OPINION 6

PERPETUAL UNREST

JHARKHAND: IN A STATE OF

WORLD 9

BALOCHISTAN KILL AT LEAST 30

TWIN BLASTS IN PAKISTAN'S

MONEY 10

OF RBI POLICY DECISION

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BUMRAH TOPS ICC TEST PACER **RANKINGS** 12 SPORTS



www.dailypioneer.com MODI CONTINUES CONGRESS DIATRIBE

PM slams economic mismanagement by UPA Govt, says he will make India viksit

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI**

 $P^{\text{rime Minister Narendra Modi}}_{\text{continued his attack, making}}$ certain jibes at the Congress and its leadership. Simultaneously, he highlighted the achievements of his Government's two terms, which have fortified the path leading to their third term. Confident of securing a massive majority in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, Modi outlined his vision for his next five-year term, saying that the Modi 3.0 government would exert all its efforts to strengthen the foundation of 'Viksit Bharat' or a developed nation.

Strongly criticising the previous Congress-led governments for their mismanagement of the economy, Modi told the Rajya Sabha that his government, over the past 10 years, has focused on the development of all sections of society. He stressed India has transitioned from being part of the "Fragile Five" during the Congress-led UPA government to becoming one of the top five economies in the world.

"Sabka saath is not just a slogan; it is Modi's guarantee," the Prime Minister asserted during his spirited 90-minute response to the discussion on the motion of thanks to the President's address in the Rajya Sabha. He further said that the government's aim is to transform India into a developed nation (Viksit Bharat) by 2047, marking the completion



Prime Minister Narendra Modi speaks in the Rajya Sabha during the Budget session of Parliament on Wednesday

of 100 years of Independence.

"Vikshit Bharat is not mere wordplay; it is our commitment," Modi said while outlining an ambitious roadmap for the next five years. The Modi Government is concluding its second five-year term, and the next general elections are scheduled for April-

May. "The third term of our government is not far away. Some people call it Modi 3.0. Modi 3.0 will exert all its efforts to strengthen the foundation of 'Viksit Bharat," the Prime Minister affirmed.

Expanding on his vision for the next five years, Modi said that all

flagship programmes, such as PM Kisan, PM Awas Yojna, free ration distribution, Ayushman Bharat, and the provision of cheaper medicines through Jan Aushadhi Kendra, will be sustained. He also mentioned that India will see a

The Prime Minister said that medical treatment will become more accessible and affordable. He pledged to extend the piped gas network, provide tap water to impoverished households, and eliminate power bills through the use of solar power across the entire nation.

Modi said India will witness the emergence of more startups, achieve the milestone of one lakh unicorns, set records in patent registrations, establish top-tier universities, increase participation in international

sports, transform public transportation, and introduce bullet trains. In Modi 3.0, the Prime Minister added, India will extensively utilise AI, nano-fertilizers, green

technologies, adopt natural farming practices, and promote superfoods. He said India will make remarkable progress in the semiconductor sector, electronic goods, and green hydrogen. Over the next five years, Modi asserted that the world will

witness the capabilities of Indian youth in every international sporting competition. He pledged to transform the

public transport system, elevate Bharat Atmanirbhar campaign to new heights, ensure dominance of Made In India semiconductors and electronics in the global market, and work towards reducing significant increase in the number of doctors and medical colleges.

dependence on other countries.

Continued on Page Continued on Page 2

Court summons Kejriwal for defying ED notices

The Rouse Avenue Court on Wednesday ordered Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal to appear before it on February 17 regarding a complaint filed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) for skipping summons in a case linked to the excise policy. The court noted that prima facie, the AAP chief was "legally bound" to comply. Additional Chief Metropolitan

Magistrate Divya Malhotra said that Kejriwal "purportedly failed" to appear before the investigating agency, and summoned him for the offence under Section 174 of the IPC (non-attendance in obedience to an order from a public servant). In its complaint, the ED alleged that the Delhi Chief Minister intentionally avoided obeying the summons and kept providing "lame excuses". The agency said that if a high-ranking public functionary like him disobeyed the law, it would "set a wrong example for the common wrong example for the common

From the contents of the complaint and the material placed on record, prima facie, an offence under Section 174 of the IPC is made out, and there are sufficient grounds for proceeding against accused Arvind Kejriwal... "Cognizance [of the complaint case] has been taken. Summons are ordered to be issued for February 17 for the offence under Section 174 of the IPC," the court said.

Kejriwal can challenge the Rouse Avenue court order to stay it or can seek relief from personal appearance in the court and appear through a lawyer. The setback comes as Kejriwal is facing heat from the Delhi Crime Branch as well regarding his comment that the BJP tried to buy seven AAP

claims. So far, Kejriwal has skipped five summons issued by the ED - on November 2, 2023, December 22, 2023, January 3, 2024, January 18,

MLAs. The Crime Branch asked the Delhi Chief Minister to

provide evidence supporting his

and February 2.
The CM was first summoned by the ED on November 2, but he skipped it, alleging that the notice was "vague, motivated, and unsustainable in law," and instead flew to Singrauli in Madhya Pradesh to address a political rally. Continued on Page 2

CAPSULE

Soren in ED remand for five more days

RANCHI: A special PMLA court on Wednesday court on Wednesday extended the ED remand of former chief minister Hemant Soren by five days in a money laundering case linked to an alleged land scam, lawyers said. Soren, JMM executive president, remanded to five days' ED custody by the special PMLA court which ended on Wednesday.

Sharad gets NCP Sharadchandra Pawar

NEW DELHI: The Election Commission Wednesday allotted Congress 'Nationalist Party-Sharadchandra Pawar' as the party name for the group led by Sharad Pawar. The order by the poll authority came a day after it gave the Nationalist Congress Party name and the "clock" election symbol to the group led by Ajit

Two cops killed in Naxal encounter

Pawar.

CHATRA: Two security personnel were killed in a gunfight between Naxalites and police in Chatra district on Wednesday. The incident took place at Bairio forest between Sadar and Basisthnagar Jori police station areas, around 200km from Jharkhand capital Ranchi.

Karnataka CM, Ministers allege economic bias, sit on protest

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Congress leaders from Karnataka, led by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Mantar in the national capital on Wednesday, alleging "injustice" by the Centre in the devolution of taxes to the

While the BJP and the Central government have refuted the financial allegations made by the southern States, another State, Kerala, led by CPI(M) veteran and Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, with his cabinet colleagues, will stage a protest in Delhi on Thursday



Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy CM DK Shivakumar and other Karnataka Congress leaders at Jantar Mantar Ranjan Dimri I Pioneer

against the Centre's alleged negligence toward the southern State.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman refuted Karnataka's claims that the

of funds, calling them misleading. She also made some extremely strong comments, accusing the State's ruling party, the shatter the nation's unity.

The Congress is now siding with separatists... Two years ago, you saw Rahul Gandhi at JNU (Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University). He stood with the 'tukde' tukde' gang. Today, the same slogans are being echoed in Tamil Nadu, and the party is not condemning it. Here also, the same language is being used in full-page ads," said the Union Finance Minister.

Continued on Page 2



President Droupadi Murmu on Wednesday took a ride in Delhi Metro and interacted with school students. This was the first time Murmu took a ride in the metro after assuming the office of the President. Murmu is the second serving President of India to travel by the Delhi Metro. In 2012, then President Pratibha Patil had also travelled in the metro

Targeted killing resumes in **Valley**

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

fter a brief lull, 'unidentified' terrorists shot dead a non-local resident late on Wednesday evening while injuring another in the Shaheed Gunj area of Srinagar. The deceased person has been identified by the police as Amritpal Singh, a hawker and a resident of Amritsar city in Punjab. Confirming the firing

incident, the Kashmir Zone Police posted on X, "Terrorists fired upon a nonlocal identified as Amritpal North Kashmir's Baramulla

Singh, a resident of Amritsar, at Shaheed Gunj, Srinagar, who succumbed to the injuries. One more person is grievously injured and has been evacuated for medical attention. The area has been cordoned off. Further details shall follow.

The injured person has been indentified as Rohit, another resident of Amritsar. Police said Rohit is undergoing treatment at a local hospital Earlier, on December 24, 2023, in the Gantmulla locality of the Sheeri area in



district, a retired police officer was shot dead by unidentified terrorists while

he was giving the call for azaan from inside a mosque. In a similar strike, Inspector Ahmad, Masroor courageous officer of the Jammu and Kashmir Police, was targeted by terrorists at the Eidgah ground in downtown Srinagar on October 29, 2023, while he was playing a game of cricket. The police officer succumbed to his injuries on December 7 at the AÍIMS, New Delhi.

Meanwhile, the situation remained volatile in the Pir Panjal region of the Jammu division following the passage

Scheduled Tribe status to the Pahari community in Jammu and Kashmir.

To prevent any untoward incidents and curb the spread of rumours, the local authorities imposed restrictions on internet access and gatherings in Poonch and Rajouri districts.

Parliament passed a bill on Tuesday granting Scheduled Tribe (ŚT) status to the Pahari community residing in various parts of Jammu and Kashmir.

Continued on Page 2

Uttarakhand House clears UCC Bill

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE DFHRADUN

The Uttarakhand Assembly on Wednesday passed the Uniform Civil Code Bill, potentially setting a precedent for other States under BJP leadership to follow suit with similar legislation. The Bill was approved via a voice vote following a two-day debate. Despite Opposition calls to refer the draft legislation to a select committee due to insufficient time for studying its provisions, this proposal was ultimately dismissed.

The Bill will now be sent to President Droupadi Murmu for her assent after which it will become a law. BJP-ruled States like Gujarat and Assam appear keen to model their UCCs on the Bill passed by

will now common law on marriage,

community is exempted from the proposed law, which also mandates registration of livein relationships. Children born of live-in relationships will be

State like Uttarakhand will

He said the UCC will create

equal laws for men and

women across all faiths and

will help create a non-

discriminatory society. It will

especially protect the rights of

women and put an end to

The hill State's small tribal

their exploitation, he said.

and

script history," he said.

partisan

considered legitimate and deserted women will be entitled to maintenance from their partners. The Bill effectively bans polygamy and 'halala' practised among a section of Muslims.

Now RLD plans to dump INDIA Bloc; AIADMK members join BJP

■ NEW DELHI/CHENNAI/LUCKNOW

Ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, the ruling BJP at the Centre received a boost on Wednesday from two regional heavyweights. From southern India, AIADMK members joined the BJP, while the RLD from northern India expressed interest in joining the NDA after leaving the Opposition bloc INDIA. A group of 15 former AIADMK MLAs and one former MP joined the saffron party on Wednesday. The induction ceremony for these leaders took place in New Delhi, in

RAJESH KUMAR/BISWAJEET BANERJEE the presence of Union Ministers Rajeev Chandrasekhar and L Murugan, as well as State BJP president K Annamalai. Chandrasekhar remarked that the

large-scale joining reflects Modi's popularity in a State like Tamil Nadu, where the BJP traditionally not been a significant Welcoming them, Annamalai said

they bring a wealth of experience to the BJP and aim to bolster Prime Narendra Minister Modi's leadership as he prepares for a third consecutive term in power. "Some of them have been involved



in politics for the past 50 years; Dravidian State and sharp criticism some were present at the inception of the established parties have of political parties in Tamil Nadu. Today, they have all come to the headquarters in New Delhi to join the BJP and seek the blessings of party president JP Nadda. This is the first time in Tamil Nadu that 16 people have joined the party simultaneously. Two former MLAs had already joined the party during

the 'En Mann En Makkal' yatra,' Annamalai added. Tamil Nadu is trending towards the BJP," asserted the young leader, whose firm stance on his party's ideological position in the

of the established parties have earned him both admirers and detractors. The former AIADMK MLAs who joined the BJP are K Vadivel (Karur), Challenger Duraisamy

(Coimbatore), PS Kandhasamy (Aravakurichi), MV Rathinam (Pollachi), R Chinnasamy (Singanallur), VR Jayaraman (Theni), SM Vasan (Vedasanthur), PS Arul (Bhuvanagiri), R Rajendran (Kaatumannarkoil), Murugesan (Kangeyam), and A Rokini (Kolathur).

Continued on Page 2

the Uttarakhand Assembly. Uttarakhand become the first State after Independence to get a

divorce, land, property and inheritance for all citizens, irrespective of their religion. During the discussion, Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said it is not an ordinary legislation.

"With its passage, a small

Mamata speaking Modi language: Congress

Thile Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday jeered at the Janpath using a remark from its alliance partner Mamata Banerjee who a couple of days ago expressed doubts on the tri-colour party's ability to win even 40 seats the Congress and the Left lapped it up as an opportunity to pin down the Bengal Chief Minister for speaking the same lingo as Modi and the RSS.

Minister's Prime statement makes it all the more clear about which side Mamata Banerjee is ... she is speaking the same lingo ... as that of Modi ... it once again proves that she also belongs to the RSS school and has been taking instructions from them ... otherwise their language would not have been so much similar," Bengal Pradesh Congress spokesperson Soumya Aich Roy said soon after 'the Prime' Minister's Rajya Sabha speech where she



Banerjee how even the people in Bengal were not expecting the Congress to get more than 40 seats.

Modi apparently quoting Banerjee said — amid thumping of desks — "A amid challenge has been posed before you from West Bengal that Congress will not be able to cross 40 (in Lok Sabha elections 2024). I pray that you are able to hold on to the 40 seats (that the Congress

While referring to Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Nyay

Yatra that passed through Bengal with a siezeable crowd in its trail a livid Banerjee had a few days ago told a gathering that the Congress was trying to flex its muscles in Bengal after conceding the States like MP, Rajasthan and UP to BJP. Without naming Gandhi she said "Some people are coming to Bengal like Vasant Kokil (weather birds) and holding

vatras without even informing me formally though I am a part of the INDIA alliance ... but I doubt whether they will be get to win even 40 seats nationally ... they are coming here but they failed to retain the States they had won ... they are not going to UP or MP to defeat the BJP ... they are coming to Bengal.'

The PCC said that all the chest thumping notwithstanding Mamata Banerjee was not in a position to take on the BJP. "If

from going to jail then she has to make compromises with Modi ji and the BJP ... so she will have to do things that help the BJP ... which is why she is the BJP ... which is why she is serving the purpose of the BJP living in the INDIA alliance," the senior PCC leader said.

CPI(M) central committee member Sujan Chakrabarty too lashed out at the Chief Minister for running with the hare and hunting with the hound. "We had from the beginning been telling that she has a setting with the BJP ... here it has been proved once again ... like Nitish Kumar she too is an agent of the BJP in the INDIA and is out to sabotage its causes .. today it was once again proved after the Prime Minister lapped up her comments ... it is clear that there is no difference between the BJP and the TMC ... they are the

two sides of the same coin and

they speak in the same

nephew Abhishek Banerjee



CM slams Centre withholding funds

SAUGAR SENGUPTA KOLKATA

 $B_{\text{Mamata Banerjee}}^{\text{engal Chief Minister}}$ again slammed Prime Minister Narendra Modi for withholding funds and depriving her State. While speaking at an administrative meeting at Howrah Banerjee on Wednesday said how she made repeated appeals to the Prime Minister but failed to get the funds under the MNREGA and rural housing schemes.
"Those are rightfully ours and

"I requested the Prime Minister on a number of occasions ... we had a number of sittings but no help came of sittings but no help came from his side ... instead of helping the State the Centre stopped all the funds," Banerjee said adding how the Centre took away the GST but

cannot be stopped legally," she

did not pay back the State's

Referring to the dharna staged in Delhi by her nephew and Trinamool Congress general secretary Abhishek Banerjee, she said, "so many people took buses from Kolkata to reach Delhi but there also they would not meet the poor unpaid works... they have stopped the payments of about 21 lakh workers wages for three years ... this amounts to several thousand crores ... they are also not paying funds for rural

roads and housing." The Chief Minister who earlier said that her Government would start paying the MNREGA workers from its own resources, said, "they have stopped the funds because we are number one in the implementation of 100-days' work scheme, we are number one in rural road construction

and housing scheme ... they cannot tolerate this." Saying that she would pay the MNREGA workers from the State's own resources, Banerjee said, "like the mothers manage the household economy from

their meager resources ... like they even have to take loans to run their families when there is financial problem ... I will run my State as those mothers." Incidentally, Bengal Opposition Leader Suvendu Adhikari had a few days ago attacked the State Government for throwing the people of Bengal into a debt trap. "This corrupt Government has

sucked the State dry ... today the total loan taken by the State has gone up to Rs 6 lakh crore,' had said apparently referring to the borrowing Banerjee was indulging in to

fund her populist schemes and

BJP may replace 40 per cent candidates in UP

PNS LUCKNOW

s anticipation for the Lok A Sabha elections builds, the Bharativa Janata Party has geared up for a significant transformation in its candidate lineup, with insiders suggesting that as many as 40 per cent of the current Members of Parliament may be replaced with fresh faces. Insiders reveal that the party's

leadership has finalised a list of 74 potential candidates. the However, ultimate decision on candidates for six out of the 80 Lok Sabha Uttar constituencies in Pradesh awaits approval from Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah.

"The selection process for 74 seats is almost final. The list is based on data collected from party-conducted surveys and considerations of caste equilibrium," said a senior BJP leader familiar with the matter, noting that an internal survey assessed the performance of incumbent MPs.

In a strategic move, BJP's coalition partners such as Apna Dal (Sonelal), Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party led by Om Prakash Rajbhar and NISHAD Party are expected to collectively secure five to six

may witness candidates from these allies contesting under the BJP banner. "This approach collaborative underscores the cohesion and shared electoral objectives of the coalition," a source added.

Solar energy to

power 17 major

Tn a bid to propel the adoption

of solar energy across Uttar Pradesh, the Yogi Adityanath

government has unveiled plans to transform 17 major cities of

the State into solar cities, along-

side the revered cities of

Following the development of

solar cities, the government

will work towards building

solar villages in the same

Of notable significance is the

government's effort to establish

Ayodhya as the state's first solar

city. Progress in this endeavour

is well underway, with

significant strides witnessed in

the installation of solar

Concurrently, preparations are

underway to inaugurate a

large-scale solar plant in

Varanasi, further cementing

Uttar Pradesh's status as a

frontrunner in the solar energy

Answering a question in the

Uttar Pradesh legislative assembly on Wednesday,

Energy Minister AK Sharma

commitment to solar energy

advancement and revealed that

Uttar Pradesh was poised to

emerge as a leader in the solar

energy domain, with initiatives

"Notably, Ayodhya stands at

the forefront of these efforts,

the

commencement of

energy production.

already gaining momentum.

the

state's

Avodhva and Varanasi.

pattern in near future.

infrastructure.

underscored

cities of UP

PNS LUCKNOW



The candidates' process is currently underway under the supervision of BJP national president JP Nadda, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, party general secretary (organisation) BL Santosh and other central leaders. Their deliberations also involve consultations with prominent state-level party leaders. The announcement of candidates is expected to commence after the BJP national executive meeting scheduled in Delhi on February 17 and 18.

Prime Minister Modi's pivotal role in the decision-making process is highlighted, particularly concerning key constituencies such Mathura, Bareilly, Sultanpur, Gandhi, General (Retired) VK Singh, Varun Gandhi and Satyadev Pachauri rests on his notification for the Lok Sabha shoulders. Concerns regarding elections.

selection the age factor of certain candidates are also being weighed, given that Santosh Gangwar, Satyadev Pachauri and Hema Malini are all approaching 75. Local BJP leaders express reservations about extending tickets to Maneka Gandhi and Varun Gandhi

In a bid to fortify its electoral

prospects and achieve its 'Mission 80', the BJP is meticulously strategising to nominate candidates after exhaustive deliberations for each constituency. As part of this overhaul, nearly 40 per cent of the existing MPs could be denied tickets this time. The party aims to infuse fresh party candidates is expected to surface before the official

BJP will contest Puducherry seat as part of alliance: CM

Duducherry Chief Minister N Rangasamy on Wednesday said their alliance partner BJP will contest the lone seat in the Union Territory in the upcom-

ing Lok Sabha polls.
Crediting the NDA government at the Centre for full cooperation in implementation of welfare schemes by the coalition government in Puducherry, he exhorted his party cadre to work hard for the victory of the AINRC-led alliance in the upcoming polls "It is the duty of the AINRC cadres and functionaries to ensure that our alliance partner emerges victorious in the poll," he said, while addressing cadres and delegates of different wings of AINRC at the 14th formation day of the party here. The seat is currently held by the Congress.

Rangasamy alleged that the previous Congress government had let down the people by not maintaining cordial relations with the Centre.

"Welfare schemes meant for the poor were not implemented which landed the people in distress. No firm steps were taken to take care of the welfare of the tion of providing financial assistance to women members in the families that had not benefited under any of the earlier schemes.

delayed," he said in a post on X

He said Karnataka and the "Congress demand NYAY -

the immediate release of all

This is not a political protest

by the Congress Party against

the BJP, but a protest by the

entire state to highlight unfair

treatment by the Modi Government, urging all

Indians to take notice of this

government has invited all

parties to join the protest to

Kannadigas, and defend the

Constitutional principle of

federalism," Ramesh said in a statement. "The economic

'anyay' done to Karnataka by

the Modi Government since

2014 are numerous, totalling

thousands of crores of funds

diverted unfairly," he alleged.

He claimed that the starkest

examples of this "anyay" is that

drought relief funds have been

denied to Karnataka, as 223

out of 236 talukas of the State

are grappling with the effects

of drought, with 123

experiencing severe drought

Bhagya" scheme was denied,

after the Modi government on

The

justice

funds rightfully due".

while sharing his statement.



The unemployment problem has also been tackled effectively while vacant posts in government departments have been filled. Recruitment of police and enhancement of monthly pension for the have-nots are among the achievements of the government." He also thanked Prime

Minister Narendra Modi for bestowing special care for the development of Puducherry. "We are able to implement several welfare schemes with the cooperation of the Centre. We also persist in our demand for statehood for Puducherry. I have personally persuaded the Prime Minister, the Home detailed letters in this regard to the Centre and I am confident that Puducherry will be upgraded into a full- fledged State," he said, amidst thunderous applause by the audience.

nano urea technology is being

From Page 1

The Prime Minister also that mentioned government will promote green hydrogen and ethanol blending. He reiterated India's commitment to achieving self-reliance in edible oil production.

Îndia imports a significant quantity of edible oil to fulfill domestic requirements, with import dependence exceeding 50 per cent. Modi also discussed the promotion of natural farming and millet as superfoods. He mentioned that the use of drones in agriculture will witness a significant increase. the fields of Digital India and Likewise, the adoption of Fintech, stating that the next

encouraged as a grassroots movement. He also movement. emphasized the achievement of new records in fisheries and animal husbandry.

Modi emphasised the tourism

sector as a significant source of employment for the next five years. He underscored the capability of many States in the country to drive their economy solely through tourism. "India is poised to become a major tourist destination globally," he added.

The Prime Minister also highlighted advancements in

five years hold a promising future for India's digital economy. "Digital services will propel India's progress. I have full faith that our scientists will lead us to new heights in space technology," he said.

Discussing transformation grassroots economy, Modi mentioned self-help groups and stated that three crore "lakhpati didis" (wealthy sisters) will script a new narrative women empowerment. "By 2047, India will relive its golden era," he said, reaffirming the government's commitment to Viksit Bharat.

Now RLD plans... Minister and other Central leadership into the electoral people during Congress rule in Kanpur Nagar. The fate of the pool of state government Puducherry's demand for state-Notably, some constituencies said, adding that the present and former AIADMK minister incumbents in these seats, including Hema Malini, Santosh Gangwar, Maneka mounts as the initial roster of coalition government headed hood. I have also written Gomathi Srinivasan also joined by him has earned the distincthe BJP. Furthermore, as the Lok

repeated

injustice.

demand

Sabha elections approach, the Opposition alliance faces the possibility of another setback, with speculation abound that Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) chief Chaudhary Jayant Chaudhry may defect and join the NDA.

As the speculation gains traction, national president Akhilesh Yadav claims, rebuffed such asserting that the RLD remains part of the INDIA bloc. He said, "Jayant Chaudhry is a seasoned politician who will align with those who support farmers, and he accused the BJP of spreading rumours. However, sources indicate

that a tentative agreement has parliamentary seats between the RLD and BJP, adding a new layer of complexity to the political landscape. Reportedly, the RLD had

initially sought the Kairana, Amroha, Baghpat, Mathura, and Muzaffarnagar seats from the BJP. Among these, the BJP appears willing to offer the Kairana, Amroha, Baghpat seats, discussions persist regarding Mathura and Muzaffarnagar. Additionally, sources indicate that the RLD requested a ministerial post within the NDA alliance.

Electoral calculations suggest that the BJP is eager to court the RLD for constituencies with a significant Muslim voter base in western Uttar Pradesh. Consequently, they have offered three seats.

Targeted resumes in Valley

From Page 1

Similar restrictions were also imposed by the District Magistrate in Jammu by implementing Section 144 of the CrPc.

National Conference leader Omar Abdullah was also barred from visiting the Sunderbani area of Rajouri to attend a party function.

The National Conference vice president mentioned that he had intended to visit the Sunderbani area of Rajouri to

participate in a party function but was refused permission. "Even the sub-divisional police officer (SDPO) accompanied

me to the (party) office as if I were a criminal being escorted. This is the first time the SDPO has accompanied me from my house to the office to personally ensure that my vehicle does not take any other turn," he said.

The former chief minister reiterated his previous assertion that democracy is not allowed to flourish in Jammu and Kashmir.

They have once again proven it. They claim that everyone is free to engage in political activities, but it is only for those who praise the BJP and its government," Abdullah said. People like us, who are not government stooges or involved in flattering the BJP, face such types of restrictions. We are now accustomed to such things," he added.

Responding to a question about being denied permission due to authorities' concerns that his visit might escalate tension between the Gujjars and the Paharis following the latter's inclusion in the Scheduled Tribes, Omar retorted, "that means the government is weak, and I alone can disturb the situation."

Karnataka CM.

From Page 1 The BJP has labelled Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan's protest against the Central government's alleged "financial embargo" on Kerala in the national capital on Thursday as "high political drama bankrolled by taxpayers' money" and has attempted to undermine the Kerala government's narrative that the Central government is responsible for Kerala's fiscal crisis. It said the proposed protest against the Centre is simply "sheer politics" aimed at shifting the blame for its own "failure" onto the Modi government, as people are reportedly "angry" with the ruling alliance in Kerala.

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, along with several MPs, ministers, and MLAs from Karnataka state, took part in the protest.

alleged Congress "injustice" has been meted out to Karnataka in tax devolution and grants-in-aid over the past few years. The protesters demanded that the Centre rectify the losses to the tune of Rs 1.87 lakh crore allegedly incurred by Karnataka under the 15th Finance Commission. Siddaramaiah said this protest is not against the BJP but against the discrimination Karnataka. Dismissing the BJP's allegation that the protest aimed to stir up a north-south divide, he emphasized that the Congress wants the country to remain

but

opposes

discrimination against the successful solar southern States. "We are raising the issue of about 'cooperative federalism,"

united

discrimination government of India against the state of Karnataka and other southern states," Siddaramaiah said while addressing the protesters. 'This is why I wrote a letter to all the MPs of the BJP and the JD(S) asking them to participate in this agitation," he added.

Chief Minister highlighted that the formula used to devolve taxes to the States, particularly Karnataka, under the 14th Finance Commission was altered by the 15th Finance Commission. He called for reverting to the old formula to prevent revenue loss for his state and stated that they representation to the new Finance Commission for adopting the formula used by the 14th Finance Commission. Shivakumar mentioned that Karnataka ranks second in Goods and Services Tax (GST) collection and is the largest contributor to the country's revenue. "We are demanding our rights, we are demanding our share. The Karnataka government had requested drought relief funds from the Centre, but not a single rupee was provided," he emphasized. "We are the voice of Karnataka. We demand justice," Shivakumar said.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said top leaders from protested at the Jantar Mantar to safeguard the interests of the whole state. The Prime Minister talks big

would submit a

Karnataka needs Rs 17,900 crore as compensation, and farmers have lost crops worth Rs 35,000 crore, but not a Karnataka single rupee has been released by the Centre to address this critical situation, he said. Ramesh said rice for the "Anna

conditions.

but as usual that is just a jumla. June 13, 2023, in a move of the His anti-democratic, anti-Government Modi discontinued the direct sale of people views are evident in the ANYAY rice and wheat from the central Karnataka, as well as other pool to State governments. Opposition-ruled States — This was a direct attack to drought relief funds denied; food grains denied; projects prevent implementation of the Karnataka government's Anna

Bhagya Yojana. Denying Kannadigas the right to free grains just because they voted for the Congress Party is the height of anti-national behaviour, especially by the Prime Minister," he said. Ramesh also alleged that Karnataka receives only Rs 12 out of every Rs 100 in taxes paid to the Centre, with the rest held by the Modi government. Under new formulas adopted by the 15th Commission, Finance Karnataka's share of funds has fallen from 4.71 per cent to 3.65 per cent, representing a loss of over Rs. 1.87 lakh crore,

he claimed. This consistent decline in the State's share highlights a growing injustice towards Karnataka. While Karnataka is facing the worst of the antifederal policy of the Modi Government today, there has been a sustained attack on federalism across the country," he alleged. The Congress leader said since 2014, the share of tax revenue collected as 'cess' or 'surcharge' has grown, from just around 10 percent to over 26 percent.

Today, all Kannadigas, all Indians, and the Indian National Congress have a Prime demand: Minister Modi, end this 'anyay-kaal' for Karnataka and all Opposition states, and immediately release the funds that are rightfully due," Ramesh said.

From Page 1
The ED then called him for questioning on December 21; however, Kejriwal went for a 10-day Vipassana meditation course at a centre in Punjab's Hoshiarpur district. The AAP convener had earlier written to the ED, describing the summonses as "illegal and politically motivated". He alleged that the summonses were aimed at preventing him from campaigning in elections. 'The respondent to the summonses, i.e., the proposed accused, was legally bound to attend in person in pursuance of

to do so," the judge said. The court passed the order on the complaint, which claimed that instead of appearing pursuant to the summons, "Kejriwal raised frivolous objections and deliberately created grounds which clearly show that he intentionally did not want to obey the summons. He kept on giving lame excuses which were not only frivolous but made with an intention to make out a false defense." In response to the development, AAP senior

the same but purportedly failed

Leader and Delhi Cabinet Minister Atishi said that the party respects the court's order and will present its stance on the case on the given date. They will highlight how the five summons from the ED are illegal and unlawful. The leader mentioned that these ED summons are part of a conspiracy to halt Kejriwal from campaigning in the Lok Sabha elections and to arrest him. By utilizing investigating agencies like the ED, the BJP aims to compel the Delhi CM to visit its investigating agency's office and have him arrested.

"Firstly, we will inform the court that all five summons sent by the ED were 100 per cent illegal and unlawful. After receiving every summons from the ED, the Delhi Chief Minister responded to them in writing, detailing the illegal components of the summons. He posed various questions through his responses to the ED, but the investigating agency never replied. Additionally, despite issuing five summons, the ED could not substantiate the legality of its summons," she said.

Court summons Kejriwal...

LG flags Delhi Government false statements in court in excise policy matter

Delhi Lt Governor (LG) Vinai Kumar Saxena has taken strong exception to the misleading and statements repeatedly made by the Delhi Government before the Delhi High Court relating to the preparation of an authoritative list of confirming and nonconfirming wards in the city purpose implementation of new Excise Policy 2021-22, which now stands rescinded. The proposal of the Excise

Commissioner to submit the

report of the committee -- set

Court regarding conforming and non-conforming wards -- to the court was moved for LG's approval on August 18, 2022, Raj Niwas officials said.

Referring to the names of the advocates, Arun Panwar and Santosh Tripathi, the LG cited the orders of the High Court passed on 12.09.2022, 10.08.2023, 18.08.2023 and 04 12.2023 to buttress that they were indulging in perjury in the name of the Lt Governor, and their action also amounts to Contempt of Court.

In a file noting to Kejriwal, Saxena noted that the file

up on the orders of the Delhi relating to the approval of the report was received at the LG Secretariat on January 16 this year - after a lapse of one year and five months since it was first moved for LG's approval on August 18, 2022.

He said the case is a sad reflection on the manner in which the state government counsels made false and misleading statements before the court, projecting the Lieutenant Governor and his office in poor light in the eyes of the courts. Further, the LG stated that these deliberate attempts at misleading the amount maligning the constitutional



office of the Lt Governor, for petty ends. Saxena said he has taken a

dim view of the matter and would like that the state government in its affidavit gives a full disclosure on the



fact that the delay in submission was completely attributable to the state government and action should also be taken against the Standing Counsel for presenting facts in a twisted

High Court, which amounts to lowering the dignity of this office apart from perjury and contempt of court.

However, it was stalled by the then minister twice, officials said. "All this while the government kept telling on record in HC, that the report was pending with LG. It prompted the court to

request the LG thrice to clear

the file for submission of the report expeditiously, despite the fact that the file was not "The proposal was cleared by

Atishi (Delhi minister) who for further

Minister Arvind Kejriwal, who cleared it on January 16 this year and sent it to LG," an official said.

He said pending such action, the above mentioned advocates should be debarred from appearing before the Hon'ble Courts on behalf of the Government immediate effect.

In a file noting to Kejriwal, Saxena noted that the file relating to the approval of the report was received at the LG Secretariat on January 16 this year - after a lapse of one year and five months since it was first moved for LG's approval

official said.

While dealing with the file, the LG noted that at the time of receipt of the report of the

Committee Department, the Excise Policy 2021-22 was in vogue and had the matter been processed timely as per the prevailing provisions of that time, a decision could have been

The deliberate misleading of the Court resulted in the Court requesting the LG to take a decision on the report as expeditiously as possible, preferably within six weeks.

taken appropriately.

DJB contract bribe was 'passed on' as election funds to AAP, says ED

The Directorate Enforcement Wednesday alleged that bribe money generated from corruption in a Delhi Jal Board (DJB) contract was "passed on" as election funds to the Aam Aadmi Party that rules the national capital.

"Incriminating" documents and digital evidence apart from valuables of Rs 1.97 crore and foreign currency worth Rs 4 lakh were seized during the raids conducted in this case on Tuesday in Delhi, Varanasi and Chandigarh, the central agency said in a statement. However, the statement did not specify what was seized from where. The agency had raided the premises of Bibhav Kumar, personal assistant to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, AAP Rajya Sabha MP N D Gupta, former DJB member Shalabh Kumar, chartered accountant Pankaj Mangal and some others as part of this ongoing money laundering investigation.



revealed that the contract of DJB was awarded at highly inflated rates so that the bribes could be collected from the contractors from the inflated cost of the contract. As against the contract value of Rs. 38 Crore, only about Rs. 17 Crore was spent towards contract and the remaining amounts were siphoned off in guise of various fake expenses. Such fake expenses were booked for bribes and election funds. A CBI FIR, which alleges that former chief engineer of DJB Jagdish Kumar Arora awarded a contract to NKG

ED investigation further Infrastructure Ltd. For a total cost of Rs 38 crore despite the fact that the company "did not meet" the technical eligibility criteria, is the basis of the ED

> "We condemn any kind of wrongdoing done by DJB officials or its contractors, if proven true. We also condemn the ED's blatantly false allegation that AAP or its leaders have anything to do with this case. Not a single penny or piece of evidence has been recovered from the AAP leaders who were raided yesterday," the AAP said. The ED arrested Arora and a

contractor named Anil

Kumar Aggarwal in this case on January 31. They are in its custody till February 10.

NKG Infrastructure obtained the bid by submitting "forged" documents and Arora "was aware of the fact that the company does not meet the technical eligibility", the agency claimed.

The ED alleged that Arora "received" bribe in cash and in bank accounts after awarding the contract to NKG Infrastructure and that he "passed on" this money to various persons managing the affairs at DJB including persons connected with AAP". "Bribe amounts were also passed on as election funds to AAP," it claimed.

This is the second case where the federal agency has charged the AAP with taking kickbacks. It has claimed that bribe money from the scrapped Delhi excise policy was used by the Arvind Kejriwal-led party for campaigning in Goa assembly elections. Meanwhile, Delhi PWD and

Education Minister Atishi on

Wednesday termed the searches as "a conspiracy to destroy Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal," and said after 16 hours of searches at various locations, including Kejriwal's personal secretary Bibhav Kumar's residence, the ED seized only two Gmail account IDs and three mobile phones. She added it may be the first time in ED's history that even after 16-hour-long raids nothing in writing was provided about the case in which the investigation was carried out.

Yesterday, the ED, the "favourite weapon" of the BJPled central government, raided the house of the chief minister's PA for 16 hours and the house of AAP treasurer and Rajya Sabha MP N D Gupta for 18 hours, she said. You will be surprised to hear that the ED officers who came for the raids did not carry out any searches. They did not find any papers or made any inquiries or file any paperwork to tell in connection with which case they had come," she added.

₹8,811 cr DDA Budget approved

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

 $R^{\rm apid\ development\ of}_{\rm infrastructure\ including}$ roads, sewerage, water supply and development of urbanised villages in the national capital are the main focus of the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) budget totalling Rs 8,811 crore for 2024-25 approved by its chairperson Lt Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena here on Wednesday. Giving details, DDA officials said the approved annual budget is in line with the emphasis of the Union Government, capital expenditure constitutes 61% (approximately) of the annual allocations.

The salient features of the budget for the next fiscal include development of civic infrastructure with an allocation of Rs. 3,460 crore for development of land and physical infrastructure which includes roads, sewerage, water supply, power lines, drainage and beautification,

streetscaping primarily in the vacant portion of land in sub cities of Narela, Dwarka, Rohini and other areas. The other key focus of the

budget is transport. The work on the construction of UER-II having project cost Rs. 6,421 is fast nearing completion. Given the fast pace of execution, the allocations for 2023-24 have been enhanced from Rs. 920 crore to Rs. 1,590 crore. Provision of Rs. 400 crore has been made towards completion of the project in BE 2024-25.

Similarly, the allocations for Phase IV of Delhi Metro projects in 2023-24 have been enhanced from Rs. 350 crore to Rs. 390 crore. Provision of Rs. 275 crore has been made in BE 2024-25. Construction of road to connect SAARC University and CAPFIMS (Central Armed Police Forces Institute of Medical Sciences) Maidangarhi Chhatarpur road is being

taken up on priority. Provision of Rs. 100 crore & Samp; Rs.20 crore have been made in BE 2024-25 RE 2023-24 respectively. In December last year, Saxena launched the Dilli Gramodaya

Abhiyan (DGA) with an overall objective to develop create necessary infrastructure in the recently urbanized villages by utilizing the funds of Rs. 959 Crore (approximately) transferred to the DDA from Revenue Department. Provision of Rs. 600 crore, Rs.300 crore has

crore (for Delhi portion only) been made in BE 2024-25 & respectively. Rejuvenation and restoration

of Yamuna River floodplains in order to enhance the ecological health of the Yamuna River ecosystem. Prominent spaces on the riverfront being created for the residents of Delhi include Asita East near ITO bridge, Baansera near Sarai Kale Khan Bus Depot and Vasudev Ghat near ISBT, Kashmiri Gate. Provision of Rs. 142 crore & Rs.96 crore has been made in BE 2024-25 & RE 2023- 24 respectively. Construction of iconic Bharat Vandana Park in sector 20, Dwarka. Provision of Rs. 150 crore; Rs.200 crore has been made in BE 2024-25; RE 2023-24 respectively. Development; maintenance of Biodiversity Parks across Delhi for environmental conservation and promotion of biodiversity. Provision of

Rs. 66 crore; Rs.40 crore has

been made in BE 2024-25; RE

respectively. Transforming

Rajghat Power Plant into an

educational public space and

highlighting the existing

facade/illumination lighting

through

Committed to provide students facilities to excel in sports: Kejriwal

STAFF REPORTER N NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday said government is committed to provide facilities to students to excel in sports and win specially the Olympics. The Chief Minister inaugurated an indoor swimming pool at the Delhi Sports School in Ludlow Castle, Civil Lines,

Fully residential Delhi Sports School at Sham Nath Marg is set up as an incubator for identifying and nurturing talent from an early age and carrying them through to higher education. This school



is designated as one of the Schools of Specialized Excellence, having classes from VI to XII. It is affiliated with the Delhi Board of School Education (DBSE), offering a specialized sportscentric curriculum to

educational experience. inspected mentioned that the upcoming 80-acre Sports University in training is provided in 10 Mundka will offer training to 2500 students across 20 Atishi, Vice Chancellor of Sports University Malleswari, and dignitaries "Anyone can have present. talent. Talent is not a slave to poverty. We set up this with only one aim -- to achieve Olympic medals. Everyone has to prepare for wining Olympic medal. The Delhi Sports University campus is

and it will take at least three inspected the to four years to be facilities and completed," Kejriwal said. "At Delhi Sports School, Olympic sports and the Delhi Sports University will provide training to the st Sports Minister Olympic sports," he added. According

includes 19 students training in archery at the S.K.V. Playground/Delhi Sports School in Ashok Vihar Block

IGI Stadium, ITO, 19 in badminton at Ludlow Castle Sports Complex, 19 in lawn tennis at Thyagraj Stadium, INA, and 16 will undergo swimming training at the new AC-Swimming pool Swimming Pool

TENDER NOTICE
Bids are invited on behalf of Commissioner, MCD through e-tende Notice No. AO/L&E/MCD/Tender/2024/D-2585 dated: 05.02.2024 for allotment of vacant Shops/Kiosk/Stall/Properties of Land & Estate Department under the jurisdiction of Municipal Corporation of

chimney

and laser shows.

Delhi on License Fee basis for a period of Ten Years which is further extendable for a period of 5 years subject to satisfaction of MCD. The e-tender document, criteria for online registration, other necessary details will be available on municipal website i.e. www.mcdonline.nic.in and www.etenders.gov.in from 05.02.2024. Date of Pre-Bid Meeting is 12.02.2024 at 15:00 Hours, Last date of submission of online bids i

R.O. No. 80/DPI/MCD/2023-24 Administrative Officer, Land & Estate (MCD)

DDA okays changes in land use



STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The Delhi Development Authority (DDA) has approved changes in land use in Ghazipur, Auchandi village and Jangpura to enhance public infrastructure, along with giving the nod to housing schemes to boost the sector and for the development of Narela subcity. The decisions were taken at a meeting of the DDA held here on Monday. It was chaired by Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena, who is also the chairman of the department. The authority has also allowed participation of nongovernmental legal entities to purchase built up properties in bulk offered by it. "Any private entity with registered office or campus in

Delhi/ NCR region can now

purchase residential flats of DDA in bulk for use as residential staff quarters, hostel, etc.

Such a policy will enable the growth and development of industrial, educational and other sectors in upcoming areas like Narela leading to the overall development of the city," it

"Several decisions were given the go-ahead for housing schemes to boost the sector and for development of Narela sub-city. The authority approved the proposals on change of land use in public interest - in Ghazipur for setting up RFID, in Auchandi village for construction of electrical sub-station, in RRTS Jangpura for installations," the statement

Extension in timelines was

provided for conforming industrial clusters for submission of redevelopment plans, it said, adding that the authority sanctioned the determined rates for 2023-24 of Rohini phase IV and V, Tikri Kalan and Narela.

The statement further said that the e-auction mode of the Diwali Special Housing Scheme 2023 was launched on November 30, 2023, and closed on December 29, 2023. Out of 2,093 flats on offer, 3,078 earnest money deposits (EMD) were received against 812 flats and 744 flats were booked, it said.

"The authority approved that for the left-out flats of Sector 19B and Sector 14, Dwarka, another round of e-auction be carried out quickly. With regard to MIG flats at Loknayakpuram it was decided to offer them through FCFS mode," the statement read.

A discount of 15 per cent to the general public and 25 per cent to employees of the central government, state government and government autonomous bodies would be offered as an incentive for more than 440 flats at Sector A1-A4, Narela, in the ongoing first come first serve (FCFS) scheme, it said.

prepared for the Olympic Games are being trained in various academies which

Stadium, INA, 26 are training

complex the in athletics, 19 in boxing at Complex.

POWERGRID Transmitting Power... Transforming Lives...

EXTRACT OF THE FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND NINE MONTHS ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023 31 12 2023 31 12 2022 31 12 2023 31 12 2022 31 03 2023 31 12 2023 31 12 2022 31 12 2023 31 12 2023 31 12 2022 11,280.96 33.561.65 33,130.17 45,227.52 11,819.70 11,530.22 34.607.73 34,048.20 46,605,64 2 Net Profit before Tax from Continuing Operation 4,629.76 3,935.50 12,975.66 12,126.38 17,243.38 4,815.77 3,975.34 13,389,15 12,366,32 17,701.62 (including Regulatory Deferral Account Balances (net of tax)) Net Profit after Tax from Continuing Operations 3,970.23 3,643.80 11,249.71 15,124.54 4.028.25 3,645.29 11,406,83 11.096.87 15,419.74 4 Net Profit after Tax from Discontinued Operation 57.85 97.13 160.96 211.00 Net Profit after Tax for the period 3,970.23 3,701.65 11,346.84 11,118.73 15,335.54 11,406.83 11,096.87 15,419.74 11,027.13 15,315.24 Other Comprehensive Income Paid up Equity Share Capital (Face value of share: ₹10/-each) 9.300.60 6.975.45 9.300.60 6.975.45 6.975.45 9.300.60 6.975.45 9.300.60 6.975.45 6.975.45 75,176.32 77,651,74 77.651.74 75,176,32 77.893.44 75.250.45 77,893,44 75,250,45 76.050.84 8 Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the Ball 75.868.73 Securities Premium Account 5,509.28 7,834,43 5.509.28 7.834.43 7.834.43 5.509.28 7.834.43 5,509.28 7.834.43 7.834.43 10 Networth 87,194.04 82,225.90 86,952,34 82,151.77 82,151.77 82,844.18 82,225.90 87,194.04 83.026.29 86,952.34 126,594.90 11 Total Borrowings 119,326.51 128,658.12 119,326.51 128,658.12 119,326.51 128,658.12 119,326,51 128,658.12 126,594.90 12 Debt Equity Ratio 1.37 1.56 13 Earnings per equity share from continuing and discontinued operation 4.27 12.20 16.49 4.33 3.92 12.26 11.93 16.58 11.95 including movement in Regulatory Deferral Account Balances (Face value of ₹10/- each): Basic and Diluted (in ₹) 14 Earnings per equity share from continuing and discontinued operation: 12.62 11.65 16.21 4.21 3.67 12.69 11.64 16.31 (Face value of ₹10/- each): Basic and Diluted (in ₹) 15 Bonds Redemption Reserve 3.035.87 4.684.26 3.035.87 4.684.26 4,168,17 3.035.87 4.684.26 3.035.87 4.684.26 4.168.17 16 Debt Service Coverage Ratio 1.71 1.81 1.52 1.97 1.52 1.82 1.54 1.99 1.54

1. The above is an extract of the detailed format of Consolidated and Standalone Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulations 33 and 52 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Consolidated and Standalone Financial Results is available on the Investors section of our website https://www.powergrid.in and under Corporates Section of BSE Limited & National Stock Exchange of India Limited at https://www.bseindia.com and https://www.nseindia.com respectively. For and on behalf of POWER GRID CORPORATION OF INDIA LTD. 2. Previous periods figures have been regrouped/rearranged wherever considered necessary

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17 Interest Service Coverage Ratio

POWER GRID CORPORATION OF INDIA LIMITED Registered Office: 8-9, Qutab Institu

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PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish
Kumar met Prime
Minister Narendra Modi
here on Wednesday in what
was their first meeting after the
Janata Dal (United) president dumped the Opposition INDIA bloc and joined the BJP-led National Democratic Allance (NDA) last month and later reiterated that he will not leave it again.

Following his meeting with Modi, Kumar met Home Minister Amit Shah and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president J P Nadda and is believed to have discussed a host of governance and political issues related to Bihar. In brief remarks to reporters later, the JD(U) chief recalled his association with the BIP since 1995, before he broke the ties in 2013, and said he might have left it twice but will never do it now."Never now. We will remain here (in the NDA)," he

The meetings came five days

Nitish meets Modi, Shah

ahead of Kumar's government facing a trust vote in the Assembly on February 12.Kumar had taken the oath February along with eight ministers, including three each from the BJP and the JD(U), and an expansion of the council of ministers is on the cards. Both parties have to deal with a

number of tricky political issues ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, including the distribution of parliamentary seats for contesting the election among them and their smaller

The BJP and the JD(U) contested 17 seats each in Bihar during the 2019 Lok Sabha polls while the then Lok Janshakti Party, now divided into two factions, contested on six. The NDA now also includes former Bihar chief minister Jitan Ram Manjhi and Union minister Upendra Kushwaha.





Kumar wants the Bihar Assembly dissolved so that its election could be held along

with the Lok Sabha polls expected in April-May but the BJP, which has much more strength than the JD(U) in the

House, might be cold to the idea, sources said. Asked about the seat-sharing issue, Kumar played it down, saying BJP leaders are aware of it.

Six Rajya Sabha seats in Bihar are falling vacant, for which elections are scheduled to be held on February 27. The

notification for the six Rajya Sabha seat in Bihar is likely to

be issued on Thursday. As per the numbers in the Bihar Legislative Assembly, BJP and RJD will win two seats each and JD(U) one. No other party has the numbers to win the sixth seat on its own, although the RJD-led Grand Alliance has the numbers for it should there be a joint candidate.

Of the six seats falling vacant, two are with JD(U), held by former president Bashishth Narayan Singh and Aneel Hegde. Two are with RJD, held by Manoj Kumar Jha and Misa Bharti. One is with BJP (Sushil Kumar Modi) and one with Congress, held by its state unit president Akhilesh Prasad



Armed forces line up ₹25,000 crore to boost defence space

Indian armed forces have earmarked funds to the tune of Rs 25,000 crore to meet its defence space requirements, ranging from building a constellation of surveillance satellites to secure communications networks, Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Anil Chauhan said here on Wednesday.

the Addressing Conference and organised by SIA-India, General Chauhan also urged India's private space sector to utilise this opportunity to make the country self-reliant in the emerging dual use-

Listing out the requirement of the armed forces, he urged the augmenting intelligence, surveillance

(ISR) reconnaissance developing capabilities by multi-sensor satellites, launchon-demand services and a robust network of ground stations.

The CDS also stressed on the need to develop indigenous positioning, navigation and timing (PNT) services by strengthening the NAVIC

constellation. "Indian armed forces cannot remain dependent on foreign constellations for its PNT

requirements. PNT services for

navigation, synchronisation as well as long-range engagement will require building a secure, reliable and resilient Navic constellation," he said.

The inaugural ceremony was attended by Australian High Commissioner to India Phillip Green, National Institute of Advanced Studies Director Shailesh Nayak and senior officers from the armed forces.

"To execute our future requirements, if I make a rough estimate, our outlay in the coming few years would be more than Rs 25,000 crore. It is the right time for the private industry to utilise this opportunity. This period may be the Amritkaal for the private space industry. I think it is time to build a highly capable Atmanirbhar Defence Chauhan said.

He said high speed, secure, satellite-assisted communication was another area of growth. "Investment towards satellite internet openings, satellites enabling the 5G ecosystem, high throughput satellite and LEO need to undertaken to provide a reliant and resilient coverage," the CDS said. He said launch capabilities being the basic building blocks, investments should also be on launch-ondemand capabilities in the near

Ex gratia to BRO casual labourers: Rajnath approves 179 days waiver the families of the CPLs who

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Wednesday gave his nod for the waiver of a pro-vision for the Border Road Organisation's "casual-paid labourers" (CPLs) to complete 179 working days for receiving the payment of ex-gratia compensation in case of an accident. Under the existing provisions, the CPLs, who have worked at least 179 days in the BRO, are covered for the payment of an ex-gratia lump sum compensation of Rs 5 lakh. "Defence Minister Rajnath

Singh has approved a proposal for waiver of the provision to complete 179 working days, at the time of accident, for payment of ex-gratia lump sum compensation to Casual Paid Labourers working in Border Roads Organisation (BRO)/General Engineering Reserve Force (GREF)," the defence ministry said in a



several deceased CPLs have been deprived of the grant due to this constraint of 179 working days

The BRO units are located in far-flung, snow-bound highaltitude areas where no proper public as well as medical facilities are available.

Factors like uncongenial climate, inhospitable hilly

and occupational health hazards pose enormous risk to the lives of the CPLs, the ministry said

"Considering the cases of occurred/reported during their engagement, the waiver of the condition of minimum 179 working days

lose their breadwinner while on government duty and will go a long way in securing their livelihoods," it added.

Rajnath recently approved a number of welfare measures for the betterment of the CPLs, irrespective of the number of days of engagement with the BRO. The measures included a group (term) insurance scheme for the CPLs engaged by the BRO and GREF for ongoing projects. The scheme provides for an insured value of Rs 10 lakh to the next of kin in case of death of the CPLs. Preservation

transportation of mortal remains and transport allowance entitlement to the families of a deceased CPL was another measure announced by the ministry. The defence minister had also approved the enhancement of the funeral assistance to Rs 10,000 from Rs on humanitarian grounds 1,000 to the families of would be a great reprieve for deceased CPLs.

Sharad party gets new name by EC PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

The Election Commission on Wednesday allotted 'Nationalist Congress Party-Sharadchandra Pawar' as the party name for the group led by Sharad Pawar.

The order by the poll authority came a day after it gave the Nationalist Congress Party name and the "clock" election symbol to the group led by Ajit Pawar, who had walked away with a majority NCP MLAs in the Maharashtra assembly in July last year.

The Commission had asked the Sharad Pawar group to suggest three names of which one could be allotted in view of the upcoming Rajya Sabha elections in Maharashtra. Accordingly, the Sharad Pawar

group has suggested the names Nationalist Congress Party-Sharadchandra Nationalist Congress Party



Nationalist Congress Party-Sharad Pawar Commission.

The faction had also sought 'banyan tree' as the election symbol for itself. The Commission conveyed to Sharad Pawar that it has "acceded to your first preference, i.E. 'Nationalist PArty Congress Sharadchandra Pawar' as the name of your group/faction as

a onetime option for the purposes of forthcoming election to 6 seats in the Rajya Sabha in Maharashtra...'

Centre supports in SC sub classification of SCs, STs for grant of quota in quota

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Wednesday supported in the Supreme Court the sub-classification of Scheduled Castes inside quota, saying it is committed to the reservation policy as an affirmative action for those who suffered "hundreds of years of discrimination". A seven-judge Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice DY

Chandrachud is examining the validity of its 2004 judgement which had held that states do not have the power to further sub-classify SCs and STs for grant of quotas. Advancing the arguments, Solicitor

General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, opposed the EV Chinniah judgement and said, "The sub-classification furthers the actual purpose behind reservations.

"It is submitted that the legitimate state



aim behind reservations is to support the backward classes who have had a history of discrimination of centuries and aiming to provide equality of opportunity," the top law officer said. The Chinnaiah judgement had held that any 'sub-classification' of the Scheduled Castes would violate Article 14 (right to equality) of the Constitution.

The 2004 verdict had stated that only

Parliament, and not state legislatures, can exclude castes deemed to be SC

341 of the Constitution. The top court is examining questions whether sub-classification inside the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes categories be permitted like in the case of other backward classes (OBCs) and if the state assemblies are competent to

introduce laws empowering the states

guarantee of equality of opportunity. The central government is committed to the declared policy of reservation for backward classes as a measure of affirmative action to bring equality to those who have suffered hundreds

to undertake this exercise.

The law officer said the 2004 judge-

ment disempowered the state to frame

appropriate policy by sub-classifying

the zone of reservation appropriately

of years of discrimination," he said. The solicitor general, in his written submissions, referred to various judgefrom the Presidential List under Article ments and provided several propositions for the court's considerations. "The concept of Equality of opportu-

nities operates at a dual level - between open category and backward classes and secondly, it has to operate even within the backward classes inter-se. "This bundling together of SC/STs by E.V. Chinnaiah Vs. State of A.P...

Which disempowers the State to frame appropriate policy by subclassifying the zone of reservation appropriately, diminishes the constitutional guarantee of equality of opportunity. "It is stated that the lack of sub-classi-

fication perpetuates the zone of inequality within the reserved category and estops the State from framing appropriate policy in this regard," the Centre said.

The central government said the level of higher education, entry-level in the government service sector and promotion in the government services. "It may also be noted that the reserva tion benefits available are limited in nature. The State can only provide for a limited number of seats in government higher education institutions and posts in the government services which are reserved. The said seats and the posts are even otherwise a scare commodity and therefore required to be re-distributed rationally," it said. In order to achieve the actual objective behind reservations, the rationalisation is key and proliferation and deepening of the reservation benefits are necessary, it said.

> Reserve for 4G saturation project in uncovered village

> Mookaraikkal was approved with the condition that the

> coverage of the network from tower should be

> maintained in a way so that

only the target village gets benefited. No network coverage beyond the limit of the

village should be permitted, said the panel. The mobile

tower was also sanctioned to cover uncovered village Oru-

nooram Vayal in Kanyakumari

IMA opposes NExT implementation

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

 $I_{
m (NExT)}^{
m mplementation}$ of the National Exit Test (NExT) without proper evaluation would jeopardise the affordability and accessibility of medical education and urged it to reconsider certain provisions, the Indian Medical Association (IMA) has flagged while drawing the attention of the National Medical Commission (NMC) in this

The doctors' body said bringing in the NExT defeats the vision of the prime minister and government of affordable and accessible medical education by seriously hampering the survival of medical institutions in underprivileged communities.

"We cannot afford to train doctors and deny degrees to practise," it said.

The association further pointed out that currently, uniform standards of medical education across all academic institutions do not exist and testing the entire country with one test would not be feasible.

"Using the same exam to test the basic minimum required for licensing and highest standards required for post-graduate entrance assessment is completely illogical," it said in response to the NMC's move in seeking comments from all the stakeholders on the implementation and preparation of conducting the National Exit Test (NExT) by filling up the feedback form by February 7

The stakeholders have also been requested to go-through the NMC National Exit Test Regulations, 2023.

The IMA further stressed that the NExT cannot be conducted both as a licentiate exam and a PG entrance exam, as the focus of the licensing exam should be on assessing the minimum



standard while that of the PG exam should be to select the most meritorious students.

The suggested format of an MCQ-based test will only decrease the attention and interest of students in classes and clinics and help in the mushrooming of coaching centres that are already threatening the medical education system in the country by patronising only the rich and affordable classes, it pointed out. This will also seriously hamper the academic

and clinical skills of the students, it stated. It further stated that the establishment of a passing criteria that strikes a balance between

accessibility and the preservation of academic rigour needs to be considered. Any change in the medical exam system has to be from a fresh batch after proper notification and making them understand the pattern

clearly, it highlighted. 'Adequate technical infrastructure, faculty training and support are required in all medical institutions across the country. Limited access to resources may hinder the equal distribution and adoption of NExT across all medical colleges. In light of these stipulations, we assert that NExT should not proceed until these prerequisites are duly satisfied," the IMA stated.

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Solar-powered mobile towers are set to dot within forested sanctuaries and tiger reserve buffer zones, aiming to provide mobile network connectivity to villages situated in these areas as part of the Government's comprehensive plan to achieve full 4G network coverage. The construction of each mobile tower is estimated to necessitate 0.02 hectares of land, which is equivalent to 200 square meters.

Recently, the Standing Committee of the National Recently, Board of Wildlife, led by Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav, approved multiple proposals to install telecom towers in villages adjacent to the buffer zones of more than ten tiger reserves and sanctuaries.

The Standing Committee of the National Board of Wildlife is an apex body of the Union Environment Ministry

The need to set up such towers on renewable energy sources instead of diesel has come amid growing concerns over the conventional fuel's adverse impact on the ecosystem and reduces human interference in maintaining these structures while helping cut down carbon footprints also.

The plan is part of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's pet project conceived in 2022 wherein uncovered villages

in sanctuaries, tiger reserves

across the country have been proposed to be covered. Under the Rs 26,316 crore plan, 4G mobile services have been proposed in 24,680 uncovered villages in remote and difficult

The apex panel of NBWL approved carving out a patch of forest land for installing towers from Pulicat Bird Sanctuary in Andhra Pradesh, Campbell Bay National Park in UT of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary and Sharavathi Valley Lion Tailed Macaque (LTM) Sanctuary, both in Karnataka.

At least 18 proposals for installation of mobile towers were proposed on forest lands inside Sharavathy Lion Tailed Macaque Sanctuary clearance. Each of these projects required 0.02 ha forest land from the Sanctuary. Similarly, at least 15 proposals of setting up mobile towers in Wildlife Karakoram Sanctuary's buffer area came from UT of Ladakh for 4G Saturation Projects. The villages that are likely to be benefitted are Thang, Khemi,



Diskit, Warisfistan (Waris), Chalunkha, Rakuru, Tangyar, Kuri, Hundar, Partap Pore, Skanpuk, Bogdang (Skilkhore), and Terchey.

Solar mobile towers to come

The high level panel has also cleared five proposals involving Changthang Wildlife Sanctuary, UT of Ladakh that will cover rural hamlets Kakset, Pangong Valley, Merak, Tsongkhakharu, and Tibra Tegazong. Manipur Government's proposal for use of 0.1674 ha of forest land from 5 sanctuaries for installation of 9 mobile towers got the nod. Out of the 9 mobile towers, 5 installed Yangoupokpi Lokchao Wildlife Thanga Chathang, Tirith,

Sanctuary and one each in

Bunning Wildlife Sanctuary, Zeilad Wildlife Sanctuary, Jiri-Makru Wildlife Sanctuary and Kailam Wildlife Sanctuary. At least 11 proposals of 4G Saturation Projects involving National Desert Rajasthan will cover uncovered Phangali, Village Kalsinghkidhani Kalan, Khareen, , Dhagari, BIKOOSI, Kambhirkibasti, Dhabhar Raslani, Dhanuaani, Chauthiyali situated Jaisalmer and Barmer Districts near the international border.

The desert's sanctuary is one of

the largest protected areas in

the world. Forest land from

Buffer Zone of Tamil Nadu's

Kalakkad Mundanthurai Tiger

others.

district, Tamil Nadu. The panel also approved proposals for construction of mobile towers in buffer zones of the Nagarjunsagar Srisailam Tiger Reserve, Andhra Pradesh, Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary (Goa), and Kali Tiger Reserve among a few While no tower will be allowed in the core areas of the tiger reserve, an inviolate area, and states have been made clear

that only solar energy powered towers have to be erected, a move aimed to slash pollution diminish consumption to ultimately cut down carbon footprint. To prevent overlapping of high radiation fields, new towers should not be installed within a radius of one kilometre of the existing towers, the project proponents have directed, as per the advisory by the Ministry.

After Ayodhya, Yogi pitches for Mathura

This was on the plea by a

Varanasi resident who claimed

that his grandfather used to

offer regular prayers in the

cellar up to 1993, when he was

The same night, hours after the

court order, the local

administration removed a

section of the barricade to

provide access to the

Archaeological Survey of India

report recently suggested that

the Gyanvapi mosque was built after the demolition of a

there

In Mathura, Hindu litigants

built on the site believed to be

the birthplace of Lord Krishna.

PUBLICATION DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL

Pradesh)

600/1, University Road, Near Hanuman Setu Mandir, Lucknow-226 007

DRC NO. 68/2023

NOTICE UNDER RULE 2 OF SECOND SCHEDULE TO THE INCOME TAX ACT, 1961 READ

WITH SECTION 29 OF THE

RECOVERY OF DEBT DUE TO BANKS AND FINANCIAL

INSTITUTIONS ACT, 1993

ICICI BANK LTD.

AVNEESH VIJ & OTHERS

171-A, Express View Appt. Block

Unit No. Krh0221804, 17th Floor,

Homes, Jaypee Greens, Noida-

171-A, Express View Appt. Block

Unit No. KRH0221804, 17th Floor, Tower- KRH-022, Krescent

Homes, Jaypee Greens, Noida-201301.

3. M/s. Jaypee Infratech Limited

Sector-128, Noida City, U.P.-201 304Defendants

This is to notify that a sum of Rs.

74,97,401/- (Rupees Seventy Four Lac Ninety Seven

Thousand Four Hundred and

One Only) together with pendent-

per annum with monthly rest from

the date of filling. 14-01-2020

original application till full realization is made has become

due from you as per the Certificate

18-07-2022 in Original Application

No. 54/2020 passed against you

the sum within 15 days of the

receipt of this Notice, failing which

the recovery shall be made in accordance with the Recovery of

Debts Due to Bank and Financial

You are hereby ordered to

of asset on or Before 15/04/2024.

4. You are hereby ordered to

appear before the undersigned on 15/04/2024 at 10.30 A.M.

5. In addition to the sum aforesaid you will also be liable to pay the

Miscellaneous Expenses Rs.
Given under my hand and seal at

Lucknow this 15th day of January,

Rs.82,000/

Recovery Officer-II

Luckno

Debts Recovery Tribuna

You are hereby directed to pay

by the D.R.T Lucknow 2. You are hereby dire

Institution Act, 1993.

following Costs

Application fee

Advocate fees

Details of costs:-

Publication charges

uture interest @ 9.00%

No. 68/2023 dated

Super Mig, Sector-93, Noida-

Tower- KRH-022, Krescent

Super MIG, Sector-93, Noida-

I. Avneesh Vij

2. Mrs. Shilpa Vij

201 301

Also at:

201 301

Also at:

court-ordered

during

stopped from doing so.

basement.

temple

Aurangzeb's rule.

make a similar claim. They say the Shahi Idgah was

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath appeared to make a pitch in the assembly for a temple where a mosque stands now in Mathura, saying that Krishna Kanhaiya wouldn't have it any other way.
The CM indirectly also

referred to two other shrines involved in temple-mosque disputes in his state — the Ram temple in Ayodhya built after a Supreme Court go-ahead in 2019 and the Kashi Vishwanath shrine in Varanasi. Participating in a debate on the Governor's Address, he recalled the Mahabharata episode in which the Kauravas refused to concede land equivalent to the "point of a needle" to the Pandavas.

"We asked only for three places, there was no issue over the others," Adityanath said, alluding to Ayodhya, Kashi and Mathura.

The CM referred to the recent consecration led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the ram temple, and also slammed the previous Samajwadi Party government of ignoring the development of Ayodhya.

"When people saw the celebration in Ayodhya, Nandi Baba too said why he should wait. Without waiting, he too got the barricades removed in the night," he said.

And Lord Krishna too wasn't the one to be dissuaded, he added. "Aur hamare Krishna Kanhaiya kahan manane wale

The Nandi Baba reference was to a recent Varanasi district court order allowing a Hindu priest to offer prayers at a cellar in the Gyanvapi mosque, located next to the Kashi Vishwanath temple

PUBLIC NOTICE

All Public are hereby informed that B M Gupta Hospital Pvt. Ltd.(Add: H-5,8 t 15,21,22.26 Uttam Nagar, New Delhi-59 proposes to permanently dispose the Inpatient Medical Records (NON MLC) fo the period 1-1-2020 to 31-12-2020 as pe Any patient / concerned intending to get

copy of patient's medical records ma contact our Medical Record Officer - MRI within 30 days of this notice date with vritten request and a valid governmer

Adminstration Departmen

PUBLIC NOTICE PUBLIC NOTICE

General public is hereby informed that Mr. Sum Parashar is the owner of the Property No. 8-291 are measuring 108 Sq. Y4s. .. ut of 300 Sq. Yds. .. te 250.83 Sq. Mirrs. out of Khasra no. 570 Min. situate at village Ghonda Gujran Khadar in the abadi of Ga. No. 1, Indra Gall, Gamri Extn., Delhi-110553, by virtue Relinquisiment Deed dated 21:12.2020, regd. at doc. No. 2100, and the same is to be financed & mortgaged with m Client Le. Piramia Carbai and Housing Finance Ltd. and Housing Committee and Mr. Sumit Parashar, shall have no objection regarded mortgaged of objection regorded consequences and property by Mr. Sumit Kunar Jain. eigar Ineis of Laie Mr. Nafflesh namely MrS. Priyanka an Mr. Sumit Parashar, shall have no objection regardin more property of the property by Mr. Sumit Kumar Juni It any person(s) have any objection(s) or claim in the property, then contact the undersigned within 7 day from delse of this notice on below address, failin the strong of the source of the source of the second of the source of the source of the second of the source of the source of the second of the source of the source of the source of the second of the source of the so

Raghav Kumar Tiwari (Advocate Ch. 830, Patiala House Courts, New Delhi - 11000 Mob.: +91-8076188328

PUBLIC NOTICE otice is hereby given to the general public at larg at Mrs. Ranjula Kapoor W/o Mr. Ambrash Kapoo o House No. 31, DDA Flats, near Uday Park Tay and Neet Sach Stand, Neeti Bagh, Andrewsganj, New Delhi is thowner of Residential Apartment bearing No. C-10 Stand, Neeu Bagh, Andrewsgan), New Delini is downer of Residential Apartment bearing No. C-105 on First Floor, having carpet area 629,08 sq. ft. in Tower No. C, stutated at OUR HOMES 3, in Sector-6 Sohna, Gurugram, Haryana, known as said property y virtue of Conveyance Deed dated 21,09,2023 executed by Arete India Projects Pvt. Ltd. in favour of Mrs. Ranjula Kappor in respect of the said property duly registered as document no.7126, Book No. 1. registered on 22,09,2023 at the office of Sub-Registrar, Sohna. That the following documents have been lost 1. Original Allotment Letter issued by Arete India Projects Pvt. Ltd. in favour of Mrs. Ranjula Kappor in respect of the said property. 2. Original Bulider Buyer's Agreement executed between Arete India Projects Pvt. Ltd. in favour of Mrs. Ranjula Kappor in respect of the said property. 3. Original Possession Letter issued by Arete India Projects Pvt. Ltd. in favour of Mrs. Ranjula Kappor in respect of the said property. 3. Original Possession Letter issued by Arete India Projects Pvt. Ltd. in favour of Mrs. Ranjula Kappor in respect of the said property. Further L&T Finance Limited is intending to create a registered/equilable mortagae over the said property. In case any person/Financial Institute. Bank/Authority/ Board or any other entity has ar

ojection or vested interest over the said proper nev may contact the undersigned within 15 days nis publication. It may be further noted that after e lapse of the aforesaid period no claim in ar anner shall be entertained and the same will b sidered as waived or abandoned

w Delhi, Dated: 07.02.2024 Mohd. Gulfam, Advocate D/8779/2019 Office: Gadi & Associates, A-4, West End colony, New Delhi-110021, +91-8800002244

इंडियन क्रि 🙈 Indian Bank ALLAHABAD

Indian Bank: Green Park Extension Branch,

New Delhi Tel: 011-26102973/46082042

Email: GREENPARKEXTENSION@indianbank.co.ii

2024.

PPENDIX IV [Rule 8(1)] POSSESSION NOTICE (For immovable property)

Whereas The undersigned being the authorized officer of the Indian Bank under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Securit nterest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rul 8 and 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 issued a demand notice date 18.11.2023 calling upon the borrower Mr. Anuj Kumar S/o Late Mr. Dilawar Singh and Mrs. Priti Chauhan W/o Anuj Kumar with our Green Park Extension Branch to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs 552947.46/- (Rupees Five Lakh fifty two thousand nine hundred and forty Seven and forty six paise only) and interest thereo within 60 days from the date of said notice. The Borrower/Guarantor/Mortgagor havin failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/Guarantor/Mortgagor an the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property describe herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13 (4)of the said Ac ead with rule 8 and 9 of the said rule on this 17th day of January of the year 2024.

The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with th property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Indian Bank for an amount Rs. 552947.46/- (Rupees Five Lakh fifty two thousand nine hundred. and forty Seven and forty six paise only)as on 01.11.2023 with further interest, costs, charge and expenses thereon.

We draw attention to the provisions of section 13 (8) of the SARFAESI Act, and the rule framed there under which deals with your rights of redemption over the securities.

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Flat no.-H-12A/03,Cloud 9,Habita 9.Plot No.RC-1/2.Sector-1.Vaishali Ghaziabad UP 201010, having Area of 1150.00 Sq Ft in the name of Mr. Anuj Kumar S/o Late Mr. Dilawar Singh and Mrs. Priti Chauha W/o Anuj Kumar and bounded by: North : Group housing plot GH 1/1 South : G.D.F Land & 12 Mt, wide road East: 24 mt wide Road West: P.A.C Land

Date: 03.02.2024 | Place: New Delhi Sd/- (Authorised Officer) Indian Bank

BJP terms Vijayan Kerala CM to protest in protest plan drama Delhi against Centre

A Krishna temple stands next

The CM accused the previous

SP government of ignoring

development in Ayodhya. "We

agree that the temple dispute

was in the court but the roads

there could have been

widened. The ghats there could

"Electricity could have been

supplied to the residents of

arrangements could have been

made there. Better health

facilities could have been

provided there. An airport

could have been built there," he

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that Mr. Pramod kumar Sharma (hereinafter referred to as the said Mortgagor/Borrower) is purchasing Ground Floor (without roof rights), covered area measuring 90 Sq. Mrx, built on Plot No 455. Nith Khand I. Indirapuram, Ghaziahad 201010 from Sh. Narender Kumar, Sh. Prashant Kumar, Smt. Ranjana Devi & Sh. Shailender Kumar, who are it's absolute womers vide Sale Deed dated 27 03.2019 bearing Doc. No. 5192 read with Surviving Members Certificate No. 90660000183614 issued by Revenue Dept., Govt. of NCT of Delhi of Late Yashwant Kumar, The Borrower will

ICT of Delhi of Late Yashwant Kumar. The Borrower will

reate mortgage in respect of the said property in favou of our clients Axis Bank Ltd., Axis House, Sector 128.

oida. Any person, body, individual, institution having

any claim and/or objection in respect of the said

any claim and/or objection in respect of the said property by way of sale, exchange, lease, lien, mortgage, charge, encumbrance, gift, trust, easement, maintenance, inheritance, testamentary deposition or otherwise or having in their custody any title documents pertaining to the said property shall communicate the same to the undersigned at our address within 07 days from the publication of this notice with documentary evidence in support thereof, failing which all the claim, of such person shall be considered to have been vaived and/or abandoned. Any objections raised after the completion of the 07 days shall not be binding upon the said property or my client.

Ms. Priya Rekhi (Advocate)

A-38, Kailash Colony, New Delhi -110048 Tel.: +91-1149774545

Public Notice

Sarv Priya Mahajan Co-operative Group Housing Society Ltd 202,

/ardhman Avon Shopping Plaza, Lsc

C-block Market, Saraswati Vihar,

2007, applications are invited from general

public of Delhi who fulfill the conditions laid down in rule-19 & 20 of DCS Rules,2007 for

filling up two vacancies in SarvPriya Mahajan CGHS Ltd. (Regd. No. 1384GH) for three

edroom flat(Tentative cost of flat 1.70 crore)

having Approximate90.88 meter carpet area,

hich has arisen due to resignation/expulsion

the application form in person from society

ffice i.e.202, Vardhaman Avon Shopping

Plaza, LSC, Saraswati Vihar, Pitampura,

Delhi-34 between 10.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m

free of cost and the same have to deposited

along with the amount of Rs. 1,16,50,350/-

which includes Share money, admission fee,

land & Construction money through Pay order/ Demand Draft within 15 days of issue

of this notice in favour of The Sarv Priva

Ltd. Further at the time of applying member

charges as prescribed in the DCS Act & Rules.

Secretary-Sarv Priya Mahajan CGHS Ltd

ATHE PIONEER A

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Simran Kaur W/o Nikhil

Sharma, R/o D-1027/A,

Street No. 10, Ashok Nagar,

Shahdara, Delhi-110093,

hereby declare that I have

changed my name Simran

Kaur to Simran Sharma for

I, Rajender Kumar S/o

Munshiram R/o H. No. 53,

Gurjar Mohalla, Chandan

Hola, New Delhi-110074,

have changed my name to

Rajender Kumar Gupta for

I, Jitender Singh Alias

Jitender Singh Pahal s/o

Mahabir Singh r/o Flat No.

904, Ground floor PKT-D,

LIG DDA Flat, Lok nayak

puram Bakkar wala west

Delhi 110041 have changed

my name and shall hereafter

be known as Jitender Singh.

I, Sahil Salmani S/o Hanif

Salmani, R/o F-20, 3rd Floor,

Parwana Road Jagatpuri,

Krishna Nagar, East Delhi,

declare that my class 10th &

12th Marksheets my mother

name has been recorded as

Suhana Parveen Begum

henceforth Suhana Parveen

Begum and Suhana Salmani

I, Muskan Parveen D/o Mr.

Hanif Salmani R/o F-20, 3rd

Floor, Parwana Road

Jagatpuri, Krishna Nagar,

East Delhi. Delhi-110051,

hereby declare that in my

and Suhana Salmani one

and the same person.

one and the same person.

Delhi-110051,

PD(263)C

PD(264)C

PD(265)C

hereby

PD(266)C

PD(267)C

all future Purposes.

all purposes.

ahajan Co-operative Group Housing Society

members, Interested persons can collect

Sanitation

have been revived," he said.

to the mosque.

Ayodhya.

The BJP has termed Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan's protest against the

Central Government's "financial embargo" on Kerala in the national Capital on Thursday as "high political drama bankrolled by taxpayer's money and sought to punc-

ture holes in the Kerala government's narrative that the Central government was responsible for Kerala's fiscal crisis. It said the proposed protest against the Centre is nothing but "sheer politics" of passing its own "failure" on the Modi govern-

ment as people are "angry" with the ruling alliance in Kerala. During a press conference at the BIP's national headquarters. Union Minister of State for

> Muraleedharan, his Cabinet colleague Rajee Chandrasekhar and BJP's Kerala incharge Prakash Iavadekar shared the details of the central government funds

External Affairs V

provided to Kerala for the implementation of various schemes in the state and said the Centre is also incurring "huge expenditure" on highways, railways and other infrastructure projects.

sh Kumar S/o Mr. Kripal Singh are th TIAL PLOT OF LAND AREA MEASUF

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

 $T^{\text{he national Capital of New}}_{\text{Delhi will see a unique event}}$ on Thursday as Chief Minister of Kerala Pinarayi Vijayan and his Cabinet colleagues along with CPI(M) leaders and the fringe parties like the CPI stage a day long agitation against the BIP Government's indifferent and callous attitude towards the southern State.

The entire ministers of Kerala and MLAs belonging to the ruling party have checked into Kerala House as well as the deluxe hotels in Delhi for staging a sit in at Jandhar Manthar to draw the national attention towards the pathetic State of Kerala.



"This agitation is not against any political parties. Our aim is to bring to the attention of the people that cooperative federalism of the country is in danger. The Narendra Modi Government is breaching the guidelines of the 15th Finance Commission and thereby denying the State its due from the Central pool," said Vijayan while speaking to the media on the eve of the "Big Day". Buoyed by the success of the

Nava Kerala Sadass (Assembly of New Kerala) held across the State and the human chain held rom Kasaragod to Thiruvananthapuram, the Chief Minister has literally declared an open war against the BJP.

He said Governor Arif Mohammed Khan was playing the role of viceroy to the Center reminiscent of what was seen during the preindependence days. "The Governor is putting spokes on all progressive and revolutionary initiatives being made the LDF Government. He is staging demonstrations across the State Government accusing us of poor law and order, charged the chief minister.

NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE

	Re-Invitation of Tenders through E- Tendering (E-Procurement System)								
S	Tender Notice No. & Date	Name of work with its location	Approx. Cost of work	Amount of Earnest Money	Completion Period of the work	Date& time for submission of tender & opening tender			
1		Re-girdering of one span of Bridge No - 27 (8x18.3m) on BLM-SPC section of under AXEN/BL/MB.	Rs. 5369308.48/-	Rs.107400/-	(06) Six Months	Upto 15:00 hrs on 27.02.2024 Opening of tender after 15.00 hrs on same day			
NI.	Nets: Above tender is available on website IRERS site in unusuirons new in where complete details of Tander can								

NORTHERN RAILWAY NOTICE INVITING TENDER

30-Elect-38-T-2023-24-E3 Name of Work and its Comprehensive annual maintenance contract (CAMC) of OTIS make lifts installed at MSRR(NDLS) Block no. 254. 255, 256 (PHG) & EDPM Centre DRM Office for three years

Approx. Cost of the works in Rs. 37.58 lacs Address of the office Sr. Divil Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi Bid Security Rs. 75200.00 Date & time of submission of tender 05.03.2024, 12.00 Hrs.

Opening of tender | 05.03.2024, 12.00 Hrs.

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 400/24

PUBLIC NOTICE **PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given that my client Syed Riyaz Zaidi is in process to purchase the Third floor with roof rights measuring 60 sq. yds. out of built up Plot area measuring 20 sq. yds. Out of Khata no. 00127, Khasra no. 73-M, Situated at Sheffali Apartment at

Khasra no. 73-M, Situated at Sheffail Apartment at Village Bhangel Begumpur Tehsil Dadri Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar Uttar Pradesh (availing loan from Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Ltd) from Sh. Shajar Ali, Sh. Nawazish Ali, Smt. Akhtar Bano & Smt. Tajwar Sultana, whereas Sh. Salamat Hussain, Sh. Shajar Ali & Sh. Nawazish Ali purchased the same vide Sale Deed dated 21/3/2011 (Doc. No. 3266), later Salamat Hussain expired leaving behind Smt. Akhtar Bano (wife) & Smt. Tajwar Sultana (Daughter) as his only legal heirs
All person/s having any claim against or in respect of the said Property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage (equitablefregistered or otherwise), gift, trust, inheritance, family arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnership, possession, lease, sublease, tenancy, license, lien, charge, pledge, easement or otherwise howsoever, are hereby requested to notify the same in writing to us with supporting documentary evidence at the

us with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned below within 7 days from the date hereof, failing which the claim or claims, if any of such person or persons will be considered to have en waived and/or abandoned

Kamal Kant Gupta (Advocate) Kamal Kant Gupta (Advocate) Unit No. FF-2, First floor, Mahaluxmi Metro Tower Sec-4, Vaishali, Gzb., U.P., Mob. 9810063351 PUBLIC NOTICE

It is publically notified that the Flat No.-050A, Ground Floor, Block-U-3, Dhawalgiri Apartment, Sector-11, Noida has been allotted in the name of M/s Kashyap Consultant through its proprietor Sh. K.K. Kashyap Slo Late Sh. Arya Muni, R/o D-56, Sector-30, Noida, U.P., had sold the said flat, on the basis of GPAto the following persons:-A GPA was executed in favour of Smt. Raman Sumrani Wo Sh. Prem Prakash Sumrani and Sh. Prem Prakash Sumrani and Sh. Prem Prakash Sumrani Slo Late Sh. J.D. Sumrani Rlo Flat No.-050A, Ground Floor, Block-U-3, Dhawalgiri Apartment, Sector-11, Noida, executed at GPA executed at Sub-Registrar, Noida Vide Book No. IV, Volume No. 273, on pages 237 to 244 at Document No. 620, dated 04/06/1999 and agreement to sell was not registered, and Smt. Raman Sumrani Wlo Sh. Prem Prakash Sumrani who had expired on 29/12/2015 so with the help of the notice it is informed the transfer of the above flat goes in formed the transfer of the above flat goes in formed the transfer of the above flat goes in formed the transfer of the above flat goes in formed the transfer of the above flat goes in formed the transfer of the above flat goes in formed the transfer of head of the properties of the properties of the safe and the transfer of the above flat goes in formed the transfer of head on the flat gray one/above partners has/have any one/above partners has/have any objection he/she may submit his/her, objection in the Housing Department of Noida Authority along-with sufficient proofs within 15 days of the publication this notice.

Prem Prakash Sumrani

FESTIN FOODS & BEVERAGES PRIVATE LIMITED REGD OFF:- E-26/47, BLOCK-26, RAJIV CAMP, MINI MARKET, TRILOK PURI, EAST DELHI - 110091 CORP OFF: 4TH FLOOR, GURU EMPIRES, PURI GRAND ROAD, DANDIM ALA SAHI, ORISSA - 752001 CIN: U15549DL2018PTC338488, EMAIL; FESTINFOODS AND BEVERAGES@GMAILCOM

> FORM NO. INC-26 Advertisement to be Published in the Newspape

[Pursuant to rule 30 the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014] NOTICE

BEFORE REGIONAL DIRECTOR, NORTHERN REGION, NEW DELHI In the matter of the Companies Act, 2013, Section 13(4) of Companies Act, 2013 and Rule 30(6) (a) of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014 AND

IN THE MATTER OF M/s FESTIN FOODS & REVERAGES PRIVATE LIMITED CAMP, MINI MARKIT, TRILOK PURI, EAST DELHI -110091

Notice is hereby given to the General Public that the company proposes to make application to the Central Government under section 13 of the Companies Act 013 seeking confirmation of alteration of the Memorandum of Association of th ompany in terms of the special resolution passed at the Extra ordinary genera neeting held on 30th Day of December, 2023 to enable the company to change it tegistered office from "State of Delhi" to "State of Odisha". uny person, whose interest likely to be affected by the said Shifting of Registere

Office of the Company from the "State of .Delhi" to "State of Odisha" may intimat THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR NORTHERN REGION New Delbi B- 2 WING 02p LOOR, PARYAVARAN BHAWAN,CGO COMPLEX, NEW DELHI-1100 03" within 2 days from the date of Publication of this notice, the nature of interest and ground of opposition to the opposition if any, supported by an affidavit and should sent the same in original to the Regional Director with a copy to the petitioner at the Registered Office of the Company as mentioned above

> By Order of the Board For FESTIN FOODS & BEVERAGES PRIVATE LIMITED FESTIN FOODS AND PRINCE GUPTA (DIRECTOR

NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE

The Sr.DME Diesel, Northern Railway, Diesel Loco Shed, Tughlakabad for and on behalf of President of India invites e-Tenders for the following work. The tender will be accepted online only in the prescribed tender document.

Name of work: Provision of conventional brake rigging arrangement in WAG9 WAG9H type of Electric Locomotives through open tender Place of work: Diesel Shed, Tughlakabad, New Delhi-110044

Completion Period: 3 Years

Approximate cost of work: Rs. 1,75,13,233.70/- including GST @18% (Rupees One Crore Seventy Five Lakh Thirteen Thousand Two Hundred Thirty Three and Seventy Paisa Only)

Amount of Bid Security: Rs. 2,37,600/- (Rs. Two Lakh Thirty Seven Thousand Six Hundred Only) Description of Similar Service Contract: The approved definition of similar

nature of work is- "CLW approved sources for Manufacturing of WAP-7/WAG-9 locomotive fabricated bogies/Brake Gear Arrangement" (OR) "Sources having Successful completion of Provision/repair/rehabilitation of conventional brake gear arrangement/Brake rigging in 3 phase Electric locomotives over Indian Railways" Technical Eligibility Criteria: As per clause 10.1 of tender form (second sheet) of Tender Document.

Financial Eligibility Criteria: As per clause 10.2 of tender form (second sheet) of Tender Document.

Website to download and upload e-tender document : www.ireps.gov.in Due date & time of uploading of Tender by tenderer: 28.02.2024 upto 12:00 Hrs

Date & Time of Tender opening: 28.02.2024 after 12:00 Hrs. class 10th & 12th marksheet Validity of offer: 60 days from opening of tender my mother's name has been recorded as Suhana Parveen

Allocation: 05-511-32 Henceforth Suhana Parveen

Tender Document can be downloaded from Indian Railway website www.ireps.gov.in For details of work experience, scope of work and terms & conditions please se

No.: TKD-Elect-CBR-OT-RT-24 dated: 06.02.2024 SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA ST & SC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

OFFICE OF THE PROJECT ADMINISTRATOR, INTEGRATED TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY, JEYPORE

E- PROCUREMENT NOTICE

BID IDENTIFICATION No. PA ITDA (J)-10//2023-2024 //2024.

Dated, the 05th February, 2024. Bid Documents consisting of work, Estimated Cost, Cost of Tender

paper, EMD, Time of completion, Class of Contractors and the set of terms and conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen in Govt. Website i.e "www.tendersodisha.gov.in" : | Civil Works as mentioned in DTCN 01. Name of the work

02.	No. of Works	:	26 (Twenty Six) Numbers only
03.	Estimated Cost	:	₹.4.16 Lakh to ₹.125.00Lakhs
04.	Period of completion	:	03(Three) & 09 (Nine) Calendar Months
05.	Date & Time of Bidding	:	From 15/02/2024 at 10.00Hours to 26/02/2024 Upto 17.00Hours
06.	Last date & time for receipt of bids in portal	:	26/02/2024 Upto 17.00Hours
07.	Offline Documents Received through Speed Post/ Registered Post	:	16/02/2024 at 10.00Hours to 27/02/2024 Upto 14.00hours (Working Days Only)
08.	Bids received online shall be opened on	:	27/02/2024 at 13.00Hours onwards
09.	Bid Received offline documents shall be opened & Transparency Lottery Draw	:	28/02/2024 at 10.30AM onwards Offline Document Open & Transparency Lottery Draw
10.	Name and address of the officer inviting Bid	:	Project Administrator, I.T.D.A. Jeypore

Further details can be seen from the www.tendersodisha.gov.in. Project Administrator, I.T.D.A. Jeypore

MP POORV KSHETRA VIDYUT VITARAN CO. LTD BLOCK NO.7, SHAKTI BHAWAN, RAMPUR, JABALPUR (M.P.)

Tel No: 0761-2997711, 2667808, Extn. 270-2473, 270-2541 CIN: U40109MP2002SGC015120

ONLINE TENDER

FEE OPENING OF

Online tender is invited for supply/supply, installation & commissioning of following item from manufacturers/ nanufacturers or their authorized distributors/ dealers only as per tender specification by the date indicated below: S TS No DISCOM NAME OF ITEMS APPROX. | TENDER | DUE DATE OF

			(Rs in Lakhs)	(in Rs)	FROM 15.00 HRS.
1.1	NIT No. CGM/S&P/E	Z/GM-I/I/2569 dtd: 01.02.2024			
1.	1429 (TENDER ID: 2024_PKVVC _328861_1)	BIS CERTIFIED ENERGY EFFICIENCY LEVEL 2 (OLD)/ LEVEL 1 (NEW), CONVENTIONAL 11/0.433KV, 63 KVA, DISTRIBUTION TRANSFORMERS	1357.14	11,800.00	19.02.2024
2.1	NIT No. CGM/S&P/E	Z/GM-I/I/2570 dtd: 01.02.2024			
1	1430 (TENDER ID: 2024_PKVVC _328864_1)	BIS CERTIFIED ENERGY EFFICIENCY LEVEL 3 (OLD)/ LEVEL 2 (NEW), CONVENTIONAL 11/0.433KV, 100 KVA, DISTRIBUTION TRANSFORMERS	1774.76	11,800.00	19.02.2024
3.1	NIT No. CGM/S&P/E	Z/GM-I/I/2571 dtd: 01.02.2024			
1	1431 (TENDER ID: 2024_PKVVC _328866_1)	BIS CERTIFIED ENERGY EFFICIENCY LEVEL 3 (OLD)/ LEVEL 2 (NEW), CONVENTIONAL 11/0/.433KV, 200 KVA, DISTRIBUTION TRANSFORMERS	567.74	11,800.00	19.02.2024
4.1	NIT No. CGM/S&P/E	Z/GM-I/I/2572 dtd: 01.02.2024		-	
1	1432 (TENDER ID: 2024_PKVVC _328867_1)	33KV & 11KV, VACUUM CIRCUIT BREAKERS ALONG WITH SPARE PARTS	378.66	5,900.00	19.02.2024

For updated/extended due dates for opening of tender (EMD in cover-1 & Techno-commercial bid in cover-2)

please refer to the online key dates. Other details can be seen in the complete tender documents available on e-portal https://mptenders.gov.in

SAVE ENERGY FOR BETTER TOMORROW

ADDI INDUSTRIES LIMITED

Regd Office: A-104, 3rd Floor, DDA Shed Okhla Industrial Area Phase-II, New Delhi-110020 CIN:- L51109DL198DPLC256335, Tel.: +91-120-252935 E-mail: atul.addi@gmail.com & addiind@gmail.com EXTRACT OF STANDALONE AND CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR

Particulars Total income from operations

Net Profit for the period (before Tax and exceptional items)
Net Profit for the period (before Tax, after 103.20 109.69 69.45 310.52 202.66 289.44 103.23 109.69 69.45 310.52 2,031.77 2,119.00 exceptional items)
Net Profit for the period after Tax (after exceptional items)
Total Comprehensive Income for the period (Comprising Profit for the Period after Tax and Other Comprehensive Income after Tax) 78.56 50.22 236.16 1,619.41 1,692.68 81.29

	Diluted	0.73	0.75	0.46	2.19	14.99	15.67
(in Lakh, except per share data)							
Consolidated							
٠		Quarter	Quarter	Quarter	9 Months	9 Months	Year
٥.	Particulars	ended	ended	ended	ended	ended	ended
		31.12.2023	30.09.2023	31.12.2022	31.12.2023	31.12.2022	31.03.2023
		(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Audited)
	Total income from operations	139.37	138.15	105.16	401.26	295.49	405.12
	Net Profit for the period (before Tax and						
	exceptional items)	107.07	113.57	72.58	322.06	212.01	302.33
	Net Profit for the period (before Tax, after						
	exceptional items)	107.07	113.57	72.58	322.06	2,041.12	2,131.89
	Net Profit for the period after Tax (after						
	exceptional items)	81.87	84.62	53.00	246.08	1,627.71	1,704.05
	Total Comprehensive Income for the period						
	(Comprising Profit for the Period after Tax and						i i
	Other Comprehensive Income after Tax)	81.84	84.60	53.13	246.01	1,628.13	1,703.96
	Paid-up equity share capital (Face Value ` 5/- each)	540.00	540.00	540.00	540.00	540.00	540.00
Ī	Earnings Per Share (of `5/- each)(Not Annualised)						
	Basis	0.76	0.78	0.40	2.28	15.07	15.78

The above standalone and consolidated financial results of the Company have been reviewed by Audit Committee and thereafte pproved and taken on record by the Board of Directors at their respective meetings held on February 7, 2024 and have been reviewed

The above is an extract of the detailed format of quaterly/annual Standalone and Consolidated financial results filed with the stock xchanges under regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligation and Disclosure Requirements) Regulation,2015. The full format of the arterly Standalone and Consolidated financial results is available on the stock exchange websites of BSE (www.bseindia.com) and impany's website at http://www.addiindustries.com/ . There is no change(s) in accounting policies which impact on net profit / loss, total comprehensive income or any other relevan

CHAMAN LAL JAIN

Place : New Delhi

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PAPER WITH PASSION-

Tiger tiger burning bright

The Govt's move to keep mobile network towers away from core tiger habitats is laudable

■ n this age of digital connectivity, where mobile networks reach even the most remote corners of the globe, a critical question arises: At what cost do we expand our communications infrastructure? This question is particularly befuddling when it comes to protecting the habitat of some of our planet's most endangered species, such as the majestic tiger. The recent push by the Government to disallow telephone towers in tiger habitats is a welcome step. The Environment Ministry has issued guidelines prohibiting the installation of mobile towers in core and critical tiger habitats; these emphasise the need to balance connectivity and wildlife conservation. The guidelines say that while providing connectivity to people in or near wildlife-rich areas should be priority, "the protection and conservation of wildlife habitats should not get affected". While mobile networks undoubtedly offer benefits for human populations, their presence in tiger territories can have devastating consequences for these already endangered animals. The pri-



mary concern with setting up mobile towers in tiger habitats lies in the disruption it causes to their natural environment. Tigers, like many other species, rely on vast, undisturbed areas for hunting, breeding and rearing their young. The introduction of mobile towers can fragment these habitats, leading to habitat loss, increased human-wildlife conflict and a decline in tiger population. Moreover, electromagnetic radiation poses a potential threat to the behaviour, health, reproduction and overall fitness of tigers and other wildlife. In sensitive ecosystems like tiger habitats, even slight disturbances can have far-reaching consequences.

Organisations such as the World Wildlife Fund

(WWF), Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and various governmental agencies have been working tirelessly to safeguard these critical areas. These efforts often involve habitat restoration, anti-poaching measures, community engagement and scientific research to better understand tiger behaviour and ecology. One notable initiative in tiger conservation is the establishment of protected areas, such as national parks and wildlife reserves. These designated zones provide a haven for tigers and other wildlife, where human activities are carefully regulated to minimise disturbances. Additionally, conservationists work closely with local communities to promote coexistence and sustainable land use practices. However, despite these efforts, conserving tigers remains an uphill battle. Encroachment by humans, poaching, habitat degradation, and now the threat from mobile towers continue to jeopardise the future of these iconic animals. Strategic planning and zoning regulations can help ensure that mobile towers are placed away from sensitive habitats, minimising their impact on wildlife. Furthermore, the adoption of alternative technologies, such as satellite or fibre optic networks, can provide connectivity without encroaching on tiger territories. Ultimately, the fate of tigers and other wild animals hinges on our ability to balance progress with conservation.



Jharkhand: In a state of perpetual unrest



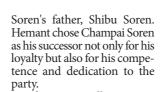
Jharkhand has been going through political unrest since it was carved out in 2000. Therefore, it is no surprise that it is facing yet another crisis now

he State had a tumultuous political history. It has witnessed eleven chief ministers in the last two decades, with the twelfth appointment being Champai Soren; on Friday, Hemant Soren, the previous chief minister, was interrogated for seven hours at his official residence and was subsequently forced to resign, resulting in a crisis. Corruption and defection have led to instability in the State. In the past, several former Chief Ministers resigned due to corrosion. It was not surprising when Hemant Soren was arrested, as he knew it was coming sooner or later.

Unfortunately, the crisis occurred at a crucial time, raising several issues. These include the uncertainty surrounding the newly formed Opposition Forum INDIA. It could adversely the outcome of the 2024 elections, which are scheduled for April-May. Additionally, why small states are experiencing political instability should also be investigated.

Jharkhand has had political instability and Maoist violence since it was formed. In contrast, Chattisgarh, created simultaneously, has been relatively politically stable. Jharkhand is blessed with plenty of natural resources. Still, its people have been struggling with poverty and underdevelopment due to frequent changes in governance. This has caused problems for the State's development over time. Jharkhand has had 11 Chief Ministers since 2000, with most having brief tenures. Only Raghubar Das, a member of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), completed a full five-year term from 2014 to 2019.

After Hemant Soren resigned, Governor CP Radhakrishnan delayed Champai Soren's swearing-in ceremony, causing tensions in Jharkhand. The State was left without a Chief Minister for more than 48 hours. However, Champai Soren, a committed Jharkhand Mukti Morcha party member and the former State Transport Minister, was finally sworn in as the new Chief Minister on Friday. Champai Soren is one of the party's founding members, along with Hemant



Just forming smaller states is no guarantee for better lives, as evidenced by Uttarakhand, Chhattisgarh, and Jharkhand, all created in 2000. The Jharkhand Assembly has 81 members. A government can form with 41 members. The JMM-Congress-RJD alliance has 47 members, BJP. has 25, and AJSU. has three members. The remaining seats are shared by the NCP, a Left party, and three independent members.s. The JMM-led alliance was concerned about the Bharatiya Janata Party destabilizing their government by luring their members away. As a precaution, the MLAs were taken to a safe place until the new chief minister took the oath. Defection problems have plagued the political system; resort politics is another issue that needs attention.

The opposition coalition INDIA has faced a setback after instability in Jharkhand. The cracks in the alliance have become more evident due to a lack of unity within INDIA. group. Nitish Kumar's departure from the party, fol-



JUST FORMING SMALLER STATES IS NO GUARANTEE FOR BETTER LIVES, AS **EVIDENCED BY** UTTARAKHAND, CHHATTISGARH AND JHARKHAND, ALL CREATED IN 2000. THE JHARKHAND **ASSEMBLY HAS 81** MEMBERS. A **GOVERNMENT CAN** BE FORMED WITH 41

MEMBERS

lowed by Mamata Banerjee's announcement that her TMC. the party will contest in all seats in West Bengal, and AAP's decision to run independently in Punjab has posed a severe threat to the unity of the group. The strained relationship between the Congress and Akhilesh Yadav's SP in Uttar Pradesh has further worsened the situation.

The Opposition accuses the

Modi government of investigating several leaders from the Opposition. These include Delhi's CM Arvind Kejriwal, Kerala's Pinarayi Vijayan, NCP's Sharad Pawar, Hemant Soren, DMK's Stalin and the Congress. Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee established three smaller states by dividing larger ones: Chhattisgarh from Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand from Bihar, and Uttarakhand from Uttar Pradesh. The main goal was to promote development in these regions. However, two decades later,

these states are still experiencing instability and a lack of development. The mere creation of a smaller state is no uarantee for better lives. The time has come to assess whether smaller states have achieved their intended purpose. There may be better

options for the people. Smaller assemblies can cause instability as MLAs switch sides. In smaller states, elections often prioritize local issues, dividing representation among smaller parties and regional leaders who act independently. It can have unintended consequences that negatively affect people's lives. The stability of smaller states depends on various factors. In Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand, direct contests occur between BJP and Congress. But, in Jharkhand, the multi-party system with national parties relying on

instability and defections. In elections, when no political party wins a clear majority, it can cause political instability in small and large states. To prevent lawmakers from switching parties, the Anti-Defection Law was created. However, this law often fails as some legislators are tempted by money and muscle power. Comprehensive electoral reforms should be implemented, and state funding must be provided for elections. Political parties must find practical solutions to ensure the system's fairness

regional parties can lead to

(The writer is a popular columnist; views are personal)

Cybersecurity concerns amidst rising cyber threats-



The Global Data Protection Index sheds light on pressing concerns around cyber attacks

→he latest Global Data Protection Index Index (GDPI) reinforces the importance of staying the course when it comes to protecting data in today's digitally transformed world. Navigating the complex terrain of data protection remains a formidable challenge and demands a steadfast commitment to understanding all the risks that can threaten an organization's

Concern over cyber threats continues to grow and remains at the top of the list for causes of organizational disruption with 52% of respondents reporting a cyberattack that prevented access to data within the past 12 months. This is the highest percentage in over 5 years. The monetary impact to organizations is considerable with costs more than doubling over our last report to \$1.4 million on average. The Global Data Protection Index surveyed 1,500 IT and IT security decision makers with 25 percent of APJ respondents from a wide range of public and private industries in September and October 2023 across the globe.



This concern is well founded as 75% of organizations surveyed are worried that their existing data protection measures are unable to cope with ransomware threats. 69% are not very confident that they could reliably recover in the event of a destructive cyberattack. Yet despite these perspectives, most organizations (59%) invest more in cyber prevention than cyber recovery. The balance between prevention and recovery needs to be carefully thought through considering the reality that successful attacks are on the rise. Another recurring red flag is that 81% of organizations believe that the rise in remote workers, fueled by the pandemic and still prevalent today, has increased their

also up from 70% in our last research findings. New insights were also aration from production data.

exposure to data loss from a

cyberattack. This sentiment is

uncovered regarding the use and effectiveness of insurance policies to help mitigate an organization's financial exposure. While 93% of organizations cited the use of ransomware insurance policies, they noted that several conditions could limit coverage. For example, 57% responded that proof of best practices for cyberthreat prevention was required, 40% indicated some scenarios would void the policy and 40% pointed to the fact payments to some entities may be restricted by law. In the end, 85% of organisations had to pay to access their data. So, while insurance policies can be a valid component of a cyber security strategy,

organizations must understand their limitations. In response to these growing threats, organizations are not sitting still when it comes to fortifying their cyber resiliency. Several trends indicate that organizations are becoming more proactive with 50% bringing in professional services to bolster resources, 49% conducting regular cyber recovery testing and 42% having deployed a cyber vault with physical and logical sepFor the first time, the GDPI probed into the impact of generative AI on both the cyber threat landscape and future data protection requirements. 52% believe that generative AI will provide an advantage to their organization's cyber security posture but 88% also agree generative AI is likely to generate large volumes of new data and increase the value of certain data types which will need to be considered when mapping out their future data protection strategies.

As organisations increasingly turn to public cloud solutions, implement hybrid working models, and experiment with generative AI, the criticality of data protection is more evident than ever. Yet, securing and safeguarding digital assets is becoming a more complex challenge for many. In a landscape continuously threatened by cyberattacks, businesses need to chart a path and stay the course. As someone once said, it's a marathon, not a

(The writer is an expert on cyber security and provides data protection solutions; views are personal)

NEED TO INCREASE EXPENDITURE

Sir — This year's actual expenditure (RE) fell below last year's budget allocation (BE) particularly in key areas vital for any welfare state, with significant cuts in subsidies for fertiliser, food, and fuel over the past five years. Even for the 2024-25 budget, a reduction of Rs 8,000 crore from last year's RE was noted, including decreased spending on education, health, and social welfare by Rs 8,000 crore, Rs 9 thousand crore, and Rs 9.5 thousand crore respectively. Additionally, capital investment for infrastructure development saw a Rs 50 thousand crore decrease compared to the previous budget estimate, driven by the government's necessity to maintain market sentiments and achieve the target of reducing the fiscal deficit to 5.8%. While this move was applauded in Parliament, attention must be paid to ensuring that the country's youth, particularly in education and health, are not overlooked, as their well-being is crucial for the nation's future. Additionally, while subsidy rationalisation may be necessary, the imbalance in farmers' terms of trade persists, warranting further attention.

N Mateeni | Mumbai

MALPRACTICES IN RECRUITMENT EXAM

Sir — The abuse of papers and fake websites in government recruitment is now going to get a lot of pressure. The central government has recently introduced the Public Examination Bill 2024 in the Lok Sabha to prevent malpractice in recruitment. The bill provides for punishment of up to three years and a fine of up to one crore for the guilty. This bill will be converted into a law after its approval in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha. This news was read recently. Exams conducted by UPSC SSC Railway Recruitment Corporation etc. will come under the ambit of this bill. There is a provision in this bill to recover the cost of taking the exam from the concerned service provider. Such service providers will be barred from conducting public examinations for the next four years. Due to mal-

practices in recruitment examinations

Paytm license revoked

THE EDITOR



he RBI's actions against Paytm Payments Bank Limited, including the decision to halt transactions and revoke its license, overlook the impact on merchants and customers. This has caused unnecessary chaos, particularly for the around 50 million merchants who rely

and untimely cancellation of examinations, lakhs of youth may be affected, so the bill aims to increase the transparency of the youth by assuring the youth that their future is secure. Not only this, it will serve as a model draft for the state. Recently these tests have been conducted at various places in the country and many times the papers are already split in the exam. So this affects lakhs of students appearing for this exam. So the intention of this bill is good. It is safe to hope that such abuses will come to an end after the passage of this bill.

ANTONY BLINKEN VISITS MIDDLE EAST

Shantaram Wagh | Pune

— US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, once again, is visiting the region for the fifth time on his Middle East tour on Monday. This time he has made Saudi Arabia his first stop. What did he achieve from the last four tours? Only a two-week ceasefire resulted in the release of some Israeli and Palestinian hostages. Even today he has come on a visit with the same purpose to rescue the remaining hundred Israelis. America's peace mission is only for

on Paytm Payments Bank for online transactions. The abrupt halt in operations leaves these small businesses, many of which cannot afford credit card fees, in a precarious position. Moreover, the lack of clear guidance from the RBI on how customers should proceed exacerbates the uncertainty surrounding the situa-

and transparency.

The RBI's handling of the issue raises concerns as it prioritizes punishment over customer and business interests, neglecting the primary purpose of payment banks. Furthermore, The RBI's history of fines and restrictions on customer onboarding indicates a tendency towards punitive measures rather than constructive solutions, adding to industry confusion. I urge the RBI to reconsider its approach and collaborate with stakeholders to address compliance issues efficiently, minimizing disruptions.

Vishal Mayur | Bengaluru

Jews and not for Palestinians? If there were not about a hundred Jews held hostage today, perhaps he would not have even visited this area. Along with them, all the Western countries are worried about the Iews. More than 27 thousand Palestinian civilians were killed and no one is sad about

While three American soldiers were killed in Iraq, everyone together started air strikes on Iraq. On the contrary, following the proverb 'the pot calling the kettle black, today Israel is saying that 'Palestinians are occupying Israeli land and will be driven out', while history and all the evidence confirm that the Palestinian land was forcibly occupied since 1948. Gradually he became the owner and the Palestinians were forced to evict from their own homes. I believed that it would have been better if the governments of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Qatar and the West Bank had not allowed Antony Blinken to visit them.

Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshedpur

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FIRST COLUMN

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF **CONCH BLOWING**

Blowing the conch symbolises purity, divinity and the triumph of good over evil



ord Krishna resounded throughout the world with the blast of a conch during the Mahabharata. The act of blowing the conch is an integral part of daily rituals performed during poojas and ceremonies in temples, households, and various events. In the Bhagavad Gita, at the onset of the great battle, Lord Krishna initiated this divine ritual by blowing the conch, followed by others such as Yuddhisthira, Bheema, Arjuna, Nakul, Sehdev, and so forth.

The conch, held in Lord Vishnu's hand, symbolizes the essence of life and the primal sound. Blowing the conch signifies the primordial creative voice linked to the sacred sound "Aum," the breath of Lord Vishnu pervading all space. This primordial sound serves as the source of divine energy in all living beings, including humans, animals, plants, vegetables, flowers, and galaxies. The sound emitted from the conch resonates with the divine presence. The spelling of the word "shankha" varies across different regions of India depending on the local language, such as Shankha in Sanskrit, Kannada, and Marathi, and as a "chank" shell in English. The significance of Conch (Shankha) and its blowing lies in its representation of purity, primal energy, brilliance, wisdom, auspicious begin-

nings, divinity, and victory over evil. It purifies and energizes the environment positively, enhancing courage, willpower, determination, and optimism, thereby signifying the triumph of good over evil. The act of blowing the conch three times before any ritual aims to dimin-

ish negative energy and reduce the vibrations of Tamas and Rajas while enhancing Sattva's vibration. Blowing the conch symbolizes the dispelling of evil thoughts and actions before auspicious events.



The conch holds historical and mythological significance, such as its emergence during the churning of the ocean (Samudra Manthan) in Hindu mythology. It represents righteousness and the victory of good over evil, often referred to as the "victory call of good over evil.

Another purpose of blowing the conch is to create auspicious sounds that mask negative noises, fostering a serene atmosphere for worship. It serves as a reminder for people to pause and acknowledge the divine presence, even amidst their daily routines.

Scientifically, spiritually, artistically, and in terms of humanity, the primordial sound "Aum" produced by conch blowing generates divine energy and vibrations, harmonizing the internal and external environments. These vibrations have healing properties, promoting well-being, calmness, and happiness, and strengthening the immune system. They also stimulate the energy zones (Chakras), fostering creativity, confidence, compassion, peace, harmony, prosperity, and protection from negative

It has several health benefits too, especially for the heart. Conch Blowing enhances blood flow in the Coronary Arteries of the Heart and 1 billion capillaries all over the body, thereby, being responsible for a healthy heart and healthy blood vessels. It also stabilizes activity of the sympathetic nervous system, thereby preventing palpitation, the conch blowing is important to practice at a young age with no underline comorbidities to enhance a healthy heart. A healthy Heart, healthy Brain, healthy Lungs and healthy blood vessels can be achieved by conch blowing daily from a young age. Heart attack at a young age is caused by increased sympathetic nervous activity, uncontrolled hypertension, uncontrolled diabetes, high cholesterol, obesity and optimization of lifestyle right from childhood by practising amalgamation of optimised lifestyle and spirituality in the form of meditation and yoga will reduce the rising menace of young heart attacks in India and the world. Conch blowing holds immense significance in Hindu rituals while also providing therapeutic benefits for individuals and the environment.

((The writer is Chief Cardiologist, at Medanta Moolchand Heart

Institute; views are personal)

Connecting the masses through Mann Ki Baat



Prime Minister Narendra Modi has emerged as a master communicator, adeptly connecting with the masses through a multifaceted communication strategy



the ever-evolving landscape of Indian politics, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has mastered the art of connecting with the masses, utilizing a multifaceted communication strategy that spans traditional and digital media. Central to his approach is the monthly radio address, "Mann Ki Baat" (Speech of Heart), where the nuances of Motivating Language Theory (MLT) play a pivotal role in enhancing his leadership effectiveness.

The study of Modi's communication style involves dissecting the ML components direction-giving, empathetic, and meaningmaking language—and their impact on followers' perception of leadership effectiveness. Utilizing the ML scale and Leader Effectiveness scale in a comprehensive survey, structural equation modelling demonstrates a strong correlation, indicating Modi's adept use of ML to enhance his leadership effectiveness.

In this digital age, the strategic use of All India Radio (AIR) as a mass communicaon channel has breathed new lite into pub lic broadcasting through "Mann Ki Baat." The program serves as a direct conduit for the Prime Minister to address the nation voicing concerns and issues that resonate with the majority. Despite the prevalence of social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook, Modi recognizes the enduring power of radio, particularly in reaching the remotest parts of India, serving the poorest of the poor.

The term 'communication,' derived from the Latin word 'communis,' underscores the exchange of ideas and views to create a common understanding. Radio, despite the surge in social media and digital platforms, remains a potent mass communication tool, reaching nearly the entire population. With over 177 radio stations worldwide and 97% of the population having access to

radio signals, its influence endures. Radio not only serves as a primary medium of entertainment but also plays a crucial role in educating and raising awareness about social issues. It can build a healthier atmosphere for growth, broadening



THE TERM 'COMMUNICATION' DERIVED FROM THE LATIN WORD 'COMMUNIS' **UNDERSCORES** THE EXCHANGE OF IDEAS AND VIEWS

TO CREATE A UNDERSTANDING. RADIO, DESPITE THE SURGE IN SOCIAL MEDIA AND DIGITAL PLATFORMS, **REMAINS A** POTENT MASS COMMUNICATION TOOL, REACHING

> NEARLY THE **ENTIRE** POPULATION

horizons and gradually shifting attitudes. Particularly in rural areas without access to television or electricity, All India Radio (AIR) has become the sole source of information and entertainment, broadcasting in 24 languages and 140 dialects. Recognizing the evolving land-scape of communication, Modi and his core team embarked on direct communication with the public well before his formal announcement as a prime ministerial candidate in 2012. Unlike other political leaders, Modi overcame the reliance on mainstream media by embracing social media in 2009. This early adoption allowed him to establish an individualized hegemony, creating a political brand that resonated across diverse segments of the population.

Modi's use of innovative technologies, such as 3D hologram technology, added a captivating dimension to his communication strategy Addressing diverse audiences in underdeveloped regions, including the mountains of the Himalayas and small towns in different states, showcased his commitment to reaching every corner of the country. Google's Hangout feature provided a platform for direct interaction with voters, offering a unique and engaging experience. The #SelfieWithModi campaign further encouraged active political participation during elections, fostering a multi-level personalised communication between the leader and the public.

While Modi recognized the importance of social media, his team understood that traditional media still held sway, influencing debates on social platforms. The live broadcast of Modi's speeches on YuvaiTV, a dedicated web TV, strategically engaged both social and traditional media. This dual approach ensured widespread coverage, with Modi commanding 33.2% to 40% of airtime on news channels during the election campaign, overshadowing competitors like Arvind Kejriwal and Rahul Gandhi.

The 2014 general elections witnessed the dominance of Modi's campaign, centred on one name: Narendra Modi. Active engagement on social media, coupled with individualistic slogans like "Har har Modi," "Har ghar Modi," and "Abb ki bar, Modi Sarkar," solidified his image as the focal point of the election discourse. By convincing voters that every vote cast for a BIP candidate was a vote for him, Modi strategically shaped the narrative, emphasizing his leadership

Modi's ability to turn challenges into opportunities became evident when an opponent from the Congress Party attempted to insult him by referring to his j profession as a teaboy. Kather than letting it affect him, Modi used the taunt to build a relatable, "one-of-us" public image. This led to the initiation of the "chai pe charcha" tradition, where Modi engaged with common citizens at tea stalls across the country, broadcasting these interactions through satellite services and social media platforms. This approach, rooted in the "us vs them" notion, further solidified Modi's populist appeal. Modi strategically employed populist tools, including creating a new internal enemy by aligning with right-wing Hindus and minimizing space for minorities like Muslims. This reshaped representation of the "us vs them" notion highlighted the perceived inferiority of the others within the population (Mazzoleni & Bracciale, 2018). Leveraging his association with the right-wing Hindu movement Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh

(RSS), Modi wooed the Hindu population through religious symbols, references, and engagements during the election campaign. Beyond the election campaigns,

Mann Ki Baat" serves as a manifestation of Modi's commitment to transparent and dialogue-driven governance. The Modi Ane Wala Hai Rath, featuring five-foot-high LCD screens mounted on 400 trucks, amplifies the reach of his message, running across 95,000 villages for a month. Modi's access to the world's largest media, including All India Radio, Doordarshan, YouTube, and social media channels, ensures a broadcast in 150 countries and multiple languages. Narendra Modi's communication strategy has catapulted him to the status of the most popular world leader on Instagram and Facebook. The observations suggest that new media technologies have empowerea populist politicians like Modi, marking the resurgence of populism in India and globally. In conclusion, Modi's adept use of motivating language, innovative technologies, and a blend of traditional and new media tools has positioned him as a formidable leader. Whether through radio waves, hologram technology, or social media algorithms, Modi continues to shape the narrative, leaving an indelible mark on Indian politics. The enduring success of "Mann Ki Baat" underscores the importance of effective communication in governance. By harnessing Motivating Language Theory principles and leveraging traditional and digital platforms, leaders can bridge socio-economic gaps, reaching diverse populations and fostering a lasting impact on the collective consciousness.

(The author is associate professor at Pondicherry Central University, views are personál)

Unveiling the green revolution at Indian airports

The civil aviation sector plays a crucial role in driving growth and facilitating mobility, pushing the nation's economic progress forward

ndia is ranked 5th in the world's GDP rankings in **▲**2024. India's economy boasts diversity and swift growth, fuelled by key sectors such as information technology, services, agriculture, and manufacturing. The civil aviation sector is also emerging as a crucial driver of growth and mobility and by implication is steering economic growth for the country. Today, India stands as the third largest aviation market.

This boom can be traced back to a mix of factors including the expansion of tourism & infrastructure development, along with lowcost carriers and growth of disposable income. The construction of new airports, expansion of existing ones, and the introduction of



world-class facilities further strengthen India's position as a global aviation powerhouse. Air passenger traffic in India, comprising both domestic and international travel, is expected to reach 395 million in 2023-24. By FY2030, it is predicted that India's domestic airport passenger numbers will rise to 700 million, while its international airport passenger numbers will reach 160

Moving to Renewables Global experts across the

world believe that India is on its way to becoming the most exciting market for global aviation due to investments made by the Indian government in airport infrastructure. However, the centre's priorities are in the middle of a complex Venn diagram maximizing economic opportunity while also moving steadily towards achieving its decarbonization goals. This can be seen clearly in their decision to promote carbon

reduction initiatives. Earlier this year, Cochin International Airport (CIAL) became the first airport in the world which is completely powered by solar energy. The unprecedented project is expected to avoid 3,00,000

tons of CO2 in the next 25 industry, attracting investyears - the equivalent of planting three million trees. A staggering 66 Indian airports have already achieved 100% green energy usage, powered by solar, wind, and hydro sources and 121 more are projected to become carbonneutral by 2025.

In India, the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) has been spearheading the promotion of sustainable development in the aviation sector by encouraging the use of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), a green alternative. This green revolution in Indian airports is not merely an environmental initiative; it is a strategic economic imperative.

By embracing sustainability, India is positioning itself as a leader in the global aviation

ments and fostering innova-Shaping an Industry for the

Usage of SAF against conventional jet fuels would result in a lifecycle carbon reduction of up to 80 per cent carbon emissions. The Indian government is actively promoting the use of SAF and has set a target of achieving a 10 per cent blending of SAF with conventional jet fuel by 2030. When the entire world is faced with the humongous challenge of climate change & related impacts, devising a sustainable approach to scaling infrastructure is crucial. It appears the government is cautiously stepping in the right direction, by adopting a 360-degree

To augment the airport infrastructure the government aims to develop 100 airports by 2024 under the UDAN (Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik) Scheme. To date, 74 airports have been developed. More than 2.15 Lakh UDAN flights have been operated and over 1.1 Cr passengers have availed of the benefits of UDAN flights so far. While new airports are being built to improve connectivity and bolster supply chain networks, this is being done with a green component. MoCA has issued guidance to developers of upcoming Greenfield Airports and the relevant State Governments, emphasizing the importance of working towards carbon neutrality and net-zero emissions. This includes promoting the use of green airport development.

green energy sources. The Indian aviation industry has been growing at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 18% over the last five years, according to a report by KPMG. The Indian Civil Aviation MRO market, at present, stands at around \$900 Mn and is anticipated to grow to \$4.33 Bn by 2025 increasing at a CAGR of about

14-15%. Various stakeholders have now come into the picture as the transition provides for new arenas of innovation. For example, the Odisha Government has recently appointed RITES Ltd as the consultant for the airports in Rourkela, Jeypore and Amarda Road. The company has provided its expertise in

Earlier, the Railways PSU was signed on to prepare a Detailed Project Report (DPR) for Shivamogga Airport under the UDAN Scheme. This shift towards green practices also improves resource management, generates cost savings, and ultimately enhances the overall competitiveness of the aviation sector in the country. India has firmly established itself on the global aviation map. As we continue to

dynamic industry. (The author is a professor at Assam University, views are

embrace the future of aviation,

the industry has the potential

to transform the way we trav-

el and approach our decar-

bonization goals. The sky's the

limit for this exciting and

'Maldives to have no foreign military soon'

 $P^{\text{resident Muizzu says to soon}}_{\text{reach a point of Male (PTI)}}$ President Mohamed Muizzu on Wednesday said by bolstering the defence capabilities of the Maldives, the country will soon reach a point where there is no "foreign" military presence, weeks after he sought the withdrawal of Indian defence personnel from the archipelago

The statement comes a day after Muizzu, who rode to power on anti-India posturing, declared that the Maldives will maintain autonomous control over all its territories, including maritime, aerial, and terrestrial domains apart from enhancing Maldives' capabilities for conducting underwater sur-

In his first presidential speech on Monday, Muizzu, widely seen as a pro-China leader, had said the first group of Indian military personnel will be sent back from the Maldives

Nikki Haley was swamped in Nevada's symbolic

Republican presidential prima-

ry as GOP voters resoundingly

picked the "none of these candi-

dates" option on the ballot in a

repudiation of the former UN

ambassador who is the last

remaining major rival to front-

Tuesday's primary, which does-

n't award any delegates needed

to win the GOP nomination. The

former president is instead

focused on caucuses that will be

held Thursday and will help him

move closer to becoming the

Republican standard-bearer.

That leaves the results Tuesday

as technically meaningless in the

Republican race. But they still

amount to an embarrassment for

Haley, who has sought to posi-

tion herself as a candidate who

can genuinely compete against

Trump. Instead, she became the

first presidential candidate from

either party to lose a race to

"none of these candidates" since

that option was introduced in

she was going to "focus on the states that are fair" and did not

campaign in the western state in the weeks leading up to the cau-

cuses, spending time instead in

her home state, South Carolina,

before its February 24 primary.

Her campaign wrote off the

Nevada's famous casino industry.

knows that when you play penny

slots the house wins," spokes-

woman Olivia Perez-Cubas said.

"We didn't bother to play a

game rigged for Trump. We're

full steam ahead in South

media network, "Watch, she'll

a Republican, had announced

beforehand that he would vote

for "none of these candidates" on

Tuesday. Several Republicans

interviewed heading to the polls

said they intended to do the

Party Chair Bruce Parks, who

pushed for the GOP to hold cau-

cuses, said that he told voters

who called his office — and

Trump supporters — to partic-

Washoe County Republican

Trump joked on his social

Nevada Gov. Joe Lombardo,

Carolina and beyond."

soon claim Victory!

"Even Donald Trump

Haley had said beforehand

Nevada in 1975.

Trump didn't compete in

runner Donald Trump.

AP LAS VEGAS



before March 10 and the remaining manning two aviation platforms will be withdrawn before May 10.

Currently, 88 Indian military personnel are in the Maldives primarily to operate two helicopters and an aircraft that have carried out hundreds of medical evacuations and humanitarian missions.

The Indian platforms have been providing humanitarian and medical evacuation services to the people of the Maldives for

ipate in the primary by voting for

none of these candidates" over

Haley.
"They basically told us they
"Parks said

don't care about us," Parks said

in an interview after the race was

called. "By marking 'none of

these candidates, we respond in

kind — we don't care about you

Michael McDonald, a Trump

ally who faces state charges for

serving as a so-called "fake elec-

tor" on the former president's

behalf, said he left it to each

county GOP chairman to decide

if they wanted to promote "none

of these candidates." He said

Haley's seeming disrespect of

Nevada voters was "reciprocat-

declared "none of these candi-

dates" the winner at 12:01 am on

Wednesday based on initial vote

results that showed it with a sig-

nificant lead over Haley in seven

counties across the state, includ-

primary on Tuesday that

President Joe Biden easily won

against author Marianne

Williamson and a handful of

lesser-known challengers. Rep.

Dean Phillips of Minnesota was

not on the ballot. Biden issued a

statement thanking Nevada vot-

ers for their support and, with an

eye toward an expected matchup

in November, warned that

Trump is trying to divide

America. "I want to thank the

voters of Nevada for sending me

and Kamala Harris to the White

House four years ago, and for set-

ting us one step further on that

same path again tonight. We

must organize, mobilize, and

vote. Because one day, when we

look back, we'll be able to say,

when American democracy was

a risk, we saved it — together,"

Biden said.

There was also a Democratic

The Associated Press

ed" with the results.

Nevada GOP Chairman

On Wednesday, a member of the public on the 'Raees ge Javaabu' series, a platform that enables the public to get direct responses to their queries from the President via social media, asked Muizzu on the efforts underway to expel foreign military troops in the Maldives, Sun.mv, a news portal, report-

"I am assuring the people that the Maldives will be led to a point where there aren't any foreign military troops in the country," Muizzu said.

Noting that all efforts necessary to expel the Indian military troops based in the Maldives officially commenced on the day he assumed office (November 17, 2023), Muizzu said discussions, in this trajectory, were proceeding at a speedy pace in accordance with the principles of diplomacy. "Hopefully, military personnel in one aviation platform will be withdrawn by March 10th and the military personnel in the

Biden wins

Las Vegas (AP) Nevada's dueling presidential caucuses

and primaries this week are cre-

ating confusion among voters,

and those who cast ballots in

the first contest Tuesday had the

option of supporting "none of

Tuesday's Republican primary,

which won't count for the GOP

nomination, while Donald

Trump is the only major candi-

date in Thursday's Republican

caucuses, which does. The split

races have undercut the influ-

ence of the third state on the

GOP calendar. It also may have

brought a ho-hum approach to

Tuesday's contests, where the

day started with lower-than-

expected voter turnout. In the

first two hours after polls

opened, officials said 183 peo-

ple had voted in person in Washoe County, the state's sec-

ond-largest county by population. In Clark County, home to

Las Vegas and Nevada's most-

populated county, 2,298 people

voted in person during the

same two-hour period. Nevada

voters also have the option to

vote by mail or before election

Democratic primary on Tuesday that President Joe

Biden easily won against author

Marianne Williamson and a

handful of less-known chal-

lengers. Rep. Dean Phillips of

Minnesota was not on the bal-

lot. Jeff Turner, 65, came to the

Reno Town Mall with a ballot

checked off for "none of these

candidates" - an option

Nevada lawmakers decades ago

added in all statewide races, and

one that many Trump support-

ers may choose since the former

president and GOP front-run-

ner isn't on the primary ballot

in Thursday's caucus.

There was also a

Nikki Haley ran in

primary

hese candidates."

May," the news portal said, quoting Muizzu.

He said the current efforts relate to increasing the capabilities of Maldivians, adding efforts are underway to make arrangements for Maldivians to independently undertake medical evacuation of emergency patients and the surveillance of the country's Exclusive Economic Zone, the report said. Expelling the Indian troops based in the Maldives was an electoral pledge for Muizzu as he won against pro-India incumbent in the September 2023 run-off.

The Maldivian government has reported that there are 88 Indian military personnel in Maldives for the operation and maintenance of helicopters and Dornier aircrafts donated by the Indian government. The current government here is also reviewing more than 100 bilateral agreements signed with India by previous administrations. On Tuesday, during an engagement his official visit to Kolhumadulu Atoll, the President had on ceasefire, hostage talks announced that the Maldives will assume sole regulation of the Exclusive Economic Zones shortly. "Planning for this endeavour is currently underway, and the President assured that execution will proceed promptly without any delay," a statement from Muizzu's office said on Tuesday. The President also announced plans to enhance the Maldives' capabilities for conducting underwater surveys, emphasising that Maldivians aspire to conduct scanning and mapping activities within their territory, the statement said.

AP TEL AVIV

fifth month.

fighting in the history of the

Israeli-Palestinian conflict has killed over 27,000 Palestinians,

levelled entire neighbour-

hoods, driven the vast major-

their homes, and pushed a

quarter of the population to

groups across the region have

conducted attacks, mostly on

US and Israeli targets, in solidarity with the Palestinians,

drawing reprisals as the risk of

en by Hamas' Oct 7 attack, in

which militants burst through

the country's vaunted defens-

es and rampaged across southern Israel, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and

The United States, Israel,

Qatar and Egypt have pro-

weeks in return for a phased

responded to the offer late

Tuesday in what it said was a

"positive spirit" while reiterat-

ing its core demands for an end

to the Israeli offensive and the

release of thousands of

Palestinian prisoners, which

President Joe Biden said were

Benjamin Netanyahu says the

war will continue until "total

victory" over Hamas and the

return of all the remaining

Israeli Prime Minister

"a little over the top."

Israel remains deeply shak-

a wider conflict grows.

ity in Gaza.

Iran-backed militant

Incidentally, Maldives had on January 23 permitted China's Xiang Yang Hong 03, a vessel equipped to carry research and surveys, to dock at Male port, saying the halt was for replenishment and that the research vessel would not be conducting any research while in the Maldivian waters.

Israeli airstrikes over Homs have killed civilians, says Syria

Tsraeli airstrikes over the cen-Itral city of Homs and nearby areas killed and wounded civilians, the Syrian military said Wednesday. There was no immediate comment from Israel. Syrian state news agency SANA quoted an unidentified military official as saying the strikes late Tuesday damaged both private and public property, without giving additional details. The Israeli jets reportedly struck the Syrian city and the countryside from over the Mediterranean Sea near the Lebanese coastal city of Tripoli.The strikes come as tensions across the Middle East flare with the Israeli-Hamas war and a drone attack on Jan. 28 that killed three US troops and injured dozens more in northeastern Jordan, near the Syrian border. The pro-government Sham FM

abducting some 250, around half of whom remain in captivradio station said the areas struck included the affluent al-Malaab neighbourhood and Hamra Street. It said Israel hit farmland in al-Waer, causing posed a cease-fire of several fires but no casualties there. release of the hostages. Hamas

Britain-based pro-opposition war monitor the Syrian Observatory for Humanitarian Rights said at least six civilians were killed, among them a woman and a child, as well as two militants from the Lebanese Hezbollah group. The casualties were all in a building on Hamra Street that was apparently targeted in one of the strikes, it said. Search efforts were ongoing, the

sions were heard in Homs and its outskirts, where Hezbollah is reportedly present. Israel has carried out hundreds of strikes on targets inside government-controlled parts of wartorn Syria in recent years.



ISRAEL-GAZA WAR ENTERS FIFTH MONTH

Blinken to brief Israeli leaders

for a "clear, credible, timebound path to the establishment of a Palestinian state."

But the increasingly unpopular Netanyahu is opposed to Palestinian statehood, and his hawkish governing coalition could collapse if he is seen as making too many concessions.

Blinken acknowledged "there's still a lot of work to be done." But he said he still believed an agreement on the hostages was possible. At a press conference in Qatar on Tuesday, he said a pathway to more lasting peace was "coming ever more sharply into focus" but would require "hard decisions" by the region's lead-

There is little talk of grand diplomatic bargains in Gaza, where Palestinians yearn for an end to fighting that has upended every aspect of their lives.

"We pray to God that it stops," said Ghazi Abu Issa, who fled his home and sought shelter in the central town of Deir al-Balah. "There is no water, electricity, food or bathrooms." Those living in tents have been drenched by winter rains and flooding. "We have been humiliated," he said.

The Palestinian death toll Blinken, who is on his from four months of war has fifth visit to the region since reached 27,585, according to the Health Ministry in the the war broke out, is trying to advance the cease-fire talks Hamas-run territory. The minwhile pushing for a larger postwar settlement in which istry does not distinguish between civilians and combat-

ants in its count but says most of the dead have been women and children.

Hamas has continued to put up stiff resistance across the territory, and its police force has returned to the streets in places where Israeli troops have pulled back. Hamas is still holding over 130 hostages, but around 30 of them are believed to be dead, with the vast majority killed on Oct. 7.

Israel has ordered Palestinians to evacuate areas that make up two-thirds of the tiny coastal territory. That covers the prewar homes of threequarters of Gaza's 2.3 million people, according to the UN humanitarian office.

Most of the displaced are packed into the southern town of Rafah near the border with Egypt, where many are living in squalid tent camps and overflowing U.N.-run shelters.In Israel, the focus is on the plight of the hostages, with family members and the wider public demanding a deal with Hamas, fearful that time is running out. Israeli forces have only rescued one hostage, while Hamas says several were killed in Israeli airstrikes and failed rescue missions.

More than 100 hostages, mostly women and children, were freed during a weeklong cease-fire in November in exchange for the release of 240 Palestinians imprisoned by

Thousands have taken part in weekly protests calling for the release of the hostages and demanding new elections. But Netanyahu is beholden to farright coalition allies who have threatened to bring down the government if he concedes

That could spell the end of Netanyahu's long political career and expose him to prosecution over long-standing corruption allegations.

too much in the negotiations.

But the longer the war continues, the greater risk it spills over into other countries, drawing the US and its allies even deeper into a volatile

Haley trounced by 'none of these candidates' option In Nevada,

Observatory added It said at least nine explo-

Azerbaijan holds snap presidential vote

AP ■ BAKU

Azerbaijanis are voting Wednesday in an election almost certain to give incumbent President Ilhan Aliyev lowing his government's swift reclaiming of a region formerly controlled by ethnic Ármenian separatists.

Aliyev, 62, has been in power for more than 20 years, succeeding his father who was Azerbaijan's Communist boss and then its president when it became independent after the 1991 Soviet collapse. The next presidential vote was set for next year, but Aliyev called an early election in December, shortly after Azerbaijani troops retook the Karabakh region from ethnic Armenian forces who controlled it for three decades

Turner's candidates of choice - Florida Gov. Ron Analysts suggested Aliyev moved the election forward to DeSantis and then businessman capitalize on his burst in pop-Vivek Ramaswamy - also would not have been on the balularity following the blitz in Karabakh. He will be in the lot had they stayed in the race, since they opted to participate limelight in November when Azerbaijan, a country which



Fuzuli in Karabakh region, Azerbaijan, Wednesday.

relies heavily on revenues from fossil fuels, hosts a UN climate change conference.

Aliyev's time in power has been marked by the introduction of increasingly strict laws

ures and independent journalists — including in the run-up to the presidential election. In January, Aliyev told local

that curb political debate as

well as arrests of opposition fig-

String of attacks on Indian students in

television channels that he wanted the election to "mark the beginning of a new era," in which Azerbaijan has full control over its territory. He pointed out that polls would be held Karabakh region after the mass exodus of thousands of ethnic Armenians who fled following the Azerbaijani military offen-

Speaking before the polls opened at 0400 GMT, 52-yearold Baku resident Sevda Mirzoyeva said she was going to be sure to vote in the elec-

"I will vote for the victorious leader Ilham Aliyev," Mirzoyeva told The Associated Press. Aliyev, she said, "returned our lands, which were occupied for many years. And he also accomplished a lot of things, including for young people."There is no limit on the number of terms Aliyev can serve, and there is no real challenge from six other candidates, some of which have previously publicly praised

Pres Sebastian Piñera dies in a helicopter crash

Former Chilean

Vina Del (AP): Sebastián Piñera, the two-time former social upheaval followed by a pandemic in his second term, died on Tuesday in a helicopter crash. He was 74.

Chile Interior Minister Carolina Tohá confirmed the death of the former president. No further details were immediately released about the cause

of the accident. Serving as president from 2010 to 2014 and again from 2018 to 2022, Piñera led the South American nation during moments of crisis, including the

aftermath of an 8.8 magnitude earthquake and tsunami. He gained a spotlight for his administration's rescue of trapped Chilean miners in 2010, and his governance during the

coronavirus pandemic, when Chile was placed among the top five countries for vaccination rates for the illness.

His legacy is marred by violent police repression in October 2019 against protesters who were demonstrating against the country's education, health and pension systems dating to the country's 1973-1990 military dictatorship. A United Nations investigation alleged that police used force "improperly and indiscriminately" injuring protesters, and that government mistreatment of detainees amounted to torture.

The social unrest ultimately led to two attempts to update the constitution that was inherited from the military government, but both have failed. Piñera's death came as Chile

already was recovering from massive deadly wildfires in the county's central region. Chilean President Gabriel

Boric honored Piñera in a speech Tuesday afternoon as a leader "seeking the best for his country," highlighting his management of the pandemic and other emergencies. "He was a democrat from the very first moment," Boric said. The death also drew an outpouring of

condolences from leaders and

former leaders across Latin

America from both the left and

Landslide in Philippines leaves at least 6 dead, 46 others missing **AP** MANILA

landslide left at least six vil-Alagers dead and 46 others missing, including miners waiting in two buses for a ride home, in a gold-mining village in the southern Philippines, officials said on Wednesday.

Army troops, police and volunteers rescued 31 villagers who were injured when the landslide hit the mountain village of Masara in the remote town of Maco in Davao de Oro province Tuesday night. They resumed the search on Wednesday morning after suspending it the night before due to fears of more landslides, officials said.

More than 750 families have been moved to evacuation centers since the landslide struck, disaster response officials said. Among the missing



In this photo provided by the Philippine Red Cross, volunteers assists residents evacuate to safer grounds following a landslide at their village at Maco, Davao de Oro province, south Philippines on Wednesday.

were 27 miners who were waiting to be driven home in two parked buses when the landslide hit in clear weather, Davao

de Oro provincial spokesper-

son Edward Macapili said. Eight miners who were among those waiting jumped

out of the bus windows or dashed away and survived. A third bus had already left. Macapili said.

Torrential rains that have swamped the region on and off in recent weeks have eased and the weather was clear in the previous three days, he said."It happened so fast," Macapili said by telephone. "They sud-denly saw the landslide cascaddirectly toward them."Three seriously injured victims will be evacuated by helicopter, regional military spokesperson Col. Rosa Rosete-Manuel said by telephone.Earthquakes in recent months had damaged buildings in the southeastern region and more than a dozen villagers have died in recent weeks from flooding and landslides, according to disaster response

US continues, yet another found dead PTI ■ NEW YORK

In a series of disturbing incidents, an Indian doctoral candidate was found dead at Purdue University in Indiana while another Indian IT student was brutally attacked near his house in Chicago. The back-to-back incidents since Sunday were the sixth in the US in 2024 alone. According to The Purdue Exponent, a news agency independent of the university, Sameer Kamath, 23, a doctoral candidate in mechanical engineering, was found dead in Warren County on Monday, the mechanical engineering head Eckhard Groll announced on Tuesday

Kamath's body was found at nature preserve at Crow's Grove, the agency said, quoting a press release from Justin Brummett, the Warren County Coroner. After his bachelor's

ing from the University of Massachusetts Amherst, Kamath had come to Purdue in the summer of 2021, Groll said in his email. He was slated to graduate from the doctoral programme in 2025. In another incident, Indian IT student Syed Mazahir Ali was chased and brutally attacked by unidentified men near his house in the US city of Chicago on Sunday, February 4. There were videos posted

on social media and in one video posted on X, Ali can be seen with a bloodied nose and face and blood stains on his clothes as he describes his ordeal. Ali, who moved to the US

from Hyderabad about six months ago, told ABC7 Eyewitness News that one of the attackers pointed a gun at him. Video surveillance shows Ali walking to his home at night

with a packet in his hand when the three men chase him when he was punched by the men in the eye and hit on the face, ribs and back. The ABC7 report said he was taken to a local hospital where he was treated for several cuts and bruises. Ali is pursuing Masters in information technology from Indiana Weslevan University. "America has been my dream country and I came here to fulfil my dreams and pursue my Masters. The incident gave me trauma," he told the channel. The report said that the

police do not have any suspect in custody and the investigation is ongoing.

The Consulate General of India in Chicago said on X that the "Consulate is in touch with Syed Mazahir Ali and his wife in India Syeda Ruquiya Fatima Razvi and assured all possible

Twin blasts in Pak's Balochistan kill at least 30

PTI ■ KARACHI

t least 30 people were killed and more Athan 40 others injured on Wednesday in twin blasts targeting election offices in Pakistan's restive Balochistan province, a day before the general elections in the coupprone country. In the first incident, a powerful blast outside the office of independent candidate Asfandyar Khan Kakar in Pishin district killed 20 people and wounded 30 others.Less than an hour later, another blast took place outside the election office of a Jamiat-Ulema Islam-Pakistan in the Killa Abdullah area claiming the lives of 10 people and injuring 22 others, officials said.
No group or individual claimed respon-

sibility for the twin blasts.

Abdullah Zehri, a senior police official in Balochistan Panjgur, said that the blast outside the election office of candidate Asfandyar Khan Kakar was detonated remotely and was placed in a bag outside the building. "The condition of some of the injured is critical and they have been rushed to Quetta for treatment," he said.

'Terrorists are targeting the election candidates to deter people from going to the polling stations but security personnel are being increased further to ensure the elections go ahead on schedule," Zehri said.

According to local media reports, the powerful blast had ripped through the election office of a JUI candidate in the Killa Abdullah area and caused great damage.

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) confirmed the two blasts and said



Security officials examine the scene of a bomb blast in Khanozai, Pashin, a district of Pakistan's Baluchistan province

security had been further enhanced in the province for Thursday's elections.

The perpetrators of these terror attacks will be caught and dealt with," a spokesperson of the ECP said.

The deputy commissioner of Pishin district, Jumma Dad Mandokhail, said that the condition of some of those injured in the blast was critical and they have been airlifted to Quetta. Pishin is around an hour's drive from provincial capital Quetta.

We have sent 18 dead bodies to the hospital while 32 others were taken with injuries to hospitals," he said.But a doctor at the Pishin government hospital said they had 20 dead bodies in the mortuary. Mandokhail said the bomb was attached to a motorbike and it was left near the election office of independent candidate, Asfandyar Khan Kakar, and was detonated remotely.

Kakar is contesting the elections for a provincial assembly seat from Pishin and was not present when the blast took place.

Deputy Commissioner in Killa Abdullah, Yasir Bazai said the blast outside the Jamiat-Ulema Islam-Pakistan election office was also carried out in similar fashion.

In a statement, Balochistan's Home Minister Jan Achakzai condemned the attacks and announced that elections would be held as per schedule.

"Allow me to reiterate our unwavering commitment to relentlessly pursue terrorists until every last one of them is eliminated...Rest assured, we will not allow terrorists to undermine or sabotage this crucial democratic process," he said.

Caretaker Interior Minister Gohar Ejaz has strongly condemned the blast outside the election office of an independent candidate in Pishin. According to a post on X, the interim minister offered his condolences to the families of the deceased.

The attacks came ahead of elections on Thursday for which elaborate security measures have been taken by the authorities.

Violence has been at its peak in Balochistan, bordering Afghanistan and Iran, in the lead-up to the February 8 general elections in Pakistan.

On Tuesday, 10 grenade attacks were carried out at security posts, election campaign offices and rallies in different areas of the province. Since Sunday, there have been around 50 such attacks carried out in the province and in one incident in Sibi town attackers targeted an election rally of a Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf candidate for the National Assembly in which four people lost their lives and six were injured.

Frontier Corps and Levies personnel had reached the spot of the blast in Panjgur but the local police officer in the area said the casualties could increase as it was a very pow-

Outlawed separatist groups in Balochistan have been carrying out attacks on security personnel, installations and government employees all over the province as they claim to be fighting a war to restore rights of the local people and an end to the alleged possession of the province's rich minerals by the government and security forces.

But since last year they have stepped up attacks and have targeted the candidates con-

testing the general elections. Late last month, at least 24 militants, four security personnel and two civilians were killed during a three-day operation in the area. Law enforcement agencies also thwarted an attack at a government school in Pasni, where an explosive device was discovered near the Bagh Bazaar Government School.

The militants have not spared even the residences of contesting candidates and late Tuesday night hand grenade attacks were carried out at the houses of Balochistan National Party-Mengal's candidate for National Assembly, Mir Mohammad Yaqoob, in Awaran district, and an attack on the house of PML-N candidate Mir Mohammad Aslam

Imran Khan's party alleges 'worst political engineering' in decades

Lahore (PTI): Pakistan is witnessing its "worst ever political engineering" in decades at the hands of the powerful military establishment to achieve "desired results" to form a government of its choosing in February 8 elections, jailed former prime minister Imran Khan's party alleged on Wednesday. In the 2024 polls, the cricketer-turned-politician Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreeke-Insaaf (PTI) is on the wrong side of the military establishment while three-time premier Nawaz Sharif has appeared to be its dar-

The mainstream parties like the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) have had massive campaigning while the PTI was stopped by police and intelligence agencies from doing any kind of campaign, mostly in Punjab.

Since the PTI candidates are contesting independently because the Supreme Court upheld the decision of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to deprive it of its iconic election symbol cricket 'bat', some have withdrawn their candidature last minute in favour of the establishment-backed candi-

PTI spokesperson Raoof Hasan told this correspondent on Wednesday that in Thursday's polls, the country is witnessing the worst-ever political engineering in the history of Pakistan to keep Khan's party from winning the polls. "It has been by all means is the worst ever political engineering through all phases of the elections to keep the PTI out of the election process and achieve the desired result," Hasan said and added despite all this political engineering and atrocities against the PTI leaders and workers, Khan's party is going to wing Thursday's polls. "A reign of terror has been unleashed on the party for the past 22 months under the 'London Plan' to dismantle PTI and remove its founding chairman Imran Khan from the political scene," Hasan said. He said the PTI leaders and workers were subjected to the worst state terrorism and barbarism after the "regime change conspiracy" of April 9, 2022. "As soon as Sharifs and Zardaris were imposed on the nation, they instantly ended their corruption cases of whopping Rs 1,100 bil-

Pakistanis to vote today to elect new govt, Sharif's PML-N front-runner

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

 $P^{\mathrm{akistanis}}$ will vote on Thursday to elect a new government to rule the cashstrapped country amid a spree of violence including deadly blasts on the eve of elections in which the front-runner former prime minister Nawaz Sharif is believed to have the backing of the powerful military.

With former prime minister Imran Khan in jail, Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) is tipped to emerge as the single largest party in the elections. Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) candidates are contesting the polls independently after the Supreme Court upheld the decision of the election commission to deprive his party of its iconic election symbol crick-

Sharif, 74, will be eying the premiership for a record fourth time in Thursday's election.

The contest also involves the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) of Bilawal Bhutto-

hinese and US officials have

Cmet in Beijing for talks on

tough issues dividing the two

largest economies, as trade and

tariffs increasingly draw atten-

tion in the runup to the US pres-

idential election. China's

Ministry of Finance said Beijing

raised objections to higher tar-

iffs on Chinese exports, two-

way investment restrictions and

other limits on trade and technology during the talks by the

countries' Economic Working

Group. In a statement, it char-

acterized the Monday-Tuesday

The talks sent a "positive signal," the Global Times, a

newspaper of China's ruling

Communist Party, said in an

article published late Tuesday.

"This positive trend, despite

lingering disputes, offers much-

needed reassurance for busi-

nesses of the two countries as

well as the international com-

munity amid rising global chal-

Department said US officials

Treasury

lenges," it said.

The US

talks as "constructive."

Zardari, who has been declared as the party's prime minister

Nearly 650,000 security personnel have been deployed across the country as authorities were busy setting up polling stations to enable more than 12.85 crore registered voters to cast their ballot in the general elections. Stepped-up security is

imperative given the spree of violence with the latest being two devastating bomb blasts targeting election offices on Wednesday in the restive Balochistan province that saw at least 25 people killed and more than 40 others injured. The Election Commission

of Pakistan had issued a schedule in December last year to hold the polls and kept the process intact despite deteriorating security situation. On Wednesday, election

material was shifted to more than 90,000 polling stations under the supervision of respective polling officers who were escorted by police and

Chinese industrial policy prac-

tices and overcapacity, and the

resulting impact on US workers

China's economy slows, partly

due to a prolonged crisis in its

That reflects worries that as

On Thursday, polling will begin at 8.00AM and continue without any interval till 5.00 PM. A countrywide public holiday has been declared to enable voters cast their vote with any hindrance. Punjab has the most num-

ber of 73, 207,896 registered voters followed by Sindh with 26,994,769, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with 21,928,119, Balochistan with 5,371,947 and Federal Capital Islamabad According to ECP, a total of

5,121 candidates are in the race for the National Assembly (NA) seats. These include 4807 male, 312 female and two transgenders. For the four provincial assemblies, 12,695 candidates are in the field including 12,123 male, 570 women and two transgenders.

In total 266 NA seats were up for grabs out of 336, but polling was postponed on at least one seat after a candidate was killed in a gun attack in Bajaur. Sixty seats are reserved

for women and another 10 for minorities, and are allotted to the winning parties on the basis of proportional representation. Another 593 seats of the four provincial assemblies, out of total 749, were open for contest but the ECP delayed polls on at least three seats, two in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and

one in Punjab, after two candi-

dates died and one was killed.

A total of 132 seats in the four provinces are reserved for women in four provinces and another 24 for minorities. The reserved seats will be allotted to the winning political parties on the basis of general seats they win in the elections. Both women and non-Muslim minorities can also contest on all general seats in addition to the reserved seats set aside for them in the national and provincial assemblies.

The ECP set up 90,7675 polling stations nationwide, including 25,320 for male voters, 23952 for females and another 41,403 as mixed polling stations.

Nearly 6,50,000 security personnel deployed for Pak general election

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Nearly 650,000 security personnel have been deployed across poll-bound Pakistan as authorities were busy setting up polling stations to enable more than 12.85 crore registered voters to cast their ballot in the general election on Thursday. Stepped-up security is

imperative given the spree of violence with the latest being two devastating bomb blasts targeting election offices on Wednesday in the restive Balochistan province that saw at least 25 people killed and more than 40 others injured. Radio Pakistan reported

that about 6,50,000 security personnel have been deployed on the ground to ensure the security of the vot-

These include the personnel of police, civil armed forces, and the armed forces. Under a three-tiered sys-

tem, the personnel of the armed forces will perform duties outside the polling



security ahead of Feb. 8 general elections, in Lahore, Pakistan, Wednesday. **AP/PTI**

war nears its two-year anniver- in southern Ukraine, where

Though the roughly 1,500- and public infrastructure were

stations. Polling will begin at 8.00 am on Thursday and continue without any interval till 5.00 pm.

According to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), a total of 12,85,85,760 registered voters were eligible to vote from among 5,121

candidates for the National Assembly seats, including 4,807 male, 312 female, and two trans-genders.

For the four provincial assemblies, 12,695 candidates are in the field, including 12,123 males, 570 women, and two trans-genders.

Zelenskyy said. The attack also

killed a man in Mykolaiv, a city

some 20 residential buildings

damaged, regional Gov. Vitalii

TD/TM/GEN-235(Vol-VII)/23/219, dtd.02.02.2024 Name of the work: "Allotment of 04(Four) nos. of Mechanical Iron Ore plots at 10HP". License Fees: Rs.2,92,43,940/-, Wharfage Fees: Rs.18,98,620/-, Last date

(technical bid): 22.02.2024 up to 15:00 hrs. Refer our website for details https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app & http://paradipport.gov.in/.

& time of Submission of bid: 22.02.2024 up to 15:00 hrs, Date and time of opening

Sd/- Traffic Manager Paradip Port Authority

PPA/PR/83/2023-2024 dtd.06.02.2024

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

SSA-12018/1/2024-MIS/I/434940/2024 dated 06.02.2024 Mission Director, Samagra Shiksha Axom, Kahilipara, Guwahati- Assam invites bids vide: GEM/2024/B/4551567 Dated: 03-02-2024 for Design, Installation and Maintenance of ICT Lab and Smart Classrooms - ICT Lab through GeM portal.

Interested bidder may visit GeM portal and submit the bid in GeM portal accordingly. The bid is also available in SSA website: https:/ ssa.assam.gov.in

myog/CF/5364/23/8-Feb-24



Sd/-Mission Director. Samagra Shiksha Axom Kahilipara, Guwahati-19

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

SSA-12018/6/2023-MIS/I/429501/2024 dated 03.02.2024

Mission Director, Samagra Shiksha Axom, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19,

Assam invites bids vide: GEM/2024/B/4548874 Dated: 02-02-2024 for supply of Desktop, MFP Printer, UPS through GeM portal. Interested bidder may visit GeM portal and submit the bid in GeM portal accordingly. The bid is also available in SSA website: https://

ssa.assam.gov.in



Sd/-Mission Director. Samagra Shiksha Axom Kahilipara, Guwahati-19

PPGCL

Gautam Budh Nagar, Noida, Utlar Pradesh-201301

Plant Adress: PO - Lohgara, Tehsil-Bara, Prayagraj (Allahabad), Utlar Pradesh-212107

Phone: +91-120-6102000/6102009 CIN: U40101UP2007PLC032835

NOTICE INVITING EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Prayagraj Power Generation Company Limited invites expression of interest (EOI) from eligible vendors for Procurement of Loctite Make Putty of 3x660 MW Thermal Power Plant at Prayagraj Power Generation Company Limited, Bara, Dist. Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh, India. Details of pre-qualification requirements, bid security, purchasing of tender document etc. may be downloaded using the URLhttps://www.ppgcl.co.in/tenders.php Eligible vendors willing to participate may submit their expression of interest along with the tender fee for issue of bid document latest by 17° February 2023.

China, US hold economic talks | Border security | and Illeraine aid reiterated concerns over the region's progress in combat-

ing climate change but cutting

carbon emissions. The two sides said the talks in Beijing also touched on issues such as debt problems in developing countries, financial cooperation and economic policies.

property market but also longer "US officials reaffirmed that term trends such as an aging the US is not seeking to decoupopulation, its leaders are likeple the two economies and ly to rely more heavily on boostinstead seeks a healthy economing export manufacturing to ic relationship that provides a make up for weak demand at level playing field for American companies and workers," the Given China's already huge Treasury Department said. It said both sides agreed to meet market shares in many industries, that could boost capacity again in April. Exchanges between the two powers picked to unsustainable levels and crowd foreign manufacturers up last year, gaining momentum after President Joe Biden met out of many industries, some with Chinese leader Xi Jinping economists say. One example: at a November summit in San

photo-voltaic solar panels, where massive investment Francisco, California. means that China controls But despite the slight about 80% of the market share improvement in relations, tenfor all manufacturing stages, sions remain high, particularly according to a recent report by over Taiwan. Biden has kept in the International Energy place most of the tariffs on Agency. The rapid ascent of Chinese imports that former Chinese suppliers has raised President Donald Trump imposed when he launched a proposals in Europe for import controls, but those could slow

and Ukraine aid collapses

Washington (AP): A Senate deal on border enforcement measures and Ukraine aid suffered a swift and total collapse Tuesday as Republicans withdrew support despite President Joe Biden urging Congress to "show some spine" and stand up

to Donald Trump. Just minutes after the Democratic president's remarks at the White House, Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell emerged from a GOP luncheon at the Capitol and acknowledged that the deal was

"It looks to me and to most of our members that we have no real chance here to make a law, the Kentucky Republican told reporters.

The split-screen moments in Washington represented a rapid turn of events that showed McConnell's slipping control of his GOP conference, Trump's growing influence, and Biden's ability only to look on as a cornerstone of his foreign policy halting Russian President Vladimir Putin's advance into Europe - crumbled in Congress

Out of funds, the Pentagon is sending no more arms shipments to Kyiv just as the war entering its third year - reaches a critical juncture. Ukraine is struggling with ammunition and personnel shortages while Russia is on the offensive, mounting relentless attacks.

"Every week, every month that passes without new aid to Ukraine means fewer artillery shells, fewer air defense systems, fewer tools for Ukraine to defend itself against this Russian onslaught," Biden said. "Just what Putin wants." Biden had engaged for months with Senate leaders on a carefully negotiated plan to pair policies intended to curb illegal crossings at the U.S.-Mexico border with \$60 billion in wartime aid for Ukraine.

Russia attacks targets across | PARADIP PORT AUTHORITY | E-TENDER CALL NOTICE | TD/IM/GEN-235(Yol-YIII/23/219, dtd/IZ/02/2024) Ukraine with missiles, drones nition and personnel short- President

ages. Some long-term foreign

funding is also in doubt as the

kilometer (900-mile) front line

has barely budged in recent

months, the Kremlin's forces

have the upper hand in stocks

of missiles and artillery ammu-

Kyiv (AP): Russia fired cruise and ballistic missiles and Shahed-type drones at targets across Ukraine on Wednesday morning, authorities reported, killing at least three civilians and injuring 10 others, including a pregnant woman.

The attacks targeted at least three major cities, including the capital Kyiv, where the European Union's top diplomat, Josep Borrell, was discussing military aid and financial support for Ukraine.

perately needed by Ukraine, which is struggling with ammu-

nition used for long-range strikes.Ukraine's Armed Forces said they intercepted 44 drones and missiles out of 64 that were launched in the morning attack.The barrage killed two people in Kyiv, Ukrainian

sary on Feb. 24.

िन्हिं चि.प्र. राज्य औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण ए-1/4 लखनपुर, कानपुर

अत्यकालीन ई—निविद्य सूचना
एतद् द्वारा सूचित किया जाता है कि प्राधिकरण के बरेली जनपद में स्थित औद्योगिक क्षेत्र बहेड़ी में विद्युत
विकास कार्यो हेतु सरकारी विभागे / सार्वजनिक उपक्रमो / निगमो / प्राधिकरणो / परिषदो / नगर निकायो में
पजीकृत विद्युत लाईसेन्सी एवं अनुमवी ठेकेदारों / फार्मों से अत्यकालीन ई—निविद्या आमंत्रित की जाती हैं, जो
विनाक 08.02.2024 को अपगन्त 4:00 बजे से दिनांक 15.02.2024 को अपगन्त 5:00 बजे तक अपलोड की
जा सकती हैं। निविदा को दिनांक 16.02.2024 को अपगन्त 2:00 बजे खोला जायेगा। निविदादाताओं द्वारा
शास्त्र पत्रों की मूल प्रतियां दिनांक 19.02.2024 को साय 5:00 बजे तक कार्यालय में जमा की जा सकती हैं।
ई—निविदा के माध्यम से आमंत्रित की जाने वाली निविदा सम्बन्धी विवरण निम्नवत् है— कार्य की लागत

Providing 11 KV HT/LT Composite Line at Balance Road No. 11 10, 06, 04, 02 & 01 at Mega Food Park Baheri Distt. Bareilly. 76.38 नोट—). निविदादाता अपनी निविदाओं में समस्त कर सहित दरें अंकित करें। जी.एस.टी. अलग से देय होगी। 2. विद्युत कार्यों हेतु निविदादाताओं को निविदा अपलोड करते समय "विद्युत सुरक्षा विमाग" उ.प्र. शासन लखनऊ में श्रेणी 'क' अनुमोदित लाइसेन्स अपलोड करना अनिवार्य होगा, अन्यथा निविदा को स्वीकार नर्ह

ाकया जायगा। निविदा सम्बन्धी विस्तृत जानकारी प्राधिकरण की website:www.onlineupsida.com पर स्थित ई-लिंक एवं यूपीएलसी की website:http://elender.up.nic.ln पर देखी जा सकती है। विस्त्र प्रबच्च विद्युत खण्ड-प्रथम उ.प्र.व.औ.वि.प्रा., कानपुर MUNICIPAL CORPORATION CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR

Executive Engineer (Mech

considerable period of time to He said even under the

current negotiations for restructuring, Sri Lanka still has to pay around USD 3 billion per year. Referring to his unpopular economic reforms, Wickremesinghe said he was aiming to lessen the tax burden as the economy sta-

That Western help is des-

कार्यालय वरिष्ठ प्रबन्धक विद्युत खण्ड-प्रथम

高		(EXECUTIVE ENGINEER MECH)			
100000	No.: (0240)2333536-40 No.: (0240)2331213	Address :- Head Office :-	:- Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar Municipal Corporation Executive Engineer (Mech) Town Hall, Pin No. 431001 E-Tender Call CSMC (For Help) Mob No:- 9764999780		
		No. CSMC	/Mech/4231/2024 Dt	. 06.02.2024	
Sr. No.		Work Name		Last date of Tender submission	
1.	Fabrication and supply of 70 meter Hydrulic Platform for Fire fighting and rescue operation with 10 years CSMC (01 Nos.) (Tender Amount Rs. 30,89,88,545/-)			04.03.2024	
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Municipal Corporatio Chhatrapati Sambhajinaga

makes slow progress USD 91 billion. It will take a **AP** ■ COLOMBO pleted by the first half of the year, which is going beyond The restructuring of Sri Lanka's external debt is to the earlier anticipation for it to be completed within the take much longer than expect-

Sri Lanka debt restructuring

ed, going by President Ranil restructuring plan has been Wickremesinghe's policy speech on Tuesday even though he signalled a positive shift in the cash-strapped economy with a surplus by the end 2023, first since 1977.Delivering 'Statement of Government Policy' on the first day of the Fifth Session of the Ninth Parliament, Wickremesinghe said the finalisation of debt

first quarter. The domestic debt

successfully executed as the first step, and a policy agreement for restructuring has been reached with foreign creditors as the second step. Negotiations with private creditors are presently in progress, Wickremesinghe, who is also the finance minister, said. "By September 2023 our total debt burden was

settle this debt. In order to meet our debt, we need to source the funds locally. It is imperative that we generate this income; otherwise, we risk falling into the debt trap once again," he said. the pioneer

Sensex, Nifty close flat ahead of RBI policy decision

enchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty closed Sensex and rank, and flat in a volatile trade on Wednesday as investors stayed on the sidelines ahead of RBI's interest rate decision on Thursdav.

The 30-share BSE Sensex declined 34.09 points or 0.05 per cent to settle at 72,152. During the day, it hit a high of 72,559.21 and a low of 71,938,22

The Nifty ended marginally up by 1.10 points or 0.01 per cent to 21,930.50.

IT shares TCS, Infosys and Tech Mahindra declined due to profit taking offsetting gains from select banking and pharma shares.

domestic market exhibited cautious rangebound movement, despite PMI data and favourable global cues ahead of RBI policy meet. While no stance the anticipated, RBI's



and improvements in liquidity will be closely monitored, Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services said. Among the Sensex firms, State Bank of India rose the most by 3.78 per cent after the bank announced the acquisition of SBI CAPS subsidiary for Rs

commentary on any hints Nestle India gained 1.68 per regarding potential rate cuts cent after it reported around 9 per cent growth in sales. JSW Steel, Bajaj Finance, Axis Bank and Asian Paints were among the gainers.

Tech Mahindra, Power Grid. Infosys, Tata Consultancy Services, HDFC Bank, Wipro, Larsen & Toubro and NTPC were the major laggards.

"Markets erased all its gains towards the end as profittaking in IT stocks and sluggish global indices weighed on the sentiment. Traders are adopting a cautious stance ahead of the credit policy announcement

tomorrow.

"While investors are bracing for a status-quo on the interest rate decision, what will be important to note is the tone of the announcement which would signal the central bank's stance on interest rate going ahead," said Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd.

TOP GAINERS

2415 JSW Steel

2.00 HDFC Life

Axis Bank

TOP LOSERS

-2.45 Tech Mahindra

Adami Ports

TCS

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge climbed 1.31 per cent and smallcap index advanced 0.38 per cent. Shares of retail firm Trent Ltd

surged 19 per cent after it reported a two-fold rise in consolidated net profit to Rs 370.64 crore for the December quarter.

Paytm-owner Communications climbed 10 per cent, continuing its

recovery journey.

Among sectoral indices, IT fell by 1.18 per cent, teck declined 0.97 per cent, services by 0.81 per cent, capital goods by 0.31 per cent and auto by 0.06 per cent and auto by 0.06 per cent. Realty jumped 1.96 per cent,

telecommunication climbed 1.18 per cent, consumer discretionary (0.89 per cent), financial services (0.76 per cent) and power (0.92 per cent).

In Asian markets, Seoul and Shanghai settled in the positive territory while Tokyo and Hong Kong ended in the negative zone.

markets ended with gains on

European markets were mostly quoting lower. The US standards/rules. Different countries enforce Paytm shares climb for second

to ensure the safety and quality of the products placed in their territory. These measures apply equally

and importers.

However, such measures may sometimes act as trade barriers due to various reasons like gaps in the regulatory frameworks and quality compliance requirements of the trade partners. lack transparency, arbitrariness or differing interpretation of the and improper

Taking cognizance of the

Government sets up task force to resolve non tariff barriers

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government has set up a task force under the Department of Commerce to identify, categorise and develop tailored strategies for the resolution of nontariff barriers, Parliament informed Wednesday.

Such barriers include prior registration requirements in the exporting country, cumbersome testing and certification requirements and unreasonable domestic

various regulatory measures

to domestic manufacturers

implementation.

challenges involved in mapping the trade barriers, and to give increased focus, a

task force has been set up under Department Commerce, to identify, categorise and develop tailored strategies resolution of these identified non-tariff barriers, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha. The resolution of trade barriers, including ensuring increased and effective market access, is a continuous process and endeavour.

He said India also engages in regulatory cooperation to help ensure that global rules governing the regulatory structures are favourable and consistent.

Replying to another question on trade with Pakistan, the minister said that in August 2019, Pakistan took a number of measures to downgrade the bilateral relations with India. "One of the decisions was to unilaterally suspend the bilateral trade with India. However, export of only therapeutic products has been allowed," Goyal said, adding that normally, the Atari-Wagah border and Karachi Port are the two major trade routes between the countries.

"The onus of resumption of bilateral trade lies with the Government of Pakistan," he

'Energy storage segment gets \$9.2 billion funding via venture capital in 2023'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $F_{\text{capital route into India's}}^{\text{unding through venture}}$ energy storage sector has registered a 59 per cent growth while the overall investments in the segment reported a 28 per cent decline, Mercom Capital said in a report on Wednesday.

The corporate funding in 2023 includes USD 9.2 billion funding through Venture Capital (VC), USD 9.8 billion through debt and public market financing, the research firm said.

VC/PE funding in the energy storage space in 2023 was the highest-ever compared to the USD 5.8 billion raised in 2022.

However, the corporate funding in the energy storage sector in 2023 was 28 per cent lower against USD 26.4 billion in 2022, the 'Mercom Annual and Q4 Funding Report'

saw their highest VC definitive transaction to largely on account of the (USA's) Inflation Reduction Act's Investment Tax Credit and other incentives like manufacturing credits for battery components. The Merger and Acquisition (M&A) activity lagged due to high asset valuations, elevated interest rates, and investor caution," Raj Prabhu, CEO of US-based Mercom Capital Group,



Lithium-ion-based battery top-funded nickel-based battery downstream, and materials companies.

said. In India, Graphite India "Energy storage companies (GIL) has entered into a invest compulsory convertible preference shares of GODI Energy, and BatX Energies raised USD 5 million in pre-series A funding.

Mercom Capital

specialises in providing market intelligence on energy storage, smart grid technology, and solar energy, in addition to offering advisory services on emerging markets and strategic decision-making.

technology companies received the most VC funding in 2023. Other included battery recycling, technology, energy storage components

categories

day, jump 10 per cent **PTI** ■ NEW DELHI

Shares of Communications One97 Ltd. which owns Paytm brand, climbed 10 per cent on Wednesday, continuing its recovery journey.

BSE after a firm beginning.

the NSE. The stock of One97 Communications rebounded by over 3 per cent on Tuesday after three days of sharp fall. In two days of rebound, the

company's market valuation has climbed Rs 3,720.17 crore to Rs 31,547.62 crore The stock jumped 10 per cent From February 1-5 (three days

to settle at Rs 496.75 -- its of trading), the company's upper circuit limit -- on the stock tumbled over 42 per cent, wiping out Rs 20,471.25 crore Shares of the company climbed from its market valuation, 9.99 per cent to Rs 496.25 on following the RBI's crackdown.



Last week, RBI ordered Paytm Payments Bank Ltd, a restricted bank that can take capital (directly and through its deposits but cannot lend, to not take any further deposits or conduct credit transactions or per cent stake in the bank.

customers accounts, prepaid instruments, wallets, and cards for paying road tolls after February 29 Paytm Payments Bank Limited (PPBL) is an associate of

carry out top-ups on any

Communications One97 Limited (OCL). One97 Communications holds 49 per cent of the paid-up share

subsidiary) of PPBL. Founder

Vijay Shekhar Sharma has a 51

Nestle India profit rises to ₹655.6 crore in December Qtr

PTI ■ NEW DELH

 $\begin{array}{cccc} F_{Ltd}^{MCG~major} & {\rm Nestle~India} \\ {\rm Vednesday} \\ {\rm reported~a~4.38~per~cent~rise} \end{array}$ in its net profit to Rs 655.61 crore for the December quarter, on the back of consistent performance by its kev brands.

The company, which owns brands such as Maggi, Kitkat and Nescafe, had posted a profit of Rs 628.06 crore in the according to a regulatory filing. Nestle India's net sales rose

8.27 per cent to Rs 4,583.63 crore during the period under review as against Rs 4,233.27 crore a year ago.

"All key brands and product groups have contributed to Nestlé India's consistent growth trajectory," Nestle India said in its earnings statement. Its total expenses in the October-December quarter rose 6.11 per cent to Rs 3,636.94 crore. Nestle India's domestic sales

grew 8.86 per cent to Rs 4,421.79 crore over Rs 4,061.85 crore in the December quarter of the last fiscal. The growth was "on the back of pricing and mix growth, with strong growth momentum in e-commerce and out-of-home channels. The quarter was marked by an se in brand invest across all product groups," Nestle India Chairman and Managing Director Suresh

Narayanan said. However, its exports declined 5.58 per cent to Rs 161.84 crore compared to Rs 171.42 crore a year ago.

The company's revenue from operations climbed 8.07 per cent to Rs 4,600.42 crore. It stood at Rs 4,256.79 crore in the December quarter of the



During the quarter, e- beverages business witnessed growth and contributed 7 per cent of domestic sales. Organised trade also witnessed strong growth backed by festive walk-ins Its Milk and Nutrition and new product launches. "The teams excelled in rolling

shopper resonant activities across our large portfolio in both legacy platforms and the fastgrowing 'quick commerce," it

According to the company, its Nestle is also expanding its

Imperative for India, US to cooperate

the largest contributor to growth which was propelled strong demand for Nescafe.

product group posted a double-digit growth. Prepared dishes and cooking aids also maintained creditable growth this quarter. In confectionery, KitKat and Munch were its strong growth drivers.

presence in the rural area. The company expanded direct coverage and added 5,300 villages this quarter, reaching a total of over 196,000 villages, close to 200,000 villages, which was its ambition, Narayanan said. Earlier, Nestle India, which followed the January-December financial year, approved the change of the financial year commencing on April 1 and ending on "Consequently,

transitional arrangement, the current financial year of the company will be for a period of 15 months commencing January 1, 2023, and ending March 31, 2024, while the previous financial year was 12 months, from January 1, 2022, to December 31, 2022," it said. It also added the audited results for the previous financial year are also comparable figures for the 12

months ended December 31, In 2023, Nestle India's profit was 25.44 per cent higher at Rs 2,998.67 crore. It was Rs 2,390.52 crore a year ago.

Similarly, revenue from sales of the company products in 2023 increased 13.3 per cent to Rs 19,021.05 crore.

"During the year 2023, our total sales grew by over 13.3 per cent and we crossed the Rs 19,000 crore mark,"

On the commodity outlook, Nestle India said coffee prices continue to be volatile and are historically high due to limited availability.

"Healthy milk flush in winter is expected to keep prices stable. Commodities such as wheat and rice are stable as of now. Rain deficit is expected to impact the production of maize, sugar, oil seeds and spices that may impact pricing," it said.

NTPC to raise up to \$750 million through ECB route

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned NTPC Ltd is looking to raise up to USD 750 million (about Rs 6,222 crore) in debt from foreign investors.

According to the request for proposal by the company, the proposed facility is being raised under automatic route as permitted under External Borrowing Commercial (ECB) guidelines of the RBI. "NTPC is looking to raise External Commercial Borrowing (ECB) in the form unsecured loan...Equivalent to USD 500 million plus green shoe Power, is the cou option of EUR equivalent to power producer.



USD 250 million," it said. NTPC said the bids from banks/financial institutions should be a comprehensive, unconditional, firm and fully underwritten offer for the full amount of the proposed facility. Last date to submit the bid is February 21. NTPC, under the Ministry of



Power, is the country's largest



cooperate on framing regulations on artificial intelligence (AI), Microsoft's chief Satya Nadella said on Wednesday, stressing that the new-age technology can "equally distribute" growth. The India-born chairman and chief executive officer of the global tech giant said the company will be skilling 20 lakh Indians on AI by 2025. A "consensus" on AI, which he termed as a powerful general-purpose technology, is essential at the multilateral



levels as well, he said, adding that a faster "diffusion" of the technology can help us have distribution "equal economic growth". Replying to a question on the

cooperation between the US and India on AI, Nadella on greater cooperation between New Delhi and Washington. "I think it's imperative

especially for India and the United States to be able to cooperate, what are the norms, what are the regulations even, instead of fracturing them," Nadella, who is on a two-day visit to the country, said.

On the announcement to train 20 lakh Indians, he said that instilling skills to ensure that the workforce "thrives" is the most important thing a trillion.

company like it can be doing. Addressing the audience comprising leaders from consultancies, legal firms and information technology companies, Nadella hinted that AI can help boost GDP growth in India as well, and termed India as one of the highest growth markets in the world. He also presented a data point from the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (Meity) to say that the AI GDP will be USD 500 billion by 2025, when the overall GDP will be USD 5



CHENNAI: Scientists need to work together to make an impact on science research and output, said Prof Umesh V Waghmare, President of Indian Academy of Sciences. He was speaking on Wednesday at the inauguration of National Physicists Conclave 2024 (NPC 2024) at T P Ganesan Auditorium on SRMIST premises at Kattankulathur near Chennai. The conclave would go on till February 10. The three days event is being organized by the Department of Physics and Nanotechnology of SRMIST. Prof Umesh said events like NPC 2024 are an ideal platform to foster collaboration between scientists working in different realms of science. It is a welcome to know that science has been receiving a big boost in India.

PATENTED HERBICIDAL SHOT DOWN IN MARKET SOON **NEW DELHI:** Best Agrolife Limited (BAL), a prominent agrochemical company in India, proudly announces the introduction of a patented groundbreaking synergistic herbicidal composition. The novel composition comprising Haloxyfop, Imazethapyr, and Butylated Hydroxy is expected to revolutionise soybean cultivation by providing an all-encompassing solution to control a broad spectrum of weeds. The product will be launched nationwide under the brand name 'Shot Down.'

HSBC MULTI ASSET ALLOCATION FUND LAUNCHED MUMBAI: HSBC Mutual Fund today announced the launch of HSBC

Multi Asset Allocation Fund (HMAAF), an open-ended scheme investing in equity and equity-related instruments, debt & money market securities and Gold/ Silver ETFs. The fund aims to generate long-term capital growth, help reduce volatility and offer diversification. The new fund offering (NFO) opens on 8th February 2024 and closes on 22nd February 2024 and will reopen on 1st March 2024. HMAAF will capitalize on an optimum multi asset allocation investment strategy.

India to overtake China as oil demand growth centre in 2027: IEA

PTI ■ BETUL (GOA)

Ithe biggest driver of global oil demand in 2027 as transportation and industry consumption in the world's fastest-growing major economy will drive growth despite a big push for clean energy and electrification, the International Energy Agency said on Wednesday.

India will overtake China as

The Paris-based agency in a special Indian Oil Market consumption as per the oil

released at the India Energy Week here, said the country's oil demand will rise from 5.48 million barrels per day in 2023 to 6.64 million bpd in 2030. China currently is the biggest

Outlook to 2030

driver of oil demand and India ranks No.2 in growth. The numbers given by IEA in the report seem to talk of crude oil processed into fuel for domestic as well as for exports. The domestic exports.

ministry data is around 5

million barrels per day (bpd).

"India's oil demand will grow

accelerated green energy moves," IEA director of energy markets and security Keisuke Sadamori said. "Growth in India will surpass that of China in 2027. But in absolute terms, demand

at a rapid pace by 2030 despite

in India will still lag China's even in 2030. "As oil demand slows in

developed countries and China, India becomes the largest source of growth," said

Toril Bosoni, head of oil

India currently is the third largest consumer of oil behind the US and China. It imports

industry and markets division,

85 per cent of its oil needs and this dependence is likely to rise as domestic production falls. Diesel, she said, accounts for about 50 per cent of Indian gains and 20 per cent of global

demand growth to 2030. The demand growth is despite the push for electric vehicles which make up for a small

push will see greater adoption in two- and three-wheelers while their penetration in the four-wheeler segment would be around 5 per cent. More than 500,000 barrels per

fraction of the automobiles on

the road currently. The EV

day of oil demand will be avoided due to increased EV penetration, energy efficiency improvements and biofuels growth," she said. Of this, around 200,000 bpd would be because of EV penetration.

SAFF U-19 Women final

India face Bangladesh in summit clash

he Indian football team will be out to break a iinx as it takes on hosts Bangladesh in the SAFF U-19 Women's Championship final here on Thursday.

Despite improvement in women's football, India somehow hold a dismal record in this age-group in

The title has eluded India on more than one occasion, the latest being the SAFF U20 Women's Championship in Dhaka last year, when Bangladesh pipped them to win the trophy.

The upcoming final will definitely be a huge opportunity for India to put past records on the burner and retain the title.

The Young Tigresses will enter the final match with a strong determination to win the championship title and set the records straight from the Indian perspective.

In the group stage, India won

Mallorca

and Real

Sociedad

draw 0-0

 $M_{ ext{Sociedad drew 0-0 in a}}^{ ext{allorca}}$

lackluster first leg of the Copa del Rey semifinals.

Neither team had many significant scoring chances

at Son Moix Stadium in the

Balearic Islands. Sociedad

was slightly closer to breaking the deadlock in a

match in which the hosts

ended with no attempts on

"They have a quality team,

that is playing in the

satisfied with the result,"

Mallorca coach Javier Aguirre said. "Of course we would have liked to win, but

it wasn't easy. The series

Mallorca's best chance was a

shot by Abdón Prats that

missed just wide in the 51st

minute. Sociedad came close

with Umar Sadiq's close-

range attempt that went over

the crossbar in the 71st after

"If you look at the second half, we deserved a better result," Sociedad coach Imanol Alguacil said. "We

did more to deserve the win

but in the end we couldn't

get the ball to go in."

The second leg will be on

Feb. 18 in Basque Country.

Sociedad is trying to return

to the Copa final for the first

time since it beat rival

Athletic Bilbao to lift the trophy in 2019-20.

Mallorca, partly owned by

Golden State Warriors coach

Steve Kerr and former NBA

great Steve Nash, won the

Copa in 2003 but hadn't

made it to the semifinals since 2009. Its last appearance in the final was 2009.

2003 when it beat Recreativo

eliminated Girona in the

Copa quarterfinals, sits just

outside the relegation zone

Sociedad has drawn its last

three matches 0-0. It is sixth

in the Spanish league and

will play Paris Saint-Germain in the round of 16

of the Champions League. The first leg of the other semifinal will be played on

Wednesday with Atletico Madrid hosting Athletic.

Atletico is playing in the last

four of the Copa for the first

time in seven seasons and is

seeking its first title since

2013. Athletic eliminated

Barcelona to reach the

semifinals for the fifth

straight season.

in the Spanish league.

which

Huelva.

Mallorca

Takefusa

remains open."

cross

international

Kubo.

AP MADRID



comfortably against Bhutan (10-0) and Nepal (4-0) but lost to Bangladesh by a solitary goal before entering midfield, India enjoy good the final as the second-place attacking

finishers in the group. Apart from having a tight defence and a balanced

forwards Pooja and Sulanjana Raul and wingers Neha and Sibani Devi putting up a commendable show. However, it will definitely not

be easy to topple the hosts, who beat India in the group league earlier this week. No one knows it better than India's India have been losing to Bangladesh for the past three years, but tomorrow will be the time to change that. I am sure both teams will put in equal efforts, but the team who score first will likely emerge champion, as the confidence to score more will start from there," she said ahead of the Bangladesh clash.

"I understand there will be huge support for Bangladesh, but we'll only concentrate on our own game," she said. Having already played against

Bangladesh in the group stage, the India head coach knows how to handle the situation.

'We know exactly how they play. But there's no doubt they're a good side. I have instructed my players to stay focused on their positions and prioritise man-marking. "It's crucial to cover the midfield more effectively because if we disrupt their ball distribution in that area, we can perform even better."

medal. She scored 30 points in that game to help Australia rout Canada 95-65. She had

retired from playing in 2016

after knee injuries derailed

her career, missing the Rio Olympics. She slowly

returned, playing in a

domestic Australian league

Germany, which is led by the Sabally sisters, Satou and Nyara, is trying to earn its first trip to the Olympics. It would be an arter beact for

would be an extra boost for the country that is hosting the 2026 World Cup. Former Canada coach Lisa

Thomaidis took over the

German team in April that is

playing in Brazil with Australia and Serbia.

Canada guard Kia Nurse said

on a conference call that she

would miss the tournament

because of a minor injury. ...

With France already having a

berth in the Olympics locked

up and China hosting the

qualifying tournament it is

most likely going to be the

the last few years.



Para badminton stars eye Paralympic berth

PTI MUMBAI

Indian para badminton players Manasi Joshi, Mandeep Kaur and Palak Kohli have set sights on excelling in the World Championships to be held in Pattaya from February 20-25, as success there would propel them into the Paralympics later this year. India won a total of 21 medals in badminton from a historic grand total of 111 at the Para Asian Games in Hangzhou last year, with Manasi and Mandeep clinching a bronze each in singles.

There was further success in store for both the shuttlers in the women's doubles SL3-SU5 event, with Manasi bagging a medal ` silver Thulasimathi Murugesan and Mandeep winning a bronze with Manisha Ramdass.

"We all are going to be playing in the World Championships for which we are travelling on February 17. This is the final; this is the end of the Paralympics qualification year," Manasi told PTI in an exclusive chat on a sidelines of an event organised by their sponsors Welspun, who focus on promoting female athletes. "The qualification process ends on March 31, from that day our rankings and the race to Paris will be frozen and that is why this Championship World tournament is important for all of us," she added. Manasi said a "high concentration" competitions would only push the para athletes to give their best on the court. India won 111 medals at the Para Asian Games, I am highest concentration of tournaments for us where there was Asian Games, World Championships and then the Paralympics this year in August.

"We don't know what happens in the next 2-3 months but for me it is one of the biggest competitions. I am very hopeful and happy that I am able to understand myself better and put in a very different kind of effort," she added. Mandeep said getting two months of training time before the tournament in Pattaya would help the shuttlers

"Every player has Olympics as their target but before that I have the World Championships," she said. 'We did not get much time (to train) before the Para Asian Games, tournaments happening back to back.

But we have got about two months to train for the World Championships and we are working hard and hope to give our 100 per cent," Mandeep said. The 21-year-old Palak, who

has recovered from being diagnosed with having bone tumour, says she is more confident of the challenges ahead.

"My main target this year is Paris; I am not looking at anything lesser than a podium at Paris," she said. 'Last year has been (about) a comeback for me. In 2022, I did not know what will happen in my life ahead. I was struggling in that phase of my life and I did not know whether I would be there tomorrow

"But days go by and you become stronger. The strength and courage you get after facing... After overcoming those hurdles, you have more power for

or not.

Olympic women basketball qualifiers set to begin around the world of pros on its roster, the teams

The US and France have already qualified for the Paris Olympics this summer in women's basketball. The 10 other spots are up for grabs this week in four qualifying tournaments that are spread throughout the world.

Belgium, China, Hungary and Brazil will each host four teams in a round-robin style format that begins Thursday. The top three teams in Brazil and Hungary will advance to the Olympics this summer. In Belgium and China, the

top two teams other then France and the U.S. Will qualify for the Games as well. The Americans sent a WNBA filled roster to the tournament in Belgium, where they will play the host nation on Thursday and then Senegal and Nigeria in the other two contents this other two contests this weekend. The US team is missing Olympians A'ja Wilson, Brittney Griner and Chelsea Gray, who all have a very strong shot to be on the

While the US is using a bunch World Cup, making the to it. The 42-year-old three-

playing in Brazil have a few college players on them. South Carolina star Kamilla Cardoso is missing the No. 1 Gamecocks next two games to compete with the Brazilian team. UCLA forward Lina Sontag is playing with the German team and Angela Dugalic with the Serbian

Washington State's Charlisse Leger-Walker was set to play for New Zealand as well before she tore her right ACL late last month. Here are a few other things to

look for in the qualifying tournaments: Nigeria will play Senegal on

the opening night in Belgium and the winner most likely will be the Olympic representative for the continent. African teams have struggled at the first Olympics since participating in 1996, winning just once in the 2004 Games. Nigeria beat South Korea in that contest. Nigeria did have a major reakthrough at



Australian national team will

have at least one more chapter

time WNBA MVP, who has won four Olympic medals with Australia, is part of the Opals team that will play in Brazil.

Jackson capped off an World Cup in 2022, helping the host nation win a bronze that area.

very proud to have winner of the game between incredible comeback at the Puerto Rico and New Zealand contributed two in it. From that gets the other bid from we have had one of the life," she added. **Laureus World Sports Awards**

to be held in Madrid on April 22

Egypt appoints Hossam as head coach

 $E_{\text{in charge of its national}}$ soccer team with Hossam Hassan taking over as coach and Ibrahim Hassan as team director.

The Egyptian Football Association said Tuesday that Hossam Hassan - the country's all-time top-scorer with 68 goals - will succeed Portuguese coach Rui Vitória, whom it fired Sunday after the team's disappointing performance at the Africa Cup of Nations. Egypt, which has won a

record seven Africa Cup titles, failed to win a game in the 34th edition of the tournament and was knocked out by Congo in a dramatic penalty shootout in the round of 16.

As a forward, the Cairo-born



to three of those titles. He played mostly for hometown club Al Ahly, with a sojourn at PAOK in Greece and Swiss team Neuchâtel Xamax. He played for other Egyptian clubs before retiring in 2008.

He since coached many Egyptian clubs and the Jordan national team. Ibrahim Hassan, a former

defender, also played for Hossam Hassan helped Egypt Egypt and accompanied his

brother at various clubs The Egyptian federation had said it was looking for a foreign coach to succeed Vitória. French coach Herve Renard had been tipped to take over.

Vitória, who was appointed Egypt coach on a four-year deal in 2022, failed to get the best out of the team. The Pharaohs drew all their Africa Cup group games by the same score of 2-2 against Mozambique, Ghana and Cape Verde before its loss on penalties to Congo. After losing Mohamed Salah

to a hamstring injury in the second group game against Ghana, and No. 1 goalkeeper Mohamed El Shenawy with a dislocated shoulder in the third against group winner Cape Verde, the Egyptian federation sacrificed a cow in an attempt the change the

PTI ■ LONDON

The 25th Laureus World Sports Awards will take place in Madrid, Spain on April 22, it was announced on Wednesday. Many of the biggest names from the world of sport, past and present, will be present to honour the greatest sportsmen, sportswomen and teams from 2023. Each of the winners will receive a coveted Laureus statuette, one of the most

excellence in sport. The awards ceremony will take place at the Palacio de Cibeles, one of Madrid's most iconic buildings, a statement said.

recognisable symbols of

The Laureus Awards will celebrate the most memorable

performances of 2023, a year in which Madrid welcomed home the FIFA Women's World Cup winners after

victory in Australia. The Spain team, led by Aitana Bonmat, lit up a tournament that was one of highlights of an incredible year in sport.

Also in 2023, Novak Djokovic moved to the front of tennis' golden generation, with only Alcaraz keeping the world No.1 from a clean sweep of the four Grand Slams by grabbing the Wimbledon title.

Athletics World Championships featured showstopping performances from athletes such as Faith Sha'Carri Kipyegon, Richardson, Shericka Jackson, Mondo Duplantis

and Noah Lyles. Formula One the On racetrack, Max Verstappen and Oracle Red Bull Racing had a record-breaking

World Championships. At the Rugby World Cup, Siya Kolisi recovered from injury to lead South Africa to the pinnacle once more.

season, securing both the

Drivers' and Constructors'

While this is the first time Madrid will host the Laureus World Sports Awards, it is the fifth time the event has been held in Spain, following Barcelona (2006, 2007) and Seville (2021 and 2022).

The Laureus World Sports Awards Show will also include the Laureus Sport for which Good Award, recognises an individual or organisation which has made

a significant contribution to transforming the lives of children and young people through sport.

Since its inception, Laureus has helped to improve the lives of more than six and a half million children and young adults, and now supports more than 300 sports-based community programmes around the world, fulfilling the visionary words of its founding Patron Nelson Mandela - 'Sport has the power to change the world'.

The winners of Laureus World Sports Awards are selected by the ultimate sports jury -- the 69 members of the Laureus World Sports Academy, the living legends of sport honouring the greatest athletes of today.

lan reaches first Asian

AP ■ AL-RAYYAN (QATAR)

Up against one of the pre-tournament favorites. favorites, Jordan reached the final of the Asian Cup for the first time after stunning South Korea 2-0. Yazan Al Naimat and Mousa Tamari struck in the second half at Ahmad Bin Ali Stadium to upset the odds and end coach Jurgen Klinsmann's hopes of adding another major trophy to his collection. "I believe the main thing I told my players was not to respect the South Korean team more than you should," Jordan coach Hussein Ammouta said afterward. "I think this gave

my players that confidence.

"We had nothing to lose."

Jordan will play Iran or
defending champion Qatar in the final this weekend. Their semifinal is on Wednesday. South Korea, meanwhile, is left rue a missed opportunity

as its wait for a third Asian

Cup title goes on.

coach is responsible for how a tournament goes for a team. The goal was to get to the final. We didn't get to the final," said Klinsmann, South Korea's coach who as a player helped West Germany win the World Cup in 1990. "We couldn't use our chances. We congratulate Jordan. They

deserve to be in the final."



Al Naimat fired Jordan ahead in the 53rd minute by flicking Tamari made it 2-0 in the 66th a shot beyond goalkeeper Jo Hyeon-woo, who had already with a long-range effort that

pulled off a series of saves to keep the score level.

sent fans in the stadium wild and extend his team's unlikely run in the competition. Jordan had only advanced to

the round of 16 as one of the best third-place teams in the group stage and had finished below South Korea in Group E. But under Moroccan coach Ammouta, it keeps coming up with the right answers and dominated the semifinal.

Klinsmann admitted Jordan "won almost every one-on-one battle in the first half hour.

South Korea needed a stoppage time own goal to secure a draw with Jordan in the group stage and mounted late comebacks in the round

of 16 and quarterfinals against Saudi Arabia and Australia, respectively. But a repeat never looked likely on this occasion.

While the two-time champion was aiming to win its first Asian Cup since 1960, Jordan was playing in the semifinal for the first time.

There was little sign of the players being overwhelmed by the occasion.

"They were the weapons and they delivered an heroic performance," Ammouta said. It was South Korea's players who looked inhibited as Jordan applied the pressure. Noor Al Rawabdeh and Al Naimat both forced saves

Tamari fired narrowly wide with another effort. South Korea struggled to create openings but came close to going ahead just after

from Jo in the early stages and

the half-hour mark. Lee Jaesung stooped to meet Hwang In-beom's cross from the right, but his header came back off the foot of the post. Jordan then had its best chance of the half shortly before the break when Al Naimat twisted and turned his way through the area and stabbed a shot at goal from five meters (yards) out. He was only denied by the face of Jo, who appeared to know little about his save.

BUMRAH FIRST INDIAN PACER TO REACH NUMBER 1 IN ICC TEST RANKINGS

rasprit Bumrah on Wednesday became the first Indian pacer to top the ICC Test rankings after a stellar per-formance against England in Visakhapatnam.

The 30-year-old's nine-wicket match haul has helped him leapfrog Pat Cummins, Kagiso Rabada and Ravichandran Ashwin, making him only the fourth from his country to

attain number one position. Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja and Bishan Singh Bedi are the other Indians who have been at the top of the charts.

Bumrah, who was named Player of the Match after helping India level the five-match series with a 106-run victory, ended Ashwin's 11month long reign. Ashwin, on 499 Test wickets, is now third in the standings.

Bumrah now has 881 rating points with Ashwin (904) and Jadeja (899) the only India bowlers to have aggregated more rating points. Ashwin and Jadeja also have the unique distinction of being jointly topranked in March 2017.

ranked in March 2017.
The batting rankings see left-handed opener Yashasvi Jaiswal progress 37 places to 29th after completing a fine double-century in the first innings and Shubman Gill go up 14 places to a career-best 38th after notching a century in the second innings.
England opener Zak Crawley is another player to gain after the Visakhapatnam Test, moving up eight places to a career-best 22nd position after scores of 76 and 73.

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Rookie leg-spinner Rehan Ahmed has moved up 14 places to 70th while Tom Hartley, who became just the



least 50 runs and five wickets in each of his first two Tests, has advanced in both lists up from 103rd to 95th in the batting rankings and from 63rd to 53rd in the bowling rankings. The latest rankings have also factored in performances in the one-off Test between Sri Lanka and Test between Sri Lanka and Afghanistan in Colombo. Left-Prabhath arm spinner Jayasuriya has moved up to hayasuriya has moved up to three places to a career-best sixth position after his eight-wicket match haul helped the home side win by 10 wickets. In the ODI rankings, Australia leg-spinner Adam Zampa is up one place to third and fast bowler Sean Abbott's six wickets in the three-match wickets in the three-match series against the West Indies this past week have lifted him 35 places to joint-33rd position.



Uday: New captain cool and chip off old block

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

During the U-19 Challenger tournament last year, India skipper Uday Saharan wasn't scoring runs and father Sanjeev was getting anxious as the national selection committee was about to pick the squad for junior Asia Ĉup.

"I wasn't in best frame of mind as Uday wasn't scoring runs, but he would tell me, 'papa, don't worry, runs will come. That's Uday for you. I am not saying because he is my son but at 19, he can remain uncluttered, Sanjeev, beaming with joy after his son led India to their fifth consecutive U-19 World Cup final, told PTI.

For the uninitiated, Uday plays national level cricket from district Ganganagar

Rajasthan. "During matches, he travels from Shri Ganganagar to Bathinda which is a two-hour train journey. He is doing second year B.Com from Bathinda University. It was a friend of my mine, who suggested that Uday be shifted to Fazilka in Punjab for cricket," the father informed. Fazilka is also Shubman Gill's

village. With one hundred and three fifties in six World Cup games so far, Punjab batter Uday is currently the highest rungetter in this edition, and his batting style resembles the 1980s and 90s' top-order accumulators.

He scores his runs at a strike rate of early 70s, something that he will need to address at senior level. As of now, it is

serving the purpose.

'Uday tells me that papa jab singlé, double pe baat ban jaayegi toh chakka maarne ki kya zaroorat? Chakka maarna hoga toh woh bhi maar lunga (why try for sixes when I can get the job done by taking ones and twos. When the need arises, I will hit sixes too," said Sanjeev, who is an Ayurvedic doctor and a BCCI Level 1 accredited coach.

For him, technique is sacrosanct and he gave an insight into how Uday learnt to play copybook, conventional

"During my playing days, I represented my district in Rajasthan CA's biggest tournament Colvin Shield. I was known as 'Gavaskar' in my local circuit as bowlers couldn breach my defence.

"I have taught Uday the value of technique. And as for IPL game, when he was 16, he scored 108 off 60 balls in a local district match, hitting Arshdeep Singh for sixes," the father said.

How was the mood in the Saharan household on Tuesday night when Uday was in the midst of a tense chase.

"Kya hi bolun. Uday ki didi, meri badi beti toh mandir wale ghar se nikli nahi. Woh toh roney lag gaayi thi. Meri patni ka bhateeje ki shaadi thi lekin woh bhi pura match mandir mein baithi rahi. Hum Pallu Devi maa ko bahot mante hai (My elder daughter and wife prayed the whole time and didn't step out of the temple at home. My wife didn't attend the wedding reception of a

Pant is confident of playing entire IPL: Ponting saying that we're only six weeks away from the first game as well. So we're not sure if we'll

Rishabh Pant is confident of playing the entire IPL but the flamboyant cricketer could only be available as a batter and not behind the stumps, according to Delhi Capitals head coach Ricky Ponting.

Pant was involved in a life-threatening car accident in December, 2022 that forced him to undergo ligament

reconstruction surgeries.

"Rishabh is very confident that he's going to be right to play. In what capacity we're not quite sure yet," Ponting was quoted as saying by 'ESPNCricinfo'.

"You would have seen all the social-media stuff, he's up and about and running well. But in

get wicketkeeping out of him this year." "We'll just keep our fingers

crossed and hope that he can be out there and play. Even if it's not all the games, if we can manage him through 10 of the 14 games or whatever that might be then whatever games you can get out of him will be a In case Pant is not able to fulfil

wicketkeeping duties, the 26-year-old could play as a pure batter or could be used as an Impact Player in the upcoming IPL, expected to begin in March.

"But I'll guarantee if I asked



him now he'll say, 'I'm playing every game, I'm keeping every game and I'm batting at No.4.' That's just what he's like, but journey he's been on the last we'll keep our fingers crossed.

"He's such a dynamic player. He's obviously our captain. We missed him incredibly last year. If you understand the

12-13 months, it was a horrific incident. One that I know he feels very lucky to have even survived, let alone have the chance to play cricket again." WARNER TO LEAD IF PANT UNAVAILABLE: David Warner led the Capital last season and Ponting confirmed that star Australian batter would be captain if Pant

batter would be captain if Pant is unavailable to do the job.
The franchise picked up young
England batter Harry Brook for Rs 4 crore at the auction last year. While Ponting is happy with his squad, the two-time World Cup winning captain acknowledged the team has underperformed in the past

two seasons.
"With Harry Brook coming

into the set-up as well, so Warner, [Mitch] Marsh, Harry Brook, we've got some really good overseas batters," Ponting said.

"Marsh and Warner will bat up the top somewhere and Harry Brook has been finishing off with England, so he'll probably play a finishing role for us

"[If] we can get [Anrich] Nortje and Jhye Richardson fit, and with the two spin options we've got with Axar Patel and Kuldeep Yadav we've got a really good squad that to be fair has probably underperformed the last couple of years, so we've got some work to do." The Capitals had finished fifth

in 2022 and ninth last season.



Botham credits England for intusing lite into Test cricket

Legendary all-rounder Ian Botham feels that England's ultra-aggressive 'Bazball' approach under Ben Stokes has infused new life into Test crick-

Since Brendon McCullum and Stokes became head coach and captain respectively, England have redefined the way the traditional format is played. "You just have to look at the crowds. The crowds are now starting to come back to Test cricket," Botham told 'SENQ

"Playing against India 20-30 years ago in India, the grounds were heaving. Suddenly, the IPL came along and so did one-day cricket and the

crowds then plummeted. People are now coming back and wanting to see (Bazball)." The former captain said England have won more Test matches than losing them after the introduction of

Bazball'. "You are entertainers at the end of the day and if you want people to come to the games, you have to entertain. They don't want to see someone score 1.2 runs per hour, you want to see guys just boss the

game.
"You are going to lose one or two games here or there but England have played 15 and won 12. England sells out games across all five days now which was just unheard of. "Test cricket is now healthier than it has been for a long time," said Botham who took 383 wickets and scored 5200 runs from 102 Tests between 1977 and 1992.

Botham also suggested that other teams are also wanting to play like England. "It's rubbed off (onto other

teams). Quite often, you see sides who are three or four wickets down and (the bowling team) seem to relax. "When you've got your foot on the throat, you have got to keep it there and do the job. Test cricket has become more impressive which I think is important."

England are currently tied 1-1 in a five-match Test series in India. The third Test begins in Rajkot on February 15.

We do not do team meetings anymore: Root on Bazball culture

England under Ben Stokes are not big on team meetings and prefer organic conversations about the game to get the best out of players, says the team's batting mainstay Joe Root.

Root, who is yet to make big runs in the ongoing Test series against India, has fully bought into England's aggressive style of play in the longest format. Their five-match series against India is lealed at \$1.1.5 for the India is locked at 1-1 after the hosts bounced back to trump 'Bazball' here on Monday in

'We don't really do team meetings anymore. That's one of the great things about how we do all of our conversations away from the game and just that enjoyment and buzz about spending time with each other," Root had told 'Jio Cinema' before the game here. We don't have to sit in a meeting room and I think it's more authentic and more genuine when you can have it around a dinner table. Having a coffee in the morning or whatever, I think that's when you do your best learning," he

England found themselves trailing India by 190 runs in Hyderabad before staging a sensational comeback. Here too, they conceded a 143-run lead but were not able to catch up with their opponents. "Regardless, of the result of the



game, we're always going to play how we know. It's what's given us success for a good period of time now. It's what brings the best out of us. We've been in similar situations before.

"The last time we played India in England, in that one-off Test, we were miles behind in the game and we managed to chase that score down. There have been numerous other occasions where we've done things that we never thought we could have done before, said Root. On Ollie Pope's match winning

surface. "The more time we spend in these conditions, hopefully, we can continue to familiarize ourselves and keep that calmness about how we go

about things.

196 in the opening Test, Root added: "Ollie went out and

probably played one of the best

overseas innings you'll see in

these conditions, especially

against that attack on that

"But also, when the chances are there and when the time's right, and then try to attack at the

we can keep applying pressure right moment."

AP MOUNT MAUNGANUI (NEW

ZEALAND) New Zealand beat an under-strength South Africa lineup by 281 runs on the fourth day of the first cricket test Wednesday to take an early lead in the two-match series. Captain Tim Southee declared New Zealand's second innings overnight at 179-4, with an overall lead of 528. New Zealand bowled out South Africa in the fourth innings for 247. New Zealand posted 511 batting first and dismissed South Africa for 162 for a 349-run first innings lead. Southee chose not to enforce the follow-on and Kane Williamson completed his second century of the match, the 31st of his career, before the declaration.

"I think it was pretty good on a good (pitch) for the batters to set it up and the bowlers to take 20 wickets," Southee said. "We knew the South Africa side would be a strong one. You look at them in all

Zealand beats South A

sports, they compete, they're a very proud nation so we knew they were going to come out and fight.'

South Africa was in trouble early Wednesday, losing the wickets of openers Neil Brand and Edward Moore within the first four overs.

Zubayr Hamza and Raynard van Tonder batted more than 100 minutes to carry South Africa to lunch without further loss. But both were out to undisciplined shots immediately after the break, hastening the end.

David Bedingham lifted South Africa's hopes after lunch with a career-best 87 from 96 balls in a partnership of 105 for the fifth wicket with Keegan Petersen (16). The partnership occupied most of the middle session and while Bedingham and Petersen were together New Zealand was faced

with the prospect that the test might continue into the fifth day.

Bedingham had benefited from New Zealand's short-pitched bowling, hitting 13 fours and a six. But he chased a short ball once too often and fell to Kyle Jamieson not long after the tea interval.

Jamieson removed both partners as South Africa slumped from 178-4 to 181-6. Bedingham tried to pull a ball which reached him sooner than he expected and his miscued shot flew to Mitchell Santner at deep midwicket. Petersen attempted to hook a ball

taken by Rachin Ravindra at fine With such a big lead, New Zealand was able to work on plans to dismiss the key South Africa batters and,

which bounced to chest height,

tucked him up and his pull shot was



pitch policy eventually yielded the

wicket of Bedingham. Clyde Fortuin's dismissal was indicative of the bad luck South Africa has had throughout the test.

while it was expensive, the short- He pushed a rank short ball from part-time spinner Glenn Phillips which hit the knee of Tom Latham as he ducked at short leg and flew up to be caught by wicketkeeper Tom Blundell.

Duanne Olivier was caught by Daryl Mitchell at first slip from Santner's bowling as he pushed forward outside off. Santner found a lot of turn earlier in the day and was unlucky not to enjoy more success. Tshepo Moreki was caught out by a ball from Santner which pitched in line and hurried on, catching him in front as he squared up in front of his stumps.

The end finally came 40 minutes before scheduled stumps when Dane Paterson holed out to Williamson from Santner's bowling. New Zealand's win was set up on the first day when Williamson and Ravindra made centuries in a partnership eventually worth 232. Williamson was out early on the second day for 118 but Ravindra turned his maiden test century into a double century before he was out

Ravindra also took his first two wickets in tests in the first innings as New Zealand control of the match. South Africa selected six new caps in its lineup for the test, stripped of most of its leading players who stayed home to play in a domestic T20 series. Inevitably, there were signs of inexperience: notably that batsmen who had made a start got out after a break in play.

But there were promising signs from South Africa's middle order batters. Brand opened in both innings and made 4 and 3 with the bat. But he excelled with the ball, taking eight wickets with his parttime spinners.

"We were completely outplayed by a very good New Zealand team," Brand said. "I think our patience was tested on this wicket. Guys got in then got themselves out. Back to the drawing board and I hope we can compete more in the second

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