

OPINION 6

TAKING STOCK OF 9 YEARS
OF MODI GOVT

WORLD 9

CLIMBERS HONOURED ON 70TH
ANNIV OF 1ST MT EVEREST ASCENT

MONEY 10

GAPS IN CORPORATE GOVERNANCE
AT BANKS DESPITE NORMS: DAS

RAIPUR, TUESDAY MAY 30, 2023; PAGES 12 ₹3



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DJOKER ENTERS
SECOND ROUND
OF FRENCH OPEN
11 SPORT

CAPSULE

ASTRONAUTS TO BE SENT TO MOON BY 2030

Beijing: China on Monday announced plans to send a manned mission to the moon by 2030 for lunar scientific exploration, amid its deepening space race with the West. The announcement was made by Lin Xiqiang, Deputy Director of the China Manned Space Agency (CMSA), as China is preparing to send a third set of astronauts to its space station on Tuesday.

DELHI HC ISSUES NOTICE TO YASIN MALIK

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court on Monday issued a notice to separatist leader Yasin Malik, who is presently serving a life term, on a plea by the National Investigation Agency seeking death penalty for him in a terror funding case. A bench of Justices Siddharth Mridul and Talwant Singh also issued warrants for production of Malik before it on August 9.

BENGAL'S CONG MLA JOINS TMC

Kolkata: Lone Congress MLA in West Bengal Assembly, Bayron Biswas, on Monday joined the TMC in the presence of the ruling party's national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee in Paschim Medinipur district.

REMAINS OF OFFICER TO GO TO US AFTER 58 YRS

Kolkata: Nearly 6 decades after he died during a visit to Darjeeling, the last remains of one of America's most decorated officer, Major General Harry Kleinbeck Pickett, is being returned to US for reburial, the US consulate here said on Monday. He fought in both World War I and World War II, died in 1965 while visiting Darjeeling, a Himalayan tourist town in West Bengal, and was buried in a cemetery there, it said in a press release.

MURDER MOST FOUL ROCKS DELHI AGAIN

Girl stabbed 20 times with knife, bludgeoned in full public view in Shahbad Dairy; killer arrested

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a horrific murder that shook the national Capital a 16-year-old girl was stabbed over 20 times and then stoned to death in full public view in Shahbad Dairy area late on Sunday night. The accused has been arrested from Bulandshahr, in Uttar Pradesh. Identified as Sahil the 20-year-old works as a fridge and AC mechanic. The horrific attack was caught on CCTV and the video footage went viral. The video showed the girl walking down the street when she was intercepted by the accused, who stabbed her over 20 times with a knife. The act was so ferocious that

at one point the knife got stuck in the head of the victim. The accused then picked up a heavy cement slab lying nearby and started hitting her. Shockingly, the murder took place in full view of people who can be seen passing within inches of the attacker, but no one stops or says anything as the girl falls to the ground and the attacker continues his assault. The horrific attack lasted for 90 seconds and this includes him kicking her body. The accused is seen walking away from victim in a casual manner only to turn back and again hit her with cement slab before leaving site.



Political slugfest: AAP lashes out at L-G, BJP screams 'Love Jihad'

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

A political slugfest erupted between the AAP and the BJP on Monday following the gruesome killing of a 16-year-old girl allegedly by her boyfriend in Shahbad Dairy area. While AAP convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind

Kejriwal sought to corner Lieutenant-Governor VK Saxena over the poor law and order situation in the national Capital, the Delhi BJP termed the brutal killing an incident of 'Love Jihad' and compared it with the Shradha Walker murder case. Taking to Twitter, Kejriwal wrote, "A minor girl

was brutally murdered in Delhi. This is very sad and unfortunate. The criminals have become fearless, there is no fear of the police. LG sir, law and order is your responsibility, do something. The safety of the people of Delhi is of paramount importance". Kejriwal's comment on Delhi LG comes

in the backdrop of the row over Centre's ordinance which limited the Delhi Government's powers. BJP MP Hans Raj Hans termed the brutal killing of a minor girl in northwest Delhi "very painful" and said youths sometimes get "carried away by emotions" and act like "fools".

Don't support AAP on ordinance: Cong men

Kharge told by Delhi, Punjab Cong leaders

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Days after Delhi Chief Minister and AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal sought an appointment with Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and senior leader Rahul Gandhi to rally their support in his party's fight against the Modi Government's Ordinance and defeat it in the Rajya Sabha, the Congress unit of Delhi and Punjab units on Monday bluntly told the party leadership to maintain distance from the AAP.

The leaders from Delhi and Punjab have advised the party leadership not to speak about the Centre's ordinance on control of services in the national Capital or not have any alliance with Kejriwal, who is mustering support from the Opposition to oppose the ordinance.

Kharge had convened a meeting of leaders from Delhi and Punjab on seeking their opinion on the matter. Former Congress president Rahul was also present during the meeting.

The leaders from Delhi and Punjab met the leadership separately. During the meeting, Delhi Congress leaders suggested that they should not have any alliance with the AAP. Reportedly several leaders from the Congress told the leadership to not support Kejriwal, calling him a "B-team" of the Bharatiya Janata Party and claiming he harmed the Congress' interests not only in Delhi and Punjab but other States as well. The



Mallikarjun Kharge

Congress leaders further advised the party leadership that either the party should remain silent or should not support Kejriwal on the ordinance issue. However, the leaders have left it to the high command to take a final decision.

Congress leaders Ajay Maken, Arvinder Singh Lovely, Harun Yusuf, Delhi Congress president Anil Chaudhary attended the meeting, with Kharge and Rahul and shared their viewpoints on the issue.

During the meeting, Delhi Congress explained to the party leadership why they should not support Kejriwal. Similar sentiments were expressed by Punjab leaders led by State unit chief Amarinder Singh Raja Warring, sources said.

The Congress leadership will also meet party leaders from other States before deciding its position. After the meeting, Punjab Congress president Warring said they have put across their views before the party high command and left the final decision to it. "All the



Arvind Kejriwal

leaders have said the party high command will decide and we have left it to Kharge to take the final decision," Warring said. He later tweeted a resolution passed by Punjab leaders who came to Delhi against the AAP Government in Punjab for its action against a journalist.

Former party chief Navjot Sidhu said what transpired during the meeting was a secret and only the Congress chief or Rahul would divulge the details. He, however, said India's Constitution is a sacred 'granth' and he took inspiration from it.

Addressing the media at the party headquarters, Venugopal, who was also present in the meeting said, "Today we had discussion on this with Delhi and Punjab leadership.

They have given their concerns and views and certainly we will take a final call in the coming days." Asked if the party has decided on Kharge's meeting with Kejriwal on the latter's request, Venugopal said, "We will let you know once it's decided."

Gehlot, Pilot to fight Rajasthan elections unitedly, says Cong

Warring leaders agree to leave sticky issues to be resolved by High Command

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



the deliberations later which was held at Kharge's residence, he said. "In this discussion, we have decided to fight the election unitedly. Both are in agreement that the Congress party has to go together and definitely we will win the election in Rajasthan," he told reporters after the meeting.

"It is very clear that Rajasthan is going to be a strong State for the Congress party. We are going to win. Therefore, both the leaders Gehlot ji and Sachin ji have decided to go together. The Congress party will fight elections unitedly," Venugopal also said.

Welcome posters greet Shah in tense Manipur

Army rounds up 25 miscreants with arms; uneasy calm prevails as toll in Sunday's clashes touches five

PNS/PTI ■ IMPHAL/GUWAHATI

Posters, banners and messages came up in Manipur on Monday welcoming Union Home Minister Amit Shah on his four-day visit during which he will meet stake-holders to assess the situation and take steps to restore normalcy to the State that witnessed ethnic violence over the past few weeks.

Shah's visit came on a day when the Indian Army and para-military forces rounded up at least 25 miscreants with arms, ammunition and grenades. A spokesperson for the defence forces said a num-



ber of people were detained with weapons after fresh incidents of firing and clashes broke out in and around Imphal valley on Sunday. "During operations in Sansabi, Gwaltebi, Shabunkhol, Khunao in Imphal East, Army apprehended 22 miscreants with weapons and other war like stores.

Five 12 bore double barrel rifles, three single barrel rifles, one country made weapon with double bore and one muzzle loaded weapon were recovered," he said in a statement. On Monday, an uneasy calm prevailed in Manipur, even as the death toll from

Sunday's clashes rose to five as three more people, who were undergoing treatment in hospitals, succumbed to their injuries, officials said.

Meanwhile, Union Minister Nisith Pramanik, who is the Minister of State for Home Affairs said in Guwahati that the Centre was providing all support to Manipur and the situation was "returning to normal." Pramanik's remarks came a few hours before Amit Shah began his four-day visit to the northeastern State.

Shah will hold several rounds of security meetings to assess the situation and plan steps to restore normalcy during his first visit to the State since the ethnic clashes between the Kuki and the Meitei communities broke out on May 3.

On Monday, posters and banners were seen in Imphal and several other districts. The welcome messages were issued by several civil society organisations of Manipur, sources said.

Nitish aide confirms Opp meet in Patna on June 12

Patna: A key aide of Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Monday confirmed that the much-awaited meeting of Opposition parties is likely to be held in Patna on June 12. State Minister and senior JD(U) leader Vijay Kumar Chaudhary said most parties opposed to the BJP are likely to take part in the "extremely important meeting".

"It is now almost final that a meeting of most parties opposed to BJP will be held in Patna on June 12", he said. "Most Opposition parties share the belief that the BJP will not win the 2024 Lok Sabha elections if those opposed to it put up a united fight," the JD(U) leader said.

"It is true that the initiative has been taken by our leader Nitish Kumar but we do not wish to claim any credit. Opposition unity is becoming a reality only because we are getting support from like-minded parties".

Wrestlers won't be allowed to protest at Jantar Mantar: Cops

Protesting grapplers yet to decide next course of action

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A day after the Delhi Police cleared the sit-in site of the protesting wrestlers, the Delhi Police on Monday said they will be allowed to demonstrate at a suitable place in the city other than Jantar Mantar.

On the other hand, released late last night from police detention, the wrestlers are still contemplating their next move even as they continued to get support from sporting fraternity after police action against top grapplers was unequivocally condemned by political and sports personalities.

"The demonstration by the wrestlers was going on smoothly at the notified place of Jantar Mantar. On Sunday, the protesters flouted the law,



ignoring our repeated requests. Hence, we cleared the site and ended the dharna," Deputy Commissioner of Police (New Delhi) tweeted in Hindi. "If the wrestlers will apply for permission to stage their sit-in again in the future, they will be allowed to do so at any suitable notified place other than Jantar Mantar," it said.

Wrestlers Vinesh Phogat, Sakshi Malik and Bajrang Punia, along with other protesters, were booked for rioting and obstructing public servant in discharge of duty on Sunday after a scuffle with security personnel who tried to stop them from marching to the new Parliament building as it was being inaugurated.

CBI books RR, brass for graft in Hawk jet deal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has booked the British aerospace and defence major Rolls Royce PLC, its top executives and arms dealers in a graft case for alleged kickbacks in the procurement of Hawk 115 Advanced Jet Trainer aircraft for the Indian Air Force and Navy.

The CBI has registered a case against Tim Jones, Director Rolls Royce India, alleged arms dealers Sudhir Choudhrie and Bhanu Choudhrie, Rolls Royce Plc and British Aerospace Systems under Indian Penal Code (IPC)

sections 120-B (criminal conspiracy) and 201 (destruction of evidence besides provisions of Prevention of Corruption Act following conclusion of a 2016 Preliminary Enquiry in the related matter.

A British court order in 2017 also mentioned the alleged involvement of middlemen and payment of commission by the company for swinging the deal, officials said. It is alleged that during 2003-12, these accused in conspiracy with unidentified public servants "abused their official positions" for procurement of 24 Hawk 115 AJTs for GBP 734.21 million.

Rain plays spoilsport yet again

Showers halt CSK's chase against GT in IPL final

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

The second innings of the IPL final between Gujarat Titans and Chennai Super Kings was on Monday affected by a strong passing shower here. Chasing 215 to win, Chennai Super Kings were 4/0 in 0.3 overs as the second innings began slightly late due to mid-innings show here at the Narendra Modi Stadium.

B Sai Sudharsan struck a 47-ball 96 and missed his maiden IPL century, but did a fine job to take his team to a daunting total with Shubman Gill (39), Wriddhiman Saha (54) and Hardik Pandya (21 not out) chipping in with vital contributions. It began with



Groundsmen cover the pitch as it rains during the IPL 2023 cricket match between Gujarat Titans and Chennai Super Kings, at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, on Monday

PTI

the ground staff immediately rushing to the middle to cover

the centre with multiple layers of the sheet as the mid-innings

show ended, but the game began soon after as it was just a drizzle. However, a mere three balls into the second innings with CSK openers Devon Conway (0 not out) and Ruturaj Gaekwad (4 not out), the heavens opened up again. For the fans, unfortunately, it was yet another test of patience as sudden rains left them drenched, with plenty of them remaining seated while it poured heavily for about 10 minutes.

Earlier, B Sai Sudharsan led the charge with a terrific 96 as defending champions Gujarat Titans set Chennai Super Kings an imposing target of 215 in the IPL final here on Monday.

UN talks on treaty to end global plastic pollution open in Paris

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/PARIS

Even as India has decided to push for plastic recycling as "a means to spur a circular economy," a United Nations panel which met in Paris on Monday to work on what is intended to be a landmark treaty to bring an end to global plastic pollution, but there is almost no agreement yet on what the outcome should be.

The Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for Plastics is entrusted with the task to develop the first international, legally binding treaty on plastic pollution,

including in the marine environment. This is the second of five meetings due to take place to complete the negotiations by the end of 2024.

At the first meeting, held six months ago in Uruguay, some countries pressed for global mandates, some for national solutions and others for both.

Environment Minister Bhopendra Yadav, who has arrived in Paris, said India would be putting forth its experiences and lessons in tackling the plastic menace and push for recycling as "a means to spur a circular economy".

Rising investment in MP getting employment to youth

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that along with PM Mitra Park and Medical Device Park, the initiative to start Global Skill Park in Madhya Pradesh is helpful in providing employment to the youth. The work of preparing skilled youth and connecting them with employment will be done continuously in the state. To make the youth strength of the society, first of all it is necessary to make them skilful. Investment is coming continuously in Madhya Pradesh and youth are getting employment due to this investment. Utmost attention is being paid to skill upgradation of the youth.

Chouhan was addressing the Mega Job Fair and Shramik Chaupal at Industrial Training

Institute (ITI) Govindpura today. Union Minister for Labour and Employment and Environment, Forest and Climate Change Bhupendra Yadav was present as a special guest. In the job fair, 640 appointments were given by various institutes. Describing the Mega Job Fair and Shramik Chaupal as useful, Chouhan congratulated the selected applicants. Offer letters and acceptance letters of schemes were also distributed to the selected applicants.

Chouhan said that Prime Minister Modi remains concerned about providing employment to the youth. Along with this, he is also focused on skill upgradation. Today 640 youth got employment in the mega job fair. Chief Minister Chouhan said that employment is very impor-

tant. On one hand there are employers who need skilled persons and on the other hand youth want employment. A mega job fair was organised for such youths who need jobs. Prime Minister Modi organises employment fairs every month. He hands out the offer letters. A comprehensive campaign to provide employment is going on in the country. In Madhya Pradesh too, work is being done to provide employment and enhancing investment by different companies. Madhya Pradesh is becoming a textile hub.

Along with this, automobile and pharma hub are also being built. Work is also going on in the food processing sector. PM Mitra Mega Park will start in Dhar district. IT sector is working rapidly also. Employment will increase with the arrival of

new investment.

The Chief Minister expressed his gratitude to those institutions which have given employment to youth. He also gave information about the Mukhya Mantri Sikho-Kamao Yojana (Chief Minister's Learn-Earn scheme). Talking about labour welfare, Chouhan said that 4 Shramodaya Vidyalayas have been opened in the state, where only children of labourers' study. There is recruitment target of one lakh government posts by the month of August. After the completion of this recruitment will be done on 50 thousand posts.

Welcoming Union Minister Yadav, Chief Minister Chouhan said that he has encouraged us all by coming to the mega job fair. He is also striving for the welfare of the workers. ESI dispensaries and hospitals are

being upgraded in Bhopal, Jabalpur, Nagda. He has also assured to start a medical college in Dhar under the Ministry of Labour. The Chief Minister said that 9 successful years of Prime Minister Modi have been completed. In these years, the fate of the people and the picture of the country have changed.

He has bestowed a big gift to give Madhya Pradesh the identity of Cheetah State. Madhya Pradesh was earlier a Tiger, Leopard and Gharial state. Now it has also become a Cheetah State. Union Minister Yadav has said today that you should not worry. When cheetahs come from other areas, they take time to adjust to the new environment. The Chief Minister said that he was very worried about the untimely death of 3 cheetah cubs.



Union Minister for Labour and Employment and Environment, Forest and Climate Change Bhupendra Yadav and Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan attended a mega job fair programme in Bhopal for youths. Pioneer photo

BHEL ED Vinay Nigam highlights achievements of Bhopal unit

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

While discussing with the present media persons, Executive Director of BHEL Bhopal and Jhansi units Vinay Nigam extended hearty congratulations to all the achievements and profit earned by Bhopal Unit in the financial year 2022-23. He said that the role of all the cadres of the society, especially the media and the people associated with the Bhopal unit, has been very important for BHEL, Bhopal's success.

He was talking to media persons here on Monday at the Devi Ahilyabai Hall, BHEL, Bhopal. Avinash Chandra, GM (HR&LGX) and other officials were also present on the occasion.

He said that under the able leadership of Nalin Singhal, CMD, BHEL and senior officials of the BHEL Board, BHEL has



been able to achieve the turnover of Rs. 22,136 crore turnover and PBT of Rs. 450 crores (Profit after tax of Rs. 448 crore). This achievement is surely a matter of pride for all the employees.

In the financial year 2022-23, BHEL Bhopal has achieved Rs. 2968 crores turnover and profit before tax of Rs 68.5 crores. Appreciating all employees for their dedication and hard work, said that there is no

doubt that this unit will easily achieve the target set for the financial year 2023-24 of Rs. 4000 Crores.

He further stressed on total avoidance of re-work and maximum cash collection along with value addition per employee. He also said that keeping in view the convenience of the employees, BHEL management is working on re-carpeting of the township road running 10

kilometers as well as equipping the ICU facility at Kasturba Hospital with state-of-the-art facilities.

Avinash Chandra, General Manager (HR & Logistics) while welcoming all the participants and the chief guest thanked them for their participation in the growth of BHEL, Bhopal and its achievements. Chandra said that Bhopal unit is dedicated towards safeguarding the interests of the employees as well as all the stakeholders.

RK Agrawal, Additional General Manager (CPX) made a presentation on the unit's performance. He informed about the major achievements of BHEL, Bhopal in the financial year 2022-23 as well as the upcoming action plan for the year 2023-24. Vinodanand Jha, Additional General Manager (Publicity & Public Relations) gave the vote of thanks at the end of the programme.

Five accused in Fedbank robbery case nabbed from Jhunjhunu

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Crime branch and Piplani police station arrested 5 accused of Fedbank robbery case from Jhunjhunu, Rajasthan and recovered hi-tech equipment, 3 country made pistols, fake Aadhaar cards.

On April 5 at 10 am in Fed Gold Bank located in Indrapuri under Piplani police station area was targeted by 4 masked armed assailants who entered with the intention of robbing the bank but they failed to rob and escaped.

During investigation information was received that one of the accused involved in the incident had also come to the bank on March 18, 2022 in connection with the gold loan, but due to lack of local ID, he

Initially Arun Sharma and Nitesh Yadav were identified who were also with four others in the rented room in Bhopal

was refused the gold loan.

Initially Arun Sharma and Nitesh Yadav were identified who were also with four others in the rented room in Bhopal.

Both the teams raided several places and arrested in the investigation Premraj Yadav, Shivam Kumar, Shivshek Ranjan , Vipin Kumar and Nitiraj alias Prince were was arrested and recov-

ered 7 mobile phones, hi-tech equipment, 3 country made pistols, 20 cartridges, scissors, tape.

In detailed interrogation, Shivam told that the entire incident was planned by Sunny Singh and Subodh Singh, who were lodged in Beur Jail, Patna while Niyatank was guiding from West Bengal jail.

Shivam had gone back to Bhopal after seeing the location of Fed Bank before the incident, who went to Bihar and prepared Prashant alias Raja, Premraj, Shivshek alias Shivesh, Vipin and Nitiraj.

Sunny Singh and Subodh Singh had sent fake Aadhaar cards, gold and modern equipment and mobile phones, country made pistols and cartridges.

Mirchi Baba attacked in Bhopal jail

Bhopal: Serving jail at Bhopal Central Jail on the charges of sexually assaulting a woman Mirchi Baba was attacked by other inmates, he sustained serious injury in his eye, incident surfaced after Baba's lawyer Srikrishna Dhausela went to meet him in jail.

Advocate Dhausela told that through Kamal Sharma, Baba's son-in-law, came to know that he wanted to meet me. After this, on May 26, he went to jail to meet Baba. This is also recorded in the jail register.

Baba told that on 23 May two prisoners entered the barrack. The prisoners attacked Baba and was beaten brutally. At the time of meeting he noticed that his left eye had been injured.

The lawyer told that RTI has been filed to get information from the jail administration in this regard. It has asked which prisoners attacked Baba and what cases are going on against the criminals who have attacked. Till now there is no response from the jail administration. The lawyer has questioned the security of the jail. He has also demanded CCTV footage.

Vairagyanand Giri alias Mirchi Baba was arrested on August 8, 2022 from a hotel in Gwalior. A 28-year-old woman from Raisen had registered a case of rape on Baba at the women's police station in Bhopal.

The woman had told in the complaint that it has been four years since her marriage. Mirchi came in contact with Baba because she has no children. Baba claimed to be a child after worshipping. In the name of treatment, the woman was raped by feeding her intoxicating pills.

Women's police station has presented a charge sheet against Mirchi Baba. The 566-page charge sheet was presented in the court of Judge Pooja Pathak. In this the allegations leveled against Baba have been found to be correct. The charge sheet includes testimony of 21 people, recovery of Bhabhoot, Sabudana tablet, FSL report, details of call details.



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan during a hand-cart hawkers and street vendors Panchayat at his residence in Bhopal on Monday. Pioneer photo

97 PIEMR students provided internships

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

As many as 97 students were provided internships in various technical fields by participating companies in a mega Internship fair organized by the Prestige Institute of Engineering Management and Research. A total of 27 companies participated in this fair.

PIEMR Director Dr. Manoj Kumar Deshpande and TPO, PIEMR, Prof. Giving information, Saurabh Bhattacharya said that so far a total of 400 third year students of his institute have been provided internship by various companies which is mandatory as per the syllabus of Rajiv Gandhi Technological University.

Dr Deshpande said that the Internship fair provided opportunities to students to gain real-world experience and practical skills bridging



the gap between education and industry. The participating companies in this fair demonstrated their commitment to offering internships in emerging technical fields and technical-management roles, giving talented individuals a chance to showcase their abilities.

The Prestige Engineering Placement Cell team, consisting of 20 student place-

ment coordinators, played a crucial role in making the Internship Fair successful. The AI and Android Training Division Soft Skill, Coding, and Aptitude Training team was also present to understand the current trends and demands in the corporate world and engaged themselves in discussions with HR heads and CEOs/founders of companies.

Sagar Group's SISTec awarded with 'NBA' Accreditation

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

National Board of Accreditation has awarded its accreditation to Sagar Group's SISTec (Sagar Institute of Science and Technology) Department of Computer Science Engineering, Department of Electronics & Communication Engineering, Department of Mechanical Engineering and Department of Electrical & Electronics Engineering.

The same was declared by the National Board of Accreditation (NBA) congratulating SISTec for bagging the accreditation. NBA India is established by the AICTE to assess the qualitative competence of the programs offered by the educational institution for promoting international quality standards for technical education with new processes, parameters and criteria that are in line with the best international practices and oriented to assess the outcomes of the programme.

The NBA peer team visited the SISTec and rigorously assessed the college on multiple parameters. During the visit, the peer team appreciated the honesty, infrastructure, manage-

The NBA peer team visited the SISTec and rigorously assessed the college on multiple parameters

ment, faculty, student contributions, teaching-learning process, institutional values & best practices adopted in the institution.

Dr Jyoti Deshmukh- Group Director SISTec, Keshvendra Chaudhury- Principal SISTec, Dr Kuldeep Ganju Principal SIPTEC, Manish Billore - Principal SISTec-R, Swati Saxena Vice Principal SISTec have congratulated the Head of Departments and entire team of SISTec for bagging the accreditation. Siddharth Sudhir Agrawal, Managing Director Sagar Group congratulated Team SISTec and said "The National Board of Accreditation (NBA) accreditation is the result of our outstanding efforts and hard work. The accreditation brings us one more step closer to our mission to 'Build Nation.' We will continue with our efforts to impart quality training and education."

Bajaj Allianz launches term product for Type 2 diabetics

Bhopal: To empower diabetic individuals and enable them to have peace of mind about securing the life goals of their loved ones, Bajaj Allianz Life, one of India's leading private life insurers, has launched an exclusive term plan Bajaj Allianz Life Diabetic Term Plan Sub 8 HbA1c. This is the first of its kind protection plan in the Indian life insurance industry designed especially for Type 2 diabetic & pre-diabetic individuals.

Bajaj Allianz Life's Diabetic Term Plan Sub 8 HbA1c offers life insurance coverage by factoring in the nuances of the health condition of those having diabetes. For pre-diabetic or Type 2 diabetic individuals whose HbA1c is up to 8% (3) the comprehensive plan will enable them to provide financial security for their loved ones.

Speaking at the launch of this exclusive product, Mr. Tarun Chugh, MD & CEO, Bajaj Allianz Life, said, "As Life Goals enablers we continue to innovate and challenge ourselves, so that more individuals can secure their life goals. With this first-of-its-kind term plan designed for diabetics, I'm happy that we will be able to help several Indians secure their family's long-term financial plans by giving them the well-deserved peace of mind."

Prometheus Setup to launch 30k MT e-waste recycling plant in Bhopal

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

With a goal to tackle electronic waste, the company aims to recycle 30,000 metric tons (MT) of E-waste annually, becoming the largest E-Waste Recycler in Madhya Pradesh.

This expansion, alongside their Gwalior plant, increases Prometheus' total recycling capacity to a staggering 45 million kilograms (KG) of E-waste, making a significant impact in reducing environmental risks. The inauguration of the E-Waste Recycling Plant in Bhopal signifies a remarkable stride in Prometheus' commitment to sustainable electronic waste management.

With an annual recycling capacity of 30,000 metric tons, the company actively fosters the principles of a circular economy. Prometheus firmly believes responsible E-waste management is crucial for conserving resources and protecting the environment. They work with stake-

With an annual recycling capacity of 30,000 metric tons, the company actively fosters the principles of a circular economy

holders, including consumers, businesses, and government entities, to raise awareness and promote responsible E-waste disposal.

The new recycling plant in Bhopal sets a benchmark for sustainable E-waste management in Madhya Pradesh and strengthens Prometheus' leadership in the industry. Prometheus Recycling, known for tackling electronic waste challenges, minimizes the environmental impact through sustainable practices and advanced recycling technologies. Their extensive network and partnerships contribute to a greener and cleaner future for generations to come.



Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Bhupendra Yadav addresses a media interaction programme over the Union Government's achievement in the past 9 years, at Kushabhau Thackeray Convention Center in Bhopal. Pioneer photo

CM plants saplings with environment-lovers and social workers

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan planted saplings of Jamun, Peepal and Imli (tamarind) in Smart Garden on Monday. Social workers and environment-lovers also participated in plantation.

Along with Chief Minister Chouhan, Dipanshu Rathore, Mohit, Neeraj and Harsh Rajput also planted



saplings on their birthdays. Ajay Sisodia, Purva Sharma, Ayush and Neetu Tiwari of Try Foundation also planted saplings.

Divya Atri, President of

Vision Development for Women Welfare Needs Society, informed about efforts being made to make citizens aware about cleanliness and for polythene-free markets in 'Mera Bhopal-Meri Zimmedari' campaign. CM Chouhan appreciated this responsibility undertaken by the citizens. Anshita Sharma, Vaidehi Choudhary, Ameya Sharma, Prabhav Sohgaure also participated in plantation.

CM recalls flavour of delicacies with guests



STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Monday praised the delicious flavour of dishes he enjoyed in Surguja.

He was addressing villagers from Surguja division at his residence in Raipur. These villagers had hosted

lunch for him during public interactions.

Welcoming the villagers, Baghel said: "You welcomed me in your houses with such warmth and affection. You served me meals with love. I am overwhelmed. I still remember the taste of delicious 'bhaji' and other delicacies."

"I have got the opportunity to welcome all of you at my residence," an official statement quoted him as saying.

The families were served traditional cuisines.

Madhulika Prajapati from Karji village of Surguja presented a sketch of the Chief Minister with his mother. She said wants to pursue art from Khairagarh University.

Three Maoists held in Sukma

STAFF REPORTER ■
SUKMA

Security forces on Monday arrested three Maoists in Sukma district of Chhattisgarh.

Madkam Deva, Madkam Hidma and Soyam Joga were apprehended by the District Reserve Guard and the police from Murliguda village, Sukma Superintendent of Police Sunil Sharma said.

Deva was a militia member, Hidma was a Dandakaranya Adivasi Kisan Majdoor Sangh (DAKMS) member and Joga was the Gompad Revolutionary People's Council (RPC) president and finance committee member of the outlawed Maoist group, the officer said.

A court sent the three to prison.

SEC releases programme for municipal by-election

STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

The State Election Commission, Chhattisgarh, on Monday released the schedule for by-elections to urban bodies. The model code of conduct has been made effective with immediate effect in the areas going to the polls.

State Election Commissioner Thakur Ram Singh said the election of councillors will be held in nine wards of nine urban bodies in eight districts.

These include Municipal Council Champa, District-Janjgir-Champa, Nagar Panchayat Tunggaon, District-Mahasamund, Nagar Panchayat Khongapani District-



Manendragarh-Chirmiri-Bharatpur, Nagar Panchayat Kharora District-Raipur, Nagar Panchayat Tunggaon District-Mahasamund, Municipal Corporation

Durg and Municipal Council Ahiwara District-Durg, Nagar Panchayat Bemetara District-Bemetara, Nagar Panchayat Ambagarh Chowki District-

Mohla-Manpur-Ambagarh Chowki and Municipal Council Kondagaon District-Kondagaon.

The District Election Officer will issue the notification. They will make arrangements for reservation of seats on June 2.

Singh said the Returning Officer will receive nomination papers till June 9. They will be scrutinized on June 10. The last date for withdrawal of candidature is June 12.

The Returning Officer will publish the final list of candidates and allocate the election symbols. The polling will be held if necessary on June 27. The counting of votes will take place on June 30.

BBNL officer commits suicide



STAFF REPORTER ■
DURG

A Bharat Broadband Network Ltd (BBNL) officer was on Monday found hanging from a ceiling fan in Durg city in Chhattisgarh.

Satish Kumar Sahu (52), general manager at BBNL's Durg office, was found dead at his office, said Vipin Rangari, the station house officer of Mohan Nagar police station.

A woman employee spotted Sahu and informed his family.

Sahu's family members had lodged a missing person's complaint after he didn't return home on Sunday.

Prima facie, it appears to be a case of suicide. However, no suicide note was found, the official said.

Collectors undergo EVM, VVPAT training

STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

District Election Officers and Deputy District Election Officers of Chhattisgarh on Monday underwent training for the first level checking (FLC) of electronic voting machines (EVM) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) in Raipur.

The Chief Electoral Officer, Chhattisgarh, organized the workshop at New Rest House, Raipur, an official communication said.

The officers were given hands-on training on the administrative and technical procedures related to the Control Unit, Ballot Unit and VVPAT.

Senior officers gave



detailed information regarding the technical and administrative procedures of EVMs and VVPATs.

Chhattisgarh Chief Electoral Officer Reena Baba Saheb Kangale said the first level checking of total of 1.27

lakh EVMs and VVPATs in the state will be done in district headquarters. The process will be on from June 10 to 27.

Chhattisgarh will witness assembly elections in October.

Badi Vikas Yojana paves way for income to growers



STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

The Badi Vikas Yojana in Chhattisgarh is proving beneficial to rural women as it has helped them earn additional income.

Under the scheme of Narva, Garva, Ghurva Badi Yojana, the Badi Vikas Yojana has been providing benefits to the rural women, an official communication said on Monday.

The members of Lakshmi Women's Self-Help Group are

sowing crops like maize and tomatoes in Kushha Gauthan in Korea district.

Anita, a member, said in the previous season she earned a profit of Rs 7,000 after an input of Rs 1,000 to grow tomatoes. Earlier, she was cultivating for her household. Now, it is grown on a large scale in the Gauthan.

The members of Pragati Women's Self-Help Group echoed similar sentiments.

Shamshun Nisha, President, and Anjulata, Secretary, of the group said

vegetables like brinjal, chillies, tomatoes and herbs have been grown for the last 10 months.

The sale of vegetables has generated an income of Rs 70,000.

Police officer suspended

STAFF REPORTER ■
BILASPUR

A police officer was suspended while another officer was served notice for negligence in connection with the arrest of a rape victim's mother in Ratanpur town in Chhattisgarh, police said on Monday.

Ratanpur Station House Officer Krishnakant Singh was suspended and SDOP Siddharth Baghel was served the notice on Sunday, Bilaspur Additional Superintendent of Police Rajendra Jaiswal said.

Singh will be attached to the Bilaspur Police Lines.

The action was taken based on a report submitted by a team led by Additional Superintendent of Police Rahul Dev to the Superintendent of Police Santosh Singh.

Also, a local court bailed out the mother of the rape victim in the case on Monday.

In March, a 19-year-old woman of Ratanpur had lodged a complaint of rape against a man following which he was arrested and sent to jail. The accused man's uncle and local BJP leader, Hakeem Mohammad, allegedly pressured the victim and her mother to withdraw the case against his nephew. He reportedly threatened to trap the two women in a false case.

On May 19, one of the relatives of the accused lodged a complaint with the police against the rape survivor's mother alleging she sexually abused her 10-year-old son.

Acting on it, the police registered against the mother and arrested, triggering angry protests.

Look for good business opportunities, says Das



STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

Union Bank of India Zonal Head and Field General Manager B.P. Das on Monday underlined the need for finding good business opportunities. He was addressing a meeting of the staff of the regional office during a

visit to Raipur. He also held review meetings with branch managers. He asked them to fulfil all the targets for 2023-24. The bank's Regional Head Anuj Kumar Singh said the bank is sanctioning loans under Union Nari Shakti Yojana especially for women entrepreneurs. The bank is also providing services under gold loan.

Need to create awareness about tobacco products: Minister

STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Health and Family Welfare Minister T.S. Singh Deo on Monday said tobacco not only affects the person consuming it but also people in the vicinity. There is a need to create awareness about this.

He was holding a discussion with officials of Auckland University, New Zealand. The team led by him had detailed discussion with experts on the challenges facing in making the state tobacco free and towards controlling tobacco products.

He said the world will observe 'World No Tobacco Day' on May 31. Continuous efforts are being made to spread awareness about the harmful effects of tobacco consumption on health.

The Secretary, Health Department, Prasanna R, said the burden on the economy due to the increasing number of tobacco patients was also discussed, an official statement said.

University officials said that compared to the income earned from



tobacco products, more money is spent on the diseases caused by it. The New Zealand government has made a concrete policy to ban tobacco.

With the target to create a smoke

free generation, it has been made illegal for anyone born on or after 2009 to use/consume/sell tobacco products. The target is to make New Zealand a smoke-free generation by 2025.

कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियंता,
लोक निर्माण विभाग, बिलासपुर मंडल, बिलासपुर

ई-प्रोसेसिंग पोर्टल निविदा सूचना
Portal: <http://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>

छत्तीसगढ़ शासन, लोक निर्माण विभाग, बिलासपुर मंडल, बिलासपुर में निम्नलिखित कार्य नवीन ई-पंजीयन में पंजीकृत ठेकेदार हेतु दिनांक 09.06.2023 तक निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है-

क्र.	नि.आ.सू. क्र. / दिनांक	कार्य का नाम	लागत (लाख में)
1	37	पामाद डोंगाकोहरीद मार्ग के वेनज 3487 से 3987 = 500 मीटर में मजबूतीकरण का कार्य । प्रथम अंशभाग । चापा संभाग चापा ।	31.92

निविदा में भाग लेने की प्रक्रिया एवं निविदा के संबंध में विस्तृत जानकारी विभाग के उपरोक्त वेबसाइट में देखें जा सकते हैं ।

अधीक्षण अभियंता
लो.नि.वि. बिलासपुर मण्डल, बिलासपुर

G- 01767/4

NAME CHANGE

It is informed to the general Public that I, **GAJENDRA NIRMALKAR S/O GIRDHARI NIRMALKAR**, RESIDENT H.NO. 208/1 SHIKARI PARA 2, BALOD, DIST-BALOD, C.G. 491226, have changed my old name **GAJENDRA NIRMALKAR S/O GIRDHARI NIRMALKAR**, so in future I should be recognized by my new name that is **FAZAL AHMED S/O GIRDHARI NIRMALKAR** in all Government and other documents.

FAZAL AHMED

H.NO. 208/1 SHIKARI PARA 2, BALOD, DIST-BALOD, C.G. 491226

न्यायालय कलेक्टर, दुर्ग जिला-दुर्ग (छत्तीसगढ़)

व्यक्तिगत उपस्थिति समन रा.प्र.क्र. 77/ब-121/वर्ष 2021-22

प्राधिकृत अधिकारी, आई.डी.एफ.सी. फर्स्ट बैंक लिमि., शाखा - डी.बी. सिटी ऑफिस, 6वीं मंजिल, डी.बी. सिटी, कारपोरेशन पार्क, राजवंश मैदान रायपुर, तह. व जिला रायपुर (छ.ग.) ...बादी

प्रेषिती

- श्री. मोहम्मद हनीफ आ. श्री. मोहम्मद रसाईल
- श्रीमती सईदा बानो

दोनों निवासी - सौरत मैदान के सामने, बैजनाथ पारा, रायपुर तहसील व जिला रायपुर (छ.ग.) ...अनावेदकगण

उपरोक्त बादी द्वारा इस न्यायालय में वित्तीय आस्थियों का प्रतिभूतिकरण और पुनर्गठन और प्रतिभूतिहित प्रवर्तन अधिनियम, 2002 की धारा 14 के अन्तर्गत अनावेदकों द्वारा आवेदक बैंक से बंधक ऋण को सुरक्षा हेतु बैंक के पक्ष में रखी गई बंधक संपत्ति ख.नं. 477/17 क्षेत्रफल 2058 वर्गफीट दो मौजा कुरुद प.ह.नं. 14/19, तहसील व जिला दुर्ग में स्थित है, को बकाया राशि की अदायगी नहीं करने के कारण रिक्त भौतिक अधिपत्य में प्राप्त करने हेतु प्रस्तुत आवेदन पत्र पर प्रकरण संस्थित कर प्राकृतिक न्याय सिद्धांत के अन्तर्गत अनावेदकों को इस न्यायालय द्वारा समक्ष सुनवाई किये जाने हेतु सूचना पत्र जारी कर आहूत किया गया था। तामिलकान द्वारा अवगत कराया गया कि उक्त पत्र पर 02 वर्ष से निवासरत नहीं होने के कारण जारी नोटिस अदम तामिल वापस प्राप्त। चूंकि अनावेदकों को प्रकरण में समक्ष सुनवाई का युक्तियुक्त अवसर प्रदान किया जाना है। अतएव इस समन के जरिये अनावेदकों को आदेश दिया जाता है कि आप इस मामले को आगामी पेशी दिनांक 05/06/2023 को कलेक्टर, दुर्ग के न्यायालय में व्यक्तिगत रूप से अनिवार्यतः उपस्थित होकर अपना पक्ष प्रस्तुत करें। यदि आप निर्धारित सुनवाई तिथि को अनुपस्थित पाये गये तो मामले को सुनवाई आपको गैरहाजिरी में को जाकर आपके विरुद्ध एकपक्षीय कार्यवाही की जावेगी। आज दिनांक 10/05/2023 को मेरे हस्ताक्षर एवं न्यायालय की पदमुद्रा से जारी किया गया। (कलेक्टर महोदय द्वारा आदेशित)

हस्ता/-
उपर कलेक्टर दुर्ग

पृ. क्रमांक/301/प.कले./2023

प्रतिनिधि:

प्राधिकृत अधिकारी, आई.डी.एफ.सी. फर्स्ट बैंक लिमि. शाखा - डी.बी. सिटी ऑफिस, 6वीं मंजिल, डी.बी. सिटी, कारपोरेशन पार्क, राजवंश मैदान रायपुर, तहसील व जिला रायपुर (छ.ग.) को सूचनार्थ एवं आवश्यक कार्यवाही हेतु अर्पित। कृपया उपरोक्त समन का प्रकाशन दो प्रचलित समाचार पत्र में कराये एवं प्रकाशन की सूचना से इस न्यायालय को अवगत करावे।

दुर्ग, दिनांक 26/05/2023

न्यायालय कलेक्टर, दुर्ग जिला-दुर्ग (छत्तीसगढ़)

व्यक्तिगत उपस्थिति समन रा.प्र.क्र. 79/ब-121/वर्ष 2020-21

प्राधिकृत अधिकारी, आई.डी.एफ.सी. फर्स्ट बैंक लिमि., शाखा - डी.बी. सिटी ऑफिस, 6वीं मंजिल, डी.बी. सिटी, कारपोरेशन पार्क, राजवंश मैदान रायपुर, तह. व जिला रायपुर (छ.ग.) ...बादी

प्रेषिती

- स्ट्रीम एग्री फार्म प्रा. लि.
- कृषा कैपिटल प्रा. लि.
- कृषा डेव प्रा. लि.

तीनों का पता - 4/1, ग्रियदर्शनो परिसर वेस्ट नेहरूनगर, भिलाई

- श्री. कुणाल जायसवाल पता - प्लाट नं. 4, ब्लाक नं. 45, नेहरू नगर, ईस्ट भिलाई, तह. व जिला दुर्ग
- श्री. विनय कुमार जायसवाल पता - प्लाट नं. 4, ब्लाक नं. 45, नेहरू नगर, ईस्ट भिलाई, बार्ड नं. 2, तह. व जिला दुर्ग (छ.ग.) ...अनावेदकगण

उपरोक्त बादी द्वारा इस न्यायालय में वित्तीय आस्थियों का प्रतिभूतिकरण और पुनर्गठन और प्रतिभूतिहित प्रवर्तन अधिनियम, 2002 की धारा 14 के अन्तर्गत अनावेदकों द्वारा आवेदक बैंक से बंधक ऋण को सुरक्षा हेतु बैंक के पक्ष में रखी गई बंधक संपत्ति-शां.नं. 201, 202, 203 एवं 204 प्रथम तल शां.को नगर केम-1 चौहान प्लाजा व्यावसायिक परिसर भिलाई, क्षेत्रफल 14.80 वर्गमीटर एवं शां.नं. 143 (232.90 व.मी.) 144 (170.20 व.मी.) 145 (154.57 व.मी.) की बकाया राशि की अदायगी नहीं करने के कारण रिक्त भौतिक अधिपत्य में प्राप्त करने हेतु प्रस्तुत आवेदन पत्र पर प्रकरण संस्थित कर प्राकृतिक न्याय सिद्धांत के अन्तर्गत अनावेदकों को इस न्यायालय द्वारा समक्ष सुनवाई किये जाने हेतु सूचना पत्र जारी कर आहूत किया गया था। जारी नोटिस वापस अग्राल। चूंकि अनावेदकों को प्रकरण में समक्ष सुनवाई का युक्तियुक्त अवसर प्रदान किया जाना है। अतएव इस समन के जरिये अनावेदकों को आदेश दिया जाता है कि आप इस मामले को आगामी पेशी दिनांक 05/06/2023 को कलेक्टर, दुर्ग के न्यायालय में व्यक्तिगत रूप से अनिवार्यतः उपस्थित होकर अपना पक्ष प्रस्तुत करें। यदि आप निर्धारित सुनवाई तिथि को अनुपस्थित पाये गये तो मामले को सुनवाई आपको गैरहाजिरी में को जाकर आपके विरुद्ध एकपक्षीय कार्यवाही की जावेगी। (कलेक्टर महोदय द्वारा आदेशित)

हस्ता/-
उपर कलेक्टर दुर्ग

पृ. क्रमांक/308/प.कले./2023

प्रतिनिधि:

प्राधिकृत अधिकारी, आई.डी.एफ.सी. फर्स्ट बैंक लिमि. शाखा - डी.बी. सिटी ऑफिस, 6वीं मंजिल, डी.बी. सिटी, कारपोरेशन पार्क, राजवंश मैदान रायपुर, तहसील व जिला रायपुर (छ.ग.) को सूचनार्थ एवं आवश्यक कार्यवाही हेतु अर्पित। कृपया उपरोक्त समन का प्रकाशन दो प्रचलित समाचार पत्र में कराये एवं प्रकाशन की सूचना से इस न्यायालय को अवगत करावे।

दुर्ग, दिनांक 26/05/2023

ICMR to form team to prevent suicides

Urges researchers to join 'suicide prevention intervention' study

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Alarmed at the rising number of suicide cases in the country, particularly among school and college students, the Government's premier health research institute, Indian Council of Medical and Research (ICMR) has woken up to the need for a suicide prevention framework that is based on scientific interventions.

It has called upon the researchers from across the country to join the team being constituted for ICMR's Multistate Implementation Research Study on Suicide Prevention Interventions. In India, the suicide rate has been on the rise with a reported rate of 12 per 100,000 of the population in 2021, reflecting a 6.2 per cent increase from the previous year.

"The goal is to reduce the burden due to suicidal behaviour and promote mental well-being, thereby improving the mental health outcomes in the country," an official from the ICMR.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO),



the crude suicide rate in the age-group 15-29 years (per 100,000 population for both sexes) for India has been recorded as 15.721, thus indicating that suicidal behaviour has become a significant public health concern, especially among the young age groups.

The Covid-19 pandemic induced factors such as stress, isolation, and economic difficulties have just worsened the mental health of this particular group, noted the official.

"Though there has been some progressive actions by the country in this regard such as launch of the National Suicide Prevention Strategy last year in November with an objective to reduce the suicide mortality by 10 per cent by 2030. Despite these alarming statistics, a suicide prevention framework that is based on scientific interventions is largely lacking in the country," said the official.

According to the health

experts, suicides are preventable, for every 40 seconds a person dies by suicide somewhere in the world and many more attempt suicide.

The inclusion of "Suicide Mortality Rate" as an indicator under the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) monitoring framework (Indicator 3.4.2), demonstrates the global commitment to address this issue more effectively. Suicides occur throughout the lifespan, notably, among young people 15-29 years of age, suicide is the second leading cause of death globally.

Suicide prevention interventions among school and college students will be implemented through training teachers, counsellors, staff members, parents, peers etc who will identify signs of distress and respond appropriately, the official said.

Under coping strategies, students will be taught mechanisms to manage stress and build resilience while under health promotion initiatives, stress would be on healthy lifestyle such as, adequate physical activity, healthy diet, away from addictions (tobacco, alcohol, other psychotropic substances, internet), and mental health promotion.

Students at high risk will also be identified while focus will also be on enhancing social skills, fostering positive relationships and reducing isolation, the official added.

Cong cheated K'taka voters: Bommai

Ex-CM accuses State Govt of delaying, putting conditions to poll promises, guarantees

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Taking note of Congress party's alleged 'delay' in implementing the five guarantees committed by it during Karnataka poll campaign, former Chief Minister and BJP leader Basavaraj Bommai on Monday accused the Congress of "cheating voters" by "attaching conditions" to its guarantees and doubted whether it would "fully operationalize" them.

Bommai expressed doubts whether the Congress government would fulfill its promises maintaining that the ruling party may soon show their true colours by using delaying tactics towards announcing legislative provisions for implementing poll-guarantees.

After some tug of war for key cabinet posts, Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has allocated portfolios to ministers , keeping the Finance department with himself while assigning the Irrigation and Bengaluru City Development departments to his deputy DK Shivakumar.

Siddaramaiah took the oath of office with Shivakumar and eight ministers on May 20.

Instances have come to notice where women who voted for the Congress have refused to pay for the bus tickets in Bengaluru drawing attention to the 'free-ride promise' by the party. Similarly, many have resolved not to pay for the bill below 200 units.

"Looking at various statements by Ministers, it looks like — it is certain that they said something and will do something else. During the election without speaking about any conditions they said it (guarantees) will be free for everyone. The Chief Minister had said with example that — it is free for me, you and everyone," Bommai said .

Speaking to newsmen at Bengaluru , he said in the in-principle approval order too it was mentioned that guarantees will be for everyone, but now statements are being made that they will be applicable only to those eligible and not for everyone.

"By making changes they (Congress) have made 'dhoka' (cheated) to the people of Karnataka. People have given them power



based on these guarantees, without responding to it, they are speaking about the previous (BJP) government's promises....Them (Congress leaders) making lame excuses, indicates that they will not operationalise the guarantees fully. Their true colours will come out in open in a few days," he added.

Responding to a question about delay in choosing the Leader of Opposition in the Assembly, Bommai said, there is no delay, normally the Leader of Opposition is elected on the eve of the first session, and it is going to happen accordingly.

The Congress had promised to implement the 'guarantees' — 200 units of free power to all households (Gruha Jyoti), ₹2,000 monthly assistance to the woman head of every family (Gruha Lakshmi), 10 kg of rice free to every member of a BPL household (Anna Bhagya), ₹3,000 every month for unemployed graduate youth and ₹1,500 for unemployed diploma holders (both in the age group of 18-25) (YuvaNidhi), and free travel for women in public transport buses (Shakti), on the very first day of assuming power in the state.

After having accorded in-principle approval for guarantees in the first cabinet meeting on May 20, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah had said they would "most likely" be implemented after the next Cabinet meeting.

In Himachal Pradesh where Congress won the assembly election this year, the party had made similar guarantees including the implementation of old-pension scheme, some of them have been implemented.

Govt committed to fulfilling poll guarantees, no need to worry: Shivakumar

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Monday said there is a "responsible government" in the state, which will fulfill all the guarantees made to the people ahead of the assembly polls.

He, however, did not specify any timeline to implement the guarantees, but maintained that the cabinet meeting on June 1 will discuss on fulfilling them.

"There is a cabinet meeting on June 1, the Chief Minister has the responsibility of the Finance department, he will discuss with officials and bring the relevant information to the cabinet. We will keep up our promise. We will have to do it systematically and preparations are on," Shivakumar said.

Speaking to reporters here, he said, "there is a responsible government in the state and it will keep up the promises made to its people and there is no need to worry"

Noting that all the Ministers have been instructed to review their respective departments, the Deputy CM said, all the Ministers including him will begin their work



today. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who expanded his cabinet on Saturday by inducting 24 new Ministers, has allocated portfolios to all the ministers in his Cabinet, late last night.

There is mounting pressure on the new Congress government by opposition parties and various sections of people from across the state, to fulfill its five poll guarantees.

In the maiden Cabinet meeting of this government, soon after the swearing-in of Chief Minister, Deputy Chief Minister and eight Ministers on May 20, it was decided to accord "in-principle" approval to the Congress' five 'guarantees' promised before the elections.

The 'guarantees' would "most likely" be implemented after the next Cabinet meeting, Siddaramaiah, who chaired the cabinet meeting, had told reporters that day.

Delhi HC issues notice to Yasin as NIA seeks death penalty for him

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday issued a notice to separatist leader Yasin Malik, who is presently serving a life term, on a plea by the National Investigation Agency seeking death penalty for him in a terror funding case. A bench of Justices Siddharth Mridul and Talwant Singh also issued warrants for production of Malik before it on August 9.

Solicitor General (SG) Tushar Mehta, who appeared on behalf of the National Investigation Agency (NIA), argued that the accused indulged in terrorist and secessionist activities and should be awarded death penalty by treating the matter as a "rarest of rare" case.

Mehta stated that Malik committed the "sensational" killing of four IAF officers and even kidnapped the daughter of



then Home Minister Mufti Mohammad Sayeed which led to the release of four dreaded criminals who masterminded the 26/11 attack in Mumbai in 2008.

"In view of the ground that Yasin Malik, sole respondent in this appeal, has inter alia pleaded guilty to a charge under IPC section 121 (waging war against the Government of India) which provides for an alternate death sentence, we issue notice to him... To be served through the jail superintendent," the court ordered. Let warrants be issued for

his production on the next date of hearing, it added.

The court also issued notice to Malik on NIA's application seeking condonation of delay in "re-filing" the present appeal. Mehta urged the court to condone the delay, saying "technicalities" should not have a bearing in matters such as the present one.

On May 24, 2022, a trial court here had awarded life imprisonment to Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front chief Malik after holding him guilty for various offences under the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and the IPC.

Malik had pleaded guilty to the charges, including those under the UAPA, and he was convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment.

Such a tactic by an accused to avoid death penalty, he said, cannot be allowed when he

knows that facing trial would lead to imposition of capital punishment.

"Any terrorist can come here, do terrorist activities, plead guilty and court says since he has pleaded guilty, I give him only life term and not capital punishment," said Mehta, adding that even Osama bin Laden would have been permitted to plead guilty here and that "possibly the USA was right" in its dealing with the Al Qaeda founder.

The court responded that there could be no comparison between Malik and Laden as the latter never faced trial and it would not comment on matters affecting foreign relations. During his submissions, Mehta said Malik crossed over to Pakistan for training, was coordinating stone pelting and spreading "rumours" on social media about oppression by security forces.

Army marks 75th anniv of UN peacekeepers day

Pays homage to fallen comrades

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Army on Monday commemorated the 75th International Day of United Nations (UN) Peacekeepers by paying homage to the fallen comrades by laying wreath at National War Memorial here by the Army Chief and Vice Chief and representatives from Navy and Air Force, Ministry of External Affairs and United Nations. One fifty nine (159) Indian soldiers have laid down their lives to uphold peace.

This is the day when in 1948 the first UN peacekeeping mission, "UN Truce Supervision Organisation (UNTSO)" began operations in Palestine.



Vice Chief of Army Staff Lieutenant General MV Suchindra Kumar and officials pay tributes during the wreath-laying ceremony to commemorate the 75th UN Peacekeepers Day, at National War Memorial in New Delhi on Monday

PTI

Each year on this Day, the UN and countries across the globe pay tributes to the professionalism, dedication and courage of all men and women who have served or are serving in UN Peacekeeping Missions and honour the memory of those who have laid down their

lives in the cause of peace. This year marks the 75th Anniversary of the UN Peacekeepers Day.

India has a rich legacy of contribution to UN Peacekeeping operations and is one of the largest contributors of troops. It has contributed approximately 2,75,000 troops to

peacekeeping missions so far, with around 5,900 troops currently deployed in 12 UN Missions.

Indian Army personnel have operated under difficult conditions in challenging terrains and have displayed exemplary professionalism, humane approach, courage and valour, to the extent of making the supreme sacrifice to defend the UN mandates.

Apart from the current deployment, India has pledged one Infantry Battalion Group and Corvette with Helicopter, as hard power and an Engineer Company and Signal Company as Force enablers, to be deployed at the behest of the UN.

In keeping with the need for women peacekeepers in conflict areas under UN mandate, India has deployed Female Engagement Teams (FETs) in MONUSCO and UNISFA (the second largest women contingent after Liberia).

NIA files 2nd supplementary chargesheet in naxal attack case in which 2 cops killed

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Saturday filed its second supplementary chargesheet in the case related to the Naxal attack on former MLA Gurcharan Nayak, in which two police personnel were killed in Jharkhand in January 2022.

The NIA has named two accused in the chargesheet filed in the NIA Special Court Ranchi. The chargesheeted accused are 25-year-old Tivari Bankira alias Shaka and 20-year-old Sadan Korah alias Sajan, both armed cadres of Communist Party of India (Maoist), a proscribed terrorist organization, the NIA said in a statement.

The duo hails from West Singhbhum district of Jharkhand and has been charged under various sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

While Tivari was arrested on November 30, 2022, Sadan has been in custody since February 13, 2023.

The attack took place on January 4 last year at High School Jhirlua, Police Station Goikera, West Singhbhum. The Jharkhand police had initially registered the case (FIR No. 01/2022) at the local police station. Subsequently, on June



30, 2022, the NIA re-registered the case.

Following investigations, NIA had charge-sheeted 14 accused persons on December 31, 2022 in this case.

"As per NIA investigations, Tivari and Sadan were providing support to CPI (Maoist) for furthering its terror and violence related activities and waging a war against the Government of India. They were part of the conspiracy to carry out the terrorist attack on Gurucharan Nayak and his bodyguards. They were also part of the Special Action Team established by the banned terror outfit to execute the crime," the agency said in a statement.

The two accused had attended the meeting in which the conspiracy to attack Gurucharan Nayak with deadly weapons at Project +2, High School Jhirlua, was hatched. They had reconnoitered the spot a day before the incident and had also participated in the training to execute the attack, it added.

KHALISTANI ATTACK ON INDIAN HIGH COMMISSION

Ensure security of our diplomatic missions, EAM urges UK Min

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In the backdrop of alleged Khalistan supporters trying to vandalise the Indian High Commission in London in March, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Monday asked visiting British Minister Lord Tariq Ahmad to ensure security of India's diplomatic missions in the UK and prevent misuse of democratic freedoms.

Jaishankar's assertions here during a meeting with Lord Ahmad, the Minister of State for Foreign, Commonwealth



and Development Affairs, came against the backdrop of the vandalism of the Indian High Commission in London in March by pro-Khalistan supporters.

Jaishankar took to Twitter to share the issues he raised during his discussions with Lord Ahmad. "Met with UK MOS Lord Tariq Ahmad today in New Delhi... Underlined

the obligation to ensure security of our diplomatic missions and prevent misuse of democratic freedoms," the External Affairs Minister said.

In April, the Union Home Ministry had handed over the probe in the case of attack on the Indian mission in London to the National Investigation Agency (NIA) after a meeting with representatives from Britain.

Jaishankar said he also discussed a broad range of issues ranging from the Free Trade Agreement and South Asia to Indo-Pacific and G20 with the visiting minister.

HC refuses relief to teen who failed to fill form for JEE-Advanced

Admission process for IITs based on discipline: Court

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Institutes such as the Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) are centres of technical studies par excellence in the country and the process of finding students is based on discipline, the Bombay High Court said while refusing relief to an 18-year-old boy who failed to submit his

online form for the Joint Entrance Exam (JEE) Advanced due to a technical glitch. The boy, Atharva Desai, in his petition claimed that he lived in a rural area where there were frequent power outages because of which he was unable to register himself online in the given time frame.

The petitioner sought a direction from the court for his registration form to be accepted and to permit him to appear for JEE-Advanced scheduled to be held on June 4.

The Joint Admission Board



of the IIT opposed the plea on the ground that as per their records, Desai had logged in on the portal for the first time to fill the online form a day after the deadline and hence, no relief ought to be granted to him. A vacation bench of Justices Abhay Ahuja and Milind Sathaye, in its May 24 order, accepted the IIT's argu-

ment and said it could not disturb the discipline adopted by the institution in the larger interest of lakhs of aspiring meritorious students of the country.

The order copy was made available on Monday."It is not in doubt that IITs, NITs and other institutes are centres of technical studies par excellence in India. The process of finding the best talent in this country is based on discipline which is of utmost importance in the field of education," the court said.

SC dismisses plea against eligibility criterion of 75% marks in Class XII board exams for admission to IITs

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday dismissed a plea challenging the eligibility criterion of 75 per cent score in higher secondary examination for admission to the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs).

A vacation bench of Justices Sudhanshu Dhulia and K V

Vishwanathan said this prerequisite existed earlier as well and it was not inclined to intervene in the matter. The top court said these are education matters and it has to defer the issue to experts.

"This condition was always there, why should we interfere? This is not a matter we want to get into," the bench said.

‘PM worked hard to speed up development in 9 yrs’

PTI ■ JAIPUR

Union Minister Piyush Goyal on Monday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has worked tirelessly and without discrimination to speed up development in the country since 2014. The PM has worked to empower the people and the country during the past nine years, he said.

Talking with reporters, Goyal said, “The full majority government has strengthened the PM’s hands so that he could transform the country, strengthen the economy, uplift the poor sections of the society and defend the country’s borders.” The PM has worked hard to speed up development, take welfare schemes to the last person in the line and empower the people of the country, he said.

BJP MP Poonam Mahajan gave a presentation on the achievements of the Modi government. “India was among the fragile five economies of the

world in 2014 and today it is the fifth largest economy in the world,” she claimed.

Meanwhile, senior BJP leaders, including Union Ministers and Chief Ministers, highlighted the achievements of Modi-led government in a nationwide outreach on Monday to mark its nine years in office, with Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur expressing confidence of its re-election in 2024.

From India’s “rising” global stature to emphasis on national security, welfare measures like housing and toilets for the poor, boost to piped water supply, infrastructure growth and efforts to ramp up the manufacturing sector were among the initiatives cited at the press conferences they held in every state of the country.

The BJP said in a statement that the country has witnessed “unprecedented” development in every sector with the mantra of “nation first” guiding Modi’s policies.

Leaders opposing Modi will face rout in LS polls, says BJP’s Ghosh

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Senior BJP leader Dilip Ghosh on Monday mocked the proposed Opposition meet in Bihar next month and said the leaders opposing Prime Minister Narendra Modi will face a complete rout and decimation in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

Ghosh’s comment comes in the backdrop of the proposed opposition meeting in Bihar.

According to hints that have emanated from a meeting of Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar’s JD (U), the meeting of the parties opposed to the BJP may be held in Patna on June 12.

West Bengal Chief Minister and TMC supremo Mamata



Banerjee is likely to attend the meeting, party sources said.

“We have seen such efforts in 2019, and the results are before us. The TMC tally came down from 34 to 22. And BJP’s tally across the country increased from 282 to 303 seats. The people of this country trust the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Whoever tries to fight against

PM Modi will face complete rout and decimation in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls,” Ghosh told reporters.

Reacting to Ghosh’s comment, the TMC said the remarks reflect the “fear of defeat” that has set in the saffron camp.

“The BJP is terrified and frustrated by the efforts to forge opposition unity ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. Just because it didn’t succeed in 2019 doesn’t mean it won’t succeed again,” said TMC spokesperson Kunal Ghosh, adding such comments only “reflect the fear of defeat.”

For the last one year, the opposition parties have been trying to come together in the fight against the saffron camp.

₹2K note saga cast doubts on stability of Indian currency: PC

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Terming the nine-year-long rule of the Narendra Modi Government as a “complete failure on all fronts”, senior Congress leader and former Union Finance Minister P. Chidambaram on Monday ridiculed the introduction of Rs 2,000 note seven years ago and its subsequent withdrawal recently had “cast doubts on the integrity and stability of Indian currency”.

Addressing a news conference as part of the part of his party’s outreach to the people across the country to expose the Modi government’s failure on all front, Chidambaram said: “In the

first place, the people had no need for the Rs 2000 notes after the Rs 500-Rs 1000 value notes were demonetised (in November 2016).... The thoughtless — some would even say foolish — introduction of the Rs 2000 note (which the people shunned) and the mortifying spectacle of withdrawing the note have cast doubt on the integrity and stability of India’s currency”.

Chidambaram said that he didn’t agree with the RBI’s explanation that Rs 2000 note was introduced to meet the immediate requirement of people. “Within 30 days of its introduction, no one was using it. The notes didn’t come to people. It was a foolish move bringing the integri-

ty of the currency system in question. The original decision to introduce it was foolish but the government didn’t want to admit it,” the former finance minister said.

Expressing his utter disappointment over the state of economy in the country, Chidambaram said: “Key economic indicators are pointing downward and there is low confidence that the economy will reach the high-growth path. The first three quarters of 2022-23 recorded growth rates of 13.2, 6.3 and 4.4 per cent, a declining trend. The present situation is a far cry from the average of 9 per cent growth rate that marked the boom years between 2004 and 2009”

Lone WB Cong MLA joins TMC

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Days after Mamata Banerjee expressed her willingness to play ball with the Congress on condition of reciprocation and days ahead of the anti-BJP Opposition meet in Patna, the Trinamool Congress on Monday drew the Congress blood by getting its lone MLA in the State legislature Byron Biswas to join the Bengal ruling outfit.

Left-backed Congress candidate, Biswas had won the Sagardighi Assembly by-elections three months ago causing a big flutter in the State politics ahead of the next year’s general elections. Sagardighi is in Muslim dominated Murshidabad district.

Biswas who joined the TMC in the presence of its national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee however said that he was attracted by Mamata Banerjee’s developmental works and that he was not being able to work while in the Congress.

“I was unable to work in the Congress ... and there is no point being an MLA if you cannot work ... so I joined the TMC where I will get ample scope to work under the leadership of Mamata Banerjee whose welfare schemes have inspired me,”



Biswas said.

Coming against the backdrop of the multi-crore recruitment scam the Sagardighi elections had been interpreted as the beginning of the end of the Trinamool Congress rule and the rise of a new experiment in the form of Congress-Left camaraderie in Bengal.

Both the Congress and the Left drew a blank in the 2021 Assembly elections which was apparently conducted in an unprecedentedly polarized atmosphere.

The Congress immediately reacted to Biswas’ joining the TMC saying the people of Sagardighi would remember the “deceit.” Pradesh Congress president Adhir Chowdhury said, “they (TMC) may have purchased or coerced one

MLA into joining their party ... but they will not be able to purchase the people of Sagardighi ... this dishonest defection will only strengthen their result and the TMC will get a befitting reply in the next elections.”

The TMC which had allegedly engineered a large number of defections in the Bengal Congress over the past several years was actually playing with snake Chowdhury said adding “the snake-charmers finally die of snake bite.”

Referring to Chowdhury’s attack, Abhishek Banerjee who is also the nephew of the Chief Minister said, the Congress’ failure to hold back its MLA was not the TMC’s fault adding his party never engineered defections.

Jambu Zoo thrown open to public in Nagrota

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

The Union Territory Administration in Jammu and Kashmir Monday added another tourist ‘hot spot’ in the long list of local getaways by throwing open Jambu Zoo at Nagrota.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha inaugurated the phase -1 of Jambu zoo built at a cost of around Rs 70 crores over 70 hectares of land.

The foundation stone of the project was originally laid in September 2016 by the then Forest Minister Lal Singh.

The ambitious project, aimed at attracting the rush of Mata Vaishno Devi bound pilgrims, had earlier missed several deadlines due to paucity of funds. Speaking on the occasion Lt Governor Manoj Sinha said, “the scenic beauty around the first-of-its-kind full-fledged zoo in the UT will make it a unique tourist destination and has the potential to boost tourism in the region.”

“This much awaited addi-



tion to the tourist destinations of J&K was taken up under the Languishing Project”, he added.

Referring to the successful conduct of G20 Summit, Lt Governor Manoj Sinha said, “Jammu Kashmir has entered a new era of opportunities.

It is a rare moment and the world is applauding J&K’s saga of development. We must work together to keep pace with the rest of the states and contribute to the significant task of Viksit Bharat 2047”.

The Lt Governor announced free entry for all in the Jambu Zoo for one

month. He also announced that the Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temple by Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams will be dedicated to the people on 8th June.

To woo the visitors, as many as 27 famous species of animals, including Royal Bengal Tiger, Asiatic Lion, leopards, bears, crocodiles etc will be shifted from different places to Jambu zoo. An amphitheatre and park for children has also been constructed.

Visitors can also avail the facility of battery-operated vehicles to move around inside the zoo.

Congress slams BJP for removing Holkar, Savitribai statues from Maha Sadan

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Hindu nationalist leader Veer Savarkar once again became a bone of contention between the Opposition Congress and ruling BJP on Monday, as the Maharashtra Congress hit out at the J P Nadda-led party for “removing” the statues of Rajmata Ahilyabai Holkar and Krantijyoti Savitribai Phule while celebrating Savarkar Jayanti at Maharashtra Sadan in New Delhi.

Describing as “outrageous” the manner in which the statues of Savitribai and Ahilya Devi were removed from Maharashtra Sadan on the Savarkar Jayanti at Maharashtra Sadan in New Delhi on Sunday, Maharashtra Congress president Nana Patole demanded a public apology from both chief minister Eknath Shinde and deputy chief minister Devendra Fadnis of the BJP for “insulting” Maharashtra’s two iconic leaders “who are a source of inspiration to the



society”.

Talking to the media persons, Patole charged that that the BJP “does not respect women and such things happen only because of their anti-women mentality”

“The BJP can do anything on the basis of its numbers, the same thing happened in Maharashtra Sadan. The BJP is trying to create a new history on the strength of numbers. What happened in Maharashtra Sadan is causing a lot of backlash and strict action should be taken against the culprits in this case,” he said.

“The world remembers Mahatma Gandhi and Buddha and BJP forgets these great men as soon as they come to power,” Patole said.

ISRO looking at testing Gaganyaan crew module mission by July

PTI ■ SRIHARIKOTA

The Indian Space Research Organisation is gearing up for a host of activities at the spaceport here, including testing of the crew module in July for its ambitious Gaganyaan mission, Chairman S Somanath said here on Monday. The secretary of the department of space said the space agency was also working for the launch of the synthetic aperture radar mission in association with National Aeronautics Space Agency (NASA).

The NISAR (NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar Mission) is a joint earth-observing mission between NASA and ISRO with the goal of making global measurements of the causes and consequences of land surface changes using advanced radar imaging.

Talking about future launches, Somanath said the next launch would be a climate and weather observation satellite called TNSAT-3DS, which would be launched using a GSLV rocket.

“The same rocket (GSLV) is bound to take the NISAR as well. In the coming months we are going to have launches of PSLVs as well as GSLV MkIII” he said. “The SHAR (Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota) will be abuzz with activities towards all of this,” he said.

Scientists are working on conducting various tests for the ambitious Gaganyaan mission and the agency is coordinating with the Navy and others in this connection, he said.

“We will be launching a test vehicle mission now. Target is to conduct it by July. The vehicle for conducting the test is already here in Satish Dhawan Space



Centre here,” he said. This launch would demonstrate how the crew escapes in case of any accident during the Gaganyaan mission, he said.

“The vehicle will be taken to an altitude of 14 km and from there we would create a problem or try to destroy it and see how the crew module escapes. That we have to demonstrate. We are talking to various stakeholders like the Navy,” he said. This mission has to be repeated again and after that there would be an unmanned mission probably next year in which the whole crew module would be taken to orbit and return, he said.

On setting up a launch pad in Kulasekarapattinam in Tamil Nadu about 600 km from Chennai, he said ISRO was almost in the final stages of acquiring 2,000 acres of land. “We will be building a launch pad for a small launch vehicle in Kulasekarapattinam and possible rocket launches for private players in future.

Land acquisition process is almost completed and some more land is yet to be acquired” he said. Somanath said the space agency was under discussion about the launch of the next-generation launch vehicle (NGLV).

“Now is not the right time to discuss it. It is a rocket which we want to be a recoverable stage, and basically (we are) working on liquid and semi-cryogenic technology,” he said.

10 killed as car crushed in head-on collision with bus in Mysuru



PTI ■ MYSURU

Ten people, including two children, died on the spot and three persons were injured in a road accident in which a car was crushed in a head-on collision with a private bus in T Narasipura taluk here on Monday, police said.

The incident took place near Kuruburu village on Kollegala-T Narasipura main road.

According to the police, the car was completely crushed due to the impact of the accident in what seems to be a head-on collision between the

two vehicles. The injured have been rushed to hospital and are receiving treatment.

The deceased, said to be from Sanganakallu in Ballari district, were returning from B R Hills in an Innova car they had hired when the incident took place, a police officer said, adding that they had their train ticket reserved from Mysuru back to Ballari in the evening.

Two children are among the deceased, sources said. The private bus was said to be on its way towards Kollegala. The three injured, also passengers of the car, have been shifted to Chamarajanagara hospital.

CAG Murmu re-elected as WHO External Auditor

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) Girish Chandra Murmu has been re-elected as External Auditor of the World Health Organization (WHO), Geneva, for a four-year term from 2024 to 2027.

The CAG has already been holding this position in the WHO since 2019 for a four-year term. The present election was held on Monday in the 76th World Health Assembly in Geneva, where the CAG of India was re-elected with an overwhelming majority (114 out of 156 votes) in the first round of voting itself, according to a press release issued by the office of the CAG.

The CAG was personally present at the meeting. After the election, in his address to the World Health Assembly, Murmu outlined his vision as External Auditor for the WHO, emphasising on process improvement for better outcomes, transparency and professional approach.

The CAG’s appointment is recognition of the Indian institution’s standing among



the international community as well as its professionalism, high standards, global audit experience and strong national credentials, the release said. This resounding victory was made possible by the sustained support and tireless efforts of the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations at Geneva, his officers and a special team of handicapped officers from CAG.

This is the second major international audit assignment

for the CAG this year following his selection for the post of External Auditor (2024-2027) of International Labour Organization (ILO) in Geneva earlier this year in March 2023.

Besides WHO, the CAG of India is currently the External Auditor of the Food and Agriculture Organization (2020-2025), the International Atomic Energy Agency (2022-2027), the Organization for Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (2021-2023) and the

Inter Parliamentary Union (2020-2022).

The CAG is a Member of the United Nations (UN) Panel of External Auditors. He is also a member of the Governing Boards of the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI) and ASOSAI. CAG chairs the INTOSAI Knowledge Sharing Committee, its Working Group on IT Audit, and the Compliance Audit Sub-Committee.

Active women have 25% less rate of Parkinson’s disease: Study

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Women who engaged themselves in regular exercise such as cycling, walking, gardening, cleaning and participating in sports had a 25 per cent lower rate of Parkinson’s disease when compared to those who exercised the least, according to a study published in the journal Neurology.

Researchers also found that 10 years before diagnosis, physical activity declined at a faster rate in those with Parkinson’s disease than in those without,



likely due to early symptoms of Parkinson’s disease.

It found that female participants who exercised the most had a 25 per cent lower rate of Parkinson’s disease when

compared to those who exercised the least.

The finding only shows an association and does not prove that exercise lowers the risk of developing Parkinson’s disease,

a brain disorder that causes unintended or uncontrollable movements, such as shaking, stiffness, and difficulty with balance and coordination.

The study included 95,354 female participants, mostly teachers, with an average age of 49 who did not have Parkinson’s disease at the start.

Researchers from the University of Pittsburgh, US and Radboud University Medical Center in The Netherlands followed participants for three decades during which 1,074 participants developed Parkinson’s disease.

Over the course of the

study, participants completed up to six questionnaires about the types and amounts of physical activity they were getting.

They were asked how far they walked and how many flights of stairs they climbed daily, how many hours they spent on household activities as well as how much time they spent doing moderate recreational activities such as gardening and more vigorous activities such as sports.

Researchers assigned each activity a score based on the metabolic equivalent of a task (METs), a way to quantify energy expenditure.

A more intense form of exercise like cycling was six METs, while less intense forms of exercise such as walking and cleaning were three METs.

The average physical activity level for participants was 45 METs-hours per week at the start of the study.

Participants were divided into four equal groups of just over 24,000 people each.

At the start of the study, those in the highest group had an average physical activity score of 71 METs-hours per week. Those in the lowest group had an average score of 27 METs-hours per week.

PAPER WITH PASSION

MANISH **ANAND**

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The new Parliament House

tion by Modi twenty-one opposition parties inclusive of the Congress will bring down their dignity in the minds of the populace as a whole. Besides the fact that more than two dozen parties inclusive of BSP have extended due support. It must not be out of context to reiterate that the installation of all the latest modern equipment in the new Parliament House will facilitate all the honourable MPs to prepare questions and answers by making good use of electronic gazettes. Very important topics related to the upliftment of the country will be discussed with references easily available on redesigned seats. Modi government should be praised with the free web for getting this best building of democracy ready. Opposition parties will also feel proud while criticizing government policies in the luxurious Parliament House.

Yugal Kishore Sharma | *Faridabad*

also acquired a new dimension due to the converging Internets in Asia as well by their becoming Quad partners. This has produced a wider and greatest outreach in several critical areas like education, defence and security, science and technology, trade and investment, education, green hydrogen, critical minerals etc.

Considering that the Indian diaspora forms more than 3 % of the Austrian population, a bilateral agreement on Migration and Mobility was reached to facilitate easier movement of people between the two countries. This will open up opportunities for students, businessmen, and research scholars and also weed out illegal migration. It also acquires even more significance given attacks on Hindu temples by extremists. The establishment of two new consulates in Brisbane and Bengaluru is a step towards their well-being. Dealing firmly with such miscreants can pave the way for a deeper, safe and secure connection between New Delhi and Canberra.

Vijay Singh Adhikari | *Nainita*

Send your feedback to
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

TEAM INDIA MUST BE FOR REAL

Sir — "Team India" will not turn into reality just through mere dialogues and rhetoric. Rather such a unity of people states and Centre can happen not only through mutual love and respect towards each other but also by following the lines and spirit of every word of the Constitution to the full.

"Team India" will shine in its full glory when everybody can exercise his/her freedom of speech and expression with head held high and mind without fear (but without taking resort to falsehood and character assassination)! No social activist should be detained in prison without concrete proof of indulging in any crime, no journalist should be jailed for his "sin" of venturing to the site of a gory crime, and no comedian should be thrown behind bars for any joke "uncracked" ie just based on mere apprehension that he would "hurt" the "sentiments" of some high and mighty!

A feeling of "Team India" will only emerge when it would be seen that the precious resources time and energy are getting invested in the welfare of common people so that they can be provided necessities of food attire shelter education medical care justice and livelihood with all children under the roof of the schools instead of labour fields under the open sky. If none other than the State is seen to sponsor/build temple statues glittering mansions and luxurious amenities for the rich; a bond of "Team India" in such an unequal environment holds no chance to emerge!

Kajal Chatterjee | Kolkata

WITHERING WHITE REVOLUTION

Sir — Dr Kurien must be turning in his grave with the Politics being played over the Milk Procurement in the Southern states by AMUL. Reports suggest that out of 2.30 crores litres of Milk that are produced in TN only 30 to 35 lakhs litres a day are bought by The state Dairy Further the present infrastructure can handle only 45 lakhs litres of milk.

Amul's procurement levels have dropped as the Milk producers prefer to

This refers to the news, New Parliament will make Indians Proud (May 27). Due to political jealousy, the opposition parties (especially the Congress) are getting angry on account of the failure of their petition in the Honourable Supreme Court. Sri Narendra Modi ji led BJP government will be boastfully encashing the inauguration of the newly constructed Parliament House. By just shrewdly speaking against the inaugura-

sell outside and get Rs 6 to Rs 12 more per litre. AMUL is trying to procure the Milk which otherwise would have gone waste or procured by the manufacturers of Milk products. It seems that still a lot of capital expenditure will be needed with more cooling points near the collection centres and hence the move of AMUL to help the milk producers should get due respect beyond misunderstanding. Hope and Pray that we rise above small bickerings and help the White Revolution.

CK Ramani | *Trichy*

INDO AUSTRALIAN RELATIONS

Sir - The bilateral relations between India and Australia reached a new high in the recently concluded Modi's visit to that country. The bonhomie started in 2014/15 when Modi assumed charge as the P.M. of India. It is not surprising that since 1986 when Rajiv Gandhi travelled to Australia, no Indian P.M. has found time to engage with the latter given their disagreement on contentious issues like nuclear disarmament due to the cold war situation. With time mutual bonding between the two countries has not only strengthened but

FIRST COLUMN

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY
IN EDUCATION SECTOR

Quality education can be imparted with digital ecosystem and better resource allocation



The role of digital technology in education is increasingly becoming crucial globally, as it provides new and innovative forms of support to students, teachers, parents, and the learning process more broadly. The Covid pandemic has made this process much faster, relevant and robust. By deploying remote learning technologies through a combination of TV, radio, online and mobile platforms, a large number of institutions were able to cater to the educational needs of their students. The G20 Education Working Group Meeting on 'The Role of Digital Technologies in Education' comes as a key development in this regard, highlighting a slew of present and prospective technological measures. Identification of core areas and themes to promote possible research and academic collaboration among educational institutions in G20 member countries, is a huge development, as the group comprises some of the most developed countries of the world, who use world-class research, innovation and cutting-edge technologies in this domain.

The selection of priority areas for deliberations such as 'Foundational Literacy and Numeracy', 'Tech-enabled learning', 'Future of work' and 'Research and innovation collaboration', - broad-based discussions with enriching inputs from sectoral experts. There is little doubt that during the past few years, G20 countries have made significant progress in expanding the use of digital technologies for improving access to quality education, however, the sharing of more tangible and effective educational practices and experiences did help recognize where participating countries are and what they need to improve upon. Here, we can



collaborate to leverage technology further to achieve some common educational goals, as we still confront a lot of challenges in the process, especially when it comes to ensuring quality learning opportunities for all along with improving learning outcomes.

What the world including some of the G20 countries, need is accessible, inclusive and equitable school education, higher education and skill development. It is digital technologies that can bring parity in the quality and accessibility of education at all levels. For example, India has around 1.48 million schools, 265 million school students and nearly 9.5 million teachers, with more than 20 regional languages as medium of instruction alongside 62 educational boards of instruction across the country. Moreover, lakhs of students received their higher education in different languages. In such a case, only digital technology can be expected to provide equitable and inclusive education, as a lot of content and expert teachers are still not available in regional languages.

Hence, the union budget 2023 emphasises much on digitisation of education. The Digital India programme has received Rs 4,795.24 crore, and to boost digital infrastructure, the government has proposed initiatives like Digital Libraries and Digital Universities. States have also been urged to set up physical libraries at panchayat levels to provide infrastructure for accessing the National Digital Library resources. Digital initiatives with a focus on artificial intelligence terming it a step towards the 'digital revolution', have been hailed by all. Three centres of excellence for AI and 100 laboratories in engineering institutions for developing applications using 5G services, will only add to this process of digital revolution. Digital Universities aim to reach out to the remotest regions of the country with quality, skill-based and job-oriented courses and training. With the focus of the budget being on expanding reach, improving quality education, building capacity and strengthening the digital education ecosystem, we can now expect to have a world-class school and higher education system, which would be accessible to all.

(The writer is a senior journalist)

Nine years of inclusive progress

Prime Minister Modi has laid the ground for the 'Amrit Kaal' and his era would be remembered for putting the country in the fast lane



The ninth anniversary of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government is an occasion to celebrate the successes of statecraft passionately demonstrated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in action with visible and verifiable impacts on the ground. PM Modi has also shown that decisive mandates deliver decisive governments. Political pundits must examine the achievements of the Modi government by dropping their coloured lenses to codify the messages for all the political parties in the larger interests of the country.

Memory will certainly not fail to recall the days of 2012-14 when a maverick activist held a kangaroo court at Jantar Mantar to accuse and abuse each and everyone in politics. The Arvind Kejriwal tribe attacked the very institution of democracy by raising doubts in the minds of the people about the political class. He poured a truckload of muck on the participants of Indian democracy.

The first task of PM Modi was to restore the trust of the people in the Indian democracy. This was done in record time, as the Jantar Mantar tribe shut their shops and also joined politics. The record turnout of the voters in the Lok Sabha and Assembly elections demonstrates that PM Modi has restored the trust of the people in the Indian democracy fully. Now, no one abuses Indian democracy. Taking inspiration from PM Modi, youngsters are quitting even high-paying jobs to join politics.

The greatest tribute to the nine years of PM Modi's achievements as head of the government will be on the count of financial inclusion of over 48 crore people in the banking system of the country. The over one-third population of the country was not seen as worthy to be part of the formal economy by the Congress-led UPA government.

These 48 crore people were pushed into the informal economy and also at the risk of losing their hard-earned money to chit funds and other financial fraudsters while also being vulnerable to the moneylenders. For the economists of the Congress pedi-

“IF THE SOCIAL SECTOR GAINS FROM THE CARING TOUCH OF THE MODI MODEL OF GOVERNANCE, THE ECONOMY HAS TO LIE ON FIRM LEGS TO RUN THE GROUND FULL STEAM TO ATTAIN THE \$5 TRILLION TAG IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS AND ALSO CLAIM THE STATUS OF THE FOURTH LARGEST ECONOMY

(The author is a policy analyst)

gree, these 48 crore people were not deserving of being part of the economy.

When they joined the Indian financial system on the call of PM Modi for their inclusion, they brought a whopping Rs1.90 lakh crores in deposits to the banking system. The Modi model of the economy must be studied by all, as the gains of financial inclusions were not limited to the beneficiaries of the Jan Dhan Scheme but even the banks, which have been reporting record profits while also meeting all norms of healthy banking norms.

PM Modi brought empathy for the poor, women and the people at large in his caring statecraft. He brought the policy attention to areas that were never paid attention to. His first term addressed the dignity of women in the country, who had for ages been going in the darkness for toilet needs. According to the topmost priority to making India a defecation-free country, more than 11 crore toilets have been built in the country.

By sanctioning over four crores of houses under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, the Modi government has brought unprecedented changes for the better in the life of the people. Shelter and sanitation have been the hallmark of the Modi model of statecraft with empathy for the vulnerable sections of society. It should be examined why the Congress-led governments never thought of addressing the basic issues that concerned the well-being of the rural and the poor people.

By ensuring sanitary napkins for Rs 1, the Modi statecraft showed that the well-being of the people is at the core of the governance. This was again seen when once in a century pandemic struck the country. PM Modi first ensured that none in

the country slept hungrily. His intervention to protect the people from hunger saw the launch of the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana for 80 crore people free of cost, and 1121 lakh metric tonnes of foodgrains were made available to the population so that they could meet the hardships caused by Covid-19 outbreak. Access to potable water is needed to safeguard the health of the people and save them from water-borne diseases. It will be a task for the economists to measure the savings for the people on their out-of-pocket expenses due to the expanding coverage of tap water in homes.

Har Ghar Jal (Jal Jeevan Mission) is another example of the Modi government thinking of the well-being of the people, as more than eight crore rural households with more than 40 crore people have benefitted under the programme.

Har Ghar Bijli (Saubhagya Yojana) also saw close to three crore households getting electrified under the scheme, covering over 99.9 per cent of the total households in the country. By March 2023, over nine crores of LPG connections were sanctioned under Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana, fulfilling the promise of a 'Har Ghar Gas Cylinder'. This again bears the Modi model of economy's concerns that the policies should think of the wellbeing of the people, as it served to protect the women from kitchen smoke. Once more the women in the country because of the policy intervention of the Modi government were protected from ailments due to exposure to kitchen smoke.

Under Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY), close to 41 crore loans have been sanctioned since the launch of the scheme. Also, there has been a growth of more than 200 per cent in digital payment

volume during the last four years since 2018-19. UPI transactions alone have grown eight times in the last three years, which is 50 times in the last four years.

With over 41 crore people in India exiting poverty between 2005-06 and 2019-20 due to the committed efforts of the Modi government, we are today on track to eliminate extreme poverty by 2024.

If the social sector gains from the caring touch of the Modi model of governance, the economy has to lie on firm legs to run the ground full steam to attain the \$5 trillion tag in the next few years and also claim the status of the fourth largest economy. The economy is making good use of the extraordinary expansion of infrastructure, spanning roads, ports, waterways and airports, which hastened the making of a well-knit Indian economy with faster movements of goods.

On the security front, the Modi government has an unparalleled track record of almost terrorism-free track record. Also, India has made its border infrastructure robust with accelerated developments in states with long border regions. North-eastern states are well-connected with all parts of India. Now, there is no reason in the country, which is without being connected with major cities in the country. This has been shown to the delegates who are taking part in several meetings of the G20 all across the country.

By committing Rs 2.50 lakh crore for the railway infrastructure, the Modi government has brought much-needed energy and capacity to the national transporter, which carries the size of the population of Australia daily. It must be underlined that the Modi Era has laid the grounds for the 'Amrit Kaal' for India.



NITI Aayog must be revived for better Centre-State relations

PM Modi is facing united opposition from the non-BJP-ruled states. They have been ganging up against him despite their political differences

One of the first things Prime Minister Narendra Modi did soon after assuming office nine years ago was dismantling the Planning Commission with a legacy of 65 years and setting up the Niti Aayog in January 2015. Even as the chief minister of Gujarat earlier, Modi had some ideas for a stronger Centre-State relationship and reforms. He hoped that Niti Aayog would strengthen this relationship.

However, Modi still faces Opposition from the non-BJP-ruled states. They have been ganging up against him due to their political differences. The new chief minister's club is growing by the day as they work in tandem.

Unsurprisingly, acting as a pressure group, some non-



(The writer is a senior journalist)

BJP chief ministers had boycotted Saturday's Niti Aayog meeting addressed by

Modi. The conference's theme was "Viksit Bharat @2047: Role of Team India." These chief ministers could have participated and discussed 100 issues identified for the session. Instead, they stayed away.

Nineteen Opposition parties also boycotted the inauguration of the new Parliament building on May 28. They held that President Draupadi Murmu and not Modi should have that honour. Those who boycotted included Mamata Banerjee (West Bengal), Arvind Kejriwal (Delhi), Ashok Gehlot (Rajasthan), K. Chandrabab Naidu (Telangana), Bhagwant Mann (Punjab), Nitish Kumar (Bihar), M.K.

Stalin (Tamil Nadu), Pinaray Vijayan (Kerala), and Naveen Patnaik (Odisha).

The last name was a surprise addition as Patnaik had been keeping equidistance from both Congress and BJP. He is said to have been upset that President Draupadi Murmu, hailing from Odisha, had not been invited to the inauguration of the new Parliament. K.C. Rao skipped the Niti Aayog meeting even last year. Having a running battle with the Centre, he claimed, "Chief Ministers do not get enough time to speak, and after a few minutes, a bell rings saying you should stop now."

Mamata Banerjee wanted a revival of the Planning Commission instead of Niti Aayog, which she called a "paper tiger". Other chief ministers

gave some excuses for their absence, like prior engagements. It was clear that they worked in tandem.

It is not the first time such boycotts have taken place. Even during the Indira Gandhi era, late Andhra Pradesh chief minister N.T. Rama Rao walked out of the National Development Council protesting against the Centre. Doyens like the late Jyoti Basu, Ramakrishna Hegde and others, too, had walked out of the NDC meetings. As for Saturday's Aayog meeting, should the chief ministers have shown their anger by boycotting it, or should they have participated and explained their misgivings? They could have attended the meeting and presented their grievances or worn black flags.

After all, it was a forum for interaction with other chief ministers and the Centre.

The BJP sees the boycotts of the Aayog meeting and the inauguration of the new Parliament building as part of the Opposition's "Modi hatred".

There have been several questions about the relevance of the Niti Aayog and its predecessor Planning Commission. While the Commission was seen as a White elephant, the Niti Aayog is seen as a toothless institution. The Planning Commission had two primary duties-implementation of the five-year plan and providing Finances to the states. NITI Aayog has no constitutional or statutory sanction. Its stated aim is to construct a dynamic and robust nation. Unlike the Planning

Commission, it has no financial role. It is mainly the country's premier think tank. The Aayog has two hubs: "Team India Hub" and "Knowledge and Innovation Hub".

In addition to developing long-term, strategic plans for the Government of India, the Aayog supports a federal cooperative structure. Critics say that it should focus on the implementation rather than only concentrating on the recommendations of the policies.

India has emerged as a major global economy. The Aayog will be unable to transform an unequal society into a modern economy. It cannot influence public or private investment or policymaking. It needs to answer specific questions like why 90% of the workers are in the unorganized

sector. Aayog should evolve into a much stronger organization. It lacks the states' confidence, particularly from the non-BJP chief ministers. petition among the states worked well during the Covid period.

The Prime Minister held Zoom conferences and involved the chief ministers in pandemic relief. However, politics entered on Covid relief later with the non-BJP chief ministers complaining of step-motherly treatment from the Centre.

Overall, the NITI Aayog needs to evolve into a much stronger organization. If it wants to be more effective, it requires the trust of the non-BJP chief ministers and their active participation. Only then a strong centre and strong states will emerge.

HK court rejects Lai’s bid to end national security trial

AP ■ HONG KONG

A Hong Kong court on Monday rejected a jailed publisher's request to terminate his national security trial, pressing ahead with a landmark case seen as part of Beijing's crack-down on the city's pro-democracy movement. Jimmy Lai, the 75-year-old founder of the now-defunct newspaper Apple Daily, faces up to life in prison if convicted under a Beijing-imposed national security law. His lawyers earlier filed an application to halt the trial, raising concerns that his case was being heard by three judges approved by the city's leader, instead of a jury.

When Hong Kong returned to China in 1997, it was promised that trials by jury, previously practiced in the former British colony, would be maintained under the city's constitution. But in a departure from the city's common law tradition, the security law



allows no-jury trials for national security cases.

On Monday, Judges Esther Toh, Susana D'Almada Remedios and Alex Lee unanimously rejected Lai's request, saying there was no reason to believe they "would be biased, actually or apparently, against" Lai. The national security law was enacted in June 2020 following months of anti-government protests calling for an

investigation into police conduct during the unrest and universal suffrage.

It outlaws secession, subversion, terrorism and foreign collusion to intervene in the city's affairs, and has been used to stamp out dissent.

Lai is accused of conspiring with others to call for sanctions or blockades, or engage in hostile activities, against Hong Kong or China. He also faces a

charge of collusion with foreign forces to endanger national security, and a separate seditious charge under a colonial-era law that is also increasingly used to crush the opposition.

Under the security law, the secretary for justice may direct national security cases to be tried without a jury if state secrets need to be protected, foreign forces are involved, or if the personal safety of jurors needs to be protected.

In such cases, they will be heard by a panel of three hand-picked judges.

Earlier this month, Robert Pang, one of Lai's lawyers, pointed to the lack of transparency in the appointment of the judges, saying that might affect the public's confidence in the judiciary and the judicial process. Pang also alleged the executive's move to block British lawyer Timothy Owen from representing Lai could be fairly described as "persecution."

Explosions rattle Kyiv during day

AP ■ KYIV

Explosions rattled Kyiv during daylight Monday as Russian ballistic missiles took aim at the Ukrainian capital, hours after a more common nighttime barrage of the city by drones and cruise missiles. Debris from missiles intercepted by Ukrainian air defenses fell in Kyiv's central and northern districts during the morning, landing in the middle of traffic on a city road and also starting a fire on a building's roof, the Kyiv military administration said. At least one civilian was reported hurt.

The blasts unnerved some locals, already under strain after being awakened by the night attack.

"After what happened last night, I react sharply to every siren now. I was terrified, and I'm still trembling," shared Alina Ksenofontova, a 50-year-old woman who took refuge in the Kyiv subway with her dog Bublik.

The central station, Tetatralna, was crowded with sheltering locals.

Artem Zhyla, a 24-year-old who provides legal services abroad, took his laptop with him and kept working underground.

"I heard two or three explosions, went to the bathroom, and then I heard five or seven more explosions. That's when I realized something terrible was happening," he said.



People take cover at metro station during a Russian rocket attack in Kyiv, Ukraine, on Monday

Like many others in the capital, he feels exhausted and stressed. However, he has no intentions of giving up and plans to attend his yoga class to recharge. "This is certainly not enough to break us," he said.

Russia used Iskander short-range missiles in the morning attack, the spokesman for Ukraine's air force said on local television.

The missiles were fired from north of Kyiv, Yuriy Ihnat said without clarifying if he meant Russian territory. Kyiv lies around 380 kilometers (236 miles) from the Russian border.

During the previous night, air defenses brought down more than 40 targets as Russian forces bombarded Kyiv with a combination of drones and cruise missiles in their 15th

nighttime attack on the capital so far this month, said Serhii Popko, the head of Kyiv's military administration.

On Saturday night, Kyiv was subjected to the largest drone attack since the start of Russia's war. At least one person was killed, local officials said.

Kremlin's strategy of long-range bombardment has brought many sleepless nights for Ukrainians.

Over the winter, Russian forces aimed their missiles and drones at power plants and other infrastructure. The apparent goal was to weaken Ukraine's resolve and compel the Ukrainian government to negotiate peace on Moscow's terms, but Ukrainians swiftly and defiantly repaired the damage.

Russia issues arrest warrant for Lindsey

Moscow (AP): Russia's Interior Ministry on Monday issued an arrest warrant for US Sen Lindsey Graham following his comments related to the fighting in Ukraine.

In an edited video of his meeting on Friday with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy that was released by Zelenskyy's office, Graham, a Republican from South Carolina, noted that "the Russians are dying" and described the U.S. military assistance to the country as "the best money we've ever spent." While Graham appeared to have made the remarks in different parts of the conversation, the short video by Ukraine's presidential office put them next to each other, causing outrage in Russia.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov commented Sunday by saying that "it's hard to imagine a greater shame for the country than having such senators." The Investigative Committee has moved to open a criminal inquiry against Graham, and the Interior Ministry followed up by issuing a warrant for his arrest.

CUBICAL FINANCIAL SERVICES LIMITED					
Regd. Office-456, Aggarwal Metro Height, Netaji Subhash Place, Pitam Pura, Delhi-110034 CIN-L65993DL1990PLC040101 website : www.cubical90.com, E-mail : cubfinser@yahoo.com					
(Rs. in Lacs)					
Extract of the statement of Audited Financial Results for the Quarter/year ended March 31, 2023					
Sl. Particulars No.	Quarter Ended 3/31/2023 (Audited)	Quarter Ended 3/31/2022 (Audited)	Year Ended 31-03-2023 (Audited)	Year Ended 31-03-2022 (Audited)	
1 Total Income from operations	35.45	21.42	114.80	216.00	
2 Profit/(Loss) for the period before tax	-24.17	26.53	-19.67	81.73	
3 Net Profit/(Loss) for the period after tax	-26.34	23.14	-28.57	67.53	
4 Equity Share Capital	1303.40	1303.40	1303.40	1303.40	
5 Reserves excluding Revaluation Reserve	-	-	53.85	82.49	
6 Earnings Per Share (EPS) (of Rs. 2/- each)					
Basic Diluted			-0.04 -0.04	0.10 0.10	
Note:- The above is an Extract of the Detailed Format of Quarterly Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchange under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosures Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The Full Format of the Quarterly Financial Results is available on the Website of Bombay Stock Exchange at www.bseindia.com & on Company website at www.cubicalrealitors.com .					
By Order of the Board of Directors for CUBICAL FINANCIAL SERVICES LIMITED ASHWANI KUMAR GUPTA MANAGING DIRECTOR DIN-00348616					
DATED : 29TH MAY, 2023 PLACE : DELHI.					

TO WHOM SO EVER IT MAY CONCERN					
That [Manchanda Medicos 17 A/L Market, Shalimar Bagh, Delhi] has already created the charge in 1992 on unaminated original title deed of the property. Mortgage was created on unaminated Title deed & later on lamination of the title deed was made in our presence					
Details of the relevant property [Shop No. 17 A/L Market, Shalimar Bagh, Delhi-110088]					
M/S Manchanda Medicos had already created charge since 1992 for availing a loan/credit facility from State Bank of India, SME Wazirpur industrial Estate Branch, Branch Code 05714					
The General Public is hereby notified that in case any party has any claim towards the said relevant property (ies), the same should be lodged with Manchanda Medicos / Susheel Manchanda at above mentioned address and also with the above stated branch of State Bank of India, within 15 days from publication of this notice					

Ramsons Projects Limited						
CIN-L74899DL1994PLC063708						
Regd. Office: A-10/6, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi-110057						
Website: www.ramsonsprojects.com, Email: corpdrelations@ramsonsprojects.com						
Extracts of Standalone Audited Financial Results for the Fourth Quarter and Financial Year ended March 31, 2023						
(Figures in Lakhs)						
Sl. No.	Particulars	Quarter Ended			Year Ended	
		Quarter ended March 31, 2023 (Audited)	Quarter ended December 31, 2022 (Un-Audited)	Quarter ended March 31, 2022 (Audited)	Financial Year Ended March 31, 2023 (Audited)	Financial Year Ended March 31, 2022 (Audited)
1	Total Income from Operations	17.74	15.05	9.03	56.81	33.42
2	Net Profit/ (Loss) For the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	1.73	0.56	4.39	6.63	13.68
3	Net Profit/ (Loss) For the period before Tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	1.73	0.56	4.39	(5.14)	13.68
4	Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	1.63	0.58	3.83	(5.30)	13.10
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period {Comprising profit/ (Loss) for the period (after tax) and other Comprehensive Income (after tax)}	10.05	0.94	(10.45)	5.22	2.07
6	Equity Share Capital	300.65	300.65	300.65	300.65	300.65
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the Audited Balance Sheet of the Previous Year	-	-	-	301.95	306.19
8	Earnings Per Share(of Rs 10/- each) (for continuing and discontinued operations) -					
	1.Basic:	0.05	0.02	0.13	(0.18)	0.44
	2.Diluted:	0.05	0.02	0.13	(0.18)	0.44
Notes:						
1	The above is an extract of the detailed format of fourth quarter & financial year results for the period ended March 31, 2023 filed with Stock Exchange under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirement) Regulation 2015. The full format of the Quarterly & Twelve months results for the period ended March 31, 2023 are available on the website of the Stock Exchange (www.bseindia.com) and website of the Company (www.ramsonsprojects.com).					
2	# Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items are adjusted in the Statement of Profit and Loss in accordance with IND AS Rules.					
By the Order of the Board Ramsons Projects Limited Sd/- Sunil Sachdeva Managing Director DIN: 00012115						
Place: Gurugram, Haryana Date:May 29, 2023						

PRAKASH WOOLLEN & SYNTHETIC MILLS LIMITED					
Regd. office. 18th KM Stone, Delhi Moradabad Road, NH24, Village-Amhera, Distt: J.P.NAGAR-244102, U.P. CIN-L17291UP1979PLC004804 PH: 9760091983, Email:info@prakashwoollen.com, Website: www.prakashwoollen.com					
Extract of Audited Financial Results (Standalone) for the Quarter and Year Ended 31/03/2023					
Particulars	Quarter ended			Year Ended	
	31-Mar-23	31-Dec-22	31-Mar-22	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-22
	Audited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Audited	Audited
Total income from operations (net)	1511.46	4639.95	2151.58	10371.96	9866.13
Net Profit / (Loss)for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	20.77	(147.60)	(52.69)	(515.75)	(13.17)
Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	20.77	(147.60)	(52.69)	(515.75)	(13.17)
Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	21.77	(144.67)	(25.81)	(503.90)	(5.56)
Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	26.84	(144.67)	(12.62)	(498.83)	7.63
Equity Share Capital	1025.98	1025.98	1025.98	1025.98	1025.98
Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve as shown in the Balance Sheet of previous year)	-	-	-	-	-
Earnings per share (before extraordinary items) (of Rs. 10/-each):					
(a) Basic	0.21	(1.41)	(0.25)	(4.91)	(0.05)
(b) Diluted	0.21	(1.41)	(0.25)	(4.91)	(0.05)
Earnings per share (after extraordinary items) (of Rs. 10/-each):					
(a) Basic	0.21	(1.41)	(0.25)	(4.91)	(0.05)
(b) Diluted	0.21	(1.41)	(0.25)	(4.91)	(0.05)
Notes: 1 The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly/ Annual Audited Financial Results (Standalone) filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly/ Annual Audited Financial Results are available on the website of the Stock Exchange (www.bseindia.com) and on Company's website (www.prakashwoollen.com)					
By Order of The Board For Prakash Woollen & Synthetic Mills Limited Sd/- Vijay Kumar Gupta Whole Time Director & CFO DIN: 00335325					
Place : Village Amhera (Amroha) Date : 29-05-2023					

Tinubu sworn in as Nigerian President

Abuja (AP): Nigeria's Bola Tinubu has been sworn in as president of Africa's most populous country at a period of unprecedented challenges, leaving some citizens hopeful for a better life and others sceptical that his government would perform better than the one he succeeded. The former governor of Lagos, Nigeria's economic hub, Tinubu, 71, was sworn in as Nigeria's president in Abuja, the capital city, in the presence of thousands of Nigerians and several heads of governments. He succeeds President Muhammadu Buhari to lead a country that by 2050 is forecast to become the third most populous nation in the world, tied with the United States after India and China.

Cape Town (AP): South African President Cyril Ramaphosa has appointed a judge to oversee an inquiry into allegations that the country supplied arms to Russia on a ship that docked secretly at a naval base in December.

The allegations were made this month by the United States' ambassador to South Africa, who said he was sure that weapons and ammunition were loaded onto the Russian-flagged cargo ship Lady R when it docked at the Simon's Town naval base near Cape Town late last year.

Ambassador Reuben Brigity indicated that the US had intelligence to sustain the

allegation and he said he would bet his life on the accuracy of his claim that weapons were loaded onto the ship. The Lady R container-carrying ship is under US sanctions for being tied to a company that has transported weapons to aid the Russian war effort in Ukraine. South Africa has denied there was any government-sanctioned deal to provide weapons to Russia, although it hasn't categorically ruled out that an unofficial transaction took place involving another entity. Judge PMD Mojapelo, a former Supreme Court of Appeal judge, was appointed chairman of a three-member panel to investigate

the incident, Ramaphosa's office said in a statement on Sunday. A lawyer and a former minister of justice were also appointed.

The panel has six weeks to complete its investigations and another two weeks from then to provide a report to Ramaphosa, the president's office said. "The panel has been tasked to establish persons who were aware of the cargo ship's arrival, and, if any, the contents to be off-loaded or loaded, the departure and destination of the cargo," Ramaphosa's office said.

Ramaphosa ordered the inquiry because of the seriousness of the allegations and "the impact of this matter on South

Africa's international relations," his office said. South Africa could be in breach of international law and its own laws regarding weapons sales if it is found to have supplied arms to Moscow for the war in Ukraine. The incident has strained relations between the US and South Africa, which is Africa's most developed economy and a key Western partner on the continent. South African Defence Minister Thandi Modise has said the Lady R was visiting to deliver an ammunition shipment from Russia that was ordered by South Africa in 2018 but was delayed because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Erdogan turns away reform-minded challenger to win another term

AP ■ ANKARA

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan turned away a challenger who sought to reverse his authoritarian-leaning changes, securing five more years to oversee the country at the crossroads of Europe and Asia that plays a key role in NATO.

Erdogan prevailed by winning more than 52% of the vote in Sunday's presidential runoff, which came two weeks after he fell short of scoring an outright victory in the first round.

A majority of Turkish voters in the second round chose him over challenger Kemal Kilicdaroglu, showing their support for a man who they see as a strong, proven leader.

Voters were divided between loyalty to Erdogan, who has ruled for two decades, and hopes for the opposition candidate, who promised to return to democratic norms, adopt more conventional economic policies and improve ties with the West.

With his immediate political future secure, Erdogan must now confront skyrocketing



President Recep Tayyip Erdogan delivers a speech to supporters outside his residence in Istanbul

inflation that has fuelled a cost-of-living crisis and rebuild in the aftermath of a devastating earthquake that killed more than 50,000 people.

In two speeches — one in Istanbul and one in Ankara — Erdogan thanked the nation for entrusting him with the presidency again. "We hope to be worthy of your trust, as we have been for 21 years," he told supporters on a campaign bus outside his home in Istanbul.

He said the divisions of the election are over, but he continued to rail against his opponent. "The only winner today is Türkiye," Erdogan said outside

the presidential palace in Ankara, promising to work hard for Türkiye's second century, which he called the "Turkish century." The country marks its centennial this year.

Supreme challenges lie ahead, starting with the economy that has taken a beating from what critics view as Erdogan's unorthodox policies. He also must tend to massive rebuilding efforts in 11 provinces hit by the Feb. 6 earthquake that levelled entire cities. Kilicdaroglu said the election was "the most unjust ever," with all state resources mobilised for Erdogan.

Spanish PM Sánchez calls early election

AP ■ MADRID

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez on Monday called an early general election for July 23 in a surprise move after his Socialist party took a serious battering in local and regional elections.

Prior to Sunday's debacle, Sánchez had insisted that he would ride out his four-year term with leftist government coalition partner United We Can, indicating that an election would be held in December.

The woes for Sánchez and his PSOE party come as Spain is due to take over the rotating presidency of the European Union on July 1.

Sánchez said he had spoken to King Felipe VI and would hold a special Cabinet meeting later on Monday to dissolve parliament.

"I have taken this decision given the results of the elections held yesterday," Sánchez from the Moncloa presidential palace.

The local and regional elections saw Spain taking a major swing to the right and made the

leading opposition right wing Popular Party, or PP, the main political force in the country.

"This is unexpected," said Ignacio Jurado, a political scientist at Madrid's Carlos III University. "Sánchez is trying to short circuit the PP's rise as soon as possible."

In the municipal vote, the Popular Party, or PP, won 31.5 per cent of votes compared with 28.2 per cent for the Socialists.

This was a 1.2 percentage point decrease for PSOE on 2019, but almost a nine point increase for the PP, which benefited from the collapse of the centrist Citizens party.

The PP won in seven of the 12 regions contested and dominated in several regions previously won by PSOE including Valencia, Aragon and La Rioja. It remains to be seen whether PP will have to rely on far-right party Vox to form regional governments.

Spain's regional governments have enormous power and budgetary discretion over education, health, housing and policing.

China to send astronauts to moon by 2030

PTI ■ BEIJING/JIUQUAN

China on Monday announced plans to send a manned mission to the moon by 2030 for lunar scientific exploration, amid its deepening space race with the West.

The announcement was made by Lin Xiqiang, Deputy Director of the China Manned Space Agency (CMSA), as China is preparing to send a third set of astronauts to its space station on Tuesday.

Li told the media at the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre in Inner Mongolia ahead of the launch of the spacecraft that takes the three astronauts to the space station called Tiangong that China has recently initiated under the lunar landing phase of its manned lunar exploration programme.

The overall goal is to achieve China's first manned

landing on the moon by 2030 and carry out lunar scientific exploration and related technological experiments, he was quoted as saying by the state-run Xinhua news agency.

China's manned lunar mission came as the US space agency NASA aims to send a second manned mission to the moon by 2025 to explore the south pole for frozen water.

For its part, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has announced plans to launch its ambitious Chandrayaan-3 mission aimed at demonstrating critical technologies to land the spacecraft on the south pole.

Chandrayaan-3 mission carries scientific instruments to study the thermo-physical properties of the lunar regolith, lunar seismicity, lunar surface plasma environment and ele-



mental composition in the vicinity of the landing site.

China in the past successfully launched uncrewed missions to the moon which included a rover. China has also sent a rover to Mars.

According to Lin, the goal of China's moon mission also includes mastering the key technologies such as earth-moon manned roundtrip, lunar surface short-term stay,

human-robot joint exploration, accomplishing multiple tasks of landing, roving, sampling, researching, returning, and forming an independent capability of manned lunar exploration.

In 2021, China and Russia announced plans to set up an International Lunar Research Station.

Russian space agency Roscosmos said in March 2021

that it has signed an agreement with China's National Space Administration to develop research facilities on the surface of the moon, in orbit or both.

Lin said China's manned lunar landing will promote the leapfrog development of manned space technology from near-Earth to deep space, deepen human understanding of the origin and evolution of the moon and the solar system, and contribute Chinese wisdom to the development of lunar science, he said.

The aim of space powers, such as the US, Russia and China, is to set up bases on the Moon for astronauts to live in, Dr McDowell, an astronomer at the Harvard-Smithsonian Centre for Astrophysics in the US told BBC earlier.

The Moon is being used as a stepping stone to places like Mars," he says.

Talks possible if Imran apologises: Dar

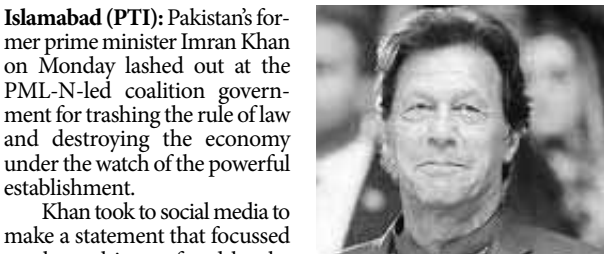
Ex-PM lashes out at Govt

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Finance Minister Ishaq Dar has hinted that negotiations with former prime minister Imran Khan to end the political crisis were possible if he took “corrective measures” and apologised to the nation for the May 9 violence in which sensitive military installations were attacked. Dar made this assertion during a Geo News programme on Sunday, the day when Pakistan’s ruling coalition rejected Khan’s offer for dialogue, saying talks were held with politicians, not terrorists. Khan, the chairman of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party constituted a seven-member team to hold talks with the government – for developing a consensus on a date for general elections - amid a massive crackdown on his party for the May 9 violence following his arrest. The crackdown launched after May 9 violent protests have thrown PTI into a deep existential crisis with dozens of key party leaders quitting the party daily. The prominent leaders who have quit the party include Secretary General Asad Umar,

senior leader Fawad Chaudhry and former minister Shireen Mazari. “If he (Khan) takes corrective measures and apologises to the nation for the May 9 carnage, negotiations could be held,” Dar said. Dar noted that before that fateful day (May 9), the government negotiated with PTI with “sincere intentions” and the two sides agreed on all matters except the date of the election. The minister said peaceful protest was everyone’s right, but attacks on armed forces’ installations should not be condoned. On May 9, violent protests erupted after paramilitary Rangers arrested 70-year-old Khan from the Islamabad High Court premises in connection with a corruption case. His party workers vandalised a dozen military installations, including the Lahore Corps Commander House, the Mianwali airbase and the ISI building in Faisalabad in response to Khan’s arrest. The mob also stormed the Army headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi for the first time. Thousands of Khan’s supporters were arrested following the

violence that the powerful Army described as a “dark day” in the history of the country. The ambiguities of the federal government’s policy came into sharp focus, with Railways Minister Khawaja Saad Rafique asserting that there was no way talks could be held with Khan under the current situation. “There used to be an environment and agenda for holding parleys on any issue. But the existing atmosphere is not suitable for talks,” the Dawn newspaper quoted him as saying. Earlier this month, the National Assembly, the lower house of Pakistan’s Parliament, passed a resolution vowing to try May 9 rioters under the existing laws including the stringent Army Act and the Official Secrets Act. Khan, a cricketer-turned-politician, was ousted from power in April last year after losing a no-confidence vote in his leadership, which he alleged was part of a US-led conspiracy targeting him because of his independent foreign policy decisions on Russia, China and Afghanistan.



Islamabad (PTI): Pakistan’s former prime minister Imran Khan on Monday lashed out at the PML-N-led coalition government for trashing the rule of law and destroying the economy under the watch of the powerful establishment. Khan took to social media to make a statement that focussed on the real issues faced by the country than highlighting the dire affairs of his party which is facing the wrath of the state for attacking institutions. “Completely abandoning the rule of law, this fascist government is committed to a one-point agenda of crushing the Tehreek-e-Insaf, leaving General Musharraf’s martial law far behind,” he tweeted. He went on to add that cash-strapped Pakistan’s economy is falling headlong into the abyss of destruction. Khan said that the dollar is being sold at Rs 315 in the open market, while it is available for Rs 320 to Rs 325 for those who



do not have an identity card and there is a difference of 30 rupees per dollar between the official and open market rates. “This dollarisation of economy means no local or foreign investment into the country, which will result in contraction of the GDP and worse, lead to hyperinflation,” he added. Turning to his favourite theme of stonewalling his opponents, Khan said the leaders of the coalition government have billions of dollars stashed abroad, and understandably they are not pushed. “The question is, how on earth is the Pakistani establishment allowing the coun-

try to head towards a complete economic meltdown?” he asked. The statement comes as the government and Khan have traded barbs over the alleged ill-treatment of women supporters of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf who were still in jail after being arrested in the wake of violent protests on May 9. Khan is under pressure to keep his party intact as dozens of leaders have abandoned it after the crackdown launched to arrest those involved in attacks on military installations. His statement is apparently an effort to tell his supporters that Khan was still relevant and can take the country out of trouble. Khan, a cricketer-turned-politician, was ousted from power in April last year after losing a no-confidence vote in his leadership, which he alleged was part of a US-led conspiracy targeting him because of his independent foreign policy decisions on Russia, China and Afghanistan.

Japan PM’s son to resign after public outrage

Tokyo (AP): Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said Monday his son is resigning as his executive policy secretary to take responsibility for using the prime minister’s residence for a private party at which the merrymaking was exposed in magazine photos that triggered public outrage. Shotaro Kishida, his father’s executive secretary for political affairs and eldest son, invited a group of people including relatives to a year-end party on Dec 30 at the Prime Minister’s Official Residence. Photos published by the weekly Shukan Bunshun magazine showing Kishida’s son and his relatives posing on red-carpeted stairs in an imitation of the group photos taken of newly appointed Cabinets, with his son at the center — the position reserved for the prime minister. Other



photos showed guests standing at a podium as if holding a news conference. “As secretary for (the prime minister’s) political affairs, a public position, his actions were inappropriate and I decided to replace him to have him take responsibility,” Kishida told reporters Monday night. He said his son will be replaced with another secretary, Takayoshi Yamamoto, on Thursday.

Lanka drafting Bill to curb religious slander

Colombo (PTI): Sri Lanka is drafting a new legislation to curb the growing incidents of religious slander and online vitriol, according to the country’s religious affairs minister. The move comes after a stand-up comedian Nathasha Edirisooriya allegedly made certain derogatory remarks on religions, which she uploaded online. Edirisooriya offered an apology, but a complaint was filed and she was taken into custody on Sunday while trying to fly out of the country. Lanka’s Minister of Buddhisthasana, Religious, and Cultural Affairs Vidura Wickramanayaka on Sunday said a legislation would soon be passed to curb the growing incidents of religious slander in the country. They will stop all incidents of demeaning religion on social media,” he asserted. The controversy surrounding Edirisooriya’s comments is not a one-off incident. Earlier this month, Pastor Jerome Fernando, a self-styled Godman, was accused of derogatory comments on Lord Buddha, which went viral on social media. On May 15, President Ranil Wickremesinghe ordered the Criminal

Investigation Department to launch an immediate investigation into the matter, arguing that such statements could create religious conflicts in the country. Like Edirisooriya, Fernando also offered an apology. He has, however, fled to Singapore and filed a fundamental rights petition to block his impending arrest. In January, a popular Youtuber Sepal Amarasinghe was sent to police custody for making disparaging comments on the Sacred Tooth relic of Lord Buddha. The Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic is a Buddhist temple in Kandy. It is located in the royal palace complex of the former Kingdom of Kandy, which houses the relic of the tooth of the Buddha. The arrest came after parliamentarians across the aisle unanimously condemned Amarasinghe’s comments on his YouTube channel. Amarasinghe’s YouTube channel has nearly 80,000 subscribers and the outspoken man is well-known on social media for his unorthodox views that challenge what he claims are parochial traditions and customs. Over 74 per cent of Sri Lanka’s 22 million population are Buddhists.

N Korea notifies Japan about plans to launch satellite

AP ■ TOKYO

North Korea on Monday notified neighbouring Japan that it plans to launch a satellite in coming days, which may be an attempt to put its first military reconnaissance satellite into orbit. Defence Minister Yasukazu Hamada said he ordered Japan’s Self Defence Force to shoot down the satellite or debris, if any entered Japanese territory. Japan’s coast guard said the notice it received from North Korean waterway authorities said the launch window was from May 31 to June 11, and that the launch may affect waters in the Yellow Sea, East China Sea and east of the Philippines’ Luzon Island. The coast guard issued a safety warning for ships in the



area on those dates because of the possible risks from falling debris. Japan’s coast guard coordinates and distributes maritime safety information in East Asia, which is likely the reason it was the recipient of North Korea’s notice. The launch a satellite into space, North Korea would have to use long-range missile technology banned by UN

Security Council resolutions. Its past launches of Earth observation satellites were seen as disguised missile tests. Japan’s Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno said the launch would violate UN resolutions and was a “threat to the peace and safety of Japan, the region and the international community.”

Japan was already on standby for falling missile debris from North Korean launches earlier this year and has deployed missile defence systems such as land-to-air PAC-3 and ship-to-air SM-3 interceptors in southwestern Japan and in the East China Sea. Matsuno said it was possible the satellite would enter or pass above Japan’s southwestern islands including Okinawa, where the United States has major military bases and thousands of troops. South Korea warned Monday that North Korea will face consequences if it goes ahead with its launch plan in violation of the UN Security Council resolutions that ban the North from conducting any launch using ballistic technology. “Our government strongly

warns North Korea against a provocation that threatens peace in the region and urges it to withdraw its illegal launch plan immediately,” a ministry statement said. It said South Korea will cooperate with the international community to resolutely cope with any North Korean provocation. In a three-way telephone conversation later Monday, the chief nuclear envoys of South Korea, the United States and Japan agreed to cooperate to help promote a unified, resolute international response to a North Korean satellite launch. They strongly urged North Korea to refrain from what they termed “an illegal launch” that would threaten regional peace, according to South Korea’s Foreign Ministry.

Sudanese army, rival force under pressure to extend truce

AP ■ CAIRO

Sudan’s warring sides were under pressure Monday to extend a shaky cease-fire in their battle for control of the country, after two key international mediators signalled impatience with persistent truce violations. In a joint statement Sunday, the United States and Saudi Arabia called out Sudan’s military and its rival, the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, for specific breaches of a week-long truce that is to expire Monday evening rather than issue another general appeal to respect agreements. Sudan descended into chaos after fighting erupted in mid-April between the military, led by Gen. Abdel-Fattah Burhan, and the RSF, commanded by Gen. Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo. The fighting has killed at least 866 civilians and wounded thousands more, according to the Sudan Doctors’ Syndicate, which tracks civilian casualties. The toll could be much higher, the medical group said. The conflict has turned the

capital, Khartoum, and other urban areas into battlefields, forcing nearly 1.4 million people to flee their homes to safer areas inside Sudan or crossing into neighbouring countries. Early on, foreign governments raced to evacuate their diplomats and nationals as thousands of foreign residents scrambled to get out of the African nation. For weeks, the United States and Saudi Arabia have been mediating talks between the military and the RSF in the Saudi port city of Jeddah. So far, there have been seven declared cease-fires, all of which have been violated to some extent. In Sunday’s statement, the US and Saudi Arabia noted that the military continued to carry out airstrikes, while the RSF was still occupying people’s homes and seizing properties. Fuel, money, aid supplies and vehicles belonging to a humanitarian convoy were stolen, with theft occurring both in areas controlled by the military and by the RSF, the statement said.

Birmingham gets first British Indian Lord Mayor

London: Birmingham has got its first British-Indian Lord Mayor in Councillor Chaman Lal after the local councillors of the West Midlands city of England chose him to represent it as its first citizen. Lal, who is from the Ravidassia community of British Sikhs, was born in the village of Pakhowal in Hoshiarpur before he moved to the UK, where he has served as a local councillor for many years. The Labour Party politician was first elected in 1994 and in the most recent local elections was re-elected Councillor for the Soho and Jewellery Quarter Ward. “It is a very proud moment for me and our family, as a son of an army officer born in India, but made in Birmingham,” Lal said in his acceptance speech at a mayoral ceremony last week. “I am an adopted Brummie, and I never thought that one day I would become the Lord Mayor of my adopted city. I would like to thank my fellow councillors for electing me as their first citizen which happens to be the highest civic role,” he said.

Many evacuated as Philippines warns of floods, landslides

Manila (AP): Philippine officials began evacuating thousands of villagers, shut down schools and offices and imposed a no-sail ban Monday as Typhoon Mawar approached the country’s northern provinces a week after battering the US territory of Guam. The typhoon is packing maximum sustained winds of 155 kpm and gusts of up to 190 kph but is forecast to spare the northern mountainous region a direct hit. Current projections show the typhoon veering northeast by mid-week toward Taiwan or southern Japan. Authorities warned of dangerous tidal surges, flash floods and landslides as it blows past Cagayan and the northernmost province of Batanes from Tuesday to Wednesday. Gusty winds lashed eastern villages of Cagayan on Monday, causing an old and unoccupied warehouse in a wharf to collapse and prompting more villagers to move to evacuation centres. Nearly 5,000 people have sought shelter in Cagayan, Batanes and other provinces, said Assistant Secretary Raffy Alejandro of the Office of Civil Defence. He said the number was expected to rise given the precautionary evacuations that

were underway in flood- and landslide-prone regions. Classes and office work, except those involved in disaster-preparedness, have been suspended. Flights to and from the provinces have been cancelled and fishing and passenger vessels prohibited from sailing.

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given on behalf of Mrs. Rajkumar w/o Mr. Chandrawali who is purchasing the Plot area measuring 411 sq. yards, out of Khasma no. 136, Village Mawai, Bhim Nagar, Pargana Loni Tehsil & District Ghaziabad (U.P.), from Mr. Vishnu Dutt Sharma S/o Mr. Deep Chand Sharma, who had owner through Khatauli Record, and same to be financed & mortgaged by Vastu Housing Finance Corporation Ltd. If any person having any type of claim/right/title/interest over the said property, may inform in writing, at the address mentioned below, about his objections, within 07 days from today, failing which it shall be presumed that the said property is free from all type of Encumbrances, lien, disputes etc.
Lucem Legal LLP B-93B, Second Floor, Opp. SBI Bank Sector 2, Noida, UP-201301 Contact #0120-4269379

PUBLIC NOTICE
PARADIP PORT AUTHORITY
e-TENDER CALL NOTICE
No.: MD/SPG-12/2022/667 Date: 25.05.2023
Name of the Work: Supply of 01 no. Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) (Drone) System for Paradip Port Authority including Installation, Commissioning, Certification, test, trial and training for a period of five years (Comprehensive Warranty of 02 Years + Annual Maintenance Contract for 03 Years) including Buy Back. Estimated cost: **Rs.136.15,000/- Plus GST.** Last date & time of submission of tender through on-line bidding is **15:00 hours on Dt.20/06/2023.** Technical Bids shall be opened at 16:00 hours on Dt.21/06/2023. For further details, please log on to the Website: <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>.
Sd/-Deputy Conservator, Paradip Port Authority
PPA/PR/17/2023-24
ctd.29.05.2023

PARADIP PORT AUTHORITY
E & M DEPARTMENT
PLANNING & DESIGN CELL
CORRIGENDUM-IV
4th CORRIGENDUM to e-tender Call Notice (CN) No. EMPD-06/2023 issued vide No. EMPD-11/2022/258 Dt. 14/02/2023 for the work "Implementation and Operation & Maintenance (O&M) of Port Access Control System".
(A) The date and time of submission of tender are hereby extended as per the following schedule: (i) Document download end date: 11/06/2023, 18:00 hrs., (ii) Bid submission and date: 11/06/2023, 18:00 hrs., (iii) Last date of submission of cost of tender document/tender fee through NEFT/RTGS (as per Clause No. 17 of IBI): 11/06/2023, 18:00hrs., (iv) Bid opening date: 12/06/2023, 10:00hrs.
(B) Clarification to the fresh queries received against Corrigendum - III are annexed as Annexure-I. No further query over the tender document and other details vide different Corrigenda published, shall be entertained hereafter for any clarification. Detailed Tender Document is available at the Website: <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app> for online bidding.
Sd/- Executive Engineer, Planning & Design Cell, Electrical & Mechanical Department
PPA/PR-18/2023-24
Date: 29/05/2023

Origo Commodities India Private Limited									
(CIN No. U51103DL2011PTC213352)									
Regd. Office- FK-06, Somdatt Chamber - I, 5, Bhikaji Cama Place, New Delhi-110066									
Email: info@origoindia.com, Phone No. +91124 4934750									
Statement of Audited Standalone and Consolidated Financial Results for year ended March 31, 2023									
[Regulation 52 (8), read with Regulation 52 (4), of the SEBI (LODR) Regulations, 2015]									
Amount (In Lakhs)									
S. No	Particulars	Standalone		Consolidated					
		For the quarter ended		For the Year ended		For the quarter ended		For the year ended	
		March 31, 2023	March 31, 2022	March 31, 2023	March 31, 2022	March 31, 2023	March 31, 2022	March 31, 2023	March 31, 2021
		Audited	Audited	Audited	Audited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Audited	Audited
1.	Total Income	33,566.02	16,428.87	128,839.20	51,766.26	36,114.86	24,843.31	148,372.74	70,305.75
2.	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/ or Extraordinary items#)	-1,307.41	540.84	-2,851.24	1,406.11	-1,271.81	474.92	-3,273.25	1,018.56
3.	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional and/ or Extraordinary items#)	-1,307.41	540.84	-2,851.24	1,406.11	-1,271.81	474.92	-3,273.25	1,018.56
4.	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional and/ or Extraordinary items#)	-1,174.86	390.92	-2,424.46	937.56	-1,161.70	336.05	-2,942.94	594.23
5.	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit/(Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	-1,151.41	386.76	-2,392.79	948.5	-1,137.18	334.3	-2,906.96	614.79
6.	Paid up Equity Share Capital	5,448.90	5,448.90	5,448.90	5,448.90	5,448.90	5,448.90	5,448.90	5,448.90
7.	Reserves * (excluding Revaluation Reserve)	4,725.22	6,961.33	4,725.22	6,961.33	1,872.89	4,612.23	1,872.89	4,612.23
8.	Securities Premium Account	6,667.22	6,667.22	6,667.22	6,667.22	6,667.22	6,667.22	6,667.22	6,667.22
9.	Net worth	16,841.35	19,077.45	16,841.35	19,077.45	13,989.01	16,728.35	13,989.01	16,728.35
10.	Paid up Debt Capital/ Outstanding Debt	0.26	0.32	0.26	0.32	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23
11.	Outstanding Redeemable Preference Shares	4,843,706	4,843,706	4,843,706	4,843,706	4,843,706	4,843,706	4,843,706	4,843,706
12.	Debt Equity Ratio *	1.26	0.9	1.26	0.9	0.78	0.36	1.69	1.44
13.	Earnings Per Share (of Rs. 10/- each) (for continuing and discontinued operations) -								
	1.Basic:	-1.79	0.72	-4.08	1.72	-1.88	0.62	-4.95	1.11
	2.Diluted:	-1.91	0.66	-4.02	1.58	-1.84	0.57	-4.87	1.02
14.	Capital Redemption Reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15.	Debenture Redemption Reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
16.	Debenture Redemption Reserve	-0.05	0.27	0.15	0.61	-0.08	0.11	0.13	0.42
17.	Interest Service Coverage Ratio	-0.26	2.50	0.32	2.01	-0.18	1.97	0.30	1.71
Note:									
1.The above is an extract of the format of Audited Standalone and Consolidated financial results filed with Bombay Stock Exchange ("BSE") under Regulation 52 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the annual financial results are available on the website of the Stock Exchange(s) i.e. BSE Limited and the listed entity, www.origoindia.com & https://www.bseindia.com .									
2.For the other line items of Regulation 52 (4) of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, the pertinent disclosures have been made to BSE and can be accessed on the URL www.origoindia.com & https://www.bseindia.com .									
3.The impact on net profit / loss, total comprehensive income or any other relevant financial item(s) due to change(s) in accounting policies shall be disclosed by means of a footnote.									
4.The above Financial Results have been approved by the Board of Directors in its meeting held on May 26, 2023 and have been audited by the Statutory Auditors of the Company in accordance with the requirement of Regulation 52 of SEBI (Listing Obligations & Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 (Listing Regulations).									
5.Segment Information as per Ind-AS 108, 'Operating Segments' is disclosed in Segment reporting.									
6.# - Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items adjusted in the Statement of Profit and Loss in accordance with Ind AS Rules / AS Rules, whichever is applicable.									
7.* - Includes Retained Earnings, Other Comprehensive Income and Equity component of Compound financial instruments.									
For and on behalf of Origo Commodities India Pvt. Ltd.									
Date: 30.05.2023 Place: Gurgaon									

Climbers honoured on 70th anniv of first Mount Everest ascent

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

Nepal honoured record-holding Sherpa guides and climbers on Monday to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the first ascent of Mount Everest by Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay. On May 29, 1953, Hillary, a beekeeper from New Zealand and his Sherpa guide Norgay scripted history by becoming the first human beings to scale the treacherous terrains of the world’s highest mountain peak. Thousands of Sherpa guides and government officials participated in a rally here to mark the 70th anniversary. They waved banners that read “Save the Himalayas.” Among those honoured include Sherpa guides Kami Rita, who climbed Everest for



People from the mountaineering community, Sherpa guides and officials participate in a rally to mark the 70 anniversary of the first ascent of Mount Everest in Kathmandu, Nepal on Monday

encrypted with the logo of Everest was distributed to dozens of Nepalese and foreign Everest summiters. Those receiving the badge include an Indian citizen, who climbed the 8,848.86 metres-high Everest in 2021. Russian, North American and French climbers were also bestowed with this honour. “For the first time, we are honouring local and foreign climbers who have climbed Everest with medals,” Mohan Lamsal, the general secretary of the Nepal Mountaineering Association, said. A special programme was also organised to honour the families of Norgay and Hillary, officials said. Since their herculean efforts seven decades ago, 7,621 mountaineers have scaled Everest.

a record 28 times, and Sanu Sherpa, who climbed all the world’s 14 highest peaks twice. Hari Budha Magar, who became the first double above-

the-knee amputee to climb Everest, was also honoured by Nepal’s Tourism Minister Sushila Sirpali Thakuri. On the occasion, a silver badge

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RBI saw gaps in corporate governance at banks despite norms: Das

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank has found gaps in banks' corporate governance despite issuing guidelines on the matter, Governor Shaktikanta Das said on Monday. Addressing directors of bank boards, Das said such gaps, which have been mitigated, could have caused "some degree of volatility".

He also hit out strongly against "smart accounting" to conceal stress and bloat financial performance. "It is...A matter of concern that despite these guidelines on corporate governance, we have come across gaps in governance of certain banks, with the potential to cause some degree of volatility in the banking sector," Das said at the meeting specially convened by the

Reserve Bank.

Bank boards and management should not allow such gaps to creep in, he said, adding that the RBI has taken up such matters with the banks at an individual level in the past.

It is the joint responsibility of the chairman of the board and the directors, both whole-time and non-executive or part-time directors, to ensure robust governance in banks, the governor noted.

The RBI has also found banks adopting "smart accounting methods" to "artificially boost financial performance," Das said, revealing more about the modus operandi.

Banks try to conceal the real status of stressed loans by getting two lenders together to evergreen each other's loans by

sale and buyback of loans or debt instruments, persuading good borrowers to enter into structured deals with a stressed borrower to conceal the stress, adjust borrower's repayment obligations by using internal or office accounts, he said.

"We have also come across a few examples where one method of evergreening, after being pointed out by the regulator, was replaced by another method. Such practices beg the question as to whose interest such smart methods serve. I have mentioned these instances to sensitise all of you to keep a watch on such practices," he said.

Without naming any particular case, Das said the RBI has noticed the dominance of chief executives in board discussions and decision-making



and rued that the boards do not assert themselves.

"We would not like this type of situation to develop. At the same time, there should not be a situation where the CEO is inhibited from doing his duties," he added.

Das advised banks to be cautious in the pursuit of their growth strategies, pricing and

portfolio composition.

"Over-aggressive growth, under-pricing or over-pricing of products both on the credit and deposit sides, concentration or lack of adequate diversification in deposit/ credit profile can expose the banks to higher risks and vulnerabilities," he said.

The governor also said that

while the Reserve Bank has nudged banks to adjust their business strategies in some cases where they were creating "avoidable vulnerabilities" by being aggressive, the central bank does not interfere in the commercial decision-making of the banks. Employees cannot be rewarded for increasing short-term profits without adequate recognition of the risks and long-term consequences, Das said.

In the remarks that come weeks after turbulence in the American banking sector, Das also asked bank boards to be wary about basic aspects like asset-liability mismatches, saying as suboptimal ALM can lead to serious liquidity risks and destabilising effects on the bank itself.

"...Developments in the

USA have also demonstrated that aggressive growth strategies with disproportionate or excessive focus on the bottom lines and/or market capitalisation often leads to build up of vulnerabilities," he said.

He was quick to add that the Indian banking sector is "strong and stable" with capital buffers at 16.1 per cent, gross non-performing assets at 4.41 per cent and provision coverage ratio at 73.20 per cent at the end of December 2022.

"It is in times such as these that complacency may set in. We have to bear in mind that risks often get overlooked or forgotten when things are going well. Therefore, boards of directors of banks and their senior management should maintain a constant vigil on external

risks and build-up of internal vulnerabilities, if any," he said.

Meanwhile, the RBI in a statement said that the governor acknowledged the role played by the banks in supporting the economy and maintaining resilience, along with improved financial performance in the face of several adverse shocks in recent times.

He exhorted the directors of banks to further strengthen the governance and assurance functions (risk management, compliance and internal audit) so that the banks are able to identify and mitigate risks at an early stage.

The governor also emphasised the need for banks to ensure continued financial and operational resilience, the statement said.

Sebi levies ₹15L fine on an individual for violating norms

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Markets regulator Sebi on Monday slapped a fine of Rs 15 lakh on an individual for illegally mobilising funds from the public through a collective investment scheme in the matter of Alchemist Infra Realty Ltd.

In addition, the regulator asked Balvir Singh (individual) to pay the penalty within 45 days.

In the matter related to Alchemist Infra, Sebi initiated adjudication proceedings against Alchemist and its directors, including Singh, for the violation of CIS (Collective Investment Scheme) rules.

In February 2021, the markets watchdog passed an order and slapped a fine of Rs 1 crore on Alchemist and its directors, including Balvir Singh, as they were engaged in fund mobilising activity from the public by floating and launching collective investment schemes without obtaining registration from the regulator.

The order came after the Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT) set aside Sebi's order



against Singh for violating CIS norms and directed the markets watchdog to pass a fresh one.

Sebi's Adjudicating Officer Soma Majumder said, "I find that Noticee (Balvir Singh), being a director of Alchemist during the period from April 2008 to February 2009, was responsible for the conduct of the firm, which engaged in fund mobilising activity from the public through investment contracts by floating/sponsoring/launching collective investment schemes without obtaining registration from the regulator during his tenure".

"Therefore, the allegation that Noticee has violated CIS regulations stands established,"

she added.

In a separate order, the regulator slapped fines totalling Rs 10 lakh on Bull Research Investment Advisors and its directors for flouting regulatory norms.

The order came after Sebi had conducted an examination of pending complaints in SCORES against Bull Research, a registered Investment Adviser under the markets regulator.

Ashif Shaikh, Vinit Satpute and Sandeep Kushwaha were the directors of Bull Research Investment Advisors.

The regulator issued the show cause notices to the noticees (Bull Research, Shaikh, Satpute and Kushwaha) in February 2023.

FDI equity inflows fell 22% to \$46 bn in 2022-23: DPIIT

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Foreign direct investment (FDI) into India declined by 22 per cent to USD 46 billion in 2022-23, dragged by lower inflows in computer hardware and software, and automobile industry, according to the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) data.

The FDI inflows stood at USD 58.77 billion during 2021-22.

Total FDI inflows, which include equity inflows, re-invested earnings and other capital, declined by 16 per cent to USD 70.97 billion in the last fiscal as against USD 84.83 billion in 2021-22.

During April-March 2022-23, Singapore emerged as the top investor with USD 17.2 billion FDI.

It was followed by Mauritius (USD 6.13 billion), the US (USD 6 billion), the UAE (USD 3.35 billion), the Netherlands (USD 2.5 billion), Japan (USD 1.8 billion), UK (USD 1.73 billion), Cyprus (USD 1.27 billion), Cayman island (USD 772 million), and Germany (USD 547



million), the data showed.

The FDI inflows have contracted in 2022-23 from Mauritius, the US, the Netherlands, the Cayman Islands, and Germany.

Though the computer software and hardware sector attracted the highest inflows of USD 9.4 billion during the last financial year, these inflows are down as compared to USD 14.5 billion in 2021-22.

Similarly, FDI in the automobile industry dipped significantly to USD 1.9 billion in 2022-23 as compared to about USD 7 billion in 2021-22. The other sectors which recorded dip in the inflows in the last fiscal include construction (infrastructure) activities, and metallurgical industries.

However, the inflows have recorded growth in sectors including services (USD 8.7 billion), trading (USD 4.8 billion),

telecommunications (USD 713 million), pharma (USD 8.7 billion), 2 billion), and chemicals (USD 1.85 billion). State-wise, though Maharashtra received the highest inflows of USD 14.8 billion during the last financial year, the inflows are down as compared to USD 15.44 billion in 2021-22. Similarly the overseas inflows in Karnataka plunged to USD 10.42 billion in 2022-23 as against USD 22 billion in 2021-22. Other states/UTs where FDI dipped in 2022-23 include Delhi, Tamil Nadu, Haryana, Telangana, and West Bengal. On the other hand, FDI in Gujarat has increased to USD 4.71 billion in 2022-23 as against USD 2.7 billion in 2021-22. FDI has also reported positive growth in Rajasthan. The FDI equity inflows declined in January, February and March in the last fiscal.

Tata Consumer to expand presence in southern India

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Tata Consumer Products Ltd is expanding its presence in the southern markets and focussing on building distribution channels in rural and semi-urban markets now, the company said in its latest annual report.

"We are expanding our presence in South India across tea, coffee, salt and spices with the launch of South-specific products to cater to regional consumers," said TCPL.

The company continues to "gain ground in the South" in tea and coffee. In tea, TCPL's Chakra Gold and Kanan Devan brands continued to make strong inroads into the south and Tata Coffee Grand was restaged with a new pack design. "We have identified the rural market as an area of opportunity and are focussing on building distribution in rural and semi-urban markets now. In salt, we launched Shuddh, a brand specifically targeted to the South market,"



said TCPL.

While in the spices category, TCPL launched a range of customised spices under the Tata Sampann brand for the southern market.

TCPL aspires to be a leading player in the FMCG industry by expanding its play in existing categories and venturing into new spaces, the annual report said.

Overall, In FY23, TCPL increased the direct distribution by 15 per cent to 1.5 million outlets pan India.

"This has allowed us to take our portfolio to a larger outlet universe with more impact. Tata Consumer currently has a direct reach of 1.5 million outlets across India, a 2x+ increase from two years ago," it noted.

G20 members to discuss common framework to define startups

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

G20 member countries, including India and the US, are holding consultations to arrive at a common framework to define startups with a view to promoting the growth of new ventures, a senior official said. This issue among others would come up for discussion during the Startup20 Engagement Groups, under India's G20 presidency, third meeting on June 3-4 in Goa.

A common framework would help investors and other stakeholders of the startup ecosystem in the G20 member countries.

Briefing media about these meetings, Startup20 India Chair and Mission Director Atal Innovation Mission, Niti Aayog Chintan Vaishnav said that there are five task forces under this group - foundation, alliances, finance, inclusion, and sustainability.

"The idea of the foundation is to come up with a start-up definition framework which



is applicable across different economies. When you talk about the global startup ecosystems coming together, working together, becoming interoperable, you realize that there are no common definitions of startups across these nations," he told reporters here.

The attempt is to provide a framework of choices from which a country can create a definition, he added.

Under alliances, the countries are trying to ensure that there is some form of platform to promote cooperation between key stakeholders of startup ecosystem such as incubators, and regulators.

Similarly, the idea of the finance task force is to unlock financing of startups in general for nations to invest in these enterprises and also cross-border investments.

"There are many other financial issues like taxation of startups is a very major issue across the world," he said adding in the inclusion part, "we are trying to focus" on marginalised groups and empowering these groups by following best global practices.

Further, the idea of the sustainability task force is to say which are those startups that

are willing to be measured by SDGs (sustainable development goals).

When asked about the possible outcomes from the summit meeting at Gurugram on July 3-4, he said it included adoption of policy commune on startups; a common framework to define startups; there is hope that there will be a global innovation centre or a global network of innovation centre that would implement what Startups 20 group wants to take forward into action.

"Also a network of global points of contact. If a startup wants to go to another country, is there a way to enter into that ecosystem? Some kind of common financing of startups, how much money to allocate, how do you invest across borders; and mechanisms to support these marginalised communities and also support those startups that help the world achieve the SDGs," he added.

"We are hoping for such kind of outcomes," Vaishnav said.

Under India's G20 presidency, Startup20 serves as a prime opportunity to foster collaboration, exchange ideas, and shape the future of startups and entrepreneurship on a global scale.

The focal point of the meeting will be to build consensus on the Draft Policy Communique, which the Startup20 recently published asking the public for feedback.

The meeting will feature a startup showcase, exciting talks as part of the Startup20x series, cultural experiences, and discussions on the implementation and benefits of the ideas outlined in the document.

Dignitaries from state, central, and international levels are expected to be present at the meeting, adding to the significance of the event.

The last date for providing views on the draft was May 27. The final version of the Policy Communique will incorporate the valuable inputs received from stakeholders across nations.

BHEL logs over 17% rise in new orders in 2022-23

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

State-run engineering firm Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL) logged over 17 per cent growth in new orders bagged in 2022-23 to Rs 23,548 crore compared to the previous year due to its diversified business approach.

BHEL secured new orders worth Rs 20,078 crore in 2021-22, according to a company statement.

"BHEL secured orders worth Rs 23,548 Crore (excluding taxes) during 2022-23 in its power, industry and export segments and the company ended the year with a total order book of over Rs 91,336 crore (excluding taxes)," it stated.

The latest outstanding order book has crossed Rs 1,00,000 crore (excluding taxes) with the finalisation of the prestigious Vande Bharat trainset order in April 2023, it explained.



The BHEL-TWL (BHEL-Titagarh Wagons Ltd.) consortium has been awarded an order valued at about Rs 23,000 crore (excluding taxes) for 80 Vande Bharat Trains in one of the biggest Railway tenders for manufacturing-cum-maintenance of Vande Bharat Trains.

This order will give further impetus to the company's diversification drive, it pointed out.

As part of its diversification strategy, BHEL has also leveraged its Pressurised

Fluidised Bed Gasification technology for coal gasification and has entered into MoUs (memorandum of understanding) with Coal India and NLC India for development of coal gasification projects.

During the fiscal year, the BHEL commissioned 1,580 MW of power-generating equipment, in addition to synchronising captive/solar projects of 298 MW.

With this, the company's global installed power generating capacity has gone up to 195 GW.

Sensex, Nifty extend gains to 3rd day on global scrip rally

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty rose for a third straight day on Monday amid positive trends in the US markets and continuous foreign fund inflows. Rising for a third session, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 344.69 points or 0.55 per cent to settle at 62,846.38 as 20 of its constituents ended in the green. During the day, it jumped 524.31 points or 0.83 per cent to 63,026.

The broader NSE Nifty gained 99.30 points or 0.54 per cent to end at 18,598.65 with 34 of its components closing in green.

In the three days of gains, Sensex rose by 1,072 points or 1.8 per cent while Nifty spurred by 313 points or 2 per cent. From the Sensex pack, Mahindra & Mahindra climbed 3.71 per cent after the



company reported an 18 per cent jump in its consolidated profit for the March quarter and the highest-ever annual profit of Rs 10,282 crore in FY23.

Titan, Tata Steel, HDFC, UltraTech Cement, State Bank of India, TFC, IndusInd Bank, NTPC, HDFC Bank and Bajaj Finserv were the other major gainers. HCL Technologies, Power Grid, Maruti, Wipro, Tata Consultancy Services, ICICI Bank, Infosys, Tech Mahindra and Hindustan Unilever were the laggard.

"The domestic benchmarks experienced a strong rally and came close to life-time highs, primarily driven by positive global cues and robust predictions of domestic economic growth..

"An in-principle approval from US leaders for raising the US debt ceiling has generated optimism among global investors, who are now anticipating the next monetary plan of the Fed and economic data points," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

Banks need to improve digitalisation and keep vigil on stressed asset: MoS Finance

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Minister of State for Finance Bhagwat K Karad on Monday said banks need to focus on digitalisation and keep a vigil on stressed loans.

Bank should also undertake financial literacy and financial inclusion activities, he said after inaugurating the zonal office of ESAF Small Finance Bank here.

Karad said banks should do timely recognition of non-performing assets and make adequate provisions so that the banking system remains healthy. Emphasising on use of technology, he said, it is the future and there is need to promote digital banking.

Speaking on the occasion, ESAF Small Finance Bank managing director K Paul Thomas said the bank has special focus on agriculture sector.

The bank signed an agree-



ment with Agriculture Insurance Company of India Limited for providing crop insurance.

The bank, which has nearly 600 branches spread across 21 states, recorded over four-fold jump in net profit to Rs 302.33 crore for the year ended March 31, 2023. The bank earned a profit of Rs 54.73 crore a year ago.

Total business (including advances under collection management) increased by 23.22 per cent to Rs 30,996.89 crore, compared to Rs 25,155.76 crore in the preceding year.

Rupee falls 4 paise to close at 82.64 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee depreciated 4 paise to close at 82.64 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, tracking a strong American currency against major rivals overseas.

However, a firm trend in domestic equities, foreign capital inflows and lower crude prices restricted the fall in the domestic unit, forex traders said. Meanwhile, the dollar strengthened as investors were upbeat on the tentative agreement between US President Joe Biden and Republican House Speaker Kevin McCarthy on the debt ceiling, which is likely to face voting on Wednesday before getting sealed.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened strong at 82.57 against the US dollar. During intra-day, the Indian currency touched the peak of 82.51 and the lowest level of 82.67.

The currency finally settled

at 82.64 (provisional) against the US dollar, registering a fall of 4 paise over its previous close.

On Friday, the rupee closed at 82.60 against the US currency.

The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, rose 0.02 per cent to 104.23.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude futures declined 0.40 per cent to USD 76.64 per barrel.

On the domestic equity market front, the 30-share BSE Sensex advanced 344.69 points or 0.55 per cent to close at 62,846.38 points, and the broader NSE Nifty rose 99.30 points or 0.54 per cent to 18,598.65 points.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were net buyers in the capital market on Friday as they purchased shares worth Rs 350.15 crore, according to exchange data.

Gold falls ₹110; silver jumps ₹290



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices softened by Rs 110 to Rs 59,965 per 10 grams in the national capital on Monday amid a fall in the metal's prices overseas, according to HDFC Securities.

The precious metal had settled at Rs 60,075 per 10 grams in the previous trade.

Silver, however, jumped Rs 290 to Rs 73,040 per kg.

"Spot gold prices in the Delhi markets traded at Rs 59,965 per 10 grams, down Rs 110 per 10 grams," Samuil Gandhi, Senior Analyst - Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

Real Sociedad seal Champions League place

AP ■ MADRID

Real Sociedad fell to a 2-1 defeat at Atletico Madrid on Sunday but still sealed qualification for next season's Champions League after Villarreal were beaten 2-1 at Rayo Vallecano.

Imanol Alguacil's Basque outfit finished fourth in La Liga despite defeat only thanks to Villarreal losing too.

Espanyol were relegated from the top flight after Valencia's Samuel Lino struck a stoppage-time equaliser in a gripping 2-2 draw.

One other side will go down along with already-relegated Elche on the final day of the season, with Real Valladolid currently 18th, a point from safety, after they drew 0-0 at Almeria.

Celta Vigo lost 1-0 at Cadiz and are 17th, a point from safety, along with Almeria.

"To get to this situation we have done many things wrong, but I think sincerely, from the most self-critical position personally and as a group, that we don't deserve this in this way," Espanyol midfielder Sergi Darder told Movistar.

"Above all, we want to say sorry. We have such a big club badge that in many moments, we haven't represented. I'm the first to be angry, but have no doubt we will be back."

Antoine Griezmann and Nahuel Molina struck for Atletico in their win over Real Sociedad, who struggled to create much of note, perhaps aware of Villarreal's struggles.

Eventually Alexander Sorloth



pulled one back for the visitors at the Metropolitano to give them something to celebrate as they achieved their European goal.

"I would have liked to be able to celebrate qualifying another way, but we have had a great season and are very happy," Real Sociedad striker Mikel Oyarzabal told Movistar.

"We have to celebrate, the fans should enjoy it, and next Sunday we can have a party at home, a celebration -- we'll do all we can to win that game and end things well."

Victory leaves Atletico third, a point behind Real Madrid.

Villarreal will play in the Europa League next season, along with Real Betis, sixth, who beat Girona 2-1.

Osasuna, who fell to a late 2-1 defeat by Getafe which took the Madrid side two points clear of the relegation zone, are seventh and currently in line to qualify for the Conference League.

However Athletic Bilbao, Girona, Rayo and Sevilla remain in contention for the spot.

CAMP NOU BOWS OUT

La Liga champions Barcelona enjoyed a series of emotional goodbyes in their final match at Camp Nou before the stadium is rebuilt, thrashing Real Mallorca 3-0.

Captain Sergio Busquets and defender Jordi Alba also played at home for the last time, in the club's penultimate league match of the season, and were awarded warm farewells by the sell-out crowd.

Ansu Fati struck twice in the first half and Gavi added one after the

break as the Catalans triumphed in style.

Marc-Andre ter Stegen earned his 26th clean sheet of the season, equalling the all-time record in the division, set by Deportivo La Coruna's Francisco Liano in the 1993-94 campaign.

The only bad news for Barcelona came when defender Alejandro Balde was taken off injured in the first half -- he will be out for at least six weeks and miss Spain's Nations League final four games in June.

Camp Nou, inaugurated in September 1957, has been one of football's most iconic stadiums since then.

Alba departed in tears when he was substituted in the final stages with the crowd chanting his name, while Busquets followed and was given an ovation of his own.

The duo could yet appear in Barcelona's final game of the season at Celta Vigo next weekend, but for nearly 90,000 supporters, this is the end of an era.

Busquets has won La Liga nine times and the Champions League on three occasions, making over 700 appearances for the club.

Alba departs with six La Liga trophies and one Champions League triumph among other silverware.

The duo both gave speeches on the pitch after the game.

"Since I was little I've dreamed of playing a game in this stadium that we're saying goodbye to temporarily," said Busquets.

"We're already the best club in the world, with the best players, and now we'll have a stadium on that level."

Giroud seals win at Juve and CL spot for Milan



AP ■ MILAN

Olivier Giroud secured Champions League qualification for AC Milan with the only goal in Sunday's 1-0 win at troubled Juventus.

Giroud guided home a brilliant header from Davide Calabria's cross in the 40th minute to guarantee Milan at least fourth place and complete Italy's line-up in Europe's top club competition next season.

It was the one moment of quality in an otherwise drab match in Turin in which little of consequence happened apart from Giroud's 12th league goal of the season.

Stefano Pioli's side, who were knocked out of this year's Champions League in the semi-finals by Inter Milan, join their local rivals, Lazio and champions Napoli on the continent's big stage.

They are six points ahead of fifth-placed Atalanta with one match left in what has been a long season and one in which their title defence collapsed after the World Cup.

was penalised for handball following a VAR check.

Former Denmark forward Gytkaer had a penalty of his own saved by Wladimir Falcone with six minutes of regular time remaining.

That allowed Colombo to fire Lecce five points clear of the drop zone and cause coach Marco Baroni to sink to his knees in joy and grief for his recently deceased father.

"I thought about my father because I lost him recently... I felt him by my side in that moment," Baroni told DAZN.

Verona sit in the final relegation spot after a gut-wrenching Giangiacomo Magnani own goal in the sixth minute of injury time which snatched a 1-1 draw for safe Empoli.

They are level on 31 points with 17th-placed Spezia, whom they might have to face in a play-off devised this season to decide who ends up in 18th place between teams who finish on the same points.

OSIMHEN NOT ENOUGH

Victor Osimhen's brace wasn't enough for Napoli as the newly-crowned Italian champions threw away a two-goal lead to draw 2-2 with Bologna.

Nigeria forward Osimhen took his season's tally to 30 in all competitions with finishes in the 14th and 54th minutes. However Lewis Ferguson pulled one back in the 63rd minute and Lorenzo De Silvestri headed the hosts level in his final home match as a Bologna player.

Napoli won their first league title since 1990 this season but owner Aurelio De Laurentiis said that coach Luciano Spalletti will leave to take a year's sabbatical.

"He's a free man, he's given us something and I thank him, it's right that he does what he wants," said De Laurentiis to state broadcaster Rai.

Mbappé wins his 4th Ligue 1 player of the year award

AP ■ PARIS

Kylian Mbappe was voted the Ligue 1 player of the season for the fourth successive time Sunday after helping Paris Saint-Germain win a record 11th French title.

The France star has scored 28 goals in the league this term and is on course to finish as the division's top scorer for the fifth season running.

"It's a pleasure, I always wanted to win, to write my name into the league's history. But even with all the ambition I have I didn't expect to win

so quickly," said Mbatpe on receiving his award.

Mbatpe, scorer of 40 goals this campaign, snubbed Real Madrid at the end of last season and signed a new three-year contract to stay with PSG.

According to reports, the 24-year-old's contract will run out next year unless he exercises an option to stay until 2025.

Asked about his future at the awards ceremony, Mbappe replied: "I will be here again next season."

He is the first four-time winner of a prize first awarded in 1994, sur-



passing Zlatan Ibrahimovic who won the accolade on three occasions with PSG.

Franck Haise of Lens was named coach of the season after leading the club to second place and a return to Champions League football for the first time in two decades.

Lens goalkeeper Brice Samba was also honoured while Paris Saint-Germain left-back Nuno Mendes earned the best young player award.

He was one of four PSG players in the team of the season alongside Mbappe, Lionel Messi and Achraf Hakimi.

Klopp won't take break from management despite Liverpool's troubled season

AP ■ LIVERPOOL

Jurgen Klopp insists he does not need a break from management as he looks to put Liverpool back on track after their troubled season.

Klopp's side missed out on Champions League qualification after finishing outside the top four for the first time in a full season under his leadership.

A 4-4 draw at Southampton on the last day of the season stretched Liverpool's unbeaten top-flight run to 11 games, but they had to settle for a fifth-place finish in the Premier League.

Klopp is the Premier League's longest-serving manager and there had been claims the intense German might be willing to walk away from Liverpool due to burn-out.

But, asked if he needs time off from football, Klopp said: "No, no, no, not at all. Honestly, I'm completely fine."

"If you'd asked me 11 games ago, 'do you want to have a break?', I would have thought about it, to be honest."

"But I'm absolutely fine, full of energy, I have a break - I don't have training and these kind of things."

"I will find time to reenergise and then we start again in July."

Liverpool's fifth-placed finish was their lowest since they finished eighth in 2015-16, the season during which Klopp replaced Brendan Rodgers at Anfield.

Despite their difficulties, Klopp takes heart from the way his squad stuck together during some difficult moments.

"There is not a lot to learn (from the season) but a lot of clubs when the expectations are as high as ours when things don't go well pretty quickly



you start blaming each other," he said.

"That didn't happen here. The better you behave in a crisis, the better you get out of it - and I really thought that was the case for us."

"We're really, really not happy about it and for a club like us it's massive not to qualify for the Champions League."

"If we improve, we are all of a sudden again a team nobody wants to play against and that's what we have to become again."

Leicester face major changes after relegation, says Evans

AP ■ LEICESTER

Leicester defender Jonny Evans admits the former Premier League champions face major changes after their relegation to the Championship.

Evans' team were condemned to the second tier on Sunday after Everton's 1-0 win against Bournemouth rendered the Foxes' 2-1 victory over West Ham irrelevant.

Leicester are only the second former Premier League champions after Blackburn to the relegated from the top-flight.

Their fairytale title success seven years ago seems a distant memory as they face up to a first season in the Championship since 2014.

A large number of players including Evans and Youri Tielemans are out of contract and likely to leave the King Power Stadium in the close-season.

England midfielder James Maddison and talented winger Harvey Barnes look set to be sold to help balance the expected financial losses of at least £60 million (\$74 million).

Leicester boss Dean Smith also faces an uncertain future, with his short-term contract set to expire after he replaced Brendan Rodgers in April.

Former Manchester United



centre-back Evans, 35, revealed the Leicester squad had said their goodbyes in the dressing room ahead of a likely close-season exodus.

"It is a tough thing to take. There was silence for a long time in the dressing room afterwards. We know there are a lot of players out of contract," he said.

"There are going to be a lot of changes in the football club."

"It was an opportunity for everybody to say goodbye really. A lot of us don't know where we are going to end up."

"I said to the boys it has been an amazing five years but the club now have decisions to make."

"I don't think they probably know what they are going to do."

Djoker battles into French Open 2nd round

P ■ PARIS

Novak Djokovic started his bid for a men's record 23rd Grand Slam singles title with a straight-sets victory over Aleksandar Kovacevic in the French Open first round on Monday.

Two-time Roland Garros champion Djokovic held off a late rally from his American opponent on Court Philippe Chatrier to clinch a 6-3, 6-2, 7-6 (7/1) victory. He has still not lost in his opening match of a major since the 2006 Australian Open.

"I'm very motivated to stay in this tournament for a long time, it's just the start now," said Djokovic after kicking off his 19th consecutive French Open campaign. "I'm happy. I've started well and hope I can improve further for the next match."

The 36-year-old will face Hungarian Marton Fucsovics, who he has beaten four times in as many meetings, in the second round. Djokovic is only seeded third at Roland Garros this year despite

the absence of his great rival and 14-time winner Rafael Nadal through injury, behind world number one Alcaraz and Daniil Medvedev.

He is tied with Nadal for most men's Slam singles trophies and just one behind the 23 of Serena Williams. Margaret Court holds the all-time record of 24.

Kovacevic, the world number 114 playing in his first Grand Slam match, battled hard but could not put Djokovic under sustained pressure until it was too late.

Elsewhere, Canadian 10th seed Felix Auger-Aliassime suffered a third defeat at the opening hurdle in four visits to Roland Garros as he lost 6-4, 6-4, 6-3 to Fabio Fognini.

The unpredictable Italian, who himself has lost in the first round six times in nine tournaments so far this season, pulled off a shock win on Court Simonne Mathieu. The world number 52 will next face Australian Jason Kubler.

British 14th seed Cameron Norrie



came through a five-set thriller on Court Suzanne Lenglen to beat home wildcard Benoit Paire 7-5, 4-6, 3-6, 6-1, 6-4.

Last year's Wimbledon semi-finalist will take on resurgent Frenchman Lucas Pouille for a third-round berth.

Canadian Denis Shapovalov scraped past Brandon Nakashima 6-4, 7-5, 4-6, 3-6, 6-3.

Chinese hopes of a first men's singles match win at the French Open since 1937 were dashed as Wu Yibing lost 7-6 (7/4), 6-1, 6-1 to Robert Bautista Agut and Shang Juncheng was beaten 4-6, 2-6, 6-2, 6-3, 6-1 by Juan Pablo Varillas.

Zhang Zhizhen is the third and final Chinese man in action later Monday.

In the women's draw, former runner-up Sloane Stephens dumped out 16th seed Karolina Pliskova 6-0, 6-4.

Russian Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova, the losing finalist in 2021, brushed aside Czech teenager Linda Fruhvirtova 6-2, 6-2. Croatian 22nd seed Donna Vekic and American Madison Keys also secured their places in round two.

Chelsea hire Pochettino as new club manager

AP ■ LONDON

Chelsea hired Mauricio Pochettino as their new manager on Monday as the Argentine accepted the daunting task of reviving the troubled Premier League club.

Pochettino agreed a two-year contract with an option for an additional year and will return to the Premier League four years after being sacked by Chelsea's London rivals Tottenham. The 51-year-old had been out of work since being dismissed by Paris Saint-Germain in July 2022.

"Mauricio is a world-class coach with an outstanding track record. We are all looking forward to having him on board," Chelsea co-owners Todd Boehly



and Behdad Eghbali said in a statement.

Pochettino, who will begin his new role on July 1, replaces Frank Lampard after the former England midfielder returned to Chelsea as caretaker boss until the end of the season.

Lampard was Chelsea's third manager of a dismal cam-

paign that featured Boehly sacking Thomas Tuchel in September and then axing his successor Graham Potter in April after less than seven months in charge.

Pochettino emerged as the favourite after Chelsea held talks with the former Spain manager Luis Enrique and Julian Nagelsmann, who was sacked by Bayern Munich in March.

Pochettino verbally agreed to take charge at Chelsea in April, but the appointment was put on hold until the end of the season.

With the Blues wrapping up their lacklustre Premier League campaign with a draw against Newcastle on Sunday, Pochettino flew into England to officially seal the deal.

SUDHARSAN'S 96 TAKES GT TO 214/4

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

B Sai Sudharsan led the charge with a terrific 96 as defending champions Gujarat Titans set Chennai Super Kings an imposing target of 215 in the IPL final here on Monday.

Sudharsan struck eight fours and six sixes to make his runs from a mere 46 balls, forging crucial partnerships along the way and helping GT find their feet in the summit clash, after Shubman Gill perished for 39 and Wriddhiman Saha failed to go beyond his half-century.

Put in to bat, Gujarat Titans posted a formidable 214/4.

A big moment arrived in the game as early as in the second over when Tushar Deshpande had Gill flicking a delivery on the leg side, as if executing a well-planned delivery, but with no success.

Deepak Chahar, positioned at short fine leg, spilled a regulation chance but Gill also could not hurt CSK the way he did Mumbai Indians a few nights ago, here.

Saha piled further pressure on the bowler, collecting 16 runs off the third over and providing the Titans momentum.

Gill followed with three consecutive fours off Deshpande, but Chahar's poor luck continued when spilled a tough return catch off Saha's bat.

The two drops indeed proved costly as GT reached 62 for no loss after the powerplay.



However, the brilliance of MS Dhoni ended Gill's sensational IPL with the bat, stumping the batter for a 20-ball 39 (7x4s) off Ravindra Jadeja (4-0-38-1) in the seventh over.

With 890 runs in 17 matches with three centuries and four fifties, an average of 59.33 and strike rate of 157.80, the 23-year-old Gill finished with the second best performance for any batter in IPL history.

Saha brought up his second fifty of this IPL in the 13th over but his 64-run stand with B Sai Sudharsan ended in the 14th over, with Chahar getting him caught by Dhoni.

Saha hit five fours and a six to make 54 from 39 balls.

The second highest run-scorer for Gujarat Titans this season, Sudharsan accelerated to his third fifty in this IPL, bringing it up with consecutive fours off Matheesha Pathirana.

The young left-handed batter from Chennai recovered well from a sedate start to accelerate after the 14th-over mark, hitting three fours and a six off Deshpande and two sixes against Theekshana. In fact, Sudharsan was on 36 from 25 balls when Saha was dismissed, and on the next 21 balls he faced, the 21-year-old smacked 60 runs.

However, in the final over, Sudharsan's carnage ended as Pathirana pinned him in front of the wickets for his first breakthrough in the game.

GT skipper Hardik Pandya scored an unbeaten 12-ball 21.



Kohli joins Team India training ahead of WTC final

PTI ■ ARUNDEL

Batting mainstay Virat Kohli joined the national team's training session on Monday at the picturesque Arundel Castle Cricket Club along with left-arm seamer Jaydev Unadkat, who seemed to have recovered from left shoulder injury.

India will play Australia at the Oval in the one-off Test from June 7 to 11. The BCCI on Monday shared pictures of the members of the team, including Kohli, pace duo of Umesh Yadav and Mohammed Siraj on their official twitter handle.

"Team India members begin their preparations for the WTC23 at Arundel Castle Cricket Club," BCCI said in a tweet. While Kohli, Umesh and Siraj were seen jogging in their new training kit, off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin could be seen rolling his arm over at the nets.

Unadkat was also engaged in a discussion with head coach Rahul Dravid and bowling coach Paras Mhambrey. Cheteshwar Pujara, who has been playing for Sussex in the English

county circuit to prepare for the final, also was seen arriving in the training ground.

Umesh and Shardul Thakur were among the first batch of Indian players to arrive for the WTC final.

Skipper Rohit Sharma and young Mumbai opener Yashasvi Jaiswal have also reached, while the last batch including Ravindra Jadeja, Shubman Gill, Mohammad Shami, KS Bharat and Ajinkya Rahane, will be leaving on Tuesday following the IPL final in Ahmedabad. Jaiswal was included in the squad as a stand-by player after Rituraj Gaikwad informed BCCI about him getting married on June 3-4.

India had finished runners-up in 2021 after losing the WTC final to Kane Williamson-led New Zealand by eight wickets in Southampton two years ago.

India won't play any warm-up game as the English County Championship is on and also this being an ICC event, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) is under no obligation to arrange practice matches for the visiting team.

ICC expecting full crowds for at least first four days of WTC final

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The International Cricket Council is expecting a sell-out crowd for at least the first four days of the World Test Championship final between India and Australia at The Oval in London from June 7.

The ICC has also kept a reserve day for the title clash if weather plays spoilsport.

"We have been working very closely with the local organising committee (ECB) to ensure it is a great spectacle for the fans. We are expecting full crowds for each of at least the first four days. We know we are heading in the right direction. It has created huge interest in terms of fans,

and two best teams in the world will be slugging it out, it is set to be a fantastic event.

"We hope the weather stays clear so we can get the full amount of cricket, though we have a reserve day to make up for lost time," said Wasim Khan, ICC general manager of cricket, in a select media interaction.

The final of the inaugural edition also involved India, who finished runners up to New Zealand in Southampton two years ago. Asked why the game is being played in the UK for the second edition in a row, Wasim said the location goes well with the scheduling of the final. The Oval also serves as a neutral venue for both teams.

Sindhu, Srikanth eye good show in Thailand

PTI ■ BANGKOK

Following a decent show in Malaysia, star Indian shuttlers, including PV Sindhu and Kidambi Srikanth, will look for consistency as they begin their campaign in the Thailand Open Super 500 badminton tournament beginning here on Tuesday.

While Sindhu had reached the semi-finals last week, Srikanth signed off with a quarterfinal finish in Kuala Lumpur and the duo will look to go deep in the draw to keep their hopes of winning a title.

Double Olympic medallist Sindhu had come close to breaking her title jinx when she reached the finals of Madrid Spain Masters but Srikanth has struggled since his epic run on way to the Thomas Cup victory last year.

The 27-year-old from Hyderabad, who slipped two places to world number 13 this week, will face Canada's Michelle Li in the opening round, while Srikanth will look to take a few tips from HS Prannoy when he takes on Malaysia



Masters finalist Weng Hong Yang of China.

While a win for Sindhu is likely to put her face-to-face with China's sixth seed Wang Zhi Yi, Srikanth will have to compete with third-seeded Chinese Shi Yu Qi if he can cross the opening hurdle.

Lakshya Sen, who has slipped out of the top 20 following a dismal run this season, will open against Chinese Taipei's Wang Tzu Wei. Sen had lost to Angus Ng Ka Long of Hong Kong in straight games last week.

Orleans Masters winner Priyanshu Rajawat will also be in the fray this week when he squares off against Malaysia's Ng Tze Yong in the opening round.

After skipping Malaysia Masters, India's top doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty will be back in action this week, taking on France's Lucas Corvee and Ronan Labar.

Men's pair of Krishna Prasad Garaga and Vishnuvardhan Goud Panjala, women's pair of Ashwini Bhat K and Shikha Gautam are also in the fray.

WTC Final: Ponting picks both Jadeja and Ashwin in playing XI

PTI ■ LONDON

Former Australia skipper Ricky Ponting believes that India will play both Ravindra Jadeja and Ravichandran Ashwin in the World Test Championship final against Australia, starting June 7.

Ponting, a three-time ODI World Cup winner, also reckons that India should try out left-handed batter-keeper Ishan Kishan for the marquee match scheduled at the Oval.

"I think they will pick Jadeja and Ashwin because Jadeja can hold that No. 6 batting spot. His (Jadeja) batting has improved that much that they can pick him as a batter now who might just bowl a few overs if required," Ponting told in ICC Review Podcast.

Ponting then explained the reason behind his view.

"There is no doubt that Ashwin is a more skilled and better Test bowler than what Jadeja is, but if Jadeja can hold down that batting spot and then

as the game goes on, getting into the fourth and fifth day, if it does start to turn, then you have got that really high-class second spin bowling option if required," he explained.

Having played a host of Ashes games at the Oval during his playing days, Ponting expects a lot of turn on offer.

"Historically, the Oval pitch has been a very good batting wicket. It's generally offered something for the fast bowlers on day one, not a lot. But I have also played some games there where it has turned a lot. If it starts a little bit dry, it can turn a lot."

With no Rishabh Pant available for this game, Ponting feels Ishan Kishan with superior batting skills, should get a go.

"If I was them (India), knowing the importance of this game — and you have to win this Test match — I'd be going with Ishan Kishan in this game," Ponting said.

"He provides that little bit of X-factor that you need when you



might be pushing for a win in a Test match. Obviously, if Rishabh Pant is fit, he is playing, and he provides that X-factor for India.

"But with him not being there, and this is no blot on Bharat whatsoever, but I think Kishan just provides that little bit more X-factor, who'd do a good job with the gloves but can provide that really high-scoring run rate that is required in a one-off Test match to push for a win."

In a one-off Test, Ponting wants as many x-factor players as possible.

"I'd be going with as many X-factor players as I could and put some real pressure back on Australia."

Ponting was happy to see Ajinkya Rahane make a comeback to Test squad but also felt that his positive intent in first phase of IPL, did help his cause.

"Jinks (Rahane) has had an incredible IPL as well. It's funny, isn't it, how IPL runs can now get you picked back into a Test match squad," Ponting said.

"Jinks has been on the outer for the last couple of years in Test cricket, but everyone saw how confident he looked and how well he played in the IPL and that was enough to get him back in."

Ponting feels that Test cricket is easier for Rahane compared to his recent exploits in IPL for CSK.

"He (Rahane) has been there and done it before in Test cricket. It was probably a bigger hurdle for him to climb to get back into playing really good T20 cricket than it is for him to go back and play good Test cricket."

"His make-up is much more suited to the Test game than it is to T20 cricket. He has rediscovered some confidence and if he does get picked, I won't be surprised to see him get runs in that Test match. He has always been a really high-quality player and we saw him even with his leadership qualities in Australia, in that last series to turn things around."

Anderson, Robinson expected to be fit for England's Ashes bid

AP ■ LONDON

England head coach Brendon McCullum expects James Anderson and Ollie Robinson to be fit for the Ashes clash with Australia despite ruling the pace bowlers out of this week's Test against Ireland.

Anderson strained his groin while on Lancashire duty and Robinson suffered an ankle issue playing for Sussex earlier this month.

The pair will remain sidelined when England host Ireland at Lord's in a four-day match prior to the first Ashes Test.

The five-match series against Australia begins on June 16, but McCullum is confident Anderson and Robinson can return in time for the opener in Birmingham.

"For the first Ashes Test, I think they should be fit," McCullum said on Monday.

"They won't be fit for this one against Ireland. We'll just have to monitor it over this next sort of while, but we've got some great options right throughout the squad."

"When I first took over this job, people said there wasn't much depth in English cricket and I disagree with that completely."

"I think there is an immense amount of depth and we've got plenty of good options throughout the squad."

England already have fitness concerns over a number of other bowlers, with Jofra Archer and Olly Stone struggling with elbow and hamstring problems respectively.



With Anderson and Robinson ruled out, Stuart Broad will lead the bowling attack against Ireland but Mark Wood will have to be assessed before a final decision is made on his fitness. "He is bowling over there at the moment and seems to be getting through his work so hopefully he will be fine too," McCullum said of Wood.

"We've still got a couple of days and will make the decision when we need to, but he seems to be progressing well."

All eyes were on captain Ben Stokes during England's training session on Monday.

There are doubts over how much he will bowl this summer following an Indian Premier League series where he only played twice

and sent down just one over for Chennai Super Kings.

McCullum remains positive the talismanic all-rounder can still make an impact with the ball.

Asked if Stokes will bowl against Ireland, McCullum responded: "I don't know. You'll have to ask Stokes. He's progressing well too. "He looks really fit as well, looks in great order and has a big smile on his face."

"He is delighted to be back around the group and as our leader, having that sort of energy he brings is fantastic so again we'll monitor that and see what happens. "I think he'll bowl at some stage throughout the summer, yeah, no doubt."

"He is a world class all-rounder and if he is able to bowl, fantastic. If not, we'll find a way."

BWF extends ban on 'spin serve'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Badminton World Federation (BWF) has decided to extend the ban on the new 'spin serve' until the conclusion of the Paris Olympics and Paralympic Games next year. The ruling will be applied from the Thailand Open Super 500 tournament starting in Bangkok on Tuesday.

Ahead of the Sudirman Cup, the BWF had put an interim ban on the use of the experimental serve until May 29, 2023.

"After consultation with the badminton community, BWF Council believed it best to forbid the 'spin serve' for another 15 months so as to not impact the Olympic and Paralympic qualifying periods and the Games themselves," the BWF said in a statement.