

OPINION 6
FIGHT PANDEMICS WITH
BETTER ANIMAL CARE

WORLD 8
NO INTENT TO BENEFIT FROM
WAR IN UKRAINE: CHINA

MONEY 10
INDIA ON PATH TO BECOME
3RD LARGEST ECONOMY: MIN

NEW DELHI, THURSDAY MAY 11, 2023; PAGES 12-13



the pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com

Published From
DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR
RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH
DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADA

Late City Vol. 33 Issue 129
*Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable



KL UNDERGOES
SUCCESSFUL
THIGH SURGERY
11 SPORT

CAPSULE

DOC STABBED TO DEATH BY MAN SHE WAS TREATING
Kochi: A 23-year-old doctor was stabbed to death on Wednesday by a man whose leg wound she was dressing at a hospital in Kerala's Kollam district where he was brought after an alleged fight with his family members. Dismayed over the killing of the young doctor, the Kerala High Court come down hard on the Government and the police, and said it indicated their "failure" to protect doctors and was a "complete breakdown of the protection system". **P5**

NCLT OK'S GO FIRST PLEA, BARS SEIZURE OF FLEET
New Delhi: Amid financial and operational headwinds, Go First might well be thanking its stars on Wednesday as the NCLT ruling also restrains taking back of aircraft by lessors, who have sought repossession of the airline's 45 planes in the last few days. With the admission of the crisis-hit Go First's voluntary insolvency resolution plea and moratorium that is in place, the carrier does not have to worry about losing aircraft from its fleet, at least for now. **P10**

DU NOTICE TO RAHUL ON HIS UNANNOUNCED VISIT
New Delhi: The provost of Delhi University's PG men's hostel on Wednesday sent a notice to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi over his "sudden" visit to the facility last week, saying "such a conduct from a leader of a National Party who has 2-plus security is beyond dignity".

A car after it collided head-on with a truck, in Korba district on Wednesday. At least four people were killed in the accident. **PTI**

Exit polls: Cong, BJP neck & neck in hung Karnataka

Some surveys give Congress an edge; JD(S) likely to be kingmaker; 70% turnout recorded

DEEPAK K UPRETI ■ NEW DELHI

The exit polls for 224-member Karnataka Assembly — which went to elections on Wednesday with voter turnout of 69.71 per cent — predicted a close contest between the ruling BJP and the Congress, with some surveys giving an edge to the latter in a likely hung Assembly. Counting of votes will be taken up on May 13.

While the BJP is banking on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's charisma to break a 38-year-old poll jinx where the State has never voted the incumbent party to power, it is likely that former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda-led Janata Dal (Secular) will emerge as a "kingmaker" as the exit polls predicted 25 to 33 seats for it.

In 2018 Assembly polls, Karnataka recorded a 72.36 per cent voter turnout which had thrown up a hung Assembly with the BJP emerging as the single largest party with 104 seats, falling slightly short of getting a majority.

Five out of the seven major exit polls have given a slight edge to the Congress, whereas, two of them have predicted the BJP to emerge as the single-largest party. The aggregate of



Voters wait their turn at a polling station in Bengaluru on Wednesday **PTI**

	Cong	BJP	JD(S)	Others
ABP-C Voter	100-112	83-95	21-29	2-6
India Today	122-140	62-80	20-25	0-3
News 24	120	92	12	0
Today's Charakya	120	92	12	0
News Nation-CGS	86	114	21	3
Republic TV-P Marq	94-108	85-100	24-32	2-6
Sona News-Jan Ki Baat	91-106	94-117	14-24	0-2
Times Now-ETG	113	85	23	3
TV 9 Bharatnagar-Poistrat	99-109	88-98	21-26	0-4
Zee News-Matize	103-118	79-94	25-33	2-5

the surveys so far suggests a hung Assembly, with the Congress emerging as the single-largest party.

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai rejected the exit polls, asserting that his party will win with a clear majority. "Exit polls are exit polls. They can't be 100 per cent correct. There will be variation that can change the whole scenario. Our ground report says we will win with absolute majority. Let us wait till May 13."

The voting day also presented a sharp contrast where a birth and a death happened in polling booths.

The booths also witnessed brides and bridegrooms voting for their public representative before tying the nuptial knot with their chosen ones.

A woman delivered a baby boy soon after casting her vote at Korlagundi village in

Kurugodu Taluk of Ballari district, according to reports. A medical team along with some other women present at the booth made the arrangements and helped the woman, who developed pain, go into labour. "Without much suffering, she delivered a baby boy at the polling station. The entire polling booth burst into joy," an official said.

At Chikkole village in Belur Taluk of Hassan district, 49-year-old Jayanna died of heart attack soon after casting his vote. In another incident, Paravva Sinal (70) died even before casting her vote at Yarajharvi village in Belagavi district.

India Today-Axis My India exit polls project the Congress leading the race in Karnataka with 122-140 seats, with BJP 62-80 and JD(S) 20-25 seats. **Continued on Page 2**

Brisk polling in UP, Punjab, Odisha, Meghalaya bypolls

New Delhi: Bypolls held in Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Odisha and Meghalaya witnessed brisk voting on Wednesday, with the Northeastern State registering over 90 per cent voting.

The bypolls were conducted for two Assembly seats in UP, one each in Meghalaya and Odisha and the Jalandhar Lok Sabha constituency in Punjab.

Till 5 pm, a voter turnout of 50.27 per cent was recorded in Jalandhar, while the Suar and Chhanbey Assembly seats in UP registered 41.78 and 39.51 per cent turnout respectively. The Jharsuguda Assembly seat in Odisha witnessed 68.12 per cent polling.

Modi targets Opp for 'negativity' in country

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday criticised the Opposition parties for spreading "negativity in the country", alleging that the Opposition leaders are adept at creating controversies and thereby not allowing development of infrastructure in the country.

Modi, who was on a visit to poll-bound Rajasthan where he inaugurated and laid foundation stones of projects worth ₹5000 crore, referred to the "naysayers who question the priorities between Aata and Data, Sadak and Satellite". Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot was present at the function.

At Nathdwara town of the State, the Prime Minister said that along with basic facilities, the creation of modern infrastructure was equally important. He said vote politics makes it impossible to plan for the country's future. Modi decried short-term thinking of creating small assets which fall short of the growing needs very quickly. This thinking led to neglect of the construction of infrastructure at great cost to the country, he said.

"Rajasthan has suffered a lot due to the lack of a futuristic vision for infrastructure in



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot during the inauguration and foundation stone laying of various projects, in Nathdwara on Wednesday **PTI**

the country", the Prime Minister remarked as he pointed out that the difficulties faced by the people were not limited to travelling from one place to another but also involved agriculture, business and industries.

Interestingly, before Modi's address, Gehlot had drawn the Prime Minister's attention to pending projects, including Dungarpur-Ratlam via Banswara rail line, Karauli-

Sarmathura rail line and national project status to Eastern Rajasthan Canal Project. Gehlot also said that the Opposition should be respected in democracy and that Prime Minister Modi "will also move in this direction".

"If this is done, the ruling dispensation and the Opposition will be able to serve the country with more vigour," he said. **Continued on Page 2**

Imran sent to 8-day remand amid violent clashes across Pak

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD/LAHORE

Pakistan's former prime minister Imran Khan was on Wednesday sent on an eight-day remand to the anti-corruption watchdog while a sessions court indicted him in a separate graft case, amid violent protests that left at least seven people dead and nearly 300 injured and prompted deployment of the Army in three provinces — Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan.

The 70-year-old chairman of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was taken into custody by the paramilitary Rangers on Tuesday on the orders of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) by barging into a room of the Islamabad High Court.

On Wednesday, Khan was produced in the Anti-Accountability Court No. 1 presided by judge Muhammad Bashir, the same judge who had convicted former premier Nawaz Sharif and his daughter Maryam in a corruption case of



A supporter of Imran Khan throws stones using a slingshot toward police officers during a protest against the arrest of their leader in Peshawar, Pakistan on Wednesday **AP | PTI**

having properties in London. Later on announcing the verdict, the court handed over Khan for eight day to the NAB.

In his statement, Khan told the accountability court that he was fearful for his life, the Express Tribune newspaper reported.

Separately, the District and Sessions Court indicted Khan in the Toshakhana case.

Army was deployed following violent clashes between Imran Khan's supporters and security forces in Islamabad. **Continued on Page 2**
See Edit: Taliban Khan

Raj, Andhra, Assam Govts against same-sex marriage, Centre tells SC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Wednesday told the Supreme Court it has received responses from seven States on the issue of same-sex marriage and the Governments of Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and Assam have opposed the petitioners' contention seeking legal validation for such wedlock.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, told a five-judge Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud that States like Manipur, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Sikkim have said the issue needed a "very intense and expansive debate" and they would not be able to submit their responses immediately.

The Centre had, in an affidavit filed in the top court earlier, said it had issued a letter on April 18 to all States inviting comments and views on the "seminal issue" raised in these petitions.

"At the outset, I had said



that we have written letters to the State Governments. There are seven responses, I am not reading them, from Manipur, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Assam, Sikkim and Rajasthan. I am placing them on record," Mehta told the bench, which also comprised Justices S K Kaul, SR Bhat, Hima Kohli and PS Narasimha, on Wednesday.

"We have examined it and we are opposed to the position the petitioners are taking," the Rajasthan Government said, adding some States oppose that the issue needed a "very intense debate, so they would not be able to respond immediately."

Indian laws permit individual to adopt child even without marriage, says SC
New Delhi: Indian laws permit an individual to adopt a child irrespective of marital status, the Supreme Court said on Wednesday while asserting the law recognises there may be situations apart from an "ideal family" having its own biological children. In its submission, child rights body NCPDR argued that the concept of gender may be "fluid" but not mother and motherhood. **Continued on Page 2**

Nitish calls on Soren in his uniting Opp efforts

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI/RANCHI

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Wednesday met his Jharkhand counterpart Hemant Soren in Ranchi and said their talks centred around forming a "united Opposition" to defeat the BJP in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. This is his third meeting within a fortnight with the Chief Ministers non-BJP Governments, which includes Odisha CM Navin Patnaik.

Nitish, along with his deputy Tejashwi Yadav, held a discussion with Soren for around one hour at the latter's residence. "Our talks centred around forming a united Opposition and the result of the discussion will be visible in the upcoming 2024 Lok Sabha elections," Kumar told reporters



Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren with Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav during a meeting, in Ranchi on Wednesday **PTI**

after the meeting. "We will oppose attempts by the Centre to make changes in history. We will also restore Hindu-Muslim unity," Kumar, the JD (U) leader, said. **Continued on Page 2**

SC verdict on Sena split, row over Delhi-Centre services control today

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday will pronounce its verdict on the Shiv Sena split — which will decide the fate of the Eknath Shinde-led Government in Maharashtra — and the vexatious Centre-Delhi Government row over control of services in the national



Capital. The five judge Constitution bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices MR Shah, Krishna Murari, Hima Kohli and PS Narasimha will deliver verdicts on these two cases. **Continued on Page 2**

Panic button, only EV bikes, taxis in Delhi draft cab plan

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has approved the much-awaited Delhi Motor Vehicle Aggregator Scheme, 2023 which include mandatory panic buttons in taxis, integration with emergency response number "112", and phase-wise transition to electric vehicles (EVs) paving the way for bike taxis to make a comeback on Delhi's roads.

As per the scheme, the main aim of this aggregator scheme is to regulate cab aggregators and delivery service providers in Delhi. Officials said the draft scheme has now been sent to



the Delhi Lieutenant Governor for approval. The draft will then be put up for public feedback and comments by the Transport Department, after which it will be given its final shape, they added. Under this

scheme, bike taxis, which were recently banned from plying in the city, will also make a comeback.

"This scheme prioritises the safety of passengers and ensures timely grievance redressal, while also promoting the use of electric vehicles and reducing pollution levels in the city," the Chief Minister said while approving the draft.

He explained that by transitioning to EVs and promoting electric bike-taxis, the AAP Government will be able to reduce the pollution levels in Delhi and create new opportunities for employment and economic growth. **Continued on Page 2**

Heatwave to spare Delhi-NCR for a week

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Heatwave is unlikely in Delhi-NCR for a week more. India Meteorological Department (IMD), a fresh western disturbance is going to affect the northwest region and it may lead to a dust storm and drizzle in Delhi-NCR on May 13.

However after a week, the maximum temperature may hit the 42-degree mark two to three days, said Kuldeep Srivastava, the head of the IMD's regional forecasting centre.

"The maximum temperature will continue to rise over the next few days amid clear skies and it is predicted to hit the 42-degree Celsius mark by May 12-13. However, a heatwave is unlikely till May 16-17," he said.

Delhi recorded a minimum temperature of 20.9 degrees Celsius on Wednesday and the maximum temperature settled at 36.7 degrees Celsius,



three notches below normal.

The national Capital experienced a long spell of cloudy weather and sporadic rainfall from April 21 to May 7, which is rare during this time of the year. May has been historically the

hottest month in Delhi, with a mean maximum temperature of 39.5 degrees Celsius.

Officials attribute this to the back-to-back western disturbances, weather systems that originate in the

Mediterranean region and bring unseasonal rainfall to northwest India.

"Northwest India has seen three to four WDs since April 21-22. Delhi has not recorded a single heatwave day during this period. This is unusual. However, we cannot link it to climate change in the absence of data. There is no definite trend," Srivastava said.

On Thursday last week, Delhi saw an unusual episode of dense fog. The minimum temperature dropped to 15.8 degrees Celsius, making it the third coldest morning in May since 1901, said India Meteorological Department.

According to IMD data, the Safdarjung Observatory has recorded 50.8 mm of rainfall in May so far. On average, the capital logs 19.7 mm of rainfall in the whole month. The city recorded more than 20 mm of rainfall in April, the highest in the month since 2017, due to back-to-back western disturbances.

Bypolls: 90% voting in Meghalaya

Punjab LS seat sees 50.27% turnout, Odisha over 68%

PTI ■ RAMPUR/JALANDHAR

Bypolls held in Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Odisha and Meghalaya witnessed brisk voting on Wednesday, with the northeastern State registering a polling percentage of more than 90. The bypolls were conducted for two Assembly seats in Uttar Pradesh, one each in Meghalaya and Odisha and the Jalandhar Lok Sabha constituency in Punjab.

Till 5 pm, a voter turnout of 50.27 per cent was recorded in Jalandhar, while the Suar and Chhanbey Assembly seats in Uttar Pradesh registered a polling percentage of 41.78 and 39.51 respectively. The

Jharsuguda Assembly segment in Odisha witnessed 68.12 per cent polling while the Sohiong Assembly seat in Meghalaya recorded a voter turnout of 91.56 per cent.

The Jalandhar Lok Sabha seat fell vacant following the death of Congress MP Santokh Singh Chaudhary due to a cardiac arrest during the party's Bharat Jodo Yatra in January. It witnessed a four-cornered electoral battle involving the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), the Congress, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD).

Prominent among those who exercised their franchise were AAP candidate Sushil Rinku, Congress nominee Karamjit Kaur Chaudhary, MLA Pargat Singh and AAP MP Balbir Singh Seechewal. Opposition party leaders accused the AAP of violating the Model Code of Conduct by deploying "outsiders" at sever-

al booths, a charge denied by the ruling party. The Congress candidate, through her election agent, wrote a letter to the chief election commissioner, alleging that AAP leaders and workers came from outside the constituency for campaigning and were present in almost every village and ward. "The ruling AAP is misusing the government machinery and no action is being taken by the returning officer and the assistant returning officers," she alleged.

A total of 16,21,800 voters — 8,44,904 males, 7,76,855 females and 41 third-gender voters — were eligible to exercise their franchise in the Jalandhar bypoll. Nineteen candidates, including four women, were in the fray.

The AAP fielded former MLA Sushil Rinku, who quit the Congress, while the Congress kept its faith in Karamjit Kaur, the wife of Santokh Chaudhary. The BJP

fielded Inder Iqbal Singh Atwal, a Dalit Sikh who quit the SAD to join the saffron party. Atwal is the son of former Punjab Assembly speaker Charanjit Singh Atwal.

The SAD fielded its two-time MLA from Banga, Sukhwinder Kumar Sukhi, who is a medical practitioner by profession. The SAD candidate was backed by the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP).

The seat is considered to be a stronghold of the Congress, which has remained undefeated here since 1999. There was a direct contest between the ruling BJP-led coalition and opposition Samajwadi Party (SP) in the Suar and Chhanbey Assembly bypolls in Uttar Pradesh. According to officials, a total of 6.62 lakh voters (3.51 lakh males, 3.11 lakh females and 82 third-gender voters) were eligible to cast their votes in the two constituencies. A total of 14 candidates — six in

Suar and eight in Chhanbey — were in the fray. Amid the SP's charges that police prevented people from casting their votes in some booths, the Suar seat recorded 41.78 per cent polling, while Chhanbey recorded a voting percentage of 39.51 till 5 pm.

In a tweet from its official Twitter handle, the SP said: "In Khempur, Rasoolpur, Faridpur, Samodia in the Suar seat of Rampur, police are preventing voters from voting. Voters are returned from polling booths. Election Commission should take cognisance and ensure fair elections." In another tweet, the party accused state minister Ashish Patel (of Apna Dal-S) of threatening SP workers.

Officials, however, denied any discrepancies and said the polling was free and fair. The Mayawati-led BSP did not contest the bypolls, while the Congress had fielded its candidate only in Chhanbey.

Road rage: 4 bikers held for assaulting man

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has arrested four motorcyclists for allegedly assaulting a man after stopping his car in the middle of the road in west Delhi's Nangloi area. The incident, a case of road rage, took place on Sunday night near Nangloi metro station over the use of dipper lights.

The prompt action followed an appeal by the victim, Praveen Jangra, on Twitter with a dashboard camera footage of the incident that occurred near Nangloi metro station.

At 8.52 am on Monday, the man, Praveen Jangra, posted a video on Twitter stating that "some miscreants stopped me in the middle of the road and beat me up. All this happened at Nangloi railway/metro station.

4 held for impersonating CBI officials, robbing shop of ₹40L cash, gold

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has arrested four persons for allegedly robbing Rs 40 lakh cash and gold from a jewellery shop in east Delhi's Shahdara by posing as CBI officials after being inspired by Bollywood actor Akshay Kumar's movie "Special 26". The accused have been identified as Sandeep Bhatnagar, (54), Pawan Gupta, (47), Yogesh Kumar, (58) and Himanshu (35).

According to police, inspired by "Special-26", accused Bhatnagar, suspected to be the kingpin of the gang, hatched a plan and executed the robbery with the help of his associates. On April 17, six persons including a woman, posing as CBI officials, entered a

jeweller's shop in Shahdara's Farsh Bazaar and told the victim that they had information about his involvement in illegal gold business, they said.

The robbers threatened him to pay 1 crore to settle the matter. In fear of action by the agency, the victim paid Rs 40 lakhs cash and gave 500 grams of gold to them. While leaving the shop, they also took away DVRs of the CCTV camera installed inside the shop, police said.

Ravindra Singh Yadav, Special Commissioner of Police (Crime) said after analysing multiple CCTV cameras installed near the scene of the crime, the accused persons were identified and following a raid, four people were arrested from their respective homes.

Exit polls: Cong, BJP neck & neck in hung Karnataka

From Page 1

The C-Voter survey predicts the Congress to emerge as the single-largest party, with victory in 100-112 seats, whereas the BJP is predicted to bag 83-95. The JD(S) is seen to be winning only 21-29 seats.

Republic P-MARQ predicts 94 to 108 seats for the Congress, 85-100 for the BJP and 24-32 for the JD(S).

The India Today-Axis My India predicts varying performance by the BJP and the Congress from one region to another in Karnataka. The BJP is to sweep in coastal Karnataka and to get 16 seats and the Congress is likely to get 3 seats, the BJP likely to get 50 per cent vote share and the Congress 40 per cent vote share in coastal region. But in central Karnataka, the India Today-Axis My India predicts that the Congress will win

more than half of seats by winning 12 seats out of 23 seats, the BJP 10 seats and the JD(S) will settle with one seat in this the Lingayat dominated area and the home turf of former CM Yediyurappa. The Congress seems to be having the edge in the Bengaluru region, with the India Today-Axis My India survey predicting 17 out of the 28 seats for the Congress, 10 for the BJP, and 1 for JD(S).

According to India Today-Axis exit survey, the Congress is set to sweep the Hyderabad Karnataka region, with a likely win in 32 out of the 40 assembly segments and BJP is predicted to win seven seats, and the JD(S) one.

According to Today's Chanakya, the BJP is likely to grab a vote share of 68 per cent among the Lingayat voters, 47 per cent among STs and 45 per cent among the OBCs.

Raj, Andhra, Assam Govts against same-sex marriage, Centre tells SC

From Page 1

The bench is hearing arguments for the ninth day on a batch of petitions seeking legal validation for same-sex marriage. The arguments remained inconclusive and will continue on Thursday. Responding to the Centre's letter for views of the state Governments on this issue, the State of Manipur has said its views or comments on this matter will require detailed assessment on the existing social customs, practices, values, rules etc that may be prevalent in different sections of the society.

Similarly, in its communication to the Union Law Ministry, the State of Andhra Pradesh said it has consulted the heads of various religions in the State on the same-sex marriage. Referring to their opinions, the special chief secretary to the Government of Andhra Pradesh has said, "After considering the above views, I am to inform that the State of Andhra Pradesh is against the same sex marriage and/or persons belonging to LGBTQIA+ community".

In its communication to the Union Law Ministry, the State of Uttar Pradesh has said the question involved in these petitions is a "sensitive subject" affecting various sections of the society and different religious denominations. "The State Government cannot formulate its comprehensive response without wide consultation with all sections of the society. Hence, it would not be possible for the State Government to provide any comprehensive response in such a short period of time," it said, while seeking additional time to prepare a proper response.

The Maharashtra Government, in its communication to the Union Law Ministry, has said the State would have to hold detailed and meaningful consultations with a cross section of society. The State of Assam has told the Union Law Ministry that the subject invokes new interpretations and challenges the validity of laws concerning marriage and personal laws enforced in the state with diverse cultures, creed, customs and religions.

"Further, it would be prudent to maintain that legislation is the prerogative of legislature, at Centre and in States, and the courts may like to view the matter in accordance with core principles of our democratic structure.

The legislature reflects the collective wisdom of the nation and its citizens, and it solely possesses the power to enact a law governing human relationships," the Assam Government has said. It said marriage, divorce and ancillary subjects fall under entry 5 of Concurrent list of the Constitution and hence, it is also in the domain of the State legislature in a manner that it is in the domain of Parliament.

Imran sent to 8-day remand amid violent clash across...

From Page 1

At least 14 government buildings/installations were set on fire by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party supporters in Punjab province following the dramatic arrest of Khan in a corruption case on Tuesday, police said.

The law enforcement agencies have arrested 1,150 PTI supporters including women in Punjab alone so far. Two top leaders - PTI Secretary General Asad Umar, former Punjab governor Omar Sarfraz Cheema and PTI Vice Chairman Shah Mahmood Qureshi - were also arrested on Wednesday.

The situation in Lahore and several other cities of Punjab remained tense on Wednesday in the wake of the arrest of the PTI chief.

As the police failed to control the law-and-order situation in the province, the Punjab government called for the deployment of the Pakistan Army.

As many as 10 companies of the army have been requested to be deployed in the province of 120 million to control the situation. The federal government has approved deployment of the Army in Punjab.

Khan was present in the court and pleaded not guilty when the charges were read. He also refused to sign the court documents, according to Geo News channel.

The case was filed last year by the Election Commission of Pakistan and Khan had skipped several hearings in the past months. The charges are about the allegation that Khan concealed the proceeds of sale from the state gifts.

The New Police Guest House located in the high security premises of Police Lines Headquarters at Sector H-11/1 area of Islamabad was declared as a court for the purpose of hearing two cases against the former cricketer-turned-politician.

Citing sources, Geo News said that a medical report submitted to the NAB showed that

Khan has been declared fit. PTI Senior Vice President Shah Mahmood Qureshi and Secretary General Asad Umar went to the Islamabad High Court to file a plea against the police decision to stop them from seeing Khan.

However, before any legal process was launched, Umar was arrested by the anti-terrorism squad of Islamabad police as two new cases have been launched against him for the violence by the PTI protests after Khan's arrest. Later, media reports said Qureshi and former Punjab governor Omar Sarfraz Cheema were also arrested.

Meanwhile, the Pakistan Army warned Khan's supporters against taking the law into their hands and said it showed "patience and restraint and exercised extreme tolerance," not even caring about its reputation, in the larger interest of the country.

In a strongly-worded statement, the army said that May 9 will be remembered as a "black chapter," referring to the protests "targeting army property and installations."

"This group wearing a political cloak" has done what enemies could not do in 75 years, all "in the lust for power," the army said, adding that the facilitators, planners and political activists involved in the protests had been identified and strict action would be taken against them "as per the law".

It warned that any further attack on the army, including all law enforcement agencies, military and state installations and properties will be severely retaliated.

Meanwhile, clashes between protesters and security forces in the last 24 hours have left at least seven people dead and nearly 300 others injured across Pakistan as the army was deployed in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan provinces to maintain law and order.

"The protesters have set on fire 14 government installations/buildings and 21 police vehicles in Punjab. Over 130

officials and officers of the security agencies have been wounded. Police arrested 1,150 miscreants during their clashes with the security agencies and causing damage to the state property," the Punjab police said.

According to the Khan's party, one person has been killed each in Lahore, Faisalabad and Burewala cities of Punjab. It said over 150 protesters have been injured in Punjab alone.

In Peshawar, at least four persons were killed and 27 others injured in clashes between protesters and police, a spokesperson of Lady Reading Hospital confirmed.

Protestors also set fire to the building of state-run Radio Pakistan, causing severe damage to the studios, auditorium and other facilities, Director General Radio Pakistan Peshawar Tahir Hassan told the media.

The office of state-owned Associated Press of Pakistan located in the building was ransacked and damaged. In Islamabad, the protestors clashed with police and the Srinagar Highway linking the national capital with its international airport remained blocked for several hours.

IG Islamabad Akbar Nasir Khan told the media that at least five police personnel were injured.

In Sindh, the government imposed Section 144 to control the situation and police arrested around 270 people.

PTI leader Fawad Chaudhry asked his supporters to remain peaceful, saying that efforts were underway to portray the party as a violent party.

The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority said that internet services across the country will remain suspended for an indefinite period. It confirmed that the decision to block mobile broadband services was taken on the directives of the Interior Ministry.

The services were shut down as protests erupted after Khan's arrest.

US Prez to host Modi on June 22

From Page 1

Prime Minister Modi and President Biden will also explore ways to strengthen India-US collaboration in pluri-lateral and multilateral fora, including in the G20. They would reflect on their shared vision for a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific and discuss opportunities to expand and consolidate the Quad engagement.

This historic visit offers a valuable opportunity for India and the US to further deepen a comprehensive and forward-looking global strategic partnership.

Incidentally, Modi and Biden will meet at the Quad summit on May 24 hosted by Australia. Similarly, Biden is expected to visit India in September to take part in the G-20 summit in New Delhi.

Nitish calls on Soren in his uniting Opp efforts

From Page 1

In all his meetings, Nitish is accompanied by his major alliance partner and his deputy in the Government RJD leader Tejashwi. And on all the counts, sources said the leaders discussed the one-seat-one-candidate which is being dubbed as "Nitish Formula". An ambitious Nitish is eyeing to be the consensus Prime Ministerial Opposition candidate, however, he has rejected the speculation.

The meeting with Soren is seen as part of Nitish's efforts to bring all non-NDA parties together to defeat the BJP in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. The Bihar CM, who snapped ties with the BJP last year, vowing

to defeat it in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, has toured many places and met political leaders of various hues as part of his "Opposition unity drive". Nitish called on his Odisha counterpart at his residence in Bhubaneswar on Tuesday and held a discussion with him for more than an hour. Recently, he also held talks with West Bengal Chief Minister and TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee and Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav.

Nitish and Yadav had in April met Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge in Delhi in presence of Rahul Gandhi and pledged to bring all Opposition parties together for a united front against the BJP.

Raj, Andhra, Assam Govts ...

From Page 1

The bench was hearing arguments for the ninth day on a batch of petitions seeking legal validation for same-sex marriage. The arguments remained inconclusive and will continue on Thursday.

Responding to the Centre's letter for views of the state Governments on this issue, the State of Manipur has said its views or comments on this matter will require detailed assessment on the existing social customs, practices, values, rules etc that may be prevalent in different sections of the society.

Similarly, in its communication to the Union Law Ministry, the State of Andhra Pradesh said it has consulted the heads of various religions

in the State on the same-sex marriage. Referring to their opinions, the special chief secretary to the Government of Andhra Pradesh has said, "After considering the above views, I am to inform that the State of Andhra Pradesh is against the same sex marriage and/or persons belonging to LGBTQIA+ community".

In its communication to the Union Law Ministry, the State of Uttar Pradesh has said the question involved in these petitions is a "sensitive subject" affecting various sections of the society and different religious denominations.

"The State Government cannot formulate its comprehensive response without wide consultation with all sections of the society.

Panic button, only EV bikes, taxis in Delhi ...

From Page 1

The Motor Vehicle Aggregator Scheme 2023 will be applicable to any individual or entity that operates, on-boards or manages a fleet of motor vehicles through digital or electronic means or any other means to ferry passengers or connect a driver offering to deliver or pick up a product, courier, package or parcel with a seller, e-commerce entity or consignor.

The scheme aims to ensure passenger safety during trips and the service quality of cab aggregators, while also promoting the transition to EVs. It will make it mandatory for the aggregators to install a panic button in the vehicles and integration with 112 (Delhi Police) for emergencies.

The scheme also includes a mechanism to ensure timely consumer grievance redressal by the service providers, enforcement of vehicle fitness, pollution control and validity of permits. It provides for driver

remedial training in instances where a driver's performance is poor. "The scheme will also mark a historic first for the nation where a State Government will be introducing a mandatory transition of commercial vehicles from conventional vehicles to electric vehicles. The scheme provides for phased mandates for fleet operators to transition their fleets from conventional vehicles to electric," the statement said.

Its mandate will only apply to an incremental percentage of new on-boarded vehicles over a period of four years to avoid any knee-jerk reaction to existing livelihoods.

For example, five per cent of the new on-boarded cars need to be electric in the first six months of the scheme. The policy further mandates that after four years from its notification, all new commercial two-wheelers and three-wheelers will need to be EVs. Similarly, after five years from

its notification, all new commercial four-wheelers need to be EVs. The aggregators and delivery service providers shall also be mandated to switch to electric fleets by April 1, 2030. The scheme lays the foundation for a regulatory provision for bike-taxis and rent-a-bike services. Since Delhi has never allowed bike-taxis to operate in the city, the scheme provides for such services to be regulated.

As a new business opportunity, the scheme ensures that all bike-taxis and two-wheeler renting services in the city shall only be via electric two-wheelers. These provisions are in line with the Delhi EV Policy 2020, the statement added.

The scheme follows the "polluter pays" principle. This will make the per vehicle licence fee for a conventional vehicle significantly higher than an electric vehicle. For instance, there may be a licence fee for an electric taxi,

but for a CNG taxi, it may be ₹50. Secondly, all licence fees and penalties under the scheme shall be credited to the State EV Fund, which in turn supports all EV promotional activity.

Talking about the draft scheme, Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot said Delhi has achieved another milestone with its Motor Vehicle Aggregator scheme. "This is happening for the first time in India when a state has given targets to the aggregator to electrify their fleets and regulate such service providers in the city, with the goal of ensuring passenger safety and reducing pollution with sustainable public transportation in the city.

"We have introduced a polluter pays principle, where onboarding of any electric vehicle will have zero licence fee. The scheme also lays the foundation for a regulatory provision for bike taxis (two-wheeler ride-hailing services) and rent-a-bike services," he added.

SC verdict on Sena split, row over Delhi-Centre services control today

From Page 1

Shiv Sena split case is having a clutch of cross-petitions filed by the Uddhav Thackeray and Eknath Shinde factions of the Shiv Sena pertaining to the 2022 Maharashtra political crisis.

The Uddhav Thackeray faction was represented by senior advocates Kapil Sibal, AM Singhvi, Devadatt Kamat and advocate Amit Anand Tiwari, while the Shinde camp was represented by senior advocates Neeraj Kishan Kaul, Harish Salve, Mahesh Jethmalani and advocate Abhikalp Pratap Singh. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta represented the office of the Governor.

The Constitution bench was set up to hear the legal issue concerning the scope of legislative and executive powers of the Centre and the National Capital Territory government over control of services in Delhi. On May 6 last year, the top court had referred the issue of control of services in Delhi to a five-judge Constitution bench.

The plea moved by the Delhi Government arises out of a split verdict of February 14, 2019, in which a two-judge bench of Justices AK Sikri and Ashok Bhushan, both now retired, had recommended to the CJI that a three-judge bench be set up to finally decide the issue of control of services in the national capital.

Justice Bhushan had ruled that the Delhi Government had no power at all over administrative services, while Justice Sikri had made a distinction. He had said the transfer or posting of officers in the top echelons of the bureaucracy (joint director and above) can only be done by the Centre and the L-G's view will prevail in case of a difference of opinion on matters related to other bureaucrats. In a 2018 judgment, a five-judge Constitution bench had unanimously held that the Delhi LG was bound by the aid and advice of the elected Government, and both needed to work harmoniously with each other. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta and senior advocate AM Singhvi for the Centre and the Delhi Government respectively.

NCR PULSE

DMC SEEKS ACTION AGAINST BJP LEADER

New Delhi: The Delhi Minorities Commission (DMC) has issued a notice to the police seeking a report on action against BJP leader Tajinder Pal Singh Bagga over his tweet allegedly hurting the sentiments of the Sikhs. The notice issued by DMC member APS Bindra has sought the report from Delhi Police till May 17. Bagga, a spokesperson of the Delhi BJP, alleged that the notice by the DMC was issued at the behest of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. Bagga was picked up from Delhi by Punjab Police last year in a case registered in Mohali in the AAP-ruled state.

PRISON DEPT MEETS WITH THSC FOR INMATE JOBS

New Delhi: The Delhi Prisons Department held a meeting with the Tourism and Hospitality Skill Council (THSC) to discuss job opportunities for the inmates currently being trained in the hospitality sector. The meeting was convened on Tuesday as a part of the ongoing National Urban Livelihoods Mission (NULM) project in Tihar Jails. It was presided over by Sanjay Baniwal, Director General (prisons). In the statement, Baniwal mentioned that many initiatives are being taken by the prison department for reforming prisoners and ensuring their reintegration into the society.

SMIPAC ACHIEVEMENT AWARD CONFERRED ON PLK PANDIT

New Delhi: PLK Pandit, Doyen of Gwalior Gharana, was conferred SMIPAC lifetime achievement award for his invaluable contribution to enrich Hindustani Classical music at the Triveni Kala Sangam in the national Capital on Sunday. Supported by Peoples' Foundation the ceremony witnessed mesmerizing live performances by reputed artists such as Meeta Pandit, Ajay Prasanna, Ayush Mohan, Mithilesh Jha in jugalbandis in the presence of People's Foundation President and veteran journalist VN Jha, according to a Press release by the foundation.



SURMALA 2023 ORGANISED BY UAWKT

New Delhi: A superlative music recital, Surmala 2023 was organised by the Ustad Abdul Waheed Khan Trust (UAWKT) at Triveni Auditorium here on Thursday. Renowned flautist Pt. Rajendra Prasanna played Rag Shree accompanied by his son Rajesh Prasanna also on the flute and Abhishek Mishra on the tabla. The finale was a sarangi duet of Raga Bageshree with Padmashri Ustad Moinuddin Khan and his son Momin Khan with Pt Mithilesh Kumar Jha on the tabla. UAWKT was founded by sarangi Nawaz Ustad Arif Ali Khan of the Kairana Gharana.



DU hostel notice to Rahul over unannounced visit

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The provost of Delhi University's PG men's hostel on Wednesday sent a notice to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi over his "sudden" visit to the facility last week, saying "such a conduct from a leader of a National Party who has Z-plus security is beyond dignity". The two-page note sent to Gandhi by provost KP Singh said the incident amounts to trespass and irresponsible behaviour, and asked the Congress leader to "cease and desist" from taking any such step in the future.

The provost said Rahul's "unexpected entry" into the premises along with three vehicles violated the prescribed rules of the hostel. In the notice, the provost mentioned rule 15.13 of the Handbook of Information and Rules of the Hostel that states: "No resident shall indulge in any activity in the hostel premises other than academic and residents council activities."

Rahul visited a Post-Graduate Men's Hostel of the university on Friday, interacted with some students and had lunch with them. "The Management Committee of the Hostel in its emergent meeting held on 06.05.2023 in the presence of Dean Students' Welfare and Proctor of the University of Delhi has unanimously decided and resolved that such a conduct from a leader of a National



Party who has Z-plus security is beyond dignity," the notice mentioned.

It further said, "The Hostel is governed by the University of Delhi Act, 1922 and its Statutes, Ordinances, Regulations and its own 'Rules of Residence', 'Rules regarding Dining Hall' and 'Guests' for the smooth functioning and welfare of its resident students' and for maintaining proper discipline."

"Needless to mention the Administration of the Hostel reserves the right to stop any activity which according to the administration goes against the prescribed rules. As an important part of the maintenance of proper discipline in the hostel, it is clearly stipulated in Rule 15.13 of the Handbook of Information and Rules of the Hostel," the notice read. The Chairman and other members of the Management Committee of the hostel have condemned this incident amounting to trespass and irresponsible behaviour, the notice mentioned.

"Moreover, such an inci-

Hindu suspends 25 students for protest, 15 for fraud during fest

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi University's Hindu College has suspended 25 students for staging protests last month over a cultural fest and 15 more for alleged fraud during the Mecca'23. At least two more students were served notices for both, their alleged involvement in protest as well as financial fraud, multiple students have confirmed.

Anju Srivastava, the college principal, did not respond to calls seeking a response. "We were told by the college official that 42 students have been served notice. But we are in contact with at least 30 students. The notices for both kinds of offences mention suspension, fine and the student will be barred from taking any post," said a student who has been served notice for holding a protest. The college hosted its annual fest named 'Mecca' on April 27 and 28.

Around 25 students have been given notice for "gross misconduct and extremely inappropriate behaviour" during the protest. In addition to that 15 students have been served notice regarding "financial fraud or cheating" during the two-day event. Sanjay Godra (18) who is a second-year student claimed that he has been served both notices.

"I was not part of the organising committee. I was only protesting against the administration over the MEECA'23. I have no idea why I have been served both the notices," he said. Students



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

have alleged that there was no disciplinary committee involved, adding that no investigation was carried out before taking action.

"They have imposed a Rs 10,000 penalty on us. Tell me how will students pay? This is a black law. The college did not conduct any kind of investigation," Godra alleged. Besides facing suspension, students will have to pay the fine of Rs 10,000 by May 12, the notices accessed by PTI stated.

Around 100 students gathered to protest on the campus after the administration allegedly asked them to cut short the three-day cultural fest to one on April 21. Some of the students followed the principal to her car when she was trying to leave for an event.

"We have been told that only those students who followed the principal have been served notices. But I was not there. Moreover, several students who were not even part of the protest have been served notices," said another student. Those served notices for protests, allegedly blocked the principal's way when she was going to attend a meeting at the university, their notices mentioned.

Co-accused can't rely on trial court remarks in excise case, says HC



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday ordered that observations made by the trial court while granting bail to two businessmen — Gautam Malhotra and Rajesh Joshi in the money laundering case in connection with the alleged Delhi excise policy case — cannot be relied upon by any other co-accused in any proceedings.

"The observations in the impugned order will not be relied upon by any co-accused person in any proceedings," pertaining to the present case, Justice Dinesh Kumar Sharma said after the Enforcement Directorate (ED) moved the High Court challenging the trial court's order seeking cancellation of bail granted by the special court on May 6 to Rajesh Joshi, director of a private firm involved in advertising campaigns for the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) during its Goa election campaign, and Gautam Malhotra, son of liquor baron and former Akali Dal MLA Deep Malhotra. The matter is next listed on July 20.

Additional Solicitor General S V Raju, representing the ED, said the trial court had taken cognisance of the chargesheet filed in the case on May 1, noting that prima facie case was made out.

Wrestlers demand Narco Test on WFI chief under SC watch

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The protesting wrestlers on Wednesday demanded lie-detector Narco Test on Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) president BJP MP Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh under Supreme Court supervision after he claimed innocence to the allegations of sexual harassment. Meanwhile, a city court on Wednesday sought a status report from the city police over the FIRs registered against WFI chief over sexual harassment charges.

"Those people speaking in favour of the WFI chief and saying that we are lying, I would say that Brij Bhushan should undergo a Narco Test under Supreme Court... And also the seven women wrestlers (who have alleged sexual harassment)," said Sakshi Malik at a press conference. "Whosoever is found guilty, hang them," she added.

The wrestlers did not, however, give clarity on how they are going to push for a Narco Test as, according to law, the consent of the accused is mandatory. Only after that can the investigating agencies proceed.

Sakshi also made an appeal to the women of the country to come forward and support the wrestlers like they did in 2012 when the Nirbhaya case happened.

"I would request the womenfolk in the country to support us just like they did in the Nirbhaya case. Express solidarity with us because we are also fighting for the cause of women. If we win this fight, we would have sent a strong message, but if we lose we would go



back 50 years," she said. The wrestlers also decided to wear black armbands on Thursday as a mark of protest over the alleged inaction of the authorities.

"I appeal to all the individuals and organisations supporting us to come and join us in a black armband protest on Thursday. Tomorrow, we will express our opposition (virodh) by wearing black armbands," said Vinesh, the 2018 Asian Games gold medalist, on a day which saw a big surge in the number of protesters.

Tokyo Olympics bronze medallist Bajrang Punia said contrary to public perception, the agitating wrestlers were not against national competitions taking place. He said if the competitions take place under the supervision of the Indian Olympic Association-appointed ad hoc panel, he would welcome them. "But if the WFI chief is involved in any way, we will oppose it," said Punia.

"I request the IOA ad hoc committee to organise all the tournaments, because we also do not want to halt wrestling activity. We are not calling wrestlers here (protest site) because their training and preparations will suffer. We

laud the constitution of the ad hoc committee," said Punia.

Earlier, Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Harjit Singh Jaspal issues notice to the Delhi Police over a plea moved by the wrestlers seeking monitoring of the investigation and recording of the statement of the alleged victims before the court. The court directed the police to file the report by May 12 when it will further hear the matter.

The plea moved by the women wrestlers had sought a direction from the court to produce a status report on the investigation in the matter. The application claimed that nothing has been done by the police after the registration of FIRs on April 28. "Police are not ready to conduct any inquiry. Not even the statement of the victims have been recorded before the court by the police," it claimed.

The copies of two FIRs against Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh were also produced in the court in a sealed cover. One FIR was registered under the POCSO Act in the matter of sexual harassment with a minor girl while another FIR has been registered for sexual harassment of other complainants.

NDMC meeting disrupted by BJP's ruckus over CM's residence

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) meeting on Wednesday witnessed disruptions after the BJP members raised the issue of crores of rupees allegedly spent on renovating Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's official residence. The BJP leader alleged that Kejriwal, who was absent in the last two meetings, attended Wednesday's meeting and "left" the proceeding in between. However, sources in the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) claimed that the chief minister left after the proceedings were over. The BJP has been attacking Kejriwal and AAP,



claiming Rs 45 crore was spent on the renovation of the chief minister's residence 6, Flagstaff Road during 2020-22. The AAP has hit back, saying the BJP was trying to divert attention from real issues by raising this matter.

Addressing a press conference, NDMC vice chairman and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Satish Upadhyaya

alleged, "The NDMC meeting was disrupted after Kejriwal was asked about the corruption." He said the chief minister has done corruption with the people of Delhi. The residence "Sheeshmahal-Rangmahal" was built — crores of rupees were spent on it, including expensive curtains, carpets, furniture, and marble. Upadhyaya said the Chief Minister of Delhi is more visible in Punjab and other states than in Delhi and rarely attends council meetings. "NDMC members asked him several questions, but he did not reply. We could not carry out the proceedings," he said. The Chief Minister of Delhi says something else and does

something else, he alleged. "The people of Delhi want an answer to the corruption. The changing colour of the Chief Minister of Delhi, the double character, the hypocrisy should come in front of the people. There is a difference between his words and actions, his appearance is all scripted, for which the public needs an answer," he said.

NDMC member and BJP leader Kuljeet Singh Chahal said he raised the issue of expenditure on the CM's residence and showed pictures of the house in the meeting. Kejriwal is a member of the NDMC by virtue of being the New Delhi MLA.

According to the NDMC Act, MLAs from this constituency automatically become members of the Council. "We could not carry out a simple proceeding because Kejriwal stayed mum during the meeting and wanted the meeting to end soon," Chahal alleged at the press conference.

On Tuesday, Lt Governor V K Saxena sought a detailed report from the chief secretary within a week into allegations levelled by Congress leader Ajay Maken about "extravagant" expenditure and violations in the renovation of the chief minister's official residence. The AAP alleged that the BJP and Congress are colluding against it.

Mayhem as group gatecrashes seminar on stray dogs in city

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A group of people gatecrashed a seminar on the menace of stray dogs organised by former Union Minister Vijay Goel at Constitution Club on Wednesday to registered their protest. The animal lovers argued with Goel and other seminar organisers, seeking an opportunity to present their views. A video of the ruckus showed two women slapping each another.

Social activist and animal lover Yogita Bhayana alleged the organisers misbehaved with them. "We wanted to speak our mind. Rather than giving us a platform, they started thrashing us," she alleged.

Bhayana claimed the organisers had put up hoardings with the face of a "ferocious dog" across the city to



promote the seminar. They wanted to discuss something on the line of an "anti-street dog" drive, she claimed. Goel said in a statement the seminar was held to discuss a solution to menace of stray dog biting people but the "so-called" animal lovers disrupted the seminar.

He said he had booked the Speaker's Hall for the seminar but people of the Constitution Club informed him that MP Maneka Gandhi had also booked the Deputy Speaker's Hall at the same time.

MCD announces significant steps to address Delhi's garbage crisis

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a resolute effort to tackle Delhi's mounting garbage crisis, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has announced significant measures to address the issue head-on. The Tehkhand Waste to Energy Plant, a crucial component of the waste management infrastructure, will undergo a capacity expansion of 50 per cent, enabling the conversion of an impressive 3,000 metric tons of waste into electricity, the civic body said in a statement.

To ensure the efficient implementation of these ambitious plans, Mayor Dr Shelly Oberoi conducted an on-ground inspection of the Tehkhand Waste to Energy Plant on Wednesday. The inspection was aimed to assess



the current operations and identify areas for improvement in order to maximise the plant's potential, it said.

Currently, the Tehkhand Waste to Energy Plant generates electricity from 2,000 metric tons of garbage daily. In a bid to further enhance its capacity, Dr Shelly Oberoi announced the installation of a new boiler capable of processing an additional 1,000 metric tons of waste. This development will not only boost electricity generation but

also contribute significantly to reducing the city's waste accumulation, the statement said.

Speaking about the government's endeavours, Dr Shelly Oberoi stated that the AAP government remains steadfast in its commitment to transforming Delhi into a garbage-free city. "The increase in the Tehkhand Waste to Energy Plant's capacity exemplifies our dedication to harnessing sustainable practices and converting waste into a valuable resource," she said.



The Delhi Police Commissioner at the Passing Out Parade of 22nd batch of DANIPS at the Parade Ground, Delhi Police Academy, in Jharoda Kalan, New Delhi on Wednesday

Storm over police's epic tweet to Pak actor seeking action against PM, RAW

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Police's epic response to Pakistani actor and a self-proclaimed social activist from Karachi, Sehar Shinwari, who sought action against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Research and Analysis Wing for "spreading chaos and terrorism" in her home country, is raking up likes.

Taking to the micro-blogging site, Shinwari on Tuesday tweeted, "Anyone knows the online link of Delhi Police? I have to file a complain against Indian PM and Indian Intelligence Agency RAW who are spreading chaos and terrorism in my country Pakistan. If



the Indian courts are free (as they claim), then I am sure Indian Supreme Court will provide me justice."

In a subsequent online outburst, Shinwari also requested the United Nations' intervention in the case. The actress blamed India for trying to escalate the tension in her home country and urged the UN to take 'immediate action'.

Delhi Police was quick and witty in its response. "We are

afraid we still do not have jurisdiction in Pakistan. But, would like to know how come you are tweeting when the internet has been shut down in your country!," it tweeted from its official Twitter handle.

Shinwari, caught off guard by the Delhi Police's response, found herself in a predicament — and the butt of humour.

Shinwari's tweet came against the backdrop of Imran Khan's dramatic arrest outside the Islamabad High Court on alleged corruption charges. The arrest has led to violent clashes between police and Khan's supporters, following which the internet was disrupted across multiple networks in Pakistan.

2020 Delhi riots: 9 given 7 yrs RI

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A city court has sentenced nine persons convicted in a case pertaining to the 2020 northeast Delhi riots to seven years of rigorous imprisonment, observing that communal riot is a menace that poses a serious threat to the sense of fraternity among the citizens.

Additional Sessions Judge Pulastya Pramachala on Tuesday pronounced the order, sentencing Mohd Shahnawaz, Mohd Shoaib, Shahrukh, Rashid, Azad, Ashraf Ali,



Parvez, Mohd Faisal and Rashid. The court also said the acts of the convicts left a deep scar on the social fabric, economy and stability of the country, besides instilling a sense of insecurity among the people and jeopardizing the communal harmony in the society.

On March 13, the court had convicted the nine accused, saying the charges levelled by the prosecution were proved beyond a reasonable doubt.

Delhi court seeks ATR on FIR against WFI chief

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi court on Wednesday sought a status report from the city police by May 12 on the action taken on the FIRs registered against Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief and BJP MP Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh over sexual harassment allegations. Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Harjit Singh Jaspal issued notice to the Delhi Police on a plea moved by the wrestlers seeking monitoring of the investigation and recording of the statement of the alleged victims before the court. The court will further hear the matter on May 12.

The application claimed police have done nothing after registering the FIRs on April 28. "Police are not ready to conduct any inquiry. Not even the statements of the victims have been recorded before the court by the police," said the petitioner. The copies of two FIRs against Singh were also produced in the court in a sealed cover. While one FIR was registered under the POCSO Act for alleged sexual harassment of a minor girl, another was lodged for claimed sexual harassment of the other



Delhi court on Wednesday sought a status report from the city police by May 12 on the action taken on the FIRs registered against Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief and BJP MP Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh over sexual harassment allegations.

six complainants. The women wrestlers had approached the Supreme Court with their complaints following which the FIRs were registered. In accordance with the Supreme Court order, the statements of the victims were ought to have been recorded before the court within 24 hours of registration of the FIRs, the counsel for the wrestlers claimed. However, the statements were recorded three days after the FIRs were lodged, the lawyer said.

He claimed it has been alleged that an officer in the Sports Ministry called the husband of one of the wrestlers and asked him to settle the matter. The counsel also alleged that

another official of a state wrestling body approached the coach and family of the victim to get the matter settled. "That person said that the girls have made a mistake. He said meet Neta ji (Singh), he will settle the matter," the counsel claimed.

A host of top wrestlers, including Bajrang Punia, Sakshi Malik and Vinesh Phogat resumed a sit-in at Jantar Mantar on April 23 demanding the arrest of Singh. The wrestlers, who have won awards at international competitions, have been demanding that the government make public the findings of an oversight panel that investigated the sexual harassment charges against the WFI chief.

Cong downplays Pilot-Gehlot conflict, terms it 'laughable'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Congress on Wednesday attempted to downplay infighting in Rajasthan unit of the party, and dismissed as a "joke" and as "laughable" former deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot's remark that a recent speech of Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot indicated his real leader is BJP's Vasundhara Raje and not Sonia Gandhi.

At a rally in Dholpur Rajasthan early this week, Gehlot had claimed that he survived a revolt in 2020 by some Congress MLAs because BJP leaders Vasundhara Raje and Kailash Meghwal refused to support a conspiracy to topple an elected government through money power.

Later Pilot mounted a no-holds-barred attack on Gehlot saying his speech indicated his real leader is Raje and not his Sonia Gandhi and also announced for a 125-km yatra to raise issues of corruption in the Gehlot-led Congress government.

Asked to comment on Pilot's remark, Congress's head of media and publicity department Pawan Khera said, "He would have said something jokingly, one can't sort that out. He will get a response in the same manner."

On whether there would be any action against Pilot, he



Pilot said, "There is an in-charge for every state in every party and he will take a decision accordingly." To further questions, he said the Rajasthan in-charge of the Congress

will make his decision public after discussions within the party. "I felt it was like a joke because it was laughable for me," Khera said when asked to clarify on his "joke" remark on Sachin Pilot's comment on Gehlot. While Raje, a former chief minister of Rajasthan, however, said that "Gehlot's 'praises' are a big conspiracy" against her and the Congress leader was speaking lies due to rebellion in his party.

that they can carry out their duty without any pressure. Pilot said he was the one asking Gehlot to probe charges of "corruption" during Raje's tenure as the Rajasthan chief minister. He pointed at the "contradiction" in what Gehlot is claiming — that the BJP had conspired to topple his government and at the same time Raje helped save it. Pilot held a one-day fast last month in Jaipur over "inaction" by own party's government on alleged corruption during the previous BJP tenure in the state.

Gehlot had also taken potshots at the rebel Congress MLAs on Sunday, saying they should return the money they had taken from the BJP so

Arrested DRDO official active RSS volunteer: Cong

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Congress on Wednesday alleged that DRDO official Pradeep Kurulkar, arrested on charges of providing confidential information to a Pakistani agent, was an "active RSS volunteer". The DRDO official was arrested last week by the Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS).

Congress' attack came a day after a special court in Pune extended till May 15 the police custody of Kurulkar after observing that the charges against him were serious and custodial interrogation of the



accused for a further period is unavoidable for a thorough probe.

Addressing a press conference at the AICC headquarters here, Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera said the arrest of Kurulkar is a "very serious matter" and alleged that it exposes the "anti-national face" of the RSS. "Pradeep Kurulkar, an

active RSS volunteer leader and DRDO's Director of R&D (Engineering), has been arrested by the Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) for spying on behalf of Pakistan. The case... Exposes the lie and charade of the RSS being a so-called nationalistic organisation," he claimed.

The party said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah should answer as to what is the relationship between Kurulkar and the RSS as the matter pertains to national security. There was no immediate reaction however from the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).

Khera also showed a video during the press conference of Kurulkar addressing RSS events with top Sangh functionaries in attendance. "Kurulkar's association with the RSS goes back generations, as he revealed in an interview with a YouTube channel last year. His grandfather was an RSS volunteer who worked as a mathematician, and his father carried on his work for the Sangh," Khera claimed. The scientist was allegedly in touch with an agent of a "Pakistan Intelligence Operative" through WhatsApp and video calls, an ATS official has said, adding it was a case of honeytrap.

Def Production waives quality assurance charges

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a significant move to promote reforms and bring ease of doing business, Department of Defence Production has waived off Quality Assurance (QA) charges levied by the QA Agencies under its administrative control for the stores meant for the exports.

This industry friendly initiative would make the defence products cost competitive in global market.

The Ministry provides proof and testing facility to the industry for their products through its various Proof and Testing establishments to make the Indian defence products more competitive in the international market. Charges are levied by the QA Agencies and the industry adds this charge to the cost of the products which adversely affect its cost competitiveness.

NIA intensifies crackdown on J&K ultras

Attaches assets of 3 linked to Pak terror organisations

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Wednesday intensified its security crackdown in Kashmir by attaching the properties of three accused linked with various banned Pakistan-based terrorist organizations like Hizb-ul-Mujahideen and Jaish-e-Mohammad, among others.

In the first case, NIA attached the immovable properties of two accused, Doulat Ali Mugal and Ishaq Pala, in Herman Shopian Tehsil in Kashmir under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, the NIA said in a statement.

While Ishaq Pala, currently lodged in Central Jail Agra, was a terrorist of Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) / Al-Badr



terrorist organisations, Doulat Ali Mugal was an over ground worker of the banned HM and is currently out on bail.

"While in Central Jail Srinagar, Pala had conspired with his co-accused, including Riyaz Naikoo and Doulat Ali Mugal, and assisted Danish Gulam Lone and Suhail Ahmad Bhat to cross the border from Kupwara Sector to join terror ranks and wage a war against the state. Accused Doulat Ali Mugal had provided logistic support to accused Danish Gulam Lone and Suhail Ahmad Bhat at Kupwara when both were about to cross the LoC," the NIA said in its statement.

The duo was charge-sheeted by the NIA on February 22, 2019 and charges were framed by the NIA Special Court Jammu on August 6, 2019. "The properties attached on orders of NIA Special Court, include land measuring 5.5 Marla and 3.5 Marla under survey Nos. 1597 Min and 1598 Min, including one double storey house of accused Doulat Ali Mugal located at Village Manigah Kupwara, and Immoveable property in the form of two rooms under the ownership of accused Ishaq Pala at village Allora, Tehsil Herman, Shopian, it said.

Others arrested and chargesheeted in the case were Danish Gulam Lone, Suhail Ahmad Bhat, Feezoo Ahmad Lone, while a key conspirator, Reyaz Ahmad Naikoo, a top

terrorist of the Hizbul Mujahideen, was killed in an encounter with the security forces.

The NIA had launched investigations into the case in February 2018 and had busted a HM module of OGWs/terrorists. In the second case, the agency attached the immovable property of accused Fayaz Ahmad Magray, an Over Ground Worker (OGW) of proscribed terrorist outfit Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) and currently lodged in District Jail Jhijjar, Haryana. The attached properties include six shops constructed over land measuring 5.5 Marlas under survey number 2664 at Lethpora, Pulwama, belonging to the accused, it said.

Fayaz was charge-sheeted on August 1, 2018 for conspiring, along with local/Pakistani terrorists of JeM, to execute a fideyean attack on CRPF Group Centre Lethpora, Pulwama. He reconnoitered the CRPF centre, and provided logistic support to JeM terrorists before and after the attack.

SC nixes ex-cop Bhatt's plea for more proof against conviction

Court also rejects plea for recusal of Justice MR Shah from custody death case

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday dismissed a plea by sacked IPS officer Sanjiv Bhatt to submit additional evidence to support his appeal in the Gujarat High Court against his conviction in a 1990 custodial death case. Earlier in the day, the top court also rejected Bhatt's plea seeking recusal of Justice MR Shah from hearing the matter.

Bhatt's lawyer on Tuesday contended that there was a reasonable apprehension of bias as Justice Shah as a High Court judge had castigated the petitioner while hearing his plea linked to the same FIR. However, it was opposed by the counsel for the Gujarat Government and the complainant who called it "forum shopping" and asked why he had not objected earlier.

An apex court bench of Justices MR Shah and CT Ravikumar said it was not inclined to interfere with the High Court order. It asked the High Court to dispose of the appeal filed by Bhatt in accordance with the law after reap-



preciation of the evidence considered by the trial court. Bhatt had filed an appeal in the High Court challenging his conviction in the case of the custodial death of Prabhudas Vaishnani, who was caught by Jamnagar police after a communal riot.

The case relates to the custodial death of Prabhudas Vaishnani, who was among 133 people caught by Jamnagar police after a communal riot broke out following a bandh call in view of BJP leader L K Advani's Rath Yatra. Subsequently, his brother lodged an FIR accusing Bhatt, who was then posted as additional superintendent of police in Jamnagar, and six other policemen of torturing Vaishnani to death in custody.

PUBLIC NOTICE

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

- 1) VOLVO EICHER 2095
REG.NO.HR55A9875-YOM-2020
- 2) VOLVO EICHER 2095
REG.NO.HR55AJ2722-YOM-2020
- 3) VOLVO EICHER 2095
REG.NO.HR55AJ9843-YOM-2020
- 4) VOLVO EICHER 2095
REG.NO.HR55AJ2858-YOM-2020
- 5) VOLVO EICHER 2095
REG.NO.HR55AJ1279-YOM-2020
- 6) TATA MOTORS LTD. - CB_LPT
1512. REG NO. DL1GE1481
YOM-2022
- 7) VOLVO EICHER - CB_PRO_2114. CABIN CHASSIS
REG NO. DL1GE0722-YOM-2022

UNDER HYPOTHECATION WITH M/S KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK IS UNDER SALE IN ITS "AS IS WHERE IS CONDITION" INTERESTED PARTIES CAN GIVE THEIR QUOTATIONS (ONLINE / OFFLINE) WITHIN 15 DAYS FROM THIS PAPER PUBLICATION I.E. ON OR BEFORE 26.05.2023 (PLEASE NOTE THAT CLOSING AUCTION DATE WOULD NOT BE A WEEKLY OFF / HOLIDAY).

BRANCH ADDRESS:
KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK LTD., PLOT NO.7 INSTITUTIONAL AREA, SECTOR-125 NOIDA NEAR DELL CAMPUS NOIDA (U.P) UP-201313 OR CONTACT : RAJESH ANTIL KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK LTD. CONTACT / 0971173320 EMAIL-rajesh.antil@kotak.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

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

- 1) SML_SMLSUPER REG.NO. UP14HT7119-YOM -2019
MINIMUM RESERVE PRICE-468046.8
- 2) SML_SMLSARTAJP REG.NO. UP14HT7909 -YOM-2019
MINIMUM RESERVE PRICE -392850
- 3) TATA_LPT709FB REG. NO. DL1LAC6109 -YOM - 2019
MINIMUM RESERVE PRIC -281929.7

UNDER HYPOTHECATION WITH M/S KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK IS UNDER SALE IN ITS "AS IS WHERE IS CONDITION" INTERESTED PARTIES CAN GIVE THEIR QUOTATIONS (ONLINE / OFFLINE) WITHIN 15 DAYS FROM THIS PAPER PUBLICATION I.E. ON OR BEFORE 26.05.2023 (PLEASE NOTE THAT CLOSING AUCTION DATE WOULD NOT BE A WEEKLY OFF / HOLIDAY).

BRANCH ADDRESS:
KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK LTD., PLOT NO.7 INSTITUTIONAL AREA, SECTOR-125 NOIDA NEAR DELL CAMPUS NOIDA (U.P) UP-201313 OR CONTACT : RAJESH ANTIL KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK LTD. CONTACT / 0971173320 EMAIL-rajesh.antil@kotak.com

India, EU discuss FTA, investment protection pact, Ukraine war, BRI

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Relations between India and the European Union (EU) are expanding, both the sides in a meeting here took stock of their negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and an investment protection pact. They also asserted that connectivity projects must respect sovereignty and territorial integrity in an apparent reference to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

Giving details of their fourth strategic partnership review meeting held on Monday, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Wednesday that India and the EU also underscored the need for "comprehensive, just, and lasting" peace in Ukraine in accordance with the United Nations Charter and international law. They "unequivocally condemned" terrorism and violent extremism in all its forms and manifestations including cross-border attacks, it said.

The call by India and the EU on the need for respecting sovereignty and territorial integrity of countries in imple-



menting connectivity projects came amid growing global concerns over China's BRI.

India has been severely critical of the BRI as the mega project includes the so-called China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) that passes through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (POK). The meeting reviewed the entire gamut of engagement detailed in the 'India-EU Strategic Partnership: A Roadmap to 2025'. The discussions focused on a broad range of topics covering climate, clean energy, biodiversity, circular economy, resource efficiency, trade, mobility, and digital issues, including data protection, the statement said.

"Both sides also discussed cooperation in the sphere of connectivity and emphasized that connectivity projects respect sovereignty and territorial integrity," it said.

"They also took stock of the ongoing negotiations for free trade agreement, investment protection agreement and

agreement on geographical indications and agreed on their importance as well as the need for full cooperation at multilateral level and of a regular bilateral dialogue on economic issues," it said.

In June last year, India and the EU restarted the negotiations for the long-pending trade and investment agreement after a gap of over eight years.

Launched in June 2007, the negotiations for the proposed agreement have witnessed many hurdles as both sides had major differences on crucial issues. In the meeting, the two sides also reviewed the progress and scope of the newly launched India-EU Trade and Technology Council (TTC) and looked forward to a successful first ministerial meeting under the mechanism on May 16 in Brussels.

The TTC is expected to facilitate exchange of critical technologies relating to an array of domains including artificial intelligence, quantum computing, semiconductors and cybersecurity.

EAM to take part in Indo-Pacific, EU forum in Sweden on May 13

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Nearly 60 Foreign Ministers of the world including External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will take part in the European Union's (EU's) second Indo-Pacific ministerial forum hosted by Sweden on May 13.

It will be co-chaired by EU High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell, and Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Tobias Billstrom.

The participating ministers are from the Indo-Pacific region and the EU along with representatives of Indo-Pacific regional organisations and other partners, sources said here on Wednesday. China is not likely to take part as it has all along criticized the Indo-

Pacific framework. Moreover, it claims the formation of Quad including India, US, Australia and Japan will lead to militarization of the Indo-Pacific.

Incidentally, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will participate in the Quad summit in Australia on May 24 along with US President Joe Biden, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese.

The high-profile meet in Sweden will see three roundtable sessions on topics like 'Building more sustainable and inclusive prosperity together', 'Pursuing green opportunities and overcoming global challenges in cooperation' and 'Facing jointly the evolving security landscape in the Indo-Pacific'. The first ministerial forum took place in February in Paris last year.

PUBLIC NOTICE

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

The following borrower/s have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from the Bank and the loans have been classified as Non-Performing Assets (NPA). A notice was issued to them under Section 13 (2) of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act-2002 on their last known addresses, however it was not served and hence they are hereby notified by way of this public notice.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ (Loan Account Number) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset / Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice	NPA Date
1.	Praveen Verma/ Bharat Verma- (LBO) T00005355 110- 2nd Floor Office No. 665, Sector 45, Gurgaon, Haryana- 122003	House No Ma 1/513, 5th Floor, Pratap Nagar, Jaipur, Rajasthan- 302001	April 08, 2023/ Rs. 13,66,723/-	23/01/2023

The steps are being taken for substituted service of notice. The above borrower/s and/or their guarantors (as applicable) are advised to make the payments of outstanding within period of 60 days from the date of publication of this notice else further steps will be taken as per the provisions of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.

Date : May 11, 2023
Place : Delhi (Gurgaon)

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Given the growing ties between the two countries, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said he discussed with visiting Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen ways to further deepen bilateral cooperation in priority areas of agriculture, water, innovation and people-to-people ties. Cohen called on the Prime Minister on Tuesday evening.

The Israeli minister arrived Tuesday morning on a three-day visit but announced his decision to cut short the trip in



view of Tel Aviv's operation against a militant group in the Gaza Strip. He held bilateral meetings with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh,

National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval and Water Resources Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat.

"Glad to have met Foreign Minister of Israel @elico11. We discussed ways to further deepen bilateral cooperation in priority areas of agriculture, water, innovation and people-to-people ties," Modi said in a tweet.

Meanwhile, the ministry of external affairs (MEA) said on Wednesday Cohen's visit provided further impetus to the bilateral cooperation that has remained on a qualitatively higher trajectory since the historic visit of Prime Minister

Modi to Israel in 2017. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is likely to visit India later this year.

The ties between India and Israel have been on an upswing in the last few years in a range of sectors, including trade and investment, defence, agriculture and water management.

"India's bilateral merchandise trade was US\$ 7.86 billion in FY 2021-22, which has scaled up to a record US\$ 10.12 billion in FY 2022-23 (April-Feb)," the MEA said.

The MEA said Jaishankar and Cohen, in their talks, touched upon various aspects of

bilateral cooperation, including in areas of connectivity, mobility, academic and scientific research, fintech, agriculture, water and trade.

It said they agreed to further diversify the basket of collaboration. "They also discussed regional and international issues of mutual interest, including cooperation under the framework of I2U2, the ongoing conflict in Sudan, developments in West Asia, the Russia-Ukraine conflict, etc.," it said. The I2U2 is a four-nation grouping. It is known as 'I2U2' with '1' standing for India and Israel and 'U' for the US and UAE.

Man kills doctor attending him

Kerala doctors protest against surgeon's murder by drug addict; lack of security

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI
Dr Vandana Das, a 23-year-old doctor who was working as a surgeon in Kottarakkara Government Taluk Hospital in Kollam district was stabbed to death by an assailant early Wednesday morning.

Sandeep, a school teacher-turned-liquor/drug addict was brought to the hospital with his leg bleeding and Dr Das was attending to him when he snatched scalpel and stabbed her many times. There were six deep injuries on the surgeon's body and some of the injuries seriously damaged her lungs and heart.

There was no emergency stabilizing system available in the hospital and she had to be shifted to a private hospital in Thiruvananthapuram. But the doctors have confirmed her death on arrival. Doctors in Government and private hos-

pitals across the State came out in the open protest the attack on Dr Das, the lone daughter of her parents. "We have been pleading with the government for ensuring the safety of the doctors and nurses working in hospitals."

The attacks against medical staff including doctors and nurses are on the increase in Kerala since the Covid-19 days. But all our requests fell on deaf ears," Dr TN Suresh, President, Kerala Government Medical Officers Association told *The Pioneer*.

According to Dr Suresh, this is the first of its kind incident in the country in which a duty doctor falling victim to the patient who was being attended to. What aggravated the situation, according to doctors and post graduate medical students in the State was the statement by Veena George, Minister for Health, who is known for courting



Doctors and medical students raise slogans during their protest against the killing of a female surgeon, at Government Medical College Hospital in Kochi, on Wednesday. The young medic was stabbed to death by a patient at Kottarakkara taluk hospital. PTI

controversies whenever she makes any statement. "The death of Dr Vandana Das was the result of incompetency and inexperience," said the Minister, a TV news reader-turned-politician.

Governor Mohammed Arif Khan was the first to reach the hospital offering homages to the slain doctor. Chief Minister Vijayan, accompanied by heavy posse of

policemen reached later as he was busy preparing for his trip to USA and Cuba. At the time of going to Press, the entire Government Hospitals in the State wore a deserted look as all medical staff except those in casualty sections have gone on strike demanding action against the police who remained mute spectators while Dr Das was being attacked.

Raje attends core panel meet in Jaipur, avoids CM face question

New Delhi: In the poll-bound Rajasthan former Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje and other senior BJP leaders attended party core committee meeting in Jaipur on Wednesday to ready the roadmap to fight the Assembly polls which are only six months away.

The meeting was also attended by the newly appointed BJP state president CP Joshi. Joshi who was a surprise pick of the BJP's central leadership in place of Satish Punia, has the backing of Raje who is trying to project herself as the CM face of the party.

The key meeting which sought to "project unity" in the state BJP unit took place on the day when Prime Minister Narendra Modi was in the state, almost kicking off BJP's poll campaign in the state after Karnataka.

Raje said after the meeting that "the party will score a decisive win in the assembly elections". PNS

Shinde won't step down, he will be CM till 2024: Fadnavis

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Amid intense speculation that Chief Minister Eknath Shinde might resign if the Supreme Court orders the disqualification of 16 Shiv Sena MLAs on Thursday, senior BJP leader and Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Wednesday ruled out such a possibility and said that Shinde would not continue nor would continue in his post but would also remain in the post during the 2024 polls.

A day ahead of the apex court's verdict on the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena's plea seeking the disqualification of 16 Shiv Sena MLAs belonging to the Shinde camp, the state capital was agog with speculation in the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena circles that Shinde might put in his papers if the SC ruling went against him. However, while talking to media persons at Latur in Maharashtra region, an optimistic Fadnavis ruled out the



possibility of Shinde resigning from the chief minister's post and indicated the latter would continue in the post irrespective of the apex court verdict.

"We are optimistic about the impending SC verdict, because our side is strong. That's why we are expecting a fair and just judgement. We should wait for the Supreme Court's order and not speculate on the apex court ruling in the interim."

After Supreme court is the highest court. We should look forward to the SC verdict with all seriousness," Fadnavis said. Queried if Shinde would bow out of his office prior to the Supreme Court verdict,

Fadnavis dismissed the talk of resignation unleashed by the Opposition Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) and a section of Constitutional experts, by saying that only idiots could indulge in such speculation. "I am sorry I am using these words... whatever happening is a talk in the market of idiots. I cannot say more than that. Tell me: why should Shinde resign? What wrong has he committed? Eknath Shinde will not resign. He will continue as the chief minister. I would also like to tell you that the 2004 elections will happen during the chief ministership of Shinde."

This is the second time in the last one fortnight that Fadnavis has spoken about continuance of Shinde as Chief Minister. It may be recalled that Fadnavis had made a similar statement on April 25 when a banner projecting him as the "future chief minister of Maharashtra" surfaced in his home city of Nagpur.

Probe Shah, son: Abhishek

We fight like lions and will never bow our head before the BJP and its probe agencies: Banerjee

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA



Shah for the second consecutive day on Wednesday and making the ED-CBI action in cow and coal smuggling cases in Bengal a reference of his attack Banerjee said, "they have unleashed ED and CBI and are arresting our leaders on all pretexts," wondering, "if our Birbhum leader Anubrata Mondal and his daughter Sukanya can be arrested for a 150-fold increase in her property then why should Amit Shah's son not be questioned for an eighty thousand fold increase in his property?" Mondal and his daughter were presently in Tihar Jail.

Saying that BSF — which was controlled by the Home Minister — was responsible for preventing cow smuggling Banerjee said, "why should Amit Shah not be questioned for this?"

Meanwhile, two top Additional and Joint Director level officers on Wednesday came to Kolkata to hold a high level meeting regarding cases that the Agency was handling in Bengal. Apart from other probes, the CBI and ED were presently handling three very high-profile cases related to school level recruitment scam, cow and coal smuggling etc.

ment of wages for hundred days' work... But how can the State government pay the wages when the entire fund has been stopped by the Centre... They are not paying for MNREGA, housing or any other schemes the funds which legally belong to the State... But we in the TMC have vowed to take the fight to Delhi with the help of the common people" Banerjee an MP from Diamond Harbour said.

Referring to the central investigating agencies he said, "The TMC is not like CPI(M) or the Congress to run away at the face of political persecution... We fight like lions and will never bow our head before the BJP and its Agencies," asking the people to send strong panchayat members so that the party could carry its fight to Delhi. Training his guns at

Curfew eased in 11 districts as situation in Manipur improves

Imphal: The situation in Manipur, where ethnic violence has claimed at least 60 lives and rendered thousands homeless, is gradually improving with no fresh incident of violence reported in the last two days, officials said on Wednesday.

Curfew was relaxed in 11 affected districts including Imphal West, Bishnupur, Churachandpur and Jiribam for six hours from 5 am.

The curfew relaxation was for four hours in these affected districts on Tuesday. A total of 2,500 more affected people from Churachandpur and 500 people stranded in the border town of Moreh were brought to Imphal on Tuesday, they said. Information and Public Relations Minister Sapam Ranjan Singh, in a press conference on Tuesday night, said 4,000 affected people are currently taking shelter in relief camps, where they are being provided with regular health check-up and psychological counseling, while 26,000 oth-

ers have been moved to other safer places and many of them have taken shelter at relatives' houses. Chief Minister N Biren Singh had on Monday said that 60 people were killed, 231 injured and 1,700 houses including religious places burnt in the ethnic violence that rocked the northeastern state for the past few days.

Violent clashes broke out in the northeastern state after a 'Tribal Solidarity March' was organised in the 10 hill districts on May 3 to protest against the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status. The clashes were preceded by tension over eviction of Kuki villagers from reserve forest land, which had led to a series of smaller agitations. Meiteis account for about 53 per cent of Manipur's population and live mostly in the Imphal Valley.

Tribals — Nagas and Kukis — constitute another 40 per cent of the population and reside in the hill districts. PTI

Sr Mizo citizen on 450 km walk to Imphal for peace

Aizawl: A 65-year-old man from Mizoram has embarked on a 450 km walk from here to Imphal to promote peace and harmony in violence-hit Manipur.

Albiakthanga, a resident of Lawpu on the south-western outskirts of Aizawl, set out on foot for Manipur's capital Imphal on Wednesday. He was flagged off by Mizoram Journalists Association (MJA) president C Lalrambaushaiha in Aizawl. A known pacifist, who has a record of travelling on similar walkathon missions to spread awareness on importance of peace and humane values, Albiakthanga said he was deeply shocked by the ethnic violence that rocked the neighbouring state in the past few days.

"I feel very saddened by the recent violence and continued tension in Manipur. So, I decided to embark on a walk to spread the message of peace and communal harmony," Albiakthanga, a former gov-

ernment employee, told PTI. Violent clashes broke out in Manipur after a 'Tribal Solidarity March' was organised in the 10 hill districts on May 3 to protest against Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status. The clashes were preceded by tension over eviction of Kuki villagers from reserve forest land, which had led to a series of smaller agitations earlier this year. Meiteis account for about 53 per cent of Manipur's population and live mostly in the Imphal Valley.

Tribals — Nagas and Kukis — constitute another 40 per cent of population and reside in hill districts. Albiakthanga will have to cover around 450 kilometres in over two weeks to reach Imphal via Churachandpur, one of worst affected districts in recent rioting. He said that he will stop by the roadside whenever he is unable to reach human settlements for night stops during his journey. "I will first have a night halt at Tuikhurhlu village in

Aizawl district about 20 km from here. Thence I will proceed to Saitual district and Manipur. I will have to take night breaks on the roadside sometimes," he said.

Albiakthanga said that he will first arrive at Churachandpur town and then proceed to Imphal.

Last year he had covered 1,212 kms in 40 days visiting at least 118 villages across all the 11 districts of Mizoram on a walkathon mission to spread awareness of 75 years of India's independence.

In 1997, he had set out on a mission and travelled to at least 50 rural villages and spread awareness on environmental and wildlife protection among students. He has also walked more than 200 km from Aizawl to Zokhawthar village on the Indo-Myanmar border to extend solidarity to the people of Myanmar and to spread the message of peace to people in the coup-hit neighbouring country in March 2021. PTI

J&K DGP: Remaining terror groups involved in recent attacks will be eliminated soon

PTI ■ RAMBAN/JAMMU

Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police (DGP) Dilbag Singh on Wednesday said that the groups involved in recent terror incidents in twin border districts of Rajouria and Poonch will be eliminated soon.

He said a fresh strategy will be chalked out in Doda, Kishtwar and Ramban districts to further improve the security situation in the region. Two terrorist attacks on the army in Poonch and Rajouri districts on April 20 and May 5 left five soldiers dead.

India, Thailand conclude naval exercise in Andaman Sea

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In an effort to further enhance bilateral maritime ties, the 35th edition of India-Thailand Coordinated Patrol (Indo-Thai CORPAT) between the Indian Navy and the Royal Thai Navy was conducted from May three to ten in the Andaman Sea, navy officials said here on Wednesday. Indian Naval Ship (INS) Kesari, an indigenously built LST (L) and His Thai Majesty's Ship (HTMS) Saiburi, a Chao Phraya Class Frigate, along with Maritime Patrol Aircraft from both navies participated in the CORPAT along

the IMBL in the Andaman Sea. Towards reinforcing maritime linkages between the two countries and with an aim of keeping this vital part of the Indian Ocean safe and secure for international trade, the Indian Navy and the Royal Thai Navy have been undertaking CORPAT bi-annually since 2005 along the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL), they said. The CORPAT builds up understanding and interoperability between navies and facilitates instituting measures to prevent and suppress unlawful activities like Illegal

Unreported Unregulated (IUU) fishing, drug trafficking, piracy and armed robbery, officials said. It further helps enhance the operational synergy by exchanging information for the prevention of smuggling, and illegal immigration and for the conduct of Search and Rescue (SAR) operations at sea. As part of Indian government's vision of SAGAR (Security And Growth for All in the Region), the Indian Navy has been proactively engaging with the countries in the Indian Ocean Region towards enhancing regional maritime security.

Form No. INC-26
[Pursuant to Rule 30 the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014] Before the Central Government Ministry of Corporate Affairs Regional Director (Northern Region) New Delhi In the matter of sub-section (4) of Section 13 of Companies Act, 2013 and Clause (a) of sub-rule (5) of rule 30 of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014

AND
In the matter of **L. R. Finvest Pvt. Ltd.** having its registered office at LG 1&3, R-23, Nehru Enclave, New Delhi - 110019

Petitioner Notice is hereby given to the General Public that the company proposes to make application to the Central Government under section 13 of the Companies Act, 2013 seeking confirmation of alteration of the Memorandum of Association of the Company in terms of the special resolution passed at the Extraordinary general meeting held on 28.04.2023 to enable the company to change its Registered Office from "The state of Delhi" to "The State of Uttar Pradesh". Any person whose interest is likely to be affected by the proposed change of the registered office of the company may deliver either on the MCA-21 portal (www.mca.gov.in) by filing investor complaint form or cause to be delivered or send by registered post of his/her objections supported by an affidavit stating the nature of his/her interest and grounds of opposition to the Regional Director at the address **Regional Director, Northern Region, B-2 Wing, 2nd Floor, Paryavaran Bhawan, CGO Complex, New Delhi-110003** within fourteen days of the date of publication of this notice with a copy to the applicant company at its registered office at the address mentioned below:

For and on behalf of the Applicant
For L. R. Finvest Private Limited
Sd/-
Girish Batra
(Director)
DIN: 00763586
Address: **LG 1&3, R-23, Nehru Enclave, New Delhi - 110019, India**

Date: 11/05/2023
Place: Delhi

Cyclone Mocha: Deep depression over Bay of Bengal, Dhaka on alert: IMD

PTI ■ PORT BLAIR



The cyclonic circulation over Southeast Bay of Bengal has moved towards west-northwest direction and intensified into deep depression on Wednesday, which is nearly 540 km away from west-southwest of Port Blair in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, IMD said.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD), which is closely monitoring the cyclonic storm said that the deep depression is 1,460 km south-southwest of Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh and 1,350 KM south-southwest of Sitwe in Myanmar.

A statement issued by GK Das, Director (Weather) at Regional Meteorological Centre, Kolkata, said, "The deep depression is very likely to move north-westwards for some time

(Rakhine State) around forenoon of May 14 with maximum sustained wind speed of 110-120 kmph gusting to 130 kmph, it said.

Meanwhile, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands administration has issued alerts and public advisories due to the cyclonic circulation over Bay of Bengal.

Fishermen of Andaman and Nicobar coasts have been advised not to venture into sea till May 13. Due to the cyclonic weather and in view of safety of passengers and vessels, the Directorate of Shipping Services in Port Blair has issued a notification which said, "It has been informed that Foreshore Sector and Harbour/Vehicle ferry services at Port Blair and out stations may get disrupted/stopped in short notice depending upon the weather condition.

and then towards north-northwestwards and intensify gradually into a cyclonic storm over the same region in the evening." It further said, "Then the deep depression will continue to move towards north-northwestwards. Later, it will gradually intensify further into a severe cyclonic storm on May 11. On May 12, it will turn into a very severe cyclonic storm

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

ICICI Bank Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd Office Number 201-B, 2nd Floor, Road No 1 Plot No-B3, Wifi It Park, Wagale Industrial Estate, Thane (West)- 400604.

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

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

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Samir Kishore Majithia & Needhi Samir Majithia- LBMUM0001844501	Flat No.504, 5th Floor, B-Wing, Acme Enclave- II, Chinchavali, Malad West, CTIS No.1212 & 1195, Survey No.422, Hissa No.1, Mumbai 400104/ May 06, 2023	January 11, 2023 Rs. 1,88,147.00/-	Noida/ Mumbai

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

Date : May 11, 2023
Place : Noida
Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

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

PUBLIC NOTICE - TENDER CUM E-AUCTION FOR SALE OF SECURED ASSET

[See proviso to rule 8(6)]
Notice for sale of immovable assets

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with provision to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ICICI Bank Ltd. will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is", as per the brief particulars given hereunder;

Sr. No.	Name of the Co-Borrowers/ Guarantors/ Loan Account No.	Details of the Secured asset(s) with known encumbrances, if any	Amount Outstanding	Reserve Price Earnest Money Deposit	Date and Time of Property Inspection	Date & Time of E-Auction
---------	--	---	--------------------	-------------------------------------	--------------------------------------	--------------------------

The online auction will take place on the website of e-auction agency **M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited (URL Link-https://disposalhub.com)**. The Mortgagors/ noticee are given a last chance to pay the total dues with further interest till **June 21, 2023 before 05:00 P.M.** failing which, this/these secured asset/s will be sold as per schedule.

The Prospective Bidder(s) must submit the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Demand Draft (DD) (Refer Column E) at : **ICICI Bank Limited, Plot No. 23, Shal Tower 3rd Floor, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh Delhi-110005** on or before **June 21, 2023 before 05:00 P.M.** and thereafter they need to submit their offer through the above mentioned website only on or before **June 21, 2023 before 05:00 P.M.** along with scan image of Bank acknowledged DD towards proof of payment of EMD. Kindly note, in case prospective bidder(s) are unable to submit their offer through the website then signed copy of tender documents may be submitted at : **ICICI Bank Limited, Plot No. 23, Shal Tower 3rd Floor, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh Delhi- 110005** on or before **June 21, 2023 before 05:00 P.M.** Earnest Money Deposit DD/PO should be from a Nationalised/Scheduled Bank in favour of "ICICI Bank Limited" payable at Delhi.

For any further clarifications with regards to inspection, terms and conditions of the e-auction or submission of tenders, kindly contact **ICICI Bank Limited On 9372730494/7304914763** Please note that Marketing agencies **1.M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited 2. Augoe Asset Management Pvt Ltd; 3. Hecta Proptech Pvt Ltd** have also been engaged for facilitating the sale of this property.

The Authorised Officer reserves the right to reject any or all the bids without furnishing any further reasons. For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please visit www.icicibank.com/n4p4s

Date : May 11, 2023
Place : Delhi/NCR
Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited



www.dailypioneer.com

facebook.com/dailypioneer | @TheDailyPioneer | instagram.com/dailypioneer/

PAPER WITH PASSION

Taliban Khan

The way Imran was dragged by security personnel is deplorable but he is no friend of democracy

Pakistan's former prime minister Imran Khan has done what few politicians in his country have done: take on the Army. Three A's, they say, rule Pakistan: Allah, Army and America. Khan is at odds with two of them: Army and America. He and his supporters believe that Allah is with him, so he will emerge victorious against all odds. They would like to portray him as a David against many a Goliath. The manner in which he was arrested—rudely pushed by the heavily armed Rangers, caught by his collar, in full view—makes it clear that the Establishment, comprising the military and bureaucracy, is not in a conciliatory mood. This is despite the fact that he is a hugely popular leader. In fact, even before becoming a politician he was a national hero. One of the best all-rounders the world of cricket has ever seen, he led the team in 1992 which won the world cup—the first and last time Pakistan ever did. When he announced his entry into politics, he had little support from anywhere. He almost single-handedly built his party, the PTI, and worked hard to become a political force. He became prime minister in 2018, but it was with the help of the Army. The generals thought that Khan would be a pliable tool in their hands, a puppet whom they would manipulate. But the puppet proved to be too recalcitrant for the puppeteers; the major point of divergence was regarding the ties with the West in general and the United States in particular. Khan, arguably the most Westernised Pakistani public figures earlier, increasingly veered towards Islamism. He also proved to be staunchly anti-America. This didn't go down well

with America and the Army.

Unsurprisingly, the Army turned against Khan, leading to his removal and the revival of the fortunes of his political enemies—the Sharif family and the Pakistan People's Party. So, the National Accountability Bureau, which once tormented Khan's enemies over corruption allegations, became his nemesis. Such are the vicissitudes of politics in Pakistan. Should the arrest of a former prime minister and the assertion of the military be regarded as an assault on democracy? Certainly not in this case. To begin with, as we mentioned earlier, Khan became prime minister because the Army wanted him to be in the first place. He was and is popular, but did not get enough seats in the National Assembly, even with the Army's support, to occupy the top office. Second, it is still a civilian Government that is in power, not a military dictator. Thirdly, while Khan is popular and swears by democracy, the democracy he has in mind is not India and other liberal democracies are familiar with; his ideal is Riasat-e-Medina, an Islamist utopia, which is unlikely to be a nice place for non-Muslims or even moderate Muslims. Not for nothing is he called Taliban Khan. Hopefully, the establishment in Pakistan would be able to end Imran's political career.

PICTALK



Young men bathe in a water body to beat the heat during a hot summer day, in Guwahati

PTI

India moves towards energy self-sufficiency

For efficient transition and to achieve its net-zero goals, India needs to invest heavily in the energy sector

Moving fast towards achieving energy self-sufficiency by 2047, is undoubtedly the greatest strides that India is making. The country is now the world's 3rd largest energy consumer, 3rd largest consumer of oil, 3rd largest LPG consumer, 4th largest LNG importer and 4th largest refiner, and many more achievements are in the offing. This remarkable journey helps India emerge as the epicentre of the global energy landscape, as it remains the most critical component of its sustained growth trajectory. In the recent past, the country has taken several revolutionary policy decisions that aim to bring about a secure and sustainable energy future, including 20% ethanol-blended gasoline to be rolled out in 15 cities in the next two years.

Being the fastest-growing major economy of the globe, India is estimated to be accounting for approximately 25% of the global energy demand growth, which makes it essential to ensure access, availability and affordability of energy for all to grow. However, the total ener-



gy consumption per capita in India presently remains just around 0.7 toe, which is half the Asian average and much less than the average of the developed world.

The electricity consumption per capita, though, grew to 920 kWh in 2021, but it also remains just a third of the Asian average. Moreover, coal remains the country's top energy source with a share of around 46%, oil with 23%, biomass with 21%, natural gas with 6% and hydro, nuclear, solar, and wind together with a share of around 4%. In the meantime, the declining oil production since 2010 in the country, has also increased its dependence on crude oil imports to around 88% of the needs in 2021. Of the total consumption of oil, around 42% is used in transport, 30% in industry and 21% in the residential, services and

agriculture sectors.

Nevertheless, India has managed to navigate the most serious energy crisis, which swept through the world, creating crippling conditions in dozens of countries including our neighbours like Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh and others. In recent months, petrol and diesel prices went up by around 40% in the US, Canada, European Countries and much more in many other countries, but India neither faced any dry outs or power cuts, nor unusual price rises. This energy justice was ensured by massively cutting in excise duties and VAT rates. PSU oil companies also absorbed huge losses to ensure that no citizen suffers from exorbitant prices.

In recent years, India has also expanded its network of crude oil suppliers from 27 countries to 39 countries



RAJESH KUMAR SINGH

including Russia. Moreover, the way India is working on both traditional fuel exploration and energy transition has hardly any parallel. The country's installed renewable energy capacity increased 396% in the last 8.5 years and is more than 174.53 Giga Watts, which is about 42.5% of the country's total capacity as of February 2023, registering the highest YoY growth in renewable energy.

To restrict pollution levels, India is massively promoting the use of CNG and battery-run vehicles to reduce pollution in cities. We have more than 4 500 CNG stations in the country. India is also committed to reducing its CO2 emission by 45% in 2030, aiming to achieve 50% of the total electricity capacity to be based on non-fossil fuel sources in 2030.

It is also considering implementing a carbon market along with a pledge to reach net-zero emissions in 2070. However, for an efficient energy transition and to achieve its net-zero goals, India needs an investment of billions of dollars.

(The writer is a senior journalist)

Fight pandemics with better animal care

Adopting the One Health Approach is way forward as human, animal and plant health are interdependent

One Health is not just a concept, it is a way of life. The "One Health" approach summarizes a century-old concept; that human, animal and plant health are interdependent and inextricably linked to the health of the ecosystems. The COVID-19 pandemic, a public health crisis potentially resulting from a virus of animal origin, underlined the criticality of One Health in confronting global health risks. Health risks are increasing. Drivers such as changes in climate and land use, unsustainable agricultural practices, globalization, and the wildlife trade, provide multiple opportunities for pathogens to evolve into new forms, increasing incidences of spillover events from animals to humans. While most risk assessments focus on the transmission of pathogens from animals to humans, diseases can also pass from humans to animals, and impact the health of animals, whether domestic or wild.

India has the world's highest livestock ownership, with 535.78 million livestock and a large variety of breeds. Nearly 280 million people, mostly marginal and landless, and women, derive multiple benefits from livestock farming. Animal-sourced foods are essential for food security, and reducing stunting and malnutrition, particularly among children. From an economic standpoint, the animal husbandry sector has realized a sustained growth of 7.93% CAGR during 2014-15 to 2020-21. The Indian dairy sector is worth more than \$ 160 billion accounting for 20% of the global dairy industry. India ranks 3rd in Egg Production and 8th in meat production in the world, and the meat market in India exceeds \$50 billion.

India is among the highest-risk regions for animal disease outbreaks due to its high-density livestock population, extensive animal-human interface, and porous boundaries with neighbouring countries. Over the last year alone, India saw outbreaks of diseases such as African Swine Fever, Avian Influenza, and Lumpy Skin Disease, causing substantial economic losses, impacting



exports, and causing distress to livestock farmers.

Over the last year, the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD) under the Ministry of Fisheries and Animal Husbandry has initiated and implemented some timely changes to improve the animal health systems and programs in the country. Key instances include overhauling the entire regulatory approval process, launching and implementing programs like Livestock Health & Disease Control Programme and National Animal Disease Control Program (NADCP), initiating the integrated disease surveillance program, and delivering quality veterinary services to the doorstep of the farmers. The focus has been on animal tagging and vaccination against FMD and Brucellosis in cattle and buffaloes, PPR in small ruminants and CSF in pigs. The Animal Pandemic Preparedness Initiative (APPI) is envisaged to fill the identified gaps and address the issues comprehensively at the domestic level as well as anchor the global coordination efforts in emerging pandemic diseases of animals. The APPI will lead to improved prediction, preparedness, prevention & control capabilities in India, and subsequently eradication of the diseases, increased access to veterinary services, higher productivity

60% OF PATHOGENS THAT CAUSE HUMAN DISEASES ORIGINATE FROM DOMESTIC ANIMALS OR WILDLIFE AND OUT OF FIVE NEW HUMAN DISEASES THAT APPEAR EVERY YEAR, THREE ARE OF ANIMAL ORIGIN

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PAWAR'S RESIGNATION

Sir — NCP chief Sharad Pawar may have succeeded in dousing the family fire but only for now. His political brinkmanship is likely to be tested severely by some unsavoury realities much like other parties that have split from the Congress and then coalesced around a single, charismatic leader, the NCP is confronted with a piquant situation. It may have a second line of leadership but none of its members can fit Mr Pawar's shoes. This heightens the possibility of an implosion if Mr Pawar is engaged otherwise, as is likely given his ambitions at the national level in 2024, or after his political retirement. A sensible succession plan should have been in place much earlier. But even here, there is likely to be more than one claimant from within the family; a bloody succession, therefore, cannot be ruled out.

The potential turbulence is likely to have ripple effects regionally as well as in Delhi. The NCP is a critical lynchpin of the Maha Vikas Aghadi coalition and splinters within the party would adversely affect its political prospects in the state. The Opposition's attempts to club an alliance against the BJP would also suffer if Pawar has to devote greater attention to his feuding family. It remains to be seen how he fights these multiple, overlapping challenges. Mr Pawar's predicament bares a bitter truth that cuts across India's political firmament: the pitfalls of the absence of the democratization of political parties.

Bagwan Thadani | Mumbai

MANIPUR VIOLENCE

Sir — Amidst the grief of violence in Manipur, my heart glows with much pride on getting enlightened that while Kuki women had come out in droves and created a human chain to protect a group of innocent Meites from a mob in Churachandpur town; Meitei girls also similarly protected innocent Kuki students in Manipur university! Let this light of goodness remove all darkness and obstacles in the path of our journey towards sanity and humanity as envisaged by

Gun violence in the US



The United States of America has a long and tragic history of mass gun violence. The horrific incidents of gun violence occur from time to time, leaving families shattered and communities traumatized. The recent mass shooting in Allen, Texas, where eight people lost their lives, including an Indian woman, has once again brought the issue of gun violence to the forefront in the United States.

The US boasts an astonishing number of 120.5 firearms per 100 citizens, outpacing other nations worldwide. It is easier and more accessible to buy military-grade weapons off the shelf than to buy health insurance coverage in the US. In recent years, the number of mass shootings

Rabindranath Tagore — "The light radiates from the centre of darkness. That is thy glow/ The goodness that originates from all conflicts, That is thy goodness!"

Kajal Chatterjee | Kolkata

LONELINESS LEADS TO HEART DISEASE

Sir — The recent advisory of U.S. surgeon general Vivek Murthy that loneliness can raise the risks of heart diseases reminds us of the year 1964, when the then U.S. surgeon general linked cigarettes to cancer and other heart ailments. There are two aspects of Loneliness. For some, Solitude, as a matter of choice who value privacy and make the most out of it, often turn those opportunities into creativity. However, for others loneliness can be a gateway to clinical depression in extreme cases. Modern lifestyle provides the necessary ingredients like overdependence on modern gadgets like mobile, Internet, social media etc that

in the United States has risen sharply. The Gun Violence Archive reports that there were 614 mass shootings in 2021 alone, which resulted in 2,769 deaths and 11,245 injuries. The US government should take multi-faceted measures to address this issue, including passing stringent gun control laws and implementing universal background checks for all gun purchases to ensure that only responsible and law-abiding citizens can purchase firearms while preventing criminals and individuals with a history of violence from obtaining guns. Furthermore, it is essential to provide affordable and effective mental healthcare services and support to those in need as Many mass shooters have a history of mental illness, and addressing this issue could potentially prevent future incidents from occurring. The tragedy in Allen, Texas, should serve as a wake-up call for lawmakers to take decisive action to prevent further mass shootings. Tighter gun control measures and the regulation of the gun lobby are necessary steps to address this issue and make the US a safer place for all its citizens.

Bishal Kumar Saha | Murshidabad

can have negative impacts on our health. For some pandemic had wreaked havoc by exacerbating their loneliness. This mental health issue has to be tackled with the right psychological approach and giving adequate attention to their needs. A National Sample Survey Office (N.S.S.O.) report in 2004 found 4.91 million Indians suffering from loneliness. About 33% of adults experience loneliness in the world. It is imperative to create a suitable environment through policy, physical and social interventions that promote social connections by creating parks, and encouraging public transport, and more public spaces for the people to lessen their burden of stress, anxiety and depression. We must revisit our lives to remain happy and stress-free.

Vijay Singh Adhikari | Nainital

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



ABHIJIT MITRA



ARUNA SHARMA



FIRST COLUMN

DELUSIONARY
WORLD OF PORN

Such images adversely influence our way of thinking which leads to crime



RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUNJ JI

'Porn'- the word itself creates ripples when one discusses it in friend circles. By definition, pornography means the depiction of erotic behaviour intended to cause sexual excitement. It may sound surprising though, but for some people, pornography use has no negative effects & it may even deter sexual violence. Sounds weird !!! In the past, governments of many countries attempted to ban pornography over the internet through ISPs (internet service providers).

However, they failed to achieve it due to the absence of legal or infra-structural framework support. The main contention of the government behind this ban was the fear that porn promotes and encourages sexual violence against women & it has a bad influence on young minds. However, the question that comes to one's mind is isn't it too late ?? because a recent report released by an NGO clearly says that the average time a young person in India spends on pornographic sites is 9 minutes 55 seconds which is more than the world average.

A few years back when the internet was not an affordable medium, it used to be tough to get porn. But, now with 824.89 million cellular internet users across India (TRAI Report), pornography is just one Google search away, and much of it is free. Also, age restrictions have now become meaningless, too, because with the advent of social media 1 in 5 has sent or posted naked pictures of themselves online. It's a fact that cannot be denied that almost all the technological advances in communications and media have been used by subverted minds to create and peddle sexually stimulating content, including text, sound and images, which have become progressively explicit over the years.



Pornography, which had hitherto reached only the literate, who could access it in novels, is now freely available to all. Over the years, the unlettered and the poor, who do not have the benefit of receiving an education, and having their minds channelised to intellectual or creative tasks, have become the most vulnerable to the degenerating influence of erotic images shown by porn films. The basic idea of developing the Internet was to create a tool for making knowledge accessible to all, regardless of the barriers of geography and economic backwardness.

The merchants of porn have turned internet into a conduit for morally corrupting content. Today, porn has become so pervasive on the internet that it poses a big threat to children, who are unwittingly exposed to it. The internet, by its very nature, is beyond regulation and therefore there is no way to check the free availability of pornographic content on the net. It would be wishful to think that this explosion of morally degrading images provides just perverse entertainment. No!! Such images influence our way of thinking and help create unhealthy attitudes that can easily lead to crime. Just ask yourself, 'Can a person who takes pleasure in watching pornography be expected to look at women with a clean mind?' No! it is now reported to be rampant in homes, with the perpetrators in most cases being known to the victims. You never know what someone too close to you might do. Hence, if we continue to turn a blind eye to this malaise, soon a time will come when even those of us who consider ourselves immune to it will become one of its victims. So, is there a genuine solution to this addiction? Yes of course!! By simply remaining in the consciousness that we are an eternal soul & not body, one can easily transform human love into spiritual energy by changing our feelings of lust into feelings of love, thereby dissolving lust automatically without any kind of suppression whatsoever. Science has proved that energy can be transformed from one form to another, then why can't we transform physical energies into spiritual energies and liberate ourselves? Remember!! all kinds of desires are the play of mind, just accept them! it will then become very easy to transform them.

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

Time to rework
Jan Vishwas Bill

To decriminalise business compliances, The Jan Vishwas Bill is a good initiative but it needs to be made more effective by increasing its reach



AS MITTAL



India has created the world's largest democracy on the infertile soil of the world's most hierarchical society on the strong foundations of the positive freedoms in our Constitution. But in the 75-year journey of India's independence carrying forward The British rules having 26,134 jail provisions for an entrepreneur. The imprisonment risks faced by Indian entrepreneurs across the Centre and States are 1,536 laws in seven categories- labour, secretarial, environmental health, and safety, finance, and taxation, industry-specific, commercial, and general. This excessive criminalization hasn't created world-beating honesty but has painful consequences like breeding corruption, sabotaging job creation, and diluting justice. The compliance is to be treated as a 'civil wrong' and not a crime to stay afloat.

To decriminalize business compliances 'The Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill 2022', is a good initiative of the Central government but it proposed the decriminalization of only 42 laws out of a total of 678 business laws with 26,134 criminal provisions out of which only 3400 to be replaced with monetary penalties. The Punjab government also scrapped 1498 mandatory compliances to ease out regulations around doing business, still there are 1427 compliances and 1273 imprisonment clauses in the state. The Centre and State governments have to make sure that future alterations in compliance are divested of criminal provisions. This purge must extend to end the criminalization of business compliances to restore dignity to entrepreneurship that creates millions of jobs, wealth, and the economy. Therefore, more amendments are needed in Jan Vishwas Bill to decriminalize the business laws which are irrelevant in technology-driven 'New India'.

Of the hundreds of business laws with imprisonment clauses excluded in the proposed Bill, very few of these are mentioned worthy here.

1) The Factories Act, of 1948: Under section 11, failure to whitewash the canteen kitchen and washrooms of business establishments invites a jail term to an entrepreneur extendable from three months to three years or with a fine which may extend to Rs 2 lakh or both.

2) Industrial Disputes Act, 1947: Sections 25-U, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30,31 A and

AN INTEGRATED
INSTITUTIONAL
REGULATORY
BODY COULD BE
SET UP TO END
THE
CRIMINALISATION
OF BUSINESS
COMPLIANCES
AND TRIM DOWN
CORRUPTION

(The Writer is
Vice-chairman of the
Sonalika group and
Vice-Chairman of the
Punjab Economic Policy
and Planning Board.
Views expressed are
personal)

33 prescribe imprisonment of up to six months or with a fine of up to Rs 5,000. Under section 29, any person who commits a breach of any term of any settlement or award, which is binding on him under this Act, shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months or with a fine of Rs 1000 or with both.

3) Labour Laws: Section 54 -b of The Code on Wages specifies penalties for offences committed by an employer, such as paying less than the due wages or contravening any provision of the Code. Penalties vary depending upon the nature of the offence, with the maximum penalty being imprisonment for three months along with a fine of up to Rs one lakh or both.

4) Maternity Benefit Act, 1961: Under section 6, the violation shall be punishable with imprisonment of three months but may extend to one year and with a fine. Subject to the provisions of this Act, every woman shall be entitled to, and her employer shall be liable for, the payment of maternity benefit at the rate of the average daily wage for the period of her actual absence.

5) Employee State Insurance Corporation Act, 1948: Section 85 is prescribed for different types of offences in terms of imprisonment of up to one year and a fine of up to Rs 5000. Section 85-A prescribed 3 years imprisonment and not less than 6 months, where an employer deducts contributions from the wages of his employees but does not pay the same to the corporation which amounts to a criminal breach of trust.

6) Goods and Services Tax Act of 2017: Under section 132, where the amount of input tax credit wrongly availed or utilised or the amount of refund wrongly taken exceeds imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years.

7) Companies Act, 2013: Section 447 prescribes punishment for a false entry in any document concerning the company or body

corporate, furnishing false statements, mutilation, and destruction of documents, section 449 for false evidence. Section 453 prescribes Punishment for improper use of Limited or Private Limited. The jail terms range from three months to as high as 10 years.

8) The Patents Act, 1970: Section 124 A prescribed for the person falsely represents that any article sold by him is patented in India or is the subject of an application for a patent in India. Where the person fails to comply, shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year, or with a fine up to Rs 25,000 which may extend to five lakh rupees, or with both.

9) The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981: Under section 39D, Offences for failure to comply and for failure to pay a penalty are to be punishable with imprisonment for a term of two years but which may extend to seven years and with a fine.

10) The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986: Under section 15F, Where any person fails to pay the penalty or additional penalty within ninety days of such imposition, he shall be liable for imprisonment that may extend to three years or with a fine which may extend to twice the amount of the penalty or with both.

11) The Trade Marks Act, 1999: Under section 112 A, Where the person fails to comply with the order made within a period of ninety days from the date of the receipt of the order, shall be punishable with a fine of Rs one lakh or imprisonment for a term may extend to one year or with both.

12) The Motor Vehicles Act, 1988: Under section 192A, using a vehicle without a permit shall be punishable for the first offence with imprisonment of six months or a fine of ten thousand rupees, or with both and for any subsequent offence with imprisonment which may extend to one year with fine or

with both.

13) The Public Liability Insurance Act, 1991: The owner who has control over handling hazardous substances is required to take an insurance policy and pay a matching amount to the Environment Relief Fund. Under section 17B, Where any person who fails to pay the penalty imposed for non-compliance with the directions, shall be liable for imprisonment up to 3 years or with a fine up to Rs 15 lakh or with both.

14) The Geographical Indications of Goods (Registrations and Protection) Act, 1999: Under section 37 A, where the person fails to comply with the order within a period of ninety, shall be punishable with imprisonment upto one year, or with a fine of Rs 25,000 but which may extend to Rs 5 lakh, or with both.

15) The Information Technology Act, 2000: Under section 70 B, Any service provider, intermediary, data centres, body corporate or the person who fails to provide the information called for or comply shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year or with fine which may extend to one crore rupees or with both.

THE WAY FORWARD

■ Imprisonment should be applicable only in cases of willful destruction of the environment, negligence in food and workforce safety, loan defaults, and evasion of taxes.

■ An integrated institutional regulatory body could be set up to end the criminalization of business compliances and to trim down corruption.

■ Before giving thumbs up to 'The Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill 2022', It seeks to deepen the debate around ease of doing business reforms in the world's fifth-largest economy, which is headed towards becoming the world's third-largest before 2030.

Pawar's resignation: Storm in a tea cup or a game plan?

Any split was averted, and Ajit Pawar would think twice before making such an attempt. Add to it the ripples he created in the BJP and Congress

Nationalist Congress Party leader Sharad Pawar surprised friends and foes alike with his sudden decision to give up the presidency of his Party recently, only to withdraw it after three days. It ultimately became a storm in a teacup. Had Pawar stuck to his decision, it could have considerably weakened his Party, the MVA, and the fight against the BJP in the state, which sends 48 members to the Lok Sabha. Sharad Pawar plays the guessing game better than most others. By his revocation, Sharad Pawar has stolen a march over nephew Ajit and consolidated the support of his party workers.



KALYANI SHANKAR

(The author is a senior journalist)

leaders resort to when their Party rebels. Others like former Karnataka chief minister Ramakrishna Hegde, Sena Pramukh Bal Thackeray, and Sonia Gandhi used it successfully. Pawar's resignation drama gave a shock treatment to his Party and other opposition leaders. He heckled his nephew Ajit Pawar who was contemplating splitting the Party and joining the BJP with himself as the chief minister. He successfully diverted the attention that his Party was facing internal trouble.

There were three crucial players in the present power play. One was Sharad Pawar, who wanted a succession plan. The second was his daughter Supriya, and the third was Ajit Pawar. Pawar's

resignation and withdrawal drama was scripted by himself. Being a clever politician, he kept his Party and the Opposition guessing whether he would take back the resignation for three days. As expected, senior leaders in the Party and even opposition leaders persuaded him to take back the resignation. The core committee to search for Pawar's successor came back and said it rejected the resignation unanimously.

As per his script known only to his family, Pawar agreed to remain, claiming he "can't disrespect the emotions of so many people," he said. Your love has made me emotional. The decision by the senior NCP leaders' committee was informed to me, and I respect it. As such, I

withdraw my decision to resign from the post." The NCP chief said that although he will continue his responsibilities, his primary focus would be creating new leadership and handing over new responsibilities to them. A cancer survivor, Pawar was emotional when he said, "My political career, which started in 1960, has been going on for 63 years without any hindrance. It is time to step down and give a chance to new leadership." He asserted, "That is why I decided to leave the NCP President's post", he revealed in an interview.

Many people knew of the power struggle between his nephew Ajit Pawar and his only child Supriya Sule, a Parliament member. It is no

big secret that Pawar would like to hand over the baton to Supriya Sule. Also, Pawar has been suspicious of his nephew's plan. Senior BJP leaders have assured Ajit that if he could mobilise enough NCP legislators, they would make him the chief minister, replacing Eknath Shinde.

Pawar clarified that he was not taking political sanyas, "There will be no separation from me or public retirement. I was with you; I am and will always be there till my last breath." In short, he would continue to loom large. Secondly, Pawar knew that his Party was sliding and had lost its national status recently; the NCP had not been able to penetrate new voters. Since its formation in 1999, the NCP has

always ridden piggyback to share power — first with the Congress Party and later with the Shiv Sena-Congress in the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) coalition. There is an urgent need to strengthen the NCP.

Thirdly, Pawar's health and his age were not on his side. Hence the urgency for a succession plan. At the national level, Pawar has already positioned himself to mobilise non-BJP parties ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha polls as an influential leader with friends in all the parties. He said, "My responsibility is in the larger interest of the nation to bring together like minor parties and provide an alternative to the people."

He clarified his role ahead of the 2024 polls: "I enjoy personal relations with many

who said that I was required for this. They include Rahul Gandhi, Sitaram Yechury and many more." He also told NDTV

While many opposition leaders are against promoting Congress leader Rahul Gandhi as the opposition candidate, they would support Sharad Pawar. Even Parties like BRS, YSRCP, and BJD, reluctant to join the UPA, may also support Sharad Pawar's post as PM.

On the whole, Pawar's game plan worked to his satisfaction. Any split was averted, and Ajit Pawar would think twice before making such an attempt. The non-BJP Opposition would also look up to him. Pawar, in his way, turned the disadvantage to his advantage.

No intent to benefit from war in Ukraine: China

China's foreign minister said Tuesday that his country has no intention of benefiting from the war in Ukraine and hopes for further discussions on a peace plan Beijing proposed earlier this year.

Speaking after a meeting with his German counterpart in Berlin, Foreign Minister Qin Gang noted the recent talks in Beijing had with both Moscow and Kyiv, and said China's special envoy for Europe was expected to visit Ukraine again soon.

"We won't pour oil on the fire" of the war, Qin said, according to an official interpreter.

Western countries have accused Beijing of providing political and material support to Russia since its invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. The European Union is currently considering imposing sanctions against companies that supply critical components to Russia's arms industry.

Qin denied Chinese firms were doing so. He said China maintains "normal" trade relations with Russia, not mentioning a significant bump in China's purchases of Russian crude oil at a major discount.

German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock urged China to use its clout to find a peaceful solution to the conflict but suggested that Beijing was



not doing enough yet.

"As a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, China can play a significant role in ending the war, if it decides to do so," she told reporters in Berlin.

Baerbock welcomed recent statements by the Chinese government confirming the sovereignty of countries that once made up the Soviet Union, adding that the position must hold for Ukraine, too.

The German government is currently in the process of adjusting its policy toward China, with some in the three-party coalition government pushing for a tougher line toward Beijing.

Chancellor Olaf Scholz said in a speech to the European Parliament on Tuesday that he favours a "de-risking" rather than a "decoupling" of Germany's economy from China.

The distinction did not satisfy Qin, who suggested the

German government's eventually policy could hurt trade between the two countries.

"Normal economic exchange should not be politicized," he said.

Qin downplayed the recent cancellation of a meeting between China and Germany's finance ministers, saying the visit was postponed for "technical" reasons and should not be over-interpreted.

A fellow member of German Finance Minister Christian Lindner's Free Democratic Party, Education Minister Bettina Stark-Watzinger, visited Taiwan in March, prompting criticism from Beijing, which considers the island part of its territory.

Lindner said Tuesday that Germany should have less of a soft touch approach in its dealings with China.

"We won't allow our liberal values to be bought in return for good business," he told German news site The Pioneer.

'No shell company in Mauritius; Hindenburg allegations false'

PTI ■ PORT LOUIS

In a boost to the embattled Adani Group, Mauritius Financial Services Minister Mahen Kumar Seeruttun has told the nation's Parliament that Hindenburg Research's allegations of the presence of 'shell' companies in the Island nation are 'false and baseless' and that Mauritius is in compliance with OECD-mandated tax rules.

US short seller Hindenburg on January 24 alleged that billionaire Gautam Adani used shell companies based in Mauritius to manipulate stock prices of his Indian-listed companies.

A shell company is an inactive firm used as a vehicle for various financial manoeuvres.

When a Member of Parliament (MP) through a written notice question asked the Minister about Hindenburg's allegation of use of Mauritius-based entities as conduits for money laundering and share price manipulation for the Adani Group, the minister said the nation's law does not allow shell companies.

"At the outset, I wish to inform the House that the allegations of the presence of shell companies in Mauritius are false and baseless," he said. "According to the

law, shell companies are not allowed in Mauritius."

All global business companies licensed by the Financial Services Commission have to meet substance requirements on an ongoing basis and are being strictly monitored by the Commission, he said.

"So far, there has been no breach that has been found," he said. He said the Financial Services Commission has taken note of the Hindenburg report but the regulator is bound by the confidentiality clause of the law and cannot disclose details.

"The Financial Services Commission can neither deny nor confirm whether an investigation has been and/or is being conducted. As such, disclosure of information on global business companies would be in breach of section 83 of the Financial Services Act and may have an adverse impact on the repute of our jurisdiction," he said.

Dhaneeswarrath Vikash Thakoor, chief executive officer, of FSC, had previously stated that an initial assessment of all the entities related to the Adani group in Mauritius was not found to be any non-compliance with rules.

Listing out the requirements for companies registering in Mauritius, the minister said they first have to carry out their core income-generating activities in

or from the country. They must be managed and controlled from Mauritius, have at least two directors resident in Mauritius, maintain at all times their principal bank account in the country, keep and maintain at all times their accounting records at their registered office in Mauritius and prepare their statutory financial statements and cause those financial statements to be audited in Mauritius.

The statement came just before the Hindenburg-Adani issue comes up in Supreme Court. The apex court, which had appointed an expert committee to look into regulatory issues, is likely to take up capital market regulator SEBI's plea for a six-month extension in timelines to probe allegations against the Adani group. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is assessing the connection between Adani Group and two Mauritian firms - Great International Tusker Fund and Ayushmat Ltd - that participated as anchor investors in the recently cancelled share sale of Adani Group's flagship company.

The conglomerate lost USD 140 billion in market capitalisation at one point after short seller Hindenburg raised allegations of fraud and stock price manipulation against the group. Adani Group, however, has denied all the charges.

Tributes pour in for AFP journalist killed in Ukraine

Paris (AP): Colleagues of Arman Soldin, the Agence France-Presse journalist slain in Ukraine, gathered solemnly at the press agency's Paris headquarters on Wednesday, a day after his death, to remember the 32-year old.

A widely broadcast photo of Soldin, pictured in protective gear and smiling broadly with a cat on his shoulder, has plucked at the heartstrings of the French nation.

"Arman was so enthusiastic, so energetic, so alive that it seems unreal to be here and talk about it this morning," said Juliette Hollier-Larousse, the agency's deputy news director.

Soldin, who was working as the Ukraine video coordinator, was killed during a Grad rocket attack near the eastern Ukrainian city of Bakhmut.

He was with a team of AFP journalists travelling with Ukrainian soldiers when the group came under fire. The rest of the team escaped uninjured.

At the editorial meeting, AFP news director Phil Chetwynd said the shock reverberated across the whole company, saying that "Arman was someone who is loved by his colleagues."

"To lose him in these circumstances is incredibly painful for all of us," Chetwynd



said, even though "we all know the risks."

Chetwynd said the logistical priority now was to return Soldin's body to the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv, so "we can safely take it out of the country and return it home to his family."

He added: "It's just something we never, ever want to have to contact the family about. It goes to some of our worst fears and concerns. So really, all our thoughts are with his family today."

Pavlo Kyrylenko, the governor of the eastern Donetsk region, said in a Telegram update that Soldin was killed near Chasiv Yar, a western suburb of the embattled city of Bakhmut.

Russian forces have been trying to capture the city for nine months, making Bakhmut the focus of the war's longest battle.

'US, China relationship complicated'

Washington (PTI): The United States has a very deeply complicated and consequential relationship with China, Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Tuesday, adding that engagement between the two countries is the key.

He also said that it is in the interest of the US and China to establish and strengthen their lines of communication — something that the rest of the world "expects us to do".

"What we have communicated to our colleagues in the government in Beijing is the importance from our perspective in engagement, precisely because we have a deeply complicated and also consequential relationship that is important to people in the United States and China," Blinken told reporters at a news conference along with his British counterpart Foreign Secretary James Cleverly.

"But beyond that around the world; that our two presidents agreed when they met in Bali at the end of last year that it would be important to establish and strengthen our lines of communication; and that we believe that that's in our interests and also something that the rest of the world expects us to do because there's an expectation that we will responsibly manage the relationship," he said.

"And precisely because we have profound differences as well as, I believe, some responsibility not only to manage those differences so that the competition that we have doesn't veer into conflict, but also the potential where it's in our mutual interest Blinken said.

'Debt ceiling meeting productive'

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

President Joe Biden and congressional leaders confronted each other on the debt limit impasse on Tuesday, ending their meeting with no breakthrough but agreeing to meet again this week to try to avert the looming risk of an unprecedented government default.

Speaking at the White House, Biden described the talks as "productive" even though House Speaker Kevin McCarthy said after the high-stakes Oval Office meeting that he "didn't see any new movement" toward resolving the stalemate.

Lawmakers and their staffs were to continue discussions on the annual federal budget at Biden's encouragement. Biden and congressional leaders

agree to raise the debt ceiling. That failure would send the country into default with wide-reaching economic impact at home and around the world.

Republicans came to the White House hoping to negotiate sweeping cuts to federal spending in exchange for allowing new borrowing to avoid default. Biden, on the other hand, reinforced his opposition to allowing the country's full faith and credit to be held "hostage" to negotiations — while affirming his willingness to hold talks on the budget only after default is no longer a threat.

"I told congressional leaders that I'm prepared to begin a separate discussion about my budget, spending priorities, but not under the threat of default," Biden said.

Two jailed for life over murder of Af Sikh teen

London (PTI): Two teenagers found guilty of murdering an innocent 16-year-old Afghan Sikh refugee in London who they mistakenly thought belonged to a rival gang were sentenced to life imprisonment by a UK court on Wednesday.

Vanushan Balakrishnan and Ilyas Suleiman, both 18, were convicted of the murder of Rishmeet Singh "in cold blood" in March following a trial at the Old Bailey court in London.

In a televised sentencing hearing at the same court, Judge Sarah Munro described the case as "tragic" as she sentenced Balakrishnan to serve a minimum of 24 years and Suleiman a minimum of 21 years behind bars before being considered for parole.

"This case is more tragic because Rishmeet was an entirely innocent victim," the judge said.

"He was described as a good person who would not hurt a fly. He was never involved in any kind of violence. It defies belief you two sought him out to kill him," she said.

During the trial, it emerged that Rishmeet Singh came to the UK in October 2019 with his mother and grandmother to seek asylum from Jalalabad in Afghanistan.

His father was killed by the Taliban six months prior to that, and shortly after they tried to kidnap Rishmeet — forcing the family to flee to the UK.

'Donald Trump defamed Jean Carroll'

PTI ■ NEW YORK

Former US President Donald Trump sexually abused and defamed author and advice columnist E. Jean Carroll in 1996, a Manhattan federal jury has found and awarded her USD 5 million for battery and defamation, a verdict that may hurt him in his 2024 bid to regain the White House.

The jury found that Trump sexually abused Carroll, holding him liable for battery charges but did not find that Carroll proved he raped her.

Carroll has alleged that Trump had raped her in the Bergdorf Goodman department store in Manhattan and then defamed her when the former US President posted a statement in October on his

The jury verdict against Trump comes just over a month after a grand jury in Manhattan indicted the 76-year-old former president, for his role in paying hush money to porn star Stormy Daniels.

Trump, the first former US President to be criminally charged, has pleaded not guilty to 34 felony counts of falsifying business records in relation to hush money payments to Daniels during the 2016 presidential elections at his arraignment in Manhattan criminal court.

Carroll, 79, called the verdict a victory for her and other victims of abuse. "I filed this lawsuit against Donald Trump to clear my name and to get my life back. Today, the world finally knows the truth.

Truth Social platform by describing her case as "a complete con job" and "a Hoax and a lie."

APPENDIX IV-A
[See proviso to Rule 8(6)]

Sale Notice for sale of Immovable Properties

E-Auction Sale Notice for sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) and Rule 9(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described Immovable Properties mortgaged to Indiabulls Housing Finance Ltd. [CIN: L65922DL2005PLC136029] ("Secured Creditor"), the physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of the Secured Creditor, will be sold on "as is where is", "as is what is" and "whatever there is" basis on **30.05.2023 from 02.00 P.M. to 04.00 P.M.**, for recovery of Rs. 49,17,904/- (Rupees Forty Nine Lakh Seventeen Thousand Nine Hundred Forty Only) i.e. **Rs. 36,49,911/- (Rupees Thirty Six Lakh Forty Nine Thousand Nine Hundred Eleven only)** pending towards Loan Account No. **HLAPPAN00339829**; and **Rs. 12,67,993/- (Rupees Twelve Lakh Sixty Seven Thousand Nine Hundred Ninety Three only)** pending towards Loan Account No. **HLAPPAN00499754**, by way of outstanding principal, arrears (including accrued late charges) and interest till **04.05.2023** with applicable future interest in terms of the Loan Agreement and other related loan document(s) w.e.f. **05.05.2023** along with legal expenses and other charges due to the Secured Creditor from **DEEPA KUMAR (PROPRIETOR, NIRMAL TRADING CO.), POONAM DEVI, OMBIR and SEEMA**.

The Reserve Price of the Immovable Properties will be **Rs. 32,00,000/- (Rupees Thirty Two Lakh only)** and the Earnest Money Deposit ("EMD") will be **Rs. 3,20,000/- (Rupees Three Lakh Twenty Thousand only)** i.e. equivalent to 10% of the Reserve Price.

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

PROPERTY NO. 1

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY BEARING SHOP NUMBER 7, ON THE GROUND FLOOR WITHOUT ROOF RIGHT AND GROUND FLOOR, MEASURING 18 SQ. YARDS (EAST TO WEST 9 FEET NORTH TO SOUTH 18 FEET) SQUARE YARDS, WAKA ABADI, OM SHOPPING MALL, SITUATED IN MASAD MOHALLA (MOHANPURA), SONEPAT NEAR GEETA BHAWAN CHOWK, TEHSIL AND DISTRICT SONEPAT WITHIN THE LIMITS OF SONEPAT MUNICIPAL CORPORATION, SONEPAT, HARYANA-131001 AND THE SAME IS BOUNDED AS UNDER:-

EAST : SHOP NUMBER 8
WEST : SHOP NUMBER 6
NORTH : OTHER PROPERTY
SOUTH : ROAD 18 FEET WIDE

PROPERTY NO. 2

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY BEARING SHOP NUMBER 8, ON THE GROUND FLOOR WITHOUT ROOF RIGHT AND GROUND FLOOR, MEASURING 18 SQ. YARDS (EAST TO WEST 9 FEET NORTH TO SOUTH 18 FEET) SQUARE YARDS, WAKA ABADI, OM SHOPPING MALL, SITUATED IN MASAD MOHALLA (MOHANPURA), SONEPAT NEAR GEETA BHAWAN CHOWK, TEHSIL AND DISTRICT SONEPAT WITHIN THE LIMITS OF SONEPAT MUNICIPAL CORPORATION, SONEPAT, HARYANA-131001 AND THE SAME IS BOUNDED AS UNDER:-

EAST : SHOP NUMBER 9
WEST : SHOP NUMBER 7
NORTH : OTHER PROPERTY
SOUTH : ROAD 18 FEET WIDE

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided on the website of the Secured Creditor i.e. www.indiabullshomeloans.com. For bidding, log on to www.auctionfocus.in

Date: 08.05.2023
Place: SONEPAT

s/d
AUTHORISED OFFICER
INDIABULLS HOUSING FINANCE LTD.

उपरो राज्य औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण
टीसीएस सिटी, गाजियाबाद | E-Mail: ed2@upsidc.com

अलकालीन ई-निविदा सूचना

एतद्वारा सूचित किया जाता है कि प्राधिकरण के विभिन्न जमिनों में स्थित औद्योगिक क्षेत्रों में विद्युत विकास/अवस्थापन कार्यों हेतु सरकारी विभागों/सार्वजनिक उपकरणों/निगमों/प्राधिकरणों/परिवहन/नगर निगमों में पंजीकृत फर्मों/देहदाओं से अलकालीन ई-निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती है।

क्रमांक	कार्य का नाम	अंदाजित मूल्य (₹)
1.	Upgradation of Conventional sodium street lights to LED along with AMC for three Years under Atal Industrial Infrastructure Mission at I.A. Etah & IDC Etah.	59.80
2.	Upgradation of Conventional sodium street lights to LED along with AMC for three Years under Atal Industrial Infrastructure Mission at I.A. Salempur (Hatras).	55.42
3.	Supply and Installation of LED High Mast Lighting System under Atal Industrial Infrastructure Mission at I.A. Babaria (Shamba).	47.21
4.	Providing LED High Mast Lighting system under Atal Industrial Infrastructure Mission at I.A. Etah, IDC Etah and I.A. Salempur (Hatras).	51.85

निविदा दिनांक 12.05.2023 को 11:00 बजे से दिनांक 19.05.2023 को 18:00 बजे तक ऑनलाइन की जा सकती है, निवेदन दिनांक 20.05.2023 को 11:00 बजे या इसके पश्चात खोला जायेगा। निविदादातों द्वारा उपलब्ध बजट पर की गयी प्रतिक्रियाओं का निर्णय लेने के बाद 03 कार्यदिन में पंजीकृत फर्मों/निगमों/सार्वजनिक उपकरणों/निगमों/निगमों की जा सकती है।

नोट:- 1. निविदादाता अपनी निविदाओं में समाप्त कर एवं जीआरएड/डी सीटी दर्श अंकित करें। अलग से कोई कर देना नहीं होगा। 2. विद्युत कार्यों हेतु निविदादाताओं को निविदा ऑनलाइन करने समय "विद्युत सुरक्षा विभाग" को 2000 घण्टा, सख्त-नकद में 'क' श्रेणी, अनुमोदित लाइसेंस एवं Eligibility Criteria के अनुसार समस्त प्रत्यक्ष ऑनलाइन करना अनिवार्य होगा, अन्यथा निविदा को Consider नहीं किया जायेगा। निविदा सम्बन्धी विस्तृत जानकारी [website: www.onlineupsidc.com](http://www.onlineupsidc.com) पर स्थापित लिंक मूवीएलसी की [website: https://www.upsidc.com](http://www.upsidc.com) पर देखी जा सकती है।

सचिव, अलकालीन विकास प्राधिकरण, गाजियाबाद

M.P. MADHYA KSHETRA VIDYUT VITARAN CO. LTD.
(Govt. of M.P. Undertaking)

Nishtha Parisar, Bijalee Nagar, Govindpura, Bhopal-23
Phone No. : 0755-2602033-36, Fax : 2589821, 2586636
Bhopal, Dated : 10.05.2023

No. MD/MK/04/487

TENDER NOTICE

MPMKVVCL, Bhopal, invites online bids from **Manufacturers only** through e-tendering for procurement of following items :-

Tender Specification Number	Particulars of Material for Procurement	Approx. Value (Rs. Lakh)	Tender Fee (incl. GST) (in Rs.)	Date of Pre Bid Conference	Date of Opening of Tender
MD/MK/04/919	Procurement of 33/11 KV 5 MVA Low Loss (4/23 KW) Power Transformers	1183.11	11800.00	24.05.2023 3.00 PM	08.06.2023 3.00 PM

Other details and full tender document would be available on our Company website <https://portal.mpcz.in> & Govt. website <https://mptenders.gov.in> very shortly.

M.P. Madhyam/109829/2023

CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER (PROC.)

Children among 15 dead as boat capsizes in Nigeria

Abuja (Nigeria) — A boat capsized in northwestern Nigeria, killing 15 people, police said on Wednesday. The boat was heading to the village of Dundjeji in Sokoto state on Tuesday when it capsized in the middle of a river, local police spokesman Sanusi Abubakar told The Associated Press.

There were 36 passengers on board the boat, with 21 of them rescued alive.

Thirteen females and two males died, Abubakar said. Some of the fatalities were children.

It was the latest in a series of boat capsizings in Nigeria's river communities.

UK tabloid apologises as Prince Harry phone hacking trial begins

London — One of the UK's tabloid publishers, embroiled in legal proceedings over historic phone hacking allegations targeted at celebrities including Prince Harry, on Wednesday "unreservedly apologised" for ordering the unlawful gathering of information.

The Mirror Group Newspapers (MGN), the publisher of "Daily Mirror", released court documents at the start of a trial in the High Court in London to continue to deny phone hacking but admitted that there was "some evidence of the instruction of third parties to engage in other types of



the younger son of King Charles III, said he was subjected to the "most intrusive methods of obtaining personal information."

MGN denies any involvement in the case of one particular claimant in the hearing that is expected to last over six weeks. The company is represented by barrister Andrew Green, whose written arguments deny allegations of voicemail interception in the cases being examined during the trial.

"There is some evidence of the instruction of third parties to engage in other types of UIG in respect of each of the claimants."

Lawyers representing the

Russia ends visa regime for Georgia

Moscow — Russian President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday abolished visas for Georgian nationals and lifted a 2019 ban on direct flights to the South Caucasus nation, a move that comes amid rocky relations between the two countries and that was quickly denounced by Georgia's president as a "provocation."

According to a "declaration" signed by Putin, starting from May 15, Georgian nationals will be allowed to enter Russia without visas — unless they're coming to Russia to work or to stay for longer than 90 days.

Another presidential decree lifts a ban on direct flights by Russian airlines to Georgia. Russia unilaterally imposed the ban in 2019 after a wave of anti-Kremlin protests in Georgia. The decrees come a day after leaders of several Central Asian and South Caucasus nations stood beside

Putin at a military parade marking the anniversary of Nazi Germany's defeat in World War II, in what looked like the Kremlin seeking to show that Russia still had allies and was not completely isolated.

Following Putin's decrees, Russia's Foreign Ministry issued a statement lifting its 2019 recommendation for Russian citizens to avoid travelling to Georgia.

Pak Army warns Imran Khan's supporters

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD/LAHORE

The Pakistan Army on Wednesday warned former prime minister Imran Khan's supporters of "severe retaliation" in the wake of attacks on its installations, asserting that it will not allow anyone to take the law into their hands while describing May 9 as a "black chapter" in the country's history. Enraged over the arrest of their leader in a corruption case on Tuesday, the supporters of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief Khan stormed the General Headquarters of the Army. They set the residence of the Lahore Corps Commander on fire while attacking military vehicles and installations.

"We will not allow anyone to take the law into their hands," the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the Army's media wing said in a terse statement.

The ISPR said that on the one hand, these miscreants evoke the nation's emotions for achieving their "limited and selfish objectives" and on the other hand, they deceive people, continuing to highlight the Army's importance.

"This is an example of hypocrisy," it stated.

The military's media wing said that "this group wearing a political cloak" has done what enemies could not do in 75 years, all "in the lust for power".

May 9 will be remembered as a "black chapter" in history due to the protestors "targeting army property and installations" after the arrest of Khan, it said. "The army showed patience and restraint and exercised extreme tolerance, not even caring about its reputation, in the larger interest of the country," the statement said.

"Any further attack on the army, including all law enforcement agencies, military and state installations and properties will be severely retaliated, the responsibility of which will be on this very group that wants to push Pakistan into a civil war and has expressed its multiple times," it said. The Army said its "mature" response

thwarted this conspiracy.

"We are well aware that behind it were orders, directives and complete pre-planning by some sinister party leadership," it said.

It said that the facilitators, planners and political activists involved in the protests had been identified and strict action would be taken against them as per the law.

"With this situation created under nefarious planning, a heinous attempt was made to make the army give its immediate reaction, which could be used for its nefarious political purposes," it said, adding that all these "evil elements" will now be responsible for the consequences.

The Army's statement comes a day after paramilitary forces whisked away the PTI chief on the orders of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) officials who barged into a room of the Islamabad High Court on Tuesday.

An anti-corruption court on Wednesday sent the former prime minister on an eight-day physical remand to the anti-corruption watchdog.

At least seven people have died and nearly 300 others have been injured across Pakistan in the last 24 hours in violent clashes between Khan's supporters and security forces.

PAK ARMY DEPLOYED

Pakistan Army troops were deployed in Punjab on Wednesday to maintain law and order in the most populous province after violent protests in several cities and attacks on military installations following the dramatic arrest of former prime minister Imran Khan in a corruption case.

The decision was taken by the interior ministry at the request of the Punjab government, according to a notification issued by the federal government. "The exact numbers of troops/assets, date and area of deployment will be worked out by the provincial government in consultation" with the army headquarters, according to the notification.



A Police officer fires a repeater rifle during clashes with supporters of Pakistan's former Prime Minister Imran Khan, in Islamabad, Pakistan on Wednesday.

Monitoring situation in Pak carefully: PM Sunak

London (PTI): British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on Wednesday said that the arrest of former Pakistan prime minister Imran Khan was an internal matter of the country, but that the UK was monitoring the situation carefully.



Asked about the ongoing "civil unrest" in the country by Pakistan-born Conservative Party MP Rehman Chishty during Prime Minister's Questions (PMQs) in the House of Commons, Sunak responded by describing the UK-Pakistan bilateral relations as "long-standing and close".

"The arrest of the former prime minister is an internal matter for Pakistan. We support peaceful democratic processes and adherence to the rule of law and we are monitoring the situation carefully," said Sunak. Chishty, a dual British and Pakistani citizen, raised concerns over the circumstances of the detention of Khan and his right to a fair

trial. "The United Kingdom has in the past sent observers to hearings around the world to ensure natural justice is done. Has the Prime Minister considered that?" he asked Sunak. The parliamentary intervention in the UK came a day after Khan was arrested by paramilitary officers, triggering country-wide protests. A large group of protesters also gathered outside the central London home of former prime minister and Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) supreme Nawaz Sharif and chanted slogans in favour of Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) following news of the arrest on Tuesday.

US wants rule of law to be followed in Pakistan

Washington (PTI): The United States on Tuesday called for respect of democratic principles and the rule of law in Pakistan in the aftermath of the arrest of its former prime minister Imran Khan.

"We are aware of the arrest of former Pakistani prime minister Imran Khan. As we have said before, the United States does not have a position on one political candidate or party versus another," White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre told reporters at her daily news conference.

She was responding to questions on arrest of Imran Khan in Pakistan.

Khan was undergoing a biometric process at the Islamabad High Court when the paramilitary Rangers broke open the glass window and arrested him in a graft case.

Pak ex-PM tells court he fears for his life

Islamabad (PTI): Pakistan's former Prime Minister Imran Khan told an accountability court here on Wednesday that he feared for his life and was afraid that he will meet the same fate as Maqsood Chappasi, a key witness in Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's money laundering case who died last year.

Khan, 70, appeared before the accountability court at the Police Lines Headquarters in H-11/1 Islamabad on Wednesday, a day after he was dragged from the Islamabad High Court and arrested, sparking widespread clashes between his supporters and police.

"I have not been to the washroom in 24 hours," the former prime minister said during the hearing.

The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief requested the court that his personal physician Dr Faisal Sultan be granted access to him, the Express Tribune newspaper reported.

"I am afraid I will meet the same fate as Maqsood Chappasi," Khan said in reference to a key witness in Prime Minister Sharif's money laundering case who died due to a cardiac arrest last year, it said.

The PTI had termed the witness' death "mysterious".

They give [you] an injection, and [you] slowly die," Khan said. During Wednesday's hearing, the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) requested a 14-day physical remand of the PTI chief. The anti-corruption court, however, sent Khan on an eight-day physical remand to NAB. Accountability court judge Muhammad Bashir heard the case at the New Police Guest House, where the NAB presented reasons behind the former prime minister's arrest.

Anti-graft body gives clean chit to Pakistan PM

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

MONEY LAUNDERING

In a major relief for Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his son Hamza, the National Accountability Bureau has declared the father-son duo were "innocent" in a money laundering case after it conducted a re-investigation, a media report said on Wednesday.

The case was filed by the anti-corruption agency in 2020, which alleged that Shehbaz and his family members were involved in money laundering and illegal transfer of funds through fake accounts.

The supplementary report was submitted to the accountability court and presented during the hearing conducted by Accountability Court judge Qamar-ul-Zaman, Samaa TV reported on its website.

During Wednesday's hearing, Hamza Shehbaz filed a petition seeking an exemption from attendance on medical grounds, which was approved by the court.

The supplementary report, submitted on Monday, stated that the 71-year-old prime minister, his wife Nusrat Shehbaz, son Hamza Shehbaz, and other accused were found to have no involvement in the matter after a re-investigation.

According to the NAB official, the corruption allegations could not be substantiated under the NAB Amendment Act.

The court, however, adjourned further proceedings till May 24 and extended the interim bails of Haroon Yousef Azziz, prime minister's son-in-law, and co-accused Syed Muhammad Tahir Naqvi until May 24.

The development comes as the country is bracing for

another day of violence that broke out in many cities after the arrest of former prime minister Imran Khan on Tuesday for alleged corruption by the paramilitary Rangers on the orders of the NAB.

In December 2020 when Khan was in power, the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) submitted a challan against Shehbaz and his son Hamza before the court for the duo's alleged involvement in laundering Rs 16 billion in a sugar scam case.

The investigation team "detected 28 Benami [untitled] accounts of the Shehbaz family through which money laundering of Rs 16.3 billion was committed from 2008 to 2018," according to the report. It examined the money trail of 17,000 credit transactions.

Shehbaz and Hamza were booked in the case along with the prime minister's other son, Suleman Shehbaz, who was absconding in the United Kingdom, and 14 other people were also named in the FIR.

The report revealed that the amount was kept under "hidden accounts" which were given to Shehbaz in a personal capacity.

The wealthy Sharif family has consistently denied any involvement in money laundering or other illegal financial activities. They have maintained that the case against them is politically motivated and an attempt to discredit their reputation and influence in the country.

The FIA also gave a clean chit to Suleman Shehbaz, stating that the agency found no evidence of his involvement in the money laundering case, according to the report.

Naval guard kills 3 near synagogue; 10 injured

Tunis(AP): A Tunisian naval guard shot and killed a colleague and two civilians Tuesday as he tried to reach a synagogue on the Mediterranean island of Djerba during an annual Jewish pilgrimage, the Tunisian Interior Ministry said. The attacker was slain by security guards, and 10 people were injured.

The motive for the attack was under investigation. It came as Tunisia, once a prized tourist destination and birthplace of the Arab Spring democracy uprisings, has fallen into political and economic crisis.

Djerba, a picturesque island off the southern coast of Tunisia, is home to the North African country's main Jewish community.

The civilians killed were French and Tunisian, the Tunisian Foreign Ministry said. It was not immediately clear if they were pilgrims attending ceremonies at the 2,500-year-old Ghriba temple, one of Africa's oldest synagogues.

Those injured include six security agents and four civilians, the Interior Ministry said. It did not specify how they were injured or whether they were all shot by the attacker, who was not publicly identified.

The assailant, a guard affiliated with the National Guard naval centre in the port town of Aguir on Djerba, first killed a colleague with his service weapon and then seized ammunition and headed toward the Ghriba synagogue, the ministry said.

When he reached the site, he opened fire on security units stationed at the temple, who fired back, killing him before he reached the entrance, the ministry said.

The synagogue was locked down and those inside and outside were kept secure while authorities investigate the motives for the attack, the ministry said. Ghayda Thabet, a member of the Tunisian Association for the Support of Minorities, was at the Ghriba synagogue and appealed for help on Facebook.

'Rocket attack underway from Gaza on southern Israel'

AP ■ GAZA CITY

Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip on Wednesday fired several barrages of rocket fire into southern Israel, in their first response to a series of Israeli airstrikes that have killed a total of 16 Palestinians, including three senior militants and at least 10 civilians.

The rocket fire set off air-raid sirens throughout southern Israel, where residents had been bracing for an attack since Israel carried out its first airstrikes early Tuesday. There were no immediate reports of damage or injuries.

Earlier on Wednesday, Israeli aircraft struck targets in Gaza a second straight day on Wednesday, killing at least one Palestinian and pushing the region closer toward a new round of heavy fighting.



Israeli security forces take cover during an air raid in southern Israel, near the Gaza border, on Wednesday.

Tuesday's strikes killed three senior Islamic Jihad militants and at least 10 civilians — most of them women and children. Palestinian militants have pledged to retaliate while Israel says it is prepared for a further escalation of hostilities.

Tuesday it was bombing Palestinian Islamic Jihad militant infrastructure in the coastal enclave.

The army said one airstrike targeted militants travelling to a rocket launcher site in the southern Gaza Strip.

ASEAN leaders condemn attack on aid convoy

AP ■ LABUAN BAJO (INDONESIA)

Southeast Asian leaders condemned an attack on an aid convoy that the regional group had arranged for displaced people in Myanmar, calling Wednesday for an immediate stop to violence and for the military government to comply with a peace plan.

Leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations convened in the picturesque harbor town of Labuan Bajo in southern Indonesia at the start of a two-day summit. Their host, President Joko Widodo, called for unity amid global economic headwinds and major-power rivalry that's lashing the region.

The 10-nation bloc has come under international pressure to effectively address the crisis in Myanmar. But ASEAN members appeared to be divided on how to proceed, with some recommending to ease punitive actions aimed at isolating Myanmar's generals and invite its top diplomat and officials back to the high-profile summit meetings.

"The time for isolation has served its purpose," said an internal ASEAN report obtained by The Associated Press.

Over the weekend, a convoy delivering aid to displaced villagers and carrying Indonesian and Singaporean diplomats came under fire in Myanmar's eastern Shan state. A security team with the convoy returned fire and a vehicle was damaged, but there were no injuries, state-run television MRTV reported.

Indonesia, which chairs ASEAN this year, had arranged for the aid delivery after a long-delayed assessment.

"We condemned the attack and underlined that the perpetrators must be held accountable," the ASEAN leaders said in a joint statement. For the second year, Myanmar's top general was not invited to the summit. Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing led the army in seizing power from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi in February 2021, plunging the country into a civil strife and becoming ASEAN's gravest

crisis since its founding in 1967.

ASEAN leaders said they were "deeply concerned with ongoing violence in Myanmar and urged the immediate cessation of all forms of violence and the use of force to create a conducive environment for the safe and timely delivery of humanitarian assistance and inclusive national dialogues."

During foreign ministers' talks ahead of the summit, however, some suggested that the group renege Myanmar's military-led State Administration Council and "bring Myanmar back to ASEAN foreign ministers' meeting and summits, noting that the time for isolation has served its purpose," according to the ASEAN report. It did not identify the countries pushing for more leniency toward Myanmar despite international outrage against continuing military attacks in the country.

The suggestion for ASEAN to bring Myanmar back into its fold was "noted," the report said, hinting it did not receive full approval from all the ministers.

Saudi invites Syrian Prez to Arab summit

Beirut (AP): Saudi Arabia has invited Syrian President Bashar Assad to the upcoming Arab League summit in the oil-rich kingdom, the Syrian president's office said on Wednesday. The news comes as Damascus continues to slowly return to the Arab fold, following a 12-year-period of political isolation.

Assad received the invitation days after the Arab League restored Syria's membership into the organisation during a meeting in Cairo on Sunday.

Syria's membership was suspended for brutally cracking down on mass protests against Assad in 2011. Since then, the uprising turned into a vicious civil war that killed nearly a half million people and displaced half of the country's pre-war

population of 23 million. The upcoming summit will take place in the Saudi coastal city of Jeddah on May 19.

Assad's office published photos of the Saudi Arabia's ambassador to Jordan delivering the invitation. It was not made clear whether Assad will attend the summit.

Saudi Arabia had been a key backer of armed opposition groups attempting to overthrow the embattled Syrian president, but in recent months had called for dialogue. On Tuesday, the Syrian foreign minister paid a visit to the kingdom, the first in over a decade, while Riyadh and Damascus announced Tuesday that they will reopen their embassies and restore diplomatic relations.

NOTICE

A Fortuner Toyota car registration no. DL1CQ0460 was sold and physically delivered to Oik AUTOS on 19th July 2022. But the ownership of this car is still not transferred despite issuance of NOC from Delhi Transport Authority on 30th November 2022. The insurance of this car is going to be expired in July 23. It is for the attention of government authorities that if the Oik AUTOS misusing post delivery of this car or occurrence of any mishap with this car, Oik AUTOS shall be solely responsible for this. Hisamuddin, A-118, Priyadarshini Vihar, Delhi-110092. Phone 9717787797

PUBLIC NOTICE

General Public: A hereby informed that my clients Sh. PREM CHANDRA TRIPATHI S/o Late Sh. Ram Saha Tripathi & SMT. PUSHPA TRIPATHI W/o Sh. Prem Chandra Tripathi, Both Rio C-40, Pocket-7, Kirti Vihar-2, Sector-62, Noida Distt. G.B. Nagar (U.P.) has detached and debarred their son namely RAHUL TRIPATHI & his wife SMT. APARAJITA GALLTAM, Both Rio at G-128B, Silicon City, Arrapur, Sector-76, Noida, Distt. G.B. Nagar (U.P.) from all their relationship heretofore. My above named clients have severed all relations with them for all intents and purposes for all the times to come. Any person dealing with them and shall do so at his own risk and consequences and my clients will not be responsible for any claim against Sh. Rahul Tripathi & his wife Smt. Aparajita Gautam under any circumstances. D.K. Sharma (Advocate), Chamber No. 219, New Lawyers Chambers, Supreme Court of India, New Delhi (NI) 95100-4822.

APPENDIX IV A
[See proviso to Rule 8(6)]
Sale Notice for sale of Immovable property
E-Auction Sale Notice for sale of immovable assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) and Rule 9(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described Immovable Property mortgaged to Indiabulls Housing Finance Ltd. [CIN: L69922DL2005PLC136029] ("Secured Creditor"), the constructive possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of the Secured Creditor, will be sold on "as is where is", "as is what is" and "whatever there is" basis on 31.05.2023 from 02.00 P.M. to 04.00 P.M., for recovery of Rs. 23,63,924/- (Rupees Twenty Three Lakh Sixty Three Thousand Nine Hundred Twenty Four only) pending towards Loan Account No. HHLVAS00368310, by way of outstanding principal, arrears (including accrued late charges) and interest till 04.05.2023 with applicable future interest in terms of the Loan Agreement and other related loan document(s) w.e.f. 05.05.2023 along with legal expenses and other charges due to the Secured Creditor from Rajesh Kumar and Mamta Devi.
The Reserve Price of the Immovable Property will be Rs. 17,00,000/- (Rupees Seventeen Lakh only) and the Earnest Money Deposit ("EMD") will be Rs. 1,70,000/- (Rupees One Lakh Seventy Thousand only) i.e. equivalent to 10% of the Reserve Price.
DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY
FLAT NO. G-2, GROUND FLOOR, REAR SIDE, PLOT NO. 1/241, SECTOR-1, VASUNDHARA, GHAZIABAD, UTTAR PRADESH- 201010.
For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided on the website of the Secured Creditor i.e. www.indiabullshomeloans.com. For bidding, log on to www.auctionfocus.in
Date : 09.05.2023 Sd/
Place : GHAZIABAD Authorized Officer
INDIABULLS HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED

UPSIDA प्रधान महाप्रबन्धक, (आर/एस) उ.प्र. राज्य औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण, ए-1/4 लखनपुर, काणपुर

अव्यक्तलीन ई-निविदा सूचना
एवम् द्वारा सूचित किया जाता है कि प्राधिकरण को विभिन्न जगहों में स्थित औद्योगिक क्षेत्रों में विद्युत विकास/अनुसंधान कार्यों हेतु सरकारी विद्युत/सार्वजनिक उपक्रमों/निगमों/प्राधिकरणों/परिषदों/नगर निकायों में भौतिक फर्म/टिकेटरों से अव्यक्तलीन ई-निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं, जिनका विवरण निम्नवत् है—

क्रमांक	कार्य का नाम	कार्य की लागत रु. (लाख में)
1	Providing LED High Mast Lighting System in Remaining area of Residential and Industrial Sectors under Atal Industrial Infrastructure Mission at TDS, City, Ghaziabad.	153.30
2	Providing street lights network along with AMC of three years under Atal Industrial Infrastructure Mission at IA, Babrala (Sambhal).	112.99
3	Upgradation of street light network of approach road from Pakwada to SEZ Moradabad along with AMC for Three years under Atal Industrial Infrastructure Mission at IA, SEZ Moradabad.	160.44
4	Upgradation of street light network along with AMC for three years under Atal Industrial Infrastructure Mission at IA, Sikandrabad (Bulandshahr).	287.86
5	Upgradation of street light network along with AMC for three years under Atal Industrial Infrastructure Mission at IA, SEZ Moradabad.	192.97
6	Upgradation of street light network along with AMC for three years under Atal Industrial Infrastructure Mission at IA, MG Road, (Hapur)	316.86

निविदा दिनांक 12.05.2023 को 11:00 बजे से दिनांक 19.05.2023 को 18:00 बजे तक अपलोड की जा सकती है, जिसे दिनांक 20.05.2023 को 11:00 बजे या इसके पश्चात खोला जाएगा। निविदादाताओं द्वारा शपथ पत्रों की पूर्व प्रतियाँ निविदा खोलने के बाद 03 कार्य दिवस में उपरोक्त डाक/व्यक्तिगत रूप से कार्यालय में जमा की जा सकती हैं।
नोट- 1. निविदादाता अपनी निविदाओं में समस्त कर एच.टी.एस.डी. राहित करें अथवा को: अलग से कोई कर देना नहीं होगा। 2. विद्युत कार्यों हेतु निविदादाताओं को निविदा अपलोड करते समय "विद्युत सूचना विभाग" उ.प्र. शासन, लखनऊ में 'क' श्रेणी, अनुमति प्राप्त एल.ई.सी. के अंतर्गत समस्त पर्यटन अपलोड करके अनिवार्य होगा, अव्यक्त निविदा को Consider नहीं किया जाएगा। निविदा संचाली विस्तृत जानकारी website: www.onlineupsida.com पर स्थिति लिंक उपलब्ध है।
वेबसाइट: http://tender.up.nic.in पर देखी जा सकती है।
उ.प्र.रा.औ.वि.प्र., काणपुर

HDB Financial Services Limited Ground Floor, Zenith House, Keshavnagar Khadye Marg, Mahalaxmi, Mumbai - 400034
Tel No: +91 22 49116300

FINAL AUCTION CUM SALE NOTICE FOR GOLD ORNAMENTS
The borrower(s) (whose details are provided in the table herein below), in particular, and the public, in general, are hereby informed that the below mentioned accounts are overdue, and the borrowers/account holders have not responded/complied with the communication, and notice sent by HDB Financial Services Limited (the "Company") requesting the borrower to clear his/her/their dues as per the documents in respect of the below mentioned loan signed/accepted by the borrower(s) (such documents, collectively "loan agreement") and therefore defaulted in terms thereof. The Company has in exercise of its rights as a pledgee, decided to enforce the pledge and therefore hold a public auction of the gold ornaments pledged to the company as security for the loan for the purpose of selling the same and realizing/recovering the dues owed by the borrower(s) to the company. The auction will be conducted on 15.05.2023 at the below mentioned local branch of HDB Financial Services Limited from 11.00 am onwards on the date and branches mentioned in the below table:-

Loan No	Customer Name	Date of Loan	Overdue Amount Rs.	Branch Name
22223686	Rahul Kumar	3/11/2022	3864	Delhi Ncr-Burari
23447755	Anil Singh	4/23/2022	2152	Delhi Ncr-Burari
15901118	Vijay Kumar Gupta	6/30/2021	26652	Delhi-Adarsh Nagar
21886825	Seela Tiwari	2/7/2022	10871.77	Delhi-Badarpur
25243776	Dipender Singh Bisht	6/24/2022	16236	Delhi-Dilshad Garden
23288842	Kalpana Shyam	4/19/2022	6508	Delhi-Dilshad Garden
24429961	Shuaib Naim	5/26/2022	7789	Delhi-Dilshad Garden
24619113	Ajay Kumar	6/2/2022	5376	Delhi-Dilshad Garden
26792447	Vipul Kumar	8/22/2022	5794	Delhi-Dilshad Garden
15715458	Manish Rohatash	6/25/2021	31770	Delhi-Kailash Nagar
21686490	Sakib Jakir	2/5/2022	47045	Delhi-Kailash Nagar
22527294	Sahid Ali	3/25/2022	8455	Delhi-Malviya Nagar
28571433	Usha Rajesh	10/26/2022	16860	Delhi-Malviya Nagar
26646688	Ravishankar Gupta	8/17/2022	5948	Delhi-Nai Sadak
27904399	Anoop Kumar Pathak	10/4/2022	5192	Delhi-Ramesh Nagar
20814089	Pawan Kumar	1/3/2022	3153	Delhi-Rohini
29407859	Seema Wo Ashwani	11/23/2022	12468	Delhi-Shastri Nagar

The action shall be conducted on an "AS IS WHERE" and "AS IS WHAT IT" basis and the Company is not making and shall not make any representation or warranties as regards the quality, purity, caratage, weight or valuation of the said gold ornaments. It shall be the sole and absolute responsibility of the potential purchaser to verify, examine and satisfy themselves about the quality, purity, caratage, weight or valuation of the said gold ornaments prior to placing their bid and for such purpose it shall be open to potential purchasers to examine, at their sole cost and expense, and at the address set out herein above, the gold ornaments whether with or without expert advice 45 minutes prior to the time stipulated for the conduct of the auction. All the bid shall be subjected to such minimum reserve price as the company may deem fit to fix in this regard. The auction process and sale (if any) pursuant to such auction shall be subjected to such further terms and conditions as the company may at sole discretion deem fit to impose.
If the borrower(s) mentioned above pays the amount due to the Company in terms of the loan agreement in his individual loan account in full before the auction as mentioned above, the pledged ornaments securing the said loan may be withdrawn from the said auction without further notice. Please note that it is the absolute discretionary power of the undersigned authorized officer of the company, either to postpone or to cancel the auction proceeding without prior notice and without assigning any reason therefor and to reject any or all the bids or offer without assigning any reason for the same.
Place : DELHI
Date : 11.05.2023
Authorized Officer
(HDB Financial Services Ltd)

India on path to become 3rd largest economy: Min Rane urges industry to keep on investing

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Union MSME minister Narayan Rane on Wednesday urged the global and domestic industries to continue to invest in India, which is on its path to become the third largest economy.

He made the remarks at 'GIC 23 Intergovernmental Connect' organised by Inventpreneur Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) in association with the Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME) here.

"From 10 largest in 2014, India today is 5th largest economy. Only Japan and Germany are ahead of us. We will become the 3rd largest by 2030 as envisioned by our prime minister," he said addressing around 200 delegates from across the globe at the event.

The minister further said that immense business opportunities are available in various sectors in India and promised



full support to investors looking to invest in the country. The country will see various industrial parks across various locations and the investors can explore business opportunities in this area, he said. He also said the industry must identify areas where imports are happening and start producing such products to check inbound shipments. ICCI Vice Chairman Rishabh Malhotra said the for-

eign delegates included industry professionals and diplomats from countries like Spain, Belarus, Mexico and Africa, among others. The participants are from various industries like FMCG, automotive, logistics, power, solar, and telecom. As directed by the minister "we will guide them (investors) on various business-friendly policies being offered by the government of India and that of various other countries."

NCLT admits Go First's insolvency plea Bars lessors from taking back fleet

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In a major relief to cash-strapped Go First, the National Company Law Tribunal on Wednesday admitted its plea for voluntary insolvency resolution proceedings and imposed a moratorium on the airline's financial obligations that bars lessors from taking back aircraft.

The tribunal's ruling, which was reserved on May 4, caps more than a week of uncertainty for the crisis-hit carrier, which has more than 7,000 employees on its rolls, and also comes against the backdrop of lessors moving to deregister at least 45 planes of the airline.

Besides, the Interim Resolution Professional (IRP) Abhilash Lal — who will be in charge of the affairs of the airline as the board has been suspended — has been directed not to renege on any employees.

Allowing the plea, a two-member NCLT bench said there is existence of unpaid debt and

default committed by Go First above the limits under IBC. It has placed on record the demands and notices issued by the creditors, which is not even disputed by its representing lessors.

Hence, it has no other option but to admit the present application "under Section 10 of the Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code (IBC)," said the NCLT bench headed by President Justice Ramlingam Sudhakar.

"Accordingly, the application of the corporate applicant (Go First) admitted," said a 41-page NCLT order.

With liabilities worth ₹11,463 crore, the airline has sought voluntary insolvency resolution proceedings as well as an interim moratorium on its financial obligations under section 10 of IBC, which allows a company to approach NCLT for initiation of insolvency after default.

NCLT has also provided protection to the debt-ridden carrier by declaring a moratorium as per the provisions of IBC.



Following this moratorium, Go First is now protected from all suits or continuation of pending suits or proceedings against it, including the execution of any judgment, decree or order in any court of law, tribunal, or arbitration panel till the completion of the insolvency proceedings.

Moreover, it has also restrained on transfer, encumbrance, alienating, or disposing of its assets and any action to foreclose, recover or enforce any security interest created by it in respect of its property. The insolvency tribunal has appointed Abhilash Lal as Interim Resolution Professional (IRP) as suggested by Go First and "directed to take charge of the CIRP of the corporate debtor with immediate effect."

"The IRP will ensure to take all necessary steps including the execution of the arbitral award to ensure that the corporate debtor as a going concern and run its services smoothly," it said. Besides, NCLT also directed IRP to ensure that retrenchment of employees is not resorted to as a matter of course. "In any event, any such decision/event should be brought to the attention of this adjudicating authority," it said.

NCLT further ordered the suspended board of directors and ex-management of Go First to "extend all necessary support and cooperation to the IRP and his team in keeping Go First a going concern" and running its operations/services smoothly".

It also directed the suspended management "to deposit ₹5 crore with the IRP to meet the immediate expenses".



Gold declines ₹265; silver advances ₹120

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices declined by ₹265 to ₹61,585 per 10 grams in the national capital on Wednesday amid a fall in international precious metal prices, according to HDFC Securities. The yellow metal had ended at ₹61,850 per 10 grams in the previous trade. Silver, however, rose by ₹120 to ₹77,800 per kilogramme.

"Spot gold prices in Delhi traded at ₹61,585 per 10 grams, down ₹265 per 10 grams," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst — Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

In the overseas market, gold was trading lower at \$2,033 per ounce and silver was up at \$25.88 per ounce. Gold price traded lower in Asian trading hours on Wednesday.

Provide easy exit for small firms to delist from CSE, PHDCCI urges Sebi

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Industry body PHDCCI has urged capital market regulator Sebi to provide an early and easy process for small firms that wish to delist shares from Calcutta Stock Exchange.

In a representation to Sebi earlier this month, the chamber has recommended a "single window system" or "one-time settlement scheme" for small companies wishing to regularize their functionality on CSE.

The chamber argued that smaller companies may not have the financial resources to comply with certain regulations and may face greater challenges in meeting regulatory requirements.

An "amnesty scheme" or "minimum penalty" or "waiver" could help alleviate some of these challenges and encourage more companies to comply with regulations and also for the sake of the interest of shareholders, leading to erosion of capital of the small companies, PHDCCI said.

The chamber claimed that CSE is a non-trading exchange but is collecting listing fees every year from the companies that were listed decades ago.

"The income of small companies is very low and some of them are facing losses. The CSE has imposed huge penalties on



small companies for non-compliance or delay in compliances, which is eventually leading towards erosion of the total capital of the small company. The delay of compliance and a freeze on directors' Dmat accounts are the main causes of companies wishing to delist from CSE," PHDCCI said.

The chamber has highlighted that 32 companies have been suspended by CSE recently.

Further delisting from CSE requires a company to be active/regular on the stock exchange first and then only can apply for delisting. Here the process is difficult for companies that have been suspended by CSE or have inactive accounts, it said.

Since the exchange suspended its own operations in 2013, there has been no trading or any other operation being carried out by the same, it said.

Sensex, Nifty close with gains in choppy trade amid caution ahead of US inflation data

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty closed with gains in highly choppy trade on Wednesday following buying towards the end of the session in select oil, banking and auto shares as investors awaited key US inflation data for further cues.

The 30-share BSE Sensex rose by 178.87 points or 0.29 per cent to settle at 61,940.20 as 22 of its components advanced and eight declined. During the day, it hit a high of 61,974.35 and a low of 61,572.93.

The broader NSE Nifty gained 49.15 points or 0.27 per cent to end at 18,135.10, posting gains for a third day in a row.

Global markets largely traded in negative as investors turned cautious ahead of the US inflation data for April which would provide some indication about the Federal Reserve's next course of action on the rate front.

Among the Sensex firms, IndusInd Bank rose the most by 2.84 per cent. Power



Grid, Tata Motors, Bajaj Finance, NTPC, HDFC Bank, Reliance Industries, Nestle and Kotak Mahindra Bank were the major gainers.

Infosys fell the most by 0.59 per cent. State Bank of India, Tata Steel, Hindustan Unilever and Titan were among the laggards.

"The domestic market traded near the flatline, oscillating between gains and losses as investors refrained from taking a firm direction due to the uncertainties surrounding the US market," said Vinod Nair,

Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

Globally, investors exercised caution in anticipation of the US inflation data and a meeting between US political leaders to discuss fiscal concerns. Oil prices edged lower as industry data revealed a surprise surge in US crude stock, indicating a potential weakness in demand, Nair added.

Markets consolidated for yet another session and it was a muted session on the sectoral front also, Ajit Mishra, VP - Technical Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said, adding that selective buying in realty, energy and auto kept the traders busy.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge gained 0.34 per cent and smallcap index climbed 0.33 per cent.

Among indices, realty jumped 0.96 per cent, oil & gas climbed 0.79 per cent, auto (0.73 per cent), energy (0.71 per cent) and utilities (0.51 per cent).

Commodities, IT, telecommunication, metal and tech were the laggards.

Rupee gains 6 paise to close at 82.00 against \$

PTI ■ MUMBAI



The rupee consolidated in a narrow range and settled for the day higher by 6 paise at 82.00 (provisional) against the US dollar on Wednesday, as investors remained on the sidelines ahead of the crucial US inflation data.

Forex traders said significant foreign fund inflows, a firm trend in domestic equities and easing crude oil prices also supported the local unit.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 82.06 against the US currency and finally closed at 82.00 (provisional), registering a gain of 6 paise over its previous close.

During the session, the rupee touched a high of 81.96 and a low of 82.09 against the dollar.

On Tuesday, the rupee closed at 82.06 against the US currency.

Traders said investors were cautious as they awaited inflation data from the US expected later in the day.

The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, rose 0.07 per cent to 101.67.

JSW Steel crude steel output grows 7% to 17.77 LT in April

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

JSW Steel on Wednesday posted a 7 per cent growth in crude steel production on stand-alone basis at 17.77 lakh tonne (LT) in April 2023. The company had produced 16.67 LT steel during the same month last year, JSW Steel said in a statement.

In April 2023, the company said the production of its flat-rolled products rose 16 per cent

to 13.92 LT from 12 LT a year ago. However, its long-rolled products output fell 9 per cent to 3.21 LT from 3.54 LT in April 2022.

"Production of rolled long-products is lower due to planned capital shutdowns taken at Salem and Vijayanagar plant locations during April 2023," it said. JSW Steel is among top six steel manufacturing companies in India.

GCPL Q4 net profit up 24.5% to ₹452 cr, Revenue up 9.6% to ₹3,172.21 crore

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

FMCG major Godrej Consumer Products Ltd on Wednesday reported a 24.47 per cent growth in its consolidated net profit to ₹452.14 crore in the fourth quarter ended March 31, 2023, led by volume growth.

It had posted a net profit of ₹363.24 crore in the January-March quarter a year ago, said Godrej Consumer Products Ltd (GCPL) in a BSE filing.

The revenue from the sale of products of the Godrej group FMCG arm was up 9.6



per cent at ₹3,172.21 crore during the quarter under review as against ₹2,894.15 crore in the corresponding period last fiscal. "4Q FY 2023 consolidated sales grew by 10 per cent in INR led by volume growth of 6 per cent," said an earnings statement from GCPL. GCPL's total expenses were at ₹2,680.39 crore, up 5.73 per cent in Q4/ FY23 as against ₹2,535.06 crore in the corresponding quarter. Its total income in the March quarter was at ₹3,258.07 crore,

up 10.83 per cent. "The performance was broad-based with India Branded business delivering stellar volume growth of 13 per cent, led by double-digit volume growth in both Home Care and Personal Care," said GCPL Managing Director and CEO Sudhir Sitapati. GCPL's India revenue was up 11.47 per cent to ₹1,822.92 crore in the fourth quarter of FY23 as against ₹1,635.34 crore of the corresponding quarter.

E-commerce export potential \$200-300 bn by 2030: Industry body

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Seeking a strategy for e-commerce exports focus on MSMEs to help them sell their products to global markets, the industry body FISME in a study paper has said that e-commerce export potential is in the range of \$200 to \$300 billion by 2030.

The industry stakeholders in an interactive session after the release of the study paper called for sensitisation of customs department to the high value of returns, about 30 per cent of the total shipments, on products sold through e-commerce platforms.

"The Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) 2023 released end-March 2023 has laid special emphasis on giving a fillip to e-commerce



exports and MSME exports. The huge gap between these estimates and the actual situation requires concerted action on the part of exporters, platform owners and the Government. Over 90 per cent of e-commerce exporters in India are MSMEs (most of them micro and small enterprises). Hence a strategy for e-commerce exports must focus on MSMEs," said Anil Bhardwaj, Secretary General, Federation of

Indian Micro and Small & Medium Enterprises (FISME).

FISME and IKDHVAJ Advisers LLP in their research report called for policy steps required to increase Business to Consumer (B2C) e-commerce exports from India. "E-commerce exporters and within them particularly the MSMEs, face two types of concerns, those faced by conventional or offline exporters and others

only by online exporters. E-commerce exports face a relatively higher extent of returns of the product sold. At present, returns are in general treated as imports (primarily because of problems in identifying the returned product as the originally exported product) and thus subject to full import duties. In many cases, the logistics costs of bringing returns back to India are very high and the products are either sold at a huge discount in the country exported to or discarded," added Bhardwaj. He also stated that E-commerce exporters also do not know when their product will be sold, or the discounts needed for enabling sales. This often leads to problems in reconciliation of the payments received with the shipping bill of exports, he stated.



Some mutual fund houses cut down expense ratio on Nifty 50 ETFs to benefit passive investors

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Amid growing investors' interest in passive funds, some mutual fund houses have curtailed the expense ratio on Nifty 50 exchange traded funds (ETFs), a move that will bring down tracking error and lead to higher returns for passive investors. ICICI Prudential Mutual Fund on Wednesday cut down the expense ratio on its Nifty 50 ETF scheme from 0.05 per cent to 0.0279 per cent, making it the lowest total expense ratio (TER) for a Nifty 50 ETF among its peers.

In market parlance, the total expense ratio or TER is the total expenses charged by the scheme. This came after Nippon India Mutual Fund last month reduced the expense ratio on its ETF Nifty 50 BeES to 0.037 per cent. In addition, it cut down the TER on its ETF S&P BSE Sensex scheme too.

Sebi allows direct mkt access facility to FPIs for participating in exchange traded commodity derivatives

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Capital markets regulator Sebi on Wednesday allowed stock exchanges to extend direct market access facility to foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) for participation in Exchange Traded Commodity Derivatives (ETCDs).

The new provision would come into force with immediate effect, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said in a circular.

Direct Market Access (DMA) facilitates the clients of a broker to directly access the exchange trading system through the broker's infrastructure to place orders without manual intervention by the broker. Also, DMA provides certain advantages to brokers such as direct control over orders, faster execution of orders, reduced risk of errors associated with manual order entry, maintaining confidentiality, lower impact costs for large orders and implementing better hedging and arbitrage strategies.

Based on representations received for enabling DMA facility to FPIs in ETCDs and Derivatives Advisory Committee (CDAC) of Sebi, it has been decided to allow stock exchanges to extend DMA facility to FPIs for participation in ETCDs," the regulator said. This permission is subject to certain conditions that require



Larsen & Toubro Q4 profit rises 10% to ₹3,987 cr

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Engineering and construction giant Larsen & Toubro (L&T) on Wednesday reported a 10 per cent rise in its consolidated net profit to ₹3,987 crore for the quarter ended in March 2023, helped by higher revenues.

The company had posted a consolidated net profit of ₹3,621 crore in the year-ago period, the infrastructure major said in a filing to BSE.

The consolidated revenue of the company during January-March 2023 increased to ₹58,335 crore from ₹52,851 crore in the year-ago period, a rise of 10 per cent.

Its total expenses also surged 11 per cent to ₹51,502 crore against ₹46,334 crore in January-March FY22. The Board of Directors has recommended a final dividend of ₹24 per equity share, for the approval of shareholders. The company received orders worth ₹230,528 crore at the group level during the year ended March 31, 2023, registering a healthy y-o-y growth of 19%.

BUSINESS BRIEF

ARA POWERGRID SUBSTATION AUGMENTATION

Bhojpur: R. K. Singh, Union Minister of Power, New and Renewable Energy, laid the foundation stone for augmentation of 220/132 KV Powergrid Ara Substation on Tuesday in presence of Bijendra Prasad Yadav, Energy Minister, Bihar, Amarendra Pratap Singh, MLA, Ara, Raghavendra Pratap Singh, MLA, Barhara, Kiran Devi, MLA, Sandesh, Awadhesh Narayan Singh, Member, Bihar Legislative Council, Indu Devi, Mayor, Ara and Poonam Devi, Deputy Mayor, Ara. Chairman and Managing Director of POWERGRID K. Sreekanth and Director Personnel V.K. Singh were also present. The scheme would facilitate meeting demand of electricity for the next 10 years in Ara





CSK INCH CLOSER TO PLAYOFFS

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Mahendra Singh Dhoni punished Khaleel Ahmed and then marshalled his bowling resources to perfection as Chennai Super Kings comprehensively beat Delhi Capitals by 27 runs to take a giant stride towards IPL play-off, here on Wednesday. The talismanic skipper's couple of monstrous sixes in his 9-ball-20 did help CSK get to 167 for 8, which was at least 20 runs above-par on a tacky Chepauk track.

The total was just what Dhoni needed to marshal his bowlers as Delhi Capitals were never in hunt after their batting mainstays David Warner (0), Phil Salt (17) and Mitch Marsh (5) were out by the start of the fourth over.

In the end, DC managed only 140 for 8 and their struggles were real as not even 10 fours were hit in the entire innings. The DC batters managed only seven boundaries and four over-boundaries. The win took CSK to 15 points and one win from two remaining games will certainly seal their place in the last four. As far as DC's campaign is concerned, it is almost curtains with 8 points from 11 games with seven defeats.

Before one points fingers at head coach Ricky Ponting and Director of Cricket Sourav Ganguly, there would some of the talent scouts, who should be held accountable for presenting the team with options who are incapable of being x-factors



even at the domestic level.

A former India player's son, who is one of the talent scouts, will have a lot of answering to do.

The Indian batters like Manish Pandey, Ripal Patel, Lalit Yadav or Aman Khan aren't good enough to ace easy chases on their own leave alone getting better of tough targets like this one on the day.

The two veterans Ravindra Jadeja (1/19 in 4 overs) and Moeen Ali (0/16 in 4 overs) tightened the noose around the DC batters in the middle overs when Pandey and Rilee Rossouw added 59 at less than run-a-ball. Pandey, especially after running Marsh out could have done better but in his 16 seasons of IPL, he hasn't even won 10 games for all the franchises that he played.

Matheesha Pathirana (3/37 in 4 overs) nailed his yorker perfectly to send the former India player packing.

Earlier Capitals bowlers came to the fore, keeping the Super Kings batters on the leash on a sluggish pitch before Dhoni and Ravindra Jadeja (21 off 16 balls) put pressure on DC bowlers at the back-end.

None of the CSK batters could go on and get a substantial score with Shivam Dube (25) being the highest score. There were 20s by Ruturaj Gaikwad (24), Ambati Rayudu (23) and Ajinkya Rahane (21).

Electing to bat after skipper Dhoni won the toss, the home team was pegged back by some fine bowling by the Capitals bowlers, especially left-arm spin-

ner Axar Patel (2/27). Mitchell Marsh (3/18) was the best bowler while Kuldeep Yadav (1/28) and Lalit Yadav (1/34) were the other wicket-takers.

The big-hitting Dube smacked the first six of the innings, hoisting Axar Patel into the stands in the 11th over. He hit two more before a pull of Mitchell Marsh landed in the hands of skipper David Warner.

He made 25 (12 balls) and helped increase the CSK scoring rate which had been slowed down due to some good bowling. The second over bowled by Ishant Sharma yielded 16 runs as Gaikwad hit three boundaries.

In the third over, Conway swished at a delivery from Khaleel and the bowler seemed to think he heard a nick. However, the Capitals didn't review it and later the replays showed a faint edge. Conway, however, did not make much of the 'life' as he was trapped LBW by Axar Patel for 10. At the end of the power-play, CSK were 49 for 1. Gaikwad was dismissed trying to up the pace, caught in the deep as Axar Patel continued to stymie the Super Kings.

Moeen Ali could not force the pace and was sent back by another spinner-Kuldeep Yadav caught in an attempt to reach out and play a shot. There was no six hit by the CSK batters in the first 10 overs as the Capitals bowlers sought to put the squeeze on run-scoring.

Ajinkya Rahane's innings was cut short on 21 when Lalit Yadav took a superb return catch.



KKR, RR aim to break into top-4

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Resurgent Kolkata Knight Riders will look for their third victory in a row in their fight for survival when they face a struggling Rajasthan Royals in the IPL here on Thursday.

Facing must-win scenarios, the two-time champions showed tremendous resilience to bounce back into reckoning after their wins over Sunrisers Hyderabad and Punjab Kings, both in dramatic last-ball finishes. The wins have not only boosted their sagging morale but also taken the side to sixth place from eighth on the points table.

As things stand, four teams including KKR and Rajasthan Royals, are locked on 10 points in a mid-table traffic rush for the playoffs. RR may be ahead on net run rate (NRR) but the equation could change quickly if KKR continue their winning run, as a victory for either side will take them into the top-four.

While KKR are high on confidence after two thrilling wins, the Royals — last season's runners-up — would be at their lowest ebb after three defeats. The Royals had posted 200-plus totals but were done in by some baffling strategies in two of their three losses, which has led to a must-win scenario for them as well.

In terms of key battles and team strategies, KKR would once again rely on Varun Chakravathy, who has been the central character in both their previous wins.

Having defended nine runs in the last over against SRH, Chakravathy's 3/26 made all the difference against

Punjab Kings.

At a time their seasoned slow bowler Sunil Narine is finding it difficult to get wickets, Chakravathy has emerged as KKR's spin spearhead with 17 wickets so far this season.

While KKR's think-tank refuses to give up on Narine who has just one wicket in the last eight matches, it's Chakravathy's four overs which would again be crucial.

With the KKR team management not bowling World Test Championship final-bound Shardul Thakur against PBKS, the pace department looked woefully short on experience.

Had it not been for the heroics of Rinku Singh and Andre Russell, the seam duo of Vaibhav Arora and Harshit Rana had almost lost the match after leaking 36 runs in the last two overs against PBKS.

It remains to be seen if KKR utilise the services of a "fit-again" Shardul in the crunch match. Against a batter-heavy Royals with the likes of Yashasvi Jaiswal, Jos Buttler and Sanju Samson in fine form, KKR would hope their bowlers get their act together.

While KKR need to plug the gaps in the pace bowling department, the Royals must take a fresh look at their bowling strategy.

While skipper Nitish Rana has been the backbone of their batting, Rinku's emergence as a finisher is coming off well for the team. From the Royals' perspective, the trio of Rana, Rinku and Russell would be their main threats. Their battle against the Royals' spin-bowling stalwarts Ravichandran Ashwin and Yuzvendra Chahal in the middle overs could prove to be decisive.

KL undergoes successful surgery

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Senior India batter KL Rahul has undergone a successful surgery on his injured right thigh and is looking forward to a return to the national side as quickly as possible.

The 31-year-old suffered the thigh injury while fielding for Indian Premier League his side Lucknow Super Giants against Royal Challengers Bangalore earlier this month. He was subsequently ruled out of the lucrative T20 tournament and next month's World Test Championship (WTC) final against Australia in England.

"Hi everyone, I just got done with my surgery. It was successful," Rahul wrote on his social media handles.

"A big thank you to the doctors and medical staff for making sure I was comfortable and everything went smoothly," the LSG skipper added.

Rahul, who was replaced by Ishan Kishan in the Indian squad for the WTC final scheduled at The Oval from June 7-12, added he was "determined" to return to the field.

"I am officially on the road to recovery now. I am determined to get back to my best and get back on the field. Onwards and upwards," he said.

Rahul, an all-format player, will target a return to the national setup in time for the Asia Cup and the ODI World Cup in India later this year.

I know my game & where my runs are: Surya

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Swashbuckling Mumbai Indians batter Suryakumar Yadav, who played a blinder of an innings against Royal Challengers Bangalore in the Indian Premier League here, says he knows his game all too well and match situations are just an extension of practice sessions for him.

Suryakumar's stunning 35-ball 83 and Nehal Wadhwa's unbeaten 52 handed Mumbai Indians a comprehensive six-wicket win over RCB here on Tuesday.

Suryakumar struck seven fours and six sixes during his sensational effort while adding 140 runs for the third wicket in only 66 balls with Wadhwa as

MI chased down the target of 200 with 21 balls to spare.

"I said Nehal, let's hit it hard and hit it into the gaps and run hard. Your practice has to be the same what you intend to do in matches," said Suryakumar after the win.

"I know where my runs are. We have open net sessions. I know my game. I don't do anything different."

The 83 against RCB on Tuesday was Suryakumar's highest IPL score. His previous best of 82 came in the 2021 IPL season. It was also Suryakumar's fourth half-century this IPL season.

The 32-year-old middle-order batter added that RCB bowlers tried their best to pitch deliveries in areas where he had



to work hard on hitting boundaries. "Much needed (win) from team's point of view. I am very happy to win a home game like

this. I mean they (RCB) come up with a plan. They tried to make me hit to the bigger part (longer boundaries). Take the pace off and bowl slow," said Suryakumar who is known for his 360 degree hitting prowess.

Wadhwa too was in awe of his senior player's batting, saying some of his cricketing shots are hard to emulate.

"Surya bhai is a top-class player and I also try to copy some of his shots but I cannot. While he was batting, I was talking to him and he was saying 'keep playing, keep playing' and he was giving me confidence," said Wadhwa.

"He told me, 'If both of us bat till the 15th-16th over, we can finish the game even early.' And that's what we did. The previous game which I played against CSK, I played a scoop. Earlier I didn't play, after seeing Surya bhai bat, I also learned from him and I am very happy," Promoted at No. 4, Wadhwa struck his second fifty of the IPL season. The left-handed batter struck four boundaries and three sixes to make 52 not out off 34 balls.

"It was fun batting up the order, earlier I was batting down. I got an opportunity to bat up and I got back-to-back fifties."

"I am happy with my fifty but I am more happy that my team won and I hope we continue to do so. I have the confidence within me that if I keep on batting till the end, I can finish the game for the team," he added.

Lehmann unhappy with Oz not playing tour games ahead of WTC final, Ashes

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Former Australia coach Darren Lehmann has expressed serious reservations over his country not playing tour matches ahead of the World Test Championship final against India and the gruelling Ashes, saying the decision was fraught with risks.

Australia did not also play a single tour game in India ahead of the Border-Gavaskar series in February-March, primarily because their board felt that playing practice games on green tops and actual matches on spinning tracks did not serve any purpose.

However, Lehmann felt that not playing tour games in foreign conditions is a risky proposition.

"You need games to acclimatise first and foremost," Lehmann, who served as Australia coach from 2013 to 2018, told 'SEN Radio'.

"To get used to the ball and wickets and pres-



sure. No tour game is not a good idea. I hope it works but if it doesn't, 'who made that decision' will be asked. I think we win the Ashes anyway 3-1 but if we don't, wow," the former Australia player added.

The World Test Championship final between India and Australia will be played at The Oval in London from June 7-12. There is a provision for a reserve day.

Four days after the WTC final, the first Ashes Test will be played at Edgbaston from June 16.

Traditionally, teams touring England play county sides but of late, tour matches are being given a short shrift as cricket schedules around the world get tighter due to the proliferation of T20 leagues. Australia played an internal two-day game before the first Test in 2019, while in 2015 and 2013, the touring side played two four-day games ahead of the Ashes.

Bangar backs Rohit to come good ahead of WTC final

PTI ■ MUMBAI

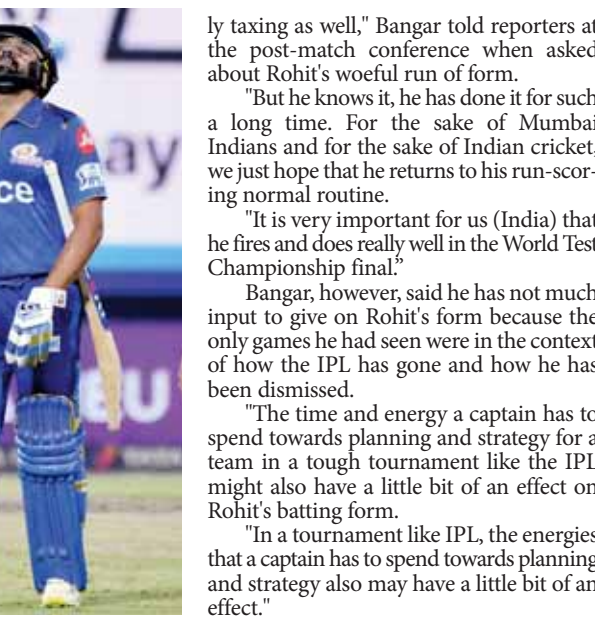
Royal Challengers Bangalore batting coach Sanjay Bangar has backed India and Mumbai Indians captain Rohit Sharma to come out of his current poor run of form ahead of the World Test Championship final next month.

Rohit was dismissed for a mere seven — his fifth single-digit score on the trot in this IPL — against RCB but MI had no trouble in chasing down the target of 200 with 21 balls to spare for a six-wicket win here on Tuesday.

Rohit has been enduring a second consecutive poor IPL season with the bat, as his average plummeted to 17.36 with just 191 runs to show from 11 matches so far.

The world No. 1 India will face Australia in the WTC final at The Oval in London from June 7-11.

"He (Rohit) has been playing for such a long period of time and captaining in all formats for India and the franchisee as well, it does take an emotional toll. It is mental-



ly taxing as well," Bangar told reporters at the post-match conference when asked about Rohit's woeful run of form.

"But he knows it, he has done it for such a long time. For the sake of Mumbai Indians and for the sake of Indian cricket, we just hope that he returns to his run-scoring normal routine.

"It is very important for us (India) that he fires and does really well in the World Test Championship final."

Bangar, however, said he has not much input to give on Rohit's form because the only games he had seen were in the context of how the IPL has gone and how he has been dismissed.

"The time and energy a captain has to spend towards planning and strategy for a team in a tough tournament like the IPL might also have a little bit of an effect on Rohit's batting form."

"In a tournament like IPL, the energies that a captain has to spend towards planning and strategy also may have a little bit of an effect."

Swann bats for Kohli, says sport would be 'dull' without conflict

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Former England off-spinner Graeme Swann feels the controversial bust-up between Gautam Gambhir and Virat Kohli is nothing compared to what he has witnessed in the fiercely-contested Ashes series, adding that the sport would be "dull" without such incidents.

Kohli and Gambhir had a verbal spat during Royal Challengers Bangalore's away match against Lucknow Super Giants on May 1.

The former Indian skipper was also seen getting into an argument with Afghan pacer Naveen-ul-Haq and Kyle Mayers as the match grabbed attention for all the wrong reasons.

"Let's face it, if there was never any conflict in sport, it would be so dull. Having played Ashes Test series throughout my life, this is nothing compared to that," Swann, an expert with JioCinema, said in a virtual interaction.

Kohli and Gambhir, who is the LSG team mentor, faced heavy sanctions and

were fined 100 per cent of their match fees for breaching the IPL's Code of Conduct.

Naveen was also charged with 50 per cent of his match fees.

Swann feels there's nothing wrong with Kohli being ultra-aggressive, and opined that he is 'Kohli' because of his passion for the game.

"You should never try to dilute the players so much that they do not wear their hearts on their sleeves."

"One of the reasons Virat Kohli is 'Virat Kohli' is because he's so passionate about his cricket. He's so in your face when he's playing and he intimidates a lot of players."

"Some may think he's going too far. They are massive personalities, who grew up and played together. Gautam is never going to back down to Virat."

"If it spills over off the field and there's swearing stuff then that's wrong. As long as there are handshakes after the game and has not created a bad image on the screen, then I'm all for



their passion," he added.

MS Dhoni is still going strong and the Englishman believes there is no reason why this season should be the World Cup-winning captain's swansong. It is widely perceived that the

ongoing IPL would be the last time Dhoni would be seen in action.

"Every time he goes into bat, he's smashing sixes. Why this will be his 'last year' is beyond me. If he wants to keep on playing, he can do whatever he likes."

"In my books, he is brilliant with the gloves, brilliant with the bat and his captaincy is still the best in the IPL. I don't think it's his last year, I think he's too big to go."

Asked about Kolkata Knight Riders spinner Sunil Narine's listless show this season, Swann said he's just having confidence issues and the Trinidadian should not be 'written off'.

"I just think he's bowling without the confidence in himself. Sometimes you get that little bit of luck when a bad ball gets a wicket, and it feels right again."

"I'm not writing him off. I will still pick him in my team. When you have (Varun) Chakravathy and Suyash (Sharma) bowling so well, they can hide him (Narine) a little bit," Swann added.

Cummins wants to play until 35

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Australia captain Pat Cummins admitted that he felt "burnt out" a few years ago because of playing non stop cricket but he's now looking at competing at the top level for at least another five years.

Cummins returned home from Australia's tour of India earlier this year to be at the side of his mother, who passed away in March after a prolonged illness.

After making his Australia debut during the tour of South Africa in 2011, Cummins had to spend as many as six years on the sidelines recovering from injuries and it was only after 2017 that he became a regular member of the national side.

"Cricket's basically 12 months of the year, there's always a cricket game going on some-

where, and I played non-stop for a year or two," the 30-year-old Cummins told 'WeAre8s': Get Real with Rio' as reported by Australian Associated Press.

"This is about four or five years ago, (when) I kind of just came back from injuries. And I was just spent, like burnt out and I just remember thinking 'gee I'm 25 here but I want to do this until I'm 35' I've got to find a way to balance all these different things," he said in a conversation with former England football player Rio Ferdinand.



ECONOMY

China's consumer market registers strong rebound during May Day holiday



An aerial photo shows customers enjoying barbecue in a market in Zibo, east China's Shandong. (Photo by China Daily)

China's May Day holiday (lasting from April 29 to May 3) saw hordes of people in the Jiegao border trade zone in Ruili City, Yunnan Province. As sight-seeing and shopping continued to recover, a number of stores in the trade zone went into business just before the holiday. "We can not only take pictures in front of the Jiegao gateway of our country, but also enjoy duty-free shopping here. It's really a rewarding trip," said Li Jiang, a tour-

ist from Guizhou. Seasonal, quality, and upgrading goods sold well; featured, diversified, and experience-based services were popular; consumption was made more innovative, intelligent, and convenient. During this year's May Day holiday, China's consumer market grew on all fronts. A bus route and a high-speed rail line were specially opened for barbecue lovers; road builders worked day and night to

make the deadline; and a barbecue town sprang out in a matter of twenty days. In early March 2023, Zibo City in Shandong Province became extremely popular just because of barbecues. The May Day holiday promoted this formerly little-known city to a "celebrity" tourist city. Li Qi runs a barbecue bar in Zibo, which is open only in the evening, and he knocks off every day when the fresh meat he prepares is sold out. Before Zibo

went popular, he usually worked until 11 to 12 pm. Now he prepares more food, but it is often sold out by about 9 pm. It was reported that during the 5-day holiday, Zibo railway station cumulatively handled more than 240,000 passenger trips, an increase of 85,000 passenger trips over the same period in 2019. "The May Day holiday figures show the enormous consumption potential of Chinese people and indicate a strong rebound of the Chinese consumer market," said Dr. Tharakom Wusatrakul, deputy director of the Thai-Chinese Strategic Research Center at the National Research Council of Thailand. China's economic operation is constantly improving thanks to its powerful measures to expand domestic demand and promote consumption. A large number of Chinese tourists consider Thailand as their first choice for outbound holiday-making. Their arrivals have accelerated the recovery of the Thai tourist industry, he said. During this year's May Day holiday, China's border control authorities handled a total of 6.265

million entries and exits or 1.253 million entries and exits every day, about 2.2 times those of the same period last year. Data from travel platform qunar.com showed that the outbound air tickets booking for the holiday has been brought back to 45 percent of that during the same period in 2019. During the 5-day holiday, the sales revenue of China's consumer-related industries increased by 24.4 percent year on year. Specifically, the consumption of services and goods increased by 28.7 percent and 19.5 percent, respectively, indicating people's increased desire to consume. "The people's demand and expectations for a better life and development have always been an inexhaustible driving force for China's economic development," said Hassan Daud, senior advisor of the China Study Center at Pakistan's Sustainable Development Policy Institute. China's domestic consumption market is rapidly developing, with new areas of economic growth and consumption emerging. Now, as their income increases, the Chinese are more

ready to spend for a better life, further expanding the consumer market and injecting new impetus into the country's economic development. "The world expects China's economy to stabilize, improve, and bring opportunities and impetus to the global market," Mr. Daud said. **66** During the 2023 May Day holiday, China recorded 274 million domestic tourist trips, up 70.83 percent year on year, recovering to 119.09 percent of the level during the same period in 2019 on comparable basis. Over a period of five days, China achieved domestic tourism revenue of 148.056 billion yuan (US\$ 21.439 billion), up 128.90 percent year on year, recovering to 100.66 percent of the level during the same period in 2019 on comparable basis. As the first holiday after China's pilot resumption of outbound group tours, the holiday was expected to register 3,500 international passenger flights operated by Chinese and foreign airlines. (Staff correspondents)

FOCUS

Chinese modernization stresses pursuing mutual benefit and win-win cooperation with other countries in the world, promoting the building of a community with a shared future for mankind, and working hard to contribute to the peace and development of humanity. —An excerpt from the fourth volume of "Xi Jinping: The Governance of China"

Enhancing developing countries' confidence in their pursuit of modernization

Under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, the Chinese people have made great achievements in modernization through several generations of efforts. This has strengthened the confidence of other developing countries in advancing their own modernization. For China, the process of exploring the path of modernization and propelling the modernization drive is also the process of achieving national rejuvenation. This is vividly testified by the fact that China has been pursuing a path of development in keeping with its national conditions and proactively developing whole-process people's democracy. By continuously developing whole-process people's democracy, China has enhanced effective governance and enriched the forms of human political civilization, providing an important reference for other countries to promote the construction of democracy. In its pursuit of modernization, China has unwaveringly taken the road of peaceful development and committed itself to promoting the building of a community with a

shared future for mankind. China firmly upholds the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, strictly observes international law, and adheres to the important principles such as mutual respect for sovereignty and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. It has provided the international community with a series of equal and mutually beneficial cooperation plans, fostering a new type of international relations. Now, as a world we are undergoing profound changes and facing growing uncertainties and destabilizing factors. China's proposals, which have won extensive support from other developing countries, will help promote the democratization of international relations and improve global governance. I believe that under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, China has a promising future for development and will further contribute to world peace and development. (People's Daily; this article is authored by Julio Yao Villalaz, honorary president of Panama's Center for Asian Strategic Studies)

NEWS

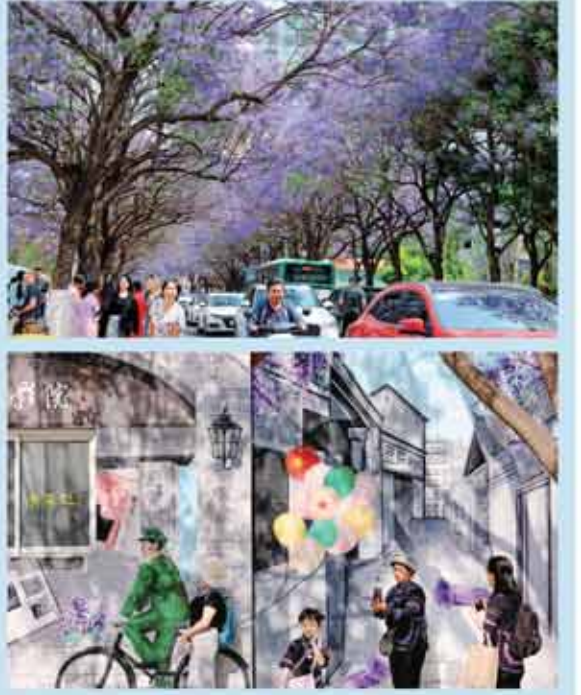
Yunnan set to celebrate China Tourism Day

China will celebrate the 13th annual China Tourism Day on May 19 in Tengchong, Yunnan province. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism, in collaboration with the Yunnan provincial government, announced recently this year's theme as "Beautiful China, Happy Journey", and that there will be a series of online and in-person activities.

On May 19, the launch ceremony for China Tourism Day will be held in Heshun ancient town in Tengchong. A series of activities will take place from May 19 to 21 including a tourism product exhibition, a Baoshan intangible cultural heritage tourism exhibition and a tourism high-quality development forum. (China Daily)



In early May, the jacaranda trees on Jiaochang Middle Road of Kunming, Yunnan are in full bloom. A 1.4-kilometer-long section of the road is lined with 551 blooming jacaranda trees. The blue flowers are like wind-bells swaying gently in the pleasantly warm breeze, attracting both locals and tourists to pose for photos under the trees. (Yunnan Daily)



A lifestyle called Yunnan

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Yunnan enhances flower breeding through science and technology

Due to its unique geographical and climatic conditions, Yunnan has flowers blooming in all seasons. In recent years, the province has strengthened conservation and development of floral germplasm resources. It has vigorously carried out the breeding of new varieties of flowering plants using genetic breeding, aerospace breeding, and other technologies, boosting the sustainable, healthy, and high-quality development of the flower industry. Genetic breeding is an important way to breed new varieties of flowering plants. In the village of Qingshuihe in Jinning, Kunming, Dr. Li

Shubin leads a scientific research team specializing in the genetic breeding of Chinese roses. Years on, Li's team have achieved good results in aspects such as the conservation of Chinese roses germplasm resources, mapping of important trait loci, and selecting and breeding of new varieties with independent intellectual property rights. "We've started with the genes of ancient Chinese roses and wild roses to breed new varieties of Chinese roses," Li said. "Our team has developed ten new varieties of Chinese roses. Among them, 'Jinning Cuihua' and a couple

of other varieties have been granted independent intellectual property rights and are already sold all over the country." In the past few years, the flower researchers in Yunnan have also been exploring aerospace breeding. With aerospace breeding, also known as space mutagenesis breeding, the seeds' gene arrangements or structures can be mutated in the outer space. At Yunnan Jinke Flower Engineering Research Center, the Chinese rose seeds that had traveled to space in the Shenzhou 12 manned spacecraft have already been sown.

Tian Liantong, a technician at the research center, said that through different breeding methods, Jinke has selected and bred more than 300 varieties of flowering plants, of which more than 50 have been granted independent intellectual property rights and are hailed on the market. Seeds are like the "chips" for agriculture. By the end of 2022, Yunnan had got more than 900 varieties of flowering plants registered with the State Intellectual Property Office and relevant departments in the province, ranking first in China. (Xinhua)

CULTURE

Yi people's embroidery passed on as intangible cultural heritage

"After embroidering the moon and the sun, I'll also embroider my lover in between." On the sixth day of the second lunar month (March 26 this year), the Yi people in Yangbi Yi Autonomous County, Dali Bai Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province celebrated their Flower God Festival. In the county's Shimenguan Scenic Area, the embroiderers worshipped the God of Flowers. In addition, they also sang traditional Yi embroidery tunes and passed on the Yi embroidery skills. "After communicating with other embroiderers on paper-cutting and embroidery skills, I've come up with some new creative ideas," said an embroiderer named Qian Jixin. Earlier this year, with the help of the Culture and Tourism Bureau of Yangbi County, a young man of the Yi ethnic group Zhang Qicheng opened a Yi embroidery intangible cultural heritage experience studio in the Shimenguan Scenic Area. On the day of the Flower God Festival, many embroiderers in the county gathered at Zhang's studio to promote the traditional embroidery culture. Zhang's grandmother Ji Zhenlin is a representative successor of Yi embroidery, an intangible cultural heritage item of Dali Bai

Autonomous Prefecture, as well as the 6th generation successor of her family's embroidery skills. In Zhang's memories, his grandmother is always embroidering. It seems that he was born with the gene of embroidery culture in his blood vessel. Ji has not only passed down the valuable Yi embroidery pieces that she had inherited from her ancestors to Zhang, but also helped Zhang set up the intangible cultural heritage experience studio. Today, Zhang has also been recognized by Yangbi County as a representative successor of Yi embroidery. To date, Zhang's intangible cultural heritage experience studio in the Shimenguan Scenic Area has collected more than 300 pieces of ancient Yi embroidery, including six sets from the Ming and Qing dynasties. "I hope to use young people's thinking to sell the works created by the embroiders in my hometown on the Internet and promote the Yi embroidery culture. By integrating culture and tourism, I'll be able to drive the development of my company," Zhang said. His company now employs more than 60 full-time and part-time embroiderers, and its products are sold to Beijing, Shanghai, and other first-tier Chinese cities. (Yunnan Daily)



Zhang Qicheng shows his embroidery skills. (Photo by Yunnan Daily)

China's renewable energy capacity up 86.5% year-on-year in first quarter

According to the Chinese National Energy Administration, China's energy consumption grew slightly in the first quarter with the overall energy supply and demand remaining stable.

In the first three months of this year, the country's total electricity consumption increased by 3.6 percent year-on-year.



The installed renewable energy capacity increased by 47.4 million kilowatts or 86.5 percent year-on-year



Accounting for 80.3 percent of the newly installed power capacity across the country, wind electricity generated from wind power and photovoltaic power reached 342.2 billion kilowatt hours, up 27.8 percent year-on-year. (People's Daily)