral compass could strengthen their role performance and bestow the satisfaction of serving the needy.

Stress among women is rampant but it can be managed

Women can reduce the risk of burnout in their daily lives by following a few simple changes to their lifestyles

tress is a common problem that many women experience in their daily lives. Whether it's due to work, family obligations, or other responsibilities, stress can take a toll on both mental and physical health. According to a Deloitte report in 2022, 56 per cent of Indian women's stress level is higher than it was a year ago. Globally, 53 per cent of women admitted to feeling

more stressed than last year. Due to a shift in hormonal levels (including sex hormones, like estrogen, which can also impact stress horcortisol, and response), females are at a higher risk of developing mood disorders. Since a woman passes through puberty, menstruation, preg-



(The writer is the founder

and Senior Psychiatrist,

Manasthali)

nancy, postpartum, and postmenopause, they face a host of different stressors and reactions to stress. However, the good news is that there are many effective ways for women to cut down on stress and improve their overall well-being. In this article, we will explore some of the most effective strategies for reducing stress in a woman's life. **Exercise regularly**

Exercise is one of the most effective ways to reduce stress for women. Physical activity releases endorphins, which are chemicals in the brain that promote feelings of happiness and well-being. Additionally, regular exercise can help women sleep better, improve their mood, and increase their energy



Practice mindfulness meditation

Mindfulness meditation is a technique that involves focusing on the present moment and paying attention to your thoughts and emotions without judgment. It has been shown to be effective in reducing stress and anxiety in women. By practicing mindfulness meditation regularly, women can learn to manage their emotions and respond to stressful situations in a more positive and productive way.

Get enough sleep

Sleep is essential for overall health and wellbeing, and it's also crucial for managing stress. When women don't get enough sleep, they may feel irritable, anxious, and stressed. By making sleep a priority and getting enough rest each night, women can reduce their stress levels and improve their mental and physical health.

Connect with others

Connecting with others is vital way for women to reduce stress in their lives. Spending time with friends and family members, participating in social activities, and engaging in hobbies and interests can all help women feel more supported and less

Eat a healthy diet

Eating a healthy diet is essential for overall health and wellbeing, and it can also assist women manage stress. Foods that are high in vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants can help reduce inflammation and promote feelings of wellbeing. Also, avoiding foods that are high in sugar and caffeine can help prevent spikes in blood sugar and promote better sleep.

Take breaks throughout the

Taking breaks throughout the day is essential for managing stress. By taking short breaks to stretch, walk, or simply relax, women can give their minds and bodies a chance to recharge and refocus. This can help them feel more productive and less

stressed throughout the day. Seek professional help

If stress is becoming overwhelming or interfering with daily life, it may be helpful to seek professional help. A mental health professional can help women develop coping strategies and manage stress in a healthy way.

In conclusion, stress is a common problem for many women, but there are many effective strategies for reducing stress and improving overall wellbeing. By exercising regularly, practicing mindfulness meditation, getting enough sleep, connecting with others, eating a healthy diet, taking breaks throughout the day, and seeking professional help when needed, women can successfully manage stress and enjoy a happier, healthier life.



'Hike capital budget of Army'

NEW DELHI

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m aced}$ by two hostile neighbours namely China and Pakistan and the ongoing tension at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh, a Standing Parliament Committee on Defence report has called for a hike in capital Budget of the Army. It will enable it to enhance deterrent capabilities to meet any challenge, the report noted.

The committee appreciated the efforts made by the Defence Ministry towards the indigenisation of military platforms and hoped that the country would see "100 per cent contract value" going to Indian



vendors in the years ahead. The report was tabled in Parliament on Tuesday.

Referring to the challenges before the Army, the parliamentary standing committee cited proxy wars, in an apparent reference to Pakistanbacked cross-border terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir.

The committee was of the view that funds slated for modernisation of the armed forces should always be incremental. The committee also desired that there should be a separate allocation for committed lia-

bilities and new schemes, under

the modernisation/capital bud-

get," it said.

in defence spending of our neighbours. Therefore, the committee recommended that the capital budget of the Army should be increased to have a deterrent capacity to ward off at least two hostile neighbours," it said, in an indirect reference to Pakistan and China.

The committee noted that the capital outlay for the Navy for 2023-24 was projected at Rs 52,804.75 crore. "Against this projection, the committee found that this year's allocation is pragmatic and supportive for the Navy as the ministry actually allocated the same amount as projected, although, this projection is Rs 14,818.21 crore

on the Adani issue and in

return it would drop the call for

an apology over Rahul Gandhi's remarks in the UK,

asserting there was no question

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said efforts are

being made since the last few

days that a "formula" or mid-

dle path is found with both the

of any such compromise.

'This also indicates that the requirements of the Navy for the new scheme have decreased, and gone down which may affect its modernisation drive. The committee recommended to be apprised of the reasons for the lower projection in comparison to last year," the panel said.

The committee recommended that from next year onwards a separate statement of the net budget be provided after taking into account the inflation, noting that it is a recurring and unavoidable phenomenon in all aspects of economic theory which applies to the Navy also.

'Sensationalist lies': India's High Commissioner to UK on Punjab

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE/AGENCIES NEW DELHI/LONDON

rerming the reports on the 1 situation in Punjab as "sensationalist lies," Índian High Commissioner to London Vikram Doraiswami said on Wednesday the situation is normal in the State and visitors including from the UK are safe.

He made these observations in the backdrop of ongoing operation in India to nab Amritpal Singh and Waris Punjab De.

While summarizing the situation in Punjab, the envoy said in London "there is no truth to sensationalist lies

Commissioner was talking about the law enforcement action against Waris Punjab

being circulated on social

media. The Indian High

"The situation for travel is normal and visitors including

demand:

"But to say that there is a

friends here in the UK, especially brothers and sisters with relatives in Punjab that there is no truth to sensationalist lies being circulated on social media," Doraiswami said in a video address released by the Indian High Commission in London.

It was reported on Saturday that mobile Internet services have been suspended in several districts of Punjab, state police said after launching an operation to arrest the chief of suspected pro-Khalistan outfit Waris Punjab De', Amritpal Singh and his aides.

India likely to be severely hit by water scarcity by 2050: UN report

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Nome 2050 and India is Cexpected to be the most severely water-hit nation due to scarcity of the precious item with a flagship UN report warning that overall the global urban population facing water scarcity is projected to increase from 933 million in 2016 to 1.7-2.4 billion people within the next 27 years.

The flagship UN report 'United Nations World Water Development Report 2023: partnerships and cooperation for water', released Tuesday ahead of the UN 2023 Water Conference, said that around 80% of people living under water stress lived in Asia; in particular, northeast China, as well as India and Pakistan.

'The global urban population facing water scarcity is projected to increase from 933 million (one third of global urban population) in 2016 to 1.7-2.4 billion people (one third to nearly half of global urban population) in 2050, with India projected to be the most severely affected," the report said, cit-

No doubt, the observations of the report hold importance for India which is home to 18 percent of the world's population, but has only 4 percent of its water resources. The UN report comes a month after the government's policy think tank, the NITI Aayog had pointed out that India's depen-

dence on an increasingly erratic monsoon for its water requirements is a challenge. Climate change is likely to exacerbate this pressure on

Yet another report by the United Nations Institute for Water, Environment and Health in January 2023 had estimated that India's 3,700 large dams will have lost on average 26 per cent of their initial total storage by 2050.

Against such a bleak scenario, experts have called for setting up strong mechanisms to prevent the global water crisis from spiralling out of con-

"There is an urgent need to establish strong international mechanisms to prevent the global water crisis from spiralling out of control," said UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay. "Water is our common future, and it is essential to act together to share it equitably and manage it sustainably.

Globally, two billion peo-



water and 3.6 billion lack access to safely managed sanitation, the report found with Richard Connor, the report's editor-inchief pointing out that "uncerwater resources, even as the fretainties are increasing".

"If we don't address it, quency and intensity of floods and droughts in the country

there definitely will be a global crisis," he said, pointing to rising scarcity that reflects reduced availability and increased demand, from urban and industrial growth to agriculture, which alone consumes 70 per cent of the world's sup-

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres said in the report that "Water is the blood of humanity.

It is vital for survival itself and supports the health, resilience, development and prosperity of people and plan-

Guterres voiced concern that humanity is blindly travelling a dangerous path. Vampiric overconsumption and overdevelopment, unsustainable water use, pollution and unchecked global warming are draining humanity's lifeblood, drop by drop.'



Opposition and

Government relenting.
"This is unacceptable to us, these two things are completely unconnected. One is a reality. The questions we are asking are fundamental questions, this has happened. The BJP's demand of apology is just baseless, it is on false allegations. So to say that you take back your demand then we will take back the demand for an apology, we are not ready for any such bargain," Jairam said at AICC

Jairam however clarified that no one from the government has talked directly to the opposition on the issue and is only being known unofficially. He said Rahul Gandhi has written to the Speaker to be allowed to speak under rule 357 (in the Lok Sabha), saying it is his democratic right and what the speaker decides on it only time will tell.

formula, it is not acceptable to us. We are not agreeable to this because the two things are like 'chalk and cheese' between the demand for a JPC and a demand for an apology. The demand for apology that is being repeated, it is being done so that attention is diverted from the Adani issue. Their strategy is 3D -- distort, defame and divert. They distorted Rahul Gandhi's remarks. defamed him and now want to divert attention from the Adani

To a suggestion by TMC nor politics," he said.

issue," he said.

leader Derek O'Brien that state governments can initiate investigation in their own states, Ramesh said, "It is laughable. Those who have given this suggestion, their only intention is to give a clean chit to the government.

"This is the question at the doorstep of the prime minister. How can state governments probe into these issues, it is the responsibility of the central government. This is a non-serious suggestion. Those who have given this suggestion neither know about the economy

Railways restores fare of AC 3-tier economy class travel in trains

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $R^{
m ailways}$ on Wednesday issued an order to restore the fare for AC 3-tier economy class travel which had been withdrawn in November last year when it was merged with

Despite the restoration in price, Railways will continue offering linen to passengers, the order indicated.

The present order has withdrawn an earlier circular in which the fare for AC 3-tier economy class ticket had been made equal to the fare of an AC 3-tier ticket. The reason for the merger was stated to be the cost of linen which was initially not provided in the economy air conditioned class. According to the order, passengers who have



booked tickets online and over the counter will be given a refund of the extra amount for the pre-booked tickets.

The railways, while introducing the 3E as a class in September 2021, had announced that fares in these newly-introduced coaches will be 6-8 per cent less than normal AC 3 coaches, pitching the class of travel as the "best and cheapest AC travel service" in the world

Before the November 2022 order, passengers could book AC 3 economy tickets under a separate category of "3E" in specific trains where railways offered such seats.

Officials said, currently there are 463 AC 3 Economy coaches compared to 11,277 normal AC 3 coaches.

AC 3 economy coaches have better facilities for passengers than normal AC 3 coaches, officials said.

CAG extending its outreach to include political executives to highlight audit concerns

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW

¬he Comptroller and Auditor ☐ General of India Girish Chandra Murmu on Wednesday said the audit watchdog outreach is now being extended to include political executives to highlight audit concerns.

The intention is to build a shared understanding of the most pressing concerns in gov-ernance and find possible solutions," Murmu said during an orientation programmes with the Officer Trainees of the Indian Information Service (IIS) belonging to three batches of

2020, 2021 and 2022. Noticing that most of the officers are from engineering background, she said technical skills should be used to handle the challenges of future media, especially with emerging selfhelp AI tools such as ChatGPT. He said that the trainee IIS officers should gear up to meet the challenges posed by Big Data and Artificial Intelligence.

Murmu said the media is a very powerful tool that adds value to society. "In the Indian context, it has helped to disseminate the government's plans and initiatives. As a probationer, you have to understand the perspective and vision of your department, and it should improve country's image," he

FROM PAGE 1

FLARES, BOTTLES HURLED AT INDIAN MISSION

Police for alleged human rights violations. The speeches switched between English and Punjabi to make allegations of Indian media bias for calling them fringe elements and backed by Pakistan's spy agency ISI. Banners for the so-called 'National Protest,' organised by groups such as the Federation of Sikh Organisations (FSO) and Sikh Youth Jathebandia, have been circulating on social media since before a protest on Sunday, which ended in violent disorder at India House.

The Indian Government had registered a strong protest over the lack of security measures at its diplomatic mission, which ended in Khalistan flag-waving protesters smashing windows of the Indian High Commission and attempting to pull down the Tricolour. In an apparent titfor-tat act, India on Wednesday morning removed the barricade security cover of the UK High Commission or British Embassy and its envoy in New Delhi.

Hours after the Indian sharp action more policemen and barricades were installed outside the Indian High Commission in London on Wednesday ahead of the planned protest, in an apparent effort to avoid a repeat of the vandalism seen three days ago. British High Commission refused to comment on the removal of bar-ricades here and said, "We do not comment on security

The Delhi Police on Tuesday and Wednesday removed extra barricades outside the UK High Commission here

but the security remains intact, officials said. 'The security arrangements outside the British High Commission here are intact. However, barricades placed on the pathway towards the commission, that created hurdles for commuters have been removed," officials said. While the British embassy is located at Shantipath in high security zone Chanakyapuri, its High Commissioner Alex Ellis lives at Rajaji Marg.

Sources said Delhi Police have removed barricades "that created hurdles" for commuters outside the British High Commission here but the security of the diplomat-

ic mission remains intact. India on Sunday night summoned British Deputy High Commissioner Christina Scott and demanded an explanation over the complete "absence of security" after videos of pulling down of the Indian flag at the Indian Mission in London during a protest by pro-Khalistan elements emerged on social media.

Following that, top British officials said the UK Government will take the security of the Indian High Commission "seriously", as they condemned as "disgraceful" and "completely unacceptable" the vandalism at the Indian mission by a group of protesters waving separatist Khalistani flags. Since the weekend, several uniformed officers have been patrolling the area in Aldwych and Metropolitan Police vans have been stationed at India

Wednesday's planned demonstration claims to be in response to alleged discriminatory actions of the police in Punjab. The Indian High Commission in London has been working to counter disinformation circulating around developments in Punjab, related to enforcement action against the separatist group 'Waris Punjab De'. 'Let me assure all our friends here in the UK, espe-

cially brothers and sisters with relatives in Punjab, that there is no truth to the sensationalist lies being circulated on social media," Indian High Commissioner Vikram Doraiswami said in a video posted on Twitter.

'The situation in your ancestral homeland is not what is being reported. The elected Chief Minister of the State and the local police authorities have put out detailed information, including interviews on television, please watch these. Do not believe the small handful of people putting out fiction and disinformation," he said.

In an update on the enforcement action since March 18, Doraiswami said that the Punjab Police launched an operation against elements of 'Waris Punjab De' against whom criminal cases have been recorded, in particular against Amritpal Singh, the chief of this organisation. He added that the constitutional rights to a legal defence for all those arrested will be protected and reiterated that all communication services, including mobile telephone networks and internet, are up and running in the state.

'TAKE EARLY ACTION ON JUDGES' APPOINTMENT'

than Neelakandan, would rank senior to Neelakandan.

Such a deviation in seniority would be unfair and against the settled convention," the resolution said. The Collegium said that while recommending the name of Rajasekar for elevation, it is of the view that his appointment should be notified after the appointment of Neelakandan is notified.

"The Collegium is of the considered view that necessary action for the issuance of a notification for the elevation of persons who have been recommended earlier in point of time should be taken at the earliest including the name of R John Sathyan which has been reiterated by this Collegium on 17 January 2023.

Earlier, the Collegium expressed displeasure on Intelligence Bureau report against John Sathyan citing his social media posts, publishing articles critical of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"The names which have been recommended earlier in point of time including the reiterated names ought not to be withheld or overlooked as this disturbs their seniority whereas those recommended later steal march on them. Loss of seniority of candidates recommended earlier in point of time has been noted by the collegium and is a matter of grave concern," the Collegium stated.

The Collegium also reiterated its recommendation of appointment of Harpreet Singh Brar in Punjab and Haryana High Court. Senior Advocate Brar was recommended as Judge in July 2022. "Collegium is of the view that Harpreet Singh Brar is fit and suitable for appointment as a Judge of the High Court of Punjab and Haryana. The Collegium has also taken note of the fact that, besides being a senior advocate, the candidate has a wide-ranging experience of practice before the High Court," said the Collegium., reiterating Brar's appointment.

Def Min justifies barring married individuals from applying for JAG

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

The Defence Ministry on Wednesday jus-L tified in Delhi High Court on the policy barring married individuals from applying for Judge Advocate General (JAG), the legal officer in the army, and said considering the "effects of marriage", the bar is a "reasonable restriction placed in public interest and the interest of national security". In an additional affidavit filed in response to a petition challenging the embargo, Defence Ministry said the condition of being unmarried for grant of com-mission to cadets aged 21-27 years is "restricted only for the period of recruitment and pre-commissioned training" which involves a high amount of stress and rigours of military training and the restriction on marriage before successful commission is in the interest of the candidates as well as organisation.

A bench of Chief Justice Satish Chandra Sharma and Justice Sachin Datta granted time to petitioner Kush Kalra to file his response to the Centre's stand.

The Centre, in its earlier affidavit filed in March 2019, said that right to marry cannot be a right to life under the Constitution and there was no discrimination on the basis of marital status of the candidates. The authorities have sought dismissal of the PIL saying the Constitution does not stipulate right to marry as a fundamental right.

In the latest affidavit, the Centre submitted that in the Indian Army, both males and females are treated equally and all army personnel have similar qualification requirements for basic military training and in all types of entries, "unmarried clause" is com-

It explained that once the unmarried cadets complete their training and are granted commission, there is no bar on marriage or its "natural consequences" like pregnancy and several service benefits are also given, but during conduct of basic military training that lasts for minimum one year, such provisions are not possible.

NPG under PMGatiShakti examines, recommends 6 infra projects

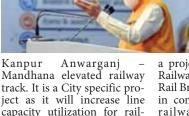
PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Network Planning **I** Group (NPG) under PM GatiShakti at its 45th session examined and recommended six Infrastructure projects including that from Railways and Road Transport Highways Ministry.

These projects will be developed in tandem with the PM GatiShakti Principles using the integrated and holistic approach. These projects will also provide multimodal connectivity, seamless movement of goods and passengers as well as increase logistics efficiency

across the country.
A project by the Ministry
of New and Renewable Energy was also examined by the NPG. A one of its kind project for the Inter-State Transmission System for Renewable Energy Projects in Ladakh is a big step towards achieving the Government of India's target of 500 GW capacity from non fossil fuels by the year 2030.

The Ministry of Railways proposed a project for city logistics. The project was for



मल्टी मोडल कनेविटविटी का

stretch with GT road running parallel to this track. On both sides of the railway track there are important components such as universities, medical college, cardiology centre, cancer centre, good shed, consumption centres, warehouses, agricultural components, among others.

ways and improve city logistics

in the region. The project is located in the heart of Kanpur

city wherein 16 Level Crossing

(LC) are located in 16 Km

Eventually, it leads to traffic jams and an increase in waiting time of trains, and vehicles. After the construction of this track rail logistics will improve by 4.2 MTPA. Further, a project by the Ministry of Railways for construction of Rail Bridge across river Ganga in connection with the new railway line connecting Vikramshila - Katareah railway station on East central railway in Bihar State was examined by the NPG. The project is about 40 KM from Bhagalpur alongside a stream on river Ganges.

The NPG examined two projects by the Ministry of Roads, Transport and Highways pertaining to construction of 4 Lane to Bijni to Mandi section including construction of twin tube tunnels of Pathankot – Mandi.

The second project proposed by MoRTH was the construction of a 4 Lane of Belgaum - Hungsund -Raichur, as a part of Panaji -Hyderabad

Army introduces millets in soldiers' ration

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

With a view to promote consumption of millets in light of the United Nations (UN) declaring 2023 as the International Year of Millets, the Indian Army has introduced millets flour in the rations of soldiers. Special emphasis is on providing healthy millet based food and snacks to troops guarding the China front or the Northern Border.

This landmark decision will ensure troops are supplied with native and traditional grains after over half a century, when these were discontinued in favour of wheat atta, officials said

here on Wednesday. Traditional millet foods with proven health benefits and suited to our geographical and climatic conditions would be a vital step in mitigating life style diseases and enhancing satisfaction and morale of the troops. Millets would now form an integral part of the daily meal for all ranks, they said.

Government sanction has been sought to procure millets flour not exceeding 25 percent of the authorised entitlement of Cereals (Rice and Wheat Atta), in rations for troops commencing from the year 2023-24 onwards. Procurement and issue will be based on option exercised and quantity demanded.



China, Russia to counter **US' Indo-Pacific strategy**

Chinese President Xi Jinping concluded his state visit to Moscow on Wednesday and vowed to build "an equal, open and inclusive security system" with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin to counter the Indo-Pacific strategy pursued by the US.

Xi held an intense round of discussions with Putin after which the leaders signed two joint statements to deepen their "Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of Coordination for the New Era" and "Pre-2030 Development Plan on Priorities in

China-Russia Economic Cooperation". Xi embarked upon the 3-day Moscow trip ostensibly to broker a peace deal and end the raging conflict in Ukraine, as he sought to push a peace talks plan that elicited a frigid response from the US, Kyiv's key ally. The trip, described by Xi as "one of friendship, cooperation and peace," marked his ninth visit to Russia since he first became the Chinese President in March 2013.

The joint statement issued in Chinese and Russian languages said the two sides expressed serious concern over NATO's continued strengthening of military security ties with the Asia-Pacific countries, which undermined regional peace and stability. It said the two sides opposed cobbling together a closed and exclusive bloc structure in the Asia-Pacific region, creating camp confrontation, in an apparent reference to the Quad alliance comprising the US, India, Australia, Japan and AUKUS, consisting of Australia, the UK and the US. Both sides said the US adheres to the Cold War mentality and pursues the Indo-Pacific strategy, which has a negative impact on peace and stability in the region, it said. China and Russia are committed to building an "equal, open and inclusive security system" in the Asia-Pacific region that does not target third



White House: Xi sees Russia as counterweight to US influence

Washington (PTI): In President Vladimir Putin and Russia, Chinese President Xi Jinping sees a "counter-convenience, because that's what I think President Xi Jinping sees a "counter-weight" to American and NATO influence on the continent and elsewhere around the world, the White House has

The statement by John Kirby, National Security Council Coordinator for Strategic Communications at the White House, came as Putin accorded a red carpet welcome to his Chinese counterpart Xi in Moscow and held marathon talks spread over two days on a range of issues, including the raging war in

"I think you've seen over the years that these two countries are growing close

countries, in order to maintain regional peace, stability and prosperity, it said. Both countries expressed serious concerns over the consequences and risks of the trilater-

it is. In President Putin and Russia, President Xi sees a counterweight to American influence and NATO influence, certainly on the continent and elsewhere around the world," Kirby told reporters at a daily news conference here on

"In President Xi, President Putin sees a potential backer here. This is a man who doesn't have a whole lot of friends on the international stage. They can count them on one hand mostly. He really needs and wants President Xi's support for what he's trying to do, because he's blowing through

al security partnership — AUKUS and related nuclear-powered submarine cooperation programmes on regional strategic stability,

- were present in the complex

reported between his defiant

supporters and security per-

sonnel after Khan arrived at the

Islamabad judicial complex to

attend hearing in the

Toshakhana case. As he left

Lahore for Islamabad, the

Punjab police launched a

search operation at his sprawl-

ing premises in the upscale

143 cases were registered against Khan, mostly on ter-

cases but the way PTI workers

are being arrested on false

cases, we are now writing to all international human

organisations against these

PML-N government is going to

adopt a resolution in a joint ses-

sion of the parliament to delay

elections in Punjab and Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa provinces.

Khan also claimed that the

On Wednesday, a total of

"I don't care about my

Zaman Park area.

rorism charges.

atrocities," he said.

Last week, clashes were

to kill me," he asserted.

Civilians killed by Russian missiles, drones in Ukraine

though artillery and rocket

strikes hit apartment buildings

and civilian infrastructure on

Wednesday, an overnight

drone attack partially destroyed a high school and

two dormitories in the city of

Rzhyshchiv, south of the

Ukrainian capital, officials said.

It wasn't clear how many peo-

ple were in the dormitories at

the time. The body of a 40-

year-old man was pulled from

the rubble on a dormitory's fifth floor, according to regional police chief Andrii Nebytov,

adding that more than 20 peo-

ple were hospitalised. Just

hours earlier, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida left

Kyiv after meeting Zelenskyy

in a show of support for

Ukraine. Earlier Wednesday,

Chinese leader Xi Jinping left

Moscow after meeting with

President Vladimir Putin and

discussing his peace proposal,

which has been rejected by the

West as a non-starter. The

drone barrage and other Russian attacks on civilian

infrastructure drew a scathing

response from Zelenskyy.

"Over 20 Iranian murderous

drones, plus missiles, numer-

ous shelling occasions, and

that's just in one last night of

Russian terror," he wrote in

English on Twitter. "Every

time someone tries to hear the

word peace' in Moscow, anoth-

er order is given there for

administration said two mis-

siles struck the apartment

Zaporizhzhia's regional

such criminal strikes."

Earlier

a daily basis

Ukraine's president posted video on Wednesday showing what he said was a Russian missile slamming into an apartment building in the an apartment building in the southeastern city of Zaporizhzhia, killing at least one person, after Moscow's forces launched exploding drones before dawn that killed another seven at a student dormitory near Kyiv.

The video posted by President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to Telegram appeared to be from CCTV cameras that captured the moment a missile hit the ninestory residential block by story residential block by a busy road. Ukrainian media showed charred apartments on several stories of the affected buildings, with flames billowing from some of them. Two children were among the wounded, said Zaporizhzhia City Council Secretary Anatolii Kurtiev, adding that 25 needed hospital treatment, with three in critical condition.

"Russia is shelling the city with bestial savagery," Zelenskyy wrote to accompany the video. "Residential areas where ordinary people and children live are being fired at." He appealed for countries to increase pressure on the Kremlin to give up its invasion of Ukraine. The city is about 100 kilometres (60 miles) from the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, Europe's largest which has previously come under threat during the war.

Russia has denied target-

block, saying Russia's goal is "to scare the civilian population of the city of thousands

"It's hell in Zaporizhzhia," Ukrainian lawmaker Oleksiy Goncharenko wrote on Telegram, adding: "There aren't any military facilities nearby.

Vladimir Rogov, an official with the Moscow-appointed regional administration for the Russian-occupied part of the Zaporizhzhia region, claimed the building was hit by a Ukrainian air defense missile that was launched to intercept a Russian missile Lie 11.2. a Russian missile. He didn't cite offer any evidence to support his claim. Russian officials have blamed Ukrainian air defences for some of the deadliest strikes on apartments in the past, charging that the deployment of air defense systems in residential areas puts civilians at risk. Ukrainian air defenses downed 16 of the 21 drones launched by Russia, the Ukraine General Staff said. Eight of them were shot down near the capital, according to the city's military administration. Other drone attacks struck central-western Khmelnytskyi province.

Kishida called Russia's invasion a "disgrace that undermines the foundations of the international legal order" and pledged to "continue to support Ukraine until peace is back on the beautiful Ükrainian lands." He said he had expressed the "unwavering determination of solidarity" of Japan and the Group of Seven countries to China's backing for Ajay Banga to head World Bank doubtful

BEIJING (PTI): China on Wednesday sounded doubtful about backing Indian-American business leader Ajay Banga to lead the World Bank, saying it is "open" to supporting "other potential candidates" based on merit. Reports from Washington said 63-year-old Banga, who is nominated by US President Joe Biden to head the Bank, is due to visit China on Wednesday to meet officials of the People's Bank of China to seek Beijing's support for his candidature.

Asked whether China will back Banga, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin told a media briefing here that "we have noted the candidate nominated by the US side and are open to other potential candidates". He said the World Bank is the most influential multilateral development institution in the world and is of systemic importance to global poverty reduction and development. "As a major shareholder of the World Bank, China stands ready to work with all parties for an open, transparent and merit-based presidential selection process," he said and asked the media to competent authorities for more details. Biden last month announced that the US is nominating Banga to lead the World Bank, saying the Indian-American business leader is uniquely equipped to lead the global institution at "this critical moment in history.

PML-N govt plotting to assassinate me: Imran

Dakistan's former prime minister Imran Khan on Wednesday alleged that the PML-N-led government was plotting to assassinate him on the pattern of Murtaza Bhutto, who was killed in police firing when his sister Benazir Bhutto was in power in 1996.

Khan, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman, made these startling allegation in a video address to his supporters. Khan survived an assassination attempt in November last year when unidentified gunmen opened fire on the container-mountedtruck carrying him during a two squads who will mix protest march in Punjab province.

been hatched. I am telling everyone, the judiciary [and] especially Punjab police," 70year-old Khan claimed in the video address.

He alleged that the police chiefs of Islamabad and Punjab, and their "handlers" had



planned another operation outside Zaman Park residence.

What is the plan? That there is another operation outside Zaman Park either today or tomorrow. They have made among our people, and then shoot and kill four to five

Khan said this would then prompt an attack from the other side, following which PTI workers would be killed in a Model Town-like situation.

"They will create a situation similar to the assassination of Murtaza Bhutto and kill

Murtaza, the brother of former prime minister Benazir Bhutto, was was killed in a police encounter in Karachi in

Ironically, Benazir was in power that time. She was killed years later in a terrorist attack during an election rally in Rawalpindi in 2007. The elements in the military establishment are blamed for their assassinations. Khan urged his party workers to show restraint and not get provoked by the operation."

"Whatever the police do. Don't get provoked. Understand their plan. I am ready to go to jail but do not want bloodshed," he said.

A few days ago, he claimed laid out during his appearance in Islamabad's court.

"A death trap was laid out at the Federal Judicial Complex, Islamabad where I had to attend a hearing in the Toshakhana case. Some 20 unknown people -- a reference

COURT REJECTS FIA'S PLEA to intelligence agencies men -

A Pakistani court on Wednesday rejected the country's top investigating agency's plea to cancel Imran Khan's bail in the prohibited funding case, a media report said. Khan, the chief of the Pakistan Tehreeke-Insaf (PTI) party was granted bail by an Islamabad-based banking court in a prohibited funding case. The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) in October last year filed a case in the banking court against Khan, 70, and other members of his party for allegedly receiving prohibited funding. The prohibited funding case was filed by PTI's estranged found-

Pakistan in 2014. comprising Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani and Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri conducted the hearing on the plea in the Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday, according to the Express Tribune

ing member Akbar S Babar in

the Election Commission of

Israeli foreign minister visits **Poland to 'restore' ties**

AP WARSAW

he Israeli and Polish foreign I ministers met Wednesday in a step that they hailed as a breakthrough in restoring a relationship that has been badly damaged for years due to disagreements over how to remember Polish behaviour during the Holocaust.

The ministers signed an agreement that they say will allow for the resumption of Israeli youth trips to Poland, one of several points of contention that have led to ten-

The visit by Foreign Minister Eli Cohen is the first Poland's Foreign Ministry says it will be followed by Israeli President Isaac Herzog attending observances next month for the 80th anniversary of the World War II Warsaw Ghetto

"I came here to restore the

'Israel attacked Aleppo airport, no casualties'

Damascus (AP): An Israeli

airstrike early on Wednesday targeted the international airport in the northern Syrian city of Aleppo, causing material damage and putting it out of service, Syria's state news agency reported. It was the second attack on the facility this month. SANA quoted an unnamed military official as saying Israeli warplanes fired Syria's largest city and once commercial centre, while flying over the Mediterranean Sea. It did not mention any casualties.

relationship between our countries, and I found in you, my distinguished colleague, a trusted partner," Cohen said at a news conference alongside Polish Foreign Minister Zbigniew Rau, whom he referred to more than once as his friend.

'This is an important moment in the relations between our countries," Cohen Poland has been one of

Israel's closest allies in Europe over the years, and Israel appears eager to restore that relationship.

Israel is also trying to shore

up foreign alliances at a time when its new far-right government, which took office in with the United States and European Union deteriorate.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has visited France, Italy and Germany in recent weeks and is scheduled to head to Britain in the coming

Macron wants French pension plan implemented by year end

French President Emmanuel Macron said on Wednesday that the pension bill he pushed through without a vote in parliament needs to be implemented by the "end of the year," sticking to his decision to raise the retirement age from 62 to 64 despite mass protests. Macron, who made the comments in an interview broadcast on national television, said the bill will "continue its democratic path."

The Constitutional Council needs to review the bill in the coming weeks, and it can only be turned into law after the body gives its approval. It was the first time that Macron spoke publicly since his government forced the pension bill through parliament last week, prompting scattered protests in Paris and across the country, some degenerating into violence. His government survived two no-confidence votes at the lower chamber of parliament on Monday.

The 45-year-old president repeatedly said that he was convinced that France's retirement system had needed to be modified to keep it financed."That reform is not a luxury, it is not fun, it's a necessity for the country," he said. Macron also condemned the violence at some protests.

He notably referred to rioters storming the US Capitol in 2021 and Brazil's top government buildings earlier this year, as well as the yellow vest movement against social injus-



age in Nantes on Tuesday.

tice in France in 2018 which led to violent clashes and vandalism in the Paris streets. "When the United States of America lived what they lived at the Capitol, when Brazil lived what it lived, when you have seen extreme violence in Germany, The Netherlands, or sometimes here at home in the past ... we must say that we do respect (peaceful protesters), we do listen, we're trying to move the country forward ... but we cannot accept factious people nor factions," he said.

At the same time, Macron insisted that he respects unions and protests organised by opponents to show that they disagree with the pension plan, seeking to clarify that he considers they are legitimate — unlike troublemakers. "We must listen to them, listen to their anger and respond to it,"

Unions have called for new nationwide protests and strikes on Thursday to demand that the government simply withdraws the retirement bill. High-speed and regional trains, Paris metro and other public transportation in major cities were expected to be disrupted. Macron acknowledged

that a majority of the French are opposed to the reform. "But between opinion polls and the general interest of the country, I'm choosing the general interest ... And if it means bearing unpopularity afterwards, I will bear it." He also said he "trusts" Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne to continue leading the government, suggesting he is not planning a overnment reshuffle.Early on

Spain's Vox party fails in govt no-trust motion

Barcelona (AP): Spain's parliament dismissed an attempt by the far-right Vox party to topple the governing leftist coalition on Wednesday, voting overwhelmingly against a noconfidence motion brought against Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez's government.

The motion only earned the support of Vox's 52 lawmakers plus one rogue vote, for a total of 53. The government received 201 votes, while the 91 members of the conservative Popular Party, the chamber's leading opposition party, abstained.

In a move that was slammed by other political parties, Vox leader Santiago Abascal broke with custom and didn't stand as an alternative prime minister. Instead, Vox chose an independent candidate in a futile attempt to win wider support.

Ramón Tamames, 89. a former communist leader who has journeyed across the political spectrum, was the losing candidate. The economist had pledged that his only act as prime minister would have been to immediately call for a national election to coincide with local elections scheduled for May 28.

Tamames presented himself and Vox as protectors of the unity of Spain against Catalan separatist parties that Sanchez has relied on to win important votes in parliament. This is the second time that Vox, an upstart party that resists criticising Spain's 20th-century dic-

IMF facility debunks bankrupt status: Ranil

President Ranil
Wickremesinghe told
Parliament on Wednesday that the IMF bailout had restored Sri Lanka's international recognition, ending the image of bank-ruptcy and helping the local banks regain foreign investors' confidence. The IMF board had on Tuesday approved a USD 3 billion facility over a four-year period to help Sri Lanka emerge from its balance of payment crisis which plagued the island since April last year. Wickremesinghe said the bailout would "create opportunities for low-interest credit, restore foreign investors' confidence, and lay the foundation for a strong new economy". The receipt of the IMF Facility is a step towards build-

ing a better future for the youth and uplifting the country. Additionally, the country is expecting about USD 7 billion dollars more in rapid credit support from other parties. Amidst numerous hardships, bearing all kinds of pressure, and undergoing suffering with equanimity, the people of this country remained calm and patient. Their commitment was a great strength in achieving the IMF Facility," Wickremesinghe, also the country's finance minister, said. Wickremesinghe, however, reminded the hard grind ahead of Sri Lanka with having to reform the vital sectors of the economy.

"We are now starting a new journey. We have to introduce many economic reforms throughout the process. The foundation for our success will

be through this path. Some of these reforms have already been proposed and implemented through the interim budget of 2022 and the budget for 2023. We will introduce numerous other reforms," he said. Wickremesinghe said he was able to gain the IMF facility and revive the economy without any support from the opposition despite his appeals for them to join him. He sought parlia-mentary approval for the agreement with the IMF, "without parliamentary approval I will not be able to go for the second round of negotiations", he said.

For Wickremesinghe, the hard task of negotiating with its bilateral and private bondholders has started. He has indicated Sri Lanka would be helped with a 10-year moratorium on debt repayment.

UK opens inquiry into killing claims in Af

London (AP): A senior judge launched an independent inquiry on Wednesday to investigate whether UK military police covered up or did not properly probe allegations of unlawful killings by British armed forces in Afghanistan from 2010 to 2013. Britain's government ordered the inquiry after lawyers brought legal challenges on behalf of the families of eight Afghans who were allegedly killed by British special forces during nighttime raids in in 2011 and 2012. Senior judge Charles Haddon-Cave said his team would "get to the bottom" of whether investigations carried out by the Royal Military Police were adequate.

"It is clearly important that anyone who has broken the law is referred to the relevant authordone nothing wrong should rightly have the cloud of suspicion lifted from them," Haddon-Cave said on Wednesday.

"This is critical, both for the reputation of the armed forces and the country." The inquiry

the armed forces and the country." The inquiry into two separate incidents will also review Boris to be grilled over partygate scandal

LONDON: Former British prime minister Boris Johnson will be grilled by a cross-party parliamentary panel for several hours on Wednesday to establish whether he knowingly misled the House of Commons over the partygate scandal of COVID law-breaking parties at Downing Street. The House of Commons Privileges Committee has published a fresh bundle of evidence, including photographs and statements from Johnson's close aides at the time, ahead of the oral evidence session. The seven-member committee, which scrutinises members of Parliament, said it was publishing the material for the benefit of those following the oral evidence session.

whether the deaths "formed part of a wider pattern of extra-judicial killings by British armed forces in Afghanistan at the time".

California faces more flooding after strong storm

AP ■ SANTA CRUZ strong late-season Pacific

Astorm that brought damaging winds and more rain and snow to saturated California was blamed for two deaths and forecasters said additional flooding was possible Wednesday in parts of the state. Tuesday's storm focused most of its energy on central and southern parts of the state, bringing threats of heavy runoff and mountain snowfall. In the north, intense hail was reported in Sacramento, the state cap-

Locally heavy rain and snowmelt may cause flooding on Wednesday in southern California and central Arizona, the National Weather Service warned. Trees and power lines were reported downed in the San Francisco Bay Area. An Amtrak commuter train carrying 55 passengers struck a downed tree and derailed near the East Bay village of Porta

The train remained upright and nobody was injured, Amtrak and fire officials said. In the Bay Area community of Portola Valley, a man driving a sewer truck was killed when a tree fell onto the vehicle, the California Highway Patrol said. And in the community of Rossmoor, a driver was injured and a passenger died after a large tree fell onto a car, the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District said.

NITU, NIKHAT & SAWEETY CONFIRM MEDALS

iding on impressive performances, star Indian pugilists Mances, star mulan paganete Nitu Ghanghas, Nikhat Zareen and Saweety Boora registered thumping victories to confirm at least three medals for India at the Mahindra IBA World Boxing Women's Championships by advancing to the semi-finals at the Indira Gandhi Sports

Complex here on Wednesday. Squaring off against the two-time Worlds bronze medallist Madoka Wada of Japan, the 2022 Commonwealth Games champion Nitu (48kg) secured a scintillating win with the Referee Stops Contest (RSC) verdict in the second round of the bout. With an attacking approach from the word go, the 22 year old hardly had to break a sweat against the veteran Japenese and was in complete control of the bout.

"I have been able to apply 100% apply of my practice in the ring so far and going into the next match I feel good I have won all my three bouts by RSC. She (Maduko) is a southpaw just like me and as this was my first time in the tournament facing a southpaw, I had to pay complete attention and attack. I was on the counter from the first round but I feel like I should have played a bit more attacking and I will try to do that in my next bout. (After the defeat in last edition's quarters) I felt that since is the tournament happening in India this year with the home support constantly backing us, I won't let the medal slip away this time," said Nitu after the bout.

The Indian will now take on the reigning Asian champion and last year's World Championships silver medallist Alua Balkibekova of Kazakhstan in what will be a rematch of last year's World Championships



Following Nitu's victory, Nikhat (50kg) successfully continued her title defence by recording a hard-fought 5-2 win on points after the bout was reviewed against the two-time World Championships bronze medallist Chuthamat Raksat of Thailand. Both pugilists were at the top of their game and gave it their all to emerge victorious in this bout that went right down the wire. However it was the 26 year old Indian who utilized her superior technical ability to edge out her Thai opponent and come out on top with the

'Yes, today's bout was stressful but

I won by a split decision so I am really happy that I secured a medal for my country, and going forward I'll win the gold medal too. My strategy today was to win in the first 2 rounds and then play around in the last. I won the 2 rounds but from 3:2 in each so in the last round, I aimed to play from a long range but there was a lot of clinching so my body got a little tired. All the bouts I have had till now were powerful but for me, it's been a good experience to keep moving forward and defeating them so hopefully I will keep moving forward like this and fight for my country." said Nikhat after the bout.

Nikhat will face Rio Olympics bronze medallist Ingrit Valencia of Colombia in the semi-finals.

Contrary to Nikhat, the three-time Asian medallist Saweety (81kg) recorded a dominating 5-0 win against the 2018 World Championships bronze medallist Viktoria Kebikava of Belarus. In what was her first match of the tournament, the experienced pugilist from Haryana was extremely confident throughout the bout and landed strong, accurate punches to seal the win. She will be going up against Emma-Sue Greentree of Australia in her next bout.

'The boxer from Belarus (Viktoria)

medal to her name and with both of our strengths including uppercuts being similar, I knew that I will have to fight till the very end. I was a bit tired towards the last round but I kept going for my coach who was constantly motivating from the ringside and my family in the audience, all of whom had high hopes from me. My next bout will definitely be better than this one as I always get better with the number of matches that I play," commented Saweety after her

Meanwhile, the two-time World Meanwhile, the two-time World Youth champion Sakshi Chaudhary (52kg) and the 2022 World Championships bronze medallist Manisha Moun (57kg) went down fighting in the quarter finals despite their best efforts. While Sakshi lost 0:5 against Wu Lu of China, Manisha lost 1:4 against Amina Zidani of France and 1:4 against Amina Zidani of France and bowed out of the competition.

The 2020 Olympics bronze medallist Irma Testa (57kg) of Italy also secured her place in the semi-finals after beating Jucielen Romeu of Brazil with a 5-0 scoreline. The Italian who won silver at last year's World Championships looked determined to better that this time round and proved it with her stellar performance.

Later on Wednesday, the Tokyo Olympics bronze medallist Lovlina Borgohain (75kg), the 2022 Commonwealth Games bronze medallist Jaismine Lamboria (60kg) and Nupur Sheoran (+81kg) will all take to the ring for their respective quarter-finals

The on-going prestigious event is witnessing the participation of 324 boxers, including several Olympic medallists, from 65 countries fighting for the titles in the 12 weight categories. The tournament has a massive prize pool of

Sarabjot clinches men's air pistol gold

Carabjot Singh shot down a Ogold in men's air pistol while Varun Tomar clinched a bronze in the same event as India opened their ISSF Pistol/Rifle World Cup campaign with two medals here on Wednesday.

The Indian women air pistol shooters though couldn't make it to the medal bracket, with Manu Bhaker, Divya Subbaraju and Rhythm Sangwan failing to come good on the inaugural day of competitions

Sarabjot, the 2021 junior world champion in the team and mixed team categories, defeated Azerbaijan's Ruslan Lunev 16-0 in the gold-medal match in the first final of the World Cup. The 21-year-old Sarabjot

was in awesome form all through as he emerged leader at the end of the qualification round with 585 points.

Sarabjot was hitting the bulls eye every time he took aim, with his scores of 98, 97, 99, 97, 97, 97 in the six qualification series suggesting he would be hard to beat.

China's Liu Jinyao was a close second at 584.

Six other shooters — Jason Solari (Switzerland, 583 points), Vladimir Svechinko (Uzbekistan, 582), Frederik Larsen (Denmark, 580), Zhang Jie (China, 580), Ruslan Lunev (Azerbaijan, 579) and Varun Tomar (India, 579) — completed the list of eight marksmen who made it to the ranking

England Championships women's doubles last week before

sod qualified for the main draw

of the women's singles after beat-

Meanwhile, Malvika Ban-

The mixed doubles pair of Rohan Kapoor and Sikki Reddy

notched up a 21-17, 15-21, 21-

18 win over Germany's Patrick

losing in the semifinals.

15, 15-21, 21-18.

In the ranking round, Sarabjot continued to excel, while 19-year-old Varun also began superbly after qualifying eighth and last for the ranking round.

At the end of the ranking round, Sarabjot (253.2 points) and Ruslan (251.9) were placed first and second respectively and both of them entered the gold-medal round high on confidence, while Varun, who scored 250.3, settled for bronze.
In the battle for the top

podium place, the Azerbaijan shooter was no match for Sarabjot, with the Indian firing single-shot scores of 10.4, 10.4, 10.3, 10.2, 10.2, 10.9 in comparison to Ruslan's 10.1, 10.1, 9.6, 9.5, 8.9 and 10.4.

As per the ISSF's new format, the winner of a single shot in the final gets awarded two points and the first to race to 16 points is the winner of the com-

With Sarabjot shooting better scores in all six shots, he raced to the title, giving India its first gold medal in the compe-

In the women's air pistol event, 27-year-old Divya Subbaraju did much better than Olympian Manu Bhaker, enter-

ing the ranking round after coming third in qualification with a score of 579. However, the Indian ended up ranked fifth with China's Li Xue winning gold after defeat-ing Germany's Doreen Vennekamp in the title round. Another Chinese shooter, Wei Qian bagged the bronze medal.

Scheiel and Franziska Volkmann to book a berth in main draw.

Maisnam and Priyanshu Raja-

wat couldn't qualify for the

main draw. Rohan Kapoor and

B Sumeeth Reddy also lost in the

first round of men's doubles

qualification. On Wednesday,

PV Sindhu, seeded fourth in the

tournament, will look to snap

her three first-round exits on the

trot this season when she faces

local player Jenjira Stadelmann

in women's singles. Kidambi Srikanth, H S Prannoy and

Lakshya Sen will also begin their campaign in men's singles.

However, Meiraba Luwang

Portugal back with Martínez as coach, Ronaldo in squad

It's a new era for Portugal as it begins European Championship qualifying under a new coach and with Cristiano Ronaldo far away from football's biggest stadiums.

Portugal starts its Euro 2024 qualifying campaign at home against Liechtenstein in Group on Thursday, with Roberto Martínez debuting as coach and Ronaldo still in the squad.

It will be Ronaldo's first appearance with Portugal since leaving Europe for Saudi club Al Nassr after a mostly disappointing stint with Manchester United. He is set to break the alltime record of appearances with a national team after tying Bader Al-Mutawa's mark of 196 outings for Kuwait during last year's

World Cup.

Martínez is taking over Fernando Santos, who quit in December after Portugal's elimination by Morocco in the quarterfinals of the World Cup. Santos left amid the controversy of benching Ronaldo in the knockout stage of the tourna-

Santos was in charge of Portugal for eight years, leading the national team to the Euro 2016 title — the country's first major trophy — and the 2019 Nations League title. He reached an agreement with the federation to leave two years before his contract was to end. Martínez ended his six-year

stint with Belgium after the team's disappointing groupstage elimination at the World Cup. He arrived pledging to respect Ronaldo's history with the national team. In addition to Ronaldo,

Martínez will inherit a squad filled with talented players such as Bernardo Silva, Bruno Fernandes, Diogo Jota, Gonçalo Ramos and João Félix. The coach made few changes to the squad, with 40-year-old defender Pepe also returning to play alongside the 38-year-old Ronaldo.

"We were briefly introduced to him on the training field," Félix said about Martínez.

"He explained to us some of

very similar. He talked about the attacking dynamic, the connections between wingers and strik-

Félix downplayed Portugal's chances in the matches against Liechtenstein and Luxembourg on Sunday.

"We always have to be prepared and not take any game lightly," he said.

"We have the recent example of the World Cup, when everyone thought we were going to get past Morocco and we didn't. It's always complicated, it's always the best from each country, and everyone plays each game like it is a final. All games will be difficult, both at home and away. We have to be cau-

Portugal is unbeaten against Liechtenstein, with six wins and a draw in seven matches.

Portugal's Euro 2024 qualifying group also includes Iceland, Slovakia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The top two nations from each of the 10 groups qualify for the final tourhis ideas, mainly for these two nament in Germany.



made an early exit from the ing USA's Lauren Lam 21-17, 21-7 in the qualifying round. The women's doubles pair Swiss Open Super 300 badminton tournament here as they lost their first-round match. of Sikki Reddy and Arathi Sara The Treesa-Gayatri duo lost Sunil also made it to the main draw after beating Paula Lynn Cao Hok and Lauren Lam 21to second-seeded Indonesian pair of Apriyani Rahayu and Siti Fadia Silva 14-21, 14-21 in 41

De Bruyne 'honoured' to be named Belgium skipper

AP ■ BRUSSELS

PTI BASEL

ll England Championships

 $oldsymbol{A}$ semifinalists, Indian wo-

men's doubles pair of Treesa

Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand

minutes in the opening round on Tuesday night. Treesa and Gayatri had

made a sensational run in the All

Manchester City's Kevin De Bruyne said on Tuesday he was "honoured" to be named Belgium captain following Eden Hazard's retirement from international football.

The Red Devils coach Domenico Tedesco chose playmaker De Bruyne for the position after Real Madrid's Hazard, who turned 32 in January, ended his Belgium career following last year's World Cup. Tedesco, who took over from Roberto Martinez after the tournament, has called up 19year-olds Zeno Debast and Romeo Lavia to what was an ageing squad. "It's an honour for me to be named and represent the country in this way," De Bruyne told RTL-TVI television.

'I'm almost 32. I've never considered international retirement. I think I can still bring something to the table and help the youngsters," he added. Madrid goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois and Chelsea attacker Romelu Lukaku will be De Bruyne's vice-captains. De Bruyne was one of the players criticised after The Red Devils were

knocked out in the group stage in Qatar.

De Bruyne has played 97 games for Belgium scoring 25 goals and will make his debut as skipper in Sweden on Friday in a Euro 2024 qualifier. They will also face Austria, Azerbaijan and Estonia in the campaign for the tournament held in Germany next summer.





Former World Cup winner Mesut Ozil retires

AP ■ BERLIN

World Cup winner Mesut Ozil announced his retirement from football on Wednesday after an illustrious international career with Germany and club spells with

Real Madrid and Arsenal.
The 34-year-old helped
Germany to glory in Brazil in 2014 but bitterly quit the international scene after the Germans crashed out of the 2018 tournament in Russia.

"After thoughtful consideration, I'm announcing my immediate retirement from professional football," the attacking midfielder said.

"I've had the privilege to be an international footballer for almost 17 years now and I feel incredibly thankful for the opportunity.

"But in recent weeks and months, having also suffered some injuries, it's become more and more clear that it's time to leave the big stage of

football. Ozil, born in the German city of Gelsenkirchen but of Turkish descent, played on some of football's biggest stages but also became embroiled in international politics and accu-

sations of racism. When Germany were knocked out of the 2018 World Cup at the group stage, a wounded Ozil accused the

attacks.

His club career blossomed when his deft passing and vision helped secure his move from the Bundesliga to Jose Mourinho's Real Madrid side in 2010. He soon led La Liga in assists while helping the Spanish club to their 32nd league title in 2012.

His big-money move to Arsenal in 2013 helped the London club end their FA Cup drought the following

In 2014, Ozil started the final as Germany beat Lionel Messi's Argentina 1-0 in the Maracana in Rio de Janeiro thanks to Mario Goetze's extratime goal.

Ozil was repeatedly short-listed for the Ballon d'Or but the later stages of his career were troubled by disputes over playing time and his close personal friendship with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Erdogan was the best man at Ozil's Istanbul wedding to former Miss Turkey and actress Amine in 2019.

But it was Ozil's decision to be pictured with Erdogan on the eve of Turkey's 2018 presidential election that caused particular controversy during that summer's World Cup.

He ended his internationcareer before moving to Fenerbahce and most recently Istanbul Basaksehir.

DONSKOY SAILS THROUGH

Former World number 65 Evgeny Donskoy of Russia sailed through to the second round at the ITF \$25K Men's International Tournament at Ekana Sports Stadium on Wednesday.

Donskoy showcased some flawless tennis against Digvijay Pratap Singh. Digvijay hit some fiery forehand cross-courts to level the sets but went

down fighting 2-6,6-2,5-7. Indian Abhinav Shanmugam went all out but faltered towards the end as he to lost Y Takahashi of Japan 0-6,7-5,6-7.

India's number two Shashikumar Mukund made it to the second round, beating Dutch Stijn Pel in the straight sets 6-4,6-2. Meanwhile, Indian Davis Cup player Karan Singh kept his nerves to overcome the challenge of seventh seed S Sekiguchi of Japan 6-3,6-4. Siddharth Vishwakarma ousted 16-year old Rushil Khosla 7-6,6-3 to enter the next round.

Niki Poonacha suffered defeat from statemate M Sureshkumar in a gruelling three-set battle 7-6, 6-4, 6-



Oliver Crawford came back from a set down to beat George Loffhagmen of Britain 2-6,6-3,6-3

UP lad Siddharth Rawat also booked his place in the second round, beating Ishaque Eqbal 4-6,6-2,6-4. But it was a bad day for another UP player Yash Chaurasia, who was comprehensively beaten by Blake Ellis of Australia 6-3,6-3.

The Uttar Pradesh teams for the

36th National Sub-Junior and 11th Poomse National Sub-Junior Taekwondo Championship, to be held in Cuttack, has been announced on Wednesday. Uttar Pradesh Olympic Association treasurer Syed Rafat Zubair Rizvi gave away the kits to the players at KD Singh 'Babu' Stadium.

TEAMS: Boy's: Jain Ali, Lakshya Mishra, Virat, Lakshya Kumar Singh, Vaibhav, Aarav, Manoj, Aryan, Sambhav, Prakhar, Vinit, Kuldeep, Shashwat, Rudransh; Girl's: Yashasvi, Akshita, Dishu, Adrika, Arpita, Vedika, Manaswini, Nikita, Sufia, Riju, Saumya, Vaishnavi, Vaishnavi Chandra, Navya Singh.

PUMSE: Boy's: Rustom, Lakshya,

Suryanshu, Vaibhav, Aakriti, Vani,

Kachnar Chaudhary.

2-Radha Chaudhary, 3-Laxmi Kashyap; Discus Throw (Men's) 1-Harpreet Singh, 2-Prabhjot Singh, 3-Jagtar Singh; **Pole Vault (Mens)** 1-Aniket Patel, 2-Santosh Kumar, 3-Thangavasanth M; Hammer throw (Women's) 1-Manpreet Kaur, 2-Anmol Kaur, 3-Varsha; Shotput (Women's) 1-

Arya; Girl's: Suhani, Naisa Coaches:

Mayank Bharti, Vishal Mishra, Priya

Maurya, Pooja, Managers: Virendra

Bharti, Chandrabhan, Sandeep Singh.

seconds in men's 100m race to emerge

fastest in the 71st All-India Police

Athletics Championship on Wednesday. Vijaya Kumari of CISF

bagged the gold in women's category,

RESULTS: 100M (Men's) 1-Midhun,

2-Chirag, 3-Narinder Singh; (Women's) 1-Vijaya Kumari, 2-Nainy

Bala, 3-Indu Prasad; 800M (Men's) 1-

Dhinesh, 2-Ramdev, 3-Tomson

Poulose (Women's) 1-Shivanu Hudda,

Midhun T of Kerala clocked 10.63

MIDHUN, VIJAYA FASTEST

clocking 11.97 seconds.

German public of "racist" Kiran Baliya, 2-Manpreet Kaur, 3-

Oz beat India in 3rd ODI, seal series

PTI CHENNAI

⊣he Indian batting unit once again choked under relentless pressure from the Australian spinners as the visitors clinched the three-match ODI series 2-1 with a comfortable 21-run victory, here on Wednesday.

Chasing a stiff target of 270 on a tricky pitch, India were all out for 248 in 49.1 overs as Australia came back in the series after losing the first ODI by five wickets.

The series defeat is an indicator that the Indian team is far from prepared for the World Cup and there are too many loose ends that needs to be tied.

The match turned out to be an anti-climax in the final 15 overs as Australian spinners Adam Zampa (4/45) and Ashton Agar (2/41 in 10 overs) snared as many six Indian wickets, giving away only 86 runs in the 20 overs between them.

The Chepauk track got slower and slower and post 35th over in the Indian innings, it became very difficult to hit the big strokes.

Once Zampa bowled a couple of googlies to force Hardik Pandya (40 off 40 balls) and Ravindra Jadeja (1 off 33 balls) hit against the turn, the writing was on the wall.

It was Zampa's best figures against India and he certainly was the hero for the Aussies.

Incidentally, Australia were the last international team to beat India in a bilateral ODI series back in 2019. The scoreline back then was 3-2. Since that series defeat four years back, India have won seven back-toback bilateral ODI rubber at

It was three games in a row that the Indian top-order flattered to deceive and that too in home conditions. They could have been blanked 3-0 in the series had Australia scored at

least 235 in the opening ODI. The highest run-getter for India in the series was KL Rahul with 116 runs and that tells the

Between overs 35 to 43, India managed only 31 runs and that was where the game turned on its head.

Skipper Rohit Sharma (30

off 17 balls) started well but played one pull shot too many to be holed out at deep square leg fence while an alert Alex Carey's decision to convince Steve Smith into taking a DRS saw the back of Shubman Gill (37 off 49 balls). Rahul (32 off 50 balls) joined Virat Kohli (54 off 72 balls) and the duo added 69 runs in 15.3 overs but were never able to dominate as such on a track that got slower with

Kohli's first boundary came in his 21st delivery, a pull shot off Agar and two balls later of Tamil Nadu he hit a regal six off

Agar over extra cover. Rahul's first boundary came in his 45th ball when he hit Zampa over his head for a four. Next over, Starc fired from wide off crease but the length ball was hit for a straight six. However a ball fired by Zampa into the blockhole was dug-out by Rahul but Abbot timed his jump well to hold onto it at the boundary.

Then it was the turn of Agar to quickly send back Kohli and the out-of-form Suryakumar Yadav (0) for his third first-ball duck in as many games.

From 146 for 2, India had slumped to 185 for 6 when Pandya and Jadeja joined forces with the Australian close-in fielders making it infinitely dif-

But Pandya, however, maintained a 100-plus strike-rate despite tight bowling by the

Earlier, a fine opening spell by Pandya and a probing effort by Kuldeep Yadav put a tight leash around the Australian batters before its tail wagged considerably to take the visitors to a fighting 269 all out in 49 overs after opting to bat first.

The five wickets added 131 to keep Australia in the game.

While Pandya (3/44 in 8 overs) shaved off the top half, Kuldeep's (3/56 in 10 overs) rhythm and guile on a helpful Chennai track was the biggest takeaway as the latter's delivery to remove Carey was the ball of the series. It was a classical leftarm wrist spinner's leg-break that beat the southpaw all ends up and Kuldeep's ecstacy was there to be seen.

India were in control after egging Australia back at 138 for 5 but a 58-run stand between Carey and Marcus Stoinis for the sixth wicket and 42 for the eighth wicket between Sean Abbott (26) and Ashton Agar (17) took them close to 250 while Mitchell Starc and Adam Zampa added 22 precious runs for the final wicket.

What looked like a good toss to win for Australia after Mitchell Marsh (47 off 47 balls) and Travis Head (33 off 31 balls) put on 68 for the opening stand didn't seem so as Pandya bowled three different deliveries in his first three overs to completely seize the momentum in favour of the hosts.

David Warner (23 off 31 balls) and Marnus Labuschagne (28 off 45 balls) paid dearly for their indiscreet shot selection off Kuldeep's bowling before Carey (38 off 46 balls) played his first innings of substance on the final day of a long near twomonth tour.



Short break for India's white ball players before joining IPL teams

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian players, who are part of the ODI series against Australia, will get a short break for three to four days before joining their respective IPL camps with the tournament starting from March 31.

Defending champions Gujarat Titans and Chennai Super Kings will play in the opening match of the season in Ahmedabad.

It is understood that all the players, who are in the World Cup scheme of things, will have their workload management monitored and hence the rest is going to be paramount.

Some players might join their IPL camps directly but they will have an option of taking a three-four day break and relax at home before touching base with their respective IPL teams," a BCCI

source told PTI on conditions

of anonymity.

Even if the players directly join the training camp, it is unlikely that they would be training for at least next 72

IYER TO MISS ENTIRE IPL, DOUBTFUL FOR WC

Shreyas Iyer is all set to undergo lower back surgery and will not take any part in the IPL, according to sources in the board. The decision is being taken keeping the player's best interest in mind as a surgery right now will give him an outside chance of at least making a comeback before the World Cup in October, although chances of making it for the marquee event also looks dim at the moment.

Jasprit Bumrah and Prasidh Krishna are the two players who have already undergone back surgery.

Fleming to be Texas Super Kings coach in MLC

passage of time.

PTI DALLAS

Former New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming will be the coach of Dallas-based Major League Cricket (MLC) club Texas Super Kings (TSK), which announced its partnership with IPL side Chennai Super Kings (CSK).

Four-time IPL champions, CSK had recently said that they would make a "major announcement" with regard to their association with the new T20 tournament in the US.

TSK said in a statement that CSK will bring "operational expertise" and help "Texas compete on the field".

The (Texas Super kings) team will be led by coach Stephen Fleming. Fleming is a forantain of the New cricket team and head coach of Indian Premier League team Chennai Super Kings. He played in the first-ever T20 to be staged as captain of the New Zealand team in 2005, said a TSK statement.

Fleming is a long-serving CSK head coach and has guided the Chennai franchise to four IPL titles.

CSK join Delhi Capitals and Mumbai Indians as the third IPL side to get associated with the six-team MLC, scheduled to begin on July 13. The six MLC teams are San Francisco

Unicorns, Lost Angeles, MI New York, Seattle Orcas, Texas Super Kings and Washington DC. Delhi Capitals, co-owned by GMR Group, are partnering with Seattle Orcas to "help build and operate a world-class crick-

et team", while Mumbai Indians have joined

the US cricket revolution by acquiring the New York franchise. Meanwhile, all six MLC teams completed the domestic player draft at the Space Center in Houston, where they selected nine players each from more than 100 cricketers eligible to represent the "US cricket commu-

The remainder of each team's player roster will be filled with top T20 cricketers from across the world.



New IPL Rule: Captains allowed to name playing XI after toss

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The captains of IPL teams can name their L playing eleven after the toss instead of handing over team sheets before the spin of coin, stated the new playing conditions ssued by the BCCI.

According to playing conditions clause 1.2.1: "Each captain shall nominate 11 players plus a maximum of 5 substitute fielders in writing to the IPL Match Referee after

"Other than set out in Clause 1.2.9 no player (member of the playing eleven) may be changed after the nomination and prior to the start of play without the consent of the opposing captain."

This effectively means that after the toss, if a skipper feels that he needs to change his eleven as per demands of the situation, he is free to do that till the match

The other significant change in playing conditions is penalising unfair movement by the wicketkeeper in case there is shift in position before the batter meets the

In the event of unfair movement by the wicket-keeper, either umpire shall call and signal dead ball and inform the other umpire the reason for doing so. The bowler's end umpire shall then: "award the one-run penalty for Wide or No ball, if applicable or award 5 Penalty runs to the batting side. Inform the captain of the fielding side of the reason for this action. Inform the batters and, as soon as practicable, the captain of the batting side of what has occurred.'

The "Impact Substitution" where a new player can be introduced during the match from the five designated substitutions had already been announced by the

Siraj slips from top spot to third in ODI rankings Mohammad Shami, who



PTI DUBAI

Pacer Mohammed Siraj was on Wednesday dethroned from the top spot by Australia's Josh Hazlewood in the latest ICC rankings for ODI bowlers, as the Indian slipped to third

Another Australian pacer, Mitchell Starc, who impressed during the first two ODIs of the three-match series in India, also moved up to join Siraj at joint

Siraj, who returned with impressive figures of 3/29 to help India win the first ODI against Australia, was expensive in the second ODI giving away 37 runs in three overs and consequently lost his position as the top-ranked bowler.

The right-arm pacer had copped the brunt of the attack

by Mitchell Marsh and Travis Head during the second ODI in Visakhapatnam. Siraj, who has had a successful run across formats in recent past, was crowned as the world No. 1 bowler in

ODIs in January this year. Starc claimed three wickets in Mumbai to stage Australia's fightback while his 5/53 in the second ODI in Visakhapatnam powered the visitors to a 10wicket win.

Hazlewood, who missed the entire tour of India consisting four Tests and three ODIs, became world No. 1 bowler in ODIs for the first time ever.

"Hazlewood, whose careerbest second position was attained for the first time in June 2017 and which he had kept since August 2022, is No. 1 in ODIs for the first time," the ICC

produced a match-winning spell in Mumbai, also moved five spots up to reach to 28th in the

KL Rahul's unbeaten 75, which helped India recover from a poor start and win the first ODI by five wickets, helped him move up three places to get to the 39th spot.

In the ODI ranking among batters, India's Shubman Gill nade 'marginal progr and Virat Kohli remained fifth and seventh respectively, while captain Rohit Sharma moved up one place to ninth.

New Zealand's Kane Williamson moved up to the second spot among batters in Test cricket following his dominant show with the bat against Sri Lanka, with the former skipper notching up scores of 1, 121 not out and 215 in the two-match series which the Kiwis won 2-0.

With his sixth double ton in Tests, Williamson is now just one behind Kohli (seven) as players with most scores over . 200. Australia's Marnus Labuschagne remains the top ranked batter in Test cricket.

New Zealand's left-handed batter Henry Nicholls, who made 200 not out in the Wellington Test and was involved in a massive 363-run stand with Williamson in what was Test cricket's 2,500th match, jumped up 20 spots to reach to 27th.

Sri Lanka captain Dimuth Karunaratne occupies the 10th



matches PNS NEW DELHI

T ucknow will host the 2023 which is likely to start on October 5 with the final to be held at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad on November 19, according to a

10-team marquee event, which will see 48 matches, including three knockouts across the 46day period, a report said. The 11 shortlisted venues

The BCCI has shortlisted

at least a dozen venues for the

are Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Dharamsala, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Lucknow, Indore, Rajkot and Mumbai.

Except for the final match, which is set to be played at the world's largest stadium in Ahmedabad, the BCCI has not specified the venues for any games as yet.

The list of 12 cities, however, does not include Mohali and Nagpur, which had hosted a Test match against visiting Australia recently. India had won the title when it last hosted the 50-over World Cup in 2011.

WORLD NO 1 ALCARAZ RETURNS TO MIAMI AFTER RAPID RISE

AP MIAMI

World number one Carlos Alcaraz heads into this week's Miami Open looking to defend both his title and top ranking and admitting even he has been surprised by his dizzying rise to the top of the sport.

A year ago, the 19-year-old came to Miami on the back of wins on clay in Croatia and Brazil and hoping to make his mark on the hard courts. His victory in South Florida launched a remarkable

The highlight was his US Open triumph which made him the youngest player to become world number one and he returns to Miami after last week's win in Indian Wells, achieved without

dropping a set in the tournament. İt's all been very fast, when I got to Miami last year I was around number 20 and a year later I am coming in with the number one ranking. That is something very special. I fulfilled my dreams quicker than I expected," he told reporters on Tuesday. Because of his victory in Miami last year, Alcaraz must win at the Florida event again if he is to hold on to his number one spot, but he says he feels no pressure in that regard or to meet newly raised expectations. 'Í don't feel the pressure too

much. I know the things I have to do. I need to play relaxed and not mind if I lose or if I play well or not," "My goal is always the same. To

feel comfortable on court. To enjoy playing tennis and try to have great thoughts when playing. That is why I am playing at a good level. I am enjoying every single second and playing relaxed. That is what I am thinking about on court," he added.

As at Indian Wells, world number two Novak Djokovic is missing after being refused entry to the United States due to his lack of a COVID vaccine and Alcaraz says he misses the Serb's presence,



along with the injured Rafael Nadal. "I'm a professional tennis play-

er, but also I'm a huge fan of tennis and I always want to watch the best players in the world, like Rafa, like Djokovic," he said.

"I played a couple of times against Rafa and I wish to play against him more and with

Diokovic as well. I wish to play against him more times, you know, but obviously in every tournament I want them to be playing and I hope we get them back soon," he

Far from feeling the weight of following in the footsteps of the 'Big Three' of Djokovic, Nadal and the

now retired Roger Federer, Alcaraz says he is trying to draw lessons from their successes

"You have to improve, you have to get better every day. That's why the big players, the Big Three, for example, did all through their careers - to improve every day a little bit," he said.

Alcaraz can expect plenty of support from the crowd in Miami, which includes many Spanishspeaking fans.

"It's so special to come back here and feel the same energy that I felt, for example, last year," he said.

"I have great supporters here, a lot of people supporting me. I remember last year it was unbelievable you know, with the crowd. I feel like I am at home, you know," he added.

The top seed will begin his title defence against Argentine Facundo Bagnis or a qualifier and could face two-time Miami champion and former world number one Andy Murray in the third round.

I'VE NEVER FELT THAT **MUCH HATE: SABALENKA** understand that there's so many people

AP MIAMI GARDENS

Belarus' world number two Aryna Sabalenka says she has faced "hate" in the women's tour locker-room but hopes tensions with Ukrainian players will eventually ease. Australian Open champion Sabalenka lost to Kazakhstan's Elena Rybakina in Sunday's Indian Wells final and at the media day for this week's ATP-WTA Miami Open was asked about her recent comments on "tensions" in the locker-room between Ukrainian and Russian and Belarus players.

"It was really, really tough for me because I've never faced that much hate in the locker room," said Sabalenka. "Of course, there are a lot of haters

on Instagram when you're losing the matches, but like in the locker room, I've never faced that," she added.

"It was really tough for me to

who really hate me for no reason, like no reason. I mean, like I did nothing, she said. Sabalenka said sometimes the tension had gone beyond awkward silences and abrupt conversations. "I had some, not like fights, but I had

some weird conversations with, not the girls, but with members of their team. It was really, it was tough. It was tough period. But, now it's getting better," she said. In comments at Indian Wells Sabalenka had said she had been in a dispute with Ukrainian Lesia Tsurenko's coach Nikita Vlasov. Tsurenko was due to play Sabalenka at Indian Wells but withdrew before their match.

The Ukrainian said she had a "panic attack" and had also been upset with a conversation about the war and the position of Russian and Belarusian players with WTA CEO Steve Simon.

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OPENING-UP

China's development benefits the world, and China cannot develop itself in isolation from the world. We must solidly promote high-level opening up, not only making good use of the global market and resources to develop ourselves, but also promoting common development of the world.

-Excerpt from Chinese President Xi Jinping's speech at the closing meeting of the 1st session of China's 14st National

"An open China welcomes investors from all over the world"

"An open China welcomes investors from all over the world," said Premier Li Qiang of the State Council of China on March 13 when he met with Chinese and foreign reporters and answered their questions at a press conference of the first session of the 14th National People's Congress. This year, China will further expand opening-up in alignment with high-standard international trade rules, Li was also quoted as saying

According to Li, opening-up is a basic state policy for China. No matter how the external situation may evolve, China will stay firmly committed to pursuing this policy. Data shows that most foreign companies are still optimistic about their development prospects in China.

Alexander Lomanov, head of the Center for the Asia-Pacific Studies of the Institute of World Economy and International Relations at the Russian Academy of Sciences, said that as the world's second largest economy, China is committed to fostering an open and inclusive world economy and creating new opportunities for the world with its own new development, which will inject confidence and momentum into the world's economic

Last year, China's utilized foreign investment totaled over US\$189 billion, which is again a record high, and almost US\$50 billion higher than that of three years ago. According to White Paper on the Business Environment in China 2023 recently

Chamber of Commerce in South China, more than 90 percent of the participating companies select China as one of the most important investment destinations, and 75 percent of the participating companies plan to reinvest in China in

Nuno Matos, Global Chief Executive Officer of Wealth and Personal Banking of HSBC Group, said that years on, China has always been committed to promoting the opening up of its financial sector to the outside world and boosting innovation-driven sustainable development. He believes that foreign investors can play an important role in the development of green financial markets. and that "the depth of China's capital markets means

it has genuine potential to become a global leader in green financial markets." Gustavo Biscassi, Di-

rector of External Affairs of Vale, a Fortune 500 company in Brazil, said that in recent years, China's business environment has continued to improve with relevant laws and regulations put into place and customs clearance getting increasingly efficient, which has benefited multinational enterprises, including Vale. "At some ports, customs clearance time has been significantly reduced from two to three days in the past to a few hours now, allowing us to deliver high-quality iron ore products to Chinese customers more efficient-

China sets its GDP growth target for 2023 at around 5 percent, which is higher than not only the expected economic growth of the world but also that of emerging markets and developing countries for

On January 1, 2023, China's "Catalogue of Encouraged Industries for Foreign Investment" (2022 Edition) came into effect. Compared with the previous edition, the new edition of the catalogue has a net increase of 239 entries, the largest number of newly added entries in recent years. The industries included in the catalogue can enjoy preferential policies such as tariff exemptions and priority land supply.

"Chinese Business Environment Research Report 22Q4" shows that foreign companies are generally satisfied with China's business environment, with 90.22 percent of foreign companies reporting "moderately satisfied" or higher ratings for access to business premises and taxation, and 88.26 percent reporting "moderately satisfied" or higher ratings for market

the same period. China's

strong economic growth

will further boost the

world's economic recov-

cry. (Xinhua and People's

FOCUS

"I'm impressed by an everchanging China"

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"When I first visited China in 2005 as the Egyptian Transport Minister, I could feel the rapidly developing Chinese economy. I've visited China more than 30 times so far, and I'm deeply impressed by an ever-changing China," said former Egyptian Prime Minister Essam Sharaf, He also pointed out that China's development achievements are not only reflected in its rapidly changing cities, but also in its people's ever-im-

proving quality of life. "Undoubtedly China couldn't have made these achievements without the strong leadership of the Communist Party of China." For Sharaf, the CPC has won the trust and support of the Chinese people by adhering to the vision of people-centered development. The "people-centered" approach is the secret of the CPC's success in

governance. It has "built the consensus of the whole society and pooled the strength for progress". As one of the earliest

Egyptian readers of Xi Jinping: The Governance of China, Sharaf attended the seminar on the launch of the Arabic edition of the book back in 2014. In his view, the Belt and Road Initiative, Global Development Initiative, and Global Security Initiative proposed by President Xi Jinping are global public goods that will help promote the building of a community with a shared future for mankind. China's initiatives and actions "not only chart the course for improving global governance and upholding multilateralism, but also bring hope for prosperity and development to other developing

(People's Daily)

China adjusts visa and entry policy for foreigners

China has decided to adjust the country's visa and entry policy starting from 00:00 hours on March 15, 2023. It resumed the entry function of visas issued before March 28, 2020 and still within the validity period. Hainan entry visa exemption, Shanghai

cruise ship visa exemption, visa exemption for foreigners from Hong Kong and Macao to enter Guangdong, and visa exemption for ASEAN tourist groups to enter Guilin, Guangxi were also restored together.

(Xinhua)

FORUM

Int'l forum held in Yunnan, focusing on global development

The 2023 International Forum on Poverty Governance and Global Development (IF-PGD) kicked off March 18 in northwest Yunnan's Nujiang

Lisu autonomous prefecture. With the theme of "new blueprint for rural revitalization and exciting opportunities for global development", the forum was divided into four parts: the opening ceremony, the main forum, the themed sub-forums and a round table

for ambassadors

More than 190 ambassadors, envoys, officials, experts and scholars from 20 countries and 4 international organizations attended the 3-day forum. They gave keynote speeches and held themed discussions on consolidating poverty-reduction achievements, enabling rural high-quality development through sci-tech, and revitalizing rural areas via green devel-(Yunnan Daily)

BUSINESS

Business Chinese proficiency promotion program for Bengal Chamber of Commerce and Industry in India kicks off

The second business Chinese proficiency promotion program, co-sponsored by the Chinese Consulate General in Kolkata, the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Foreign Affairs Office of the Yunnan Provincial People's Government, and Yunnan University, kicked off on March

The leaders of relevant institutes in China and India, as well as the instructors and participants, attended the opening ceremony online. As is learned, the participants attending this program are medium and senior management personnel sent by the Bengal Chamber

of Commerce and Industry in India. Upon completion of the 60-hour program, which will last for 15 weeks, the participants will be awarded the Business Chinese (A2) certificate.

In recent years, India and China have been increasing bilateral trade and industrial cooperation. Making the most of its advantages, Yunnan Province has been closely communicating with South and Southeast Asian countries. It is hoped that the participants will play an active role in expanding China-India cooperation in various fields and strengthening friendly exchanges between the two countries. (Yunnan Daily)

PEOPLE A LIFESTYLE CALLED YUNNAN

The spirit of Lei Feng reflects common values of humanity be highly recognized, learned

"Life is limited, but serving the people is limitless. If one person can put the limited life into limitless cause of serving people, his or her life will become limitless."

This is one of the most well-known quotes from Lei Feng, a humble township government messenger, civil servant and later army truck driver in the 1950s and

March 5, marks the annual Lei Feng Day across China. As a national role model who epitomizes the spirits of selflessness, diligence, humility and dedication, he has been commemorated and learned by Chinese people for decades.

Lei Feng, however, never walks alone. Every country around the world has its own heroes and role models that keep encouraging and inspiring the public despite time changes.

Therefore, we invite 6 young representatives from the Lancang-Mekong countries to share the stories of "Lei Feng" in their hearts.

Zhang Shiqin (China)

Lei Feng has left us with innumerable stories and memories. As a teacher from the Yulong Middle School in northeast Yunnan's Lijiang, I find him particularly inspiring because education can never be bettered without the devotion of every teacher.

Choun Lin (Cambodia)

Lei Feng is not just a product of his own era. Selflessness, dedication, helpfulness, modesty... All these spirits which he shows are invaluable human assets that should

and passed on by people from around the world.

In China, Lei Feng is an undoubtedly a symbol of dedication. To the people in Laos, Kaysone Phomyihane is such a figure like Lei Feng. As the former president of Laos, he dedicated his entire life to the liberation of Lao people and the development of our country.

Sai Myo Min Tun (Myan-

People primarily remember Lei Feng by his "selfless service for the people". This reminds me of Khaing Hin Wai, a renowned actress and philanthropist in Myanmar who has helped many orphans and disabled children. To me, she is genuinely the "Lei Feng of Myanmar."

Arunee Anusuriya (Thai-

I totally understand people's feeling for Lei Feng here in China, because we have the same admiration and respectfulness for our beloved King Bhumibol the Great. What he did for his whole life was to make Thai people live a better life.

Trinh Nguyet Lan (Vietnam)

"Serving others without any thought of self-interests" was Lei Feng's motto. In Vietnam, the story of Vo Thi Sau has inspired one after another generations. As a young female guerilla, she sacrificed her life for the nation's independence at the age of 19.

Who is Lei Feng?

Lei Feng is one of the most encharing and symbolic figures of modern China. The spirits he showed lessness, hardwork, humility and dedication for example have made him a national role model since the 1960s. Lei Feng was born in a poor family in the countryside of Hunan province in 1940. He worked as a messenger and civil servant before joining the People's Liberation Army at the age of 20. Lei Feng died in an accident when he was 22.



VIEWS

China's innovation-driven development starts with QR codes

In the plan for the reform of bodies of the State Council approved by the ongoing first session of China's 14th National People's Congress, one point attracting the attention of foreign media is the re-establishment of the Ministry of Science and Technology.

For me, an Indian working in China, this is China's latest step to strengthen the spirit of innovation and pursue self-improvement in science and technology. When I came to China from India six years ago, I was soon drawn to the vibrant and fast-paced innovation

One summer day after I first arrived in China, I suddenly wanted to try a bowl of cold noodles that a friend of mine had recommended. When I seated myself at a

restaurant, I noticed a board on the table with a QR code on it. I took out my phone and scan the code, and a menu popped up on the screen. Without calling the waiter, I was able to browse the menu, order the food, and check out. It was an amazing experience!

a rare alpine wild herb known as Wikstroemia, is durable,

moisture-proof, and moth-proof, and can last for more than a

thousand years. (Yunnan Daily)

In China, the ubiquitous 'black and white squares" are the door opening to a world of convenience. From paying utility bills to renting a bicycle and taking the subway, the QR codes have revolutionized the way people interact with the world. You can even scan a code to pay for the fruit you buy from a street vendor.

The "black and white squares" are an epitome of China's digital economy that has been injecting important impetus in China's

innovation-driven development. The digital economy has always been covered by the government's annual work report for the past five years. During this year's Two Sessions, China announced the establishment of the National Data Administration

Innovation has changed every aspect of Chinese people's life. From the high-speed rail network to life-saving medical technology, the fruits of technological progress have benefited every comer of the country. Telemedicine, for example, can overcome the barriers of time and distance and allow people in remote areas to access high-quality medical care, saving lives and improving the health of millions of people.

China's high-speed trains

are amazingly comfortable and convenient. The intercity trains operating between Beijing and Tianjin can travel at speeds of up to 350 kilometers per hour, and a single ride takes only about half an hour. I have traveled to many countries. but I do not think that any other country can match China in terms of transpor-

tation infrastructure. From infrastructure to cutting-edge technology, high-quality innovation is changing Chinese people's life in ways previously unimaginable. As a foreigner who has been living in China for many years, I believe that China's innovations will also make my life better (This article is originally written by Shameem Zakaria, an Indian corre-

spondent with Xinhua.)