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PROFIT TAKING IN BANKING

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RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADA

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VIRAT ABSENCE, GREAT CHANCE FOR ENGLAND: BROAD 12 SPORTS

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Union Ministers held talks in Chandigarh Monday evening with farmer leaders to dissuade them from their "Delhi Chalo" march. Meanwhile, authorities in Delhi fortified the border points with neighbouring States and imposed a monthlong ban on large gatherings. security arrangements were put in prevent the farmers from

entering the city on Tuesday. The ministers, including Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Pivush Goval and Agriculture Minister Arjun Munda, held the second round of talks with the farmer leaders at the Mahatma Gandhi State Institute of Public Administration in Sector 26. Leaders such as Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal and Kisan Mazdoor Sangharsh Committee general secretary Sarwan Singh Pandher were among those present at the

meeting, which commenced at around 6:30 pm. At the time of going to press, the meeting was still in progress. During the meeting, the Centre has already assured them that some of their demands will be However, sources indicate that the farmer leaders are unwilling to relent until the debt waiver and legal

guarantee for Minimum and paramilitary personnel Support Price (MSP) are equipped with anti-riot gear fulfilled. The demands has accepted by the Centre Multiple layers of barricades, include granting Rs 10 lakh concrete blocks, iron nails, compensation to farmers injured in Lakhimpur Kheri, been erected at three border cancelling FIRs related to the 2020-21 farmers' agitation, providing compensation and

been implemented. and walls of containers have points: Singhu, Tikri, and Ghazipur. Additionally, makeshift

processions, or rallies, as well as the entry of tractor trolleys carrying people, in the national capital. The Delhi Police has imposed Section 144 for a month in anticipation of widespread tension and "social unrest' due to the farmers' "Delhi



Multi-layered barricading in place at Singhu Border ahead of the scheduled 'Delhi Chalo' march by the farmers in New Delhi

jobs for families of farmers killed in the agitation, and improving the quality of seeds across all crops. This also involves revising licences and imposing penalties on companies manufacturing selling sub-standard seeds.

To prevent the farmers from entering the city on Tuesday, massive deployment of police complete ban on gatherings,

established "specific locations" in anticipation of the farmers' "Delhi Chalo'

The police are also using drones to maintain strict surveillance at border points, an official stated, emphasising that they are fully prepared to handle any law and order situation. There will be a In addition to a legal guarantee for MSP, the farmers are also demanding the implementation of the Swaminathan Commission's recommendations, pensions for farmers and farm laborers, farm debt waiver, withdrawal of police cases, and "justice" for victims of the Lakhimpur Kheri violence.

Delhi Fortress against Farmers Soft diplomacy at work: Modi brings back Naval veterans from Qatar

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

 $I^{n \quad a \quad major \quad diplomatic}_{achievement \quad for \quad the}$ country, eight Indian Navy veterans were released by Qatar, 46 days after their death sentences, handed down last October, were commuted to jail terms of varying duration. They were arrested on alleged charges of espionage. However, neither Qatar nor India made the charges against them public. Seven of them returned home early Monday. The eight nationals are

Captains (retired) Navtej Gill Vasisht, Saurabh Commanders (retired) Purnendu Tiwari, Amit Nagpal, SK Gupta, BK Verma, and Sugunakar Pakala, and sailor Ragesh.

was learned Commander Tiwari stayed back in Doha and is likely to return to India soon.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be travelling to Doha in Qatar on Wednesday after his visit to the United Emirates Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra announced here on Monday, adding that the Minister had "personally supervised' developments in the case. "Prime Minister Modi had personally supervised this issue. This (the release) is



also reflects the strength of India-Qatar ties," the Foreign Secretary said.

While speaking to reporters, Kwatra added, "The Prime Minister has personally and constantly supervised all the developments in this case and has never shied away from any initiatives that would ensure the return of Indian nationals back home?

The announcement about Modi's visit to Qatar came a day after the Gulf nation released eight jailed former Indian naval personnel. "We are gratified by Qatar's decision to release the Indians," Kwatra said.

Foreign Secretary mentioned that Modi and Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, the Emir of Qatar, will hold wide-ranging talks to further expand bilateral ties. after their death sentences, handed down last October. were commuted to jail terms of varying duration.

Kwatra also expressed gratitude, saying, "We are grateful for their return. We deeply appreciate the decision of Qatar's government and the Amir to release them. We are happy to have seven of those Indian nationals back. The 8th Indian national has also been released, and we continue to work with the Qatari government to see how quickly his return to India would be possible." In December last year, Prime

Minister Modi met Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani on the sidelines of the COP28 Summit in Dubai and discussed the well-being of the Indian community in

This meeting was in the backdrop of Qatar backdrop commuting death sentence to jail terms to the eight veterans. National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval negotiations with the Qatari authorities in securing the release of the Indians, it was

Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said here on Monday India appreciates the decision by the Emir of Oatar to enable the release and homecoming of the Indians, who were arrested in August 2022. Union Minister Anurag Thakur welcomed the release

of eight Navy veterans and said it strengthened the belief in seriousness and the ability of the Modi Government to protect its citizens at any cost. This homecoming of our Navy veterans is a moment of happiness and this further strengthens our belief in the seriousness and ability of the Modi government to protect its citizens at any cost, Thakur said on X.

Minister "Prime Narendra Modi means the guarantee of life, limb and liberty of the people of India across the globe," he said, adding that the veterans were detained "under some false charges". BJP and Congress

welcomed the development. Continued on Page 2

PATNA/NEWDELHI

The newly formed Nitish Kumar-led NDA Government in Bihar won the trust vote in the State Assembly on Monday, amid a walkout by Mahagathbandhan led by RJD Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav. In the 243-member Bihar Vidhan Sabha, a total of 129 members voted in favour of the motion of confidence. Deputy Speaker Maheshwar Hazari presided over the session as Speaker Awadh Bihari Chaudhary, a member of the RJD, was removed through resolution. Chaudhary had refused to step down despite his party losing power a fortnight ago. After declaring the motion as passed through a voice vote, Hazari ordered a headcount following Parliamentary Vijay following a request from Affairs Kumar Chaudhary, which was seconded by Chief Minister

against him by the ruling NDA. Only 112 members voted against the motion. Kumar recently abandoned the Mahagathbandhan, of which the RJD was a key constituent, and returned to

Nitish Kumar. To facilitate the floor test, Chaudhary was

removed with 125 members

voting in favour of the no-

confidence motion moved



Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar being greeted by his deputies Vijay Kumar Sinha and Samrat Choudhary after Kumar-led NDA Government in the State won a vote of confidence during the first day of Budget session of the Assembly in Patna

government with the support

Earlier, participating in the debate on the motion, the JD(U) chief alleged that the RJD indulged in corrupt practices during the party's rule in the State, and the new NDA-led government will

initiate a probe into it. Kumar also claimed that during RJD's tenure, several communal riots took place in Bihar. "There was no law and order. The RJD indulged in corrupt practices during its rule (before 2005)... I will get these probed," he said. Speaking in the Assembly, Tejashwi Yadav said he always considered Kumar to be a

the NDA fold to form the "father figure" and wondered what forced him to ditch the Mahagathbandhan return to the BJP-led NDA. "I always considered Nitish Kumar as 'Dashrath' (a character from the Ramayan). don't know what reasons forced him to ditch the Mahagathbandhan," he said. The NDA, comprising the JD(U), the BJP, former CM Jitan Ram Manjhi's HAM, and an Independent, has a combined strength of 128. However, it received a shot in the arm with three RJD MLAs Prahlad Yaday, Chetan Anand, and Neelam Devi —

Continued on Page 2

walking over to the ruling

Nitish survives trust vote Nyay Yatra shifts gears, turns to Western UP

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Congress-led Opposition INDIA bloc ally, Rashtriya partner with the NDA, the Congress has decided to cut short their ongoing Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra in Uttar Pradesh by skipping the western part of the State, which is the stronghold of the Jayant Chaudhary-led RLD. The RLD has been a long

time ally of the Samajwadi Party (SP) and may join hands with the BJP ahead of the Lok Sabha elections. Though there has been a rift within the RLD leaders and their legislators in the UP Assembly, Jayant has already indicated a switch-over after his grandfather, former Prime Minister Chaudhary Charan Singh, was conferred with the Bharat Ratna by the Narendra Modi Government last week. Denying that the sudden shift of the RLD towards the BJP has prompted the Congress to leave the western UP region, Congress said the change in the itinerary of the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra is only due to the UP Board examinations. Uttar Pradesh Congress spokesperson Anshu Awasthi said the duration of the yatra



in UP is being reduced in view of the State board examinations for Classes 10 and 12. The yatra was earlier scheduled to remain in Uttar Pradesh from February 16 to February 26 before entering Rajasthan. However, it will now end on February 21 and enter Madhya Pradesh by skipping western UP.

"Setting an example of sensitivity, Rahul Gandhi ji has prioritised public interest on many occasions. Keeping in mind the UP Board examinations starting from February 22, the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra will remain in Uttar Pradesh from February 16 to February 21," Awasthi said in a statement issued

"Earlier, Rahul Gandhi had cancelled his rallies in Bengal out of concern for the people the COVID-19 during period," the spokesperson

added.

Elaborating on the schedule of the yatra in UP, Awasthi said it will enter the state through Varanasi on February 16 and then reach Amethi on February 19 via Bhadohi, Prayagraj, and Pratapgarh. On February 19, Rahul Gandhi will address a public meeting in Gauriganj in the Amethi Lok Sabha constituency, and the yatra will reach Rae Bareli the

Continued on Page 2

Desertions galore, Ashok Chavan quits Congress

TN RAGHUNATHA MUMBAI

n a second major jolt to the Congress ahead of the February 27 Rajya Sabha polls and in the run up to the Lok Sabha polls in the State, minister Ashok Chavan on

Monday resigned from the grand old party.

Though Chavan said he had not "thought" about joining the ruling BJP or any other party and would decide on his party and would decide on his future course of action in the next couple of days, there were no takers for his statement in the State political circles.

Informed sources close to him said that he might join the BJP and he might be given a ticket by the ruling party to contest the biennial Rajya Sabha polls for six seats, scheduled to be held in the State on February 27. Chavan's Following

resignation, there were speculation within the State political circles that the ruling BJP — which is the single largest Opposition party the Maharashtra Assembly with a strength of 45 MLAs might use the use "services" of the senior party leader to engineer a split in the Congress ahead of and during the Rajya Sabha polls. The news about Chavan

having quit the Congress surfaced after he called on Assembly Speaker Rahul

Narwekar in the morning and submitted his resignation as an MLA. Before long, he took to micro-blogging site "X" and announced that he had quit the Congress.

have tendered my resignation as Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) from 85-Bhokar Assembly Constituency to the Assembly Speaker Rahulji Narvekar," Chavan wrote on "X".

Today I have resigned from the post of Member of Congress Working Committee of the Indian National Congress Party, membership of Maharashtra Congress Legislature Party and primary membership of the Indian National Congress," the former chief minister added.

Continued on Page 2

purchases and services," the

India emerges as a global wedding destination

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

After Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Mann Ki Baat appeal for destination weddings within the country, more than 42 lakh weddings are expected to be solemnised this marriage season between January 15 and July 15, incurring an expenditure of Rs 5.5 lakh crore. According to estimates from a traders' body, in Delhi alone, more than four lakh marriages are expected in these six months, which would bring business prosperity worth Rs 1.5 lakh crore. A survey conducted by the research wing of the Confederation of All India

Traders (CAIT) found that

expenditure of Rs 3 lakh per wedding, while about 10 lakh weddings will cost around Rs 6 lakh each. CAIT national president BC Bhartia revealed that following the Prime Minister's appeal, destination weddings within the country have gained popularity across all types of weddings.

Furthermore, it is projected that 10 lakh weddings will incur expenses of Rs 10 lakh per wedding, followed by 10 lakh weddings with lakh weddings with expenditures of Rs 15 lakhs per wedding. Additionally, 6 lakh weddings are expected to have

an expenditure of Rs 25 lakh

during the wedding season, it is estimated that about five takh weddings will have an wedding, and 40,000 weddings 50 lakh expenditure per wedding, and 40,000 weddings with expenses exceeding Rs 1 crore. Overall, during this sixmonth period, about Rs 5.5 lakh crore will circulate wedding-related through purchases in the markets. Last year, around 35 lakh weddings occurred during the

wedding season ending on December 14, with expenses estimated at Rs 4.25 lakh crore. The traders' body said that banquet halls, hotels, open lawns, community centres, public parks, farmhouses, and various other wedding venues are fully booked across the country, including Delhi. Besides purchasing accessories



at each wedding, a wide array of services is also in demand, including tent decorators, flower decorations, crockery, catering services,

services, cab services, professional welcome groups, vegetable vendors, photographers, videographers, bands, musicians, DJ services, this time.

wedding horses for processions, carriages, lighting, and numerous other services, all expected to thrive during

management and packaging of wedding goods and gift items have emerged as significant business prospects. Notably, the wedding season also provides employment opportunities for a large number of people working in the service sector. "Traders across the country,

Additionally,

including Delhi, are optimistic about the current wedding season, which commenced on January 15 and will extend till July 15. During this period, about 42 lakh weddings are expected to take place nationwide, resulting in a substantial capital influx of about 5.5 lakh crore rupees through wedding-related

CAIT survey report said.
"Before the wedding season, a significant amount of business is conducted in home repairs and painting. Additionally, jewellery, sarees, lehengachuni, furniture, readymade garments, clothing, footwear, wedding and greeting cards, dry fruits, sweets, fruits, worship items, groceries, food grains, decoration items, home decor, electrical utilities, electronics, and various gift items are typically in high demand and expected to generate significant business this year," CAIT secretary general Praveen Khandelwal Continued on Page 2

Bengal Governor, Irani seek | Shehnaz joins | Adhikari, five others arrest of fugitive Shahjahan

SAUGAR SENGUPTA KOLKATA

namour for justice for the besieged villagers of Sandeshkhali rose with Bengal Governor CV Ananda Bose and Union Minister Smriti Irani jointly on Monday demanding the arrest of absconding Trinamool Congress toughie Sheikh Shahjahan the don who had perpetrated a reign of terror for the past one decade across the river islands of this allegedly "TMC infested and god forsaken" area.

While Irani at a media conference in Delhi asked, "where is Sheikh Shahjahan" who along with his TMC felons had rav ished a number of Hindu women of the area Bose said that the situation inside the island boondocks had shattered his senses to the extent that like Shakespeare was forced to believe that heaven had fallen empty as all devils had descended to this region of North 24 Parganas barely 50 miles off

"What I saw was ghastly, shocking, shattering to my senses. I saw something which I should never have seen; I heard many things which I should never have heard. I cannot believe this could happen in Kabiguru Rabindranath Tagore's land," Bose told the media after returning from the island that had presently been blocked away by



the police administration in the wake a popular uprising that saw large-scale vandalism and arson where the angry villagers torched the properties of Shibu Hajra and Uttam Sardar the two cronies of Shahjahan.

Assuring the "justice" to the local villagers Bose quoted the women as saying: "we want peace, security for ourselves. We cannot stand this torture anymore," and adding, "I will see to it that the dignity of my sisters are restored."

Launching a scathing attack on Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for allowing the perpetration of mass sexual exploitation of Hindu women of the area Smriti Irani alleged," Mamata Bandopadhyay is infa-

in TMC premises." Quoting what the local women had told journalists Irani alleged how, "TMC members visit households to identify good looking women," and after identifying their targets their husbands were informed that they "may remain husbands in name only, with no rights over their

mous for the massacre of Hindu

women, and she is allowing her

supporters to systematically tar-

get Hindu married women for

repeated acts of sexual violence

While Irani's statements tended to confirm what your reporter gathered from first hand information at Saneshkhali even as she further alleged that "the TMC women would be kept

wives.

for nights on end ... till their lust was not satiated."

Wondering whether the citizens of India could remain passive bystanders even after learning about the mass rape of the Hindu women, Irani said, "earlier the question was who is Shahjahan ... but now the guestion is where is Shahjahan."
Though Shahjahan the TMC

district board member and a close confidant of jailed Bengal minister Jyotipriya Mallick --for his alleged role in RS 10,000 crore ration scam --- has been infamously known in the State for booth capturing and other electoral crimes he shot into national prominence when on January hundreds of men allegedly at his behest attacked Enforcement Directorate officials and CAPF personnel when they went to raid his house in connection with the ration scam.

There ED officials were griev-

ously hurt with one getting a

fractured head. Since then Shahjahan and Hajra who have jointly grabbed more than 1250 acres of land which is way more than what the Chief Minister fought for at Singur driving away the Tata Nano plant in that process have been absconding and applying for anticipatory bail from his hideouts. Incidentally one such bail appli-

cation was rejected on Monday.

BJP in JK



MOHIT KANDHARI JAMMU

fter granting the scheduled ATribe status to the Pahari ethnic group, the Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) has formally started beefing up its team in the Pir Panjal region ahead of the crucial 'battle of ballot' in the Union Territory of Jammu and

With an eye on the forthcoming elections, the BJP on Monday inducted Dr Shehnaz Ganai, a former Member of the Legislative Council into its ranks. She joined the party in the presence of the National General Secretary and Incharge Jammu and Kashmir, Tarun Chugh, and MoS PMO Dr Jitendra Singh at the party headquarters in New Delhi. Daughter of late National Conference Pahari leader and former minister Ghulam Ahmed Ganai, Dr. Shehnaz hailed from the Mandi area of Poonch.

She was elected to the Legislative Council as a National

Conference nominee against the Panchayat quota in 2013 and completed her five-year term in

Dr. Ganai resigned from the membership of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference to contest the District Development Council polls as an Independent candidate in 2020. She, however, lost the

Another senior Pahari leader Mushtaq Bukhari, who spearheaded the campaign to get ST status for the Pahari Ethnic group is likely to don the saffron robes soon.

Last week, a two-time MLC from NC and prominent Gujjar leader, Haji Mohammed Hussain, also joined BJP along with hundreds of supporters in the presence of BJP State general secretary (organization), Ashok Koul. By inducting prominent leaders of the Gujjar Bakerwal and Pahari ethnic group the BJP is aiming to win the maximum Lok Sabha seats.

raise Sandeshkhali issue in House; suspended



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Bengal Assembly Speaker Biman Banerjee on Monday suspended Suvendu Adhikari and five other BJP MLAs for 30 days for creating ruckus in the House when they were demanding a debate on Sandeshkhali matter.

The other suspended MLAs are Mihir Goswami, Shankar Ghosh, Tapasi Mondol, Agnimitra Paul and Bankim Ghosh. While the BJP MLAs sat on the floor of the House and shouted slogans condemning the Sandeshkhali incident the Speaker asked them to return to their respective seats, Bengal Parliamentary Affairs Minister Sobhandeb Chattopadhyay said adding, "they refused to maintain the decorum of this historic house leaving no other way for the Speaker but to suspended

The BJP MLAs who were wearing white T-shirts with the inscription "We are with Sandeshkhali" however refused to budge and walked out of the House shouting slogans.

'We feel proud and happy that we have been suspended for standing by the people of Sandeshkhali," Adhikari said before driving off along with 68 MLAs towards the disturbed village only to be stopped by the Kolkata Police at the mouth of Basanti Highway that leads to Sandeshkhali. The BJP leaders held on for

more than three hours before giving up as the police would not

Akhilesh Yadav is likely to

Soft diplomacy at work: Modi brings back Naval...

The MEA in a statement said India appreciates the decision by the Emir of Qatar to enable the release and homecoming of the Indians, who were arrested in August

"The Government of India welcomes the release of eight Indian nationals working for the Dahra Global company who were detained in Qatar," the MEA said.

"Seven out of the eight of them have returned to India. We appreciate the decision by the Amir of the State of Qatar to enable the release and home-coming of these nationals," it said in a brief

The Navy veterans were on October 26 given death

First Instance. The Court of Appeal in the Gulf nation on December 28 commuted the capital punishment and sentenced them to jail terms for durations ranging from three years to 25 years.

The Court of Appeal had also given 60 days to appeal against the prison terms. In December last year, Prime

Minister Narendra Modi met Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani on the sidelines of the COP28 Summit in Dubai and discussed the well-being of the Indian community in Qatar. The Indian nationals, who worked with the private company Al Dahra, were

sentences by Qatar's Court of of espionage. Neither the Qatari authorities nor New Delhi made the charges against the Indian nationals public.

> În May last year, Al-Dhara Global closed its operations in Doha and all those working there (primarily Indians) have since returned home.

> India was also looking at the possibility of invoking provisions of a bilateral pact on the transfer of sentenced persons.

The pact inked between India and Qatar in 2015 provides for citizens of India and Oatar who have been convicted and sentenced for criminal offences to serve arrested in August 2022 their sentences in their home reportedly in an alleged case country.

Kerala BJP padayatra loses steam

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

 $P_{\text{Modi's whirlwind tours to}}^{\text{rime Minister Narendra}}$ Thrissur and Kochi in the span of a fortnight created a big sensation all over Kerala. But with the Prime Miniter emplaning for Delhi from Kochi, the spirit generated by his roadshows and public meetings too got dissipated into thin air. The phenomenon was well proved by the public response to the padayatra being held by Kerala BJP president K Surendran from Kasaragod to Thiruvananthapuram as part of the Hindutva party's Lok Sabha election campaign.

With 20 seats at stake from Kerala, chances of the BIP opening its account in the State in 2024 too look bleak, if the public response to the padayatra is any indication. Empty chairs and thin crowd, at times even less than 50 persons, are what that welcome Surendran throughout the

The poor response forced Surendran to reschedule his walkathon and jump from northern districts to the southern districts. The padayatra's progress is like a rudderless ship got entangled in rough seas," said Sudheer Damodaran, a keen political observer who has covered Prime Minister Narendra Modi's electoral forays from Varanasi. The BJP promoted social

media handles too have started trolling Surendran and his campaign march much to the discomfit of the BJP's leader who has become a persona non grata in the party. "Surendran's tenure as party president will go down in history as the worst period of our party. The truth is that he is vet to understand the reality that he is a misfit and lacks organisational skills," said a veteran leader of the party. The leader, who preferred to

remain anonymous, said that Surendran should take a cue from the style of functioning of K Annamalai, president, Tamil Nadu BJP. "Today, Sannamalai is the news in Tamil Nadu and not Stalin or Edappadi Palaniswamy," said the Palakkad based leader. Though Surendran managed to

reach Palakkad with his truncated padayatra, he was forced to call off the campaign and rushed to southern district of Kollam for the next leg of the yatra. But that has not helped in attracting party cadres and supporters to the yatra dampening the spirit of Surendran. Prakash Javadekar, the incharge of the party claims from all platforms that the BJP would win five seats in the ensuing election.

'But Javadekar does not know the ground realities and demographic realities of the State," said Padmanabhan Nair, a long time worker of the party.

Nyay Yatra...

From there, it will proceed to Lucknow. The participants of the march, Gandhi, are likely to make a night halt there. The spokesperson said the yatra will reach Unnao from Lucknow on February 21. It will enter Kanpur via Unnao Shuklaganj. and Subsequently, it will reach Jhansi via Kanpur and Hamirpur, after which it will enter Madhya Pradesh on the same day. According to the website of

the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra, the hybrid bus and foot march were earlier scheduled to reach Bareilly from Lucknow. It would have then gone to Aligarh and Agra before entering Rajasthan. Asked when Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav will join the yatra, Awasthi said ŚP chief

join the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra in Rae Bareli district participate in a road show.

on February 20 and Yadav received an invitation to join the yatra on February 6. He had stated that he would join the yatra either in Amethi or in Raebareli. "Akhilesh Yadav has received an invitation from (Congress president) Mallikarjun Kharge to join Rahul Mallikarjun Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra, which enters UP on February 16. Yadav has agreed to join the yatra either in Amethi or Raebareli," the SP said in a statement. Yadav expressed his expectation that the yatra would align with the 'PDA' strategy of the SP upon entering the state and continue its agitation for "social justice and mutual

Desertions galore, Ashok Chavan quits Congress

From Page 1

statement.

Son of veteran Congress leader and former Union Home Minister SB Chavan, 65-yearold Chavan was the chief minister of Maharashtra from December 8, 2008 to November 9, 2010. He quit the post after he faced allegations of misuse of office in the much-discussed Adarsh Society scam.

Coming as it did after he attended the strategy meeting of the State Congress which was presided over by AICC general secretary Ramesh Chennithala, Chavan's resignation sent shockwaves in the State Congress circles.

Immediately after the news about Chavan's resignation Maharashtra surfaced, Congress chief Nana Patole flew to Chhattisgarh to meet Rahul Gandhi en route his Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra and would later head to New Delhi to discuss the issue with party president Mallikarjun Kharge. The development has caused a

considerable dent to the State, as Chavan's resignation came in less than a month after former union minister Milind M Deora exited from the Congress and joined Shiv Sena led by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde who had switched sides on January 14.

Meanwhile, interacting with the media, Chavan said that he had not "thought" of joining the BJP or any other party, but would take his next political step in the next couple of days. "I have quit the Congress Party, as an MLA and from all other party posts today... I have severed all my links with the party. I have no complaints and till yesterday I worked honestly for the party," Chavan

He denied that he was not making bargains to join any political party nor was he "in touch" with other Congress MLAs to quit along with him. Declining to spell out the reason for his quitting the Congress, Chavan said: "There may be some reasons. But I am not the kind to wash dirty linen in public. I don't have to tell everything in public. It's not in my nature to talk of any

individuals in public". He, however, said: "I admit the Congress has given me a lot, my family has a legacy with the party. But even I have worked very hard and sincerely for the party till I was with it. Now, I have made a decision to quit, and I do not hold any grudges against anyone."

Having suffered a major upset, the Congress went into a damage-control mode, with senior leaders establishing contact with MLAs to keep their flock together ahead of the February 27 Rajya Sabha

The Congress, with a strength of 45 MLAs in the State Assembly, apprehends that Chavan, who wields influence over at least a dozen MLAs, might tilt the electoral scale against it in the RS polls.

Not wanting to take any chances, top leaders including Congress Legislative Party leader Balasaheb Thorat, former chief minister Prithviraj Chavan and party's state working president Naseem Khan began reaching out to the party MLAs across

Nitish survives trust vote

From Page 1

BJP MLAs, who were elated at the party's return to power after a gap of nearly 17 months, erupted in chants of "Jai Shree Ram" as the trust vote was won by the Chief Minister, who spoke for nearly 30 minutes, venting spleen against erstwhile allies RID and the Congress as well as the Opposition INDIA bloc, which he had helped form.

Pointing towards RJD's Tejashwi Yadav, who had served as his deputy until he remained with the Mahagathbandhan, Kumar fumed: "What was the State of Bihar while it was ruled by his father (Lalu Prasad)? There were no roads, people were afraid of venturing out in the dark after sunset. We set it

right upon coming to power in 2005." The JD(U) chief, who was taunted by Tejashwi with the remark "what is the guarantee that Kumar will not do a flipflop yet again?", asserted that he was "with my old allies forever" and lamented that his efforts to bring together parties opposed to the BJP proved to be of no avail. "I had warned the Congress that things were not going well in things were not going well in the INDIA bloc. Some people were having problems with me occupying the centre stage. Even his (Yadav's) father seemed to have joined my detractors," alleged Kumar, who was seen as a contender for the post of a convener or the prime ministerial candidate of the Opposition coalition.

Kumar also came down heavily on Yadav for the claim that the State witnessed largescale recruitment of teachers as a result of the RJD's commitment to job creation. "Your party (RJD) has been involved in financial wrongdoings whenever it has been in power. All good work was done when the education department was held by my party." For a brief period, it was with the Congress, but you people created problems even back then," the CM claimed. The allusion was to Ashok Choudhary, former State Congress president, who had held the education portfolio when Kumar first shared with power Mahagathbandhan between 2015 and 2017. Choudhary subsequently switched over to the JD(U) and was a powerful minister till recently.

The JD(U) supremo also questioned the RJD's claim of championing the cause of Muslims and pointed out that it was only under his rule that the State did not witness any communal conflagration, unlike in the past. Even the culprits of the

The order was implemented

to enter the city.

1989 riots, which took place before the ascendancy of Lalu Prasad, were brought to justice only after the NDA came to power. A point of order was raised by Yadav when he saw the three MLAs of his party sitting on

the ruling side's bench. All three members voted along with the NDA in favour of the no-confidence motion, which was supported by 125 MLAs and opposed by 112. According to NDA sources, some MLAs of the JD(U)-BJP combine had not reached the House when the motion was taken up. However, they were present during the trust vote. Those who opposed the no-confidence motion against the Speaker included Akhtarul Iman, the lone MLA of Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi's AIMIM, which is not

a part of the Mahagathbandhan.
The election of the new Speaker is now likely to take place on Tuesday, as the day's proceedings were adjourned after the trust vote, which concluded late in the afternoon, with no breaks in

harmony". India emerges as a global wedding

destination

From Page 1 Khandelwal emphasised that in anticipation of the opportunities during the wedding season, traders nationwide are adequately stocked with weddingrelated goods to meet customer preferences and demands. They mentioned that about 20 per cent of the expenditure for each marriage is allocated to both the groom's and bride's sides, while 80 per cent goes to while of third-party in agencies arrangements.

A video of a wedding in Noida has left several sections of the internet stunned as guests at the event witnessed an extravagant exchange of gifts between the two families. This particular episode was shared on social media by an Instagram user named Vinit

Delhi Fortress against **Farmers**

From Page 1
Other demands
reinstating the include Acquisition 2013, Act withdrawing from the World Trade Organisation, and providing compensation for families of farmers who died during the previous agitation,

among others. Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal and Kisan Sangharsh Committee general secretary

among others, were part of the meeting. Meanwhile, the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM) clarified on Monday that it did not issue the 'Delhi Chalo' call for February 13 and strongly condemned the called for a nationwide strike and rural bandh on February 16. Several other unions and

13 has been issued by

Samyukta Kisan Morcha

(Non-political), a splinter

Sarwan Singh Pandher,

Centre's handling of the protest, alleging that an atmosphere of terror is being March 12. The Delhi Police created to frighten people.

SKM, along with the central trade unions (CTUs), has trade unions (CTUs), has the borders of the patients capital national capital. The order further states that sectoral organisations have also supported the call. The 'Delhi Ĉĥalo' call for February

and the Kisan Mazdoor Earlier, an order issued by

Delhi Police Commissioner Sanjay Arora prohibited any type of rally or procession and the blocking of roads and passages. The order will come

there will be a prohibition on provocative actions, slogans, speech, or messages through verbal, written, or electronic means that may incite or inflame passions leading to a breach of public order and group of the original SKM, tranquility. Additionally,

there will be a prohibition on the use of loudspeakers, amplifiers, or other similar instruments in or at any private vehicles, private buildings, or public places unless allowed by the competent authority. The Delhi Police has also requested the extension of full cooperation from residents, community leaders, and stakeholders for implementation of the order. With traffic restrictions and security measures in place, motorists experienced difficulty commuting between Delhi and NCR towns. A makeshift office has been set up at the Singhu

border to maintain round-

the-clock vigilance on the

developing situation. The

Delhi Airport issued a notification to passengers regarding the anticipated farmers' protest at various Delhi borders starting on

borders, the Delhi Police have deployed over 5,000 security personnel. Cranes and earthmovers carrying large containers to block the road were also deployed.

Multiple security barricades have already been installed at farmers from entering the national capital. Nails have been placed on roads to puncture the tires of vehicles transporting "individuals or if protesting farmers attempt materials", especially

"taking into consideration the past experience of farmer agitation organised in 2020" Pebruary 13, 2024. and intelligence inputs. In addition to the massive deployment of security personnel and crowd control measures at the capital's stated that there would be "an agitation organised in 2020 and intelligence inputs. In addition to prohibiting gatherings and agitations at public places, the orders stated that there would be "an agitation organised in 2020 and intelligence inputs. In addition to prohibiting gatherings and agitations at public places, the orders stated that there would be "an agitation organised in 2020 and intelligence inputs. In addition to the massive deployment of security personnel and crowd control measures at the capital's stated that there would be "an addition to prohibiting gatherings and agitation organised in 2020. absolute prohibition" on organising, convening, or participating in processions, demonstrations, rallies, or marches on foot, whether for political, social, or any other purpose, within the geographical limits of the borders to prevent Delhi and New Delhi. A ban was also imposed on the entry of tractor trolleys, trucks, or other vehicles

especially

"sticks/lathis/dandas, swords, spears", firearms, or anything else "capable of being used as weapons or tools of violence", the order also stated. There will be a complete

prohibition on collecting or carrying brickbats, boulders, acids, or any other dangerous fluids, as well as petrol, soda water bottles, or any articles capable of causing danger to human life and safety. The order also stated that all vehicular traffic originating from the borders of adjoining districts of states of Harvana and Uttar Pradesh shall be subjected to rigorous and thorough inspection by police. Any vehicle found to be transporting lathis, rods, banners, or similar objects likely to be used for disruptive purposes shall be denied entry into Delhi. The sealing of the borders led

to traffic spillover in the border areas of Delhi, further causing sluggish vehicular movement inside the city on Monday. Ahead of the farmers' 'Chalo

Dilli' march, not only Delhi but also Haryana and Raiasthan have imposed Section 144, though in a few districts only. The Haryana government has enforced prohibitory orders under Section 144 of the CrPC in 15 out of the total 22 districts. Additionally, Section 144 has been imposed in the Sri Ganganagar district of Rajasthan, which borders Punjab's Fazilka, Muktsar, and Bathinda districts.

Farmers protest: Traffic advisory issued

The Delhi Police on Monday issued a traffic advisory in view of the proposed farmers' protest, alerting the commuters about restrictions on the movement of vehicles at three borders of the national Capital. Several farmer associations,

mostly from Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Punjab, have called for the march on February 13 to demand a law guaranteeing MSP for their produce, one of the conditions they had set when they agreed to withdraw their agitation in 2021.

According to the Interstate buses intending to go towards Sonipat, Panipat, Karnal etc. Via NH-44 will take ISBT to Majnu Ka Tilla to Signature Bridge to Khajuri Chowk to Loni Border to KMP via Khekra, it said.

Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) intending to go towards Sonipat, Panipat, Karnal etc. Via NH-44 are suggested to take exit number-2 on NH-44 (DSIIDC) intersection to Harish Chander Hospital crossing to Bawana road crossing to Bawana Chowk to Bawana-Auchandi Road reaching Auchandi Border to KMP via Saidpur chowki, the advisory

"The HGVs intending to go towards Bahadurgarh, Rohtak, etc. Are suggested to take Outer





Ring Road from Mukarba Chowk to Madhuban Chowk to Bhagwan Mahavir Road to Rithala to Pansali Chowk to Helipad to UER-II to Kanjĥawala Road-Karala T-Point-Kanjhawala Chowk to Jaunti Village to Jaunti

Border/Nizampur Border and enter in Haryana village Bamnoli and may go further go via Nahra-Nahari road to Bahadurgarh road," it read. The cars and light goods vehicles intending to go towards Sonipat, Panipat Karnal etc. Via

NH-44 are suggested to take exit from exit 1 (NH-44) Alipur cut to Shani Mandir, to Palla Bakhtawarpur Road Y-Point to Dahisara Village Road two lane stretch to MCD toll Dahisara to Jatti Kalan road to Singhu Stadium to PS Kundali reaching NH-44 towards Sonipat in Haryana.

They can take exit from exit number-2 NH-44 DSIIDC intersection to Harish Chander Hospital Red Light to Sector-A/5 red light to Ramdev Chowk. Ramdev Chowk to Piau Maniyari Border (entering Haryana) towards NH-44, the advisory said. "The cars and LGVs intending

to go towards Bahadurgarh, Rohtak, etc. Are suggested to take exit from exit number-2 DSIIDC cut towards Bawana road to Kanjhawala T-Point to Kanjhawala Chowk via Dr Sahib Singh Verma Road to Jhanda Chowk/Ghevra to take right Nizampur Border via Savdha Village to Bahadurgarh Connecting NH-9," it stated. They can take Outer Ring Road from Mukarba Chowk to Madhuban Chowk to Bhagwan Mahavir Road to Rithala to Pansali Chowk to Helipad to UER-ll to Kanjhawala Road-Karala T-Point Kanjhawala Chowk to Jaunti Village to Jaunti Border/Nizampur Border and enter in Haryana's Bamnoli village and may go further via Nahra-Nahari road

to Bahadurgarh road, the advi-

Traffic from Delhi going to Ghaziabad through Gazipur border may take Pushta Road in front of Akshardham temple OR, Patparganj Road/Mother Dairy road OR, Chaudhary Charan Singh Marg ISBT Anand Vihar and exit from Maharajpur or Apsara border in UP Ghaziabad, it said.

Heavy/commercial vehicles going towards Bahadurgarh, Rohtak etc. Via Rohtak Road are advised to use Najafgarh Nangloi Road from Nangloi Chowk to enter Haryana via Najafgarh Jharoda Border, it

The vehicles intending to go towards Bahadurgarh, Rohtak etc. Via Rohtak Road may take left turn from PVC red light up to Jharoda Nala Crossing-take right turn up to Najafgarh Bahadurgarh Road reaching towards Bahadurgarh, the advi-

The motorists coming from Punjabi Bagh to turn left from Peeragarhi Chowk up to Najafgarh Road (8 KM) - turn right Uttam Nagar Chowk-Dwarka Mor-Tura Mandi-Najafgarh Firni Road turn left-Chhawla Stand-turn right Dhansa Stand-turn right Bahadurgarh Stand - turn left Najafgarh Bahadurgarh Road-Jharoda Village-Jharoda Border reaching towards Bahadurgarh

Security checks at Noida Delhi border, route diversions

STAFF REPORTER ■ NOIDA

 $N^{\text{oida Police on Monday}}$ said there could be traffic pressure on routes leading to and from Delhi in view of a proposed farmers protest in the national Capital on Tuesday.

Police said due to the protest in the national Capital, there will be intensive security checks at the Noida-Delhi border areas with the possibility of route diversions, and people to opt for metro services for their commute. Several farmer associations,

mostly from Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Punjab, have called for the march on February 13 to demand a law guaranteeing MSP for their produce, one of the conditions they had set when they agreed to withdraw their agitation in

"The general public is informed that a protest by farmers is proposed in Delhi on Tuesday regarding their problems. During the said programme, intensive checking will be done by Delhi

Nagar Police by installing barriers on all the borders, due to which, in case of increase in police added. traffic pressure on the routes from Noida to Delhi border, traffic will be diverted as per requirement," the police said in a statement.

"People going to Delhi please use metros as much as possible to avoid traffic inconvenience. Arrival of all types of goods

vehicles will be restricted on the route from Yamuna

Noida-Greater Expressway and from Sirsa to Surajpur via Parichowk," the

The police said diversions would be placed on DND, Chilla border routes, among others but vehicles will be allowed in cases of emergency.

"In case of traffic inconvenience, you can contact the traffic helpline number 9971009001. Please use alternative routes to avoid inconvenience," the police said.

Security upped on Gurugram borders to thwart farmers entry

STAFF REPORTER ■ GURUGRAM

 \mathbf{I}^{n} view of the farmer's protest the Gurugram police tightened and beefed up their security on the Gurugram-Mewat border, Gurugram-Rewari border and Gururgam-Jhajjar border on Monday. Gurugram police started checking suspicious vehicles and also put up barricades on border roads for vehicles entering Gurugram. A large number of security personnel were deployed on the Gurugram border.

"I have given necessary directions to the concerned departments to step up security in the border area. If the district administration is required to deploy duty magistrates will do the same. However, no inputs about the movement of farmers came to the fore in Gurugram," Nishant Kumar Yadav, Deputy Commissioner of Gurugram said. Apart from the Gurugram police has also visited the border area to take stock of the preparations.

Meanwhile, the police have put containers near Panchgaon Chowk on the service lane on the Jaipur Expressway to block the expressway in case any inputs about farmers' movement are received. "We have instructed our seniors to keep a vigil on suspected vehicles and farmers groups if they enter the district and keep informing them about the situations," said a Gurugram police personnel deployed at the border area.

However, the Gurugram police officers claimed that none of the farmer groups will cross or enter Delhi amid the protests from Gurugram. "The Gurugram police are already on high alert amid farmers' protests. The strength of the personnel has already been at all the connecting borders of the district. Also, a rapid action force alone and extra force have been reserved to face any untoward situations on the border locations," said a senior police official of the such impact reported in the police stop the workers Gurugram. Security has been increased since Saturday and strict vigil was being maintained

Local shopkeepers in border areas fear losses due to farmers protest

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

ooking anxiously as police set Lup a five-layer barricade near the Tikri Border metro station, Krushna Kumar wondered if he would have to shut shop again like three years ago when the agitation against the farm laws hit life in the area. The fear of financial losses and other hardships has returned to haunt locals and shopkeepers like Kumar ahead of the farmers' protest march to the national capital on Tuesday.

"During any protest, we face a huge loss," the 35-year-old who runs a grocery shop said. Kumar said that his regular customers are the labourers working nearby, but due to security measures and other restrictions during any protest, the main road becomes inaccessible to them.

"Most of the labourers working in the nearby area are our daily customers and the only source from using the main road and we lose our customers," Kumar

Another shopkeeper Sayyam

said that during the last farmers' protest, he faced a lot of difficulty while going to his shop. "My grocery shop is located just 100 metres away from Tikri Border Metro Station, but due to heavy security force deployment, i had to take another way to

Kumar who runs car mechanic shops at Alipur border expressed concern over the farmers Delhi Chalo march, saying the march is politically motivated. "They would ruin their business," he

reach my shop for which I had

to walk almost two kilometres,'

Multiple-layer security barri-cading with concrete blocks, spike barriers, barbed wires and containers has been put on roads to stop the protesting farmers from entering the national capital. Meanwhile, prohibitory orders under Section 144 of CrPC have been imposed for 30 days till March 12 in the 'Delhi Chalo March' called by farmer outfits. More than 5,000 security personnel have been deployed along the border with

Gopal slams BJP heavy handedness in dealing with protesting farmers

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Coming down heavily on the high-handedness of the BJP-ruled Centre as well as the BJP-ruled Haryana government for taking brutal measures to stop the peaceful march of the farmers from reaching Delhi, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Delhi Convenor and Cabinet Minister Gopal Rai demanded that the farmers' demand be met in consultation without any delay. Addressing a press conference here, Rai alleged that the security measures taken by the Centre to control the farmers' protest on February 13 is "more intense than that of the colonial era". A purported video showing nails and barricades along with other security measures at Singhu, Ghazipur and Tikri borders was also played during the press conference by

Several farmer associations, mostly from Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Punjab, have called for the march on he said. "Today, the BJP gov-February 13 to demand a law ernment is crossing all limits



guaranteeing MSP for their produce, one of the conditions they had set when they agreed to withdraw their agitation in 2021.

"Farmers do the job of providing food to all. As they decided to stage a protest on February 13, the Centre has come up with extreme security measures that are more intense than those of the with the agitating farmers and resolve their problems,

and stopping the helpless farmers from raising their voices peacefully and demo-cratically. More than 700 farmers died in the previous farmers' movement during the Bharatiya Janata Party rule and the compensation the government had promised has not been given to date. The cases filed against the farmers have not been with-

Rai said that each and every leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party boasts in every media channel, on the streets that 80 crore people are being given

ration. "The Modi government gives ration to 80 crore people. Is the ration produced in the office of the BJP ? Who produces wheat, farmers produce it, who produces rice, farmers produce it. You want to harvest the election crop on the basis of the yield due to the hard work of the farmer. Now you are crossing all limits so that you can win the elections. The arrogance of the British was not left inside this country, elections are not everything if you attack the hearts of the farmers like this.

Ahead of the farmers' 'Delhi Chalo March', the Delhi Police has intensified security arrangements at Singhu, Ghazipur and Tikri borders and installed nails along with barricades to prevent vehicles carrying protesters from entering the city The 'Delhi Chalo March'

farmers' unions and a large number of farmers is expected to reach the national capital on Tuesday from the three

LG approves revival of 1,027 Vice Principal posts in DoE

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In another move aimed at ending adhocism and contractual appointments, often marred by lack of transparency, favouritism and right of equal opportunity for appointment to permanent Government vacancies, Delhi Lieutenant Governor(LG) Vinai Kumar Saxena on Monday approved the revival of 1,027 posts of Vice-Principals in the Directorate of Education, Delhi government for the vacancy year 2014-15 to 2019.

These posts would have been abolished due to the reason that they were not filled for more than the prescribed time limit, in which vacant posts are supposed to be filled, with the justification that they are not required. This situation, in turn, had arisen out of the fact that the vacancies off late were being filled on an ad hoc and contractual basis by the Education Department, officials said here.

The revival of the posts of Vice Principal was necessary since there was an acute shortage of the Vice Principals - posts, which are essential for the smooth functioning of the Schools.

As per earlier Recruitment Rules (RRs),100 per cent posts of Vice Principals were supposed to be filled in through promotion and theseRRs were amended vide notification dated 15.10.2018,



Principals changed from Group 'B' gazetted to Group 'A' gazetted and the mode of selection also changed from 100 per cent through promotion to 50 per cent by promotion and 50 per centthrough Direct Recruitment by Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)

The LG was informed that out of these 1,027 posts of Vice Principals, 873 posts up to vacancy year September-2018 (prior to amendment of RRs dated 15. 10 2018) were filled on ad hoc basis vide promotion order dated 15-01-2018 and 24-12-2019. Remaining 154 posts pertaining to vacancy year w.e.f 15-10-2018 to 31.12.2019 have not been filled. There is an acute shortage of Vice Principals in Delhi Government schools and the work is being managed through PGTs who are work-

ing as Vice Principals (pro-

moted on ad hoc basis),

which is a temporary arrange-

ment having limitation and

period of time. As per new RRs, eligible candidates are available for promotion and their promotion cannot be denied, and in the near future, the present situation may worsen, given the fact that Vice Principals may also retire leading to more vacancies.

The Ministry of Finance, Gol OM dated 12.04.2017 provides that posts except newly created posts, kept in abeyance or remaining vacant for a period of more than 02 years would be considered as deemed abolished. Further, existing post vacant for 5 years may be abolished immediately.

However, it is evident that the purpose for which the posts of Vice Principal were created still exist and the posts are essential for the smooth functioning of the Department and the revival of these posts is urgently required for filling of these posts through

AAP slams BJP on demolition actions in city

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The AAP on Monday hit out at the BJP over "demolition actions" in the city allegedly by the central agencies in the past few months, as it sought to know the stand of seven Delhi MPs of the BJP on the issue. Addressing a press conference here, Delhi Urban Development Minister and AAP's national Saurabh spokesperson Bharadwaj also claimed that people were being "rendered homeless" as JJ clusters and other structures were being dismantled "without rehabilitating' the affected people. One can see many people living beneath flyovers and on footpaths, and these are people who have been rendered homeless "due to such actions", the AAP leader told

À number of "demolition actions" are being taken in the national capital by central agencies, Bharadwaj claimed, as he hit out at the BJP, the ruling party at the Centre. He alleged that bulldozers have also been run over "listed" clusters. As per rules, such listed structures warrant that rehabilitation of affected people be undertaken before taking any demolition action, he added. The Delhi minister said that

these people voted for the BJP MPs in the national capital. "I want to ask all the seven MPs of BJP in Delhi whether they are standing with these demolition actions. If not, what have they done to stop demolition, have they met the vice chairman of the DDA or written any letter to

160 years old iron bridge Loha Ka Pul closed for repair

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The 160 years old double decker old iron bridge, known as Loha ka Pul connecting east and north Delhi has been closed for repair works. The road surface will be covered with a fresh layer of bituminous material and road markings will be painted. Delhi Traffic police has issued an advisory saying the road repair work on the old iron bridge will be conducted from February 12 to March 13, 2024. The Iron Bridge will be closed for traffic during this period. Commuters are requested to avoid the old Iron Bridge road. All motorists are advised to plan their journey accordingly," traffic police said in a state-

This double decker bridge was constructed during the British era and sees heavy traffic. The four-lane bridge has a railway line on the upper deck and roadway on the lower. Over the years, the road surface has eroded considerably. Due to this poor surface condition, the movement of vehicles was slow, adding to the advice on driving slowly because of the antiquity of the bridge.

Motorists use the bridge to reach areas near Shahdara in east Delhi and localities near Kashmere Gate in north Delhi. There are some unauthorised colonies near the bridge. Built by the East Indian

railroad link between Delhi and the then capital Calcutta in 1863, the Old Yamuna Bridge was regarded as an architectural marvel. The 2,640 feet bridge consists of 12 spans, all measuring 202.5 feet each, and is the first bridge of its kind in north India, according to Indian Railways officials, who also claim it to be one of the oldest standing bridges in the country. Construction of the bridge was overseen by George Sibley, chief engineer of the northwest province of the East Indian Railway Company who is also credited with the Naini Bridge in Prayagraj (formerly Allahabad) and the old Delhi railway station, George Huddlestone, former superintendent of East India Railway, writes in his book History of the East Indian Railway. The book was published in 1902. Work on the new bridge, which is being built parallel to the Old Yamuna Bridge or Loha Pul, began in 2003. The construction work witnessed several halts over the years owing to Railway Company as part of a structural changes.

suspicious found

School receives

bomb threat, nothing

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Amity International School in Pushp Vihar here received a bomb threat email on Monday morning but nothing suspicious was found by the local police and bomb detec-

tion squad. DCP (South) Ankit Chauhan said the email was received in the wee hours but the school administration spotted it a few hours later. "As soon as we received the call regarding the threat at about 8.30 am, local police along with BDT (bomb detection team) reached the spot" Chauhan said, adding that nothing suspicious was

He said a case under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code will be registered in the matter. Another officer said that the sender of the email threatened that explosives were planted at several locations in the school. "The sender also demanded some money," the officer said.

In an official statement, Ameeta Mohan, principal of Amity International School, Pushp Vihar said classes have been called off for Tuesday as a precautionary safety measure. 'We received a bomb threat via email and we immediately took precautions and informed the police. The police took prompt action and has been very supportive. They are investigating the source of the email and taking necessary action. We have closed the school for tomorrow as a precautionary safety measure in the interest of our parents and students," the statement read.

"We will now await further guidance by the police after all their checks and investigations today and tomorrow and keep you updated," it added. Savita Mehta, vice president (communications) of Amity

Education group, said even as classes were called off, prescheduled exams were held after the school premises was searched by the police and bomb detection team. "We have around 400 cameras around the premises of the school and ample security guards. As soon as we received the information, we informed the police," Mehta said. 'Classes have been called off for Monday and Tuesday. However, exams were held as per schedule for some of the classes as the premises were already searched," she added. In September last year, the Lal Bahadur Shastri School in RK Puram received an email about a bomb on the premises that later turned out to be a hoax. In May, the Delhi Public School in Mathura Road received a similar hoax email about a

The Indian School in Sadiq Nagar received two bomb threats, the last on April 12, 2023, via email. The first one was over the phone in

Navy veterans on death row in **Qatar thank Modi for release**

A mid chants of 'Bharat Mata Aki Jai', the Indian Navy veterans returned to Delhi early Monday morning and thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his intervention in the

"It wouldn't have been possible for us to stand here without the intervention of PM Modi. And it also happened due to the continuous efforts of the Government of India," one of the Navy veterans said.

His colleague voiced similar sentiments and said, "We waited almost for 18 months to be back in India. We are extremely grateful to the Prime Minister. It wouldn't have been possible without his personal intervention and his equation

"We are grateful to the Government of India from the bottom of our hearts for every effort that has been made and this day wouldn't have been possible without those efforts," ĥe added.

Meetu Bhargava, Purnendu Commander Tiwari's sister, said her brother had not come home vet but he had been freed and the fam-



time from Ukraine, Sudan and

Nepal during crises, Irani said

"ghar wapsi" and protection of

interests of Indians, wherever

they may be in the world, have

been Prime Minister Modi's

The release of eight jailed for-mer Indian Navy personnel

nearly three-and-a-half months

after they were handed down

death sentences is a "big diplo-

matic win" for India, BJP

Spokesperson Shazia Ilmi said.

time it will be very difficult to

make it happen. But they have come back safe and sound.

That is great news for every

Indian. It shows how much the

words of the Indian foreign

ministry and Prime Minister

(Narendra Modi) matter," Ilmi

"Investment in infrastructure

is being ramped up to accel-

erate development," he said

adding that Rs 11 lakh crore

has been earmarked for

investment in infrastructure

'Rozgar Melas' have played a

contribution of the country's

building, the prime minister

said, adding that a sizeable

number of recruits will join

the Central Armed Police

Recruitment examinations in

the forces have now begun to

be conducted in 13 Indian

languages apart from Hindi

and English, he said, adding

that this will give equal

opportunity to candidates.

On the occasion, he also laid

the foundation stone of phase

I of the integrated complex

"Karmayogi Bhavan" here. This complex will promote

collaboration and synergy among various pillars of

Mission Karmayogi'. The

recruits will be joining the

government in various min-

istries and departments,

according to a statement

in the recent budget.

It seemed at one point of

"If my brother had come, our happiness would have been complete," she told PTI Videos in Gwalior while thanking the prime minister, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and the government as well as the Emir.\The BJP credited the government for the release of the former Navy personnel asserting that the protection of interests of Indians, wherever they may be, has been a priority of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Union Minister Smriti Irani told reporters that the manner in which the Navy veterans have returned to India is due to the government's special

Referring to the evacuation of Indians at different points of

India. It shows how India has negotiated so well that we have our Navy veterans back," she said. The Congress expressed relief and happiness at Qatar releasing eight former Indian naval personnel nearly three and a half months after they were handed down death sentences, and it greeted them and the information. their families. In a post on 'X', Congress gen-

eral secretary Jairam Ramesh said, "The Indian National Congress joins the entire nation in its relief and happiness that the eight former Indian Navy personnel earlier sentenced to death by a court in Qatar have been released and are back home." "It sends its greetings and good wishes to them and their families," he said.

Senior Congress leader and former minister of state for external affairs Shashi Tharoor said the release of the Indians was "a huge relief"."It's a huge relief and a matter of quiet celebration for all Indians - that eight of our compatriots who were sentenced to death in Qatar have been freed & returned home. Congratulations to all those who worked quietly behind the scenes for their release," he said.

Army Chief on US visit to strengthen, expand bilateral military engagement

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

rmy Chief General Manoj Army Chief General Wanne, Pande on Monday left for the US on a four-day visit aimed at exploring ways to fur-ther strengthen and expand bilateral military engagement. The Army described General Pande's visit from February 13 to 16 as "significant" and said it underscores deepening mil-itary cooperation between the two countries.

He will engage in high-level discussions and interactions with General Randy George, Chief of Staff of the US Army, and other senior American military leaders.

"This visit underscores the deepening military cooperation and strategic partnership between India and the United States, aiming to further strengthen defence cooperation and foster stronger bonds between the armies of both nations," the Army said.

Highlights of the visit include a prestigious US Army Honour Guard ceremony, a solemn laying of the wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in the Arlington National Cemetery and a comprehensive tour of the Pentagon.

These engagements symbolise



the respect and mutual commitment towards global peace and security shared between the two countries, the Army said. "This visit is another milestone in the Indo-US defence relationship, reflecting a mutual desire to enhance military collaboration, exchange strategic perspectives on global threat perceptions, and work together toward future force development and modernisation," it said.

"The engagements between General Manoj Pande and senior leadership of the United States Army are poised to yield substantive outcomes, fostering an environment conducive to shared security interests and defence cooperation," it said. Ideas will be exchanged on crucial topics such as the transformation in the Indian Army, global threat perception, future force development and modernisation, and co-production and co-development initiatives, officials said. These discussions are aimed at sharing insights, ideas, and best practices between the two armies,

Pande's itinerary includes a visit to the Army Geospatial Centre at Fort Belvoir, the National Defence University at Fort McNair and interactions with the leadership at Headquarters 1 Corps.

they said.

He will also engage with units at the forefront of military innovation and strategy, including the Stryker Unit, 1st Multi-Domain Task Force, the first Special Forces Group at Seattle and the Defence Innovation

A visit to the California National Guard is also planned, highlighting the comprehensive nature of the visit aimed at exploring avenues for more significant training, co-development and co-production engagements, according to an

Army statement.
General George had recently visited India for the Indo-Pacific Army Chiefs Conference (IPACC) that was jointly hosted by the Indian Army and the US Army. The conference was attended by 18 Chiefs of Armies and 12 countries represented by heads of delegations.

During IPACC, General George and General Pande engaged in constructive dialogue, addressing a wide range of issues related to military cooperation.

The Indian Army and the United States Army share a commitment to peace, democracy, and stability across regions. This tour epitomises the shared values and interests that underpin the partnership between India and the United States, aiming at a future of enhanced cooperation and mutual development in defence and security domains," the Army said.

BJP Government gave 1.5 times more jobs than previous dispensation: Modi



Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said his Government has given 1.5 times more jobs in its 10 years than the previous dispensation did in the same duration.

Handing over recruitment more than one lakh youngsters via video conference during a Rozgar Mela programme, Modi castigated the previous government for taking an inordinately "long time" to complete recruitment exercises and said it bred bribery.

The prime minister said his government has brought transparency and is working to ensure that recruitment is done in a time-bound manner. Youngsters now believe that they all have equal opportunity and can find a place for themselves in the government system through hard work and talent, he said. The prime minister asserted that the measures taken by his government, be it a scheme for rooftop solar power for one crore homes or the masstructure, have been creating a lot of employment oppor-

With over 1.25 lakh start-ups, India is the third largest ecosystem in the sector, and youngsters are launching new firms in even smaller cities, he said, adding that it is creating crucial role in enhancing the lakhs of jobs.

coaches like those used in the Vande Bharat trains will be manufactured and included in normal trains to increase convenience and comfort for passengers. Accusing previous governments of not paying due attention to the railways, he said the entire sector is transforming now.

"They neglected the common people's expectations," Modi said, attacking the previous governments.

The prime minister said his government has extended tax rebates to start-ups and has announced a fund of Rs 1 lakh crore for research and innovation.

Highlighting the far-reaching impact of connectivity, Modi spoke of new markets, expansion of tourism, new businesses and the creation of more to mortality than extreme ones, says study PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Mild heat waves contribute

NEW DELHI

urprisingly, mild heat Owaves, despite being more common, contribute more to mortality over time compared to extreme heat waves. This has been revealed by a study conducted in India in ten cities, underscoring the importance of investigating the health risks associated with temporarily elevated temperatures, especially as heat waves are projected to become more common due to climate change.

The research, published in the journal Environment International, analyzed excess mortality with different climate zones over a decade from 2008 to 2019.

Surprisingly, the mildest heat waves were found to be the deadliest due to their frestudy published in journal Environment International called for adjusting heat warning systems to trigger warnings at lower temperatures to protect more people.

They emphasized the need for policymakers to plan for both mild and extreme heat waves to safeguard public health effectively

By selecting the days that were hotter than 95, 97 or 99 percent of all days in the different regions, the researchers led by Jeroen de Bont from Karolinska Institutet in Sweden were able to create different definitions of heatwaves and examine the health risks associated with them.

Unsurprisingly, the hottest and longest heat waves, those that were hotter than 99 percent of days and lasted at least

five days, increased mortality the most - by over 33 percent. Heatwaves that were hotter than 95 percent of all days and lasted only one day increased mortality the least - by just over 10 percent.

"This is also because the milder heatwaves were so much more common than the hotter ones. In the end, the most extreme heat waves turned out to cause the lowest number of deaths because they were so infrequent. One consequence of this may be that heat warnings may need to be triggered at lower temperature thresholds to protect more people," said Jeroen de

The researchers now argue that policymakers and other stakeholders need to understand and plan for both the relatively mild, short and common, and the extreme, long order to offer relevant measures to protect public health in the future.

The study suggests that current heat warning systems may need adjustments to trigger warnings at lower temperature thresholds in order to protect more people, given the significant impact of mild heat waves on mortality.

Additionally, the researchers emphasize the importance of policymakers and stakeholders planning for both mild, shortduration heat waves and extreme, long-duration ones to implement effective measures to protect public health in the face of increasing temperatures. This comprehensive approach is essential for mitigating the health risks associated with heat waves in the future, the study said.

Modi meets family of **Karpaoori Thakur**

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday met family members of former Bihar Chief Minister late Karpoori Thakur, who was bestowed Bharat Ratna, the nation's highest civilian award, last month. The family members of the prominent socialist leader, led by his son Rajya Sabha member and JD(Ú) leader Ram Nath Thakur, met the prime minister at his 7, Lok Kalyan Marg residence. Very happy to meet the fam-

ily members Bharat Ratna awardee Jananayak Karpoori Thakur ji. Karpoori ji has been the messiah of the backward and deprived sections of the society, whose life and ideals will continue to inspire the countrymen," the prime minister said.

Ram Nath Thakur said he the honour on behalf of his family, on behalf of Bihar and on behalf of the oppressed, Dalits, and backward commu-

"It was a joyous moment for us, just like a second Diwali. Crackers were burst and sweets were distributed," Ranjit Kumar, the former chief minister's grandson said.

He said the prime minister called them a day after the award was announced. He spoke with every family member and invited them to meet him in Delhi, he added. "I felt that the prime minister was one amongst our family," he said. Fondly known as Jan Nayak, Karpoori Thakur served as the chief minister of Bihar from December 1970 to June 1971 and from December 1977 to April 1979.

to curb flight overshooting, DGCA asks stakeholders PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Place runway safety teams

NEW DELHI

To prevent instances of runway incursions at airports, aviation watchdog DGCA has asked stakeholders to put in place a runway safety team at all airports and adopt technologies to improve situational awareness, among other measures. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has issued a circular in view of the collision of planes due to runway incursion at the Haneda airport in Japan last month. Apart from establishing a runway safety team at all aerodromes and ensuring their effective functioning, the regulator has emphasised on comprehensive training for pilots, air traffic controllers, aircraft maintenance engineers, and drivers operating inside an airport.

(ATCs) should ensure that stop bars are switched on to signal a stop and switched off to indicate traffic may pro-

In no case, aircraft or vehicles be instructed to cross illuminated red stop bars, DGCA said in a release on Monday. Further, the watchdog said that aerodromes, ATCs and airlines should implement contingency measures to cater to unserviceable stop bars.

Another recommendation is adoption of technological interventions to improve situational awareness, thereby assisting Air Traffic Control (ATC) and other stakeholders to identify the traffic within the manoeuvering area. Other recommendations include ensuring adherence to standard procedures by all

Undertake prompt rescue of



involved personnel/stake holders, and recognising the influence of human factors on performance, which may contribute to runway incursions.

The rate of runway incursions are decreasing and by ensuring a proactive approach among all stakeholders, the risk of such incidents can be reduced further, according to DGCA. In a fatal incident on January 2, a large passenger plane and a Japanese coast guard aircraft collided on the and burst into flames. Five people onboard the plane of the coast guard were killed.

The incident happened due to runway incursion by Japanese coast guard's DHC-8 aircraft when Japan Airlines aircraft was in the process of landing.

Following the incident, DGCA undertook a review of its existing requirements and safety measures in place for runway safety and prevention of runway incursions. In August last year, a mishap was averted at the Delhi airport involving two Vistara planes as the air traffic controller inadvertently gave clearance for crossing and take off of two different aircraft on the same runway at the same time before cancelling the

97 per cent of migratory fish at risk of extinction: Study

PNS NEW DELHI

Overexploitation including hunting and fishing, both targeted and incidental has emerged as the greatest threat for many migratory species, surpassing habitat loss and fragmentation, a global report has painted a grim picture of the migratory species world with one in five such species threatened with extinction.

At the same time, 44 per cent have a decreasing population trend, according to the United Nations' first 'State of the World's Migratory Species' report released on Monday. The situation is particularly dire for aquatic ecosystems, where a staggering 97 per cent of migratory fish are at risk of extinction.

These fishes are listed for protection under the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS).

According to the report, 82 per cent of the species listed



extinction, and 76 per cent vation status and require have a declining population international agreements for trend. Eighteen per cent of their conservation and man-Appendix II species are globagement". The report also identifies 399 globally threatally threatened, with almost half (42 per cent) showing ened and near-threatened decreasing population trends. migratory species (mainly The convention's Appendix I birds and fish) that are not yet lists migratory species which listed in the CMS Appendices are endangered. Appendix II that may benefit from inter-

According to CMS Executive Secretary Amy Fraenkel, overexploitation (hunting and fishing, both targeted and incidental) emerges as the greatest threat for many migratory species, surpassing habitat loss and fragmentation. The report said the habitat

national protection.

fragmentation resulting from dams is currently greatest in East Asia, Europe, the Indian sub-continent, America, and Southern Africa. By-catch of non-target species in fisheries is a leading cause of mortality of many CMS-listed marine species

tory species include pollution (including light and noise pollution), climate change, and invasive species. Inger Anderson,

Executive Director of the

United Nations' Environment

Programme (UNEP), said the

report is a significant step for-

Other key threats to migra-

ward in the development of a conservation roadmap for migratory species. "Given the precarious situation of many of these animals, and their critical role for healthy and well-functioning ecosystems, we must not miss this chance to act - starting now by urgently implementing the recommendations set out in this report," she said.

Action under the Convention is crucial for achieving the global commitments set out in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, including commitments to restore and establish well-connected networks of protected areas, halt human-induced extinctions, and ensure that any taking of wild species is sustainable,

safe, and legal Established in 1979, the CMS focuses on bringing countries and stakeholders together to agree on the actions needed to ensure that migratory species survive and thrive.

animals, AWBI urges fire services ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Expressing concern that there have been frequent instances of birds and animals-both wild and domesticated — trapped in hazardous situations such as building ledges, pits, open drainage, and fire to name a few, the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) has urged all the Chief Fire Services across the States/UTs to undertake prompt compassionate rescue operations so as to ensure wellbeing of the animals, preventing unnecessary stress and fatalities.

"It is pertinent to mention that each year, a multitude of animals find themselves trapped in precarious locations such as building ledges, pits, open drainage or wells, overhead wires, trees, and other challenging situations," said AWBI chairman OP Chaudhary in his letter written recently to all



the Chief Fire Services across the States.

However, animals and birds, including domesticated pets and wildlife, often suffer and perish due to stress and starvation when not rescued promptly. Lack of skilled rescue workers and equipment further complicates timely rescue

efforts. "It is observed that your department's firefighters are widely acknowledged for their dedication and longstanding history of saving lives, including those of animals," AWBI

Chief said to the fire officials in the letter while referring the Standing Fire Advisory Committee/ Council, constituted by the Union Home Ministry that recommends the provision of special services for rescuing animals, offered free of charge for all types of life rescues. Besides Chief Fire Services, the AWBI Chief has also writ-

ten to Chief Wildlife Wardens across the country to ensure their local service units are equipped and prepared to provide proficient animal rescue services, collaborating with animal welfare organizations Chaudhary also stressed the importance of reporting details of animal lives lost, injured, and rescued, and recommended that the Union Animal Husbandry and Wildlife Departments offer necessary support, including training, to the State Fire Service

Next hearing on Soren plea against ED on February 27



Soren's arrest). This is a good

indication, now we can place all

the facts before the court," Ranjan, Soren's counsel, said.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal

Additional solicitor general SV

Raju appeared on behalf of the

"In our amendment prayer,

we have said that the entire

process (initiated by the ED against Hemant Soren) is moti-

There was no crime but inquiry

was on against a sitting chief minister...ED acted beyond its

power. We have challenged the

entire proceeding by the ED. It

is illegal," the advocate gener-

The high court had on

February 5 asked the central

agency to file its reply on

argued on behalf of Soren.

central agency.

vated by malice.

Soren's petition.

PTI RANCHI

The High Court of Jharkhand on Monday adjourned the hearing on a petition filed by arrested exchief minister Hemant Soren against the Enforcement Directorate (ED) till February

The court will again hear the plea on that day. It asked the federal agency to

file a consolidated affidavit.

Advocate General Rajeev Ranjan said they had challenged the arrest of the former chief minister, and the high court allowed their amended application to be submitted. "ED has been directed to give

a consolidated reply. The court has fixed February 27 as the date for final disposal. The amendment to our application has been allowed...Now hearing will be on the turn of events (leading to Hemant

THE PIONEER () ASSIFIED

NAME CHANGE

I, SHALINI LAMBAH D/O (Late) Brig. Rajinder Nath Lambah (Retd.) R/o House No. 280, Sector 15 A, Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar, Uttar Pradesh (201301), have changed my name from Shalini to Shalini Lambah for all future purposes.

PD(273)C

PUBLIC NOTICE To be known to all that I,ANUPINDER SINGH S/O LATE SH. NIRANJAN SINGH R/O C-4/27, SECTOR-11, ROHINI, DELHI-110085.1 and attorney of DDA LIG FLAT NO. 71-8. IN BLOCK-BA {BA-71-8} ON FIRST FLOOR, ALONG WITH ONE SCOOTER GARRAGE, SITUATED AT JANAKPURI, DELHI-110085., VIDE DDA FILE NO. 752/263/74/LIG/LAB/H has applied for conversion of the aforesaid flat from lease hold to free hold The original (1) DEMAND LETTER (2) POSSESSION LETTER (3) DDA NOC (ELECTRIC (2) WATER CONNECTION) (4) SITE POSSESSION NEW Delhi,vide NCR/LRNO:142702/2024, dated-05/02/2024, Any person(s) claiming any right, interest, alway any objection or found in possession of original documents, may write contact with above named person at above address/phone No.9718290907 within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. The person claiming any right, interest, objections with respect to this represensally with respect to this represensally Vikas Sadan, INA New Delh

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE
This Public Notice has been issued for General Public, under instructions from and on behalf of my client namely Mrs. Rupashree Sengupta wife of Laie Arup Sengupta, R/O Y-147 Regency Park-2,DLF Phase 4, Gurgaon, Haryana-12209 and it is hereby informed that Late Sh. Arup Sengupta, who was the co-allottee of Property bearing Unit No.PH3-50-0602. The Palm Hills, Village Sikhopur, Sector 77, Gurugram, Haryana, Passed Away on 16/03/2022. He has not left any 'registered' vill & is survived by legal heirs Mrs. Rupashree Sengupta & Mr. Arjun Sengupta (Son). That my client Mrs. Rupashree Sengupta wife of Late Arup Sengupta intends to apply forthe transfer of the aforesaid property in her own name being the of the aforesaid property in her own name being the lst Class legal heir of Late Arup Sengupta after Mr.Arjun Sengupta has /will relinquish his rights in favor of Mrs.Rupashree Sengupta.

If any person having any claim or interest in the said property may file his/her claim to the undersigned within 21 days from the date of publication of this

Advocate & Solicitors Office at: Chamber No. 38 & 104, Shaheed Sukhdev Singh Block, Distt. Courts, Gurgaon Contact: +91-8826283131, 99995 00090

Public Notice
This is to inform the general public that Mrs. Aktais
the GPA Holder of Property Bearing Plot No. 32-A,
area measuring 53.1/2 sq. yds., Out of Khasra No.
2/23, situated in the revenue estate of Villaga
Razapur Khurd MazraHastsal, Delhi State Delhi,
area Abadi Known as Colony G-2. Sai Endave,
Mohan Garden, Utlam Nagar, New Delhi She
acquired the above property through GPA, ATS,
WILL dated 24.04.2/032executed by Mr.
Bishambhar Dayali n favour of Mrs. Akta.
Mrs. Aktainteds to transfer the ownership by

Mrs. Aktaintends to transfer the ownership by way of Sale Deed of the aforementioned Property to Mr. Jeetu Yadav & Mrs. Geeta Devi. Subsequently, Mr. Jeetu Yadav & Mrs. Geeta Subsequently, Mr. Jeetu Yadav & Mrs. Geeta Deviare in the process of mortgaging the said property SMFG India Home Finance Co. Any objections or concerns regarding this transaction should be raised within a period of 07 days from the date of this public notice. Any objections submitted after the completion of this 07-day period will not be considered binding with respect to the said property or the interests of our client. If anyone wishes to raise an objection, please do so within the stinulated 07-day nariod by contacting.

Il anyone wishes lo raise an objection, please do sc within the stipulated 07-day period by contacting Law Veritas: North (Advocates & Lega Consultants) at Office No. 11, 1st Floor, Building No. A-44/A, Sector-16, Noida, Uttar Pradesh 201301; Landline(s): +910120-3101683 4562809; e-mail: accounts@lvnorth.in

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to public at large tha my client namely Smt. Ritu Sharma hav separated and debarred her son name Sh. Paras Vats aged about 27 years and he Daughter-In-Law namely Smt. Sanjana Goswami aged about 27 years and the have no right, title, interest, claim to any o the properties possessed or belonging t me, as the said properties both movable and immovable are all, my selfacquire properties in which my son and m daughter-in-law holds no right and claim whatsoever. My said son and Daughter-In Law has no power or authority to incur any debts on the security of my said propert and any person hereinafter giving him an loan or advance shall be doing so entire on his own risk and responsibility.

. nor my properties, shall in any way responsible for such debts. Akash Swami (Advocate)

Chamber No.8, Old Lawyers Chamber

INDIA alliance strong despite Nitish exit, claims Ramesh

Senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Monday said the opposition INDIA bloc is strong and all con-stituents will soon finalise seat sharing for the upcoming Lok Sabha polls.

Addressing a press conference in Barpali village in Chhattisgarh's Korba district, he said Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's JD(U) as well as the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) quitting the Congress-led bloc will not have any impact. "INDIA alliance is strong. Nitish ji has done volte-face and RLD is trying to do the

There were 28 parties in the alliance and two have left. However, discussion is under way with Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), DMK, NCP, Uddhay Thackeray-led Shiv Sena (UBT) and Mamta Banerjee ji over seat sharing (for Lok Sabha polls)," he said.

"We are strong and soon seat sharing in different states will be given a final touch," he added.

Attacking Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Ramesh said the former spoke about 'one nation, one tax' and 'one nation, one election' but in reality it has become about "one nation, one company" in the last 10 years (of NDA rule).

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER, PWD (BORDER ROADS & NEC WORKS), PWRD, ASSAM CHANDMARI, GUWAHATI-3

PRESS NOTICE

No. CE/NEC/NESIDS/2021-22/01/85

The Chief Engineer, PWD (Border Roads & NEC Works), Assam, Chandmari, Guwahati-3 on behatf of Governor of Assam invites bids from eligible Contractors registered with APWRD Class-I(A) for the project "Construction of Road & Bridge project under North East Special Infrastructure Development Scheme for the year 2023-24" in 3 (three) Packages through EPC mode for a tentative cost of Rs. 272.56 Cr. (Rupees Two Hundred Seventy Two Crore and Fifty Six Lakh) only.

Details may be seen at the website http://assamtenders.gov.in and also in the office of the undersigned during office hours

> Chief Engineer, PWD **Border Roads & NEC Works** Assam, Chandmari, Guwahati-3

Janasanyog/CF/5479/23/13-Feb-24

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

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

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

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

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
V	ijay Kumar/ Kiran/	Dda Mig Flat 276, Third Floor, Prasad Nagar, Near Police Station, Central Delhi, Delhi/ February 09, 2024	October 23, 2023 Rs. 23,39,291.00/-	Delhi

the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Date: February 13, 2024 Authorized Officer ICICI Bank Limited

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, O-1527 CENTRAL RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, BHUBANESWAR /Date.05.02.2024 "e" Procurement Notice for Building Works Building work 01 No. of Building work for the year 2023-24 Estimated Cost of the work: Class of Contractor a)Estimated cost more than Rs. 20.00 lakhs up to Rs. 3.00 Crores. B Class (of Odisha PWD) or relevant class of o b)Estimated cost more than Rs. 1.00 Crore up to Rs. 20.00 Crores. A Class (of Odisha PWD) or relevant class of ot Period of completion As mentioned in Column-7 of Annexure Other detail Availability of Tender Chief Constructio To be intimated Engineer, Central Rural Works Circle, Bhubaneswar 29.02.2024 of 2024

eb site www.tendersodisha.gov.in

OIPR-25082/11/0051/2324

Chief Construction Engineer Central Rural Works Circle, Bhubaneswa

at 11.00 A.M.

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

PICICI Bank Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road

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

As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the

Sr. No.	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
	Municipal Property No. 68/3 P, Surya Nagar, Part of Plot No. 4, Mauza Naroli Chandrapuri Extension, Mathura, Uttar Pradesh- 281001/ February 08, 2024	October 30, 2023 Rs. 76,31,301/-	Mathura/ Ghaziabad/ Bareilly

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

Date: February 13, 2024 Authorized Officer **ICICI Bank Limited**

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER (ROADS), PUBLIC WORKS ROADS DEPARTMENT, ASSAM, GUWAHATI-03

No. CE/DEV/TB/906/2023-24/04

Janasanyog/CF/5488/23/13-Feb-24

PRESS NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The Chief Engineer (Roads), PWRD, Assam, Chandmari, Guwahati-3 invites Bids on behalf of Governor of Assam for 6 (Six) nos. of Packages for Construction of Road and Bridge projects under SOPD-ODS for the year 2023-24 in Dibrugarh District of Assam amounting to Rs. 4.83 Crores (approx.) including GST etc. from approved & eligible Contractors registered with PWRD, Assam. Details may be seen from 15-02-2024 at website www.assamtenders.gov.in. Amendment

Addendum to the SBD, if any, and further notifications shall appear in this website and also at the office of the undersigned during office hours. The contractor/bidder must be registered with the Electronic Tendering System (ETS) of PWRD, Assam website www.assamtenders.gov. in. The scheme is not yet sanctioned by the competent authority. In the event of non - sanction

of the scheme, the bids may be cancelled and no claim what so ever on this account shall be entertained from the bidders

Note: - N.l.T Value is inclusive of GST (12%), Labour cess (1%) etc.

Sd/ Chief Engineer (Roads), PWRD Assam, chandmari, Guwahati-3.

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM PUBLIC WORKS ROADS DEPARTMENT O/O THE CHIEF ENGINEER (EAP) ARRTI CAMPUS, FATASIL AMBARI, GUWAHATI - 25, Email-id: as-ce.asbip@assam.gov.in RFB No.: CE/EAP/ARRBP/III/TENDERS/2024/1

REQUEST FOR BIDS (RFB)

E-PROCUREMENT NOTICE - Open Competitive Bidding

(Two-Envelope Bidding Process with e-Procurement)

The Government of Assam through Government of India has applied for financing from the World Bank towards the cost of the Assam Resilient Rural Bridges Program (ARRBP) and intends to apply part of the proceeds to the eligible payment under the contract. Bids are invited online from the eligible

SI. No.	Package no.	Name of the work	Approx. Estimated Amount (Rupees in Lakh)	Bid security (Rupees in Lakh		Period (month)	
1	CE/EAP/ARRBP/O CB/Bridge- I/Kamrup/19	Construction of Bridge in Kamrup district: i) Br. No. 1/1 of Tamarhola to Simlibari Road	134.66	2.69	5000		
2	CE/EAP/ARRBP/O CB/Bridges- 2/Cachar/03	Construction of Bridges in Cachar district: i) Br. on Guabari to Lutherthal Road ii) Br. on S. K. Road to Kullicherra	290.32	5.81	5000	24	
3	CE/EAP/ARRBP/O CB/Bridge- I/Cachar/04		186.03	3.72	5000	18	
4	CE/EAP/ARRBP/O CB/Bridge- I/Barpeta/14	Construction of Bridge in Barpeta district: i) Br. No. 1/1 on Bdebra to Saldoh Road	237.24	4.74	5000	24	
5	CE/EAP/ARRBP/O CB/Bridge- I/Barpeta/15	Construction of Bridge in Barpeta district: i) Br. No. 1/1 on Chanartari to BD Road	394.36	7.89	5000	30	
6	CB/Bridge-	Construction of Bridge in Karbi-Anglong district: i) Br. No. 4/1 on Jeng Ronghang to Manduli	155.02	3.10	5000	18	
7	CE/EAP/ARRBP/O CB/Bridges- 3/Karbi- Anglong/04	Construction of Bridges in Karbi-Anglong district: i) Br. On Parakhowa Panjuri Road ii) Br. On DuporTimung Gaon to Dengaon iii) Br. Howraghat to Pub Gojalipara	781.77	15.64	5000	30	
8	CE/EAP/ARRBP/O CB/Bridges- 2/Biswanath/06	Construction of Bridges in Biswanath district: i) Br. No. 1/1 on Phuleswari Aai Than Road ii) Br. No. 1/1 on Brahmajan Bagan Road	452.21	9.04	5000	30	
9	CE/EAP/ARRBP/O CB/Bridge- I/Hojai/04	Construction of Bridge in Hojai district: i) Br. No. 2/1 on Alisinga to Singjuri Road	139.09	2.78	5000	12	
10	CE/EAP/ARRBP/O CB/Bridge- I/Dibrugarh/08	Construction of Bridge in Dibrugarh district: i) Br. No. 1/1 on Charai Ali (Lahon Chuk to Madhakali)	392.87	7.86	5000	30	
11	CB/Bridge- I/Dibrugarh/09	Construction of Bridge in Dibrugarh district: i) Br. No. 3/1 on Ghilaguri Nepali Basti Road	185	3.7	5000	18	
12	CE/EAP/ARRBP/O CB/Bridge- I/Tinsukia/08	Construction of Bridge in Tinsukia district: i) Br. No. 2/1 on Phillobari to Chikara Jan via Phillibari TE Road	160.19	3.20	5000	12	
13	CE/EAP/ARRBP/O CB/Bridges- 3/Tinsukia/09	Construction of Bridges in Tinsukia district: i) Br. No. 2/1 on Amguri Satsang Kendra to Vitorrongdoi gaon via Puniyajan Gaon ii) Br. No. 1/1 on Chengchap to Gorshinga Road iii) Br. No. 1/1 on Chapakhowa Gurung basti to Magar Gaon Road	708.42	14.17	5000	30	
14	CE/EAP/ARRBP/O CB/Bridges- 3/Tinsukia/10	Construction of Bridges in Tinsukia district: i) Br. No. 3/1 on Kachijan Chariali to Kulipathar Road ii) Br. No. 4/1 on NH-37 to Eragaon Road iii) Br. No. 1/1 on 7 No. Shantipurto Jyotish Nagar Ujanichuk	771.08	15.42	5000	30	

The bidding documents are available online on <u>http://www.assamtenders.gov.in</u> from 15/02/2024 to 16/03/2024. Bidders will be required to register on the website which is free of cost. For submission of the bids, the bidder is required to have Digital Signature Certificate (DSC). Bids must be submitted online on http://www.assamtenders.gov.in on or before 14:00 Hours on 16/03/2024. Other details can be seen in the bidding document. The method of paying Bid Security, Tender Processing fees as indicated in the table above of this e-procurement shall be required to be submitted online on <u>http://www.assamtenders.gov.in</u> by selecting "Pay Online" option.

Chief Engineer, (EAP) PWRD Assam, Fatasil Ambari, Guwahati-25

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

Reaping discontent

Both the Cong and BJP accuse each other of remembering farmers only for votes; who is true?

he electoral war cry between the BJP and the Congress is getting only shriller: The latest point of contention is which party has done more for the welfare of villagers, farmers and the poor. With the last sitting of the 17th Lok Sabha behind us and the announcement of election dates likely anytime soon, both the sides are sharpening their attack on each other and portraying themselves as the real benefactor of the marginalised classes. It all started with the Congress making a scathing attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Government, accusing them of neglecting the welfare of rural communities, the impoverished and farmers, except during election season. In his counterattack, the Prime Minister touted the Congress' record on rural development and agricultural reforms. The party remembers farmers only at the time of elections, was Modi's charge. The Congress, one of the principal Opposition forces, has a long history of championing the cause of marginalised sections of society. However, the BJP



has made inroads into its territory and the Congress' grip on its core support base has loosened. To support its stand, the BJP argues that initiatives such as the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme. which provides direct income support to farmers, demonstrate its commitment to the welfare of rural communities. However, to regain lost ground, the Congress has been vocal in criticising the BJP's farm policies, including the three Bills which were later withdrawn amid huge protests.

With a massive farmers' 'Delhi Chalo' rally scheduled today, the Congress is again accusing Modi of paying lip service to these constituencies while failing to

deliver meaningful change. Though the latest salvo seems timed with the poll dates announcement, the Congress' criticism of the Modi Government's approach to rural and agrarian issues is not new. It has long accused the BJP of pursuing a development agenda that prioritises the urban elite and big business interests over the needs of the rural poor. However, with elections on the horizon, the rhetoric has reached fever pitch. Amid mounting agrarian distress, farmers across the country are protesting against contentious reforms introduced by the Modi Government. The protesters are demanding a legal guarantee for the minimum support price (MSP), implementation of the Swaminathan Commission's recommendations, pension for farmers and farm labourers, farm debt waiver, withdrawal of police cases and justice for victims of the Lakhimpur Kheri violence. The Congress leaders have seized upon this discontent to launch a blistering attack on the Government, alleging that the BJP's pro-corporate policies have exacerbated inequality and widened the gap between the rich and the poor; thousands of farmers still commit suicide every year. The parties may accuse each other of ignoring farmer welfare but the fact is that no one has done enough for the farmers. Their demands may again go unheard today; the bitter truth is everyone remembers farmers only for their votes.



isitors pose for photos with a model of rhinoceros at the 37th Suraikund International Crafts Mela, in Faridabad

Tensions escalate in Bab-el-Mandeb Strait



With recent attacks by Houthi rebels on vessels passing through the strait, the region faces heightened security risks which could disrupt world economy

he Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, a narrow passage linking the Red Sea to the Indian Ocean via the Gulf of Aden, has thrust itself into the international spotlight. Situated on the northern side of the Red Sea lies the renowned Suez Canal, a monumental feat of engineering connecting the Red Sea to the Mediterranean Sea. This vital waterway, spanning approximately 193 kilometres in length and nearly 200 meters in width, serves as a lifeline for global trade and maritime transportation.

However, recent events have cast a shadow over the tranquillity of these waters. The Houthis, a rebel group from Yemen, have launched a series of attacks targeting vessels passing through the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait. These assaults, primarily aimed at ships with ties to Israel, have sparked concerns over maritime security and the free movement of goods through this crucial chokepoint. In response to these escalating tensions, Operation Prosperity Guardian, spearheaded by the United States, was initiated to safeguard the Bab-el-Mandeb and ensure the unimpeded flow of maritime traffic. Over 20 nations have expressed their support for this initiative, underscoring the collective effort to protect this strategic waterway.

The motives behind the Houthi attacks are rooted in geopolitical complexities, with their actions perceived as retaliation against İsrael's military operations in Gaza. Houthi leaders have explicitly stated their intent to target any ship associated with Israel, leading to a spate of attacks on vessels carrying goods to or from the region. The Houthis contend that peace in Gaza is intrinsically linked to stability in the Red Sea, warning of further conflict if hostilities persist.

The significance of the Red Sea extends beyond its immediate vicinity, serving as a conduit for maritime trade connecting Europe to the rest of the world. The Mediterranean Sea, accessed through the Suez Canal, plays a pivotal role in global shipping tion, the blue economy routes, facilitating trade between continents and enabling vital economic exchange. Traditionally, for economic growth while



global maritime trade.

The economic ramifications of disruptions in the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait are far-reaching, affecting industries reliant on the timely delivery of goods and materials. Major shipping companies, such as the Mediterranean Shipping Company and Merk and Hapag Lloyd, have suspended operations in the region, exacerbating supply chain disruptions and logistical challenges. Amidst these geopolitical tensions, the concept of the blue economy emerges as a beacon of sustainable maritime development. Championed by advocates of ocean conservaemphasizes the responsible utilization of marine resources



WHILE INDIA AND

THE UNITED STATES SHARE A STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP, **DIFFERENCES IN** MARITIME POLICIES AND MILITARY **OPERATIONS UNDERSCORE THE COMPLEXITIES OF** NAVIGATING

INTERNATIONAL

WATERS

ensuring environmental preservation. India, with its extensive coastline and maritime interests, plays a pivotal role in shaping the future of the blue economy. Through initiatives like the Sagarmala project and SAGAR policy, India seeks to bolster its maritime infrastructure and strengthen its naval capabilities to safeguard its maritime interests.

However, divergent perspectives on maritime sovereignty and strategic alliances complicate the geopolitical landscape. While India and the United States share a strategic partnership, differences in maritime policies and military operations underscore the complexities of navigating international waters. Russia's stance on maritime

cooperation underscores the need for inclusive approaches to ocean governance, emphasizing collaboration over competition. As global leaders grapple with the challenges of maritime security and sustainable development, the Bab-el-Mandeb crisis serves as a poignant reminder of the interconnectedness of oceanic ecosystems and geopolitical dynamics. In conclusion, the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait stands at the intersection of geopolitical rivalries and maritime commerce, symbolizing the challenges and opportunities inherent in our interconnected world. As nations navigate these turbulent waters, cooperation and dialogue remain

essential to ensuring the security and prosperity of maritime nations and the preservation of our oceans for future genera-

The Future of Maritime Security and Sustainable Development

Looking ahead, addressing the complex issues surrounding maritime security and sustainable development requires concerted international efforts and innovative solutions. The Bab-el-Mandeb crisis serves as a wake-up call for global leaders to prioritise ocean conservation and cooperative strategies to mitigate geopolitical tensions. Investments in technology, such as satellite surveillance and unmanned maritime vehicles, hold promise for enhancing maritime surveillance and response capabilities. Additionally, strengthening legal frameworks and multilateral agreements can foster greater cooperation among nations and promote sustainable ocean governance.

Ultimately, the Bab-el-Mandeb crisis underscores the interconnected nature of global maritime challenges and the urgent need for collective action. By working together to address the complex issues facing our oceans, we can build a more resilient and sustainable future for generations to

fessor at Pondicherry Central University, views are personal)

(The author is associate pro-

Develop skills with experimental learning



Embracing experiential learning may well be the key to preparing students for the challenges and opportunities of the changing world

n an ever-evolving world, the ability to acquire and ▲adapt skills is crucial for success. While traditional learning methods hold value, experiential learning emerges as a powerful tool for skill development. By immersing individuals in real-world scenarios, it fosters deeper understanding, boosts knowledge retention, and cultivates essential soft skills.

Experiential Learning?

Experiential learning, rooted in the work of David Kolb, emphasises learning through active engagement and reflection on experiences. It's a hands-on approach, contrasting with passive knowledge absorption. Individuals "learn by doing," applying theoretical concepts to practical situations, whether through simulations, projects, internships, or real-world chal-

Key Componentsg:

Engagement: Experiential learning places a strong emphasis on engagement. Students are actively involved in the learning process, whether through experiments, projects, field trips, or interactive activities. This



ages a sense of curiosity.

Reflection: A crucial aspect of experiential learning is the reflective process. After engaging in an activity, students are prompted to reflect on their experiences, analyse the outcomes, and connect the practical knowledge gained to theoretical concepts. This reflective phase enhances their critical thinking skills.

Application: Experiential learning encourages the immediate application of knowledge. By directly applying what they have learned in real-world scenarios, students can see the practical relevance of their education, leading to a deeper understanding and retention of information.

Experiential Learning in Skill Development:

Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving: Experiential learning chalengagement helps capture lenges students to think crit- to understand and manage

ically and solve problems on their own. Through hands-on experiences, they learn to analyse situations, make decisions, and adapt to changing circumstances - essential skills for success in both academic and real-world settings.

Teamwork and Communication: Collaborative projects and group activities inherent in experiential learning help students develop strong teamwork and communication skills. They learn to express their ideas, listen to others, and work cohesively towards common goals, mirroring the dynamics of the professional world.

Creativity and Innovation: Hands-on experiences stimulate creativity and innovation by encouraging students to think outside the box. When faced with real-world challenges, students are prompted to generate unique solutions, fostering an entrepreneurial mindset and adaptability.

Emotional Intelligence: Experiential learning enhances emotional intelligence by exposing students to diverse situations. They learn

their emotions, as well as empathise with others, preparing them for a more emotionally intelligent and socially aware future.

Long-term Retention: The active involvement and application of knowledge in experiential learning contribute to better retention. Students are more likely to remember and understand concepts that they have personally experienced, as opposed to those learned through passive methods. In the 21st century, where adaptability and a diverse skill set are crucial for success, experiential learning emerges as a powerful tool for skill development in schools. By integrating this pedagogical approach, educators can foster not only a deep understanding of academic concepts but also the critical skills needed for future success. As schools continue to evolve, embracing experiential learning may well be the key to preparing students for the challenges and opportunities of the rapidly changing

(The writer is an educaor and expert on education policies; views are personal)

WHAT ABOUT PEOPLE KILLED BY DOGS?

Sir — This refers to Hiranmay Karlekar's article, "The Killing of a Puppy: Murder Most Foul" (February 10, 2024). A few days ago, a seven-month-old boy was killed by a pack of stray dogs in Bhopal. All stray dogs must immediately be sterilised and kept in an enclosed area to minimise colossal loss of human lives. India has around 20,000 rabies deaths a year which according to the World Health Organisation, "accounts for 36 percent of the world's deaths." Most of the victims of rabies in India are under the age of 15

This fatal disease has been eliminated from many countries. It is a challenging job in a country like India where dogs are allowed to roam freely. Rabies can be eliminated by vaccinating all dogs for a number of years and by sterilising the stray dog population. Bhutan has successfully sterilised and vaccinated its entire stray dog population after pursuing a 14-year-long programme. Bhutan sets an example which India needs to follow. Most of the victims of dog bites and rabies belong to the poor working class of our society who build our roads, bridges and houses for all of us and who serve everything at our door starting from morning newspapers to food packets. It is really perplexing that their deaths evoke little public sympathy and a lukewarm response from the authorities. I love dogs as much as I hate such insensitive attitudes towards poor work-

Sujit De | Kolkata

BEYOND GRADES

Sir —Cheating often stems from the intense pressure to excel in India's education system, where success is often equated with academic achievements. This pressure creates a culture where students feel compelled to resort to dishonest means to secure top positions. However, this toxic environment not only fosters unethical behaviour but also

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Crafting the Olympic medals



t's really astounding and delightful to know that the medals made for the upcoming Paris Summer Olympics are simply remarkable and fantastic. In addition to the customary gold, silver and bronze, each winner's medal will feature a small piece of iron straight from the Eiffel Tower! Small chunks of the iconic tower — the symbol of Paris and France and one of the wonders of the world — have been included in the medals to mark the 100 years since last hosted the Olympic Games. Each and every medal

has at its centre a hexagon of iron from the tower. They all come from pieces removed from the structure during different renovations over the last so many decades. The pieces of metal were carefully preserved, and the organisation in charge of the Eiffel Tower's preservation donated them to the Paris Olympic Committee to create the unique medal designs.

Definitely, it would be joy unlimited as medalists will get an unforgettable souvenir of Paris made from this unique metal. The "puddle iron" which has been used to make the tower is a special pure material, which is extremely strong, These special Olympic and Paralympic medals were designed by craftworkers at the famous Chaumet House of Jewellery and it is for the first time in the history of the Games that a jeweller has designed the medals. An out-of-the-box idea by the organisers these medals are definitely a symbol of excellence, a source of motivation, a symbol of ultimate achievement and historically precious

M Pradyu | Kannur

mental health issues and even suicides

among students. To address this, a comprehensive reform of the education system is crucial, emphasizing holistic development and emotional well-being alongside academic performance. Implementing mentoring programs, stress relief initiatives and mental health awareness campaigns can provide vital support to students, fostering a healthier and more conducive learning environment. By prioritizing student well-being and nurturing individual growth, India can mitigate the underlying causes of cheating and cultivate a generation equipped to thrive in the real

Mahi Khandelwal | Ujjain

FOOD WASTAGE

Sir — The issue of food waste intersects with the stark reality of hunger and malleads to severe consequences such as nutrition, particularly evident in the

context of those struggling to afford even two meals a day. With millions worldwide facing food insecurity, the recent suggestion by the Central Government to integrate lessons on food wastage into school curriculums aims to foster awareness among students.

Shocking statistics from the United Nations, revealing that approximately 931 million tons of food were wasted globally in 2019, underscore the urgency of addressing this issue. Despite ample resources, food wastage persists in our country, exacerbating the plight of the hungry and malnourished. This paradox highlights the need for a shift in mindset towards valuing food and combating wasteful practices, especially among those blinded by material wealth.

N Ashraf | Mumbai

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FIRST COLUMN

STRIVE FOR ALL-ROUND DEVELOPMENT

Spirituality offers us a methodology to deepen our awareness of the inner being



RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR **NIKUNJ JI**

Il of us dream of a world without poverty, that is equitable, that respects the dignity of all living beings, and the sacredness of the natural world. There is no doubt that it is an achievable dream, but we all must collectively pave a new way to make it into reality. Over the past two millennia, man has made great strides in almost every field of development as a result of which, today we have achieved a standard of living and scientific development unimaginable even half a century ago. But, if development concerns the betterment of the human being and his relationship with other humans and beings, then one would find that we have come down the wrong path in our quest for material fulfilment. Right? When we discuss development, we usually talk of economic development to meet material needs, measured perhaps through growth in the GNP or GDP. So, is this all that there is to devel-

Does economics measure everything? The answer to this is NO, because if we are aiming at all-round development, then it must include not only material progress but social and cultural dimensions as well. It's a fact that cannot be denied that the ideal of development as a continuing process of growth, creation, improvement and positive change has yielded to a reality more frequently marked by destruction, degradation and negativity. In his quest for improving his lot, man first turned to religion, which not only provided an anchor for his life but also answered some of the questions about his existence in this world and his place vis a vis the universal scheme of things. However, with time, religion itself got corrupted by ritualism and the greed for power, thereby making men disillusioned, who then turned to politics, to make their lives better. They sought succour and salvation from political ideologies but to no avail, resulting in their pinning hopes on science. With the aid of



science, much development happened in several fields.

Today as we stand on the threshold of both hope and fear of losing everything, we realise that materialistic progress is a transient solution and hence the effort to establish lasting peace and prosperity for all has to come from an imperishable source. The seed of lasting peace and happiness lies in human values and wisdom, which are both eternal and universal. The need of the hour is that we have to look at our development from a broader perspective than the one we have been adopting so far. Our narrow concept of development can find its roots in a narrow concept of the self that neglects the larger reality of the soul and overlooks the essential unity of the human family. Hence we need to move from an overly materialistic approach to one that includes the broader and deeper realities of human life and experience i.e. the inner world of our thoughts and values and the innate spirituality on which our worth and dignity are based.

Spirituality offers us a methodology to deepen our awareness of our inner being. From this awareness may follow steps to develop or change the self in ways that are conducive to the kind of world we want. Values and spirituality are at the heart of not just who we are but also of the political, social, economic and environmental issues we are facing. Remember! A development that sustains all people depends at least as much on spiritual empowerment as on material progress and prosperity. So let us inject values into our society by effective education in self-awareness, and spiritual principles and realize our dream of a world that is environmentally, socially and economically sustainable.

(The writer is a spiritual educator and a popular columnist;

views are personal)

Delink disinvestment from the Budget



UTTAM GUPTA

There is a need for a paradigm shift in the approach to disinvestment; the Government must detach it from budgetary constraints and tackle legacy issues



n a briefing following the presentation of the interim Budget for the financial year (FY) 2024-25 by the Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman on February 1, 2024, Finance Secretary TV Somanathan stated that the "government no longer views disinvestment - fancy nomenclature for sale of Union government shareholding in central public sector undertakings (CPSUs) - from the perspective of balancing the budget". The statement is out of sync with Sitharaman setting a target of Rs 50,000 crore as proceeds from disinvestment for the FY 2024-25 though it wasn't mentioned in her speech.

If, the government's intent was not to view it as an exercise in balancing the budget as stated by the finance secretary - then, it made no sense to fix a target. Yet, setting a target for boosting non-tax revenue receipts means that it hasn't shed its age-old stance of linking this exercise with the budget. To plan for garnering resources from the sale of government shares in CPSUs is inherently flawed. This is because unlike tax revenue, which can be projected with a

degree of certainty based on the existing tax rate and a reasonable assessment of the growth in nominal GDP, the same cannot said about proceeds from disinvestment. In this case, a lot depends on the market scenario and, in particular, the perception of investors about the company in which share-sale is contemplated. In cases where the strategic sale (it reduces

the government's holding in the CPSU to below 50 per cent or privatization) is mooted, the Government faces a bigger challenge as apart from a favourable market, it needs bidders with deep pockets. The lengthy and cumbersome process of approval and bureaucratic red tape further undermines the chances of its kicking the ball rolling just around the time when the strategic investors are ready to put in their bets.

The Niti Aayog identifies companies for disinvestment which are then considered by the Core Group of Secretaries on Divestment (CGD), a long-drawn process by itself, which takes it to the Alternative Mechanism (AM) - a group of ministers, including finance, road transport & highways, administrative reforms, etc., - for approval. After AM's approval, the Department of Investment and Public



THE MAJORITY **OWNERSHIP AND** CONTROL BY THE **GOVERNMENT** FOR SEVERAL DECADES HAS INGRAINED

BUREAUCRAT A FEELING OF **EXERCISING** COMMAND OVER THE MANAGEMENT OF THE PSU

Asset Management (DIPAM) moves a proposal for in-principal approval of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA).

It is therefore not surprising that the

Modi - government has missed its disinvestment targets ever since it started the process in 2015-16 with a particular focus on 'strategic' sales. Only during two years viz. 2017-18 and 2018-19, it achieved the target. That was primarily because, in those years, it had conducted two big-ticket sales of its shares from one CPSU to another. During 2017-18, the government sold 51.11 per cent of its shareholding in Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) to the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) yielding Rs 37,000 crore. In the following year, it undertook the sale of its 52.63 per cent stake in the Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) to the Power Finance Corporation (PFC) yielding Rs 13,000 crore. But, those sales can't be termed as strategic as the purchaser being another CPSU UNGC/PFC, Government continues to have effective ownership over the divested entity viz. HPCL/REC.

For the current FY, while presenting the budget on February 1, 2023, Sitharaman had set a target of Rs 51,000 crore for proceeds of disinvestment. This has since been revised downwards to Rs 30,000 crore. Against this, as of February 1, 2024, the government has raised only about Rs 12,500 crore, and it is unlikely that even the revised

divestment target will be met. At a fundamental level, disinvestment of the government's shareholding in a PSU is in effect sale of its assets. Therefore, receipts arising therefrom can only be treated as 'capital receipts' (CRs). While preparing the budget, it won't be logical to plan for receipts from this source in the same manner as it is done for revenue receipts (RRs) which are receipts generated from

the day-to-day business activities e.g. dividends on shares held by the government. The government should change the track. It should unequivocally fall in line with what the finance secretary has indicated. It should pursue share sales 'indepen-

dent' of the budget exercise. The government's tax revenue is buoyant (for three years in a row since 2021-22, these have exceeded the BE) and it is getting higher dividends from CPSUs as also higher dividends from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and state-run banks. These positive trends should be good enough for managing fiscal deficits. Hence, its budget need not have to depend on proceeds from disinvestment.

The FM has referred to the approach to share sales outlined in her Budget speech for 2021-22. Under it, CPSUs are divided into two broad categories i.e. strategic and non-strategic. The strategic group covers atomic energy, space and defense; transport and telecommunications; power, petroleum, coal and other minerals; and banking, insurance and financial services. The non-strategic category includes all other sectors such as industrial and consumer goods, hotel and tourist services, trading, and mar-

keting. While, the government wants to sell CPSUs in the strategic sector with the caveat that at least one (and a maximum of four) will be retained in the public sector, it will privatize 'all' undertakings in non-strategic sectors. All loss-making undertakings in the latter category will be closed. However, it needs to unshackle the process from a host of legacy issues.

Foremost, the majority ownership and control by the Government for several decades has ingrained in the bureaucrat a feeling of exercising command over the management of the PSU. Although things have improved under the Modi - dispensation (courtesy of its focus on a

'policy-driven state', and increase in transparency'), the basic ingredients remain intact. This mindset has to

Second, even after strategic sales, the government wants to remain in the driver's seat. This is amply reflected in a statement in Sitharaman's budget speech for FY 2019-20. She had stated the intent was to change the existing policy from "directly" holding 51 per cent or above in a CPSU, to one whereby its total holding, "direct" plus "indirect", is maintained at 51 per cent. This stance remains intact.

Third, it remains inclined to use CPSUs for achieving other unrelated objectives. For instance, it uses fertilizer PSUs to ensure adequate availability of this politically sensitive agri-input in every nook and corner of the country. This has come in the way of taking up the strategic sale of nine CPSUs in the fertilizer sector (it falls in the non-strategic category) recommended for sale by the Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) and Niti Aayog Despite, the deregulation of petrol and diesel prices way back in 2010/2014, the government continues to regulate their prices.

For this purpose, it rides piggyback on oil PSUs which control over 90 percent of the total sales. For this reason, the strategic sale of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) hasn't happened nearly four years after it was initially mooted in 2019-20.

Fourth, the government wants to use CPSUs to build infrastructure and invest in green transition to meet climate mitigation goals. While the argument is tenable, this doesn't undermine a case for vigorously pursuing strategic sales to maximize asset value besides involving the private sector in achieving climate goals. Modi should remove all legacy obstacles and de-bureaucratize the process of share sale.

(The writer is a policy analyst; views are personal)

Advancing the maxim of 'One Earth, One Health'

Modi's vision of 'One Earth, One Health' rooted in ancient Indian philosophy, reflects India's enduring commitment to universal health

ndia raising the slogan of 'One Earth One Health' in Litself tells how India wants to develop health infrastructure. This philosophy includes holistic health protection and care for all beings - humans, animals and even plants. Apart from this, making medical treatment affordable has also been a top priority of the Government of India. This may surprise many people, but the fact is - only two welfare health schemes - 'Ayushman Bharat' and 'Jan Aushadhi Yojana' have provided more than Rs 1 lakh crore to patients mainly coming from the poor and middle class. Have saved. Ayushman Bharat has not only increased the demand for new hospitals but is also increasing the opportunity to open new hospitals and med-



RAJESH KUMAR SINGH

ical colleges. But also creating a new and complete health ecosystem with technology at the centre of operations. These revived efforts for healthcare services have given a big push to the highly potential healthcare sector, which promises to be worth Rs 10 lakh crore in the coming years, if there is proper coordination between the private sector and medical academia. Of course, It would

proper coordination with the state governments had taken care of the primary health centres also. Which perhaps the present ministry has failed to do. Whereas at smaller village health centers the testing facility could be linked to the district hospital.

The focus on technology in healthcare is a huge opportunity for healthcare entrepreneurs, investors and professionals. The allocation of Rs 89,155 crore in the Union Budget 2023-24 has also given new impetus to the sector. There is a clear difference in focus between pre- and post-Covid situations.

Springing into action, India focuses not just on treatment but also on wellness. Putting aside the absence of an intehave been even better here if grated long-term approach to

health for several decades after independence, it is now better to pursue a whole-of-govern-ment approach under PM Modi, rather than confining the subject of health to the health ministry alone. Points towards the future. Keeping in mind the problems of common people, the government has given top priority to affordable treatment. More than 10,000 Jan Aushadhi Kendras provide affordable medicines to the needy. The PM-Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission is not only giving birth to new hospitals but also creating a new and complete health ecosys-

There has been a revolution of sorts in the medical education sector in the last 10 years More than 260 new medical colleges have been opened, doubling the medical seats in undergraduate and postgraduate medical courses as compared to 2014. However there is a need to change the policy decisions regarding the establishment of medical colleges, and more work needs to be done on how to make India's doors easier for Indian medical students studying abroad. However, in the latest budget, a lot of emphasis has also been given to the nursing sector. 157 nursing colleges around the medical colleges, a major step towards medical human resources. Technologies like 5G are creating new opportunities for startups. Drones are revolutionizing drug delivery and testing services. The medical device sector has seen a

tiatives like Bulk Drug Park, and Medical Device Park, over Rs 30 thousand crore on PLI

schemes. Apart from this, starting courses like biomedical engineering, industry-academia and government collaboration in IITs also has a lot to offer for the sector. However, instead of increasing the infrastructure of primary health centres, we added more to patient care OPD in institutions like AIIMS, while AIIMS remained identified as a research institute and their old contribution to the research

The government's efforts on preventive health care and awareness such as Swachh Bharat Abhiyan for cleanliness, Ujjwala Yojana for smoking-

Mission to tackle waterborne diseases, National Nutrition Mission to address anaemia and malnutrition, obesity Focus on grains - Shri Anna, PM Matru Vandana Yojana, Mission Indradhanush, Ýoga, Fit India Movement and increasing focus on naturopathy, alternative medicine system including Ayurveda have saved people from diseases. All these measures of the gov-

ernment are the beginning of a new era for the people and also a vision of India regarding health in front of the world. Which can be understood in an earlier address of the Prime Minister.

In which the Prime Minister warmly welcomed health ministers from across the world and representatives from West growth of 12-14% due to ini- related diseases, Jal Jeevan Asia, SAARC, ASEAN and

African regions. Quoting an Indian scripture which translates to 'Let everyone be happy, let everyone be free from diseases, let good things happen to everyone, and let no one suffer from sorrow', the Prime Minister expressed his vision of an inclusive country. Highlighted and mentioned that India's vision of health was universal even when there were no global pandemics thousands of years ago. He underlined that One Earth One Health follows the same beliefs and is an example of the same idea in action. "Our vision is not limited to humans only. But also a beautiful earth for every living being. That is the Indian philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'.

(The writer is a senior journalist; views are personal)

Israeli forces rescue 2 hostages in Gaza raid that killed 67

Israeli forces rescued two hostages early Monday, storming a heavily guarded apartment in the Gaza Strip and extracting the captives under fire in a dramatic raid that was a small but symbolically significant success for Israel. The operation killed at least 67 Palestinians, including women and children, according to Palestinian health officials in the beleaguered terri-

tory.
To assist the rescue forces, heavy airstrikes pounded the area near the apartment in Rafah, a city on the southern edge of the Gaza Strip where 1.4 million Palestinians have fled to escape fighting elsewhere in the Israel-Hamas war.

The raid was celebrated in Israel as a victory in the sluggish battle to free the hostages, with more than 100 captives still held by Hamas and other Gaza militants, and briefly lifted the spirits of a nation still



Hostages Fernando Simon Marman, right, and Luis Har, second from left, hug relatives after being rescued from captivity in the Gaza Strip, at the Sheba Medical Center in Ramat Gan, Israel, Monday.

reeling from Hamas' crossborder raid last year.

But in Gaza, where civilians have borne a staggering toll since the war erupted on October 7, the operation unleashed another wartime tragedy, with many Palestinians killed or wounded.

Palestinian minors — children and young teens — have been Hamas, the Health Ministry in

That means minors make up about 43 per cent of the total number of 28,176 Palestinians killed so far. About 8,400 women were also among those

The ministry, which does not distinguish between com-batants and civilians, provided the breakdown of minors and women at the request of The Associated Press. Israel claims to have killed thousands of Hamas fighters.

The plight of the hostages has profoundly shaken Israelis and the government has made freeing the dozens of remaining captives a top aim of its war, along with destroying Hamas' military and governing capabil-

But as the fighting drags on, now in its fifth month, their freedom remains elusive and rifts have emerged in Israel over the best approach to end their

'It's critical to receive EU aid soon'

AP BRUSSELS

The head of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees said Monday that it's vital that it receives new European Union funding within weeks because Israel appears to be readying a ground assault on Rafah, where many civilians have taken

The aid agency UNRWA is reeling from allegations that 12 of its 13,000 Gaza staff participated in the October 7 Hamas southern Israel.UNRWA immediately fired the staff, but more than a dozen countries suspended funding worth about USD 440 million, almost half of UNRWA's budget for 2024.

Asked how important it is that UNRWA receive an 82 million euro (USD 88 million) EU payment by the end of UNRWA month,

Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini said, "It's absolutely critical." He has previously warned that the agency might be forced to close by the end of the month.

Two UN investigations into Israel's allegations are underway, but the European Commission -- the third biggest donor to UNRWA after the United States and Germany -- has demanded a separate audit and wants to appoint experts to carry it out.

The audit would focus "on the control systems needed to prevent the possible involve-ment of (UNRWA) staff in terrorist activities," the EU's executive branch said. It also is insisting on "a review of all UNRWA staff" to confirm they had no role in the attacks.

Of the UN agency's 13,000 Gaza staff members, more than 3,000 continue working there. Screening them all within weeks would be impossible and time is of the essence.

The agency has been the main supplier of food, water and shelter during the war in Gaza, where around 85 per cent of the population has been displaced.

Part of the audit would involve a new "pillar assess-ment" of UNRWA. The commission routinely carries out these checks of agencies that it funds to ensure that they're complying with EU standards.

But even the EU's crisis management commissioner, Janez Lenarcic, conceded on Monday that such an assess-ment of UNRWA "has been concluded very recently."

The agency was also included in an audit the commission launched in October, which found that no funds were reaching Hamas.

Dutch court orders Netherlands to stop export of F-35 parts to Israel

The Hague (AP): An appeals court ordered the Dutch government on Monday to halt the export of F-35 fighter jet parts to Israel, citing a clear risk of violations of international law.

A trio of human rights organisations brought a civil suit against the Netherlands in December, arguing authorities needed to reevaluate the export license in light of Israeli military action in the Gaza Strip.

'It is undeniable that there is a clear risk that the exported F-35 parts are used in serious violations of international humanitarian law," Judge Bas Boele said in reading out the ruling, eliciting cheers from several people in the courtroom. The exports must cease within seven days. The decision came as Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte travelled to Israel to meet with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to discuss the conflict. Rutte was also expected to separately meet with Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammad

Shtayyeh.
"We are extremely grateful that there is justice and that the court was willing to speak out on justice," lead lawyer Liesbeth Zegveld told reporters after the hearing. Oxfam Novib, Pax Nederland and The Rights Forum filed the case in December. They argued the continued transfer of the aircraft parts makes the Netherlands complicit in possible war crimes being committed by Israel in its war with

In January, a lower court sided with the government, allowing the Dutch to continue sending US-owned parts stored at a warehouse in the town of Woensdrecht to Israel.

The Netherlands is home to one of three F-35 European regional warehouses. Other countries are also considering restricting weapons sales to

 $F_{\text{after former Prime Minister}}^{\text{inland has a new president}}$ Alexander Stubb narrowly won a runoff vote Sunday for the key post in this Nordic country. Stubb, who takes over in March, will steer Finland's foreign and security policy, including integrating the NATO newcomer into the alliance's core structures.

The final tally shows Stubb, of the centre-right National Coalition Party, had 51.6 per cent of the votes, while independent candidate and former Foreign Minister Pekka Haavisto from the green left got 48.4 per cent of the votes. The two were the contenders in the second round of the election. Haavisto had served as Finland's top diplomat from

Stubb is taking over from the hugely popular President Sauli Niinistö, whose second six-year term expires next month and who wasn't eligible for reelection. A runoff was

required after none of the original nine candidates got a majority of the votes in the first round on January 28. In tradition with consensus-driven Finnish politics and no belowthe-belt attacks during the campaign, Stubb visited Haavisto's election party event late Sunday after the result

"You're one of the nicest people I have ever met," Stubb told his opponent at the party event, according to Finnish

broadcaster YLE. The presidency is a key political post in this northern European country of 5.6 million people. Unlike in most European countries, the president of Finland holds executive power in formulating foreign and security policy together with the government. But he is also expected to remain above the fray of dayto-day politics and stay out of domestic political disputes while acting as a moral leader

Finland elects new president 2 including 5-year-old, injured after woman opens fire at Texas church

5-year-old child and a A 5-year-old child and a man were injured and a woman was killed after she opened fire inside a church here in the US state of Texas, police said. The violence erupted at pastor Joel Osteen's Lakewood Church in Houston on Sunday where a 2 p.m. Spanish service was set to begin. Two off-duty law enforcement officers - a Houston police officer and an agent with the Texas Alcoholic Commission — engaged and struck the woman who entered the massive church with the boy who was later hurt in the shootout.

The woman, roughly 30-35 years old, was wearing a trench coat and a backpack and was armed with a long rifle, Houston Police Chief Troy Finner said.Lakewood Church — a building with a was previously an arena for the NBA's Houston Rockets has grown tremendously over the past 25 years since Joel Osteen took over after his father died in 1999 and introduced an upbeat style of Christian televangelism that has captured a following of millions. "Unfortunately a 5year-old kid was hit and is in critical condition at our local hospital," Finner said. It was unclear what the child's relationship to the shooter was, he said. A 57-year-old man who authorities believe was not connected to the incident

"I want to commend those officers. She had a long gun and it could have been a lot worse," Finner said.An investigation will take place into the shooting and both law enforcement officers will

- was shot in the leg and is

seeking treatment at a hospi-

tal, Finner said.

leave while the probe is ongoing. The woman had also threatened she "had a bomb", but authorities searched her vehicle and a backpack she was wearing and found no explosives, Finner said.

"She was also spraying some type of substance on the ground," the chief added.

The woman's identity has not yet been revealed. Speaking during the news conference, Osteen, the pastor, said the shooting took place "in between services", noting the timing of the incident likely helped prevent further injuries and dam-

"I can only imagine if it would have happened during the 11 o'clock service," he said. "So, you know, if there's anything good of it ... (it's) that she didn't get in there and do a whole lot worse damage," Osteen said of the Houston Mayor John

Whitmire lamented that the violence took place while people were preparing to practise their faith and others looked forward to the Super Bowl encounter between the San Francisco 49ers and the Kansas City Chiefs. "We find ourselves gathered here to respond to this tragedy," he said.

In a statement Sunday afternoon, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott said: "Our hearts are with those impacted by today's tragic shooting and the entire Lakewood Church community in Houston. Places of worship are sacred."

The governor added he has been in contact with local and state officials to 'help this community and help bring swift justice to the criminal who committed this heinous act".

Serbs protest decision to abolish Serbian dinar

Mitrovica: Thousands of minority Serbs in Kosovo on use of the Serbian currency in areas where they live, an issue that has been the cause of the latest crisis in relations between Serbia and Kosovo.

Tensions escalated after the government of Kosovo, a former Šerbian province, banned banks and other financial institutions in the Serb-populated areas from using the dinar in local transactions, starting February 1, and imposed the euro. The dinar was widely used in ethnic Serbian-dominated areas, especially in Kosovo's north, to pay pensions and salaries to staff in Serbian-run institutions, including schools and hospitals. The ban has angered both Kosovo Serbs and Serbia.

The leaders of Serbia and Kosovo sparred over the issue at a meeting last week at the United Nations Security Council.

US Defence Secy Austin hospitalised

Washington (AP): US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin was hospitalised again on Sunday to continues to recover from prostate cancer and has transferred authorities to his deputy, the Pentagon said. Austin was diagnosed with prostate cancer in December and continues to deal with complications from his treatment.

At about 2:20 pm Sunday, he was transported by his security detail to Walter Reed National Military Medical Centre "to be seen for symptoms suggesting an emergent bladder issue", Pentagon Press Secretary Maj Gen. Pat Ryder said in a statement

While Austin initially intended to retain the "functions and duties of his office", at about 5 pm Sunday he transferred those authorities to Deputy Secretary of Defence Kathleen Hicks. As of Sunday evening, he remained hospitalised.

A statement from Walter Reed medical officials late Sunday said Austin was admitted into the critical care unit for supportive care and close monitoring. Dr. John Maddox, the trauma medical director, and Dr. Gregory Chesnut, director of the Centre for Prostate Disease Research of the Murtha Cancer Centre, said while it was unclear at this time how long Austin will remain hospitalised, "the current bladder issue is not expected to change his anticipated full recov-

The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was notified, as well as the White House and Congress. Austin was scheduled to depart Tuesday for Brussels to hold a meeting of the Ukraine contact group, which he established in 2022 to coordinate military support for Kyiv after Russia's invasion.

After that, Austin was scheduled to attend a regular meeting of NATO defence min-

It was not immediately clear if this hospitalisation would change those plans. Austin was diagnosed with prostate cancer in December and underwent a procedure called a prostatectomy to treat it on December 22.

Yemen's Houthi rebels fire | UK may send asylum-seekers to Rwanda missiles at Iran ship

of the nation.

 $Y^{
m emen's}$ Houthi rebels fired two missiles at a ship bound for a port in Iran on age but no injuries to its crew, authorities said. The attack on the Marshall Islands-flagged, Greek-operated bulk carrier Star Iris shows just how widely the Houthis now target ships travelling through the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden and the Bab el-Mandeb Strait connecting the two waterways. The Star Iris had been heading from Brazil to Bandar Khomeini in Iran, the main backer and armer of the Houthis in Yemen's years-long war. The Houthis sought to

describe the Star Iris as an "American" vessel without offering evidence, and said they targeted the ship with multiple missiles.

The Houthis' military "will not hesitate to carry out more operations in retaliation to the Zionist crimes against our brothers in the Gaza Strip, as



well as in response to the ongoing American-British aggression against our dear country", Houthi military spokesman Brig. Gen. Yahya Saree said in a statement after the attack. The British military's United Kingdom Trade Operations centre, which oversees Mideast waters, reported the attack, saying it happened while the Star Iris was travelling south through the Bab el-Mandeb Strait that separates East Africa from the Arabian Peninsula. The ship's captain "reports his vessel was attacked

by two missiles and reports

temple site. We then washed

and polished them followed by

a layer of primer and then

paint. Each rock has a motiva-

tional quote on one side and

any part of the temple painted

on the other side," she told PTI.

Reva Karia, 8, who spent this

minor damage", the UKTMO said. "Vessel and crew are safe. Vessel proceeding to next port

of call? The attack on the Star Iris follows days in which no Houthi attacks on ships were reported. It's unclear what caused the pause, though the US and British militaries have conducted multiple rounds of airstrikes targeting the Houthis' missile arsenals and launch sites in territory they hold.

Since November, the rebels have repeatedly targeted ships in the Red Sea over Israel's offensive in Gaza.

The British government's plan to send some asylumseekers on a one-way trip to Rwanda is "fundamentally incompatible" with the UK's human rights obligations, a said Monday, as the contentious bill returned for debate in the House of Lords.Parliament's unelected upper chamber is scrutinizing a bill designed to overcome the UK Supreme Court's ruling that the Rwanda plan is illegal. The court said in November that the East African nation is not a safe country for migrants.

The Safety of Rwanda Bill pronounces the country safe, makes it harder for migrants to challenge deportation and allows the British government to ignore injunctions from the European Court of Human Rights that seek to block removals. Parliament's Joint Committee on Human Rights, which has members from both government and opposition parties, said in a report that the bill "openly invites the possibility of the UK breaching inter-

national law" and allows British officials "to act in a manner that is incompatible with human rights standards".

Scottish National Party lawmaker Joanna Cherry, who chairs the committee, said the bill "risks untold damage to the of human rights". "This bill is designed to remove vital safeguards against persecution and human rights abuses, including the fundamental right to access a court," she said. "Hostility to human rights is at its heart and no amendments can salvage it."

The Home Office said the Rwanda plan is a "bold and innovative" solution to a "major global challenge". "Rwanda is clearly a safe country that cares deeply about supporting refugees," it said in a statement. "It hosts more than 135,000 asylum seekers and stands ready to relocate people and help them rebuild their lives."

Under the policy, asylum-seekers who reach the UK in small boats across the English Channel would have their claims processed in Rwanda, and stay there permanently. The plan is key to Prime

Minister Rishi Sunak's pledge to "stop the boats" bringing unauthorised migrants to the UK Sunak argues that deporting unauthorised asylum-seekers will deter people from making risky journeys and break the business model of peoplegroups call the plan inhumane and unworkable, and no one has yet been sent to Rwanda. In response to the Supreme

Court ruling, Britain and Rwanda signed a treaty pledging to strengthen protections migrants. Sunak's Conservative government argues the treaty allows it to pass a law declaring Rwanda a

safe destination. The bill was approved by the House of Commons last month, though only after 60 members of Sunak's governing Conservatives rebelled in an effort to make the legislation

tougher.

It is now being scrutinised by the Lords, many of whom want to defeat or water down the bill. Unlike the Commons the governing Conservatives do not hold a majority of seats in the Lords.

Iraq says, US troop drawdown

Children in Abu Dhabi giving final shape to gifts for attendees of first Hindu temple inauguration activity. I come with my parents

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

Over 100 Indian school children here are busy painting "tiny treasure" stones which will be gifted as memoirs to the guests attending the inauguration of the first stone Hindu temple here in the UAE's capital on Wednesday. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha (BAPS) Hindu temple in Abu Dhabi, the first traditional Hindu stone temple in the UAE.

The children have been offering "stone seva" at the temple site every Sunday for three months and are now giving the final touch to the gifts called "tiny treasures".

For 12-year-old Tithi Patel, stone seva is a weekend activity which she enjoys with her



gift boxes, said they have named the gift "tiny treasure" because children are making them with their tiny hands. 'The stone will make the

guests remember their first

visit to the grand temple. For

me, this has been an experience

of teamwork, a weekly outing

with friends and a creative

affirmation and represent peace, love and harmony. 'They are later varnished so they can last for many years as the temple," he said. Thakkar said they will continue to do this activity for a few months so that when the

here and they also offer their

seva at parts of the temple," she

said. Aarnav Thakkar, 11, said

the designs being painted on the stones are reflections of

can get the gift. The BAPS Hindu Mandir, located in Abu Mureikhah, near Al Rahba off the Dubai-Abu Dhabi Sheikh Zayed Highway, has come up on around 27 acres of land in Abu Dhabi and the work for the structure has been going on

the visitors in the initial months

$\Gamma^{ ext{he}}$ Iraqi government met again with the US government on Sunday on how to draw down American troops who have been deployed there for years combating the Islamic

State. The two governments had held their first, long-awaited meeting January 27, but those meetings had been put on pause after Iran-backed militants struck a base in Jordan the very next day with a drone that killed three US sertemple is opened to the public, vice members.

In the weeks since, the US has launched multiple retaliatory strikes in Iraq and Syria including a strike last week that killed a high-ranking commander of the powerful Kataib Hezbollah militia who the US said is responsible for "directly planning and participating in attacks" on American troops in the region. Both Iraq and the

talks depend on peace US had agreed last August to enter into talks to transition US forces from their long-standing role in assisting Iraq in combating IS. There are approximately 2,500 troops in the country, and their departure will take into account the security situation on the ground, and the capabilities of the Iraqi armed forces, the Iraq government said in a statement on Sunday posted to X, formerly Twitter.

> The resumed meetings will continue to chart a path to a new bilateral relationship "as long as nothing disturbs the peace of the talks", Iraq said in its statement.

Iraq has long struggled to balance its ties with the US and Iran, both allies of the Iraqi government but regional archenemies. Since the Israel-Hamas war broke out in the wake of Hamas' October 7 attacks, Iran-aligned groups

have struck at US facilities in

Iraq, Syria and Jordan 170 times, prompting retaliatory airstrikes by the US, which blames Kataib Hezbollah for a string of those attacks. The Iraqi government has

angrily condemned US airstrikes against Kataib Hezbollah, which is part of the Popular Mobilization Forces. The Popular Mobilization Forces, or PMF, are state-sanc-

tioned, mainly Shiite militias, which have grown into a powerful political faction estimated to have the most seats in the Iraqi parliament. But the deaths of three US

service members at Tower 22 in Jordan was a red line for the US and in the days following the deadly strike, Iran disavowed any knowledge or connection to the attack, and Kataib Hezbollah said it would cease launching attacks in order to not embarrass the Iraqi govern-

PML-N, PPP discuss power-sharing formula to form government in Pak

he top leaders of the Pakistan the Pakistan Peoples Party have discussed a new power-sharing formula for dividing the five-year tenure between them, as efforts to form a coalition government gathered pace on Monday following a split verdict in the elec-

Despite independent candidates backed by jailed former prime minister Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf (PTI) party winning the most seats in Parliament, questions loom over what the next government of Pakistan will look like. None of the three major parties, the PML-N, the PPP, or the PTI have won the necessary seats to secure a majority in the 266-member National Assembly and, therefore, will be unable to form government on their own, leaving it unclear who will be picked as the cash-strapped country's next prime minister.

The leaders of PML-N and the PPP discussed the idea of appointing a prime minister for half the term during their first meeting held on Sunday following the February 8 elections as part of their efforts to form a coalition government in the Centre and provinces, according to a source privy to the develop ment. "It has been proposed that a PML-N candidate will serve as prime minister for three years and PPP's leader for two years, the source said, adding that it was not yet decided who will get the first term. The meeting was attended by PPPattended Parliamentarian President Asif Ali Zardari, PPP Chairman Bilawal-Bhutto Zardari, and former prime minister Shehbaz

Sharif from the PML-N. The same power-sharing formula was chalked out by PML-N and National Party (NP) in Balochistan in 2013 when two chief ministers from the two parties held office for half of the fiveyear term.

PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif is still in the race for the prime ministerial slot despite his party not securing a simple majority in the Feb 8 general

IMF team likely

to visit Pak for

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

bailout package

Adelegation of the IMF may visit cash-strapped

Pakistan once a new federal

government is formed, nego-

between major political parties after the general elections

threw a hung Parliament, a

media report said on Monday

Monetary Fund's review mis-

sion might visit Islamabad by

the end of this month or early

next month, provided the

government formation at federal and provincial levels was

complete, according to the

Ministry of Finance's assess-

icance as it is crucial for the

completion of the USD 3 bil-

lion Standby Arrangement (SBA), which is going to expire on April 12. The mis-

sion will finalise the salient

features of the anticipated medium-term bailout pack-

age to avert a default on

repayment of foreign debts, the report said. In its recent

staff report, the IMF talked about rephasing access for the

second review, to March 15, 2024, to provide sufficient time to complete the programme's structural agenda. However, in the wake of controversy over the poll results, the mission's possible delay for the completion of the second review and release of the last tranche worth USD 1.2 billion under SBA could lead to fears of default, the report said. Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves hovered around USD 8.04 billion during the week ending February 2, after witnessing a decline in reserves by USD 173 million due to external debt repayments. A Finance Division official said the IMF would only come to begin the

second review talks once a

new government was sworn

in at the national level, according to the report.

1.2 billion was conditional upon the newly elected gov-

ernment assuming office. The new agreement will also be

finalised with the new gov-

ernment, he said.

The official added the last and third tranche of USD

The visit assumes signif-

ment, Geo News reported.

International

N leaders said on Monday.

We are having discussion with the PPP over power-sharing formula in the upcoming coalition government in the Centre and Nawaz Sharif cannot be ruled out as the prime ministerial candidate," PML-N Senator Irfan Saddique told a private news channel.

He said Nawaz Sharif, 74, is the candidate for the prime minister slot from the PML-N. In the Sunday meeting at the Bilawal House in Lahore, the two sides agreed in principle to cooperate for the country's political stability following the general election, the sources said. They confirmed that so far several open and behind-the-doors meetings have been held between the leaders of PML-N and PPP and other parties since the powerful Pakistan Army has also indicated that they will back a unity government to pull the country out of the challenges it faced. "The main hurdle is who will lead the government as both parties are pushing forward their candidates but after a lot of discussion, some sort of middle ground may emerge," according to a leader of the PML-N. A PPP leader said the party was not withdrawing from its demand that Bilawal Bhutto Zardari

because he was endorsed for the the PTI would form a strong post by the PPP's Central opposition. "We don't feel comfortable Executive Committee (CEC) even before the elections. The Election Commission of Pakistan has announced that independent candidates, a

majority of them supported by

the PTI secured 101 seats, fol-

lowed by Pakistan Muslim

League-Nawaz (PML-N) with 75

seats, Pakistan Peoples Party

(PPP) getting 54 seats, and

Muttahida Qaumi Movement-

Pakistan (MQM-P) bagging 17

seats. Other parties got 17 seats

while the result of one con-

stituency was withheld. Though

the PTI initially claimed to form

the government but its chances

looked grim from the beginning

as at least 169 seats, in the house

of 336, were needed to form the

government. A total of 266 seats

are directly contested while 60

women-reserved seats and 10

minority seats are allocated

based on proportional represen-

tation to the winning parties. As

PTI was not allowed to contest

as a single party with a common

symbol, it was not qualified to get

on the opposition benches, leav-

ing the field open for PML-N

and PPP as well as others to form

a coalition, party leader Barrister

The PTI hence decided to sit

PROJECT MANAGER

the reserved seats.

UTTARAKHAND PEYJAL NIGAM

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Estimated Cost: - Rs. 55.92 Lakh (Without GST)

ALMORA, DISTRICT-ALMORA.

Period of Completion: 02 Month

portal:-12-02-2024(17.00 hrs)

(17.00 hrs)

1. Name of the work:- CONSTRUCTION OF APPROACH

ROAD AT GOVERNMENT MEDICAL COLLEGE

Date and Time of availability of Bid documents in the

Online Bid submission: End date:- 19-02-2024

6. Date & Time of Technical bid Opening: 20-02-2024

. Name and Address of the Officer inviting bid:- Project

Manager, Construction Unit, Uttarakhand Peyjal Nigam

3. For further details, details of subsequent Amendment

e-Procurement portal www.uktenders.gov.in

correction documentation etc. may be obtained from the

with both (PML-N and PPP) of them. There will be no talks with anyone to make a government or to make a government together with them. It is better to sit in the opposition than to make a government [with them], but we think we have the majority," Gohar Khan told Dawn News on

Particulars

Total Income from Operations

Net Profit / (Loss) for the period

(before Tax, Exceptional and/or

Net Profit / (Loss) for the period

before tax (after Exceptional and/or

Net Profit / (Loss) for the period

after tax (after Exceptional and/or

Total Comprehensive Income for

the period [Comprising Profit /

(Loss) for the period (after tax)

Reserves (excluding Revaluation

Reserve) as shown in the Audited

(of ₹10/- each) (for continuing

and discontinued operations) -

Balance Sheet of the previous year

and Other Comprehensive

Income (after tax)]

3. Earnings Per Share

Basic & Diluted (in ₹)

Date: 12.02.2024

Extraordinary items#)

Extraordinary items#

Extraordinary items#)

Rejected ballots exceed victory margin in 24 constituencies

of rejected ballots was greater than the margin of victory in at least 24 National Assembly constituencies, according to an interesting statistical nugget from Pakistan's recent general elections. The difference potentially opens doors for legal battles as several losing candidates have flooded the courts with petitions to review the results

According to a report in the Dawn newspaper, 22 constituencies with a greater number of rejected votes than the margin of victory fell in Punjab, with one each in

KEY CORP LIMITED

CIN No.:L65921UP1985PLC007547

Regd. Office:16/16-A, Civil Lines, Kanpur - 208001

Email: keycorpltd@gmail.com; Phone: 0512-3013416, 3010422, 2305416

STATEMENT OF UNAUDITED FINANCIAL RESULT (REVISED) FOR THE

THIRD QUARTER ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2023

Current Corresponding

(31.12.2022

(Unaudited

1786.93

1771.32

1771.32

1771.32

32.05

600.00

0.53

Notes: 1. The above unaudited financial results have been revised as per directions of BSE notified to the company vide

their e-mail dated 29.01.2024. 2. The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly Financial Results (Revised)

filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 & Regulation 52 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure

Requirements) Regulations, 2015 as amended, 3. The full format of the Quarterly Financial Results are available on the

websites of the Stock Exchange(s) and the listed entity. https://www.bseindia.com/stock-share-price/key-corp-

ltd/keycorp/507948/financials-results-special/. The above results have been reviewed by the Audit Committee and

approved by the board of directors of the company at its meeting held on 12.02.2024 The Statutory Auditor of the

company have carried out a limited review of accounts of the company for the third quarter ended 31st December, 2023

ended

(31.12.2023)

3015.38

2981.78

2981 78

516.69

600.00

Nine Months

(31.12.2023)

(Unaudited)

3036.97

2984.36

2984 36

2984.36

1449.87

600.00

Sindh province. The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) won the electoral race in 13 of these constituencies, five were claimed by the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), four by the Pakistan Tehreeke-Insaf (PTI)-backed independents and two by other independents. Going by their numerical strength, both the PML-N and the PPP are in a position to form a coalition government in the Centre. However, PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif announced that all parties except PTI should join hands in the upcoming

(₹ in Lakhs)

Previous

Year ended

(31.03.2023)

(Audited

1536.16

1536.16

1536.36

123.27

600.00

4103.36

By Order of the Board

(G.D. Maheshwari)

DIN 00235209

Whole Time Director

Corresponding

Nine Months

(31.12.2022)

1805.87

1742.19

1742.19

1742.19

36.04

ended

the results announced by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) till Sunday, of the total 265 National Assembly seats, PTI-backed Independents bagged 93 seats, followed by PML-N at 73, PPP at 54, MQM at 17 and others at 19.

The highest number of rejected votes was in the NA-59 (Talagang-cum-Chakwal) area of Punjab where Sardar Ghulam Abbas of PML-N secured 141,680 votes against Muhammad Ruman Ahmad, who got 129,716 votes.

The margin of victory was 11,964 while the number of ballot papers rejected was 24,547. It was followed by NA-213 Umerkot (17,571 ballots). The lowest number of ballots excluded are reported from NA-236 Karachi East-II (51 ballots). In total, around two million ballot papers have been excluded from the count from the 265 National Assembly constituencies.

कार्यालय नगर निगम, ऋषिकेश

Haridwar Road Rishikesh, Distt-Dehradun, Pin-249201
Website: www.nagarnigamrishikesh.com, Email: npprishikesh@gmail.com
Ph:0135-2430015,1800313529

तिथि विस्तारण एवं निविदा शुद्धि-पत्र

नगर निगम, ऋषिकेश के आई०एस० डब्ल्यू०एम० प्लाट लालपानी कक्ष सं0-1 हेतु प्रोजेक्ट मैनेजमेन्ट कन्सन्टेंसी (पी०एम०सी०) के चयन हेतु इच्छुक अनुभवी, दक्ष, कम्पनी / फर्मों से 2 बिंड सिस्टम (तकनीकी एवं वित्तीय) के अन्तर्गत नगर निगम ऋषिकेश के कार्यालय पत्रांक सं0-3593 / सा०प्र० / 2023-24 दिनांक 30.01.2024 से 14.02.2024 तक ई-निविदा आमंत्रित की गई थी जिसकी प्री-बिड पुच्छाएं यथोचित शुद्धियों / संशोधनों सहित निस्तारित कर दी गई है तथा उक्त निविदा की अन्तिम तिथि विस्तारित करते हुए दिनांक 19.02.2024 तक विस्तारीकरण की जाती है उक्त सम्बन्धी समस्त सूचना, key - dates जो ई-निविदा websitewww.uktenders.gov.in पर देखी जा सकती है।

पत्रांक :- 3768/सा0प्र0/2023-24 दिनांक :- 12.02.2024

नगर आयुक्त नगर निगम, ऋषिकेश

NORTHERN RAILWAY OPEN-E- TENDER NOTICE

The Sr. Divisional Engineer-III, Northern Railway, Delhi Division invites E-Tender for

Replacement of worn-out/damaged pipe line with different safety valves for Akshardham Rainy wall at KM 2/46 Near 2 nd Yamuna bridge including desilting of Rainy well to improve the water yield of rainy well in the s/o SSE/W/NDLS under ADEN/NDLS.

Rs. 1,98,10,510.05/- (Rupees One Crore Ninety Eight Lakh Ten Thousand Five Hundred Ten and Five paise only) Rs. 2,49,100/- (Two Lakh Forty Nine Thousand and One Hundred Rupees)

to be Deposit Rs. 0.00/-4. Cost of tender document 01.03.2024 at 15.00 Hrs 5. Date & Time of submission of tender bid and opening of tender. 6. Website particulars where complete www.ireps.gov.in

(IREPS) site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in for participating in the e-tender system. • For all terms and conditions please refer tender document.

acceptable. Cost of tender document and Earnest money will be acceptable or payment gateway only. No. 128erms and conditions please refer tender document. • No manual offers are

acceptable through net banking or payment gateway only. No. 128-W/280/e Tender Notice/NIT/83/2023-24/W-3 Dated:-10.02.2024

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

NORTHERN RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE

Sr. DEE-TRS-GZB acting for and on behalf of President of India invites E-Te against Tender No. 230-TRS-GZB-2023-24-09. The details are as under:

Name of the work: 'Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) of Electric Loco Cab Air Conditioners mounted on roof of Locomotives' for a period of 12 (Twelve) months at Electric Loco Shed, Ghaziabad.

2. Approx. cost of work Rs. 69,76,937.08

Earnest Money to be Rs. 1,39,500.00 deposited

Last Date & Time of Submission of tender 04.03.2024 (11:00 Hrs.) Date & Time of opening of tender document | 04.03.2024 (After 11:00 Hrs.)

6. Website particulars where complete details of tender www.ireps.gov.in Note: (i) The tenderer/s must be registered on the Indian Railway E-Procurement m (IREPS) site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in for participating in e-tender system

(ii) For all terms and conditions please refer tender document. (iii) No manual offers are acceptable. (iv) Cost of Tender document and Earnest money will be acceptable through ne

panking or payment gateway only.

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

NORTHERN RAILWAY Tender Notice

Invitation of tender through E-tendering (e-Procurement Systems) NIT No.: 6-SEFile-166192RT2Tender

Name of Work and its location: Tender for "Works contract for Provision for supply, fixing & commissioning of Aluminum partitions work for providing chambers inside

office space in main shop, Shot Blast shop, paint shop, body repair shop, wheel shop, bogie shop, power car shop and miscellaneous shop at RCNK Sonipat" Approx. Cost of work: Rs. 47,38,234.23/- including GST

(Rs. Forty-Seven Lakh Thirty-Eigth Thousand Two-Hundred Thirty-Four and Paise Twenty-Three Only)

Earnest Money: Rs. 94,800/-Completion period of work: 03 months of date of execution of work

Cost of Tender document on cash/by post : NIL

Date and Time for submission of tender and opening of tender: Upto 11:00 rs. on 04.03.2024 Opening of Tender at 11:00 hrs.

Website particulars notice board location complete details of tender can be seen : Above tender available on IREPS site i.e.

www.ireps.gov.in No.: 6-SEFile-166192RT2Tender Dated: 10.02.2024 462/2024 SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

JINDAL LEASEFIN LIMITED CIN: L74899DL1994PLC059252 Regd. Office: 110, Babar Road, New Delhi 110001 EXTRACT OF STATEMENT OF STANDALONE UNAUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS

FUR THE QUARTER AND	MINE MO	IN I HO EN	(Rs. in Lacs)				
	Three Mo	onths Quart	er Ended	Nine Mon	Year Endec		
Particulars	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	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Net Profit/(Loss) for the period (before Tax,	-2.07	-1.41	-2.02	-8.85	-10.43	-11.92	
Exceptional and/or extraordinary Items)							
Net Profit/(Loss) for the period before tax	-2.07	-1.41	-2.02	-8.85	-10.43	-11.92	
(after Exceptional and/or extraordinary Items)							
Net Profit/(Loss) for the period after tax	-1.53	2.02	-1.68	-6.55	-8.97	-10.10	
(after Exceptional and/or extraordinary Items)							
Total Comprehensive Income for the period	8.36	13.43	-9.09	27.07	-3.47	5.36	
[Comprising Profit/(Loss) for the period							
and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]							
Equity Share capital	300.89	300.89	300.89	300.89	300.89	300.89	
Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve)	522.44	514.09	486.55	522.44	486.55	495.37	
as shown in the Audited Balance Sheet of the							
previous year							
Earning per Share (face Value of Rs.10/- each)							
(not annualised)							
1. Basic	-0.07	0.06	-0.06	-0.24	-0.3	-0.34	
2. Diluted	-0.07	0.06	-0.06	-0.24	-0.3	-0.34	
	Particulars Total Income from Operations Net Profit/(Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or extraordinary Items) Net Profit/(Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional and/or extraordinary Items) Net Profit/(Loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional and/or extraordinary Items) Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit/(Loss) for the period and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)] Equity Share capital Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the Audited Balance Sheet of the previous year Earning per Share (face Value of Rs.10/- each) (not annualised) 1. Basic	Particulars Three Middle Action of the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or extraordinary Items) Net Profit/(Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or extraordinary Items) Net Profit/(Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional and/or extraordinary Items) Net Profit/(Loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional and/or extraordinary Items) Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit/(Loss) for the period and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)] Equity Share capital Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the Audited Balance Sheet of the previous year Earning per Share (face Value of Rs.10/- each) (not annualised) 1. Basic -0.07	Three Months Quart 31.12.2023 30.09.2023 Unaudited Unaud	Three Months Quarter Ended 31.12.2023 30.09.2023 31.12.2022 Unaudited Unaudite	Particulars 31.12.2023 30.09.2023 31.12.2023 30.202 31.12.2023 30.202 31.12.2023 31.12.2023 30.202 31.12.2023 31.12.2023 30.202 31.12.2023 31.12.2023 30.202 31.12.2023 30.202 31.12.2023 30.202 31.12.2023 30.202 32.2	Three Months Quarter Ended Nine Months Ended 31.12.2023 30.09.2023 31.12.2023 31.1	

 The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly/Annual financial Results filed with the Stock Exchange. under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly/Annual financial Results are available on the Stock Exchange website www.bseindia.com The same is also available on the Company's website www.jindalleasefin.in

2. The above results duly reviewed by the Audit Committee, were approved by the Board of Directors in their meeting held on 12.02.2024 For Jindal Leasefin Limite

Date: 12.02.2024

(SURENDER KUMAR JINDAL

SUPERIOR FINLEASE LIMITED

CIN No.:- L74899DL1994PLC061995
Regd. Office: 92, Khasra No-33/21, Ranaji Enclave, Najafgarh, Near Arjun Park Bus Stand New Delhi -110043
Email Id: superiorfinlease@gmail.com; Website: www.superiorfinlease.com; Phone No.: +91-9953798335 **Extract of Statement of Standalone Unaudited Financial Results** for the Quarter ended on December 31, 2023

		Quarter Ended	Quarter Ended	Year Ended
SI No.	Particulars	31.12.2023 (Unaudited)	30.09.2023 (Unaudited)	31.03.2023 (Audited)
1	Total Income from Operations	31.16	32.07	223.81
2	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period			
	(before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	3.59	(9.36)	45.08
3	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax			
	(after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	3.59	(9.36)	45.08
4	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after tax			
	(after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	3.59	(9.36)	33.36
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period			
	[Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other			ĺ
	Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	3.59	(9.36)	33.36
6	Equity Share Capital	300.10	300.10	300.10
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the			
	Audited Balance Sheet	77.58	77.58	77.58
8	Earning Per Share (of Rs. 10/- each)			
	1. Basic:	0.01	(0.03)	0.11
	9. Diluted :	0.04	(0.00)	N 14

. The above is an extract of the detailed format of Unaudited Financial Results for the Quarter ended 31.12.2023 filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Other Disclosure Requirements Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly Unaudited Financial Results is available on the websites of the Stock Exchange www.msei.in and www.bseindia.com and the Company's website www.superiorfinlease.com

Place : New Delhi Date : February 12, 2024 (RAJNEESH KUMAF DIN: 02463693



MODI RUBBER LIMITED

CIN: L25199UP1971PLC003392, Registered Office: Modinagar - 201204 Dist. Ghaziabad (U.P.), Corporate Office: 4-7C, DDA Shopping Centre, New Friends Colony, New Delhi 110025 Website: www.modirubberlimited.com Email: investors@modigroup.net Phone: +91-11-2684 8416

EXTRACT OF STANDALONE AND CONSOLIDATED UN-AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND NINE MONTHS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

(Amount in Lacs)													
		QUARTER ENDED					NINE MONTHS ENDED				YEAR ENDED		
SI. No.	Particulars	STANDALONE			CONSOLIDATED		STANDALONE		CONSOLIDATED		STANDALONE	CONSOLIDATED	
		31-Dec-23	31-Dec-22	30-Sep-23	31-Dec-23	31-Dec-22	30-Sep-23	31-Dec-23	31-Dec-22	31-Dec-23	31-Dec-22	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-23
		Un-Audited	Un-Audited	Un-Audited	Un-Audited	Un-Audited	Un-Audited	Un-Audited	Un-Audited	Un-Audited	Un-Audited	Audited	Audited
1	Total Income from operations (Net)	70.55	41.38	63.12	722.30	140.57	498.59	197.88	152.96	1,699.39	246.16	271.58	532.36
2	Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period (before tax and exceptional items)	(205.53)	(410.01)	2,503.27	694.85	716.39	687.02	3,091.09	1,390.35	1,966.35	2,741.97	1,126.38	3,140.96
3	Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period before tax (after exceptional items)	(205.53)	(410.01)	2,503.27	694.85	716.39	687.02	3,091.09	1,390.35	1,966.35	2,741.97	1,126.38	3,140.96
4	Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period after tax (after exceptional items)	(371.92)	(289.04)	2,293.40	558.71	834.67	317.60	2,504.85	1,094.35	1,237.07	2,443.54	796.64	2,765.51
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period (after tax)	(151.11)	(343.00)	2,485.68	962.64	938.03	662.90	2,889.62	728.44	1,828.99	1,492.44	137.69	1,931.71
6	Equity Share Capital (Face value of share is Rs. 10/- each)	2,504.05	2,504.05	2,504.05	2,499.55	2,504.05	2,499.55	2,504.05	2,504.05	2,499.55	2,504.05	2,504.05	2,499.55
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserves as shown in the Balance Sheet of previous year)	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A
8	Earnings per share (EPS) (of Rs. 10/- each) (Not Annualised)												
	(a) Basic and Diluted EPS (before exceptional Items) (in Rs.)	(1.49)	(1.15)	9.16	2.24	3.33	1.27	10.00	4.37	4.94	9.76	3.18	11.06
	(b) Basic and Diluted EPS (after exceptional Items) (in Rs.)	(1.49)	(1.15)	9.16	2.24	3.33	1.27	10.00	4.37	4.95	9.76	3.18	11.06

NOTES:

- The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly/ Annual Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulations 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly/ Annual Financial Results are available on the stock exchange website, www.nseindia.com, www.bseindia.com and on the Company website www.modirubberlimited.com.
- The above results have been reviewed by the Audit Committee and subsequently approved by the Board of Directors of the Company at their respective meeting held on February 12, 2024. The Statutory Auditors of the Company have carried out a
 - Previous quarter/ year end figures have been rearranged and / or regrouped, wherever necessary, to make them comparable with those of the current quarter/ year end

(Alok Kumar Modi)

Managing Director

Date: 12th February, 2024

Place: New Delhi

By order of the Board

Sitharaman.

RBI rules out review of action against Paytm Payments Bank

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Reserve Bank of India Governor Shaktikanta Das on Monday ruled out any review of the central bank's action against Paytm Payments Bank (PPBL), saying the decision was taken after a comprehensive assessment of the functioning of the lender. Payments

In a major action against (PPBL), RBI, on January 31, directed it to stop accepting deposits or top-ups in any customer accounts, wallets, FASTTags and other instruments after February 29. "At the moment let me say very clearly there is no review of this (PPBL) decision. If your are expecting a review of the decision, let me very clearly say there is (going to be) no

review of the decision," Das the direction follows persistent said at a press conference after the 606th meeting of the Central Board of Directors of the Reserve Bank of India. The meeting was addressed by Finance Minister Nirmala

The governor said any decision against entities regulated by the RBI is taken comprehensive assessment.

While emphasising that RBI is supportive of the fintech sector, Das said it is also committed to protect the interest of customers as well as ensure financial stability.

The central bank is expected to soon issue a set of FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) on the Paytm matter this week. While announcing the action against PPBL, the RBI had said

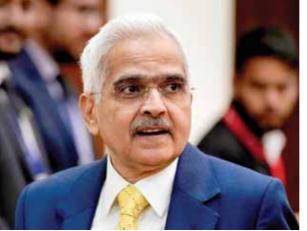
non-compliances continued supervisory concerns.

Earlier on March 11, 2022, the RBI had barred PPBL from onboarding new customers with immediate effect.

In its latest action, RBI has asked the Paytm Payments Bank not to take deposits/ credit transactions/top-ups in any customer accounts, prepaid instruments, wallets, FASTags, and NCMC cards, among others after February 29, 2024

However, the central bank has allowed credit of interest, cashbacks, or refunds even beyond February 29.

Further, withdrawal utilisation of balances by PPBL customers from their accounts, including savings



accounts,

prepaid instruments, FASTags, and National Common Mobility Cards are permitted without

premium valuation," Nair

In the broader market, NHPC

dropped 15.81 per cent after it

reported a 19 per cent decline in profit for the December quarter. Another power PSU SJVN dropped 20 per cent to

hit the lower circuit on BSE.

Leading forging manufacturer Bharat Forge tanked 14.04 per

cent following the announcement of its quarterly

"Nifty declined further after a

consolidation breakdown on

any restrictions, up to their available balance.

RBI also directed termination of the 'nodal accounts' of One97 Communications Ltd.

Communications, which owns Paytm brand, holds a 49 per cent stake in Payments Bank Limited but classifies it as an associate of the company and not as a subsidiary.

Gold remains flat; silver jumps Rs 400 New Delhi, Feb 12 (PTI) Gold prices remained steady at Rs 63,150 per 10 grams in the national capital on Monday, according to HDFC Securities.

However, silver jumped Rs 400 to Rs 75,400 per kg from its previous close of Rs 75,000 per kg. Meanwhile, the next tranche of Sovereign Gold Bond scheme opened for subscription at a price of Rs 6,263 per gram. The issue is open until February 16.
The Government of India, in

consultation with the Reserve

Bank, has decided to offer a discount of Rs 50 per gram less than the nominal value to those investors applying online and making the payment against the application through digital mode. "Spot gold prices (24 carats) in the Delhi markets are trading flat at Rs 63,150 per 10 grams, unchanged from the previous close," Saumil Gandhi, senior analyst of commodities at HDFC Securities, said. In the international markets, spot gold at Comex was trading at USD 2,022 per ounce, down by

22.80 per ounce. Traders avoided directional bets before the outcome of the US consumer inflation data, to be released on Tuesday, which

USD 2 from the previous close.

Also, silver was trading marginally higher at USD

about the US Federal Reserve monetary policy path, Gandhi Jateen Trivedi, VP Research

Analyst, LKP Securities said that the spotlight also turned to the fourth tranche of Sovereign Gold Bonds (SGB), which garnered investor attention. With stable returns fixed at 2.5 per cent, investors were drawn to park their funds in gold, especially amidst prevailing uncertainties in the global and Indian markets. "However, the price of Rs 62,130 per 10 gram may seem unattractive to some investors, particularly considering the delayed hints

of US rate cuts, which could potentially support a rise in the dollar and limit the upside for gold prices in the short term,"

The availability of palm oil for

edible oil requirements has come down as the two main producers, Malaysia and

Indonesia, are diverting it for the production of bio-diesel.

This could result in an increase

in prices this year, it said.

Sensex tanks 523 points on profit taking in banking, metal shares

 $\begin{array}{c} B^{\text{enchmark Sensex plunged}} \\ by 523 \text{ points on Monday} \\ \text{due to profit taking in metal} \end{array}$ and banking shares amid mixed trends in global

The 30-share BSE Sensex settled 523 points or 0.73 per cent lower at 71,072.49 as 22 of its components closed in the red and eight in the green. The barometer opened higher and touched a high of 71,756.58 in early trade.

However, profit taking in Reliance Industries, metal giants and banking shares dragged the index to a low of 70,922.57 during intra-day trade.

The broader NSE Nifty also closed 166.45 points or 0.76 per cent lower at 21,616.05 with 34 of its constituents ending in the red.

Metal, banking and select oil shares succumbed to selling while pharma and IT shares bucked the trend.

"An uptick in exchange margin requirements caused a decrease in positions, primarily in mid and small caps. Aside from the pharma and IT sectors, selling was widespread, with notable struggles seen in PSU banks," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services said. In the Sensex pack, Tata Steel fell the most by 2.76 per cent, followed by NTPC (2.72 per cent) and SBI (2.26 per cent). Private banks IndusInd, Kotak Bank, HDFC Bank and

ICICI Bank also declined. In contrast, Wipro, HCL Tech, Mahindra & Mahindra and Nestle were among the nine while metal declined by 2.73

TOP GAINERS Change -523.00 PACE Tech LOSERS NTPC TOP GAINERS



2228 HCL Tech Coal India Hero Motocorp 3.5 ONGC

289 Dr Reddys Labs

275 Apollo Hospital

2.41 Divis Labs

BSE smallcap index fell 3.16 per cent while midcap lost 2.62 per cent and largecap closed 0.90 per cent lower.

Among the sectoral indices, utilities saw a steepest fall of 3.60 per cent, followed by realty which declined by 3.01 down by 2.90 per cent. moderated Industrials fell 2.92 per cent and energy slid 2.80 per cent, challenge

Sensex stocks that defied the per cent and oil & gas by 2.56 er cent.

Capital goods, commodities, bankex and financial services were other laggards.

Monday.

Faced with financial woes, legal battles and other

headwinds, the no-frills carrier

might ask more staff to leave as

there is excess manpower now compared to the number of

planes in service. A final

decision on the quantum of

layoffs is expected this week,

one of the officials in the know

profitable growth but did not

The premium valuation gap between mid to large caps has notched to its all-time high. Despite a robust economic forecast, corporate earnings operating margins. It is going to be a challenge for the broad market to sustain

results.

the hourly chart, indicating an increase in pessimism. The daily chart shows the index forming a lower top, signaling diminishing bullish sentiment," Rupak De, Senior Technical Analyst, LKP Securities said.

In Asia, Tokyo's Nikkei 225 closed 0.9 per cent higher and China's Shanghai Composite went up 1.28 per cent. Hong Kong's Hang Seng fell 0.83 per

European markets were trading on a mixed note with CAC 40 of France and DAX of Germany rising, while London's FTSE 100 trading

with losses Global oil benchmark Brent crude declined 0.50 per cent to USD 81.78 a barrel on Monday.

Institutional Foreign Investors (FIIs) purchased shares worth Rs 141.95 crore on Friday, according to

exchange data. On Friday, Sensex climbed to settle at 71,595.49 points while the Nifty gained 64.55 points or 0.30 per cent to close at 21,782.50 points

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The country's vegetable oil imports declined by 28 per cent to 12 lakh tonnes in January from a year-ago period, industry body SEA said on Monday.

Vegetable oil imports stood at 16.61 lakh tonnes in January

India is a leading vegetable oil buyer in the world.

In the first quarter (November-January) of the current oil year, total imports dropped 23 per cent to 36.73 lakh tonnes as against 47.73 lakh tonnes in the same quarter of previous

According to the Solvent Extractors Association of India oils stock stood at 26.49 lakh



India vegetable oil imports fall 28 per cent in January

(SEA), about 7,82,983 tonnes of palm oil and 4,08,938 tonnes of soft oil were imported in January this year out of total vegetables oils

As on February 1, total edible

tonnes, down 7.64 per cent from that of the year-ago period, it said in a statement. SEA said prices of edible oils, which are currently low, may go up this year on lower production, global economic Global palm oil output was seasonally low in January-March 2024, leading to a reduction of stocks both in producing as well as importing countries, it added. India imports palm oil mainly from Indonesia and Malaysia and a small quantity of crude soft oil, including soyabean,

from Argentina. Sunflower oil is imported from Ukraine and

Rupee rises 7 paise to close at 83 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee appreciated 7 paise to close at 83 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, on softness in the American currency and easing crude oil

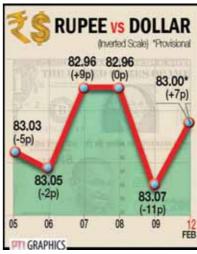
However, weak domestic markets and foreign fund outflows capped sharp gains, forex traders said.

gains, forex traders said.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.01 against the greenback. The unit hit an intra-day high of 82.98 and a low of 83.02. The local unit finally settled at 83 (provisional) against the dollar, higher by paise from its previous close of 83.07. We expect the rupee to trade with a slight positive bias, positive global greenback.

'However, any bounce back in crude oil prices amid ongoing geopolitical tensions in the Middle East and selling pressure

SpiceJet plans to lay off 1,000 people



from foreign investors may weigh on the rupee at higher levels," said Anuj Choudhary, Research Analyst, Sharekhan

to exchange data.

Traders may take cues from India's CPI and IIP data. "Headline inflation is expected to ease to 5.09 per cent from 5.69 per cent. Investors may remain vigilant ahead of US inflation data on Tuesday," Choudhary said, adding the USD-INR spot price is expected to trade in range of Rs 82.80-83.20.

Meanwhile the dellar in the del

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.04

per cent higher at 104.15. Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, fell 0.51 per cent to USD 81.77 per barrel. On the domestic equity market front, the Sensex declined 523 points, or 0.73 per cent, to 71,072.49. The Nifty fell 166.45 points, or 0.76 per cent, Investors (FIIs) were net buyers in the capital markets on Friday as they bought shares worth Rs 141.95 crore, according

TATA MOTORS

Tata Motors ties up with LeadIT for greener future

Tata Motors on Monday said it has tied up with the Leadership Group for Industry Transition (LeadIT), a global alliance launched governments of Sweden and India at the UN Climate Action Summit in September

As a member of LeadIT, the auto major will be able to harness the power of global best practices, influence policy-making, and together other members strengthen climate action plans, thereby accelerating transition towards net-zero

emissions. "Our pledge to attain net-zero emissions across our Passenger Vehicles (PV) business by 2040, and our Commercial Vehicles (CV) business by 2045, is a testament to our commitment to a greener

future," Tata Motors Vice President and Chief Sustainability Officer SJR Kutty said in a statement. Joining forces with LeadIT

"Demand signals are crucial for the transformation of our

achieving reduced climate emissions," she added.

propels the automaker closer facilitating a journey towards sustainable transformation, he Sweden's Minister for Climate

and the Environment and Co-Chair of LeadIT, Romina Pourmokhtari said the membership signals an important commitment to netzero from a leading global manufacturer in the supply

industry. Fostering dialogues strengthening partnerships in areas where transition challenges need to be addressed is core to

these ambitious goals,

 $R^{\text{etail inflation declined to a}}_{\text{three-month low of 5.1 per}}$ cent in January, mainly due to fruits and other food items, according to government data released on Monday.

Reserve Bank's comfort level of 4 per cent.

Γĥe Consumer Price Index (CPI) based inflation was on

The airline has around 9,000 employees and is now looking Crisis-hit SpiceJet plans to hand out pink slips to at at reducing the strength by 10least 1,000 employees in the 15 per cent, the official said, coming days as the airline adding that layoffs are necessary to reduce the overall works to significantly reduce costs and streamline operations of its depleted costs and annual savings could be up to Rs 100 crore. aircraft fleet, officials said on

A reduction of 15 per cent

would mean around 1,350 people will lose their jobs. The second official in the know said that layoffs are expected across departments and the final list is being prepared. People from the management and consultancy are working on chalking out the contours of letting staff leave, and all the departments have been asked to give their inputs, the official added.

said. When contacted, a SpiceJet spokesperson said the airline There was no official comment has initiated several measures, from SpiceJet on the proposed manpower job cuts. rationalisation, for achieving

The second official explained that the airline has stopped

(Regional Scheme) routes and at those stations, there is excess manpower, especially staff with lower salaries. Relocating such people will be a challenge, the official noted.



operations on certain RCS Connectivity

inflation

little over 30 aircraft apart from 10 planes that are on wet lease. "As part of our turnaround and cost-cutting strategy, following the recent fund infusion, SpiceIet has initiated several including rationalisation, manpower

measures, Currently, SpiceJet has a fleet of aimed at achieving profitable

opportunities in the Indian aviation industry. "Through this initiative alone,

and ourselves to capitalise on the

we anticipate an annual saving of up to Rs 100 crore," the airline spokesperson said in a statement.

During a meeting with the airline's senior officials last month, SpiceJet Chairman and Managing Director Ajay Singh emphasised the importance of judicious spending and that he will personally oversee all major expenditures.

The carrier will prioritise fleet upgrades, enhance on-time performance and cost-cutting measures will be implemented to streamline operations, according to an internal note last month.

SpiceJet, which has undergone multiple ownership changes since inception and is currently helmed by Ajay Singh, is in the

various investors. On January 26, the carrier announced that it has received

process of raising funds from

Rs 744 crore as the first tranche of the total Rs 2,250 crore proposed to be raised through the issuance of securities on a preferential basis.

There were reports that there has been a delay in raising the requisite funds.

The airline has also availed funds worth around Rs 1,000 crore under the government's Credit Line Emergency Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) and Singh has committed to infuse Rs 500 crore. In recent times, SpiceJet also witnessed lessors taking legal recourse to take back their leased aircraft due to non-payment of dues. India is one of the world's fastest growing civil aviation markets and the domestic air traffic is on an upward trajectory. However, SpiceJet

has been struggling for sometime now. In 2023, the carrier flew 83.90 lakh passengers and had a domestic market share of 5.5 per cent.

Inflation falls to three months low in January rabi sowing has caught up with last year's level, reservoir

subdued prices of vegetables,

The fall indicates that retail inflation is inching towards the

the rise for two straight months after touching a trough of 4.9 per cent in October 2023. In December, it stood at 5.69 per

cent. In January, inflation in the However, marginally higher in the 'fuel food basket eased to 8.3 per and light, 'clothing and cent from 9.53 per cent in the footwear, 'cereals and products,' preceding month. It was at 6 'meat and fish', and eggs per cent in January 2023, as per the data released by the National Statistical Office segments on a month-onmonth basis.

Food inflation was lower in rural areas at 7.91 per cent compared to 9.02 per cent in the urban centres of the The latest data showed that inflation in 'oils and fats', 'pulses

and products', spices, fruits, and

vegetables segments was lower

in January 2024 compared to

December 2023.

As per the data, inflation was more than the national average of 5.1 per cent in Assam, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Telangana, and Uttar Pradesh.

> The lowest reltail inflation in January this year was in Delhi at 2.56 per cent. Aditi Ñayar, Chief Economist at rating agency Icra, said while

year-ago levels in most regions, continuing to imbue caution in terms of the outlook for the rabi harvest. "We project the CPI inflation to

storage remains well below the

ease below 5 per cent in February-March 2024, and average at 5.3 per cent in FY2024. "Thereafter, we estimate the

CPI inflation at 4.6 per cent in FY2025, broadly in line with that of the MPC (Monetary Policy Committee), based on the assumption of a normal monsoon," she said.

Role of nursing highlighted

 $S_{
m conference}^{
m peakers}$ at a national conference on Friday said that nurses were at the forefront of healthcare delivery, while stressing on the importance of knowledge transfer in the profession. SRM College of Nursing, SRMIST, hosted the 8th

National Nursing Conference on Friday. More than 570 participants including faculty of nursing institutions, staff nurses, Ph.D scholars apart from graduate and post graduate students of nursing from 34 institutions all over India took part in the day-



While delivering the Chief Guest address, Professor T Samuel Ravikumar, Trauma & Disaster Management Consultant, and former Trauma Centre Coordinator and Head, Emergency Nursing, CMC, Vellore, said nurses were at the forefront of healthcare delivery.

WOODS STARTS A NEW YEAR WITH NEW LOOK

¬iger Woods is starting a new year with a new look. Just not a different color.

Woods makes his 2024 debut this week in the Genesis Invitational at Riviera, a signature event on the PGA Tour in which he is the tournament host. The first order of business is unveiling what he referred to in December as the next

"chapter." Woods and Nike ended 27 years together at the end of last year. He wore the swoosh on his shirt for the final time at the PNC Championship that he played with his son, Charlie, who was wearing clothes from a different apparel company.

Woods has scheduled a press conference Monday at 4 p.M. PST outside the gates of Riviera to discuss what he will be wearing in the limited tournaments he plays. All signs point to TaylorMade

Woods already plays their golf clubs, and TaylorMade Lifestyle Ventures has filed four trademark applications with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office for "Sunday Red" or "SDR."

Woods announced on Jan. 8 that his relationship with Nike, which produced so many big moments on the golf course



and in commercials, had officially ended. His agent at Sports Management, Šteinberg, said he expected "an exciting announcement" at Riviera. Woods has been teasing the

announcement on social media recently. He posted a closeup of his face a week ago Monday that said, "The vision remains the same." On Friday, he posted a darkened picture of him wearing a red shirt that

said, "A new day rises." Woods has worn some variation of red on Sunday his entire career because his Thai-born mother, Kultida, told him it was his power color. She also gives him a new head cover of a Tiger first competition in nearly

each season with words in Thai that say, "Love from Mom." Key to that is getting to Sunday. Woods played all four rounds of the unofficial Hero World Challenge in December, his

months while recovered from ankle surgery after the Masters.

Woods made the cut in the rain-delayed Masters but withdrew on Sunday morning before completing the third round because of his injuries. He also made the cut at the Genesis Invitational last year, tying for 45th.

The Genesis Invitational not only carries a \$20 million purse, because it is a player-hosted signature event the winner will get \$4 million. But unlike the other signature events, the Genesis Invitational will have a 36 hole cut to the will have a 36-hole cut to the top 50 and ties, and any player within 10 shots of the lead. Whatever the new look, it won't be visible as it once was. Woods already was coming off four back surgeries, the last one who fuse his lower spine, when he had a car crash in Los Angeles in the days after the

2021 Genesis Invitational. He didn't play the rest of the year. But amid concerns he might never play again, Woods recovered to play in the 2022 Masters and made it to Sunday. He has never missed the cut at Augusta National as a pro.

Woods had his right ankle fused after last year's Masters and felt optimistic about 2024. He has set a goal of playing once a month through the major season.



Sangram to face Saeed

PTI MUMBAI

Making his comeback after six years, former Nisix years, former Commonwealth Heavyweight champion Sangram Singh will face Pakistan's Muhammad Saeed in what will be the headline event of the International Pro Wrestling Championship on February 24 in Dubai.

The event carrying a prize purse of Rs 3-crore will have a lineup of five matches, including the one featuring Sangram and Saeed.

"This sport of wrestling exemplifies gentlemanly conduct, and I aim to inspire the youth through this event keeping in mind the ideology of FIT India," said the 38-yearwho won Commonwealth Heavyweight Championship in 2015 and

2016.
"Competing against Muhammad Saeed, who is an elite athlete in his own right will be the perfect way to emphasize that age is no barrier and I look forward to a great fight to complete my anticipated comeback facilitated World Professional Wrestling Hub."
The other match ups feature
Ilias Bekbulatov (Russia), 2017 European Wrestling Champion vs Damon Kemp (USA); Andrea Carolina (Columbia), Olympian, vs Vescan Cynthia (France), Olympian; Bader Ali (UAE), Silver medallist, Championship vs Mbo Isomi Aron (Congo), Gold Medalist, Games of La Francophonie; Mimi Hristova (Bulgaria), Olympian vs Skiba Monika



Davis Cup stars felicitated at inauguration of Bengaluru Open 2024

PTI BENGALURU

The Indian Davis Cup team, which defeated Pakistan resoundingly on their resources. recently, was felicitated during the inauguration ceremony of the Bengaluru Open 2024 at the Karnataka State Lawn Tennis Association (KSLTA) Stadium here on Monday. The main draw of the

tournament was inaugurated Manjunath Prasad, additional chief secretary in the Karnataka government's department youth empowerment and sport.

"It's a proud moment for the Karnataka State Lawn Tennis Association to have Davis Cup stars participating at the DafaNews Bengaluru Open 2024. Their achievement in Pakistan was historic and inspiring," said R Ashoka, President Karnataka State

Lawn Tennis Association. "We extend our heartfelt congratulations to the entire team for their remarkable victory in this historic match

PTI ■ SHAH ALAM (MALAYSIA)

Thomas Cup champions find when they chase the elusive crown at the homas Cup champions India will Badminton Asia Team Championships, which will mark the return of double Olympic medallist P V Sindhu from injury.

The Indian men's team, which lifted the Thomas Cup in 2022 and secured a first-ever silver medal at last year's Asian Games, will look to go all the way in the continental event this week after finishing with bronze medals in the 2016 and 2018 editions.

It won't be a walk in the park for the Indian men's team, who will face formidable China and Hong Kong in its group A league matches

However, India, led by HS Prannoy, Lakshya Sen and inform doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, will back themselves to finish in the top two and make it to the knockout stage. The women's team, led by Sindhu, got It will be an uphill task for the Gopichand and Guwahati Masters





the rub of green as China is the only other team in Group 'W' and India are thus already assured of a knockout

women's team, which will depend on Sindhu and the two doubles pairs — Commonwealth Games bronze Treesa Jolly-Gayatri medallists

2023 champions Ashwini Ponnappa-Tanisha Crasto to provide them the

For Sindhu, the event assumes extra significance as she will look to test her match fitness and regain confidence after being missing action since October last year.

The 28-year-old had suffered a knee injury at the French Open and took some time to regain her fitness and then shifted her base to Bengaluru to train under mentor Prakash Padukone at PPBA.

The continental competition will also be important for the players as it offers valuable qualification points in the race to the 2024 Paris Olympics. Focus will also be on the young and second string Indian players such as Thailand Open super 300 semifinalist Ashmita Chaliya, 16-year-old senior national champion Anmol Kharb and

Championships medallist Tanvi Sharma, who would be eager to punch above their weight on the grand stage. India will begin its campaign on Wednesday with the men's team taking on Hong Kong and Sindhu and Co. Facing China at the Setia City Convention Centre here. While Hong Kong boasts of two solid men's singles players in World No. 18 and World No. 22 Ng Ka Long Angus, they lack a decent doubles pair and

Asia

Badminton

opponents. The same can't be said about their women's counterparts. China won't have the presence of Olympic champion Chen Yu Fei in their ranks but the likes of World No. 8 Han Yue, World No. 9 Wang Zhi Yi and World No. 15 Zhang Yi Man could prove a handful for Chaliha and Kharb.

India is expected to get across their

China will also be without their top doubles pair but World No. 4 Liu Sheng Shu and Tan Ning will be tough opponents.

Marathon world record holder Kelvin dies in car crash

AP ■ NAIROBI (KENYA)

long-distance running and was place in the Davis Cup World Group I earlier this month. a top contender for gold at the Olympics in Paris this year, was The members of the winning killed along with his coach in a Ramkumar Ramanathan, Sriram Balaji, car crash in Kenya.

Saketh Myneni and Nikki K Their vehicle was the only one involved in the crash late Poonacha — were present at the felicitation ceremony as Sunday and Kiptum was they will also feature in the driving when it veered off a ongoing tournament. road and into a ditch before "We welcome all of you to the sixth edition of Bengaluru hitting a tree, police said. Kiptum was 24 and one of the

Open 2024 and wish you all most exciting prospects to the best. It will be an exciting emerge in road running in week for the fans as top players years, having broken the world will be in action, competing for the coveted title," said Prasad. record in only his third appearance in an elite The ATP Challenger Tour 100 marathon. His record, set at last year's Chicago Marathon, event, organised by KSLTA, was ratified by international will be played from February 12-18 with the likes of star Indian player Sumit Nagal, track federation Athletics just last week. World who broke into the ATP Top-

reverberated death through Kenya, where runners are the biggest sports stars. Kenyans have also gotten used to tragic tales involving their

top athletes after a number have died in road crashes, Marathon world record-holder Kelvin Kiptum, violence cases.

President William Ruto said in a statement offering his condolences. "Kiptum was our future."

Kiptum and his Rwandan coach, Gervais Hakizimana, were killed in the crash at around 11 p.M., police said. It happened near the town of Kapsabet in western Kenya, in the heart of the high-altitude region that's renowned as a training base for the best distance runners from Kenya and across the world.

Kiptum was born and raised in the area A third person, a 24-year-old

woman, was also in the car and was taken to a hospital with serious injuries, police said. Kiptum and Hakizimana died at the scene.

Athletes and family members including Kiptum's father, gathered at the hospital mortuary where the bodies of



Kiptum and his coach were taken. One of the athletes, former women's steeplechase champion Milcah Chemos, struggled to speak while breaking down in tears. "I have no words to explain the loss of Kelvin," she said.

Kenneth Kimaiyo, a friend of Kiptum, said he arrived at the crash scene soon after it happened and Kiptum had been thrown out of the car. Photos showed the silver car with a badly mangled roof and one of the doors flung open. Kiptum was the first man to run the marathon in under 2 hours, 1 minute in an official race when he set the world record of 2:00.35 in Chicago in October, beating the mark of fellow Kenyan and marathon great Eliud Kipchoge.

Kiptum and Kipchoge were expected to provide an enticing all-Kenyan battle for marathon gold in Paris and Kiptum was

due to start his season at the Rotterdam Marathon in April, which would have been his by running the fastest time first event since breaking the ever by a marathon debutant at

World Athletics President Sebastian Coe was one of the first to offer his condolences in a statement on X, formerly Twitter. "We are shocked and deeply saddened to learn of the devastating loss of Kelvin Kiptum and his coach, Gervais Hakizimana," Coe wrote. "On behalf of all World Athletics we send our deepest condolences to their families, friends, teammates and the Kenyan nation.

'It was only earlier this week in Chicago, the place where Kelvin set his extraordinary marathon World Record, that I was able to officially ratify his historic time. An incredible athlete leaving an incredible legacy, we will miss him dearly," Coe wrote.

David Rudisha, Kenya's twotime Olympic champion in the 800 meters, wrote on X that Kiptum's death was "a huge Kiptum had immediate success

The following year, he won the London and Chicago races, two of the most prestigious marathons in the world. He set a new course record at the London Marathon last April and then became the fastest marathoner in the world months later.

While young and new to the circuit, he had already run three of the seven fastest marathon times ever recorded and was seen as a rare talent. But he was also the latest Kenyan star to die in

devastating circumstances. David Lelei, an All-Africa Games silver medalist, died in a car crash in 2010. Marathon runner Francis Kiplagat was among five people who were killed in a crash in 2018. Nicholas Bett, who won gold in the 400 meter hurdles at the 2015 world championships, also died in a car crash in 2018.

AP ■ LONDON

The Champions League narrative is so often about Manchester City and Real Madrid.

The past two champions of Europe were the only teams to sweep through the group stage with six wins. They also are first in action Tuesday when the most prized competition in club soccer resumes in the round of 16.

Man City is away to a Copenhagen team playing in the knockout stage for the first time in 13 years and Madrid is at Leipzig for the first leg. The two teams favored to lift

the trophy warmed up with comfortable wins Saturday and goals from signature players. Erling Haaland confirmed his return to form after a foot

injury with both goals in Man City's 2-0 win over Everton, his first since Nov. 28 when Leipzig was beaten 3-2 in their Champions League group.

Haaland has a Premier League leading 16 goals and Madrid's Jude Bellingham has a La Ligabest 15 after also scoring twice in a 4-0 rout of second-place Girona, which is owned by the same Abu Dhabi group as Man

100 ranking, former World No.

25 Vasek Pospisil of Canada

and others vying for honours.

But Bellingham has an ankle injury, having asked to be substituted Saturday, and is a doubt to face Leipzig. At the same time Madrid was

imperious in its domestic titlechasing clash, Bayern Munich was falling to an embarrassing 3-0 loss at Bayer Leverkusen in its own table-topping game.

Bayern now trails Bundesliga leader Leverkusen by five points and its run of 11 league titles is at risk again after barely holding on to the trophy on the last day last season.

The 2020 Champions League winner visits Lazio on Wednesday with its aura dimmed despite Harry Kane's goals this season and coming through the group stage unbeaten for the sixth

straight year.

Germain hosts Real Sociedad. which was the surprise winner of a group ahead of last season's beaten finalist Inter Milan.

PSG is the in-form team though it was edged for first place in a tough group won by Borussia Dortmund.

The French champion — with Kylian Mbappé in the last few months of his contract - is unbeaten in all competitions for three months, since a 2-1 loss at AC Milan.

"From what I can feel and sense in and around the club and the city, all I have seen for the last three weeks is that we are playing in the Champions League. It is as if our life was at stake," PSG coach Luis Enrique said Saturday. "We have to treat the competition calmly."

Real Sociedad has slumped and has just one win in eight league games, including four goalless draws. **REST OF THE ROUND:** The

20 when Inter goes to Atletico Madrid and PSV Eindhoven hosts Dortmund. On Feb. 21, Napoli hosts Barcelona and Also Wednesday, Paris Saint- first-leg games continue Feb. Porto hosts Arsenal.

Champions League knockout stage starts

Second-leg games are played from March 5-13. UEFA draws pairings for the quarterfinals and semifinals on March 15. MORE TO PLAY FOR: This Champions League has even the door is still open for more at stake. Four more Arsenal. entries must be decided for the Already definitely in on the 2025 Club World Cup, the FIFA event relaunching at the end of next season with 12 European teams in the lineup

The Club World Cup rebrand sees a month-long tournament — a group stage and 16-team knockout bracket — played every four years in June-July, starting in 2025 in the United States. FIFA will pay tens of millions of dollars in prize money.

will send each Europe Champions League title winner from 2021 to '24 -Chelsea, Madrid and Man City so far - plus the top eight or nine teams in a ranking table counting all Champions League results in that fourseason period.

Countries can enter only two teams unless it has at least three different title holders. So,

Already definitely in on the basis of ranking are Bayern, PSG, Inter, Porto and Benfica. Atletico is the next-best Spanish team in ranking so Barcelona must advance past Napoli to stay in contention. Dortmund is ranked second among German teams and will be confirmed if Leipzig is eliminated by round of 16 opponent Madrid.

ĀĪso in line is Juventus, despite serving a one-year ban from UEFA competitions for financial wrongdoing. Napoli and Lazio need to advance deep into this Champions League.

BONUS ENTRIES: Every

result in the Champions League, plus the Europa League and Conference League, also toward UEFA's longstanding ranking table of each country's collective What's new is the rankings award extra places in the 36-team expanded, Champions League next season to the two countries that collectively did best in the three UEFA competitions this

performance.

That's key for teams who might finish fifth this season in the biggest leagues because Italy currently leads the rankings with Germany barely edging England into third place. Spain trails a little in fourth. Each Champions League win

for Inter, Napoli and Lazio is good for all Italian clubs doing well in Serie A. It could be that Manchester United's path back into the Champions League is to rise to fifth in the Premier League while English clubs' UEFA ranking is boosted by its biggest rivals winning European trophies - Man City plus Europa League contender

Liverpool And so, the 29 games left in the Champions League through the June 1 final in London have great value beyond the 16 clubs directly involved.

ENGLAND TEAM LANDS IN RAJKOT

resh from a one-week break in their pre-series base Abu Dhabi, the England cricket team on Monday returned to India for the remainder of the fivematch rubber against the hosts, which is locked at 1-1 after two games.

The England team landed in the city — venue for the third Test — on Monday evening. After their 106-run loss in Visakhapatnam, the England players opted to utilise the 10day break between the second and third Test by relaxing and playing golf in Abu Dhabi.

The third Test is scheduled to be held here from February 15. The visiting team will begin training at SCA Stadium from Tuesday morning, while the India players will practice in the afternoon.

A day before their return to India, England were dealt a blow with their frontline spinner Jack Leach ruled out of the remaining three Tests with a knee injury.

However, no replacement will be called up for Leach, an indication that England will continue with the spin trio of Tom Hartley, Rehan Ahmed and Shoaib Basheer for the rest of the tour.

Joe Root is the visitors' fourth spin option behind the three



regular spinners.

England prepared for the highly anticipated Test series against India with an extensive conditioning camp in Abu Dhabi instead of arriving in the subcontinent early for practice matches.

The second match ended with a day to spare as hosts India, having lost the series opener, staged a remarkable comeback to level the series 1-1.

During the Abu Dhabi camp prior to the series, the England team spent a lot of time

working on ways to tackle the Indian spinners.

While they rallied to emerge winners in the opener, the English batters were blown away by Jasprit Bumrah's brilliant exhibition of reverse swing bowling in the first

innings of the second Test before succumbing in a record 399-run chase to a disciplined Indian bowling unit in their

second innings. The fourth and fifth Tests will

held in Ranchi and Dharamsala.

'The battle between Virat and

...Virat adds to the quality of any contest because he is such a wonderful player who brings fire, passion, competitiveness and great fan brings following to the sport. But personal matters always take

Tests. Broad said he is also very happy with the performance

In Virat absence, great chance for England to win series: Broad

PTI ■ CAPE TOWN

 $F^{\text{ormer pacer Stuart Broad}}_{\text{says the ongoing India-England Test series is the}}$ most evenly-matched contest that he has seen between the two sides but the visitors have a strong chance of emerging triumphant as the "fire, passion and competitiveness" of Virat Kohli is missing from the home team's arsenal.

Speaking to PTI on the sidelines of the justconcluded SA20, where he was a commentator, Broad said the absence of Kohli due to personal reasons is a downer but the matches so far have been engrossing.

The five-match series is locked 1-1 and the two teams will now square off in the third game in Rajkot, beginning February 15.

(The) first two matches were very competitive and it is one of the most exciting India-England Test series that I have seen. It is the most level series," he said.

"India won the last Test but England's playing style ('Bazball') is quite effective in Índia. With Virat not in the team, it is a great opportunity for the England team," he added.

Broad feels Kohli's break has also opened a window of opportunity youngsters in the Indian team to make a name for themselves.

England bowlers had been great in the past. (James) Anderson and Kohli's battles are quite famous. It's a shame for the series and the sport that he will be missing," he observed.

preference over cricketing matters," he said.

We saw in the last match when Yashaswi Jaiswal scored a brilliant double century," pointed out the bowler who snared 604 wickets in 167

of his former new-ball will be bowling partnerships partner James Anderson on that will light up world cricket

India's unresponsive tracks. in the next few years," he Anderson replaced Mark added. Wood in the second Test at "I grew up watching fast Visakhapatnam and picked

bowling partnerships like Courtney Walsh and Curtly up five wickets. Ambrose, Waqar Younis and We saw in the second Test, seamers played an important Wasim Akram, Darren Gaugh and Andy Caddick to name a role with Jasprit Bumrah giving a match-winning few. I am sure there will be performance and Jimmy bowling like that on those another partnership coming soon.

Describing Test cricket as the pinnacle of the game, the pitches. Everyone expected that the pitch might spin a little bit former England captain said a window for the format should more but seamers had a lot be created in which all more success. Maybe with the moisture in the morning," he nations can play at the same

intimidating

will be difficult for another set

"I don't think we are the last

of the great bowing partnership in Test cricket. I

think Jasprit Bumrah is an

outstanding Test bowler. I

don't think our partnership,

in terms of wickets we have

taken, will get overtaken

because of the longevity of

"I certainly think that there

our career," he said.

of two pacers.

of the

"I think the charm of Test "Jimmy is nearing 700 wickets and I know he is someone Cricket is unmatched. It is a who always takes wickets in a wonderful spectacle. There winning cause," he added about the 41-year-old are many T20 leagues now and a number of World Cups Anderson, who has claimed 179 Test wickets against India coming around so scheduling is difficult to fit. 'I can certainly see a period in 68 tests.

where we have a window for Broad and Anderson formed Test Cricket where all the nations are playing at the same time, kids watching highlights, talking about the partnership at the peak of their prowess but he does not believe that they were the last performances of different teams," he said. great Test fast bowling pair in the era of T20 cricket. But he did agree that to take more He also advised young fast than 1200 wickets together

bowlers to balance their training to increase their career span.

"Every bowler should find out what works for him for longevity. I liked running which I found crucial for my injury prevention. Jimmy and I did a lot of heavy weight lifting as well that really helped us.

"It's quite different in Test cricket with 25 overs a day while in T20 it's only four. You don't need much power, just balanced training," he said.

KL Rahul ruled out of third Test, fails to recover

PTI ■ RAJKOT

Senior India batter KL Rahul was on Monday ruled out of the third Test against England after failing to fully recover from his quadriceps strain that forced him to miss the second match in Visakhapatnam. It is understood that Devdutt

Padikkal, the talented Karnataka left-hander who is enjoying a great first class season, will replace Rahul in the squad.

"KL Rahul hasn't yet reported in Rajkot. Ravindra Jadeja, the local boy has linked up with the team. It was always a case of subject to fitness and BCCI medical team is still not confident that he is match fit," a senior BCCI source told PTI on the condition anonymity

The selectors had earlier



Ravindra Jadeja in the squad subject to clearance from the BCCI's medical team.

In his most recent Ranji Trophy match, the 23-yearold Padikkal scored 151 with the chairman of selectors Aiit Agarkar watching his knock from the stands.

Padikkal has been in excellent form this season. Having serious

named both Rahul and

started with a 193 against Punjab in the opening game, he struck 103 against Goa. Besides his exploits in Ranji, Padikkal also scored 105, 65 and 21 in his three innings for

Tests against England Lions. As far as Rahul is concerned 31-year-old batter's extended break raises a question about

India A in the two unofficial

whether the senior India and the BCCI's medical team are giving proper picture about the status of certain

players.

If the BCCI's medical team knew in first place that Rahul's quad injury is as serious as it looks, why in the first place was he kept in provisional squad. And why is the player sending wrong signals by posting videos of his batting on Instagram stories," a senior BCCI official asked.

Another senior player, who was recently told that he would be dropped for his poor form, pulled out on pretext of multiple injuries, something that the board hasn't even mentioned.

The case of Ishan Kishan is even more curious as he hasn't even spoken to his

home state unit on whether he would play a Ranji Trophy match or not.

With Rahul ruled out of the third Test and possibly fourth, the doors could open for Sarfaraz Khan in the middleorder now that Shreyas Iyer has also been dropped.

However, there will be more selection conundrum if Jadeja takes his rightful place in the

Axar Patel has batted well in the two Tests so far and Kuldeep Yadav was the second best Indian bowler in Visakhapatnam after Jasprit Bumrah.

As far as the keeper's slot is concerned, time is running out for KS Bharath with Dhruv Jurel breathing down his neck, but the former could still get one last chance in

RANJI TROPHY

Akash scalps 9 wickets to help Railways beat Goa | Kerala crush Bengal, jump to third spot

PTI ■ SURAT

 $R^{
m ailways}$ left-arm spinner Akash Pandey achieved a rare feat as he took nine wickets for 71 runs in Goa's second innings in a stunning bowling show to single-handedly power his side to a 63-run win in their Ranji Trophy Group C match here on Monday.

Pandey dismissed eight Goa batters on the final day, while taking the wicket of opener Amogh Sunil Desai on Sunday. He bowled 26.2 overs in total in Goa's second innings.

Only two players — Premangsu Chatterjee of Bengal and Pradee Sunderam of Rajasthan -Р́radeep have picked all 10 wickets in one innings of a Ranji Trophy match. Chatterjee achieved the feat in a Ranji match against Assam in 1957, while Sunderam did the same in a match against Vidarbha in 1985. Chasing 306 for a win, Goa were all out for 242 in 65.2 overs. Railways walked away with six points while Goa got none.

With the win, Railways now occupy fourth spot with 18 points.

With just one round of matches left in the group league, Karnataka, who got three points on the basis of first innings lead in the drawn match against Tamil Nadu in Chennai, are in top spot with

with 22 points and Gujarat in third with 19. In Chennai, chasing a target

of 355, TN could only manage

338 for 8 in 105 overs. The

match ended in a draw and

24 points. Tamil Nadu are in second

Karnataka got three points for their first innings lead, while TN had to be satisfied with one point.

Baba Indrajith was run out just two runs short of century, while Pradosh Ranjan Paul and Vijay Shankar chipped in with 74 and 60 respectively. They lost three quick wickets towards the end to fall short of target after beginning the day at 36 for 1.

In Mohali, Gujarat crushed Punjab by 299 runs to walk away with six points on the

final day.
Pacer Priyajitsing Jadeja scalped two more wickets on Monday to complete a fine five-wicket haul for 39 runs as Gujarat shot hosts Punjab for just 111 in 39.4 overs in their

second innings.
Chasing a tall target of 411
runs, Punjab produced an insipid batting display as none **İn Chennai:** Karnataka 366 &

of them could reach 20 runs with the highest being 18 by captain Mandeep Singh. Seven of their batters were captain dismissed without reaching

double-digit figures. Priyajitsing's pace colleagues Chintan Gaja and Arzan Nagwaswalla took two wickets apiece, while spinner Siddharth Desai got one as the home side batters surrendered meekly.

Punjab were staring at defeat after beginning the day at 40 for 4 and Gujarat completed the formalities in 25.4 overs on Monday BRIEF SCORES:

beat Goa 200 & 242 in 65.2 overs (Suyash Prabhudessai 67; Akash Pandey 9/71) by 63 Railways 6 points; Goa 0

point.

In Surat: Railways 297 & 208

139 drew with Tamil Nadu 151 & 338 for 8 in 105 overs (Baba Indrajith 98, Pradosh Ranjan Paul 74, Vijay Shankar 60; Vijaykumar Vyshak 3/71). Karnataka 3 points (for 1st innings lead); Tamil Nadu 1

În Mohali: Gujarat 339 & 290 for 8 declared beat Punjab 219 & 111 in 39.4 overs (Mandeep Singh 18; Priyajitsing Jadeja 5/39) by 299 runs. Gujarat 6 points, Punjab 0

point. In Chandigarh: Chandigarh 356 & 359 for 3 declared in 74 overs (Arslan Khan 147, Shivam Bhambri 98, Manan

(Bikramkumar Das 58; Arpit Pannu 1/15). Tripura 3 points (on basis of first innings lead), Chandigarh 1.

Vohra 74; Sridam Paul 1/39)

drew with Tripura 438 & 121

for 3 in 34.4 overs

PTI THUMBA (KERALA)

Veteran all-rounder Jalaj Saxena grabbed a match haul of 13 wickets on a rank-turner as Kerala crushed Bengal by 109 runs to taste their first win of the ongoing Ranji Trophy season here on Monday.

The win propelled Kerala (14) to third in the Group B table behind leaders Mumbai (30) and Andhra (25).

This was Bengal's second successive defeat of the season as the last edition's runners-up slipped to sixth spot and their knockout qualification hopes are as good as over. Bengal had endured an innings defeat to Mumbai at home in

their previous outing.
The spin-bowling all-rounder Saxena followed up his 9/68 in the first innings to pocket 4/104 as Bengal were bowled out for 339 in their tough chase of 449 runs.

Abhimanyu Easwaran Opener completed his second fifty of the match after Bengal resumed the day on 77/2. But Saxena gave the breakthrough first dismissing Anustup Majumdar (16) and then halted Abhimanyu's patient innings for 65 (119b).

Playing his penultimate match of his career, veteran Manoj Tiwary also became Saxena's victim falling cheaply for 35. Tiwary has announced that he will finally call it a day after Bengal's last league match against Bihar at Eden Gardens from February 16.
Returning to action after a two-month

injury layoff, Bengal premier all-rounder Shahbaz Ahmed was the lone warrior for as he chipped in with an entertaining 100-ball 80 (8x4, 2x6). Karan Lal gave him support with a 78-

ball 40 in an 83-run alliance for the seventh wicket. But it was just a formality for the visitors with Basil Thampi (2/8 from 2.4 overs) wiping out the tail, first by effecting the

run-out of India Test-bound Akash Deep

and then dismissing Shahbaz. RAHANE SLAMŠ FIFTY, MUMBAI LOG 3 PTS: In Raipur, veteran India batter Ajinkya Rahane struck his first



fifty of Ranji Trophy season, as his 56 not out helped Mumbai bag three points by virtue of their first innings lead over hosts Chhattisgarh.

Resuming the day on 97/1 with an overall 98 run lead, Mumbai declared their second essay on 253/6 as both the skippers, Rahane and Amandeep Khare, agreed for a draw before the tea break. For the home side, left-arm spinner Ajay Mandal returned with 5/63 but that was not enough to bowl Mumbai out.

The sidelined India batter, Rahane's previous scores in this year Ranji Trophy has been 0, 0, 16, 8, 9 and 1. This was his first fifty in nine innings as the Mumbai skipper scored a 78 against Tripura in the Vijay Hazare Trophy in December last

ASSAM SECURE FIRST WIN OF **SEASON:** In Guwahati, Assam also secured their first win of the season, defeating Bihar by nine wickets. Assam now have eight points from six matches, three ahead of bottom-rung Bihar in the

eight-team Group B standings. The day's hero was left-arm spinner Rahul Singh who claimed 5/49 as Bihar were bowled out for 292 following on.

It gave Assam an easy target of 95 as the

home side cantered home in 14.2 overs with opener Parvej Musaraf remaining unbeaten on 52, his second fifty of the match.

BRIEF SCORES

In Thumba: Kerala 363 and 265/6 declared. Bengal 180 and 339; 87.4 overs (Shahbaz Ahmed 80, Abhimanyu Easwaran 65, Karan Lal 40). Kerala won by 109 runs. Points: Kerala 6, Bengal 0. In Raipur: Mumbai 351 and 253/6 declared (Bhupen Lalwani 59, Ajinkya Rahane 56 not out, Prithvi Shaw 45, Shardul Thakur 31; Ajay Mandal 5/65). Chhattisgarh 350. Match drawn, Mumbai take first innings lead. Points: Mumbai 3, Chhattisgarh 1.

In Guwahati: Assam 405 and 100/1; 14.2 overs (Parvej Musaraf 52 not out). Bihar 207 and following on 292; 121 overs (Piyush Singh 103, Bipin Saurabh 44; Rahul Singh 5/49). Assam won by nine wickets. Points: Assam 6, Bihar 0.

In Vizianagaram: Andhra 261 and 429/9; 145 overs (Ricky Bhui 129, Shaik Rasheed 85, Nitish Kumar Reddy 53 not out, Hanuma Vihari 48; Saurabh Kumar 5/116). Match drawn, Andhra take first innings lead. Points: Andhra 3, UP 1.

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