

Optics to hog SCO meet as Bilawal in attendance

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE AGENCIES NEW DELHI/ ISLAMABAD

All eyes will be on the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Foreign Ministers' meeting on Thursday and Friday in Goa where Foreign Ministers of China, Pakistan, Russia and other SCO countries will deliberate on various issues concerning the region. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will chair the conclave.

Given the growing ties between China and Pakistan, Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang will travel to Islamabad immediately after the conclu-sion of the SCO meet on May five. He will hold strategic talks with the country's top officials there and is expected to attend a trilateral meeting involving

Afghanistan. Pakistan Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari will lead his country's delegation for the SCO conclave. It will be the first visit by a Pakistani minister since 2014 when then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif attended the swearing-in ceremony of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi

Rajnath Singh. The spotlight on Thursday will be on whether Jaishankar and Bhutto Zardari hold a

SC rejects Beant's

assassin Rajoana

plea to commute

death sentence

PNS NEW DELHI

bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the SCO meet. laishankar is likely to hold bilateral meetings with all other Foreign Ministers of the SCO, including China. Chinese Foreign Minister

had a 45-minute bilateral meet-

ing with Defence Minister

Qin Gang arrived in Goa amid continuing tension at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh and little forward movement to disengage troops from there in an effort to restore normalcy. Chinese Defence Minister General Li Shangfu was in New Delhi last week to attend the SCO Defence Ministers' meet. He

New Delhi chaired by Prime

Minister Narendra Modi. Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin too are likely to be present here during the high-profile event.

The Chinese President along with US President Joe Biden, British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and others will arrive in New Delhi in September for the G-20 summit to be chaired by Prime Minister Modi.

Meanwhile, besides Bilawal Bhutto and Qin Gang, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov will also take part in the SCO Foreign Ministers' meeting.

The overall situation in In July, Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is like-ly to attend the SCO summit in

terrorism under the Taliban rule as well as the fast evolving regional security situation are expected to figure prominently during the deliberations.

India is emerging as a key player among the SCO coun-tries though China and Russia are seen as the major drivers of the grouping that is increasingly seen as an "alternative" to NATO.

In a way, New Delhi has been uniquely placed in the SCO as it is also a member of the four-nation coalition Ouad The other members of the Quad are the US, Japan and Australia. Both Russia and China have been severely critical of the Quad.

Continued on Page 2

2 Pak terrorists killed at LoC PNS JAMMU

On the eve of Pakistan Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's participation in a SCO meeting in Goa, the Indian Army on Wednesday neutralised two Pakistani terrorists near the Line of Control in Machhal sector of north kashmir's Kupwara district. Detailed report on P5

Mantar as wrestlers accuse drunk cop of attacking two



A ruckus after an alleged scuffle between protesting wrestlers and a policeman at Jantar Mantar in New PTI Delhi on Wednesday

PTI 📕 NEW DELHI

ruckus allegedly broke out Abetween the wrestlers staging a protest at Jantar Mantar here, demanding the arrest of the wrestling federation chief over sexual harassment charges, and some police per-

sonnel. There was no immediate comment from the Delhi Police regarding the development.

In a video being circulated on social media platforms, some of the protesters can be heard accusing a policeman of attacking two wrestlers under the influence of alcohol.

The accused policeman is seen sitting in the video, while the protesters allege that his colleagues were mute spectators.

Detailed Report on P3

Ukraine drones tried to kill Putin: Russia

Ukraine denies, calls charges **Russian alibi to** escalate war

AP 📕 KYIV

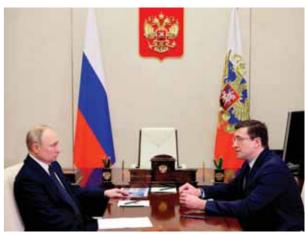
 $R^{ussia}_{\rm Ukrainian}\,{\rm drone}\,{\rm attack}\,{\rm on}$ the Kremlin early Wednesday, calling it an unsuccessful assassination attempt on President Vladimir Putin and promising retaliation for what it termed a "terrorist" act. Ukraine denied any involvement, saying Moscow could use it for further

escalation of the war. Putin wasn't in the Kremlin at the time and was at his Novo-Ogaryovo residence outside Moscow, his spokesman Dmitry Peskov told Russia's state news agency RIA Novosti.

There was no independent verification of the reported attack on the Kremlin, which Russia authorities said occurred overnight but presented no evidence in support of the claim. Nor did officials say why it took more than 12 hours to report the incident.

Ukraine presidential adviser Mykhailo Podolyak denied any involvement.

"Ukraine has nothing to do



Russian President Vladimir Putin listens to the Governor of the Nizhny Novgorod Region, Gleb Nikitin, during their meeting at the Novo-Ogaryovo residence outside Moscow, Russia on Wednesday AP | PT

with drone attacks on the Kremlin," he said. He said the claims would provide a pretext for Russia "to justify massive strikes on Ukrainian cities, on the civilian population, on infrastructure facilities" in

coming days. The alleged attack immediately prompted calls in Russia from pro-Kremlin personalities to carry out assassinations on senior leadership in Ukraine. The purported drone

attack would be a significant escalation in the 14-month conflict, with Ukraine taking the war to the heart of Russian

it added. The claims came as Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy made an unannounced visit to Helsinki for talks with the leaders of five Nordic countries. He is trying to secure greater firepower for his armed forces as they figure out how to dislodge Russian troops from occupied areas of Ukraine. Continued on Page 2

The Kremlin said Russian

military and security forces

stopped the drones before they

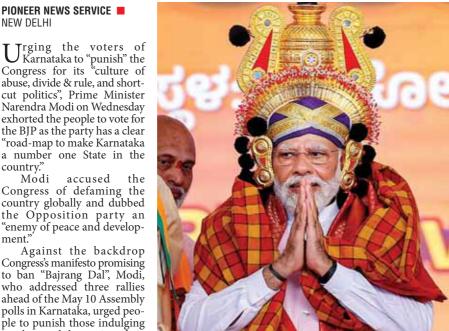
could strike. Nobody was hurt,

CBI arrests WAPCOS ex-CMD, son in DA case

PNS NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has arrested former Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Raiinc

Gupta and his son Gaurav



Punish Congress for 'culture of

abuse, short-cuts': PM to voters

'appeasement politics. Will you (people) allow such a Congress to come to power, will you allow Karnataka to get ruined." The whole world appreci-

ates and respects India's democ-racy and development, "but the Congress is going across the l defam country Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra alleged that the BJP was raising emotional issues to divert the attention of voters. "Your attention wanders every time the election comes. You don't even ask for answers. BJP leaders know that if they are getting votes by raising an emotional issue, then why work? Wake up... Enough," she said at an election rally.

Mamata on warpath against eviction notice to Amartya

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA NEW DELHI/KOLKATA

 $T_{ing}^{ension\ is\ once\ again\ brew-ing\ between\ the\ Centre}_{and\ TMC\ supremo\ Mamata}$ Banerjee-led West Bengal

assassination case of then Puniab Chief Bean Singh, to life imprisonment. The court said the compe-

The Supreme Court on Wednesday declined to

commute the death penalty of

Balwant Singh Rajoana, who

was convicted in the 1995

tent authority (Government) may deal with Rajoana's mercy plea

Continued on Page 2

Minister

CAPSULE

8 KIDS, GUARD KILLED IN Serbia School Shooting Belgrade: A teenage boy opened fire in a school in central Belgrade Wednesday killing eight children and a school guard, police said. Six more children and a teacher P-9 were injured.

COUPLE LYNCHED ON PANCHAYAT'S ORDER

Ranchi: A couple was thrashed to death on Tuesday after the panchayat in Fasla village in Jharkhand's Latehar district claimed that the village is getting affected adversely due to their black magic

ti on V exhorted the people to vote for the BJP as the party has a clear "road-map to make Karnataka a number one State in the country?

NEW DELHI

Modi accused the Congress of defaming the country globally and dubbed the Opposition the Opposition party an "enemy of peace and development.

Against the backdrop Congress's manifesto promising to ban "Bajrang Dal", Modi, who addressed three rallies ahead of the May 10 Assembly polls in Karnataka, urged people to punish those indulging

in abuse while casting their vote, chanting "Jai Bajrangbali". Along with "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" slogan, Modi also made a point at the beginning as well as at the end of his speech to raise "Jai Bajrang Bali" in Mulki in Dakshina Kannada, Ankola in Uttara Kannada distinct and Bailhongal in Belagavi district.

He also hit out at the grand old party along with JD(S) for

Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a public meeting in support of BJP candidates ahead of Assembly polls, in Ankola on Wednesday

"shortcut" governance.

At a public meeting at Mulki in the coastal district of Dakshina Kannada, a BJP stronghold, Modi called Congress the "enemy of peace and development" and accused it of insulting and abusing Congress's only identity was

India's defence forces "Congress is an enemy of peace and development. When Congress is there, investors will flee. Congress protects 'aakas' (boss) of terror, they encourage appeasement. The

ΡT

₹1 cr stashed in tree at house of brother of Cong candidate

Mysuru: Income Tax officers on Wednesday seized ₹1 crore hidden between the branches of a tree located inside the res-idential compund of K Subramanya Rai, the brother of Ashok Kumar Rai, who is contesting from the Puttur Assembly constituency in No rift in NCP, no info from Dakshina Kannada district on a Congress ticket.

notice to Nobel laureate Amartya Sen to vacate his house in Visva-Bharati University in Shantiniketan.

Visva-Bharati is the only Central University or centrally-funded institution which has the Prime Minister as its Chancellor, while all others are helmed by the President of India as their Chancellor or Visitor. Set up in 1921 by Rabindranath Tagore, Visva-Bharati is the only Central varsity in West Bengal.

Visva-Bharati had sent an eviction notice to Sen on April 19, asking him to vacate 13 decimals of the 1.38 acre land of his residence before May 6.

To protest the development, Mamata has asked State Ministers to begin a sit-in demonstration outside Sen's house to protest against the university's eviction order.

Earlier, the TMC and the BJP-led Centre had been in confrontation mode with daily squabbles over decisions by then Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar, who is now the Vice-President of India.

Visva-Bharati authorities have pasted the notice at the gate of the Nobel laureate's house "Pratichi" and said that the university will use force, if necessary, to get the land vacat-ed. "We don't have any say in this regard as we don't interfere in day-to-day administrative discharges of any university falling under the Central Government's purview," a top Union Education Ministry official told The Pioneer.

after it recovered more than ₹38.38 crore cash from their premises making it the biggest haul of cash seized by the agency in its history. Water and Power Consultancy Services (India) Limited (WAPCOS), is a Central Public Sector

Enterprise (CPSE) wholly owned by the Government and is under the administrative control of the Ministry of Jal Shakti.

The CBI began its searches on Tuesday after booking Gupta, his wife Reema Singal, son Gaurav Singal, and daugh-ter-in-law Komal Singal, for allegedly amassing illicit wealth to the tune of ₹7.91 crore during Gupta's tenure as CMD from April 1, 2011 to March 31, 2019.

Continued on Page 2

Continued on Page 2

India to map heat impact on population

PTI 📕 NEW DELHI

India will launch its own composite index next year to quantify the impact of heat on its population and generate impact-based heat wave alerts for specific locations, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has said.

The IMD began issuing an experimental heat index for different parts of the country last week, taking into account air temperature and relative humidity to determine how hot it really feels.

"The heat index is an experimental product. It is not validated and we have mentioned that (on the IMD's website) too. We are coming up with our own system now, a multi-parameter product called 'heat hazard score'. We hope



mer season"

will be an effective indicator of that it will be better than the heat stress for people, he said. The IMD chief said the others," Mrutyunjay Mohapatra, Director General of hazard score will be ready in Meteorology, IMD, told PTI.

Along with temperature and humidity, it will integrate other parameters such as wind and duration of exposure. It

Change in climate pattern likely: World Meteorological Org

Geneva: There is strong possibility of a change in weather and climate patterns worldwide as El Nino is now predicted to emerge with a 60 per cent likelihood by July end and an 80 per cent chance by the end of September, according to UN's World Meteorological Organisation. "This will change the

weather and climate patterns worldwide," said Wilfran Moufouma Okia, head of around two months and "it will WMO's regional climate prediction services division, while be operational in the next sumaddressing reporters in Geneva. **Continued on Page 2**

Panel to look into same-sex couples' concerns: Centre PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

headed by the Cabinet Secretary to examine administrative steps that could be taken for addressing "genuine humane concerns" of same-sex couples without going into the issue of legalising their marriage. The Centre's submission came pursuant to the apex court asking it on April 27 whether social welfare benefits like opening joint bank accounts, nominating life partner in Provident Fund, gratuity and pension schemes can be granted to same-sex couples without going into the issue of

Pawar on staying on: Praful

TN RAGHUNATHA MUMBAI

As the debate over who will succeed Sharad Pawar as the next Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) president raged in the State political circles, NCP's vice-president Praful Patel on Wednesday dismissed the speculation that he was in the race the party chief's post and also denied that Pawar had resigned from his post because of the rift within the party.

A day after Pawar stunned everyone by announcing his decision to step down as the NCP president, the names of Patel, Pawar's nephew and leader of the Opposition Ajit Pawar, daughter and party MP Supriya Sule and State NCP president Jayant Patil cropped up as the probable contenders for the party chief's post.

legal sanction to their marriage. Patel's vehement denial *Continued on Page 2* about the rift within the NCP



NCP leader Praful Patel addresses the media at YB Chavan Centre after a meeting with the party chief Sharad Pawar, in Mumbai on Wednesday

came in the midst of intense speculation that there were serious differences between Ajit dada – as Ajit Pawar is known in the Maharashtra political circles - and Supriya

Sule and it was Ajit dada who precipitated the situation within the party that prompted Pawar to announce his decision to step down from his post.

Continued on Page 2

The Centre told the Supreme Court on Wednesday it will constitute a committee



PAWAR'S RESIGNATION THROWS MVA OUT OF GEAR **MVA cancels Kolhapur, Pune and Nashik rallies**

TN RAGHUNATHA MUMBA

Aday after its architect Sharad Pawar decided to step down as the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) president, the Opposition's grand alliance "Maha Vikas Aghadi" (MVA) – comprising the Shiv Sena, NCP and Congress – appeared to be in a state of utter confusion on Wednesday over its future plans in the run-up to the 2024 Lok Sabha and State elections Interestingly enough, it has

been revealed now that Pawar had been planning to announce his resignation from the NCP chief's post on May 1 - the Maharashtra day. However, the NCP chief postponed his announcement about his reswant to jeopardise the Vajramuth (iron fist) rally held

in Mumbai on May 1. The Vajramuth rally held in Mumbai was one of the three such rallies held so far in the state. Earlier, the first rally was held at Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar (erstwhile Aurangabad), headquarters of Marathwada region on April said. 2, while the second rally was

held in Nagpur on April 14 in Nagpur, the headquarters of the Vidarbha region. The MVA is planning to hold the fourth Vajramuth rally

the

in Pune - the headquarters of Western Maharashtra - on May 14, followed by one such rally at Kolhapur on May 26 and another rally on June 2 at

Nashik the hub of north Maharashtra. However, following Pawar's

resignation as the NCP president, the MVa has postponed the Vajramuth rallies of Pune, Kolhapur and Nashik indefinitely. "We have decided to postpone the next rallies because of the weather," NCP Vice President Praful Patel

Though Patel clarified that the decision to postpone the next three rallies had nothing to do with Pawar's resignation as the NCP president, there are not many takers in the state political circles that MVA had cancelled or postponed indefinitely next three Vajramuth rallies because of unfavourable weather conditions.

Health systems recovering after 3 years of pandemic, says WHO

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

After three years into the Covid-19 pandemic, which has left millions dead and hundreds of millions infected, health systems in most countries have started showing the first major signs of recovery, according to a new UN report launched recently.

However, on a flip side, the report noted that despite signs of recovery, service disruptions persist across countries in all regions and income levels, and across most service delivery settings and tracer service areas. "It is welcome news that health systems in the majority of countries are starting to restore essential health services for millions of people who missed them during the pandemic," said Dr. Rudi Eggers, director for integrated health



services at the World Health Organization (WHO). "But, we need to ensure that all countries continue to close this gap to recover health services, and apply lessons learnt to build more prepared and resilient health systems for the future".

By early 2023, countries reported experiencing reduced disruptions in the delivery of routine health services, but highlighted the need to invest in recovery and stronger resilience for the future, the UN health agency said in its newly published interim report

"Fourth round of the global pulse survey on continuity of essential health services during the COVID-19 pandemic: November 2022-January 2023". Among the 139 countries responding to the survey, WHO said continued disruptions persist in almost one quarter of services. In 84 countries where trend analysis is possible, the percentage of disrupted services declined on average from 56 per cent in July to September 2020 to 23 per cent in November 2022, to January 2023.

Respondents also expressed a need for WHO support to address remaining challenges in Covid-19 context and beyond. This pertains most frequently to strengthening health workforce, building monitoring capacities of health services, and designing primary healthcare.

HC allows Centre to inspect 123 de-listed Waqf properties

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court has allowed the Centre to carry out inspection of 123 delisted properties taken over from the Delhi Waqf Board while ensuring minimal disruption in their day-to-day administration by the body.

Earlier this year, the Land and Development Office (L&DO) of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (HUA) had decided to take over 123 properties from the Board, which included mosques, dargah and graveyards, based on the report of a two-member committee.

The deputy L&DO in a letter to Board chairman Amanatullah Khan on February 8 had informed about the decision to absolve the Delhi Waqf Board from all matters related to the 123 properties based on the committee PTI report.

HC: RAW exempted under RTI Act unless it's human rights or graft issue

New Delhi: India's external intelligence agency RAW is an exempted organisation under the Right to Information Act and unless the information sought by an RTI applicant relates to human rights or corruption issues, it is not liable to be disclosed, the Delhi High Court has said.

The court's order came on a petition by an RTI applicant for disclosure of information on the residences of a former RAW chief during a certain period. The court refused to interfere with CIC order refusing to supply information to petitioner and observed that Section 24 of Right to Information Act provides that it does not apply to security and intelligence organisations specified in its Second Schedule and Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) was one of them. *PTI*

to-ground rockets and ammu-

nition. The weapons will all be

pulled from Pentagon stocks,

so they can go quickly to the

front lines, according to the

officials who spoke on condi-

tion of anonymity because the

aid has not yet been formally

Iranian-made drones during its

third attack on Ukraine's cap-

Elsewhere, Russia used

announced.

IMD: Cyclone likely in **Optics to hog...** Bay of Bengal on May 9 From Page1

PTI BHUBANESWAR

developing weather for-Amation may turn into a summer cyclone in the Bay of Bengal around May 9 though details of its path and intensi fication have as yet not been assessed, the Indian Meteorological Department said on Wednesday.

IMD Director General Mrutunjay Mohapatra said the department's modelling indicate formation of a cyclonic storm around May 9, but its movement and intensification may be determined after the low pressure area actually forms on May 7.

However, there is no forecast so far regarding landfall over the country's coast. Neveretheless, fishermen have bneen advised against venturing into the sea from May 7, he said. Keeping in view the weather development, the Odisha government has already put collectors of 18 coastal and adjoining districts and officials of 11 departments on the alert, its special relief com-missioner Satyabrata Sahu said on Wednesday.

Mohapatra said a cyclonic circulation is forming over southeast Bay of Bengal around May 6 and under its influence. a low pressure area is likely to form over the same region

around May 7. The system is likely to concentrate into a depression over southeast Bay of Bengal on May 8. "There is a good possibility of the circulation intensifying into a cyclonic storm while moving towards the central Bay of Bengal around May 9. The system is being constantly watched and monitored regu-

larly," he said. Asked about the likely impact on Odisha coast, Mohapatra said no alert has

been issued for it or any other place on the east coast. The information on the cyclone is aimed at updating fishermen, oil explorers or any other commercial operations being carried out in Bay of Bengal, he said, adding that there was no need for a panic.

However all cyclone prone districts are kept in a state of readiness. Districts and line departments along with NDRF, ODRAF and others are in readiness for any possible eventuality. Mohapatra said April, May and June are considered as summer cyclone months, while September, October and November are monsoon cyclone months. The east coast has witnessed three major summer cyclones - Fani, Amphan and Yaas - in month of May in 2019, 2020 and 2021 respec-

tody, they said. During its searches on Tuesday, the CBI

"During searches con-

receipts (FDRs), keys of bank

lockers and details of accounts

in various banks have been

Ways to expand overall cooperation including in areas of trade, investment and connectivity will figure prominently in the discussions, sources said here on Wednesday. Challenges of terrorism as well as dealing with implications of the war in

Ukraine will also be discussed. The SCO foreign ministers will deliberate on overall challenges facing the region in the backdrop of the current geo-political turmoil and the state of bilateral ties between the member nations would not impact the discussions.

On the sideline of the conclave, the external affairs minister is expected to hold separate bilateral talks with his counterparts from Russia, China and a few other member nations, people familiar with the matter said.

While the visiting dignitaries will be welcomed at a gala reception on May 4, the crucial deliberations on various key challenges facing the member nations of the grouping will be held on May 5, sources said.

The ties between India and Pakistan came under severe strain after India's warplanes pounded a Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorist training camp in Balakot in Pakistan in February 2019 in response to the Pulwama terror attack. The relations further deteriorated after India in August 2019 announced withdrawing special powers of Jammu & Kashmir and bifurcation of the state into two union territories.

The SCO is an influential economic and security bloc and has emerged as one of the largest transregional international organisations.

Mamata on warpath against...

From Page1

The present matter is the university's internal matter and the Chancellor has been briefed about the issue in the present case as the alleged defaulter is a Bharat Ratna as well as Nobel laureate," a top Union Education Ministry official told The Pioneer. Incidentally, the Bharat Ratna on Sen was bestowed during the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Government's tenure in 1999.

Over 120 eminent people have written an open letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi condemning the eviction notice and accused the university of harassing and humiliating Amartya Sen over the issue.

Sources said the TMC leader has asked MSME Minister Chandranath Sinha and local MLAs to lead the protest, which will be joined by Education Minister Bratya Basu and Urban Development Minister Firhad Hakim. Banerjee, too, would start a sit-in demonstration in Shantiniketan over the issue. The date and time of the dharna will be decided in a couple of days.

"She asked them not to move from the spot even if the Central varsity sends bulldozers to take possession of the land. Bauls and other folk artists from the district must be involved in the demonstration, and various cultural programs should be organised there," sources said as communicated by Mamata Banerjee to her party colleagues

Singer Kabir Suman and painter Subhaprasanna will also join the programme on May 6 and 7. "The CM advised them not to move an inch even if Visva-Bharati sends bulldozers to take possession," sources said.

The university has claimed that Amartya Sen is in possession of 1.38 acres of land on the campus, which is in excess of his legal entitlement of 1.25 acres. However Sen has confronted that most of the land he is holding in the campus was purchased from the market by his father while some other plots were taken on lease.

A civil suit has been filed in West Bengal's Suri district court on behalf of the Nobel laureate and hearing of the case is scheduled for May 15. In his appeal to the court, Amartya Sen said Visva- Bharati authorities were deliberately trying to evict him.

Ukraine drones tried

From Page1 Zelenskyy told a Helsinki

news conference before Russia's drone attack claims that Ukraine's counteroffensive is coming "very soon." This year will be decisive ... for victory," he said.

The Kremlin's website said debris from the drones fell on the grounds of the Moscow landmark without damage. A video published overnight on a local Moscow news Telegram channel, filmed across the river from the Kremlin, appeared to show smoke rising over the buildings. It wasn't possible to ascertain its veracity.

According to the text accompanying the video, residents at a nearby apartment building reported hearing bangs and seeing smoke at around 2:30 a.M. The Kremlin claimed the attack was planned to disrupt Victory Day, which Russia celebrates in Red Square on May 9 to commemorate the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II. Foreign dignitaries are expected to attend. Peskov said the parade would take place as scheduled.

Shortly before the news about the alleged attack broke, Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin issued a ban on using drones in the Russian capital, with an exception for drones launched by authorities. Sobyanin didn't offer any rea-

son for the ban, saying only that it would prevent the "illegal use of drones that can hinder the work of law enforcement."

Zelenskyy made no com-ment in Helsinki, though he was due to attend a news conference there later in the day. The Nordic countries -

Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Iceland - have been among Kyiv's strongest backers since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Before the meeting with Zelenskyy in Finland's capital, Nordic officials appeared ready to provide more aid as the war stretches into its 15th month.

"There is still an urgent need for military support to ensure that the Ukrainians stand as strong as possible in the fight against Russia," Danish Prime Minister Frederiksen said in a statement. Norwegian Prime Minister

Jonas Gahr Støre, another of the summit attendees, said: "Here in the north, we have a more unpredictable and aggressive Russian neighbor, and it is important that we discuss together how to face this new situation." The talks came a day after U.S. Officials said Washington plans to send Ukraine about \$300 million in additional military aid, including an enormous number of artillery rounds, howitzers, air-

ital city in six days. Explosions were heard in Kyiv and elsewhere during the night as Ukrainian air defenses shot down 21 of the Russian drones, Ukraine's Air Force Command said. No damage or casualties were reported Meanwhile, a massive blaze broke out at an Russian oil depot, local officials said Wednesday. The depot erupted in flames in Russia's southern Krasnodar region, located east of the Russian-held

Crimean Peninsula, according to Krasnodar Gov. Veniamin Kondratvev. He didn't say what caused the fire, which was described as

extremely difficult to put out. But some Russian media outlets said it was likely caused by a Ukrainian drone attack overnight. There was no official comment on that possibility. Local residents heard an explosion shortly before the fire erupted, Russian news site Baza said

tively.

CBI arrests WAPCOS... UDI.

From Page 1

After getting information about illicit wealth allegedly accumulated by Gupta, the agency conducted a check for the 2011-2019 period during which it found that the former CMD had amassed assets worth Rs 7.91 crore which were disproportionate to known sources of income by over 131 per cent.

Following the FIR, the CBI teams fanned across 19 locations in Delhi, Gurugram, Chandigarh, Sonipat, and Ghaziabad in a synchronised search operation leading to detection of the staggering sums of money bundled across properties of Gupta and family members for which no satisfactory explanation was provided, officials said.

The agency arrested Gupta and his son Gaurav on Wednesday and produced them before a special CBI court which remanded them to five days of CBI cus-

PUBLIC NOTICE

seized Rs 20 crore in cash, Indoor Medical Records of the patients which rose to more than Rs admitted during period 01/04/2016 to 31/03/2019 (financial years 2016-38.38 crore by Wednesday, the 2017, 2017-2018 and 2018-2019) CBI said in a statement. are scheduled to be disposed of as per ducted so far, cash of Rs.38.38 crore (approx), fixed deposit

hospital policy. Any patient requiring his/her Medical Records may approach the undersigned within 30 days failing which the records will be disposed of without further notice.

Medical Record Officer recovered from the premises of Kailash Hospital the accused," the CBI said in a 1727, Tappal Road, Jewar Bangar statement. G.B.Nagar

| India to map heat impact ...

From Page 1 heat hazard score is that the lat-Asked if the IMD has ter also considers other paraincorporated health data into meters that aggravate heat sitthe product, he said the weathuations such as minimum temer bureau will gradually do it. perature, wind and exposure "We have been working on it duration, he added. The IMD but health data is not readily has predicted above-normal available in some places.' maximum temperature and Mohapatra and his team conmore heatwave days in eastern ducted a heat wave hazard and central-eastern parts of the analysis for the entire country country in May. According to IMD data, last year, taking into account

maximum temperature, minithere was a 24 percent increase in the number of heat waves mum temperature, humidity, wind and the duration of heat during 2010-2019 compared to 2000-2009. However, there is a The analysis will help gendecreasing trend after 2015. erate heat hazard scores which

Between 2000 and 2019 will be utilised as thresholds to the mortality rate for tropical issue impact-based heat wave cyclones decreased by 94 peralerts for specific locations. cent, whereas it increased by 62.2 percent for heat waves. "The heat index provides apparent temperature, factoring

The Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change said the major climate risk for south Asian countries will be the rising major difference between the mortality rate due to heat waves.

No rift in NCP, no info from Pawar...

said.

From Page 1

On his part, Patel - who is Pawar's close confidant and also the convenor of the search-committee appointed to choose the successor to Pawar - said that no discussion had taken place on the issue so far within the NCP. He asked the media not to speculate on issues relating to the choice of next NCP president.

Talking to media persons here, Patel said: "When a national leader of the stature of Pawar resigned from the party chief's post, he must have thought about the whole issue

before taking the decision. After party leaders and office bearers pressured him to reconsider his decision, Pawar sought two to three days from us to take a decision. He has not told anything to us so far" "In case, if Pawar decides not to reconsider his decision, then the search committee will start the process of elect-

ing a new president in his place. I can tell you one thing: the choice of the party's new president will be unanimous," the former Union Minister

Asked to comment on the speculation that he himself and Supriya were being considered as strong contenders for the NCP chief's post, Patel said: "I am currently the vicepresident of the NCP. For me, this is an honourable post. I do not nurse such dreams.

I am not at all ready or interested in taking up the party president's post. As far as Supriya is concerned, party's senior leader Chhagan Bhujbal said in one of the television interviews that he would like to see Supriya as the next president of the party. That was his personal opinion". Asked if Pawar resigned from the party chief's post because of the rift within the party, Patel said: "The so-called rift within the

party is being seen in the media. But, there is absolutely no rift within the party. The NCP as a party is united. Pawar will always remain the supremo of the party".

Earlier in the day, local television channels had carried reports that the NCP had in the morning convened a senior patty leaders' meeting at the YB Chavan centre in south Mumbai to which the current state party president Jayant Patil had not been invited.

Reacting to the reports, Patil had said in Pune earlier in the day: "May be my presence was not needed at the meeting. That's why I had not received any invitation for the meeting". When asked if Jayant Patil

was unhappy for having been reportedly side-lined in matters relating to the party leadership issue, Patel said: "Jayant Patil has not taken any different stand.

SC rejects Beant's assassin Rajoana plea to commute death sentence

From Page 1

"What we have decided is that the stand of the Ministry of Home Affairs to defer the decision on the mercy petition of the petitioner is also our decision for the reasons given hereunder...

"This actually amounts to declining grant the same (remission) for the present. Therefore, we have directed that the competent authority will again as and when they deem necessary will deal with the mercy petition and take a further decision.

The writ petition (of Rajoana) is disposed of accordingly," a bench comprising Justices B R Gavai, Vikram Nath and Sanjay Karol said. Rajoana has been in jail for the past 26 years.

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION, BHOPAL 1 Water Work Department Municipal Corporation Rest House, Shyamla Hills, Bhopal Office Telephone No 0755-2701663, 2701669 NOTICE INVITING TENDER Second Call Online tenders are being ivnited for the following work from the appropriated firm that Registration in the office of Madhya Pradesh (Central Registration Cell). The tender documents can be obtained online on the website https://mptenders.gov.in as per Key Dates in the Notice published on the above website and detailed information can also be seen on website https://mptenders.gov.in Corrigendum for this NIT shall not be issued separately in newspapers. Corrigendum regarding correction can be seen on the website. https://mptenders.gov.in System NIT No. Estimated Earnest Details of Work Cost (INR) oney (EMD)

in temperature and humidity.

Heat hazard score will depict

the severity in terms of num-

bers, such as on a scale of 1 to

10," another official said. The

heat index of the US and India's

waves.

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Panel to look...

Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Central Government, told a five-judge Constitution Bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud there were discussions at the previous hearing about some genuine humane concerns of such couples and whether something can be done to address those administratively. "I have taken instructions and the Government is positive. What we have decided is, of course subject to your lordships' approval, that this would need coordination between more than one Ministries. So, there-

fore, a committee headed by no less than the Cabinet Secretary will be constituted," Mehta told the Bench, which also comprised Justices SK Kaul, SR Bhat, Hima Kohli and PS Narasimha.

The top court was hearing arguments for the seventh day on a batch of petitions seeking legal validation of same-sex marriage. The Solicitor-General said petitioners can give him their suggestions or the problems they are facing, and the committee will go into them and try, so far as possible and legally permissible, to ensure they are addressed. The Bench said petitioners' side can give their suggestions to the Attorney-General or Solicitor-

General without prejudice to their rights in the rejoinder. The CJI said the counsel appearing for both the sides can have a meeting where these issues can be discussed. "They are most welcome," Mehta said, adding, "The only difficulty would be, we may not have ready solutions. We mean lawyers."

To this, the CJI observed, "We understand because you say that Government will constitute a committee headed by Cabinet Secretary." Senior advocate AM Singhvi, who is appearing for one of petitioners, said meeting and giving suggestions is not a problem, but substantial issues are involved in matter and at best, what is being suggested is

"administrative tweaking", where necessary, by a committee based on suggestions.Without prejudice we can certainly give (suggestions) but, personally, I don't think that your lordships will have any major solution," Singhvi said, adding having seen the entire gamut of problems and the level at which, conceptually and jurisprudentially, the matter has been argued, it would be better that court goes on to decide matter.

Justice Bhat observed, "Dr Singhvi, look at it as one or none. Because, although he (Mehta) is saying administrative, there are substantive issues here when you are looking at insurance, housing, etc.

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GENERAL NOTICE

The General notice is hereby informed that Mr. Sh. Sudhir Kumar Jain S/o Late Madan lal Jain R/o Nehru Road Baraut Distt. Baghpat is the owner of a property measuring 139.27 sq. mts. part of khasra no. 692 situated at Yaman Abadi Qasba Baraut Sarai Road (between Nahar Udyogik Police Chwoki to Railway Road) Pargana & Tehsil Baraut Distt. Baghpat. Earlier to this being registry no. 6606 dated 22.06.16 executed by Sh. Sanjay Kumar in favour of Jitendra Kumar which registered in the office of SR- Baraut and the same original sale deed has been misplaced to somewhere else. The said sale deed if utilized by any other same shall be illegal. It is also Intimated that in case the said sale deed are engaged in mortgaging with any of the bank or financial instructions, in that event the undersigned by informed within a period of 15 days. Otherwise the property mentioned In the said deed shall be mortgage with HDFC Bank Under the ircumstances no objection of any kind shal not be admissible. Dated - 19.04.2023

Kapil Vashishti

Advocate Meerut



Singh's

Sanjay seeks sanction to prosecute ED top brass for defamation

PTI NEW DELH

AP Rajya Sabha MP A Sanjay Singh has written to the Union finance secretary seeking sanction to prosecute the Enforcement Directorate chief and the assistant director for allegedly making "false and derogatory claims" against him in connection with the Delhi excise policy case which is being probed by the agency. Singh's letter came after the ED filed an application, on

April 20, in a court seeking to correct a "typographical/clerical" error related to his name in the charge sheet. ED sources said Singh's name appears four times in the charge sheet out



wrong as his name was typed policy and formulated. "inadvertently" in place Rahul AAP alleged that Sanjay Singh's name has been men-

Rahul Singh was Delhi tioned in the ED charge sheet

in the case "at the behest of the PMO" to defame the party and its leaders.

Singh had on April 22 sent a legal notice through his lawyer to ED chief Sanjay Kumar Mishra and Assistant Director Jogender Singh, asking them to issue an apology, or face civil and criminal proceedings

An ED counsel wrote to Singh's lawyer on April 29 saying, "Instead of Rahul Singh, Sanjay Singh was inad-vertently mentioned at only one reference. The application for correction is much prior to the date of the present notice (Sanjay Singh's notice to the ED on April 22), which

demonstrates the bona fide of the agency," the ED counsel said.

In a statement issued on Wednesday, AAP said, "Senior leader and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh has written a letter to the Union Finance Secretary, seeking sanction for prosecuting ED Director Sanjay Kumar Mishra and Assistant Director Jogender

Singh. The request has been made to prosecute the officers under Section 499 r/w Section 500 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860, for making defamatory and untrue statements about Sanjay Singh," the party added.

ED sources said the

agency moved a petition before the designated special PMLA court on April 20 to rectify the anomaly in the prosecution complaint (charge sheet) after the "typographical/clerical" error came to notice.

In a video message issued on Wednesday, Singh slammed the agency. "In reply to my legal notice, the ED today has admitted that my name was put in the charge sheet by mistake. What kind of joke is this? What kind of fake probe is this?"

The ED is conducting "a baseless" probe into the alleged scam in the Delhi liquor policy, he alleged.

'Singh's name in excise policy case chargesheet not mistake but deliberate' PTI NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister and AAP convenor Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday

claimed attempts were being made to defame the "most honest party of the country", as he wondered how someone's name can be included in a charge sheet by mistake.

In a tweet in Hindi, Kejriwal said: "Can someone's name be included in a chargesheet by mistake? It is clear from this that the whole

case is fake. Prime Minister is doing this just to defame the most honest party of the coun-try and to stop the fastest growing party as part of dirty politics. It is unbecoming of them." The Aam Aadmi Party also claimed that the mention of Singh's name in the ED charge sheet was a "deliberate attempt" to defame the party and its leaders

Sisodia moves

HC seeking bail

capital 03

PM stressed timely changes in selection Tihar Jail to seek help from cops rules of Ministries for more jobs: Shah to segregate gangs, stop killings HM hands over

appointment

letters to 4.4K

NDMC staff

PTI NEW DELHI

PTI NEW DELHI

Aday after gangster Tillu Tajpuriya was stabbed to death inside the Tihar Jail, the Delhi Prisons Department on Wednesday said it will seek real time information from police about gangs operating outside so that their jailed members can be segregated to avoid such kind of incidents in future. Tajpuriya was killed early

Tuesday morning inside central jail number 8 and 9 allegedly by four members of the rival Gogi gang, who stabbed him "92 times" with improvised weapons. The four attackers --

Deepak alias Titar, Yogesh alias Tunda, Rajesh, and Riyaz Khan -- lodged on the first floor of the prison, cut the iron grille installed there and used bed sheets to climb down to Tajpuriya's floor, according to police.

"We will coordinate with police and get the real time information about the operating gangs so that their mem-



bers can be segregated in order to avoid such kind of incidents in future. It is a regular exercise and we will again approach the police," an official of the pris-

ons department said. 'The Public Works Department (PWD) conducts regular audit inside the jail premises about security structure where they locate the areas where improvement can be done," he added.

When any such incident happens inside the jail, the prison officials get real time data (regarding threat percep-

Dushvant and Rahul suffered

Even the women constables

tion) about the operating gang members from police to avoid untoward incidents in the future, officials said

An official said inmates generally make weapons after sharpening metal objects --which are being mostly cut from exhaust fans, water coolers and mesh -- with the help of stones and tiles.

The officials said as many as 53 searches were conducted inside the jail in April during which 32 non-sharped and 22 sharped weapons were recov-

Drime Minister Narendra P Modi has emphasised timely changes in recruitment rules at all the ministries of the Central Government, paving the way for the creation of more jobs, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on

Wednesday. Distributing appointment letters on regularisation of over 4,400 muster roll employees of the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) at Talkatora stadium here, Shah said Modi has also worked to end uncertainties in many areas, which is why everyone is saying "Modi

Hai To Mumkin Hai" "Modi due to his innate decision-making capability has

ended uncertainties in many



areas while working earlier as chief minister of Gujarat and now as prime minister of the country. An example of this is the appointment letters received by you. That is why whether children, elderly or youth -- everyone says Modi hai to Mumkin hai," he said.

Shah said the prime minister himself has exerted thrust

on timely changes in recruitment rules and conditions in all the ministries of the Union government. "This is why these appointment letters are being given."

Congratulated the regularised NDMC employees, he said they were provided respect and pride through regularisation under Modi's leadership,

which was a matter of great pleasure and satisfaction to ĥim.

Shah hoped that the NDMC workforce of 13,000 employees strengthened by 4,400 regularised muster role workers will work to ensure that a positive message is conveyed to the heads of states, who will visit the national capital during a G-20 Summit in September.

The Union home minister said the reason for the lack of regularisation was that there

were no recruitment rules. The rules were prepared and the DoPT approval was obtained and now regularisa-tion has happened, he added. Shah said the process of

regularisation was completed with the creation of 900 additional posts in the NDMC to accommodate all the 4,400 muster role workers. He said the NDMC need-

ed to be strengthened in the coming days with a focus on service delivery and sanitation wherein the employees have a crucial role to play.

when it will be heard before Justice Dinesh Kumar Sharma.

bail application on the ground of illness of his wife.

Wrestlers accuse drunk cop of beating them at protest site at Jantar Mantar

PTI NEW DELHI

head injuries. The police did not even let doctors reach the site. ruckus allegedly broke out Abetween the wrestlers stagwere misbehaving with us," he said. "I was abused and pushed around by policemen. Where ing a protest at Jantar Mantar here, demanding the arrest of the wrestling federation chief over sexual harassment charges, and some police personnel.

are the women police person-nel?" asked Phogat. Punia's wife Sangeeta also There was no immediate comment from the Delhi Police claimed that she was pushed regarding the development.

around by policemen. circulated

PT Usha meets wrestlers, assures them of all support



comment that brought criti-

cism for her and the IOA. Usha left without speaking with the media but Bajrang

Student groups seek WFI chief's arrest

PTI 📕 NEW DELHI

 $E_{\rm the\ protesting\ wrestlers,}^{\rm xpressing\ solidarity\ with}$ various student groups on Wednesday staged a protest in front of Delhi University's Arts Faculty and demanded



in money laundering case

PTI NEW DELHI

Former Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Wednesday approached the Delhi High Court seeking bail in a money laundering case related to the alleged excise pol-

icy scam. The plea was mentioned before Chief Justice Satish Chandra Sharma for an urgent listing and was allowed to be listed for hearing on Thursday,

Sisodia has filed a regular bail plea as well as an interim

on social media platforms, some of the protesters can be heard accusing a police personnel of attacking two wrestlers under the influence of alcohol.

The accused policeman is seen sitting in the video, while the protesters allege that his colleagues were mute spectators. "The mattresses got wet due to rain so we were bringing fold-

ing beds for sleeping, but the police did not allow that. Drunk policeman Dharemendra abused Vinesh Phogat and got involved in a scuffle with us," former wrestler Rajveer told PTI.

"They started hitting us. Bajrang Punia's brother-in-law

ers and their leaders to assemble at the protest site on Thursday morning. "Delhi Police ki gundagar-

di ab nahi chalegi (Delhi Police's high-handedness will not work anymore). We will call farmers to assemble here in numbers. We will not tolerate it anymore. Tractors or trolleys. Whatever you get, just come here," he said.

The wrestlers have been staging a sit-in at Jantar Mantar since April 23. They have levelled allegations of sexual harassment against Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief Brij Singh, who is also a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP from Uttar Pradesh.

PTI NEW DELHI

Facing criticism from all quarters for being insensitive towards the protesting wrestlers, IOA President PT Usha on Wednesday met them at Jantar Mantar here and assured the grapplers of her support, saving she was first an athlete and then an adminis-

trator. Former sprinter Usha had come down heavily on the wrestlers for resuming their protest instead of approaching Olympic the Indian Association (IOA) for their issues. She had said that the wrestlers should have shown some discipline and that they had tarnished the country's image by hitting the streets, a

them help.

"Initially when she said that, we had felt very bad but then she said that her comments were misinterpreted. She said that she is first an athlete and then an administrator," said Bajrang, the Tokyo Games bronze medallist.

We told her that we want justice. We don't have a fight with the government or opposition or anyone else. We are sitting here for the betterment of wrestling. If this issue is resolved and if the allegations (against WFI president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh) are proved then there should be legal action," he added.

India chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh be arrested immediately.

The students also demanded Singh's resigna-

Some of the protesters were later detained by the police, who said they did not seek permission to hold the protest.

An internal complaints ommittee must be constituted immediately to ensure that women wrestlers do not face sexual harassment in the future, the protesting students demanded.

They alleged they were manhandled and forcibly

detained by the Delhi Police.

"Why are we being dragged and detained? There is absolutely no law and order left in this country. A man who harassed women wrestlers is being protected, while those raising their voice against such people are being detained. Why hasn't Brij Bhushan Singh been arrested yet," a protester asked while being whisked away by police personnel.

Another protesting student said, "Is this democracy? We are being detained for extending support to wrestlers.

He (Singh) has been allowed to retain his post. Also, it was only after the Supreme Court's direction that two FIRs were registered by the police against the BJP MP. However, the accused BJP MP has not been arrested so far.'

6 arrested during police raids across Delhi-NCR against gangster Sangwan

PTI NEW DELHI

¬he Delhi Police on I Wednesday arrested six people and detained 20 during raids at multiple locations in the Delhi-National Capital Region in search of associates of gangster Kapil Sangwan alias Nandu, officials said.

The action comes days after six people, including two juveniles, were apprehended in connection with the killing of Delhi BJP Kisan Morcha leader Surendra Matiala in Dwarka's Bindapur. One of the two shooters, arrested from Chandigarh, was associated with the Kapil Sangwan gang.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Dwarka) M Harhsa Vardhan said 21 teams comprising 300 police personnel conducted simultaneous searches at 15 locations in

Delhi and six in Haryana. Twenty people have been detained and six arrested for various offences under the Arms Act and the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act based on the



hiding abroad, the officer recovery during the raids and searches, he said. added. The arrested during the raids were identified as Nitin

The officer said the raids targeted Kapil Sangwan's gang Narulla, Nikhil, Rajpal, Deepak, Mohit and Jitender and his associates. Sometime ago, a case of murder was reg-Dahiya, police said, adding istered in Bindapur police sta-Deepak, Nikhil and Nitin were tion in connection with the found involved in other crimkilling of a man named Surender. inal cases as well. During the search opera-

Eight people were arrested in the case. Wednesday's raids tion, a bullet proof Fortuner were also connected to this case as Sangwan is alleged to be involved in the killing, he said. Inputs suggest Sangwan,

and 73 grams amphetamine who has been declared a "prowere seized from various locaclaimed offender", is currently tions, the DCP said.

Delhi court summons BBC, others on defamation complaint

PTI NEW DELHI

Delhi court on Wednesday Alissued summonses to the BBC, Wikimedia and Internet Archive on a criminal complaint filed by a BJP leader seeking to restrain them from publishing a documentary on the 2002 Gujarat riots, or any other material defamatory to the RSS and Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP).

The complainant had said the BBC documentary "India: The Modi Question" has defamed organisations like the BJP, RSS and VHP.

The court was told that though the documentary has been banned by the government, a Wikipedia page dedicated to the series provides links to watch it and that the content is still available on Internet Archive.

Wikimedia Foundation funds Wikipedia while Internet car, three pistols with seven rounds of ammunition, Rs 20 Archive is a US-based digital lakh cash, 22.4 grams heroin library

"Issue summons of the suit for settlement of issues to the defendant (BBC, Wikimedia



and Additional District Judge (ADJ) Ruchika Singla said, posting the matter for May 11.

Singh said he is a state executions like the RSS, VHP and the

BJP. The complainant sought a direction to the BBC and other respondents "to tender an unconditional apology" to him and the RSS and VHP "for the libellous and defamatory content published in the two volume documentary series.

"Pass a decree of damages of Rs 10 lakh in favour of the plaintiff and against the defendants," it further urged the court.

It claimed that the allegations made against the RSS and VHP were motivated by a "malicious intent to defame the organisations and its millions of members/ volunteers"

"Such unfounded allegations are not only baseless but also have the potential to damage the reputation and image of the RSS, VHP and its millions of members/ volunteers, who have committed themselves to upholding the cultural, social and national values of India," it said.

Rain hits traffic, causes waterlogging in parts of Delhi-NCR



PTI NEW DELHI

■raffic snarls and waterlogging were reported in sev-eral parts of the national Capital and NCR. The traffic jams were witnessed in many areas including on GT Karnal Road near Mukarba Chowk, on Wednesday as rain lashed the city. Police officials said they received a number of calls related to traffic congestion and waterlogging in the city.

Rain caused a drain near the Delhi Police headquarters to overflow. The central control

room of the MCD on Wednesday received two complaints of waterlogging in Uttam Nagar and Vasant Kunj area. It also received two calls reporting tree falls in Bhajanpura and Jhilmil and one complaint of partial damage to a building in Budh Vihar due to rain, the officials said. "Traffic is affected in the carriageway from Wazirabad Flyover towards Police Station Timar Pur due to waterlogging near Timar Pur parking. Kindly avoid the stretch," the Delhi Traffic Police said in a tweet.

Internet Archive), Complainant Vinay Kumar

tive committee member of the Iharkhand BJP and an active volunteer of the RSS and VHP. He claimed the BBC documentary defamed organisa-



SC questions 3rd extension to ED chief

The next

Is there no other person in ED who can do his job, SC asks Govt

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday questioned and asked the Government on the third extension given to ED Director Sanjay Kumar Mishra despite its express direction that no further extension shall be granted to him. "Is there is no other person in the organisation who can do his job? Can one person be so indispensable?," asked the bench.

"According to you, there is no one else in ED who is competent? What

will happen post to the agency post-2023, when he does retire?" a bench of Justices BR Gavai, Vikram Nath and Sanjay Karol asked Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, who represented the Centre. The apex court said it had categorically held in its 2021 judgement that any

extension of tenure granted to officers holding the post of Director of Enforcement after attaining the age of superannuation should be for a short period and clearly mentioned that no further extension will be given to Mishra. The barrage of questions from the bench came after the Solicitor General said Mishra's extension was necessitated because of administrative reasons and was vital

for India's evaluation by the Financial



nuity of the leadership in the Enforcement Directorate is crucial," Mehta said, adding the person already interacting with the task force is best suited to deal with it and the skills for that is acquired after working in that position for several years.

At the start of the arguments, the solicitor general questioned the locus standi of some of the PIL petitioners who have challenged the amended law

that allowed extension to the ED boss. "At the outset, I have serious objection with respect to petitions filed by political persons whose party's senior functionaries are under investigation by Enforcement Directorate. They have no locus in the matter. Office bearers of the Congress party

Their leaders are facing serious ED investigations and it is not just political investigation as alleged. In one of the cases, we had to bring a cash counting machine because there was so much cash recovered from them...Will this court entertain petitions at the behest of persons who are trying to pressurise the agency ED," ehta said

The apex court, however, refused to agree with Mehta's submission. Merely because a person is a member of a political party, can that be a ground not to permit him a petition? Can he be stalled from approaching the court?" the bench asked. The

hearing in the matter remained inconclusive and will continue on May 8.

A batch of petitions, including those filed by Congress leaders Randeep Singh Surjewala and Jaya Thakur, and TMC's Mahua Moitra and Saket Gokhale, had come up for hearing before the bench. According to the latest extension notification issued by the government, the 1984 batch IRS officer will be in office till November 18, 2023. Mishra, 62, was first appointed the director of the ED for two years on November 19, 2018. Later, by an order dated November 13, 2020, the central government modified the appointment letter retrospectively and his two-year term was changed to three years.

The Government promulgated an ordinance last year and later passed law, under which the tenure of the ED and CBI chiefs could be extended by up to three years after the mandated term of two years.

US Coast Guard, ICG train in Chennai

PNS NEW DELHI

The US Coast Guard is train-ing the Indian Coast Guards(ICG) in various operational aspects in a training programme in Chennai. It started on May one and will end on May 12.

Officials said here on Wednesday, a Maritime Advanced Boarding Officers Course by United States Mobile

Training Team (USMTT) of US Coast Guard is on at Coast Guard Air Station Chennai for Junior Level Officers of the Indian Coast Guard. The course comprises Theory and Practical. The USMTT consists of three instructors and cover Boarding Procedures, Counter Smuggling and drug identifi-

cations, Human trafficking and radiation threat awareness. Twenty four ICG Officers drawn from all five regional Commands of Indian Coast Guard are undergoing the training. The transitional dynamics

nation 04

of today's world, coupled with existing threats, reinforces the need to ensure security on the high seas as well as coastal areas. One of the primary roles of the Coast Guard ships dur-ing operational deployments in recent years has been maritime interdiction operation, which involves the surveillance, interception and, if necessary, boarding of commercial vessels, fishing vessels including trawlers or dhows and at times yachts to ensure compliance with national regulations.

IAF chief meets Lankan Priyank, Yatnal get EC President, PM on visit notices over 'nalayak', 'vishkanya' remarks

PTI 📕 NEW DELHI

The Election Commission Nednesday issued notices to Congress MLA Priyank Kharge for his "nalayak beta" remark against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and to BJP legislator Basangouda Patil Yatnal for his "vishkanya" jibe at former Congress chief Sonia Gandhi.

The separate EC notices said the two have prima facie violated provisions of the model code in Karnataka.

The notices came a day after a strong advisory was issued by the poll panel asking parties and their leaders to exercise restraint in their utterances during electioneering in Karnataka.

Both Kharge and Yatnal have been asked to explain by 5 PM Thursday as to why action should not be taken against them.

While Kharge is Congress' candidate from Chittapur, Yatnal is BJP's star campaign-er and a candidate from Bijapur City

In its notice to Kharge, the EC referred to a clause in the poll code which states that



"Political parties and candidates shall refrain from criticism of all aspects of private life, not connected with the

public activities of the leaders and workers of the other par-It said "the Commission is

prima facie of the opinion that you have violated the aforesaid provision of MCC by making the said statement. In its notice to Yatnal,

District Election Officer Koppal cited same clauses of the model code and said "a personal attack remark against a rival party leader is found to be made by you ... Which is in violation of the provisions of the

Model Code of Conduct...? The BJP had moved the Commission on Tuesday against Kharge for his remark while the EC had taken cognisance of Yaatnal's statement through media reports.

Petitioner moves SC over SEBI's plea

for extension to complete Adani probe



SERVICE/AGENCIES NEW DELHI/COLOMBO

Signifying the close ties between the two countries, IAF Chief V R Chaudhari has met Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe and Prime Minister Dinesh Gunawardena and discussed avenues for deepening bilateral cooperation and engagements in the defence sphere.

Chaudhari arrived in Colombo on Monday on a four-day official visit to Sri Lanka. He is visiting Sri Lanka at the invitation of Air Marshal SK Pathirana.

"As part of his ongoing visit to Sri Lanka, Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari met the Honourable President, the State Minister of Defence, the National Security Advisor as well as the Commanders of Sri



Lankan Air Force and Navy, the Indian Air Force tweeted

"Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari #CAS @IAF_MCC called on President H.E @RW_UNP. Discussed avenues for deepening cooperation and engagements in the defence sphere," the Indian High Commission Colombo tweeted.

"The bilateral talks assured IAF's steadfast commitment to Sri Lanka at all times when India is called upon. The CAS also gave a talk at the prestigious Sri Lankan National Defence College," the Indian Air Force said in another tweet

Chaudhari also met Sri Lankan Prime Minister Gunawardena who said that India is the 'First Responder' in the region and acknowledged the significant role of the Indian Air Force.

India, Maldives to boost ties, agree on need for peace in Indian Ocean PIONEER NEWS

SERVICE/AGENCIES NEW DELHI/MALE

India and the Maldives on Wednesday agreed to further strengthen bilateral defence ties and reaffirmed the impor-tance of maintaining peace, stability and security in the Indian Ocean as they underscored the significance of respecting international law and rulesbased international order. This resolve came in the backdrop of China increasing forays into the strategically important

region. These commitments were the main focus points of talks between Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's talks with his Maldivian counterpart Mariya Didi in Male. The two sides also issued a joint communiqué

after the talks. Rajnath , who arrived in Male on a three-day visit on the invitation of his Maldivian counterpart Mariya Didi, also jointly laid the foundation stone for the Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF) Ekatha harbour in Male in keeping with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of SAGAR or Security And Growth for All in

The development of the Coastguard Harbour and repair

the International Year of

and environment friendly.

susceptible to pests.

soldier's diet.

Millets are good for health

Some of the important

benefits of millets are - good source of proteins, gluten-

free; low in Glycemic Index

(GI); and rich in dietary fibre,

micronutrients including cal-

cium, iron, phosphorus and

phyto-chemicals, thus boost-

ing the nutritional profile of a

Millets.

the Region.



facility at Sifavaru is one of the tional law and rules-based biggest grant-in-aid projects international order and expressed their commitment to of India upholding these principles, it

added.

Airavat.

vears," she said.

The Maldivian defence

minister described Rajnath's

visit as "a major milestone in

the bilateral defence coopera-

tion engagements" between

strong sisterly bond that exist

between our two nations from

time immemorial," she said

and Rajnath for the reception

hosted by him on board INS

"The reception celebrated the rich cultural heritage and

friendship that exists between

India and Maldives. The event

was a testament to the strong

bonds of cooperation and

mutual respect fostered over

granularity than previously

for the first time. For each cen-

sus tract, roughly equivalent to

a neighborhood in size, they

calculated residents' access to

care by incorporating service

demand, competition, and

score to the average suicide

rate at the county level. Higher

scores, which indicated short-

er travel times to more

providers who are less satu-

rated by demand, were strong-

ly associated with reduced

suicide risk. This effect per-

sisted when controlling for

other key factors associated

with suicide, including race,

divorce, and gun shop preva-

heated tobacco and vaping

products as less harmful than

cigarette smoking and that they

aid deaddiction. Chairman of

ENT and Head Neck Surgery at

Medanta Hospitals, Dr KK Handa shared, "The interna-

tional tobacco industry is

attempting to position E-ciga-

rettes as a substitute for smok-

ing." Added Dr. Rajesh Gupta, Additional Director

Pulmonology & Critical Care -Fortis Healthcare, "It is not sci-

entifically right to claim that E-

cigarettes are a step-down from

smoking cigarettes for elimi-

the cause of a rapid rise in the

growth of this category is the ris-

ing mental health issues on the

back of growing performance

pressures and growing empti-

ness making children more vul-

nerable, they said.

The third trend, which is

nating nicotine addiction.

lence, said the study.

Next, they compared this

transportation options.

"His visit epitomizes the

the two countries.

The joint statement said during his visit Rajnath and Didi held bilateral talks to enhance defence cooperation and strengthen the longstanding partnership between India and Maldives.

"They discussed a wide range of regional and global security issues of mutual concern, and agreed to deepen their cooperation in the defence and security domains," it said.

"Both Ministers reaffirmed the importance of maintaining peace, stability and security in the region and recognised the need to work together to address common security challenges" the statement said. They underscored the importance of respecting interna-

The ministers welcomed the progress made in ongoing defence cooperation between the two neighbours, including joint exercises and exchanges of visits by military officials. They also noted the importance of sharing best practices and expertise in areas such as counter terrorism, disaster management, cyber security and maritime security.

The ministers agreed to explore additional avenues for cooperation, including in the areas of defence trade, capacity building and joint exercises. They also discussed the need to promote people-to-people contacts and exchanges between the armed forces of both countries. They attended a ceremony for the commissioning of the replacement ship for Huravee. Prime Minister Modi had announced the provision of the replacement ship for the aging Huravee, during Maldivian President Ibrahim

Solih's recent visit to India. Rajnath also gifted MNDF an additional Landing Craft. The handing over of these ves-sels are in line with India's SAGAR vision that seeks to work together with and jointly develop the capabilities of friends and partners for a safe, secure, prosperous and stable Indian Ocean Region.

Millets to be served in CAPF, | 'Interventions to alleviate mental India to review ties with Israel NDRF meals: Home Ministry | health-care access disparities during Cohen's

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

One of the PIL petitioners has moved the Supreme Court opposing SEBI's plea seeking a six-month extension to complete the probe into allegations of stock price manipulation by the Adani group and lapses in regulatory disclosure, saying the market regulator has already got sufficient time to inspect, examine, collect and seize relevant documents.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) recently moved an application in the top court seeking six more months for ascertaining possible viola-tions related to misrepresentation of financials, circumvention of regulations and/or fraudulent nature of transactions, and completing the exercise.

dinate delay. The top court had on March 2 asked SEBI to probe by the respondent (SEBI) may



the matter within two months

and also set up a panel to look

into the protection of Indian investors after a damning

report by a US short seller

wiped out more than USD 140

headed by Chief Justice D Y

PIL petitioner and lawyer

market value.

inordinate delay. 'The ...Delay may allow the various corporate entities

which are under the umbrella of investigation to manipulate the important data and figures and may cause tampering of evidence present in different shapes and modes," Tiwari said in his reply. He said SEBI, even before

prolong the matter and cause

the court ordered a probe, stated it had already begun the investigation and was enquiring into the situation emerging after the Hindenburg report. "When SEBI is already in

action prior to the order passed by this court of invesbillion of the conglomerate's tigation then it should have got Vishal Tiwari Tuesday filed an the records and data which are application before a bench required in the present investigation of several corporate entities and of Adani group," Tiwari's reply said.

Chandrachud opposing the SEBI's plea, saying it will pro-It also added that SEBI has long the probe and cause inornot stated in its plea as to who "That the Application filed it has appointed to investigate the issue

PNS NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry on Wednesday said millets-based dishes will be served in the meals of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) or paramilitary forces and National Disaster Response Force (NDRF).

The decision to introduce 30 per cent millets in the meals has been taken following a directive from Union Home Minister Amit Shah after detailed discussion with all the Forces, an official statement said.

In the International Year of Millets-2023, the Union Home Ministry has taken a momentous decision to introduce millets in the meals of personnel of CAPFs and the NDRF, it said.

Recognising the importance of millets and creating a domestic and global demand along with providing nutritious food to people, the United Nations declared 2023

can prevent death, suffering

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

essary death and suffering, a team of researchers has said in an article to be published soon in PNAS next week. Titled "Differential

and also beneficial for farmers Spatial-Social Accessiblity to The millets are energy Mental Health Care and dense, drought resistant, with Suicide," the study comes amid lower water requirements and historically high suicide rates and mental health care can be grown with ease in arid soils, hilly terrain and is less provider shortages in the health care settings.

The research by Daniel Tadmon and Peter S Bearman find that in the United States improved access to mental health care is associated with reductions in suicide risk.

To enable this research, Tadmon and Bearman developed new methods of measuring access with greater upcoming visit



SERVICE/AGENCIES NEW DELHI/JERUSALEM

ndia and Israel will review L the entire spectrum of their growing bilateral ties during the upcoming visit of Foreign Minister Eli Cohen to New Delhi next week. The visit will set the tone for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's likely visit to India later this year.

Cohen will be on a threedav visit to India from Mav 9 to 11 during which he will hold discussions with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar. The Israeli Minister will visit Mumbai for a day.

It is the third high-level visit by senior Israeli officials in less than three months, coming in quick succession after Knesset (Israeli parliament) speaker Amir Ohana's trip at tĥe end of March-early Ápril and also Economy Minister Nir Barkat's visit to India last month

Cohen will be accompanied by a business delegation. Collaboration in the field of innovation with a focus on agriculture and water management is likely to prominently feature in discussions during the Israeli foreign minister's visit. He will also be advancing a consular agreement being worked out to bring Indian workers to Israel to work in the construction sector.

The high-level visits are being seen as a prelude to the much-anticipated visit of Prime Minister Netanyahu to India later this year.

AIIMS surgeons remove 1.5 kg jaw tumour

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

In a jaw-dropping feat, a team of surgeons and medical professionals at All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Delhi here has successfully operated upon a young girl suffering from a massive jaw tumour -over 1.5 kgs--associated with hyperparathyroidism, a rare endocrine disorder.

The surgery, which was a collaborative effort between the surgical disciplines and Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, was conducted by the Head of the Department of Surgery, Dr Sunil Chumber and the Head of the Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery, Dr Ajoy Roychoudhury has now ensured quality life to the teenager who was facing stigma because of her facial dis-



figurement and having difficulty eating and speaking.

The team of surgeons led by Prof Chumber operated on her for parathyroid adenoma while her jaw tumor excision and reconstruction were performed by Prof Roychoudhury and Prof Ongkila Bhutia.

Roychoudhury, Dr explained that the girl's family, in the last six months, had approached many hospitals but

in vain. "When she approached us we investigated that the tumour was a rare type that is usually benign. It was very risky in terms of bleeding and risk of causing permanent dam-age to her ability to eat or speak, but we were able to manage well with accurate planning and a great team." Her tumors were diagnosed

using modern radiology and nuclear medicine diagnostic methods led by Dr and Dr Devasenapathy Nishikant Damle.

Dr Chumber explained that the parathyroid gland, which is located in the neck, plays a crucial role in maintaining the calcium and phosphate balance in the human body. The gland secretes parathyroid hormone (PTH), which regulates calcium levels in the blood.

Addictive substances' glamourisation ruining minors

PNS NEW DELHI

 \neg lamorization of intoxication Gand addictive substances by the tobacco industry and celebrities is taking toll on the impressionable minds particularly those in 10-17 age group, resulting in mental health issues, performance pressure, growing emptiness and changing socio-economic conditions among the GenNext. This trend is likely to explode in the next decade, warned the preliminary findings of an ongoing study released on Wednesday by independent think tank Think Change Forum.

The national study has been initiated based on expert consultations to decode the problem of rising addiction among adolescents and recommend solutions. Titled, 'Ideas for an Addiction-Free India' this ini-

tiative entails drawing learnings from the views of national experts from the fields of policy, psychology, social sciences, medical fraternity, among others. The findings have identified 'Three most important trends' accelerating the adoption of substance use among adoles-cents and youth and the 'Three most important interventions' needed to immediately decelerate them.

The first trend that has emerged from the consultations is the glamourization of intoxication and addictive substances. Parenting Coach & TEDx Speaker, Sushant Kalra pointed out that heroes and heroines in popular media glamourize intoxication. Children and adolescents are exposed to these role models indulging in such acts across different media including movies

and video series. The message conveyed is that these activities are not only acceptable but also highly desirable. Therefore, those who have not yet engaged in such activities may feel stigmatized. The environment is not saying it is wrong, it's saying it is great. Do it." Also, the presence of upscale alcohol role of glamorization in enticsubstance use. The use of substances like alcohol, weed, vaping etc in parties is normal, which is communicating that this is the new way to enjoy paradded.

The second trend that the experts believe is the marketing hype created by international ecigarette companies claiming that electronic device based

shops in cities like Gurugram today serve as a testament to the ing young people to engage in ties and friends' company, he

possible. To start, they precisely Interventions to alleviate located all psychiatrists and mental health care access therapists in the United States, disparities can prevent unneccreating a comprehensive, accurate provider mapping

nation 05



2 ultras neutralised in I-T raids at TMC's Bengal **J&K's Machhal sector**

Troops also recovered explosives like 2 AK-47 rifles, 6 magazines and two hand grenades from their possession

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE JAMMU

Ahead of Pakistan Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari visit to attend a meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in Goa from Friday, alertness of the Indian army on Wednesday neutralised two terrorists near the line of control in Machhal sector of North Kashmir's Kupwara district.

The operation was launched on May 1 by the troops based on a intelligence input provided by the SSP Kupwara about the possible infiltration bid in Machhal sec-

PTI INDI (K'TAKA)

In a scathing attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi,

Congress General secretary

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on

Wednesday wondered why the

"omnipresent and omniscient"

leader could not see the "loot"

happening in Karnataka by the '40 per cent commission

here in Vijayapura district ahead of Assembly election on

May 10, she sought to know why the 'vikas purush' (devel-

opment man) Narendra Modi

still says that he has a dream of

developing Karnataka and pre-

sents it to the nation as the

Prime Minister "omnipotent",

The whole world calls the

"development model".

Addressing a public rally

government' of the BJP.

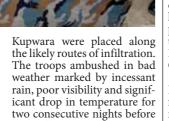
Wednesday



tor. According to a Srinagar based Defence spokesperson, "On Wednesday around 08.30 a.m terrorists were spotted by the troops having infiltrated onto their own side of the Line of Control.

As they were challenged by the troops an intense firefight ensued resulting in elimination of two terrorists". The Defence spokesman said, "a well coordinated counter infiltration grid has been put in place in on May 1.

A number of additional ambushes including those of Indian Army and SOG



they killed the two terrorists.

During the searches in the forward area, the bodies of two terrorists were recovered along with two AK-47 rifles, 6 magazines, 159 rounds of AK-47, 2 Hand grenades, eatables and cigarettes with Pakistani marking and Pak currency worth

660 rupees, defence spokesman said

PAC Chairman's house now

conducted on grounds of eva-

sion of taxes and dispropor-

tionate asset, sources said

adding the MLAs office at Rafi

Ahmed Kidwai Road in North

Kolkata too was raided by the

the saffron leadership should

not navigate central agencies.

"We have no issues with search

operations or action against the

corrupt but the issue is why

such actions should be selective

so as to target only anti-BJP

people or for that matter why

such actions should come only when the BJP leaders want it,"

would be examined.

SAUGAR SENGUPTA KOLKATA

A lready at the receiving end of ED and the CBI raids there was more pressure on the Trinamool Congress ahead of the panchayat elections with the Income Tax department now joining the "assault" as the TMC leadership put it. The IT department on Wednesday conducted simultaneous daylong search operations in the properties owned by BJP-turned-TMC MLA and State Public Accounts Committee

Chairman Krishna Kalyani. Raids were conducted at Kalyani's houses, offices and factories including rice and oil mills at Raiganj in North Bengal, Malda and Kolkata, sources said adding a good amount of documents, laptops, mobile phones and other items had been seized in the raid. Kalyani had won the 2021 Assembly elections from Raiganj constituency on a BJP ticket but had subsequently joined the TMC to become the PAC Chairman. Raids were

State Finance Minister Chandrima Bhattacharya said adding, "it seems the state BJP and its leaders are deciding whose house to be raided by central agencies.

CBI sleuths. "Our teams are This proves that the BJP is conducting searches at multiple locations connected to Kalyani and the premises of one of his business partners in Malda," a CBI official said, adding documents and other materials that had been found When asked to comment the TMC leadership reacted with caution saying they did not oppose action against corruption but such actions should not only be those who are opposed to BJP and of course

"The TMC often complains that central agencies do not raid BJP leaders ... here they have raided Krishna Kalyani who still officially is continuing as a BJP MLA ... now they should not have any problem," said State BJP spokesperson Samik Bhattacharya.

said huge estimate given by

work, were violated by SRIT -

a Bengaluru-based company

allowed it to happen.

Opp raps Kerala Govt over AI camera issue, calls it a 'huge scam' been implemented much lesser

PTI THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Congress party-led opposition UDF bloc on Wednesday stepped up their attack on the ruling Left front in Kerala over the Artificial Intelligence (AI) camera issue by terming it as a "massive scam" and questioning whether the LDF Government has the

'spine" to honestly probe it. Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the Assembly VD Satheesan and Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) president K Sudhakaran alleged that the AI

for which the way was paved by the state government and Kerala State Electronics Development Corporation Limited (Keltron).

lem was carrying out an honest and proper investigation and placing findings before public."The question is whether Left government has courage, the intention or spine to do that. They have to clearly say what they intend to do," he said while speaking to reporters at

misusing central agencies to serve its political interests." Apparently she was referring to an earlier comment made by Bengal Opposition Leader Suvendu Adhikari who had allegedly dropped hints of more I-T raids against "corrupt TMC leaders." The saffron party however, hit back saying the TMC's allegations were unjustified because Kalyani had been occupying the post of PAC on the basis of his being a BJP

MLA.

Thousands join tribal solidarity march in Manipur



PTI IMPHAI

housands of tribals Twednesday turned up at a 'Solidarity March' called by a students body in all the ten hill districts of the state to oppose moves for inclusion of the majority Meitei community

in the ST category. The All Tribal Students Union of Manipur (ATSUM), which called for the march, said it was organised to protest moves to include the "Meitei community in the ST category"

Lawmakers of the valley areas have earlier openly endorsing the demand by some Meitei organisation for ST status for the majority community in Manipur, alarming communities who figure in the sheduled tribe list.

The Meiteis who make up 53 per cent of the state's poipulation inhabit the Manipur valley, which accounts for about a tenth of in ₹70 to ₹80 crore. The LoP the former pricely state's land Keltron was an indication that area, and claim that they are government was aware of facing difficulty in view of intended corruption and "large scale illegal immigration by Myanmarese and Bangladeshis". The hill dis-He also contended that the terms of tender, which includtricts which accounts for much ed not subcontracting entire of the state's land mass is inhabited mostly by tribals including the Nagas and Kukis processions, waved placards and raised slogans opposing ST status for the Meitei community. Representatives of the Senapati District Students' Association also met the deputy commissioner and apprised him of their concerns. At Churachandpur, the second largest town in the state, people defied prohibitory orders and gathered at the public ground and took a rally till Tuibong peace ground to show their support to ATSUM,

mostly live are protected

from enceroachment by valley

people by various laws. Tribal

villagers from interior hill

areas came in buses and open

trucks to the nearest hill dis-

trict headquarters to attend the

Senapati town, the district

headquarters with the same

name and located about 58 km

from the capital town of

Imphal, the local bodies forced

total shutdown of markets

and suspension of public transport from 10 am to 1 pm

to ensure that maximum num-

ber of demonstrators partici-

make up about 40 pr cent of the population, joined the

Thousands of tribals who

pate in the rally.

police said.

Naga-dominated

rallies.

In

that was granted the contract for the project - with the full Sec 144 at Goa's Manohar knowledge of Keltron. Satheesan further alleged that SRIT subcontracted work, including procurement of all airport as locals protest technology and completion of associated vendor management, loss of land for project to a Hyderabad-based compa-ny which raised a bill of ₹66

brought to the notice by police that those who have lost their The North Goa district administration has imposed CrPC section 144 land for the airport in Pernem taluka, and people from Mopa, Warkhand, Nagzar and around Manohar International Chandel have been protesting under the banner of 'Together Airport and nearby villages to for Pednekars'. prevent unlawful assembly for two months in view of a call for blocking its road given by peo-

The protesters have been demanding that they may be en mrst ter their yellow black taxis for plying from the airport, located at Mopa, along with a separate counter and not allow taxis of Ola and Uber (private aggregators) to ply from this facility, the order noted.

Why 40% commission Govt in K'taka: Cong Bajrang Dal says 'Hanuman Chalisa' recitation prog to be

conducted across K'taka VHP also extends its support to call

PTI BENGALURU

The Bajrang Dal has decid-Congress General Secretary Privanka d to conduct 'Hanuman Gandhi Vadra addresses an election Chalisa' recital programmes campaign meeting for forthcoming across Karnataka on Thursday, Karnataka Assembly polls, in Bidar, on a day after the Congress promised in its election man-

ifesto to ban the outfit. The opposition Congress, in its manifesto for the May 10

Assembly election in Karnataka, said it was committed to take firm and decisive action against individuals and organisations spreading hatred amongst communities on grounds of caste and religion.

In the manifesto, Congress said: "We believe that law and Constitution is sacrosanct and cannot be violated by individuals and organisations like Bajrang Dal, PFI or others promoting enmity or hatred, whether among majority or

anyone. How is this? Why is your government called '40 minority communities.



standing together is the only way forward. We should set aside our differences and come together to protect dharma, and hold hands together," the right-wing organisation said in a statement.

The Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) too extended its support to the call. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during his public meeting at Hospet in Vijayanagara district on Tuesday, too had come down heavily on the Congress promise of banning Bajrang

camera project was a huge scam

Sudhakaran, also an MP, said the only solution to probcrore for the same. He said the government can check with GST department about bill amount raised by company and said it was illegal for state administration to procure materials at a lower cost and sell them to a public sector enterprise at double the price.

The Congress leader also claimed that the subcontracting and added that

est of all ne, and and 'vikas purush', the Congress leader said in a sarcastic tone, adding that Modi keeps saying that it is his dream of developing the state and projecting it as a model for the rest of the country. "You (Modi) are

Vadra said. The Congress general secretary alleged thatcontractors were dying by suicide and are writing to the "omniscient" about the 40 per cent commission being charged but no reply has come out till now.

supreme, omnipotent, omni-

scient and omnipresent. Why

couldn't you fulfil your dream?

When your own government

was plundering people by

becoming '40 per cent com-

mission governent' what were

you doing?" Vadra asked. Modi had shut his eyes to the "loot

and plunder" in Karnataka because he was busy in "dream-ing", she said in the verbal

big, so you allowed the loot and

theft to happen. You didn't stop

"You were busy dreaming

attack on Modi

as per law including imposing a ban on such organisations On Wednesday, Bajrang Dal said it will organise recitals of 'Hanuman Chalisa' across the state. "This is the time when 'Dharma' is in danger and its manifesto has decided to lock up Lord Hanuman.

Initially, they locked up Prabhu Shri Ram (Lord Ram). And now they want to lock up people who say 'Jai Bajrang Bali⁷ (Hail Hanuman)."

annur Congress was examining legal remedies to problem. Satheesan, at a press conference held here, said there was major conspiracy behind preparing a huge estimate of ₹232 crore for carrying out project when it could have

nthout mation to Keltron. The LoP also said since the project was to be implemented on Build Own Operate Transfer (BOOT) basis, then the government has to clarify whether the cameras are public or private.

the airport project.

PTI PANAJI

The airport was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in December 2022. District Collector Mamu Hage in the order issued on Tuesday said it has been

India emerging as a hub for clinical trials: Study

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

India is emerging as a favourable destination to conduct clinical trials, as per a joint report by PwC India & USAIC (US-India Chamber of Commerce) titled, "Clinical Trial opportunities in India". The report was released at the USAIC BioPharma & Healthcare Summit held virtually on May 3. "Clinical trial activity in

India has been increasing steadily since 2014 due to several key regulatory reforms aimed towards global harmonisation, enabling open access to clinical trials in India. The country's diverse population, combined with its rapidly advancing



healthcare infrastructure, provides a fertile ground for clinical trials to flourish. This is an opportunity for

top biopharma companies to develop a long-term strategy that focuses on the key enablers of innovation and strategic partnerships in India," said Sujay Shetty, Partner & Global Health Industries Leader, PwC. However, more needs to be done given that India has an

of over 3% but contributes upwards of 15% to the global burden of most high prevalent diseases (e.g., respiratory infections, cardiovascular, diabetes, cervical cancer), representing an untapped potential for top phar-ma. The report underlined that biopharma can benefit from the critical enablers of innovation in the private healthcare system in

India and leverage the rapidly expanding healthcare infrastructure in the country.

Commenting on the opportunity for the private sector, Karun Rishi, President, USAIC said, "The growing interest in clinical trials in India presents a significant opportunity for private biopharma companies to leverage the country's rich diveroverall clinical trial participation sity and robust healthcare infra-

structure." The report suggested that the private sector is a well-suited channel for the top biopharma to conduct more efficient clinical trials with easier and faster access to investigators and patients. Also, it said, Indian states with high disease prevalence (e.g., cancer) also have the most number of tier-1 cities, with advanced medical infrastructure and availability of investigators.

Targeting these states can provide biopharma companies with faster access to patients, sites, and investigators. Total number of investigators has increased by 2 times between 2015 and 2020, with the majority of the increase occurring in the internal medicine and oncology specialisations.

Conduct autopsy on BJP worker at Army hosp: HC police aided by the civic volun-

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE KOLKATA

There was sporadic violence I on Wednesday during the bandh called by the BJP in East Midnapore district following the murder of one of its booth committee presidents BK Bhuniya.

He was abducted and then eliminated by alleged Trinamool Congress goons, Bengal Opposition Leader Suvendu Adhikari had complained before calling a 12-hour bandh at Moyna in East Midnapore. About a dozen people were arrested and some were injured,

teers brutally assaulted our men who had taken out processions at various places," complained Ashok Dinda former India cricketer and saffron MLA even as Adhikari said agitation would continue in East Midnapore against Bhuniya's murder.

Meanwhile, the Calcutta High Court on Wednesday ordered postmortem of Bhuniva be conducted at a central government run hospital instead of a State hospital. While hearing case Justice

Rajasekhar Mantha directed that a video-graphed postmortem be conducted at Army's sources said adding, the bandh Command Hospital at Alipore evoked a mixed response. "The in South Kolkata.

New Okhla Industrial Development Authority гаіда ninistrative Building, Sector-6, Noida, G.B. Nagar (U.P.) Website: www.noidaauthorityonline.in

E-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tender are invited from firms/contractors registered with UPLC Lucknow for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened/downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on NOIDAAuthority's official website: www.noidaauthorityonline.in & http://etender.up.nie.in. Please ensure to see these websites for any changes/amendments & corrigendum etc.

- 1. 01/S.M.(JAL)-I/ET/2023-24, M/o W/s (Painting, Repairing and Other Civil work in W.W.C. & Tubewells in Water Supply Network Sector-106 and 110) Noida. Cost Rs. 59.53 Lac.
- 2. 01/S.M.(Jal)-II/E.T./2023-24, M/o Sewerage (Desilting of deep sewer line by Super Sucker Machine in network sector-70, 71, 72, 73 and Basai, Sarfabad) Noida. (For 03 years). Cost Rs. 49.39 Lacs.
- 3. 03/S.M.(JAL-O.A.)/2023-24, M/o STP (Supply and Fixing of Light Arrangement, LT, HT armoured Cables and other related Electrical works at STP -54 Compound) NOIDA (Two Years). Cost Rs. 46.94 Lac.
- 4. 04/S.M.(JAL-O.A.)/2023-24, O/M of Sewer line and MSPS/IPS at Expressway (Annual Cleaning of Sewer line and Sewer manhole between IPS/MSPS LHS along Noida Gr. Noida Expressway Green Belt Ch.-0.00 to 10.00 Km) Noida. Cost Rs. 41.89 Lac.
- 5. 05/S.M.(JAL-O.A.)/2023-24, O/M of Sewer line and MSPS/IPS at Expressway (Annual Cleaning of Sewer line and Sewer manhole between IPS/MSPS RHS along Noida Gr. Noida Expressway Green Belt Ch. 0.00 to 10.00 Km) NOIDA. Cost Rs. 45.05 Lac.

6. 06/S.M.(JAL-O.A.)/2023-24, O/M Sewer Line and MSPS/SPS at Expressway (Two year Repairing and Rewinding of 75 HP and 90 HP Submersible Pump at IPS-7, Sector-129) Noida. Cost Rs. 59.97 Lac.

Which can be uploaded by date:- 17.05.2023 upto 5.00 PM. Pre-gualification shall be opened/downloaded on date:- 18.05.2023 at 11.00 AM.

- (B)
- 1. 64/S.M.(Jal)-II/E.T./2022-23, Reboring and Chlorination Plant in Different Sectors (Reboring of T.W. No. 19/25, 18/25 and 13/25) Noida. Cost Rs. 89.11 Lac.
- 2. 36/S.M.(Jal)-III/E.T./2022-23, Water Chlorination (Supply Installation Commissioning and Testing Salt based Electro Chlorination Plant & Two Year Operation at Booster-155 & Booster-158) Noida. Cost Rs. 70.51 Lac.

Which can be uploaded by date:- 10.05.2023 upto 5.00 PM. Pre-qualification shall be opened/downloaded on date:- 11.05.2023 at 11.00 AM. Dy. General Magager (Jal), Office, Sector-5 Noida

Cybercriminals arrested for duping people across country

Cops: 12th pass mastermind used to make more than ₹5 cr a day

PTI MUMBAI

Mumbai police have exposed a ring of cybercriminals that stole money from people from across the country by posing as police personnel and arrested its kingpin, who has studied till Class 12 and used to do transactions of more than Rs 5 crore a day



in his accounts, an official said Bangur Nagar police station on Wednesday. Mastermind from a plush hotel in Shrinivas Rao Dadi (49), who Hyderabad, the official said. has sound technical knowledge Besides Dadi, police also arrestdespite limited education, was ed four more members of his gang, including two from taken into custody by a team of

neighbouring Thane and as many from Kolkata, he said. Dadi pretended to run a real estate business and used to communicate only through the Telegram app. Police have so far frozen 40 bank accounts used by Dadi and recovered cash of Rs 1.5 crore from him, the official said

Explaining the modus operandi of the cyber fraud-sters, the official said that Dadi and his accomplices would call people, mostly women, posing as police officers and tell them that cops have found drugs or weapons in a courier sent by them, he said. The caller would then demand the bank or income tax-related details account. The cyber gang tarsaying those were needed to geted thousands of people from verify if the courier didn't belong to the person they were speaking with.

Ajay Kumar Bansal, deputy commissioner of police (zone -11), said most people would get scared by the phone call and share their bank or IT details. Victims also shared the one time password (OTP) and in some cases allowed the fraudsters to take control of their mobile phones by downloading apps like AnyDesk, the official said.

After accessing key details, the fraudsters would steal money from the victim's bank

across the country using this method, he said. All money stolen by the gang would go into bank accounts managed by Dadi. The accounts had transactions of Rs 5 crore to Rs 10 crore a day, said the official. Dadi would then convert the

money into cryptocurrency and transfer it to a Chinese national, said the official. To investigate the case, city police teams are in Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Jharkhand, Haryana and other places in Maharashtra and more arrests **CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA** are expected, he said.

NEW DELHI | THURSDAY | MAY 4, 2023 the pioneer



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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

Save heritage

Delhi HC did the right thing by ordering demolition of encroachments at the Tughlaqabad Fort area in Delhi

orceful eviction of anyone from their homes is always painful and humiliating even for top politicians who overstay in the bungalows allotted to them in Lutyens' Delhi. Household items strewn on the road do evoke compassion; they also make good photographs which appear prominently in newspapers. And when the evicted are poor people, the visuals are even more poignant. Like those of the demolition drive by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) at the Tughlaqabad Fort area in Delhi a few days ago. Poor residents talking to news reports in despair, many of them rummaging through the remains of their razed houses. They demand rehabilitation and assistance from government. Many angry residents angrily told the media that local politicians and their aides fooled them; some of them also told a news channel of having bribed the local cops. If there was any wrongdoing involved in build-



ing houses in the area under the ASI's jurisdiction, they say that the local authorities and policepersons were equally guilty. So why is it that only we are being punished, they ask. We built our homes with our meager savings, and now we are on the road, they lament. Some of the affected residents are also angry that while their houses were being demolished, new multistorey structures were coming up nearby. The law, in their eyes, seems to be not just discriminatory but also arbitrary and capricious. We can sympathise with these people but it is hard to accept their arguments. They did violate the law, and got their just deserts. The Delhi High Court did the right thing by ordering demolition. It is unfortunate though that

no government is likely to initiate action against the guilty local officials and cops.

Meanwhile the ASI is now reportedly contemplating a 3km-long, 6-8-foot-high boundary wall with concertina wire atop to precluded encroachment in the future. This is a case of too little too late. It is a well-known fact that a lot of historical monuments in Delhi and elsewhere have been encroached upon-and the problem seems to be growing. In 2019, the government informed the Rajya Sabha that there were 321 protected monuments facing encroachments. In 2022, the number went up to 356. As many as 75 protected monument sites have been trespassed in Uttar Pradesh; this is closely followed by Tamil Nadu with 74, Minister of Tourism and Culture G Kishan Reddy told the Rajya Sabha in December last year. UP also has the largest number of Centrally protected monuments in the country at 743, again followed by Tamil Nadu with 412. Since bulldozers are roaming in Yogi Adityanath's UP, demolishing illegal constructions, especially by mafia dons, it is time that some of them visited the shanties in the above-mentioned 75 monuments. Other states should do the same. Encroachers and land sharks have ruined our cities and towns; we shouldn't let them destroy our heritage as well.



Grounds for a military take-over



BHOPINDER SINGH

Ironically, all Military takeovers in Pakistan entailed the Pakistani Generals deposing the politicians who were responsible for 'selecting' them

he reserved and affluent former Prime Minister of Pakistan, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi (2017-18), is an 8-time member of the National Assembly with a deep history with the proverbial establishment' (Pakistan Military). He electorally represents the garrison townships of Rawalpindi (hosting the general HeadQuarters) and is himself the son of a decorated Air Force Veteran, Commodore Khaqan Abbasi, who was part of General Zia-ul-Haq's cabinet. Shahid's father-in-law, General Muhammad Riaz Abbasi, was Director General of the shadowy Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) in the dark ages of Zia's reign. Later, Shahid was to join the conservative Islami Jamhoori Ittehad (IJI), floated by the egregious, Lt General Hamid Gul. His own understanding of the 'establishment' was nuanced by his subsequent appointment as the Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Defence

Shahid later joined PML-N and became Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National Assembly on Defence. Larger politics of the day saw him get co-accused with Nawaz Sharif for conspiring to kill General Pervez Musharraf in the hijacking case, only to go behind bars for two years. However, he was to get his most definitive exposure of the 'establishments' ways as the Prime Minister, after Nawaz Sharif was debarred from holding office, in a move largely seen under pressure by the 'establishmenť.

Recently, Shahid Abbasi raised some pertinent concerns, as he forewarned that the ensuing crisis in Pakistan was deep enough to lead to a possible military takeover. He presciently alluded to the hopeless crisis of discredited institutions, irreconcilable politicians and dire economic morass that could legitimise a Military takeover to 'avoid' inevitable anarchy. Shahid warned, "Pakistan has had many long periods of martial law in very



cumstances, the military has taken over". In a sarcastic pun on the typical opening line used by Generals after taking over, Shahid warned of having to hear, "merey aziz hum watno" (literally, My dear fellow citizens), in the post-coup address!

The current Pakistani Army Chief, General Asim Muneer, has not shown any such inclination so far - but neither had Ayub Khan, Ziaul-Haq or Pervez Musharraf, initially. That said, General Asim Muneer would be more than familiar with the murky ways of the 'establishment' by being the only Pakistani Chief who has headed both the Military Intelligence (MI), as also the Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI). His elevation was part of a political process that entailed him being 'retained' and then 'appointed' (he was set to retire a few days before his predecessor, General Qamar Bajwa was to hang his boots). Besides, Asim Muneer had his own personal run-in and wounded history with Imran Khan that saw him get booted out as the Director General of ISI, after Muneer had raised concerns about Imran Khan's wife, earlier. Therefore, with acutely failing

This leaves him with the only possible option of step-ping in. Other side players (though still relevant) in the current scenario like the recently retired General Qamar Bajwa and the intelli-gentsia would not be too averse to that scenario given the necessity of 'hard decisions' i.e., on economy and terror management.

All three previous Military takeovers i.e., Ayub Khan THE CURRENT (1958-69), Zia-ul-Haq (1978-88) and Pervez Musharraf PAKISTANI ARMY (1999-2008) entailed the CHIEF, GENERAL Pakistani Generals deposing the politicians who were ASIM MUNEER, responsible for 'selecting' them. Ayub ousted President HAS NOT SHOWN Iskander Mirza (after Generals loyal to the 'establishment' ANY SUCH forced Mirza to tender their **INCLINATION SO** resignation). Ayub had set the template for justifying the FAR – BUT Military take over by holding politicians singularly respon-**NEITHER HAD** sible for the 'chaotic internal AYUB KHAN, ZIAsituation' and accusing them of selling the country 'for person-UL-HAQ OR al gains.' For the masses reeling under socio-economic dis-PERVEZ tress, this was seductive. MUSHARRAF,

Similarly, the unhinged General Zia-ul-Haq who was 'selected' by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was personally responsible for sending Zulfikar to the galhanging Zulfikar Bhutto stat-ed, "Mein Bhutto Sahib ko kaisey maar sakta hoon? Woh to merey mohsin hain." Zia's immediate promise on undertaking the ironic name 'Operation Fairplay' (coup in 1978) was to hold 'free and fair' elections within 90 days - he ruled ruthlessly till he died in a mysterious air crash, after 11 years!

Even Nawaz Sharif's ostensibly 'safe' General Pervez Musharaff had dumped and exiled his benefactor, and then sought a three-year term to 'set things right' - only to remain as sticky and selfish as his co-Generals, before him. Musharaff's populist pitch included getting back 'looted money', initiating structural reforms in the economy, cleansing corruption and devolving power to the grassroots - none of which ever fully materialized. He was no better or worse than civilian governments and if anything, he weakened the critical independence of the institutions of checks and balances' in a democracy. It is this backdrop of mayhem and distress that often gives succour to notions of military take-over. Shahid Abbasi's warning is timely.

> (The writer, a military veteran, is a former Li Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry. The views *expressed are personal*)

similar situations and added, in fact, I would say Pakistan has coalition government and his never witnessed a [more] severe economic and political situation ing' Imran Khan is highly before. In much less severe cir- unlikely.

perceptions of the existing own discomfort in 're-select-

lows, after singing nosannas to the political leader, just before his elevation as the Pakistani Army Chief. Untrustworthy Zia had just hours before

Devotees take holy dip in the Ganga river during 'Ganga Pushkaralu', in Varanasi

Freedom from mood swings, the right way



Mood swings can be controlled by developing equanimity. But first one needs to recognise that he or she has a problem. Ignoring it won't help

et us understand how because mood swings ⊿are quite common. It is normal to have days when you feel sad or days when you are overjoyed. As long as your mood changes don't interfere with your life to an extreme degree they are generally considered okay. Fortunately, the Bhagavad-Geeta teaches us about how to have very minimal mood swings. Lord Krishna has used the term equanimity for this, and He has spoken about it quite extensively in the Geeta.

What is the mood? It is defined as a temporary state of mind or feeling, and it is greatly influenced by our natures. Mood swings are defined as an abrupt change in mood or emotional state. The difference between nature and mood can be understood by a couple of examples. The climate is the weather conditions prevailing over a long period of time. And the weather is the state at a particular place and time Our natures are like climate and mood is similar to weather. Mood change goes on all the time and varies according to time, place and circum-



stances. Too much change is a problem and for too long is also a problem.

What harm do undesirable mood swings do? It disrupts daily life. One is unable to enjoy favourite activities. Relationships may get affect-ed. It may become difficult to concentrate. There may be feelings of sadness, hopelessness, worthlessness, etc. One may feel exhausted, tired and fatigued. There may be trouble sleeping or one may sleep too much as a result. The same may happen with eating; one may either eat too much or too little. In extreme cases, thoughts of suicide may come or fear of death may become prominent. Yes, mood swings can be quite serious.

rial solutions first. I will just stick to what one can do by way of self-help. If the problem persists, medical help may become necessary. To help oneself, one must recognise that he or she has a problem. Ignoring it won't help. Walking is the best remedy for all kinds of mental problems. Try to walk at home if going out appears too daunting. Speed is not important; the time period is. Eat healthy

even if the taste has to be sac-

rificed. Force yourself to sleep enough; at least lie down to give your body relaxation. Yoga exercises can help if one can find out which ones will suit you. Reduce workload, if possible, to control stress. And social interactions with Now I come to spiritual solutions, which are the core solutions to harmful mood swings. The gradual change in nature is required to make our moods stable. And change in nature is only possible through active help from God. How does one get help from God? We just have to follow His instructions, as given in scriptures like the Geeta. Lord Krishna instructs, "One should neither reioice

Let me begin with mate- too much having achieved

something dear nor get agitated having met something unpleasant." (5.20) "Not envious towards all beings, having friendly and even kind feelings, free from the bondage of possessiveness, free from the feeling of being the doer, equipoised in distress and happiness, forgiving." (12.13) "Having equanimity towards an enemy and a friend and in honour and dishonour; poised in cold, heat, pleasure and misery; entirely free from attachment." (12.18)Equanimity in pain and pleasure; self-situated (not disturbed); free from greed; neutral towards pleasant and unpleasant; steady; poised in criticism and appreciation. (14.24). Gaining equanimity, which is stability in mood, is not easy, we need to do a lot. Being able to do even to a limited extent brings enormous benefits, and this solution is a permanent solution. Our natures will change and our moods will stabilize. If we can develop the kind of feeling Hanumanji or Vibhishana had developed towards Lord Ramachandra, we will have a very stable mind.

(The writer is a spiritual teacher)

THE LUDHIANA TRAGEDY

Sir — The tragic loss of lives in Ludhiana due to the release of noxious gases from a partially open manhole according to initial reports is a heart-wrenching reminder of the dire consequences of neglecting basic safety precautions by the relevant stakeholders. It is now incumbent upon the government. authorities to provide adequate aid to the affected victims and take swift and resolute action to prevent such disasters from happening in the future. Furthermore, this tragedy underscores the need for greater investment in infrastructure and public services with enhanced safety measures to ensure that such incidents are prevented from occurring in the first place.

Subhranshu Roy | Patna

THE KERALA STORY

Sir — It seems the main intention of making the movie " The Kerala Story " is to segregate people based on religion in the text of freedom of expression. Freedom of expression should not become a licence to spew venom in society and create communal tensions. It is sad to note that the Union Home ministry itself is a part of the planned move.

The release of the trailer of the Hindi film "The Kerala Story " has let off a storm, for the cause, aim and intention behind the movie. The movie tells the story of 32000 women in Kerala who have gone missing and are shown to have been radicalized and used by the terror outfit IS. The movie tells how thousands of young women were brainwashed to join the Islamic State. It is said that the movie is about Love Jihad being used in the fight against Islamic State.

Previously also a propaganda film " The Kashmir Files' ' was made by Sangh Parivar, just to spew venom on a particu-lar community. The Kerala Story' seeks to create communal polarization in the name of Love Jihad. Now the sole intention of making the movie " The Kerala Story " is to create communal Polarization in favour of the saffron party, not only in Kerala but throughout the country. The film " The to promote scientific temper in the

Golden Globe Race

THE EDITOR



INITIALLY

Opportunities do not come to your doorstep. They have to be created. But, only a few turn them into success stories by weathering the storms that hinder their path. Commander Abhilash Tomy, a retired Naval officer is one such personality that has scripted history by becoming the first Indian to complete the prestigious Golden Globe Race (GG.R). A podium finish to a nonstop unassisted round-the-world trip in a boat with 1968 Vintage technology has accorded him a

prominent place in the Asian panorama. In fact, in Abhilash, India had already found its first circumnavigator in 2010 who

Kerala Story " tells that thousands of young women were brainwashed to join the Islamic State in Svria and Yemen. The film makes an unverifiable claim about extremism. The film is a part of hate propaganda and it gives misinformation and hence it should be banned. The film is against the unity and sovereignty of our country and tarnishes the credibility of all intelligence agencies of India, as 32000 women joining IS is not correct. The film promotes a far-right stance towards Islamophobia and makes false accusations. If the film is released it will bring global discredit to all and will create communal tension.

Zakir Hussain | Kazipet.

SHUTTERS DOWN

Sir — It is really disturbing to note that the NITI Aayog, through its myopic vision, has decided to shut Vigyan Prasar, set up by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) in 1989

took this craft to newer heights. What sets him apart from others is his never say die attitude which was ably demonstrated by him while sailing in 2018 against a massive storm in the choppy waters of the Indian Ocean that nearly broke his back. The naval veteran has shown remarkable courage and willpower to return to a race that nearly liked him. Even rough weather and unrelenting seas could not shake his consciousness to survive against all odds

It is a dream come true to finish second in the solo sea trip around the world, which started on September 4, 2022, from France, He also has the rare distinction of being the first to sail around three navigable oceans twice in just a dozen years since the country first set off in this adventure. His podium finish in the G.G.R. voyage will remain etched in golden letters in the history of this adventurous game

Vijay Singh Adhikari | Nainital

country. For over three decades, the organisation has played a stellar role in taking initiatives to widen scientific literacy in India. Vigyan Prasar has acted as an interface between society, scientists, media and policymakers.

The expertise, capability and skills that VP has nurtured and grown over the years will be lost if it is closed. The decision to shut down Vigyan Prasar is short-sighted, illconsidered and contrary to the national interest and objectives. Needless to say, scientific literacy is indispensable as we seek to go forward to becoming a modern, technologically and scientifically advanced nation. Erasing the Nehruvian legacy is equal to undermining India. Even if the BJP rewrites India's past, there are international records and histories that it cannot easilv touch

Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

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FIRSTCOLUMN GOD: THE POINT OF LIGHT

When souls are suffering, they call out to God to liberate them and end their misery



RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUNJ JI

ccording to most religious scholars, God is present in every creature and every particle and everything is a manifestation of HIM. In simple language, what they mean is that GOD the Supreme is Omnipresent. Is it really so? Some people say that God is present in every 'ghat', meaning every heart. Others say that God is wherever his devotees call him. This belief is supported by instances of divine visions or help received by many devout worshippers. Putting this another way, some notable devotees are shown as having him in their hearts. Taking this idea still further, many people say that God is present everywhere, in each and every particle.

Now! If God is really everywhere, how does one explain the degradation one sees in the world? God is praised as the purifier, the everpure, the one who uplifts the downtrodden. So if God is also subject to degradation like everyone else, who will uplift whom? In the 18th Chapter of Gita which is a summary of the entire Bhagwadgita, God says 'sarva-dharma parityajya, mam ekam saranam vraja, aham tvam sarva-papebhyo, moksayisyami ma such meaning Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reactions. Do not fear. This brings up the most important question of liberation or salvation

It is believed that God comes or descends to this world to liberate humanity from sorrow. Now! if he is already present everywhere, where is the need for him to come from anywhere? Hence one should understand the fact that Omnipresence is most probably a mistaken belief derived from the Omnipotence of God. Since God the Supreme can reach out to his beloved children anytime, anywhere, and manifest HIS powers in many ways, it has been taken by some to be proof of HIS presence everywhere.

God is called the Father and the Supreme Father. Just as we all have a father of our body who has a form and identity, God is the father of souls. He is not formless or limitless. He too has a form --- that of a point of light. Nothing that has a form and distinct identity can be omnipresent as that would render the thing formless. If on the one hand, we call God the Father and on the other, we say that HE is omnipresent, then it would mean that everybody is a Father. But that is not the case as souls are eternally brothers. Moreover, if we say that God is in everyone then all souls would become equal to God. And when everyone is equal, who will give inheritance to whom? Thus, it is clear from the above, that God cannot be omnipresent, as it is obvious that humans are not equal, and they are constantly seeking God's help or blessings, which they shouldn't be doing if God were present in them.



Sports as a harbinger of peace



analys \$ 07

Sport provides a common ground for people to come together, irrespective of their cultural mores. It can be binding force force for nations in conflict



indfulness has, in recent he International Day of Sport for Development and Peace is celebrated every year on April 6th. It is a day that recognizes the positive influence that sports can have on individuals and communities, particularly in areas affected by conflict and poverty. The power of sports in bringing people together and fostering peace has been acknowledged by the United Nations, which declared 2013 as the International Year of Sport for Development and Peace.

Sport transcends cultural and linguistic barriers and provides a common ground for people to come together therefore, sport has the unique ability to unify nations in conflict. It can also promote social integration and help to break down stereotypes and prejudices. This is partic ularly important in areas affected by con- SPORTING TALENT flict and violence, where sports can serve as a powerful tool for peace-building. One such example is the story of the Afghan women's football team. Despite facing opposition from conservative elements in their society, a group of Afghan women formed a football team in 2007. They faced numerous challenges, including death threats and attacks on their families, but they continued to play and advocate for women's rights. Their courage and determination inspired others and helped to break down gender barriers in their country. Another example is the use of football as a tool for peace-building in Israel and Palestine. The Peres Center for Peace, a non-profit organization based in Israel, runs a programme called "Twinned Peace Sports Schools", which has helped Jewish and Arab children to play together and thereby promote cross-cultural understanding and building bridges between communities in conflict.

THE KHELO INDIA PROGRAMME, LAUNCHED IN 2018, AIMS TO **IDENTIFY AND**

While promoting sustainable development, sports can also help factors like health and fitness, reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, and empower marginalized communities. The use of sports in development programs has been recognized by the United Nations, which has called for greater investment in sports as a means of achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The "Beyond Bars" programme in South Africa, which uses rugby to promote social integration and reduce crime among young offenders is another such example that provides training and mentoring to young offenders, helping them to develop life skills and pos-

India has no doubt emerged as a global leader since 2014 in promoting traditional sports for young talents. The government of India has taken several initiatives to promote traditional sports, such as kabaddi, kho kho, and indigenous martial arts, among others. These sports are not only a part of India's rich cultural heritage but also offer a unique opportunity for young people to engage in physi-cal activity and develop important life skills.

Further, the Khelo India programme, launched in 2018, aims to identify and nurture young sporting talent and also provides financial support, training, and infrastructure to young athletes, opment of joint programs and initiatives.

Most importantly, there needs to be greater promotion of sports as a tool for development and peace-building at the international level. This includes the establishment of a global network of sports organizations and non-profit organizations, as well as the development of international guidelines and standards for the use of sports in development and peace-build-

Sports can be a powerful tool for diplomacy and building bridges between nations. In this direction, India has leveraged its sporting achievements and initiatives to foster peaceful coexistence with other countries by hosting internation-al tournaments, such as the Kabaddi World Cup and the Indian Premier League (IPL) cricket tournament, where teams and players from around the world came together thereby showcasing a spirit of cooperation and goodwill, not to miss the opportunities of employment and revenue generation schemes. India's emergence as a global leader and its promotion of tradi-tional sports for young talent is not only helping to build a strong sporting culture but also contributing to the country's overall social and economic development. By leveraging sports as a tool for diplomacy and peaceful coexistence, India is showcasing its sporting prowess to the world and fostering cooperation and goodwill with other countries. What needs to be done is keeping the momentum going.

When souls are suffering, they call out to God to come and liberate them from their bondages and end their misery. It is thus obvious from this that the soul is not God. If it were God, then it would not be undergoing suffering in the first place. And this also shows that God is not omnipresent. If He was present everywhere, then there would have been no need for anyone to pray to Him to come and end their sorrows. Right? Because God comes and liberates human souls from the bondage of the vices, which is the root cause of all human suffering, God is called a Liberator. Remember! Human souls come into these bondages precisely because they are not God, and God never comes into these bondages because God is ever pure and that's the reason that only God and no human soul can purify another soul because all the souls are caught in the same quagmire of vices. So, let's connect to that ONE Supreme Source and enlighten ourselves with his positive energies & powers to live a life full of abundance.

(Writer is a spiritual educator & popular columnist for publications across India, Nepal & UK)

NURTURE YOUNG

AND ALSO PROVIDES **FINANCIAL** SUPPORT. TRAINING, AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO YOUNG ATHLETES

(The writer is Programme Executive, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti)

itive attitudes and has helped in reducing reoffending rates among participants thereby promoting social cohesion.

Another example is the "Magic Bus" programme in India, which uses sport and education to empower marginalized children and youth. The initiative aims at providing coaching and mentoring in various sports, including football, cricket, and volleyball, as well as life skills training and education support and can boast of promoting positive attitudes, health and well-being of participants.

It is of great importance to have greater investment in sports as a tool for development and peace-building. This includes increased funding for sports programs and facilities, as well as support for the training and development of coaches and instructors and reaching the grassroots.

with the goal of developing a strong sporting culture in the country.

India's efforts to promote traditional sports and nurture young talent have earned her international recognition. For instance, the International Olympic Committee recognized kabaddi as an official sport in 2018, while kho kho was included in the 2022 Asian Games. These developments have helped to raise the profile of traditional Indian sports and showcase the country's sporting prowess to the world.

For further promotion of sports for breaking cultural barriers and reducing conflicts, there needs to be greater collaboration between different sectors and stakeholders, including government, non-profit organizations, and sports organizations. This includes the sharing of resources and expertise, as well as the devel-

Whopping 258 million faced food insecurity last year

The impact has been most acute on the poorest countries that are dependent on food imports, says UN Food and Agriculture Organization's emergencies and resilience director Rein Paulsen

ore than a quarter-billion people in 58 coun-L tries faced acute food insecurity last year because of conflicts, climate change, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's war in Ukraine, according to a report published Wednesday.

The Global Report on Food Crises, an alliance of humanitarian organizations founded by the U.N. and European Union, said people faced starvation and death in seven of those countries: Somalia, Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Haiti, Nigeria, South Sudan and Yemen.

The report found that that the number of people facing acute food insecurity and requiring urgent food aid - 258 million - had increased for the fourth consecutive year, a "stinging indictment of humanity's failure"

to implement UN goals to end world hunger, UN Secretary-General António Guterres said.

While the increase last year was due in part to more populations being analyzed, the report also found that the severity of the problem increased as well, "highighting a concerning trend of a deterioration.

Rein Paulsen, director of emergencies and resilience for the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, said an interplay of causes was driving hunger. They include conflicts, climate shocks, the impact of the pandemic and consequences of Russia's war in Ukraine that has had an impact on the global trade in fertilizers,

wheat, maize and sunflower oil. The impact has been most acute on the poorest countries that are dependent on food imports. "Prices have increased



(and) those countries have been adversely affected," Paulsen said.

He called for a "paradigm shift" so that more funding is spent investing in agricultural interventions that anticipate food

crises and aim to prevent them. "The challenge that we have is the disequilibrium, the mismatch that exists between the amount of funding money that's given, what that funding is spent on, and the types of interventions that are required to make a change," he said.

The UN World Food Program's new chief issued a warning that the Rome-based agency's resources to provide food aid amid the surging needs are "running dangerously low." Executive Director Cindy McCain told panelists at an event to present the report that the

agency could be forced to make "heart-breaking decisions to slash" assistance if substantial new funding doesn't materialize quickly.

McCain noted that she had just returned from Somalia, where, she said, "millions are teetering on the edge of hunger and catastrophe." She sounded a poignant note: "We all know it doesn't have to be that way."

Acute food insecurity is when a person's inability to consume adequate food puts their lives or livelihoods in immediate danger.

The EU's commissioner for international partnership, Jutta Urpilainen, said that the bloc's strategy to fight hunger includes supporting initiatives aimed to "boost local production and reduce dependence on unsustainable imports.



Teen shoots 9 at Serbian school

AP BELGRADE

teenager who opened fire AWednesday at his school drew sketches of classrooms and wrote a list of people he intended to target, police said. He killed eight fellow students and a school guard before being arrested

A father of a student at the school in central Belgrade said the shooter entered his daughter's classroom, firing at her teacher and then her classmates as they ducked under their desks. Most students were able to flee through a back door, according to a local official.

Senior police official Veselin Milic said the shooter drew sketches of classrooms and wrote a list of children he planned to "liquidate" in an attack he planned for a month.

said Milic Kosta Kecmanovic called police him-

A suspect is escorted by police outside the Vladislav Ribnikar school in Belgrade Serbia. on Wednesday AP/PT

self when the attack was over. Earlier, police said Kecmanovic was a student at the Vladislav Ribnikar school and was born in 2009. They said he

used his father's gun. Six more children and a teacher were also hospitalised in the attack. Local media footage showed a commotion as police

removed Kecmanovic, whose head was covered as officers led him to a car. Police sealed off the blocks around Vladislav Ribnikar, which is what's known as a primary school, whose students would typically range in age from 6 to 15. Authorities later carried body bags to a waiting van.

Mass shootings are extremely rare in Serbia and in the wider Balkan region; none were reported at schools in recent years. In the last mass shooting, a Balkan war veteran in 2013 killed 13 people in a central Serbian village.

Experts, however, have repeatedly warned of the danger posed by the large number of weapons in the country after the wars of the 1990s. They also note that decades of instability stemming from the conflicts as well as the ongoing economic hardship could trigger such

outbursts. Police said they received a call about the shoot ing at around 8:40 a.m. on the first day that classes resumed after a long weekend for the May 1 holiday.

"I was able to hear the shooting. It was nonstop," said a student who was in a sports class when gunfire erupted elsewhere in the building. Her mother asked that her name be withheld because of her age. "I didn't know what was happening. We were receiving some

messages on the phone. The student described the suspect as a "quiet guy" who had good grades. "He was not so open with everybody. Surely I wasn't expecting this to happen," she said. Milan Nedeljkovic, the mayor of the Belgrade area of Vracar where the shooting happened, said that most of the students were taken out a back door of the school.

Swiss lower house approves ties to Taiwan legislature

- doesn't necessarily have to

The issue now heads to a

If carried out, the Swiss

gesture would be a new tactic

by foreign lawmakers to sup-

port the self-ruled island

democracy in the face of intim-

idation by the mainland's rul-

ing Communist Party, which

claims Taiwan as part of its ter-

ritory and has threatened to

invade. The measure has been

championed by Socialist law-

maker Fabian Molina, who led

a parliamentary delegation to

line up for it to take effect,

according to the Swiss parlia-

foreign affairs committee to

explore how to put the measure

ment's press office.

to work.

AP 📕 GENEVA

Switzerland's lower house of parliament has voted to tighten ties with the legislature in Taiwan, a move that could further rankle China after recent visits by Western lawmakers to the island.

The Swiss National Council voted 97-87 with eight abstentions late Tuesday to instruct parliamentary offices to "strengthen" relations with Taiwan's Yuan legislature, as a way to help strengthen democracy, peace and stability, and deepen economic, political, scientific and cultural exchanges between Switzerland and Taiwan.

Left-leaning parties generally supported the measure, while the main right-wing and free-market parties opposed

Taiwan in February that met with President Tsai Ing-wen. This measure only relates to the lower house; the upper Lawmakers from other house — the Council of States

countries, including Germany and the United States, have taken part in similar delegations. All come from countries whose governments have diplomatic relations with Beijing rather than with Taiwan, which the mainland claims as part of its territory.

world 08

Chinese officials in Beijing and Switzerland did not immediately respond to emails from The Associated Press seeking comment.

Recently, China has stepped up its campaign to isolate Taiwan by peeling away some of the island's few remaining foreign diplomatic partners, most of them poor and in Africa and Latin America.

Dissident pulled

8 years in prison

Tallinn (Estonia) (AP): A

Belarusian court convicted a

dissident journalist who was

arrested after being pulled off a

commercial flight that was diverted to the country and sen-tenced him Wednesday to eight

years in prison. Raman Pratasevich's dramatic arrest in May 2021 elicited outrage in the

West, with some leaders saying

the plane's diversion was tanta-

mount to state-sponsored

hijacking.Belarusian flight con-

trollers ordered the Ryanair jet-

liner traveling between Greece

and Lithuania to land in Minsk,

telling the crew that there was

a bomb threat against the flight.

No explosives were found on

board, and Pratasevich, who

lived in exile at the time, was

detained once the plane was on

the ground. His Russian girl-

friend was also arrested. In

response, several Western coun-

tries imposed a raft of new sanc-

tions and barred their planes from flying over Belarus.

off plane by

Belarus gets

'US to send Ukraine \$300 mn military aid

Washington (AP): The US is sending Ukraine about USD 300 million in additional military aid, including an enormous amount of artillery rounds, howitzers, air-to-ground rockets and ammunition as the launch of a spring offensive against Russian forces approaches, US officials said Tuesday.

The new package includes Hydra-70 rockets, which are unguided rockets that are fired from aircraft. It also includes an undisclosed number of rockets for the High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems, or HIMARS, mortars, howitzer rounds, missiles and Carl Gustaf anti-tank rifles. The weapons will all be pulled from Pentagon stocks, so they can go quickly to the front lines. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because the aid has not yet been formally announced.

The latest shipment comes as Ukrainian officials say they are readying a counteroffensive — with Ukrainian Defense Minister Oleksiy Reznikov declaring they are in the "home stretch, when we can say: Yes everything is ready." Ukrainian officials have said they are stockpiling ammunition to stow it along potentially long supply

lines Reznikov said Monday that the key things for the assault's success would be "the availability of weapons; prepared, trained people; our defenders o know thei plan at their level, as well as providing this offensive with all the necessary things - shells, ammunition, fuel, protection, etc." The US in recent months has declined to say exactly how much material will be sent to Ukraine, but the latest package resembles other previous deliveries. Officials said there will also be trucks, trailers, spare parts, and other maintenance assistance. This is the 37th package of Pentagon stocks to go to Ukraine since the war began in February 2022, and it brings the total US military aid to about USD 36 billion. Officials have said the weapons and other equipment will help as Ukraine prepares to shift from what has been a long and bloody winter stalemate, focused on heavy fighting in Ukraine's east, particularly around the town of Bakhmut in

Israeli airstrikes on Gaza kill Palestinian AP JERUSALEM

▼sraeli airstrikes on the Gaza Strip killed a 58year-old man and wounded five others on Wednesday, Palestinian health officials said, even as the latest spasm of violence between Israel and Palestinian militants in the enclave appeared to ebb. Israeli fighter jets struck targets in Gaza in response to salvos of rockets launched by Palestinian militants at Israeli territory on Tuesday. But after sunrise, the violence seemed to subside as both sides signaled they wanted to avoid a wider conflict.

The exchange erupted when a prominent Palestinian detainee died in Israeli custody after an 87-day hunger strike. The death of Khader Adnan, 45, a leader of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad militant group credited with popularizing hunger strikes as an effective form of activism, reverberated across the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, where he is revered as a national hero.

Protests erupted at Israeli military checkpoints and a general strike shuttered stores across the territories. Palestinians and rights groups have blamed Israel for his death, accusing prison authorities of medical negligence.

Palestinian militants in Gaza fired 100 rockets into southern Israel late Tuesday, seriously wounding a foreign worker at a construction site. The Israeli military said its warplanes struck tunnels, arms production sites and military installations belonging to the ruling Hamas militant group in Gaza. The Israeli strikes sent shrapnel slicing through the house of 58-year-

old Hashil Mubarak in Gaza City, his son Hatem said. As their roof collapsed, shards of metal struck Mubarak's chest, killing him, according to the Palestinian Health Ministry. Mubarak was rushed to the hospital and could not be resuscitated.

'We were sleeping at home safe and sound when we heard a giant explosion from a missile," Hatem recalled as mourners filled his neighborhood mosque and took turns bending down to kiss his father's forehead. "He was martyred," he said. After a quiet few

hours, the Israeli military announced that residents in southern towns no longer needed to remain close to bomb shelters. Hamas spokesman Hazem Qasem thanked Palestinian militants for "confronting Israeli aggression and concluding the round of the conflict." The UN's envoy to the Mideast, Tor Wennesland, said he welcomed "the restoration of calm" after a violent 12 hours. "Had our efforts failed, we would risk being in the midst of another deadly escalation," he said. But not everyone welcomed the calm. Israel's far-right National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir lambasted Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu over what he described as a weak response to the rocket fire from Gaza Ben-Gvir's party, called Jewish Power, announced that its members would boycott all parliament voting on Wednesday in protest.

Netanyahu hit back at Ben-Gvir, saying that only the prime minister, defense minister and security forces are tasked with handling "the sensitive and complex security events" in Israel

Zelenskyy in Finland for summit of Nordic leaders

AP HELSINKI

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is in the Finnish capital, Helsinki, for a one-day Nordic summit. Zelenskyy is expected to meet with four Nordic prime ministers who are gathering at the res-idency of the Finnish President Sauli Niinisto on Wednesday. They will discuss their support

ing at the Finnish Presidential Palace in Helsinki are Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson, Norway's Jonas Gahr Store, Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen, Iceland's Katrin Jakobsdottir and Finnish President Niinisto. Niinisto said the summit will discuss Russia's

Wife of suspected Texas

gunman arrested: Sheriff

aggression in Ukraine, the Nordic countries' continued



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, right, and Finnish President Sauli Niinisto, review the honor guard at the Presidential Palace in Helsinki, Finland, on Wednesday.

support for Ukraine, developments in Ukraine's relationship with the European Union and NATO and Ukraine's peace ini-

"There is still an urgent need for military support to ensure that the Ukrainians stand

as strong as possible in the fight against Russia," Danish Prime Minister Frederiksen said in a statement. "We must help rebuild Ukraine and keep alive the hope for a normal everyday life and a just future on the other side of the war."

Police search Bolsonaro's home, seize his phone

Brasilia (AP): Brazil's Federal Police searched former President Jair Bolsonaro's home on Wednesday and seized his phone, according to an official anonymity. The official, who wasn't authorised to speak publicly, said that Bolsonaro will be deposed at Federal Police headquarters and also confirmed that one of his closest allies, Mauro Cid, was arrested. Asked about the search of

Bolsonaro's home, the Federal

Police's press office provided a

statement saying officers were

carrying out 16 searches and six

arrests in Rio de Janeiro relat-

ed to the introduction of fraud-

ulent data related to the

COVID-19 vaccine into the

nation's health system. The

statement didn't name

Television network Globo

Bolsonaro or Cid.



Germany, Italy clamp down on Italian mob with raids, arrests

Berlin (AP): Police arrested The group has exploited tens of billions of dollars in Germany and Italy in a massive to extend its criminal reach effort to clamp down on memacross Europe and into severbers of the Italian 'ndrangheta al continents as the Sicilian organised crime syndicate. Mafia lost influence. In Germany, more than Over 30 suspects who had 1,000 officers searched dozens outstanding warrants were of homes, offices and stores in arrested in Germany. Among other things, the the states of Bavaria, North Rhine-Westphalia, Rhinelandsuspects are accused of money Palatinate and Thuringia, proslaundering, gang tax evasion, commercial gang fraud, and ecutors said in a joint statenarcotics smuggling, a statement. ment from the German state In Italy, carabinieri police office of criminal investigation backed by helicopters served arrest warrants on 108 people in North Rhine-Westphalia who were accused, among said. other things, of mafia associa-The raids are part of a tion; possession, production, and trafficking of drugs and wider joint investigation involving Europol and also weapons; and money launderincluded simultaneous measures against the group across ing. Europe, the statement said. European authorities have been waging a campaign against the Calabria-based À press release from cara-binieri in Regio Calabria, where 'ndrangheta, arguably the the 'ndrangheta is based, said world's richest organised crime arrest warrants were also served group, in recent years. in Belgium, France, Portugal,

AP CLEVELAND

day after the man suspect-

of kinning

to Ukraine. The Nordic countries -Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Iceland — have largely rallied around Ukraine following Russia's February 24, 2022, invasion. Those attending the meet-

tiative.

neighbours in a Texas shooting was arrested, the sheriff says his wife has also been taken into custody. Divimara Lamar Nava, 53, wife of suspect Francisco Oropeza, was in custody in connection with the Friday night shooting, according to Montgomery Sheriff County Rand Henderson. Nava had previously

denied knowledge of Oropeza's whereabouts, Henderson said, but authorities believe she hid him in the home near Conroe where he was arrested Tuesday.

A four-day manhunt for Oropeza ended Tuesday when authorities, acting on a tip, said they found the suspect hiding underneath a pile of laundry in the closet of a house.

Oropeza, 38, was captured without incident near the community of Conroe, north of Houston and about 20 miles



(32 kilometres) from his home in the rural town of Cleveland. That's where authorities say he went next door and shot his neighbours with an AR-style rifle shortly before midnight

Friday Óropeza had been shooting rounds on his property and the attack occurred after neighbors asked him to go farther away because the gunfire was keeping a baby awake, according to police.

Oropeza will be charged with five counts of murder.

San Jacinto County Sheriff Greg Capers said. Bond was set at USD 5 million.

"They can rest easy now, because he is behind bars," Capers said of the families of the victims. "He will live out his life behind bars for killing those five."

The arrest ends what had broadcast images that showed police inside Bolsonaro's conbecome a widening dragnet that had grown to more than dominium complex in Brasilia. Local media reported that the 250 people from multiple vaccine cards of Bolsonaro and jurisdictions and had seen USD 80,000 in reward money his family members were offered altered. During the pandemic,

Bolsonaro repeatedly sowed doubt about the efficacy of the vaccine.

"We trust that all doubts the Judiciary has will be clarified and it will be proven that Bolsonaro didn't do anything illegal," the leader of Bolsonaro's political party, Valdemar Costa Neto, wrote on Twitter.

The police statement said that the insertion of false data occurred between November 2021 and December 2022, and enabled the people whose vaccine cards were altered to comply with the US vaccine requirement to enter the country. The investigation indicates the the objective was to "sustain the discourse aimed at attacking the vaccine against COVID-19," the statement said.

UN chief urges all nations to stop targeting media, truth

authorised to be held every

the world must unite to stop

threats, attacks and imprison-

ment of journalists for doing

their jobs, and stop the lies and

disinformation.

The secretary-general said

"As journalists stand up for

AP UNITED NATIONS

the Donetsk province.

The United Nations chief warned on the eve of World Press Freedom Day that the media is under attack in every corner of the world and urged all nations to stop the targeting of truth and those who report

Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called the 50 per cent increase in the killing of media workers in 2022 "unbelievable," stressing that freedom of the press "is the foundation of democracy and justice" and it is under threat.

At least 67 media workers were killed in 2022. In addition, digital platforms and social media have made it easier for extremists to push false narratives and harass journalists.

"Truth is threatened by disinformation and hate speech seeking to blur the lines between fact and fiction, between science

WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY

and conspiracy," Guterres said. the targeting of media workers Guterres said the collapse of both on and offline, saying the media industry, which has they are routinely harassed, led to closures of local news outintimidated and detained. He added that nearly three-quarters lets and consolidation of media "into the hands of the few" is of women journalists have expethreatening freedom of expresrienced violence online and one-quarter have been threatened physically.

May 3.

So are threatening new laws passed by governments world-Guterres made the remarks wide, such as Russia's 2022 law in a video message for the UN commemoration of the 30th that anyone publishing information about its military that anniversary of World Press Moscow deems to be false could Freedom Day, which the U.N. General Assembly first proface up to 15 years in prison. Russia detained Wall Street claimed in December 1993 and

Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich in late March under accusations of spying, which the Journal denies. The Biden administration has said Gershkovish is being wrongfully detained and has been working to secure his release. Guterres strongly criticised

sion.

truth, the world stands up with them," he said.

Audrey Azoulay, directorgeneral of the U.N. Éducational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, which organised the commemoration, said the advent of the digital era has changed the entire information landscape

While digital platforms have provided new ways for expression and information, she said, "they are also proving fertile ground for those who sow disinformation, hate speech and conspiracy theories." "We find ourselves at a

new crossroads," Azoulay said. "Our current path is leading us away from informed public debate ... towards even more polarisation," she warned. "The other path is one we must imagine together, to ensure information can remain a public good, accessible to all."

Azoulay said UNESCO in

2021 launched a model curriculum for teachers on media and information literacy "to develop critical mindsets to navigate

Given that the business models of digital platforms are based on the number of clicks, she said, they "all too often favour sensationalism over truth.

Azoulay said that's why UNESCO in February organised a global conference to address this issue with a goal of ensuring "that technology helps our shared values and promotes human rights rather than harming them."

It was attended by over 4,000 interested parties. This was "a decisive step," she said, toward publication later this year by UNESCO of a set of guidelines on the moderation and selection of online content - just as it did for broadcasting nearly 20 years ago, she said.

TV shows go dark as writers strike for better salaries

AP NEW YORK

The first Hollywood strike I in 15 years began Tuesday as the economic pressures of the streaming era prompted unionized TV and film writers to picket for better pay outside major studios, a work stoppage that already is leading most late-night shows to air reruns.

"No contracts, no content!" sign-carrying members of the Writers Guild of America chanted outside the Manhattan building where NBCUniversal was touting its Peacock streaming service to advertisers.

Some 11,500 film and television writers represented by the union put down their pens and laptops after failing to reach a new contract with the trade association that repre-



sents Hollywood studios and production companies.

The union is seeking higher minimum pay, more writers per show and shorter exclusive contracts, among other demands — all conditions it says have been diminished in the content boom driven by streaming. "There's too much work and not enough pay," said demonstrator Sean Crespo, a 46-year-old writer whose credits include the former TBS show "Full Frontal With Samantha Bee.'

these new flows."



Syria, Iran sign oil, trade agreements

The presidents of Iran and L Syria signed Wednesday a series of long-term cooperation agreements on oil and other sectors to bolster economic ties between the two allies.

Iran's Ebrahim Raisi, leading a large economic and political delegation, met with his Syrian counterpart, Bashar Assad, after landing in the war-torn country for a two-day visit - an Iranian president's first visit to Damascus since 2010.

Tehran has been a main backer of Assad's government since a 2011 uprising turned into full-blown civil war and has played an instrumental role in turning the tide of the conflict in his favour.

Iran has sent scores of military advisers and thousands of Iran-backed fighters from around the Middle East to Syria to fight on Assad's side. Tehran has also been an economic lifeline for Assad, sending fuel and credit lines worth billions of dollars.

Syrian government forces have regained control of large parts of the country in recent

Russian Orthodox

In this photo released by the official Facebook page of the Syrian Presidency, Syrian President Bashar Assad, right, welcomes Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi in Damascus, Syria on Wednesday AP/PT

al sectors, including oil, agriculyears, with the help of its two main allies — Russia and Iran. ture, railways and free trade Syrian state media said zones

Iran's state-owned railway Raisi and Assad signed agreements and memorandums of company has long aspired to expand its network through understanding related to sever-

neighbouring Iraq and Syria, linking it to the Syrian port of Lattakia on the Mediterranean Sea to boost trade. Syria's opposition and Tehran critics see this as another Iran attempt at

growing its political influence. The deal are important also for Syria, whose economy has hit an all-time low over the past decade, with spiralling inflation, a currency plunge and rampant power cuts.

In an interview with pan-Arab television channel Al-Mayadeen ahead of his visit, Raisi called for reconstruction efforts and for Syrian refugees who fled the country's war to return home.

return home. "Syria's government and people have gone through great hardship," Syrian state media quoted Raisi as telling Assad during their meeting. "Today, we can now say that you have overcome all these problems and were victorious despite the and were victorious, despite the threats and sanctions imposed against you." Raisi was also to visit the

Sayida Zeinab and Sayida Ruqayya shrines, both holy sites in Shiite Islam, as well as the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, a monument dedicated to Syrian soldiers killed in battle. The last Iranian president to visit Syria was President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in

2010.

Iran's Revolutionary Guard seizes tanker in Strait of Hormuz

seizure

board

The Niovi had been com-

ing from dry-dock repairs in Dubai, bound for Fujairah on

the eastern coast of the United

Arab Emirates without carry-

ing any cargo, according to the

oil tanker carrying crude for Chevron Corp. of San Ramon,

California, amid wider ten-

sions between Tehran and the

US over its nuclear programme.

The Advantage Sweet had 23

Indians and one Russian on

Advantage Sweet of colliding

with another vessel, while offer-

ing no evidence to support its

claim. Iran has offered a vari-

ety of unsupported claims in

the past when seizing foreign-flagged ships amid tensions with the West.

The taking of the two tankers in under a week comes

amid the disappearance of the Marshall Island-flagged Suez

Rajan, which had been in the

South China Sea off Singapore

for over a year after a report

alleged it to smuggling sanc-

Rajan last showed it off East

Africa, moving in a direction that could take it to the

well as the maritime intelli-

gence firm Ambrey, both have

reported the Suez Rajan was

seized on order of American

authorities. The ship's manag-

er has not responded to queries

from The Associated Press

about the status of the ship. US

officials also have not com-

mented. However, the Greek

Ministry of Maritime Affairs

acknowledged Wednesday

recently sending a warning to Greek ships in the Mideast to

be on alert when going through

the Persian Gulf.

Tracking data for the Suez

The Financial Times, as

tioned Iranian crude oil.

Americas.

Iran has accused the

Last week, Iran seized an

data firm Refinitiv.

AP DUBAI

Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard seized a Panamanian-flagged oil tanker in the strategic Strait of Hormuz on Wednesday, the second such capture by Tehran in under a week amid height-ened tensions over its nuclear

programme. The taking of the oil tanker Niovi renewed concerns about Iran threatening maritime traffic in the strait, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf through which a fifth of all crude passes. It also comes amid the disappearance of a crude oil tanker in southeast Asia believed to be carrying Iranian crude oil amid reports it may have been seized by the United States.

The US Navy published surveillance footage shot by an aerial drone of about dozen Guard vessels swarming the tanker on Wednesday morning. The drone had been on a routine patrol in the area and saw the seizure, though the Navy did not receive a distress call from the Niovi itself, 5th Fleet spokesman Cmdr.

Timothy Hawkins said. Those Guard ships "forced the oil tanker to reverse course and head toward Iranian territorial waters off the coast of Bandar Abbas, Iran," the Navy said.

"Iran's actions are contrary to international law and disruptive to regional security and stability," the 5th Fleet said in a statement. "Iran's continued harassment of vessels and interference with navigational rights in regional waters are unwarranted, irresponsible and a present threat to maritime security and the global economy."

Iran acknowledged the seizure, with the judiciary's Mizan news agency quoting the Tehran prosecutor's office as saying that a judge ordered it impounded over an unspeci-

Shipping registries show the Niovi as managed by Smart Tankers of Piraeus, Greece. A woman who answered the phone at the firm declined to immediately comment on the

India, new Trade

Commissioner London (PTI): Harjinder Kang,

world 09

Kang appointed

Deputy Envoy to

Britain's Chief Negotiator for the India-UK free trade agreement (FTA) was on Wednesday named as the country's new Trade Commissioner to South Asia and Deputy High Commissioner for Western India. Kang, who will succeed Alan Gemmell as Deputy High Commissioner, will play a pivotal role in supporting the implementation of the FTA expected to bring huge oppor-tunities for UK businesses, according to the British government.

India and the UK have held nine rounds of discussions since the FTA talks began over a year ago in January 2022, with a goal towards a comprehensive pact that is expected to significantly enhance the bilateral trading elationship worth an estimat ed GBP 34 billion last year.

am delighted to welcome Harjinder to this role. He has been an integral part of our India trade deal negotiating team, and I'm confident he will use that experience to build on our outstanding track record on trade in South Asia, expanding opportunities for British businesses in untapped markets," said UK Business and Trade

Secretary Kemi Badenoch. Trade Commissioners lead the UK's overseas effort to promote trade, investment, trade policy and export finance. They are expected to generate business opportunities for the UK while contributing to the growth of sustainable, resilient, and productive economies across respective regions associated

with their roles. "It is an honour to be appointed as Trade Commissioner for South Asia Deputy High and Commissioner for Western India, both vibrant and growing regions which are pivotal to the UK's security and prosperity," said Kang. "Í am deeply committed to fostering strong relationships between the UK and South Asia and am excited about the opportunities ahead as we strengthen our economic ties and forge new partnerships in the region to create jobs, promote innovation and drive economic growth at home and abroad," he said.

PUBLIC NOTICE Please be informed that we, Ankit Pasricha and arul Pasricha, son and daughter of Jeewan arsicha, R/o 10-C, MIG Flats, Gulabi Bagh, New Delhi-110007, are the mutated/ owners of Flat No. 10-C, MIG Flats, Gulabi Bagh, New Delhi-110007, owever, the original Conveyance Deed for the aid flat was issued in the name of Sml. Asha Pasricha which has file number F24 (55)82/ said flat was issued in the name of Smt. Asha Pasricha, which has file number F24 (55)82/ MG/G, has been lost. We have filed an FIR with LR No. 387153/2023 on 27/04/2023 to report the loss of the Conveyance Deed. Any person(s) claiming any right or interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents, mer context waithin 14 down fore the deta of ay contact us within 15 days from the date his notice at the above-mentioned address and hone numbers (9811185007 / 9899790341).

single day, date yet to be decided envoy amid peace mission talk PTI ISLAMABAD

AP VATICAN CITY

Pope greets

Pope Francis on Wednesday greeted the foreign envoy of the Russian Orthodox Church, just days after revealing a secret "mission" was under way to try to put an end to the war in Ukraine.

Metropolitan Anthony attended Francis' weekly general audience in St. Peter's Square and then greeted Francis at the end.

He presented the pope with an icon, which Francis blessed. Anthony was later seen being led off the stage by one of Francis' aides.

Francis devoted his remarks at the audience to a recap of his weekend visit to Hungary, during which he made repeated calls for an end to the war.

sus on the date of the polls. decision was The announced by a senior minister after overnight parleys between the government and the main opposition party to

Pakistan's coalition govern-ment and former prime minister Imran Khan's party

have made "big progress" after

they agreed to hold simultane-

ous elections under caretaker

governments across the coun-

try but failed to reach a consen-

end a deadlock over the timing of provincial and federal elections, an issue that has rocked the cash-starved country's politics for months. The talks were held in the

backdrop of the controversy with Khan's Pakistan Tehreeke-Insaf (PTI) party seeking early polls - particularly in Punjab and Khyber

assemblies were dissolved in and there was no confusion January - and the government among anyone. led by the Pakistan Muslim He added that there were League-Nawaz (PML-N) mainmany things in the backdrop taining that provincial and federal elections across the coun-

the talks, the Leader of the

House in the Senate and Federal

Minister for Finance and

Revenue Muhammad Ishaq

Dar termed the consensus on

holding simultaneous elections across the country to be held

that played a key role including the 18th Constitutional try be held on the same day in Amendment, the concept of caretaker governments and

Pak govt, Opp agree to hold polls on

The third and key round of simultaneous polls for free, fair talks between the coalition govand transparent elections without any controversy. ernment and PTI began on However, he said a consen-Tuesday night to discuss proosals for holding elections on

sus was yet to be reached on the the same day in the country. date of the elections. Talking to the media after "We have narrowed down

on the date ... but we have yet to reach an agreement," he said, adding that both sides would consult their leadership on the matter.

He termed the consensus two points as a great positive on holding one-day elections in Dar said that there was conthe country as "big progress." sensus between both parties on

The minister said both sides have shown flexibility and if they continue to work

towards a resolution with sin-cerity, "the third stage (finalisa-tion of the election date), which Pakhtunkhwa provinces where under caretaker governments will be the final stage, will also

be successful". Speaking alongside him, PPP's Yousuf Raza Gilani said it was also agreed that both sides would accept the election results.

The government side included Ishaq Dar, Khawaja Gilani and Syed Naveed Qamar

tion government. The PTI, which is the main opposition party, fielded its Vice Chairman Shah Mahmood Qureshi,

Chaudhry and Senator Ali Zafar for talks.

PUBLIC NOTICE Be it known to the public at large, that my client Mrs. Anju Arora, Wo Sh. Ajay Arora, R/o 236-E MIG Flats Rajouri Garden. New Delhi-110027, has disowned and severed all her legal and social ties with her Brother Mr. Ajay Kumar Arora and Sister-in-Law Mrs. Sunita Arora W/o Ajay Kumar Arora. Henceforth, both of them would have no claim in her moveable and immovable properties/assets. Anybody dealing with them shall do so at their own risks, costs and consequences. My client shall not be responsible for their any act of omission and c om mission. ARUSH KAPOOR ADVOCATE Office-SC / GA NEW ROHTAK ROAD, KAROL BAGH NEW DELHI -Kathmandu (PTI): Injured inserted into the windpipe

Public Notice My client Mr. Surender Singh Bisht S/o Sh. Kawar Singh Bisht, Resident C-129A, Vishwas Park Uttam Nagar, West Delhi, Delhi-59, has disowned/debarred his sor Mohit Bisht who is R/o D-62, Vishwas Park Rajapuri Road, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi from his movable, immovable properties due to disrespectful, out of control behaviours. He severed his relationship with him for all intents & purposes with immediate effect. Anybody deals with him will do so

at his /her/their own risk and responsibility

UN's Martin Griffiths in Sudan, seeking guarantees on aid

AP PORT SUDAN

The UN's humanitarian chief port on Wednesday, as thousands of Sudanese and foreign nationals gathered there in hopes of fleeing the conflict-torn east African country. Martin Griffiths, the under-secretarygeneral for humanitarian affairs and emergency relief coordinator at the United Nations, tweeted that he came to the city of Port Sudan to affirm the UN's commitment to the Sudanese people. His arrival in the Red Sea port came on the last day of a shaky truce, meant to expire at midnight, that has done little to quell the fighting. It also comes amid increasing concern about the humanitarian situation for those trapped and displaced by the fighting, which is the result of a power struggle between the country's two top generals. But questions remain over how UN agencies can operate with limited staff and supplies amid the chaos.

workers were evacuated from the Darfur and Khartoum as badly of a land convoy to

country's capital on Khartoum Darfur were looted on the road, he said, and singled out

October.

achievement.

Indian mountaineer undergoes successful

surgery in Nepal

Saad Rafique, Azam Nazeer Tarar and Sardar Ayaz Sadiq from the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and they are joined by Yusuf Raza

Senior Vice President Fawad

from the Pakistan Peoples Party and other parties in the coali-

fied complaint.

More than a week after the brutal fighting erupted in the Port Sudan

Some UN offices paused their services, such as the World Food Programme, after two of its workers were killed in fighting in southern Sudan. The WFP has since said it will resume operations.

The battle for control of Sudan erupted after months of escalating tensions between the military, led by Gen. Abdel-Fattah Burhan, and a rival paramilitary group called the Rapid Support Forces, com-manded by Gen. Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo. At a news conference from

seeking guarantees from the

warring sides for the safe pas-

sage of humanitarian aid. He

addressed criticism that the

UN had not been doing enough

by saying it was "extremely

Sudan

for the moon," Griffiths said in the online briefing. "We're asking for the movement of humanitarian supplies and peo-

ple. We do this in every other country, even without ceasefires." The conflict has so far killed 550 people, including civilians, and wounded more

than 4,900. The fighting has displaced at least 334,000 people inside Sudan, and sent tens of thousands more to neighbouring countries — Egypt, Chad, South Sudan, the Central African Republic and Ethiopia, Port Sudan, Griffiths said he is according to UN agencies.

More than 42,000 Sudanese who fled the war in their country have crossed into Egypt along with 2,300 foreign nationals since the crisis began, according to the UN refugee agency. Aid workers are increasing-

difficult" for it to operate in ly concerned about lack of basic Six trucks belonging to the services in these areas, and also World Food Programme carryin Port Sudan, some 400 kilomeing aid to the western region of tres (250 miles) from Khartoum.

Maloo on Wednesday under-"It's not as if we're asking went a successful tracheostomy surgery and his condition is improving, his brother said, nearly a fortnight after he was found alive by rescuers in Nepal's Mount Annapurna.

Anurag, 34, a resident of Kishangarh in Rajasthan, went missing in mid-Ápril after he fell from around 6,000 meters while descending from Camp III. Mount Annapurna is the 10th highest mountain in the world. He was found alive in a deep crevasse at some 5800metre altitude on April 20 after three days of continuous search by a team of rescuers. He was rushed to Manipal Hospital in Pokhara and then airlifted to Kathmandu for further treatment.

"Anurag underwent a successful tracheostomy surgery," his brother Ashish Maloo told PTI.

A tracheostomy is an opening created at the front of the neck so a tube can be

to help a breathe. If necessary, the tube can be connected to an oxyger supply and a ventilator.

We are hopeful that he could be taken off the ventilator in the next 3-4 days, Ashish said, adding that Anurag is conscious and opening his eyes and obeying instructions from the doctors

Anurag is currently undergoing treatment at the Intensive Care Unit of the Medicity Hospital in Lalitpur near Kathmandu.

Anurag has also slightly moved his body, Ashish said.

He was on a mission to climb all 14 peaks above 8,000 metres and the seven highest points in all seven continents to create awareness and drive action towards achieving the UN Global Goals.

He has been awarded REX Karam — Veer Chakra and became the 2041 Antarctic Youth Ambassador from India

ROAD, KAROL BAGH NEW DELHI 110005|CONTACT:09910950400 ROAD,

PUBLIC NOTICE

Vide this notice, Objections/

Suggestions are hereby invited on

the proposed revision of the location

of Commercial - 2 area measuring 52.28 mtrs, in the green area due to HSVP drain passing on the already

approved location as mentioned in the Building Plans of the Group

(Anshul Kumar Aggarwal), Advocate, Shop No. 2 S-44,45 Paramn Puri, Utam Nagar, New Delhi-59 PUBLIC NOTICE To be known to all that my client. Shri SUNI KUMAR CHAWLA, son of Shri K L Chawla

PUBLIC NOTICE "This is to inform the public at large that, Mrs. Neetu Gupta W/o Mr. Sanjay Gupta (Aadhar No. 96223326722) & Mr. Anupam Gupta (Aadhar No. 96223326722) & Mr. Anupam Gupta (Aadhar No.841142747288) both R/o D-13A/11, Second Floor, Model Town-II, North West Delhi. 10009, who are the owner of the property i.e. Entire Second Floor without roof of Property bearing No. D-13A/11, (Block No. D-13A, Prop. No. 11), Land area measuring 573.07 sq. yds. ie. 479.86 sq. ntrs., siluated at Model Town, Delhi-09, (hereinafter referred to as "the said property", having purchased the same by virtue of Saie Deed dated 01-06-2022 executed by Wis Aay Jay Realtech Pvt. Ltd. (Doc. No. 8676). The said Property has been mortgaged by the owner with RBL Bank Limited. Some Property Paper regarding this property i.e. Original Sale Deed dated 23-12-2017 executed in favour of M/s Aaj Jay Realtech Pvt. Ltd. (July regd. Doc. No. 15307) in Bk-1, Vol. No. 7260 at Pages. 86-101, dated 23-12-2017 has been lost by the owner and is not traceable and if anybody found the same and such document is in hisher possession then kindly returm to the address mentioned below and if any Person having any type of resident of SFS Flat no. 387 (on Second Floor) in Pocket GH-13, Category-II, Paschin Vihar, New Delhi-63 have lost/misplaced the original documents issued by DDA (i.e Possession Letter, Possession Slip and NOC for Water and Electricity, etc.) in respect of DDA SFS CATEGORY-II FLAT No. 387, in Pocket - GH-13, Paschim Vihar, New Delhi 110063 issued by DDA vide File No. F.136(131)89/SFS. An FIR to this effect has been lodged in PS-Crime Branch, Delh bearing LR No. 390454/2023 dated 28/04/2023. Any person(s) claiming any right, interest over documents or found in possession of original documents, may write/contact above named person at above address/phone no 9910022490 or to Dy. Director (LAB)H o Director (H)-1, Vikas Sadan, INA, New Delhi within 15 days from the date of publication o any Person having any type of Achin Sharma (Advocate) aim/right/title/interest over the said property may G-2/210 and 210A. Tulsi Tower form in writing, at the address mentioned below, bout his objections, within 07 days from today. Alaknanda Market, New Delhi ailing which it shall be presumed that the said 9810221449, 9650865007 y is free from all type of Encumbrances,

PUBLIC NOTICE PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for notice of the general public that a political party is proposed to be registered by the name of BAHUHAN CHETNA VIKAS MORCHA, The office of the party is located at C-8, Kachnar City, Post-Vijay Nagar, Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh-482001. This Party has submitted application to the Election Commission of India, New Delhi for its registration as Political Party under Section 29A of the Representation of People Act, 1951-Name/ address of the office bearers lame/ address of the office bearer Name/ address of the office bearers of the Party are as follows:-1 President/ Chairman- Khemra Jharia, Raipur, Chhattisgarh 2 General Secretary/ Secretary/ Narendra Kumar Dass, Jabalpu M.P. 3. Treasurer- Manoha Dehariya, Seoni M.P. If any one has any objection to the registration o AHUJAN CHETNA VIKA WORCHA thy may send their object with reasons thereof, to the Secretary (Political Party) Election Commission of India, Nirvachan Sadan, Ashok Road, New Delhi 110001 within 30 days of the publication of this notice. VIPUL KR. RAHEJA (ADVOCATE) Chamber No. 55, Civil Side, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi

(Khemraj Jharia)-President BAHUJAN CHETNA VIKAS MORCHA

The Department of G.N.D		teference No. GNDU/Gen/05/20 nritsar invites online bids for the	following:-	
Sr. No.		Item	Quantity	
1 Heavy Duty Print 2 UPS	er		01	
Closing date & time: 13-0 For details log onto www Note:- Any corrigendum(website only.	eproc	. punjab.gov.in ne tender notice shall be publis	egistrar (General)	
NA/12/16029/2023/	23482	Dated CHD :- 5/3/2023		
MER 2023 INDIA	Ţ	HERN RAILWAY ENDER NOTICE gh E-tendering (e-Procurem	Azadi _{Ka} ^{Amrit} Mahotsav	
NIT No.		eNo-171050	, , ,	
Name of Work and its Location	Tender for "Development of One Smart Class Room (E-Training Centre) at RCNK/SNP."			
Approx. Cost of Work	(Rs. 1	2,84,923/- including GST welve Lacs Eighty Four Thousand Nine Hundred ty Three Only)		
Earnest Money Rs. 2		5,700.00/-		
Completion Period of Wo	ork	03 months of date of execution of work		
Cost of Tender documen cash / by Post	t on	NIL		
Date and Time for submi of tender and openin tender		Upto 11:00 hrs. on 23/05/2023 Opening of Tender at 11:30 hrs.		
Website particulars n board location com		Above tender available on IF www.ireps.gov.in	REPS site i.e.	

29k cops to be deployed for King's Coronation

AP LONDON

The operation to secure the L Coronation ceremony of King Charles III and Queen Camilla, known as Golden Orb, will be one of the largest security operations ever mounted in London with as many as 11,500 officers on duty for the mega event, Scotland Yard said on Wednesday.

The Metropolitan Police said there will be more than 29,000 police officer deplovments over the course of this week in the lead up to Coronation Day on Saturday and the rest of the long celebratory Bank Holiday weekend, which runs until Monday.

A proverbial ring of steel is expected to be in place in the UK capital as thousands of Londoners and visitors turn out to enjoy the "once in a lifetime



moment of national signifipublic safety. cance and pride". "We want Londoners and

The Met said it has been visitors coming to the city to planning for Operation Golden enjoy this historic and momen-Orb for many months and will tous occasion safely and securebe using facial recognition and said Met Police Deputy Assistant Commissioner Ade other specialist units to ensure

Adelekan. "On Coronation Day we will have the largest one-day mobilisation of officers seen in decades with just over 11,500 officers on duty. The weekend promises to be a spectacular celebration and the Met Police is

honoured to be policing such an internationally important event across the capital," he said.

a long history of policing such events and will be drawing upon its diverse expertise from across the organisation, using officers and specialist units to keep people safe. It comes a day after a male suspect was arrested at the gates of Buckingham Palace on Tuesday evening after throwing shotgun cartridges into the palace grounds. The force has ruled out a terrorism link with the incident, which necessitated a controlled explosion on the suspect's bag.

"London is one of the most exciting and diverse cities in the world and throughout the celebrations, we will be at the heart of and doing all we can to be connected with the people and communities we serve

Housing Colony, in the Revenue Estate of Village Daulatabad, Sector-106, Gurgaon, being developed under License. No. 61 of 2012 Dated: He said the Met Police has 13.06.2012, granted by The Director General, Town & Country Planning

> Harvana. A copy of the earlier approved Building Plan bearing drawing no. 12307 Dt: 17.06.2016 & the as built Building Plan is available for perusal at the office of the undersigned, as well as in the Office of Senior Town Planner, Town & Country Planning, 3rd Floor, HUDA Complex, Sector-14, Gurgaon (Hr). Objections / Suggestions, if any, may be sent to the Senior Town Planner, at the address mentioned above with a

is notice

copy to our company at the address mentioned below, within 30 days of this publication

Sepset Properties Limited 11th Floor, Paras Twin Towers, Sector-54, Gurgaon-122 002 (HR)



money 10

WTO needs to look at farm subsidy issue with open mind: Sitharaman

PTI INCHEON

World Trade he Organisation (WTO) should look at the issue of farm subsidies with an open mind as it impacts the food security needs of emerging economies in the backdrop of Covid pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Wednesday.

Speaking at the Asian Development Bank (ADB) Governor's seminar on 'Policies to support Asia's rebound', Sitharaman said sooner a solution is found out by the WTO, the better it would be for the world.

"Since WTO was founded, there has been a grievance with respect to the export of agricultural products and generally in trade, the voice of the Global

NOAL MEETI SIAN DESELOPM EON, REPUBLIC OF

South and emerging markets has not been heard at par with that of the developed countries," she The 'Global South' largely

and South America. Subsidies for agriculture and poor farmers in developing countries were not counted at all and were frozen, she said, adding

PTI 📕 NEW DELHI

Shares of edible oil major Adani Wilmar on

Adani Wilmar on Wednesday fell nearly 5 per cent

tanked 6.11 per cent to Rs 390.10. On the NSE, it fell 4.56

per cent to end at Rs 396.50 each

share. In volume terms, 6.79 lakh

shares of the company were

traded on the BSE and over

that in context of Covid and Russia-Ukraine war, food and fertilizer security have become important. "We will all have to talk

again (about food and fertiliser refers to countries in Asia, Africa security) at the WTO with an open mind," the minister said. There is better food secu-

rity in the developed world compared to developing coun-

Adani Wilmar shares fall nearly 5%

45.68 lakh shares on the NSE

it at Rs 93.61 crore for the quarter ended March 2023 on lower

revenue amid a fall in prices of

Its net profit stood at Rs 234.29 crore in the year-ago period. Adani Wilmar, an equal

joint venture between Adani

Group and Singapore's Wilmar,

sells edible oil under Fortune

brand. It also sells some food

products like rice, wheat flour

12,622 crore in FY22.

across all parameters.

According to

Chemicals Managing Director

and CEO R Mukundan, the

company has delivered an

improved performance during

FY23 as compared to FY22

situation is expected to remain

Coal production

vears to 893.08

MT in FY-2023

PTI NEW DELHI

on Wednesday.

ministry said.

cent.

"The global demand-supply

Tata

On Wednesday, Adani Wilmar reported a 60 per cent decline in consolidated net prof-

after Q4 earnings announcement

during the day.

cooking oils.

tries. Trade agreements have come about in a lopsided way, for which solutions have to be found," Sitharaman said.

Under global trade norms, a WTO member country's food subsidy bill should not breach the limit of 10 per cent of the value of production based on the reference price of 1986-88.

As part of permanent solu-tion, India has asked for mea-sures like amendments in the formula to calculate the food subsidy cap and inclusion of programmes implemented after 2013 under the ambit of 'Peace Clause?

As an interim measure, the WTO members at the Bali ministerial meeting in December 2013 had agreed to put in place a mechanism popularly called 'Peace Clause' and committed to negotiating an agreement for a permanent solution.

and sugar. Total income fell to

Rs 13,945.02 crore in January-

March 2022-23 from Rs

14,979.83 crore in the year-ago period, Adani Wilmar said in a

Consolidated revenue wit-

nessed a decline due to fall in prices of edible oil, the compa-

ny said. During the full last fis-

cal, Adani Wilmar's net profit fell

to Rs 582.12 crore from Rs

803.73 crore in the previous year.

Total income, however, rose to

Rs 58,446.16 crore from Rs

54,327.16 crore in the previous

regulatory filing.

vear.

Robust equity buying by foreign institutional investors failed to stop the downward movement as fall in index heavyweights Reliance Industries, Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys and Larsen & Toubro weakened the overall

PTI MUMBAI

trends

sentiment. The 30-share BSE Sensex declined 161.41 points or 0.26 per cent to settle at 61,193.30. During the day, it tumbled 330.27 points or 0.53 per cent to 61,024.44.

The broader NSE Nifty fell 57.80 points or 0.32 per cent to end at 18,089.85.

"Renewed concerns over the US regional banking turmoil, uncertainty regarding the Fed's policy outcome, and the need to increase the US treasury debt borrowing limit triggered a bearish attack on Wall Street. Despite this, the robust growth of India's services and manufacturing sectors in April and the strong inflow of foreign funds helped minimise the losses in the domestic market," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at

Geojit Financial Services. India's services sector growth accelerated in April, as strong demand conditions resulted in the fastest increase in new business and output in close to 13 years, a monthly survey said on Wednesday.

From the Sensex firms, Bharti Airtel, Tech Mahindra, Axis Bank, Bajaj Finance, Larsen & Toubro, Tata



Consultancy Services, State Bank of Índia, Reliance Industries, Wipro, Infosys, HCL Technologies, IndusInd Bank and Tata Steel were the major laggards.

Hindustan Unilever, Asian Paints, Tata Motors, UltraTech Cement, ITC and Nestle were among the gainers.

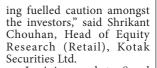
Markets pause 8-day rally; all eyes

on US Fed interest rate decision

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.35 per cent and smallcap index gained 0.20 per cent.

per cent. Among indices, telecom-munication fell by 1.28 per cent, teck (0.95 per cent), IT (0.86 per cent), oil & gas (0.80 per cent), power (0.20 per cent) and bankex (0.14 per cent). FMCG, realty, consumer discretionary and industrials were among the gainers.

"Markets lost steam after eight sessions of gains as select profit-taking in banking, metal and IT stocks ahead of the US Fed's rate setting meet-



In Asian markets, Seoul and Hong Kong ended lower, while Shanghai settled in the green. European equity mar-kets were trading mostly with gains.

The US markets had ended lower on Tuesday.

Rallying for the eighth straight day, the BSE bench-mark had climbed 242.27 points or 0.40 per cent to set-tle at 61,354.71 on Tuesday. The Nifty went up 82.65 points or 0.46 per cent to fin-

points of 0.46 per cent to ini-ish at 18,147.65. Meanwhile, global oil benchmark Brent crude declined 2.08 per cent to USD 72 75 per bergel Forgign 73.75 per barrel. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were net buyers on Wednesday as they bought equities worth Rs 1,338 crore, according to exchange data.



Aviation stocks rally as Go First moves NCLT for insolvency

PTI 📕 NEW DELHI

Chares of InterGlobe Aviation. Othe parent of IndiGo, and SpiceJet jumped on Wednesday after Go First sought voluntary insolvency resolution proceedings and decided to cancel flights for three days starting May 3. InterGlobe Aviation stock climbed 4.52 per cent to settle at Rs 2,163.90 on the BSE. During the day, it rallied 7.99 per cent to Rs 2,235.95 -- its 52-week high. Shares of SpiceJet gained 1.40 per cent to end at Rs 31.93. In intra-day, it zoomed 5.58 per cent to Rs 33.25.

Cash-strapped Go First on Tuesday sought voluntary insolvency resolution proceedings and decided to cancel flights for three days starting May 3, as the budget airline is unable to meet financial obligations amid the grounding of half of its fleet due to non-availability of Pratt &

Whitney engines. Go First, which has been fly-ing for more than 17 years, cancelled all flights for three days -- May 3, 4 and 5 -- and promised to make a full refund to the customers. It operates around 180-185 flights, carrying around 30,000 passengers on a daily basis. Airline's CEO Kaushik Khona said the airline has grounded 28 planes, more than half of its fleet, due to non-supply of engines by Pratt & Whitney (P&W), and that has resulted in a fund crunch.

Industrial Revolution levels, fuelled by ever-rising Green

House Gas (GHG) concentra-

"India's diverse topography makes it highly vulnerable to cli-

mate risks, manifested in the

form of sustained rise in temper-

tions and accumulated heat.

after the company reported a 60 per cent decline in consolidat-ed net profit for the March quar-ter. The stock declined 4.30 per cent to settle at Rs 397.65 apiece on the BSE. During the day, it tanked 6.11 per cent to Bs

Audi commences local production of Q3 range at Aurangabad

PTI 📕 NEW DELHI

uxury carmaker Audi L'India on Wednesday said it has commenced local production of Q3 and Q3 Sportback at Skoda Auto Volkswagen India's Volkswagen India's Aurangabad facility. With this, the Volkswagen

Group reiterates its commitment to Make in India and continues to enhance its product offering to meet the ever evolving needs of the discerning Indian luxury cus-tomer, the automaker said in a statement.

"Commencing local pro-duction of the Q3 and Q3 Sportback is a momentous step for the brand in India. With this, we now manufacture six cars at our facility in

Tata Chemicals Dec-March consolidated net profit rises 54% to ₹711 crore

PTI 📕 MUMBAI

Chemicals on ¶ata Wednesday reported a 53.56 per cent growth in consolidat-ed net profit at Rs 711 crore for the quarter ended March 2023. The company's net profit stood at Rs 463 crore in the year-

ago period, Tata Chemicals said in a regulatory filing.

balanced over the medium term. Revenue from operations We expect sustainability trends will drive the demand for newer rose 26.60 per cent up during the applications like solar glass and quarter under review at Rs lithium which will fuel 4,407 crore as compared to Rs For the year 2022-23, the "Our focus is on timely company's consolidated net execution of expansion proprofit surged 86.35 per cent to jects and efficient cost manage-Rs 2,335 crore over Rs 1,253 ment. We continue to work crore in FY22. with our customers and other stakeholders on our sustainabil-Its revenue from operations witnessed a growth of 33.01 per ity and digitisation efforts," cent during FY23, at Rs 16,789 k un dan u said.

total installed capacity hits 72,304 MW

Super Thermal Power Plant

"NTPC Group has reached a significant milestone in the power sector, with an installed MW. This acity of achievement includes the recent addition of Unit-1, a 660 MW capacity, of the 1,320 MW (2x660) MSTPP located in Rampal, Mongla, Bagerhat, Bangladesh," the power giant said in a statement. This marks NTPC's first overseas capacity addition.

(MSTPP) in Bangladesh.

India's green financing requirement estimated at 2.5% of GDP: RBI Study PTI MUMBAI

India's green financing require-ment is estimated to be at least 2.5 per cent of GDP annually till

2030, a Reserve Bank report said on Wednesday. The country aims to achieve net zero emissions target by 2070. The Reserve Bank of India's

report on Currency and Finance (RCF) for the year 2022-23 covers four major dimensions of climate change to assess future challenges to sustainable high

growth in India. The areas are the unpreceted scale and pace of climate change; its macroeconomic effects; implications for financial stability; and policy options to mitigate climate risks.



per cent annually and a significant improvement in its energy-mix in favour of renewables zero goal by 2070 attainable. "Climate change is upon us". to around 80 per cent by 2070-

ature, erratic monsoon patterns, and rising frequency and intensity of extreme weather events achieve its green transition targets by 2030, making the net

Godrej Properties Q4 profit rises

58% to ₹412 crore; to raise up

to ₹2,000 crore via bonds

"India's goal of becoming an advanced economy by 2047 and achieving the net zero target by 2070 would require accelerated efforts in terms of reducing the energy intensity put as well as improving the energy-mix in favour of renewables," it said. Further, the report said scenario analysis suggests that delayed climate policy actions could be costlier in terms of larger output losses and higher inflation.

NTPC group's

PTI NEW DELHI

State-owned NTPC Ltd on Wednesday said its installed capacity at the group level has reached 72,304 MW-mark post addition of unit 1 of Maitree

Head Balbir Singh Dhillon stated.

The company rolls out A4, A6, Q5, Q7, Q3 and Q3 Sportback from the plant making inroads and moving towards capturing India's dynamic and growing luxury car market, he added

crore as compared with Rs

The country's goal of achieving the net zero target by 2070 would require an accelerated reduction in the energy intensity of GDP by around 5

"India's green financing requirement is estimated to be at least 2.5 per cent of GDP annually till 2030," the report said.

According to the report, a balanced policy intervention with progress ensured across all policy levers will enable India to

per Meteorological Organisation (WMO), the 2015-22 period was the warmest on record.

Despite the cooling effects of La Nina into its third year, 2022 was the eighth consecutive year in which annual global temperature reached at least 1 degree celsius above pre-

PTI NEW DELHI

to Rs 2,000 crore.

Sebi introduces legal identifier system for issuers with listed NCDs, securitised debt

PTI NEW DELHI

¬apital markets regulator Sebi Jon Wednesday introduced Legal Entity Identifier (LEI) system for issuers that have listed or planning to list non-convertible securities, securitised debt instruments and security receipts.

LEI, a unique global identifier for legal entities participating in financial transactions, is designed to create a global reference data system that uniquely identifies every legal entity, in any jurisdiction, that is party to a financial transaction. It is a unique 20-character code to identify legally distinct entities that engage in financial transactions

Presently, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) mandates non-individual borrowers having aggregate exposure of above Rs 25

crore to obtain LEI code. In view of this, Sebi said that issuers having outstanding listed non-convertible securities as on August 31 will have to obtain and report the LEI code in the centralised database of corporate bonds by September 1, according to a circular.

Similarly, issuers having outstanding listed securitised debt instruments and security receipts as on August 31 will have to obtain and report the LEI code to the depositories by September 1.

Further, issuers proposing to the ISIN for future issuances. list non-convertible securities



and securitised debt instruments as well as security receipts on or after September 1 will have to report their LEI code to the centralised database of corporate bonds and depositories respectively at the time of allotment of the ÍSIN.

Sebi said that the requirement of LEI for issuers proposing to list or having outstanding municipal debt securities will be specified later.

The LEI code can be obtained from Legal Entity Identifier India Ltd, a subsidiary of the Clearing Corporation of India Ltd, which has been recognised by the RBI as issuer of LEI and is accredited by the Global Legal Entity Identifier Foundation (GLEIF) as the local operating unit in India for issuance and management of

LEI code. The regulator has asked depositories to map the LEI code to existing ISINs by September 30, and map the LEI code provided by the issuers with the ISIN at the time of activation of

Govt aims 1 bn tonne rises 22.6% in five coal production in FY24 under Action Plan

PTI 📕 NEW DELHI

India's coal production has In a first, the coal ministry has set an ambitious target of 1 bilregistered a growth of about 23 per cent in last five years to lion tonne coal production dur-893.08 million tonnes (MT) in ing 2023-24 under its 'Action FY23, an official statement said Plan' for the sector and a capex target of Rs 21,030 crore for its "India's overall coal pro-PSUs. In a statement, the minduction has seen a quantum istry said it has conceptualized jump to 893.08 MT in FY 2022the Action Plan for FY24 with the goal of achieving Aatmanirbhar Bharat by 23 as compared to 728.72 MT in FY 2018-2019 with a growth of about 22.6 per cent," the coal enhancing the production, efficiency, sustainability, new tech-In the last five years, the pronologies etc in the coal sector. duction of Coal India Limited

"It is an ambitious, well-(CIL) has increased to 703.21 crafted roadmap that covers a MT from 606.89 MT in FY19, variety of areas including a total coal production target of 1012 registering a growth of 15.9 per MT for 2023-24," it said.

While Singareni Collieries The ministry has already Company Limited (SCCL) has taken various steps to increase registered a growth of 4.3 per the coal production and efficiencent at 67.14 MT in FY23 comcy like mining developers cum operators (MDO) for the oper-

ationalization of CIL (Coal India) mines/blocks and production in discontinued/abandoned mines on the revenue sharing basis.

> istry has taken various measures to achieve the objective of supply of quality coal to all consumers. For undertaking the job of sampling and analysis of coal samples at loading end, third party sampling agencies have

been empanelled for both power and non-power coal consumers. The capex target for FY24 is Rs 21,030 crore with CIL Rs 16,500 crore, NLCIL: Rs 2,880 crore and SCCL: Rs 1650 crore) The overall projected target of assets monetization plan for

FY 2023-24 is Rs 50,118.

Bajaj Consumer Care net profit climbs 13% to ₹40.5 crore

PTI 📕 NEW DELHI

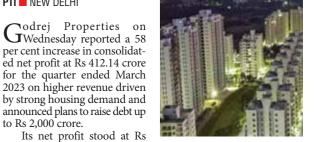
FCG firm Bajaj Consumer Care Ltd on Wednesday reported a 13 per cent rise in its consolidated net profit at Rs 40.46 crore for the fourth quarter ended March 2023.

It had posted a consolidated net profit of Rs 35.82 crore in the year-ago period, according to a regulatory filing by Bajaj Consumer Care Ltd (BCCL)

260.47 crore in the year-ago BCCL owns hair oil brands such as Almond Drops and period. Brahmi Amla.

The company's revenue from operations rose 14.53 per cent to Rs 246.19 crore during the period under review as against Rs 214.95 crore in the year-ago period. Its total expenses were at Rs 210.32 crore, up 13.69 per cent, in Q4FY23 as against Rs 184.98 crore.

BCCL's total income rose 2,585.69 crore. 13.37 per cent to Rs 259.52 crore in the March quarter.



issuance of Non-Convertible Debentures (NCDs), bonds and/or other debt securities on a private placement basis, in one or more tranches, for an amount not exceeding Rs 2,000 crore.

Pirojsha Godrej, Executive Chairperson of Godrej Properties Ltd, said, "Residential real estate demand in India has been strong throughout FY23 and leading developers have benefited from both sectoral growth as well as market share

The board of directors has approved raising of funds, by gains.

However, weak domestic equi-

ties capped sharp gains, said Anuj Choudhary - Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP

Paribas. "We expect the rupee to

trade with a slight negative bias

on risk aversion in global mar-

kets amid renewed fears over the

Total income rose to Rs

1,838.82 crore in the fourth

quarter of 2022-23 from Rs

Î,522.57 crore a year ago,

In the entire last fiscal, net

according to a regulatory filing.

profit increased to Rs 571.39

crore from Rs 352.37 crore in

2021-22. Total income also grew

to Rs 3,039 crore from Rs

Rupee gains 6 paise to close at 81.81 against US dollar

PTI 📕 NEW DELHI

pared to 64.40 MT in FY19.

The rupee consolidated in a The rupee consolidated in a narrow range and settled for the day higher by 6 paise at 81.81 provisional) against the US dollar on Wednesday, tracking the weakness of the American currency in the overseas market.

Forex traders said significant foreign fund inflows and crude oil prices below USD 75

a barrel also supported the local unit. At the interbank foreign

exchange market, the local unit opened at 81.80 against the US currency and finally closed at 81.81 (provisional), registering a gain of 6 paise over its previous close.

During the session, the rupee touched a high of 81.75 and a low of 81.86 against the



dollar.

On Tuesday, the rupee closed at 81.87 against the US currency.

The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, fell 0.41 per cent to 101.54.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude futures fell 2.04 per cent to USD 73.78 per barrel.

banking crisis in the US and The Indian rupee appreciworries over global economic

ated on a weak US dollar and recovery. sharp decline in crude oil prices.

"However, a weak dollar and extended fall in crude oil prices may prevent a sharp fall in rupee," Choudhary said.

Sustained FII inflows may also support rupee at lower levels. Investors may remain cautious ahead of the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) meeting outcome and ISM services PMI.

The ministry has also formulated a strategy to enhance coking coal availability in the country to reduce imports. Coal companies along with the min-



sport 11

BARCA CLOSER TO TITLE Real Madrid lose more ground



AP BARCELONA

ordi Alba struck a late winner for Barcelona in a 1-0 win over 10-man Osasuna on Tuesday to move the Catalans a step closer to their first La Liga title since 2019. Xavi Hernandez's side

climbed 14 points clear of sec-ond place Real Madrid, who lost against Real Sociedad later. The visitors had debutant Jorge Herrando sent off in the first half for a professional foul on Pedri, as they sat deep and tried to frustrate hosts Barcelona.

Visiting goalkeeper Aitor Fernandez kept the leaders at bay in the second half but even-

tually substitute Alba, who has had reduced minutes this season, sliced home a volley to snatch a late victory. "For a full-back I've had the luck of scoring

many goals," Alba told DAZN. "It was important to win, it was a hard game against a side

having a good season. "We haven't won La Liga for a while and for someone from here, it feels very good."

Osasuna coach Jagoba Arrasate rotated heavily to rest players ahead of the Copa del Rey final against Madrid on Saturday, while Barca started with the same side which crushed Real Betis at the weekend. The Catalans failed to

carve out many clear opportunities in the first half against their defensive opponents. The best chance fell to Pedri

after left-back Alejandro Balde found him a few yards out from goal but he did not connect with the ball well, scuffing a shot wide.

Osasuna were reduced to 10 men before the half hour mark when Herrando pulled down Pedri as he ran in on goal.

The visitors might have been reduced to nine men as goalkeeper Aitor Fernandez collided with Raphinha outside the area as the Brazilian burst through, but the referee decided both players were to blame.

Ronald Araujo powered a header narrowly over the bar from Raphinha's corner, while the Brazilian whipped a free-kick onto the roof of the net.

Xavi brought on Ansu Fati after 35 minutes for Gavi, who appeared to take a knock, and the forward came close at the start of the second half but Fernandez denied him.

Frenkie de Jong should have sent Barcelona ahead but fired straight at the goalkeeper from six yards out when Pedri found him. Barcelona's frustration grew when Fernandez saved from Fati again and substitute Ousmane Dembele sent a shot wide from close range.

if they beat West Ham at home on

Wednesday in the first of their two

we played really well. That was

everything I want to see from our

"We wanted to earn the right to be top of the league. We are happy to

"The first 60 minutes, I thought

Speed, quality, movement, two beautiful goals, we connected with our crowd and created an incredible

games in hand on Arsenal.

team," Arteta said.

La Liga's top scorer Robert Lewandowski had another quiet night at the office and when he did get a chance, Fernandez

foiled him too. Ferran Torres almost scored when he deflected a clearance narrowly wide of the far post, with Osasuna clinging on by their fingertips.

When Lewandowski found the net with 10 minutes remaining it was ruled out for offside. Eventually the breakthrough came with five minutes to go, with substitute Alba volleying home his second goal of the season after De Jong headed the ball

celebrations.

Barcelona director of football Mateu Alemany will leave in the summer to start a new pro-

ject elsewhere, the club said in a statement on Tuesday. The club said Alemany would leave at the start of July but continue working for Barcelona to close any summer transfer deals which take longer, as his contract runs until the summer of 2024.

"Despite the fact that he will leave the club on July 1, thanks to a friendly agreement, Mateu Alemany has promised to seal all first team transfer deals this summer, even if there are some into his path, sparking vigorous that take place in the last instant of the window," said Barcelona.

Real Madrid fell to a 2-0 defeat at Real Sociedad on Tuesday, leaving the champions 14 points behind La Liga leaders Barcelona with five games remaining. Former Madrid winger

Takefusa Kubo and Ander Barrenetxea netted for the hosts, who tightened their grip on fourth spot and Champions League qualification. Madrid defender Dani Carvajal was sent off after an hour for a second yellow card to make matters worse for Los Blancos.

Real played a makeshift side because of injuries and sus-pensions, and Carlo Ancelotti also left striker Karim Benzema behind in the Madrid capital ahead of Saturday's Copa del Rey final clash with Osasuna. Alex Remiro denied

Madrid defender Eder Militao in the opening stages while Martin Zubimendi struck the crossbar at the other end from close range.

Kubo struck at the start of the second half for the hosts after Militao gave the ball away in a dangerous area.

ALEMANY TO LEAVE



Carvajal was dismissed for foul on Real Sociedad forward Mikel Oyarzabal, giving Madrid an uphill struggle.

Madrid goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois did well to parry a deflected Barrenetxea strike, but he could not keep out the forward's next effort, surprising the Belgian at his near post. Los Blancos' defeat means

Barcelona just need two more points to clinch their first title since 2019, providing Madrid win their remaining matches.

Elche relegated from La Liga AP MADRID

Bottom-of-the-table Elche Were relegated from La Liga on Tuesday, with a 2-1 defeat at Almeria ensuring they cannot climb higher than 18th.

Leo Baptistao and Adri Embarba struck to take Almeria provisionally 14th, five points clear of the relegation zone, with Ezequiel Ponce pulling one back late on for the visitors.

Elche, 20th with just three wins all season, had delayed



relegation at the weekend with a thumping 4-0 win over Rayo Vallecano.

The east coast club was promoted back to La Liga in 2020, finishing 17th and 13th in the two subsequent seasons.

AP LONDON ATAR

Messi's PSG future in doubt after suspension

Gulf state.

Arsenal back on top of Premier League

Martin Odegaard fired Arsenal back to the top of the Premier League as the Norway midfielder's double inspired a 3-1 win against woeful Chelsea on Tuesday.

Mikel Arteta's side lost control of the title race after last week's 4-1 defeat at Manchester City.

But the Gunners signalled their intention to push City all the way to the wire with a much-needed first win in five games. Odegaard's brace was followed

be there. After 10 weeks at the top, Arsenal by a Gabriel Jesus strike as the hosts were knocked down to second place raced into a three-goal before halfby City's win at Fulham on Sunday. time at the Emirates Stadium.

atmosphere.

Three successive draws, includ-Noni Madueke's second half ing two blown two-goal leads, and the nitous loss at City have led Arsenal to be written off as title race chokers But Arteta insisted this week that the title was still winnable and his players responded to the Spaniard's rallying cry Troubled Chelsea were ideal opponents for Arsenal to get back on

track before a tricky trip to Newcastle on Sunday.

The Élues have now lost all six games since Frank Lampard returned as caretaker boss to replace the sacked Graham Potter.

Languishing in 12th place, Chelsea are on an nine-game winless run in all competitions and face the prospect of failing to finish in the top half of the table for the first time since

1996. "We were too nice to play against in all aspects in the first half. Not good enough," Lampard said.

"It's tough because you want to win games, but it's our job, we'll work on it Former Arsenal forward Pierre-

AP PARIS

ionel Messi's future at PSG Lwas plunged into doubt on Wednesday after he was suspended by Paris Saint-Germain after travelling to Saudi Arabia without the club's permission.

A source with knowledge of the disciplinary procedure said that Argentina's 35-year-old World-Cup winning captain, who is out of contract at the end of the season, would be sidelined for "several days", while various media in France reported that he would be suspended for two weeks.

"He cannot train, cannot play, and will not be paid while disciplinary measures are in place," the source added.

Another source, indicated that the seven-time Ballon d'Or winner would "probably" be sidelined for a fortnight, noting that "nobody is more important than the club"

Messi played the whole game in PSG's 3-1 home defeat by Lorient in Ligue 1 on Sunday.

He then travelled to Saudi Arabia to fulfil commercial commitments in his role as a tourism ambassador for the

The Saudi Tourism Authority said in a press release on Wednesday that Messi had "returned to Saudi for a second time, this time with his family' and had been treated to a demonstration of palm weaving and had fed Arabian gazelles.

As a result of the trip, Messi missed a training session scheduled for Monday following the weekend defeat.

The PSG squad were given a day off on Tuesday and Messi did not take part in training on Wednesday either. PSG are due to return to

league action away at struggling Troyes on Sunday, a game that Messi may now miss. If he were to be sidelined for two weeks he would also sit out a home match against Ajaccio on May 13.

The disciplinary measures make the prospect of Messi staying in the French capital after his two-year deal expires at the end of this season even more remote. Having at one point looked set to extend his stay for

another year, a source close to the club had said last month that he was now "much more likely" to depart.

mas no consolation for wretched performance. Arsenal are now two points

clear of second placed City and while Pep Guardiola's men remain favourites to win the title, the north Londoners have at least applied a little pressure on the champions.

City will go back into first place



Chelsea start since the Blues lost 1-0 to the Gunners in November.

But Aubameyang, whose fouryear spell with Arsenal ended acrimoniously in 2022, never had a chance of exacting revenge on his old team before being hauled off at half-

Leeds appoint Allardyce to replace sacked Gracia

AP LEEDS

Leeds have sacked manager Javi Gracia and appointed Sam Allardyce for the rest of the season as they scramble to avoid relegation from the Premier League.

The club said on Tuesday that director of football Victor Orta had left by mutual consent and 24 hours later announced the departure of Spaniard Gracia along with his backroom staff.

Gracia, who only arrived at Leeds in February, leaves the club after four defeats in five Premier League games -- they

are outside the drop zone on goal difference with four games remaining.

"Leeds can confirm Javi Gracia will leave the club after

12 games in charge," a club state-ment said. "Zigor Aranalde, Mikel Antia and Juan Solla, who joined alongside Gracia, will also leave the club.

'We thank Javi and his team for their efforts under difficult circumstances.

of the season will be overseen by experienced head coach Sam Allardyce.

Former Bolton, Newcastle, West Ham and England boss Allardyce, 68, becomes Leeds' third permanent manager of the season after Jesse Marsch and Gracia

Openda keeps Lens on course for CL

AP PARIS

Lens took a major step towards securing qualification for next season's Champions League as a Lois Openda goal secured a 1-0 win away to Toulouse in Ligue 1 on Tuesday.

Belgian international forward Openda headed in a Massadio Haidara cross just after the half-hour mark for the only goal of the game at Le Stadium, where Toulouse were playing for the first time since winning the French Cup at the weekend.

Lens, who are third in the table, held on for a victory which moves them eight points clear of fourth-placed Monaco with just five matches of the sea



son left

The northern side, who last appeared in the Champions League in 2002/03, are also only one point behind secondplaced Marseille before the teams clash in Lens on Saturday. Lens are also six points

behind flagging Ligue 1 leaders Paris Saint-Germain.

Only the top three in France qualify for the Champions League, with the top two earning a direct ticket for the group stage and third place entering in the third qualifying round.

Olmo takes Leipzig into DFB-Pokal final

AP BERLIN

 $R^{\rm B}_{\rm Olmo\,\, scored\,\, one\,\, and\,\, set\, up}$ three more first-half goals as the German Cup holders returned to the final, with a 5-1 win at Freiburg on Tuesday.

In a rematch of last year's final, which Leipzig won on penalties, Freiburg started brightly but two goals in 90 seconds put them squarely on the back foot.

Olmo headed Leipzig in front from a Dominik Szoboszlai cross after 13 minutes and assisted Benjamin Henrichs shortly after. The Spain forward teed up Szoboszlai and France winger Christopher Nkunku



to give the visitors a commanding 4-0 lead at half time.

Leipzig were reduced to ten men early in the second half when last-man Josko Gvardiol pulled down Roland Sallai outside the box but were unable to mount a comeback. Freiburg scored a late goal through Mich-ael Gregoritsch, but Szoboszlai scored again from the spot in injury time for a dominant win.

Promoted to the first-division for the first time in 2016, Leipzig have now appeared in four of the past five German Cup finals. Five-time winners Eintracht Frankfurt travel to three-time winners Stuttgart in Wednesday's second semi final.

Zhang Zhizhen became the first Chinese Palayer to reach the quarter-finals of an ATP Masters 1000 event when he beat Taylor Fritz in the Madrid Open fourth round on Tuesday.

The world number 99 said he would do the best he could against Russian Aslan Karatsev in the last eight after his 3-6, 7-6 (7/5), 7-6 (10/8) victory against the American, ranked 10th.

"I'll tell you a secret, we had a practice, I lost 6-0 with Karatsev," said Zhang.

"I'll do my best. Here everyone is a great player, huge player. They all have some very good results. (I will) try to do the best I can do."

In February Wu Yibing beat John Isner in the Dallas Open to become the first Chinese player to lift an ATP tour trophy. Wu beat Fritz in Dallas on the road



to the final, securing a first victory over an ATP top ten opponent for a Chinese player

Zhang followed suit in the Spanish capital to hit a new milestone in a superb year for Chinese tennis.

"I didn't really think about ranking, because you just need to give the best you can," said Zhang.

"Before the match, you know it's a very tough player. There is no weakness, so (I) just tried what I can do."

The 26-year-old saved three match points in the tie-break, continuing his strong run after upsetting Briton Cameron Norrie, ranked 13th, on Monday.

Zhang had already become the first Chinese player to break into the top 100 of the ATP rankings in October 2022.

He is now guaranteed to climb to at least world number 66 on Monday, the highest ranking of his career.

I'll do the best I can: Zhang after landmark win

"The remaining four games



RAIN FORCES LSG, CSK TO SPLIT POINTS

PTI LUCKINOW

yush Badoni stood tall amidst the ruins with a Aclassy half-century on a poor surface before a sharp downpour forced Lucknow Super Giants and Chennai Super Kings to split points as their IPL match was called off on

Wednesday. This is the first game in the 16th edition of IPL that had to be called off midway due to rain. Rain stopped play in the 20th over but by then Badoni, who came in at 44 for 5 had put his team in a position of respectability on a very difficult surface.

Badoni, smashed two fours and four sixes in his 33-ball-59 and his temperament on a surface conducive for slow bowlers was worth its weight in gold as it didn't seem at one point that LSG could cross 125-run mark.

With 11 points from 10 games, LSG and CSK are placed second and third on points table respectively. LSG (+0.639) have a better net runrate compared to CSK (+0.329).

It was a good toss to win for Mahendra Singh Dhoni and the CSK skipper's decision to bowl first was vindicated by his bowlers on a surface that is certainly not good enough for an absorbing T20 contest.

Most of the balls were gripping off the surface and the batters found it extremely difficult to hit through the line unlike in other surfaces as Moeen Ali 2/13



in 4 overs), Ravindra Jadeja (1/11 in 3 overs) and Maheesh Theekshana (2/37 in 4 overs) kept them under tight leash and also got wickets at regular inter-

vals. Such was their dominance that the first six of the innings came in the 15th over when Badoni, coming in at No.7, slog swept Sri Lankan spinner shackles did the trick as he could

Theekshana over mid-wicket and got another maximum in the next over to get some momentum going for his team. Dhoni, who rightly assessed

the track as "tacky", got Moeen into the attack in the fourth over and a flighted delivery inviting Kyle Mayers (14) to break the

only mistime a skier to Ruturaj Gaikwad in the deep. Manan Vohra (10) tried a

non-existent lap-shot and Krunal Pandya was snapped at slip by Ajinkya Rahane.

The ball of the innings was certainly bowled by Jadeja, who got one to turn sharply as Marcus Stoinis drew forward

only to find the ball turn sharply past his outside edge and peg the off-stump. Karan Sharma's 16-ball stay

for a painstaking 9 was indeed a struggle before he offered a return catch to Moeen Ali.

Badoni and Nicholas Pooran (20) then added 59 for the sixth wicket.

You've decided it's my last': MSD's cheeky reply on his retirement

IANS LUCKNOW

The question of whether this is Mahendra Singh Dhoni's final Indian Premier League (IPL) season, has been a hot topic of discussion since the commencement of this year's tournament. On Wednesday, the CSK skipper gave a cheeky reply when he was asked about his future in IPL.

During the toss between Dhoni's CSK and Lucknow Super Giants for an IPL 2023 match at the Bharat Ratna Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ekana Cricket Stadium, popular com-mentator Danny Morrison asked whether the former India captain Dhoni is enjoying the fans' support on his farewell year to which Dhoni came up with an epic reply.

"This wonderful swansong tour, your last, how are you enjoying it?," Morrison asked the CSK skipper.

"You've decided it is my last," Dhoni replied with a warm smile. His reply elicited a huge

roar from the Lucknow crowd, majority of whom were garbed in Chennai's yellow jerseys. Earlier this season, after CSK's match against the



SunRisers Hyderabad (SRH), Dhoni mentioned that he is relishing the final stage of his career

"Whatever is said and done, the last phase of my career, it's important to enjoy it. It feels good to be here," Dhoni had said after the match against

SRH Following his retirement from international cricket on August 15, 2020, the former India captain has been participating in the IPL only. He has been rather coy about what his future holds as far as competitive cricket is concerned.

SKY SEALS HISTORIC IN FOR MI

PTI MOHALI

Tshan Kishan's stylish 75 off 41 balls was complemented by Suryakumar Yadav's 360 degree effort that fetched 66 off 31 balls as Mumbai Indians powered to a six-wicket victory over Punjab Kings in an IPL match, here on Wednesday.

Uncapped Jitesh Sharma (49; 27b) matched T20 specialist Liam Livingstone (82 not out; 42b) in flair and flamboyance as the duo stepped up in style in the back end to propel Punjab Kings to a fighting 214/3 after Mumbai Indians opted to bowl.

But Ishan was at his furious best in a 41-ball 75 (7x4, 4x6), while Survakumar Yadav batted with his usual flair in a 31-ball 66 (8x4, 2x6) to make a mockery of 200-plus chase, winning with seven balls to spare. The duo added 116 runs from just

55 balls as MI raced to the target with seven balls to spare to secure their fifth win from nine matches.

Arshdeep Singh took a stunning catch to dismiss Suryakumar off Aussie seamer Nathan Ellis (2/34) and then he



KL Rahul out of IPL, going to Mumbai for scans

PTI MUMBAI

Lucknow Super Giants skipper KL Rahul in all likelihood will take no further part in the Indian Premier League (IPL) after sustaining a serious thigh injury during team's last game against Royal Challengers Bangalore.

The PTI can also confirm that veteran pacer Jaydev Unadkat's shoulder condition is serious and he too is ruled out of the IPL.

It is understood that it will be a race against time for BCCI Sports Science & Medical Team to get the senior batter-keeper Rahul ready for World Test Championship final in London from June 7 to 11.

Rahul injured his right thigh while sprinting towards bounda Faf di



The source also confirmed that no scans has been done till

"Once the scans ascertain the degree of injury, the BCCI

Yadav and Siddhant Gupta are

also in the fray in men's singles.

of India has been conducting

selection trials for major team

championships since last year

and the players ranked in the

top-20 in the BWF world rank-

ing have been picked directly.

Hangzhou, China to be played

from September 23-October 8,

2023 will have separate team

championships for men and

women followed by the individ-

ual events in which India can

have a maximum of two entries

per event. Nine men's singles

players and eight women's sin-

gles players have entered the tri-

als for three spots each, while

there are four entries each in

men's and mixed doubles and

to pick one pair each for men's and women's doubles and two

mixed doubles combinations

through a round-robin tournament format to decide the final standings. The selected players

will join HS Prannoy, former world champion PV Sindhu,

reigning Asian champions Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj

Rankireddy and women's dou-

The selectors have proposed

three in women's doubles.

The Asian Games in

The Badminton Association

ed for Ishan with a knuckle ball.

The duo were dismissed in eight runs to open up the match with 37 runs needed off 22 balls but Tim David (19 not out) and Tilak Verma (26 not out) sealed the chase

Tilak Verma (26 not out off 10 balls) launched mercilessly into Arshdeep Singh, who went for 66 in 3.5 overs as it finished in a jiffy in the end.

The win pushed MI (10 points from nine matches) to top-six, ahead of

Punjab (10 from 10 matches) on net runrate. From being 0/1, it was only a oneway traffic for Mumbai Indians with Ishan forging a counter-attacking fiftyplus partnership with Cameron Green (23; 18b) to set the tempo.

The duo got it going against Punjab's ace pacer Arshdeep Singh, hitting him for 16 runs. Ishan first showed the way with Cameron Green (23 off 18 balls) in a fifty-plus partnership to show the way after their five-time title winning skip-

per Rohit Sharma capped a three-ball duck in his 200th appearance for his franchise

The left-handed wicketkeeper-batter batted at his belligerent best and gave Mumbai a perfect start in company of Suryakumar. It was then Suryakumar show that lit up Mohali when he batted with disdain against Sam Curran to race to a 23-ball fifty, his third this season and 19th overall.

Suryakumar, who came in as Impact

Substitue for debutant Akash Madhwal, suddenly opened the face of his blade to a wide Curran delivery and cleared the backward point boundary with utmost ease. Curran retuned with a wide fullish delivery and Surya had no problem reaching to it, as he went down on his

knee to sail the ball over to 87-metre. The next ball he gave a return catch to Curran but it was too difficult for the pacer as he smashed two more bound-

aries to get 23 runs from the over.

off Marcus Stoinis bowling.

"KL is currently with the team in Lucknow but he is leaving the camp on Thursday after watching the game against CSK on Wednesday. His scans will be done in Mumbai at the BCCI designated medical facility. His case as well as Jaydev's case will be handled by BCCI," a senior BCCI source privy to development said.

"When someone sustains course of action," said the source. It is understood that even in an injury like this, there is con-

siderable amount of pain and case of Unadkat, things aren't swelling that is there in and looking great at the moment. around the area. The swelling 'Yes, it's a good thing that takes around 24 to 48 hours to Jaydev doesn't have a dislocation heal and only after that can you but the shoulder isn't in great perform the scan. "Since he is an shape and he can't play IPL any important member of Test team, more as far as this season is conit would only be prudent that he cerned. Also we can't say if he doesn't take any further part in will get fit in time for WTC IPL," he further added final," he concluded.

Hope we learn from each other: KKR eye revenge against Sunrisers Smith on playing with Pujara All-rounder Washington Sundar being ruled out of the



tournament.

rhythm

an underwhelming 110 at the

top, number three Rahul

Tripathi is not faring any better

either. Skipper Aiden Markram

too needs to lead from the front

and Harry Brook, despite scor-

ing a hundred, has failed in

majority of the games.

PTI HYDERABAD

Sunrisers Hyderabad will expect more consistency from their top-order when they host Kolkata Knight Riders in an Indian Premier League match here on Thursday.

Both teams are languishing at the bottom of the table and another loss will put a serious dent in their play-off qualification chances

Getting Abhishek Sharma back to open worked in the previous game for Sunrisers and now they will be hoping their other opener, Mayank Agarwal, to find some fluency.

IPL due to injury is a big blow to Sunrisers. Pacer Umran Malik has the

worst economy rate among the bowlers and has only taken five wickets in seven games, contributing to the team's woes.

KKR too would be expecting more fluency from their batters as they look to get their campaign back on track after six defeats in nine games.

They have been found wanting in all three departments of the game, something that was mentioned by skipper Nitish Rana after the loss to Gujarat Giants. "In crucial games and against top oppositions, you need to do all the basics well in all the three departments of the game," he had said.

Rana has not shown the consistency that is expected of The batting as a whole has not clicked for Sunrisers and him while N Jagadeesan has struggled at the top. Both Jason therefore it is not a surprise they find themselves in a desperate Roy and Rahmanullah Gurbaz situation in the second half of the have shown good form at the top but the management can only While Agarwal is striking at play one of them.

The pace bowlers leaking runs has also been hurting KKR. All-rounder Andre Russell and Shardul Thakur have conceded more than 10 runs per over. Harshit Rana did well in his first game and is likely to start again.

The spin trio of Varun He is back in the middle Chakaravarthy, Sunil Narine order and the management will and Suyash Sharma has been be hoping that he finds some effective but need support from the fast bowlers.

 $S_{\rm Smith}$ is excited about his making his County debut and "learning more about" Cheteshwar Pujara as they turn up for the same side ahead of the WTC final and Ashes next month.

Smith is expected to play three games for Sussex against Worcestershire (May 4-7) Leicestershire (May 11-14) and a home against Glamorgan (May 18-22) as a part of his preparation for the WTC final from June 7 and the marquee Ashes battle against England starting June 16

Smith said the IPL has helped him get used to play alongside rival international players and he is eager to play alongside Pujara, who has been leading Sussex this season.

"The day I don't want to keep getting better and learning is the day I would probably call it quits. I am keen to play with Puj (Pujara) as well. I have played against him a lot, seen him score lot of runs against me. Hopefully we can spend a bit of time together in the middle and learn more about each other.'

How would it be playing with Pujara and then against the Indian batter in a space of days?

"You are playing for the same team, have seen that for



years playing the IPL While you are playing with each other you try as hard as you can have to success as a team and we will take care of their rest later on,"

site. Smith will be up against Australian teammate and friend Marnus Labsuschagne when Sussex take on Glamorgan. The two have already had a laugh about it.

ter. He thinks he is going to get me out out. We will see what

happens. May be he will come into bowl when I come in. I am sure it would be good fun," Smith said.

"It is nice to be here. I have always wanted to play county cricket and it is going to be my first time which is hard to believe.

On the Ashes, he added: "It is going to an exciting summer. England have been playing some incredible cricket over the last 12 months, very different from what we have seen before and we have been playing well too."

Youngsters to clash with top stars in BAI's selection trials for Asiad



A card as top stars such as Kidambi Srikanth and Lakshya Sen clash with the young brigade, led by Orleans Masters champion Priyanshu Rajawat, at BAI's selection trials for the Asian Games beginning here on Thursday. Srikanth, the 2021 World Championship silver medallists, and Lakshya, the Commonwealth Games champion, will face off against their young challengers in the fourday trials, which will be held at the Jwala Gutta Academy. Both Lakshya and Srikanth

haven't been in the best of form and they will look to put up a good show against the likes of Rajawat, national champion Mithun Manjunath and Tokyo Olympian Sai Praneeth.

Among others, Maisnam Meiraba, Bharat Raghav, Ansal

bles combination of Gayatri Gopichand and Treesa Jolly in the Asian Games squad.

Smith told Sussex Cricket web-

"There has been a bit of ban-

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