OPINION 6

THE UCC AS A REFORM

WORLD 9

SHEHBAZ SHARIF LIKELY TO

BECOME NEXT PAK PM

ROHIT SHARMA TO

CAPTAIN INDIA IN

T20 WORLD CUP

12 SPORTS

DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR

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Puniab-Harvana Shambhu border near Patiala on Wednesday

RAJESH KUMAR NEW DELHI/ CHANDIGARH

s the stalemate between Athe protesting farmers government efforts are the continues, underway to find a solution with the third round of talks between three Union Ministers and farmer leaders scheduled to be held in Chandigarh on Thursday in virtual mode.

According to Samyukta Kisan Morcha (a non-political organisation) leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal, the meeting will include Union Ministers Arjun Munda, Piyush Goyal, and Nityanand Rai. Earlier, two meetings between the two sides, involving senior Union Ministers, including Rajnath Singh and Arjun Munda, have remained inconclusive.

Sources indicate that the meeting in the national capital is significant against the backdrop of farmers from Punjab marching towards Delhi and the Haryana Police using tear gas shells to stop them at the Shambhu border between the two States. "Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, also a former

Agriculture discussed various farmer issues with Munda, who is currently in charge of the Agriculture Ministry. Munda is also one of the Ministers who held discussions with farmer groups," the sources added.

the Agriculture Earlier, Minister said efforts to engage in constructive dialogue with the farmers' union persist. The Minister also expressed readiness to hold discussions considering all viewpoints and appealed for a conducive environment for dialogue. On the other hand, farmer

leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal in Chandigarh said they are ready for holding talks with Centre over their demands, including a legal guarantee to minimum support price. Furthermore, the Agriculture Minister urged the farmers organisations to avoid actions that disrupt daily life.

As protesting farmers began a march on the second day which was stopped at the Punjab-Haryana border on Tuesday night, chaos prevailed at the Shambhu border in Punjab after a fresh clash erupted, prompting the Haryana police to use tear gas and water cannons. There was a similar standoff

at the Data Singhwala-Khanauri border in Haryana's Jind district, with the Haryana Police barricades stopping farmers from traveling to Delhi on their tractor-trolleys. A scuffle between Haryana Police and farmers took place at the Khanauri border Wednesday afternoon when farmers tried to cross barricades. Police resorted to lathicharge and fired tear gas shells, causing injuries to some farmers.

With the farmers from several places in Punjab continuing to pour in at the Shambhu border to participate in the "Delhi Chalo" march, a large number of tractor-trolleys could be seen parked along the national highway on the Punjab side.

Continued on Page 2



Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the inauguration of the BAPS Hindu Mandir, in Abu Dhabi on Wednesday

Modi Salutes Maa Bharati

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday inaugurated Abu Dhabi's first Hindu stone temple, describing it as a symbol of the shared heritage of humanity and thanking the UAE for scripting a new golden chapter of human history.

Speaking at the inauguration of the temple built by the Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha (BAPS), the Prime Minister profusely thanked the President of UAE Sheikh Mohammad Zayed

Nahyan for making the grand temple in Abu Dhabi a reality and said he has not only won the hearts of Indians living in the Gulf nation but also of 140 crore Indians.

"I hope that the BAPS Mandir will become a symbol of communal harmony and global unity for the whole world," Modi said, addressing gathering that included Tolerance Minister Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan and spiritual leaders from all faiths.

'We do not see hatred in diversity, we consider diversity as our specialty! In

this temple, we will see a Lauding the contribution of glimpse of diverse faiths at the UAE President in making glimpse of diverse faiths at each and every step," the the grand temple a reality, he said, "If there is anyone who Prime Minister said. He said the UAE, which till has the biggest and the most

two countries," Modi said.

now was known for Burj Khalifa, Future Museum, grand temple a reality, then it is none other than my brother Sheikh Zayed Mosque and other hi-tech buildings, has His Highness S. Mohammed bin Zayed." now added another cultural The Government of UAE has chapter to its identity. "I am confident that a large number wholeheartedly worked to of devotees will come here in fulfil the aspirations of crores of Indians. The Government the times to come. This will of UAE has not only won the also increase the number of people coming to the UAE and increase the people-topeople connect between the Indians," he said.

hearts of Indians living in the UAE but also of all 140 crore

Continued on Page 2

Sheikh

significant role in making this

CAPSULE

Kejriwal gets sixth ED summons

New Delhi: The ED has served the sixth summons on Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal for his questioning in the excise policy linked money laundering case. He has been asked to depose February 19. He was earlier called on December 21 and November 2 in 2023 and January 3, January 18 and February 2 this year. The CM has always called these notices "illegal". Acting on a complaint filed by the ED for disobeying its summons in this case, a special court last week had asked Kejriwal to appear before it on February 17

ED starts probe against Paytm

New Delhi: The ED has initiated a preliminary enquiry against PayTm Payments Bank Ltd, under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), As per the market reports. Additionally, the ED and Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) have also sought inputs from Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the reports said. The ED had first sought more information from the RBI, which ordered the Paytm Payments Bank to wind down much of its business by February 29.

Sonia retires from electoral politics

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Virtually indicating her retirement from electoral politics, UPA Chairperson and longest-serving Congress president Sonia Gandhi filed nominations Wednesday to enter the Rajya Sabha. Alongside, top BJP leaders including party chief from Gujarat this time, as his current RS seat in Himachal Pradesh will be vacant.

Union Ministers Ashwini

Vaishnaw and L Murugan, among others, also received the green signal from the BJP for re-election from Odisha Pradesh, and Madhya respectively. With Nadda and Vaishnaw announced as candidates for the council of States, the speculation about their contesting Lok Sabha elections comes to an end. Nadda was expected to shift from Himachal Pradesh, while Vaishnaw from either Rajasthan or Odisha. Nadda currently holds a Rajva Sabha seat from Himachal Pradesh, but the BJP lacks the numbers to win a seat from the

Congress-ruled State. Former Maharashtra CM Ashok Chavan, who recently left the Congress to join the BJP, was nominated from Maharashtra to represent the party in the Council of States. The elections for which are scheduled for February 26, with February 15 being the last date for nominations. Alongside Sonia, senior party leaders Ajay Maken and Abhishek Śinghvi were also named by the party for the



Congress leader Sonia Gandhi files her nomination papers for the upcoming Rajya Sabha polls at Rajasthan Assembly, in Jaipur on Wednesday. Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and Ashok Gehlot are also seen

Rajya Sabha election to be held on February 27. Sonia Gandhi, accompanied by her son Rahul Gandhi, daughter Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, and former Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot, filed her nomination papers in Jaipur.The 77-year-old former Congress president is set to enter the Upper House for the first time from Rajasthan. Gandhi will fill the seat that will fall vacant in April after former prime minister Manmohan Singh completes his Rajya Sabha tenure. Sonia Gandhi had announced in 2019 that it would be her last

Lok Sabha election. She will be the second member of the Gandhi family to enter the Rajya Sabha after former prime minister Indira Gandhi, who was a member of the Upper House from August 1964 to February 1967.The BJP stated that Sonia Gandhi's decision to opt for the Rajya Sabha signifies an acknowledgment in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

"After the Congress' crushing defeat in Amethi, Rae Barel was next. Sonia Gandhi's decision to opt for the Rajya Sabha is an admission of looming defeat," BJP IT cell has been fielded from Karnataka, and Abhishek Singhvi from Himachal Pradesh, where the party holds government. Maken had unsuccessfully contested the Rajya Sabha election from



of the party's potential defeat

chief Amit Malviya said, adding that the Gandhis have now deserted every supposed stronghold, with the former Congress president choosing the Rajya Sabha route instead of contesting the Lok Sabha elections from her family pocket borough Rae Bareli. The biennial elections to fill 56 seats of the Rajya Sabha will be held on February 27 with the last date for filing nominations being February 15. Congress treasurer Maken

Haryana last year. Continued on Page 2

Concerns over fatal tranquilisations

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

leopard tranquilised by Athe veterinary specialists of Kerala Forest Department on Tuesday evening was found dead within hours in Kannur district. The leopard which allegedly trespassed into a farm land in rural Kannur got entangled in the steel fence and unconscious within minutes. The veterinary team that reached the spot took a shot with their tranquiliser gun so that the big cat would not get up from its slumber. The tranquilised leopard was



public garden in Thrissur when the accompanying forest staff found that the

two leopards succumbing leopard was dead. after getting tranquilised by This is the fourth such wild the forest teams. Wildlife activists like VK animal that got killed in the

shot by the tranquilisers. Last two months saw a tiger and

questioned competency and efficacy of the veterinary specialists as well as the tranquilisers employed in the missions. "We fear that outdated tranquilisers are being used in the operations and thus have put the life of the animals in danger," said Venkatachalam.

Heritage Animal Task Force,

Venkatachalam,

Meanwhile, a district wide alert has been issued in Wayanad following the sighting of another leopard

on Wednesday morning.

Continued on Page 2

LIC POLICYHOLDERS!

As per Insurance Act, 1938 (amendment 2015), Section 38 (5) "Subject to the provisions in sub-section (2), the transfer or assignment shall be complete and effectual upon the execution of such endorsement or instrument duly attested but except, where the transfer or assignment is in favour of the insurer, shall not be operative as against an insurer, and shall not confer upon the transferee or assignee, or his legal representative, any right to sue for the amount of such policy or the moneys secured thereby until a notice in writing of the transfer or assignment and either the said endorsement or instrument itself or a copy thereof certified to be correct by both transferor and transferee or their duly authorized agents have been delivered to the insurer:

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Pakistan Rangers resort to unprovoked firing in Jammu

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

¬he Pakistan Rangers on Wednesday resorted to 'unprovoked' firing in the RS Pura sector of Jammu frontier. According to reports, the firing lasted around half an hour, triggering panic in the forward villages. According to a Jammubased BSF spokesperson, "On February 14, 2024 at about 5:50 pm, Pak Rangers resorted to 'unprovoked' firing in the R S Pura area, which was befittingly responded by BSF troops." The spokesperson said the firing stopped at about 6:15 pm. The troops have been kept in a state of high alert. Ahead of Diwali celebrations



last year, a Border Security Force (BSF) head constable was martyred in 'unprovoked' firing by Pakistan rangers along the International border in the Ramgarh sector of Jammu frontier's Samba district.

Before this provocation, Pak rangers had resorted to heavy mortar shelling in the Arnia sector for about seven hours on October 28, 2023, causing extensive damage in the resi

Pushed by cops, Bengal BJP chief hurt, hospitalised SAUGAR SENGUPTA KOLKATA

Bengal BJP president Sukanto Majumdar on Wednesday sustained head injuries when he tripped after allegedly being 'pushed' by policemen who were trying to prevent him from going to Sanedeshkhali to meet victims of land-grab and rape — by the men of Trinamool Congress dons, Sheikh Shahjahan, Shibu Hajra and Uttam Sardar all members of district committee and district board. The doctors said tests including MRI and scan were being conducted on him and his condition could be ascertained only after investigations were completed.

Initially what seemed to be a minor injury seemed to turn out critical when the police had to rush him to a private hospital in Kolkata - in an ICU ambulance with oxygen masks



where he had been admitted to trauma unit. Sources in the BIP said that Majumdar was passing in an out of his senses and MRI and other tests were being conducted on him to find out the extent of his head injury, sources said. Majumdar had on Tuesday led

SP office where the saffron workers protesting Sandeshkhali incident fought a pitched battle with the cops leading to a number of injuries and arrests. The BJP leader

a massive BJP rally at Basirhat

who held his ground and continued a night-long sit-in demonstration was subsequently detained and taken to

However on Wednesday morning he slipped out of the place and reached the banks of Ishamati River — bordering India and Bangladesh — where he performed Saraswati Puja before coming back to the hotel. Soon scuffle ensued between the BJP supports and the police as once again he tried to move towards Sandeshkhali. In the melee he was allegedly pushed from behind by the policemen leading to his fall. As he passed out under the impact he was taken to the nearby hospital from where he was shifted to Kolkata, sources said. The Wednesday's incident

takes place a day after Anarul Islam a CPI(M) supporter died after receiving injuries from

bursting tear gas shells at Behrampore where the police resorted to a massive lathicharge to disperse a large gathering of farmers who had assembled with their demands. Giving strong reactions to the treatment meted out to him Bengal Opposition Leader Suvendu Adhikari said "Mamata Banerjee government has crossed all limits of despotism ... if this can happen to a lawmaker, an MP then it is easily imaginable what treatment the common man gets in this regime... we strongly con-demn the brutal attack of the police on Sukanto Majumdar." His party colleague and State committee member Sajal Ghosh saw an "intention to kill Sukanto Majumdar." He said, "it is increasingly becoming dif-

president in order to stop us from raising the people's voice ... but that is not going to happen and the BJP will continue to fight and throw out this Government from power." While there was no official reaction from the police administration Trinamool

Congress MP Shantanu Sen it was a "drama being enacted by Sukanto Majumdar in order to draw public attention after his agitation failed to find any

TMC spokesperson Kunal Ghosh also asked "why Sukanto Majumdar was dancing on the bonnet of his vehicle from where he apparently fell down," adding "the BJP leaders like Sukanto Majumdar have started acting because he wants snaps to be sent to Delhi so that his tenure is further extended by his bosses.'

Didi to meet Mann, Kejriwal in Amritsar soon

Having shaken off the Congress' extended hand of friendship in her own State and in an apparent bid to find a friend in an 'enemy's' (read the Congress) friend Bengal Chief Minister will fly off to Amritsar on February 21, Trinamool Congress sources

Apart from offering prayers at the Golden Temple, Banerjee is likely to meet Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and his Delhi counterpart and Aam Aadmi Party president Arvind Kejriwal.

For the records, both the TMC and the AAP have refused to play ball with the Congress in Bengal and Punjab in that

Banerjee had on a number of occasions attacked the Congress for its alleged highhandedness before declaring her ekla chalo (go alone) pol-



icy. "We were giving them two seats but they wanted to bite more than they could chew ... such is their arrogance ... so I have decided to go it alone ... the TMC will fight alone in Bengal as only the Trinamool can defeat the BJP here," he

On whether Banerjee's meeting with Mann and Kejriwal would sound a death knell in the Indian National Democratic and Inclusive Alliance --- for all practical purposes pivoted by the Congress --- by the creation of a "room within a room," TMC spokesperson Arup

visit should be seen in a wider angle as she was a senior leader in the INDIA alliance who unlike many others was trying to selflessly bring the like-minded parties together keep-

ing without usurping their

Speaking on the possible agen-

identities.

da of the Mamata-Mann-Kejriwal summit he said, "Our leader Mamata Banerjee has already made it clear from the very beginning that each party should fight with its full force where it is strong and support the other parties that are stronger in their respective regions ... she has been telling from the very beginning about amicable seat-sharing formula . in Bengal due to a number of reasons she has made it clear that the TMC --- which is the only party capable of fighting and defeating the BJP as it did

in 2021 Assembly elections --

- will fight the elections alone

... in other places we are ready to cooperate.'

He also said that "the talks (with Mann and Kejriwal) will further strengthen the anti-BJP alliance and the meeting will send positive message about INDIA alliance to the people all over the country ... other constituents like DMK etc will also hail such efforts being made by Mamata Banerjee.

On whether the Punjab summit could make possibilities of the AAP and TMC leaders campaigning for each others' parties during the elections, he said, "when politicians meet many things are discussed." The BJP however pooh-pooed the likely meeting even as its State president Sukanto Majumdar said, "Bhagwant Mann ji should be very careful

about Mamata Banerjee

because whenever she meets

someone and gives her advice

to that person he invariably

goes to jail ... as it happened in

the case of Kejriwal ji whose Deputy Chief Minister went to jail after his meeting with Mamata Banerjee ... even Kejriwal ji is on the verge of going to jail ... now Mann ji should consider things before meeting Mamata Banerjee." In any case there was no scope of INDIA alliance in the 2024 general elections he said.

INDIA alliance is a gone case ... they are a divided house without any leader, agenda or any message for the people ... they are only a group of thieves so their meeting does not impact us.'

Pradesh Congress president Adhir Chowdhury on the other hand refused to pay any importance to Banerjee's Amritsar trip saying, "this is a democratic country where anyone can go anywhere ... as for me I am not concerned about who is going where or meeting whom ... we are only concerned about our own programmes.'

J&K CRPF pays tributes to martyrs of Pulwama attack

ficult for the Mamata Banerjee

Government to handle the BJP

... so they tried to teach us a

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

To mark the fifth anniversary ■ of the ghastly terror attack on a CRPF convoy in which 40 jawans sacrificed their lives in the line of duty on February 14, 2019, a solemn wreath-laying ceremony was organised at a CRPF camp in Lethpora, Pulwama on Wednesday. Senior officers of the CRPF led

by ADG J&K Zone Nalin Prabhat remembered the supreme sacrifices made by the CRPF personnel to restore peace in Jammu and Kashmir. A suicide bomber had targeted a convoy of CRPF personnel along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway by ramming an explosives-laden car to trigger a blast.

Posting a message on X (Earlier Twitter) a CRPF spokesman



said, "On the solemn occasion of the Pulwama attack anniversary, Nalin Prabhat, ADG J&K Zone, Gyanender Verma, IG Kashmir Operations Sector, and Ajay Yadav, IG, CRPF Srinagar paid homage to the brave Martyrs. A wreath-laying ceremony & blood donation camp were held at185 Bn CRPF, Lethpora".

In Jammu, a separate tribute ceremony was organized by the 76 Bn headquarters where a large number of CRPF jawans and senior officers paid glowing tributes in the memory of mar-

Meanwhile, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha also paid tributes to 40 CRPF personnel on the fifth anniversary of the 2019 Pulwama suicide attack in the

Union Territory.

"Humble tributes to the bravehearts who sacrificed their lives in the 2019 Pulwama terror attack. The nation will forever remain indebted to their exemplary courage, supreme sacrifice and selfless service to the motherland," Sinha said in a post on X. Director General of Police R R Swain also paid tributes to the fallen jawans.

A police spokesman said Swain, on behalf of Jammu and Kashmir Police pariwar, paid heartfelt homage to the courageous souls who made the ultimate sacrifice in the 2019

Modi Salutes Maa Bharati

From Page 1

The prime minister also recalled the consecration ceremony of the newly constructed Ram temple in Ayodhya last month.

"Our immense pleasure in Ayodhya has been further enhanced by the wave of Dhabi today. It is my good fortune that I have been a witness to the grand Shri Ram temple first in Ayodhya, and then to this temple in Abu Dhabi," the Prime Minister

"Just last month, the age-old dream of a grand Ram temple in Ayodhya was fulfilled. Ram Lalla is seated in his Bhavan! The whole of India and every Indian is still immersed in that feeling of love," Modi said.

The PM noted that this is not only the time of India's 'Amrit Kaal', this is also the time of 'Amrit Kaal' of our faith and culture.

Earlier, Prime Minister Modi, dressed in a light pink silk dhoti and kurta paired with a sleeveless jacket and stole, participated in rituals of a ceremony to dedicate the temple to the people. Modi met people from different faiths who contributed to the construction of the first Hindu stone temple here. The Prime Minister also

offered water in the virtual Ganga and Yamuna rivers at temple proceeding to inaugurate the temple built on a 27-acre site in Abu Mreikhah, near Al Rahba off the Dubai-Abu Dhabi Sheikh Zayed Highway, at a cost of around Rs 700 crore.

He also inscribed "Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam" on stone using hammer and chisel at the temple.

According to the temple authorities, the grand temple has been built as per an ancient style of construction and creation mentioned in the Shilpa and Sthapathya Shastras, Hindu scriptures which describe the art for design mandir construction.

"The architectural methods have been clubbed with scientific techniques here. Over 300 high-tech sensors have been installed at every level of the temple to measure

temperature, pressure and movement (seismic activity). The sensors will provide live data for research. If there is any earthquake in the region, the temple will detect it, and we will be able to study," Swami Brahmaviharidas head of international relations No metal has been used in the

construction of the temple and fly ash has been used to fill up the foundation, replacing 55 per cent of cement in the concrete mix, reducing the carbon footprint of the temple. Madhusudan Patel, the

construction temple's manager, told PTI, "We have used heat-resistant nano tiles and heavy glass panels, merging both traditional aesthetic stone structures modern-day

functionality. Considering the extreme temperatures in the UAE, the tiles will be comfortable for visitors to walk even in hot weather. Non-ferrous material has also been used in the temple."

Constructed with 18 lakh bricks, seven lakh man hours and 1.8 lakh cubic metres of sandstone sourced directly from Rajasthan — Abu Dhabi's first Hindu temple has been made in the Nagara style of architecture, just like the recently inaugurated Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

According to Umesh Raja, a volunteer at the temple, 20,000 tonnes of sandstone pieces were carved in Rajasthan and then shipped Abu Dhabi in 700

"Not just the stone, many labourers who helped construct the temple over five years belong to Gujarat and Rajasthan. Even the marble mined from Italy was first shipped to India for carving and then back to the UAE to be used in the interiors," he

The work for the structure has been going on since 2019. The land for the temple was donated by the UAE government. The UAE has three other Hindu temples that are located in Dubai. The BAPS temple, spread over a large area with stone architecture, will be the largest of all in the Gulf



Ministry of Education Additional Secretary Vipin Kumar inaugurates an exhibition on Swachchh Bharat at the National Bal Bhawan in Delhi on Wednesday

ientre, Farmers

From Page 1

While the protesting farmers said they were determined to march towards the national Capital, many young farmers have made their tractors ready for removing the multi-layered cemented blocks at the Shambhu border. They have also made arrangements of water tankers in order to minimise the impact of any tear gas shell lobbed by the Haryana security personnel. The farmers were also

carrying water bottles and wet clothes to limit the impact of tear gas shells. One of the protesters was seen wearing body protective gears along with eye protective safety goggles at the Shambhu border. An unconventional strategy emerged on the ground as protesting farmers flew kites to counter drones employed by the Government to drop tear gas canisters on them.

In Chandigarh, citing media reports, farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal said they are ready for holding talks with the Centre over their demands, including a legal guarantee to minimum support price. Dallewal said Union Minister Anurag Thakur has, in his statement, said the Centre was ready for holding talks and was also ready to resolve the issues of the farmers.

'We do not want to give any room to the Centre for saying it was inviting us, but they did not accept it. That we have accepted and we are ready for talks," he told reporters at the Shambhu border. Dallewal said the farmer leaders have taken the consent of fellow

farmers for holding talk Security remained tight in with personnel deployed in huge numbers and barricades regulating movement in Central Delhi and at border points with Haryana, causing hardships to commuters.

Meanwhile, traffic affected in the border areas of Delhi as police erected several layers of barricades and stopped the movement of vehicles at the Singhu and Tikri borders.

The authorities took all measures to fortify and seal the city's borders to prevent a reprise of the earlier protest. The multilayered hurdles metal barricades, concrete blocks sealed with cement, barbed wires and trucks blocking alternative routes all overseen by troops of police and paramilitary forces left thousands of commuters factory workers and locals fuming and frustrated.

The police had taken care to leave one lane on the highway open to traffic. It was used to permit ambulances to pass at low speed. This generousity wasn't meant for thousands of people who had boarded buses to reach Delhi from their homes in Haryana and Punjab. The narrow passage under the flyover at Singhu border, with barbed wire blocking one side, added to the perils of pedestrians, including patients who had to access hospitals on the other side of the blockade.

Traffic remained unrestricted at Ghazipur border with Uttar Pradesh, while Singhu and Tikri borders with Haryana were completely closed. The expressways turned into crawl ways for the second straight day as traffic restrictions and heavy police barricading paralysed the movement of vehicles. The NH-9 and NH-24, crucial routes connecting Delhi with Ghaziabad, Noida and Meerut, experienced uninterrupted movement during the day.

Ashok Chavan, Praful Patel among six for RS polls from Maharashtra

Maharashtra's former Chief Minister and the BJP nominee Ashok Chavan, NCP (Ajit Pawar faction) sitting MP Praful Patel and Congress nominee Chandrakant Handore are among the six biennial Rajya Sabha polls in the State who will get elected unopposed.

With the ruling BJP deciding not to field its fourth candidate for the February 27 RS polls, decks were cleared for the uncontested election of all the

six candidates in the fray. The BJP has nominated Chavan, who quit the Congress and joined its ranks on Tuesday, former MLA from Pune Medha Kulkarni and RSS pracharak-turned-BJP leader Dr Ajeet Gopchade as its candidates for the RS polls.

The NCP (Ajit Pawar) sprang a surprise by nominating its senior leader Praful Patel, who is a four-time Lok Sabha member and three times Rajya Sabha member.

Sixty-six-year-old Patel, who was elected to Rajya Sabha in July 2022 and whose term will end in 2028, has been nominated by the NCP (Ajit Pawar) mid way through his tenure for some technical reasons. "After considering various issues and also technical issues (arising out of the recent split in the Sharad Pawar-led NCP), we have decided to field Praful

Patel as our candidate," State NCP President Sunil Tatkare

Informed sources in the NCP (Ajit Pawar) said that Patel would resign from current RS membership after he gets reelected to the Upper House of Parliament for the fourth time. On its part, the Congress has Working President Chandrakant D Handore as its candidate for the Rs polls. The move to nominate Handore nearly 20 months after he suf-

fered a shocking defeat in the June 2022 biennial Maharashtra Legislative Council elections because of cross-voting despite his being the Congress' first-choice candidates.

Sixty-seven-year-old Handore was a Municipal Corporator in Mumbai, later a Mayor of Mumbai, a two-time MLA and state minister for several years. The Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena is likely to nominate Milind Deora, a two-time former Lok Sabha MP from Mumbai South and son of Gandhi-family loyalist Murli Deora, as its candidate for the polls. The RS polls are being held to fill the vacancies to be created by the expiry of the terms of Narayan Rane, Prakash Javadekar and V Muraleedharan (all three from BJP), Kumar Ketkar (Congress), Anil Desai (Shiv Sena) and Vandana Chavan (NCP), who are retiring in

on February 20 to decide on reservation for Maratha

Maharashtra Special Session

TN RAGHUNATHA

The Eknath Shinde-led "Maha-Yuti" Government on Wednesday convened a Special Session of the Maharashtra Legislature on February 20 to decide on the reservations to Maratha comcondition of the agitating Shivba Sanghatana leader and pro-reservation activist Manoj Jarange-Patil deterio-

On a day when the hunger agitation of Jarange-Patil entered fifth day, Maharashtra chief minister Éknath Shinde announced the scheduling of a special session of both Houses of the state Legislature on Tuesday next.

At a weekly meeting presided over by Shinde, the state Cabinet decided to convene a special session of the Maharashtra Legislature in line with the commitment it had made to Jarange-Patil last month to accord reservations to the Maratha community.

Buoyed by the Shinde dispensation's recent decision to accept his demand for expanding the scope of Kunbi OBC certificates for Marathas, Jarange-Patil went on a fresh hunger agitation from February 10 to demand speedy implementation of a draft rules for the Maratha reservations. The health condition of

Jarange-Patil, who has gone on a hunger agitation in his native village Antaravali-Sarati in Jalna district of Marathwada, worsened after blood started oozing from his nose and he reported

On his part, Jarange-Patil has gone on record saying that he would not calloff his agitation till the state government issues a notification to facilitate speedy implementation of the notification on the draft rules for the Maratha reservations issued on January 26.

dehydration, physical weak-

ness and severe abdominal

It may be recalled that on January 27, the Maharashtra government had decided to issue a gazette notification with rules aimed at easing and expanding the scope for offering Kunbi OBC certificates to Marathas. These certificates will entitle them to apply for government jobs and admissions in educational institutions as OBCS, who are entitled for 27 per cent reservations in the state.

Sonia retires from...

From Page 1

Congress nominated former Union minister Renuka Chowdhury as a Rajya Sabha candidate from Telangana, along with local leader M Anil Kumar Yadav from the southern state where the party came into power in December. Senior party leader and

Union minister former Anand Sharma was seeking a Rajya Sabha berth from Himachal, his home state, as the seat will fall vacant when BJP chief J P Nadda's tenure ends in April this year.The Congress also renominated Syed Naseer Hussain, who serves as a coordinator in the office of Congress President

Mallikarjun Kharge. This will be Hussain's second term as a Rajya Sabha

member Karnataka. According to a statement, the party has also renominated its Bihar unit chief, Akhilesh Prasad Singh, from the state, and he Karnataka,

filed his nomination on Tuesday. Party leader from Chandrasekhar, has also been renominated by the party in the list announced on Wednesday. From Madhya Pradesh, the party has fielded local leader Ashok Singh and named Chandrakant Handore as its candidate

Maharashtra.

Concerns over fatal...

From Page 1

Lissy Joseph, a homemaker was on her way to church to attend the morning mass when a leopard drove her away from the direction of the church.

The local CPI(M) leaders blamed the leopard for attack on minority community members and by the time the legislative Assembly met for the day at Thiruvananthapuram, forest minister AK Saseendran introduced a legislation in the House declaring that all wild animals entering human settlements would be annihilated without warning.
Though the Forest Department has been trying to shoot down

a wild elephant which had killed a 47-year old man in his house, the pachyderm has been leading the foresters in wrong directions. A special task force constituted for the purpose missed the elephants three to four times as it took cover in the deep forest in the district. The minister said in the House that wild elephants from Karnataka, with which Wayanad has a common border, were sneaking into the district to rob food and water. Saseendran, (who has not seen a forest according to K Sudhakaran , KPCC president) said all wild animals trespassing into the settlements would be killed without any







Leave early for exam centres: CBSE to students amid farmers protest there," said Suraj Upadhyay, a

Advisory issued as X, XII Board exams start today

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Amid ongoing farmers' protest, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) issued an advisory on Wednesday for the students appearing in the board exams in view of the traffic restrictions imposed in Delhi, advising them to leave their homes early to arrive at the examination centres in time. With school board examinations slated to begin from Thursday, residents of areas near Delhi's Tikri and Singhu borders are worried about how children will reach examination centres amid traffic and security

Traffic restrictions are currently in place in the national capital in view of the farmers' Delhi Chalo" march. The class 10th and 12th board exams are set to commence from Thursday, with nearly 5.8 lakh students will take the exams across 877 centres in Delhi.

"As the examination starts at 10.30 am, hence, all the students have been directed to reach their examination centres on or before 10 am," the advisory read. It cited the current situation in Delhi and said it is expected that there will be traffic issues that might cause a delay in reaching the exami-nation centres. "Hence, all the students are advised to leave their homes early so that they can reach well on time as per instructions issued by the CBSE. It is advisable to use metro services to reach the examination centres which are

the students of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) across India and other countries to plan their journeys to reach the examination centres on or before 10 am, looking into the local conditions, traffic, weather conditions, distance etc., as the students will be allowed to enter the centres only up to 10 am and not thereafter. "All schools are requested to help and guide the parents and students. Students are once again advised to visit their examination centres in advance and make a plan for their travel so that they can arrive before or on time on all examination days," it added. Adding to their woes, the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM) has called a 'Bharat Bandh' on Friday in support of



the national capital to press the Centre to accept their demands, including the enactment of a law guaranteeing minimum support price (MSP)

The restrictions in areas around the Delhi-Haryana border points, which have been

are already battling the "stress A group of girls, whose exam centre is the Government Boys

to the concern of parents, who

Senior Secondary School, Tikri Kalan, said because of the restrictions, they would have to leave home early as the school is around seven kilometers from their village.
"We don't have a vehicle. So we

might have to leave early and look for an auto or a bus to reach our exam centre in time," said a girl of the group that travelled from Mundaka to visit their centre.

Those who have vehicles have decided to use the metro rail to avoid traffic jams. "My exam centre is in south Delhi's Mehrauli, which is around 40 km away. I have to reach the km away. I have to reach the centre at 8 am. I won't travel by car due to heavy traffic. Instead, I will take the metro to reach

class 12 student and resident of Tikri border.

Pallavi, a student of a CBSE school living near the Singhu border, said, "I have planned to leave my home three to four hours early as I have to go to DAV Pritampura for my exam. I can wait for an hour outside the centre but I cannot be late." A woman, who resides near the Singhu border, said, "There are a lot of traffic restrictions because of which children tions because of which children are not able to go for coaching centre or play." "This is impacting their studies and may affect their scores in the exams," another parent said.

On the SKM's decision, a parents group said that "as concerned parents, we are in

concerned parents, we are in agony and compelled to raise our voices against the proposed nationwide strike or bandh on February 16" and appeal it to reconsider their

"Our children have been work ing hard while preparing for these examinations. However, their hard work could go in vain if they are unable to reach their examination centres due to railroad blockades and nonavailability of transport services," it said.

Traffic across Delhi's border regions was disrupted on the second day of the protest due to blockades created by security forces to stop farmers from marching into the national capital. On Grand Trunk Road, which connects Delhi to Punjab via Haryana, vehicles were redirected for the last 20 km through side roads. Multiple layers of barricades, concrete blocks, iron nails and container walls have been placed at the city's border points – Ghazipur, Singhu and Tikri - to thwart the farmers'

Vehicles movement hit as barricades block borders

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

raffic was hit in the border 1 areas of Delhi on Wednesday as police erected several layers of barricades and stopped the movement of vehicles at the Singhu and Tikri borders in view of a proposed farmers' march to the capital. While the Singhu and Tikri borders between Delhi and Haryana have been entirely closed for traffic, vehicular movement is allowed at the Ghazipur border in a regulated

A section of a road in a village near the Singhu border was dug reaching Delhi.

manner.

The Apsara and Ghazipur borders between Delhi and Uttar Pradesh are open for traffic, but there is heavy security deployment at both places.

Ravi Verma, who was travelling from Shahdara to Noida Sector-62, said the traffic movement was slightly affected at the Ghazipur border. "I was planning to take an alternative

route to reach office. Vehicular movement was slightly affected at the border. Heavy security was deployed there," Verma

Police said the Singhu border on National Highway-44 is inaccessible for traffic. Interstate buses and heavy goods vehicles for Haryana, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and other places are to take a diversion on Outer Ring Road at Majnu Ka Tilla to proceed towards Signature Bridge to Khajuri Chowk via the Loni border towards Eastern Peripheral Road, police said.

Sanjay Gandhi Transport Nagar are to take a diversion from the Azadpur Mandi, take the service road towards Outer Ring Road, Haiderpur water plant and take a U-turn for Rohini Jail Road Sector-18 to Badli metro station to Sanjay Gandhi Transport Nagar, they added. Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) buses and four-wheelers are allowed from

Mukarba Chowk towards NH-44 to take exit number-2 on NH-44 at the DSIIDC cut to go towards Narela and the Safiabad border. Commuters are advised to follow the above routes to avoid inconvenience, police

the 'Delhi Chalo' agitation -- a

march by farmers of Punjab to

Police have put up barricades and placed concrete slabs on various roads to prevent the protesting farmers from entering Delhi. People had to cross the Singhu border between Delhi and Haryana on foot on Tuesday as police blocked the movement of vehicles in view of the farmers' march.

Trucks originating from the Hem Singh, who lives in going to northeast Delhi to attend a wedding but his bus had to halt nearly a kilometre from the border.

"My nephew is getting married in northeast Delhi's Gokulpuri and we are stuck here due to traffic. The bus driver stopped the vehicle a kilometre before the border. We are walking towards Delhi and are not sure whether we will get any vehicle.

Singhu border sealed, commuters woes continue

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELH

To visit her gynaecologist in Delhi, over eight-month pregnant Madhu Kumari on . Wednesday trudged wearily on foot trying to bypass the Singhu border made impregnable by the police using multilayered barricades.

As a precaution, the streets and bylanes connecting Sonipat in Haryana to Delhi near the Singhu border were dug up to prevent the farmer protesters'
Delhi Chalo' march from
entering the national capital.
The protesting farmers, demanding legal guarantee of minimum support price (MSP) were held back by the police near Ambala.

her husband and two other relatives, was one of the large number of commoners forced to face hardships due to the sealed border and heavy deployment of police and para military personnel in the wake of the farmers' march.

"The bus dropped us way behind Singhu border which has been closed by the police. They told us that we have to



walk towards the other side to get another mode of transport to Delhi," she said. The commuters moving between Delhi and Haryana were either stuck up for hours on the closed borders or walked on foot to reach vated by trenches dug up on the bylanes and streets at the border to prevent movement of vehicles and people impossible.

fortified with metal barricades

and concrete blocks to stop

farmers from entering the city,

came into effect on Tuesday, the day the march began. Children

are not being able to reach

coaching classes, how will they

reach examination centres, a

local of Tikri said and added

Police officials said some streets were still open for the people to cross the border but ultimately they will also be barricaded if the farmers reach the Singhu border. Sonipat Commissioner of Police B Satheesh Balan said multiple barricades were laid at several checkpoints between Ambala

and Singhu border. "I do not think they will be able to cross this area but we are constantly monitoring the situation. Alternate route has their respective destinations. been provided for movement of Delhi Police officers and their Haryana counterparts were in touch to discuss the emerging situation, he said.

A big territorial signage installed at the Delhi-Haryana Singhu border was taken down JCB machines on Wednesday. According to the police, this is to ensure that they do not obstruct the way when tear gas shells are fired by

protesting farmers. The traffic from Delhi towards Singhu border was minimal

due to the restrictions. Movement of vehicles was shut completely on the Singhu border flyover on Wednesday. Seven layers of barbed wires, spikes, concrete blocks, containers and four-five layers of concrete barricades on both sides of the flyover have ben put up. Drones are being used

for monitoring the situation.
All the vehicles including buses from Sonipat were stopped near the sealed border and the people walked on foot to reach Delhi and use other modes of transport, mostly autos and e-rickshaws to reach accompanied by his wife pleaded with the police personnel to be allowed to get past the barricades, saying he had to go to Rajouri Garden where one of their relatives had passed away.

A courier service worker Buland Singh said he was stuck up at Singhu border since 2 am on Wednesday, while trying to reach IGI airport to collect parcels for delivery.

asked what to do since movement is not allowed. They asked me to find a way and move past the border. But I am completely frustrated as the movement is not allowed and I stand to lose my daily wage if I do not get the parcels," Singh

The daily wage earners and factory workers across the Singhu border faced hard times reaching their work places at factories, warehouses and banquet halls and other such establishments due to the sealed borders and restricted movement.

"I have to reach my factory in Delhi but there is so much problem here at the border. Similar was the situation in the 2021. I do not know how will I reach my factory if this situation continues," rued a factory worker Rahul from Sonipat. The Singhu border was closed from November 2020 to December 2021, with farmers from Punjab, Haryana and other states staging a sit-in there in protest against three farm laws brought by the

Seamless flow of traffic on Ghazipur border on second day of protest

On the second day of the farmers' Delhi Chalo march, traffic movement remained unrestricted at the city's Ghazipur border with Uttar Pradesh on Wednesday while it was completely closed at the Singhu and Tikri borders with Haryana.

There is tight security in the national capital because of the farmers' march, with personnel being deployed in large numbers and barricades put up to regulate movement in central Delhi and at the border points with Haryana. The NH-9 and NH-24, which connect Delhi with Ghaziabad and Noida and further with Meerut, witnessed uninterrupted movement of vehicles during the day.

According to police, traffic was heavy on both carriageways of the DND Flyway. In a post on 'X', the Delhi Police said, "Due to the deployment of picket/checking on DND Flyway, traffic is heavy on both the carriageways of the DND Flyway. Commuters from Noida to Delhi and vice-versa are advised to take alternative routes like Chilla Border route. Multiple layers of barricades, concrete blocks, iron nails and container walls have been placed at the city's border points - Ghazipur, Singhu and Tikri – to thwart the farmers march. A section of a road in a village near the Singhu border was dug up as well to prevent the march.

Saksham Mishra, a resident of east Delhi, said there was no restriction on traffic movement on the Delhi-Meerut expressway. "I went to a hospital in Indirapuram via the Delhi-Meerut expressway and there were no restrictions. Security is, however, high at the border," he added.

Farmers demanding a law on minimum support price are marching towards Delhi after a meeting with a team of Union ministers over their demands remained inconclusive.

The Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) and the Kisan Mazdoor Morcha said the farmers will head to Delhi to press the Centre to accept their demands. The farmers are also calling for the implementation of the Swaminathan Commission's recommendations, pensions for farmers and farm labourers, farm debt waiver, withdrawal of police cases and "justice" for victims of the Lakhimpur Kheri violence among others.

At 71.09 lakh, Delhi Metro hits record daily ridership

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Metro on February 13 registered the highest-ever count of daily passenger journeys at 71.09 lakh, a record achieved on a day when huge traffic jams were reported in the NCR amid heavy security arrangements in view of a farmers march to the national capital. The urban transporter shared the data in a post on X on Wednesday, saying it has surpassed its previous milestone accomplished last September. The count of daily passenger journeys in Delhi Metro had stood at 71.03 lakh on September 4 and 69.94 lakh on August 29 in 2023 around Raksha Bandhan festival.

On Tuesday, the Delhi Metro had regulated passengers' entry and exit at nine stations by shutting some gates for several hours in view of the farmers' march towards Delhi. The commuters were allowed to enter or exit these stations through other gates.

The figures on February 12 stood at 70.87 lakh which rose to 71.09 lakh on February 13, officials said.

their destinations. On weekdays, the average

Journey or line utilisation is calculated by the number of corridors passengers use to reach

count of daily passenger journeys in Delhi Metro stands at around 65 lakh, a senior offi-

cial said. The Delhi Metro Rail

Corporation's current network span is nearly 392 km with 286 stations (including the Noida-Greater Noida Metro Corridor and Rapid Metro, Gurugram). "Delhi Metro broke its highest passenger journeys record set in September 2023 by registering an unmatched 71.09 lakh passenger ridership on Tuesday (February 13, 2024), the highest ever daily passenger rider-ship," the DMRC said in its

It also shared a poster, saying "Delhi Metro has crossed another milestone of success". Later, the DMRC said in a statement, "This faith shown by passengers makes the DMRC a major mass transit backbone of the National Capital Region.

The Delhi Metro is continuously working towards further improving the overall commuting experience of the passengers and would like to thank the passengers for their patronage and support.

'Šince the Delhi Metro is an environment-friendly system, when more passengers prefer the Metro over their private vehicles, there is a reduction in vehicular emissions, which helps in improving the air quality of the city and its peripheries," it said. The DMRC also shared data

with a break-up of line journeys on its various corridors. Of the 71,09,171 passenger

journeys recorded on February 13, the share of various corridors were -- 7,57,629 (Red Line); 19,34,568 (Yellow Line); 3,35,350 (Green Line) and 51,910 (Rapid Metro), among other lines, as per the data.

Mahapanchayat will be organised to discuss atrocities on protesting farmers: Rakesh Tikait

STAFF REPORTER NEW

 $B_{\hbox{\scriptsize Rakesh}}^{\hbox{\scriptsize haratiya Kisan Union leader}}$ Tikait on Wednesday said a 'mahapanchayat' will be organised on Saturday at Muzaffarnagar in Uttar Pradesh to discuss the 'atrocities" being committed on the protesting farmers in the

Farmers and activists of BKU from UP, Uttarakhand, Delhi and Haryana have been exhorted to attend the congregation to be held at the 'Kisan Bhawan' in Sisauli.

"All farmers, office bearers and workers of Bharatiya Kisan Union are being informed that as per the decision of the national working committee, a monthly panchayat will be organised on February 17, 2024 at Kisan Bhawan, Sisauli in Muzaffarnagar district of Uttar Pradesh, in which the current situation of the country will be discussed. There will be a discussion regarding the atrocities being committed on farmers," Tikait posted on Facebook in Hindi.

Senior officials of Bharatiya Kisan Union of Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Delhi, and Haryana will be present in this monthly panchayat," the BKU spokesperson added

Minister highlights gravity of global water pollution challenge

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat has underscored the gravity of the global water pollution challenge and emphasized the critical role of such events where knowledge exchange support sustainable management of water resources.

Addressing a conclave on Water and Management, the Jal Shakti Minister commended the organizers for initiating deliberations on this crucial issue and highlighted the transformative initiatives undertaken by the Government of India to address water pollution and ensure water security.

The Water and Waste Management Conclave, hosted bv Mu Gamma Consultants and the Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR), and sponsored by RailTel, was held in the national Capital last week. The conclave was organized for knowledge sharing and dissemination of the harmful health impacts caused by contaminants of emerging concerns (CECs).

Debashree Mukherjee, Secretary, Department of Water Resources, River



Rejuvenation, Ministry of Jal Shakti emphasized how data and research aid in ensuring clean water access. Dr S K Sarkar, IAS (Retd.), Former Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources and Distinguished Fellow, TERI, addressed the distinguished delegates about the health concerns of polluted water. Dr. Girija Bharat, Managing

Director of Mu Gamma Consultants, delivered the welcome address, setting the stage for the enlightening discussions to follow. Martine Aamdal Bottheim, Deputy Ambassador of Norway to India, delivered a thoughtprovoking keynote address, emphasizing the importance of international collaborations in addressing water and waste management chal-

Modi, Shah pay tributes to martyrs of Pulwama attack

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday paid tributes to the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel killed in a terror attack in Pulwama on this day in 2019. In his tributes, Modi said on X, "I pay homage to the brave heroes who were martyred in Pulwama. Their service and sacrifice for our nation will

always be remembered." Pakistan-linked terrorists had rammed an explosive-laden vehicle into a CRPF convoy on February 14, 2019, killing 40 personnel. In a retaliatory



strike, the Indian Air Force had bombed terrorist camps in Pakistan's Balakot.

Paying tributes, Shah posted on X"I bow to the valorous martyrs of Pulwama, who laid down their lives for our motherland. Their supreme sacrifice will always be remembered. Nation will forever remain indebted to our bravehearts," Shah posted on X.

Names of several top BJP leaders missing from RS renomination PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■

The names of several top BJP leaders, including Union Ministers, have been missing in the party's list for the biennial Raiya Sabha polls amid strong indications that several of them may contest the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. No outgoing Rajya Sabha member of the BJP who has served two or more terms has been repeated except Nadda, who is set for a third term.

Seven Union Ministers -Dharmendra Pradhan and Bhupender Yadav, Rajeev Chandrasekhar, Mansukh Mandaviya, Parshottam Rupala, Narayan Rane and V Muraleedharan whose term is ending in the Upper House and who have not been renominated by the party. This means they will have to contest the

apcoming Lok Sabha elections. With the ruling party naming 28 candidates for the elections to 56 seats, their profiles underscore the BJP's determination to recognise its grassroots organisation workers, who might not be much known in outside political circles, while factoring in social equations as

Three of the new names -

Dharmshila Gupta of Bihar, Kulkarni Maharashtra and Maya Naroliya of Madhya Pradesh are associated with the party's 'Mahila Morcha' (women's wing), an ode to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's repeated emphasis about the higher approval the BJP enjoys among women voters. Among the 28 outgoing MPs,

four - its president J P Nadda, two Union ministers and an articulate national spokesperson in Sudhanshu Trivedi sending a strong signal that its Rajya Sabha members cannot take their high-profile perch for granted and are expected to use the platform to connect with the masses and cultivate constituencies of their own.

who have been renominated. Notably, none of the party's national office-bearers figure among the 28 soon-to-be Rajya Sabha MPs, even though many of their lower-profile state organisation leaders have made "I will call it decentralisation

and democratisation of the selection process. The visibility that comes with moving around in political circles in Delhi or comments to the media makes no difference to the current national leadership," a senior party leader

Other senior leaders who have not been repeated are the party's chief spokesperson and its media head Anil Baluni, former Union minister Prakash Javadekar and former Bihar deputy chief minister Sushil

seats of Rajya Sabha will be held on February 27. The last date for filing of nominations is February 15.

If the number of candidates is equal to the number of vacancies, then no polling is required, and all the candidates are declared elected unopposed. However, if there are more candidates than vacancies, a poll is conducted by the system of proportional representation by means of a single transferable vote. In the case of a poll, the votes are counted as per the single transferable vote system, and the candidates securing the required quota of votes are declared elected.

The seats are allocated to candidates based on the number of votes they receive. The number of seats allocated to each party is determined by their strength in the respective Legislative

51 countries to participate in 9 days naval exercise Milan

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

 $F_{\text{ticipate in the nine-day}}^{\text{ifty one countries will participate}}$ mega naval exercise 'Milan ' in Visakhapatnam starting February 19, Deputy Chief of Naval staff Vice Admiral Tarun Sobti said here on Wednesday. He also said the event seeks to provide a platform to India and other countries to work together on common maritime challenges even as he underlined "there is no message" against China in this exercise.

Highlighting the main features of the upcoming exercise, he said the current geopolitical situation and the maritime challenges arising out of these will also be discussed during the

"Milan 2024 is a major endeavour by the Indian Navy to get together friendly foreign countries from across the globe to partner with us for a maritime activity. This year in 2024, we are having Milan in Visakhapatnam, and 51 countries are participating in the event. And of these 51 countries, 15 countries are sending ships and one aircraft is also joining for the exercise," Vice Admiral Sobti told reporters. It has a series of events, including an international maritime exposition, a maritime techniexhibition, a city parade is planned, and also junior officers' interaction, he added. Vice Admiral Sobti said all this is part of its harbour phase,

which will be from February 19

to 23. "After that we will be doing the exercises at sea, which will be from February 24-27, in which we will have Indian naval ships and aircraft as well as ships from friendly foreign countries participating in 'Milan," he

Navies from the US, Japan, Australia, France, Bangladesh, Brazil, South Korea, Vietnam, Indonesia and Malaysia are set to be among the participating nations.

Canada, Germany, Iraq, Italy, Spain and Yemen, besides others, are among the countries which will be part of the exercise for the first time, according to a curtain-raiser presen-



interaction on Wednesday. Asked if there is any message to China in this mega exercise, Vice Admiral Sobti said, "There are 51 countries participating (in it) and among these 51 countries, each country has its own relationship with China. I

want to make it clear that there is no message here against

"Our message is that our challenges at sea, these we can face, if we work together. And, so we want to give this platform to the countries so that they come,

discuss how to participate and the challenges, and do sea exercise," he added. Vice Admiral Sobti said what

relation any of these 51 countries have with a second or third country is not intended to be brought up at this event. The tagline of the exercise is 'Camaraderie Cohesion Collaboration'.

Asked what will be the focus areas at this event, Vice Admiral Sobti said the particular focus area will remain the international maritime seminar in which various invited people will contribute their thoughts on various subjects. So that is one big event where the vice president will be presiding over, he added.

itime seminar during which maritime threats and maritime challenges will be discussed, a lot of interactions will be there for the junior officers.

"And, we have sea-going exercises, it is important that we exercise and that we exercise together at sea, learn how to operate with each other in large numbers and large groups, and learn how to communicate with each other at sea. So, these are the basic focus points," Vice Admiral Sobti

'Milan' exercise stared in 1995 for which the Indian Navy had invited a few countries because it was felt "there has to be a collaboration". It started then in

As our 'Look East' and 'Act

East' policies grew, and then the SAGAR initiative came, then this exercise has gradually grown and so it was realised that Port Blair was turning out be a bit inadequate and it was shifted to the mainland and from 2022, it is happening at Visakhapatnam," he said. This year's exercise will be the sec-ond such exercise at Visakhapatnam.

Vice Admiral Sobti said "11 heads of maritime agencies" are participating in 'Milan' this year. The Indian Navy will engage with them through international maritime expositions. Besides there will be bilateral dialogues between the Indian naval chief and the heads of these maritime agen-

Lal Bahadur Shastri grandson | Anthology of Government policies quits Congress, joins BJP

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Former Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri's grandson Vibhakar Shastri on Wednesday joined the BJP and announced leaving the Congress. Vibhakar Shastri joined the BJP in Lucknow in the presence of party state president Bhupinder Singh and Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh

In a post on X, Shastri said, Shri Kharge ji! Respected Sir, I hereby tender my resignation from the primary membership of Indian National Congress, Regards, Vibhakar

Vibhakar Shastri, who is the grandson of former prime minister Lal Bahadur Shastri and son of Hari Krishna Shastri, has unsuccessfully contested Lok Sabha polls in the past from Fatehpur Lok Sabha seat in Uttar Pradesh.



series of exits in the last few years with the likes of Ashok Chavan, Milind Deora, Baba Siddiqui, Jyotiraditya Scindia, Jitin Prasad, Priyanka Chaturvedi, Sushmita Dev, RP N Singh and Jaiveer Shergill among others joining other parties. Pathak said that Vibhakar Shastri joining the BJP is a welcome message for the social workers. He said as Vibhakar Shastri

hails from the former prime

that the party would benefit from the development. Siddharth Nath Singh, another brother of Shastri, welcomed the decision. Singh is presently a BJP MLA from Allahabad West seat.

Vibhakar Shastri said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Sabka saath sabka vikas' slogan, the guiding spirit of the BJP governments at the Centre and in the states, is attracting everybody.

unveiled at Anant National University

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Ahmedabad Policy compendium, an anthology of Government policies, was unveiled at the Anant National University last month end. The compendium consists of 16 policies of the Government

of India ranging from transportation, urban development, skill development, design and culture. This document is intended to be a ready reckontowards enhancing awareness of policy issues and nudging the students and faculty members to come up with their policy proposals and solutions. The compendium was unveiled by the Chief Guest Dr Sachin Parikh, Joint Director, Directorate of Technical Education, Government of Gujarat and Dr Anunaya

Chaubey, Provost of Anant National University. "I am glad that the Centre has



come up with a compendium occasion. of public policies. This com- Addressing the audience Parikh reckoner of public policies for Anant students and faculty and enlighten them on the role of these policies in shaping the future of their profes-

The chapters within this compendium serve as an invaluable resource for policymakers, urban planners, architects, designers and all those passionate about shaping the future of our built environment," Dr Chaubey said on the

Policy at Anant National University holds a unique and innovative position in the landscape of higher education in India while Head of the centre and founder of Communeeti, Pratyush Prabhakar said that the centre is an exercise in bringing in interdisciplinarity in education and strives to nurture future policy professionals coming from diverse fields such as design, architecture and sustainability.

Ministry of Defence inks contract for 463 remote control guns

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

The Ministry of Defence on Wednesday here signed a contract on with Advanced Weapon Equipment India Ltd. (AWEIL), Kanpur for manu-facturing and supply of a facturing and supply of a total of 463 indigenously manufactured 12.7 mm Stabilised Remote Control Navy and Indian Coast Guard at a total cost of Rs 1752.13 crore, with Indigenous Content (IC) of more than 85

Giving details, officials said the SRCG will enhance the capability of Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard to accurately engage small targets that post a threat to ships in an asymmetric environment, both by day and night. This acquisition will provide

further boost to the vision of "Aatmanirbharta in Defence". This contract will also open up a large avenue in defence manufacturing for over 125 Indian Vendors and DPSUs for over a period of 5 years. Incidentally, defence ministry on Tuesday had signed a contract here with Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), Hyderabad for procurement Warfare(EW)systems along with associated equipment and accessories for Indian Navy under Buy (Indian-IDDM) category at a total cost

of Rs 2,269.54 crore. The Shakti system is indigenously designed, developed and manufactured. It is capable of accurately intercepting electronic emissions and implement counter measures in dense electromagnetic environment, officials said.

KVS integrates BBPS for payment of school fees

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI**

Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) has suc-Vidyalaya cessfully integrated with Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS) for payment of school fees from January 2024. By doing so, it has expanded the fee payment options for entire KVS community with 400 additional platforms, including Google Pay, PhonePe and Amazon Pay etc, along with various banks and NBFCs.

With this development, parents of over 1.4 million students enrolled in Kendriya Vidyalayas nationwide will have the convenience of paying the school fees seamlessly through BHIM UPI and other Bharat BillPay-enabled apps, like PhonePe, Google Pay etc.

Adding KVS as an education fees biller aligns with the Reserve Bank of India's vision of expanding the scope of BBPS (Bharat Bill Payment System) to enhance digital empowerment across India's

educational landscape.

This step being a part of 'Ease of Doing Business' and 'Digital India' initiatives of Government of India, showcases the commitment to modern financial solutions, making the fee payment process more accessible and user friendly for the parents/guardians. The motive behind this is to

help parents/guardians of KV's ward to access online payment facilities for remittance of fees.

Up till 2013-14, fees were being collected by the class teachers in all Kendriya Vidyalayas. From the academic year 2014-15, KVS had initiated an online solution for deposit of fees across all KVs pan India.

After integration with Bharat Bill Payment System, now the process of depositing fees has become even more easier and user friendly. This step marks a milestone in the digital transformation of fee payments for one of India's

Bharatiya Kisan Sangh refuses to support farmers Delhi march

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

The RSS-affiliated Bharatiya Kisan Sangh (BKS) on Wednesday said it does not support the farmers' 'Delhi Chalo' march as it was "political" and does not seem to be serving the farmers' interest. In a statement, BKS general secretary Mohini Mohan Mishra said farmers should get the remunerative price for their produce based on the cost but "political manoeuvres" in the name of farmers with an eye on the elections should be stopped

He said that when movements are organised in the name of farmers with "political intentions" during elections, violence, chaotic environment and loss of national property follow. Such movements give rise to "negative feelings" towards farmers and the peasants struggling for their betterment have to face the "consequences", Mishra added.

'That is why the Bharatiya Kisan Sangh does not support the violent agitation. We urge that those who want to fulfil their political ambitions should continue to do so but they should not create negative feellargest school chain i.e. KVS. I ings towards farmers in the



"continuously" fighting for the demand of giving remunerative prices of farmers' produce based on cost, and organises Delhi in 2020-21. agitations when dialogues with the governments do not arrive at any solution, Mishra said.

"We demand remunerative prices to farmers based on cost, which is the right of the farmer, abolition of GST on agricultural inputs. Kisan Samman Nidhi should be increased, GM-seed should not be allowed," he added.

Mishra said that it hurts when "some people with political intentions" use farmers to further their "political interests". "Bharatiya Kisan Sangh believes that when a political movement is carried out in the name of farmers, it is only the farmers who suffer the loss," he

in Madhya Pradesh's Mandsaur in 2017 and the agitation against the three farm laws in "Therefore, the Bharatiya Kisan

Sangh urges that political and election manoeuvres in the name of farmers should be stopped," Mishra added. The BKS general secretary said

various organisations are continuously fighting in the interest of farmers to solve their problems. "Irrespective of whose government it is, they are finding solutions to the problems of the farmers," he

'Today, seed and market are the main problems of farmers. Be it inside or outside the market, exploitation of farmers in seed and market should be stopped," Mishra added.

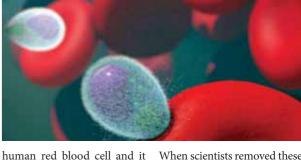
Significant breakthrough in fight against malaria

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NFW DFI HI

 $I^{
m n}$ a major breakthrough that could open the door to a new way to fight malaria, a study spanning four years has found that by preventing the malaria parasite from scavenging fatty acids, a type of required nutrient, it could no longer grow. For humans, this process means the creation of the most essential compounds needed to survive. But not every living thing has this capability, such as the parasite that causes malaria, which is one of the most devastating infectious diseases impacting around 249 million people in 2022.

The key to this breakthrough is that we were able to develop a screening method for the malaria parasite and block this process," said Michael Klemba, associate professor of biochemistry and principal investigator on the project from Virginia Tech researchers in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. "While very much in its infancy, the results could open the door to a new way to

fight malaria." Malaria is caused while the parasite is replicating in a



human red blood cell and it relies on scavenging, rather than creating, to satisfy its need for fatty acids. Many fatty acids are obtained by metabolising a class of host lipids, called lysophospholipids. However, scientists didn't know how the parasite releases fatty acids from the host lipids.

The Virginia Tech research team did experiments with infected red blood cells and found chemicals that can stop the parasite from getting the

needed fatty acids. Researchers discovered that two enzymes were instrumental in breaking down host lipids to release the fatty acids the parasite needs. These enzymes work in different places: One works outside in the red blood

cell, and the other works inside

This was especially true when that host lipid was the only fatty acid source available. When both enzymes were stopped from working, either by changing the parasite's genes

two enzymes, they found that

the parasite struggled to get the

needed fatty acids and could-

n't grow well.

or by using drugs, the parasites couldn't grow in human blood. This shows that breaking down the host lipid, called lysophosphatidylcholine, to get fatty acids is critical for the malaria parasite's survival in our bodies and that targeting these two enzymes could be a new way to fight malaria. The research is published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of

nation 05

E-AUCTION NOTICE No.23AC/393/E-Auction/2022 Dated: 14.02.2024 Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager/PS, Northern Railway Delhi Division invi through e-Auction through IREPS (http://ireps.gov.in/) for the allotment of under mention contracts at following Railway stations/locations:

No.	of bidding	Railway Stations/Locations/Lots
arking- 1-2024	at 12.00	Delhi 1st Entry (DLI) (10533 Sq. Mtrs.), Meerut Cantt (Kankankhera), Naya Ghaziabad (GZN), Ghaziabad Ilst Entry Bhoor Side (GZB) (2430.46 Sq.Mtrs.) for one year, Panipat 1st Entry (477 Sq.Mtrs.), Tuglakabad (Car)(607.05 Sq.Mtrs.) = Total 6 Sites
arking- 2-2024		Ghaziabad (City Side) (2534.90 Sq.Mtrs.), Sahibabad (SBB), Khatauli (KAT), Muradnagar (MUD), Panipat 2nd Entry (390 Sq.Mtrs.) = Total 5 Sites
ebsite pa	rticulars. whe	ere complete details of https://ireps.gov.in/

All contractors who intend to participate in the e-auctions conducted through E-Auction Leasing module of IREPS should fulfil following mandator requirements before they can submit their bids:

Registration on IREPS for E-Auction Leasing module -Active IREPS User Account for E- Auction Leasing Module • Payment of One Time Registration Fee • Current Account in State Bank of India • Integration of SBI Bank Account with IREPS Account • Lien Marking of Funds • Updation of Turnover Details • Contractors who do not have IREPS account for any module of IREPS can submit their online request for registration by clicking on New Vendors / Contractors (E-Tender /E-Auction Leasing) link on IREPS Home page. Railway Authority to Divisional Railway Manager's Office, Commercial Branch contact, in case of any State Entry Road, New Delhi 110055, Email sion@gmail.com Tel: 011-23743084

Sr.Divisional Commercial Manager/P Northern Railway, Delhi Divisio 505/24 **SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE**

BSES

CMC/BR/23-24/

RB/CR/AL/1178

Cost of each Tender Document: ₹ 1180/

NORTHERN RAILWAY (Through e-tendering) Name of Work Shifting of cross over point 108 at JNC Sation of Delhi with its location Division. Approx. Cost of the work (Rs.) Rs. 18,36,383.02 /-only Bid Security (Rs.) Rs. 36,700.00 /-only Senior Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer-C, Northern Railwa of the office 3rd Floor, Annexe-1, DRM Office, New Delhi-110055 Date & Time for upload the tender / Tender uploading 14.02.2024 / closing closing of tender date & time-08.03.2024 up to 15.00 hrs Website particular & notice See the Northern Railway website www.ireps.gov.in & Notice board at S&T branch, 3rd Floor, DRM office, State Entry Road, New Delhi-110055. SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 498/24

NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE

Above tender available on

Invitation of Tender through E-Tendering (E-Procurement Systems) N.I.T. No. 48-23-24/WE Name of work with AMC of 3 No. RO system of 1000 ltrs/hr capacity for 3 its location (A) years in the S/o SSE/W/RB under ADEN/E-II Approx. Cost of work Rs. 4028678.72

EMD amount Rs. 80600.00 Completion period of work 03 Years Date and time for submission Closing date of tender on 08.03.2024 at of tender and opening of tende 15.00 hrs.

and address of the office fron where the tender form can be

Website particulars notice

TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tenders under two Bid System (Unpriced & Priced) is invited for following job from all bidders

Brief Tender Description

CIVIL WORK FOR FACE-LIFTING / STRENGTHENING

WEST-2 (5 NOS. DIVISIONS)

128-W/269/OET/23-24/WE/NIT/48 Dated: 13.02.2024

06.03.2024

1.50.00.000/- 75.000/-

11.03.2024

BSES Rajdhani Power Limited, New Delhi

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

2.68 Cr

Estimated Cost Cost of EMD

(₹)

1.35

Date: 15.02.2024

06.03.2024

also passed a resolution on the delimitation exercise, stating that the population of 1971 (census) should be the criteria for carrying out the process, if it was to be held for 'unavoidable reasons.' Moving the two resolutions, Chief Minister M K Stalin described as 'autocratic', the one nation one election proposal. He dubbed as a conspiracy the proposed move to carry on with the

¬he Tamil Nadu Assembly

on Wednesday adopted a

'One

resolution against the

proposed

Nation, One Election' policy,

terming it impractical and

undemocratic. The Assembly

Centre's

delimitation exercise after the year 2026, based on the census (which may be conducted following the Lok Sabha polls). Further, he said it would lead to a drop in the number of elected representatives for Tamil Nadu and the southern States. In March 2023, then Union Minister of Law and Justice, Kiren Rijiju had said in Rajva Sabha that the next delimitation exercise may be conducted after the first census to be taken after the year 2026. Stalin said, both the proposals impinged on democracy and

must be opposed in unison. "The one nation one election is out-and-out impractical and it is against the basic feature of the Constitution. It is fully opposed to the Constitutional guarantee of independent, free and fair polls," the chief minister said

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that Anjana Chopra claims to be owner and in possession of First Floor of Prop. No. 254 Block-E, Greater Kailash-I, New Delhi 48 ereinafter called the said property) by tue of Will Dated 28.03.2003, Doc No. 3370 Executed by Mangal Das Bajaj r/w Family Settlements dated 10.07.2012 and 19.08.2012, said late Mangal Das Bajaj was the owner of said property by virtue of sale Deed Dated 20.08.1962 Doc No. 6304 and Said Anjana Chopra along with other legal heirs as confirming party has agreed to sell the said Property to Vandana Seth And Said **Vandana Seth** has agreed to create a mortgage in favour of our clients Axis Bank Ltd., East of Kailash Branch, New Delhi, any person/shaving claim against the said Property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage (equitable/registered or otherwise), gift, trust, inheritance, lien or otherwise howsoever, are hereby intimated to notify the same in writing to us with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned below within 10 days from the date hereof, failing which the claim or claims, if any, of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived

Vishal Diwan (Advocate) For Diwan and Company LLP H. No.2 (LGF), NRI Complex New Delhi-19 Mobile No. 9818399999

Particulars

Total Income from Operations

Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period

(before Tax, Exceptional and/ o

Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period

Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period

after tax (after Exceptional and

Total Comprehensive Income for

the period [Comprising Profit/

(Loss) for the period (after tax)

and Other Comprehensive

Paid up Equity Share Capital

Income (after tax)

Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve

8. Securities Premium Accoun-

Outstanding Redeemable Preference Shares

13. Earnings Per Share (of Rs.10/ each) (for continuing and

discontinued operations)

. Basic: (in Rupees

2. Diluted: (in Rupees) 14. Capital Redemption Reserve

15. Debenture Redemption Reserve

17. Interest Service Coverage Ratio

meeting held on 13th February 2024.

16. Debt Service Coverage Ratio

10. Paid up Debt Capital

12. Debt Equity Ratio

Outstanding Debt

9. Net worth

Notes

or Extraordinary items#)

before tax (after Exceptional and/ or Extraordinary items#)

including other income

Extraordinary items#)

SOJO INFOTEL PRIVATE LIMITED gd. Office Address: M-11, Mezanine Floor, Balrama House Commercial Complex Karampura, New Delhi 110015 CIN: U74999DL2016PTC302026; E-mail: info.sojoinfotel@gmail.com

Website: sojoinfotel.sojo.co.in; Contact No. 7428193046

Quarter

31.12.2023

12.5

(643.02

(410.63

(6.613.53

(6.612.53

17,40

(4,106.27)

NΑ

0.00

0.00

. The above results have been reviewed and approved by Board of Directors in their

The above is an extract of detailed format of unaudited standalone financial results for the quarter and nine months ended Dec 31, 2023 filed with Bombay Stock Exchange under

Regulation 52 of SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) 2015. The full format of the financial result can be accessed at URL (1) and http://sojoinfotel.sojo.co.in/

For the other line items referred in regulation 52 (4) of the LODR Regulations, pertiner disclosures have been made to the Bombay Stock Exchange and can be accessed on

the URL (http://www.bseindia.com/) and can be accessed at URL

Previous period figure have been regrouped and reclassified to confirm with currer

and/or abandoned and our client shall proceed with the disbursement of loan and subsequent creation of mortgage in respect

dissolution of State Assemblies in advance which is against the Constitution. the government at the Centre is to fall, will all state assemblies be dissolved ? Similarly, if governments in a few states were to be short-lived, will those in power at the Centre demit office? Could there be a

TN Assembly adopts resolution

against One Nation, One Election policy

parties

AIADMK's

he asked. Holding elections to local bodies is in the state government's domain and to make a claim to conduct local polls as well meant usurpation of state's rights.

policy more comical than this,"

As regards the delimitation exercise, it hangs over Tamil Nadu and south India like the Sword of Damocles.

The delimitation exercise is a 'punishment' for states that reduce their population. The number of constituencies in both the houses of Parliament and in the Assemblies are cut down for such states that reduce population.

States that did not show interest in reducing population will get additional prize as their representation will increase in Parliament. This cannot be accepted and 'we must oppose this. MLAs belonging to

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client Sh. Sandeep Kumar S/o Sh. Kedar Prasad is the owner of House no. D-306, area measuring 27.5 sq. mtrs. Khasra no. 193, situated in unauthorized Colony, Tripathi Encalve Prem Nagar Nangloi II, Revenue Estate of Village Mundka, Delhi vide registered authorization Slip executed by DAP-M-UDAY Cell Regd, no. 1076, dated 24.02.2021 SR-VI D New Delhi. The abovedated 24.02.2021 SR-VI D New Delhi. The above-mentioned property is going to be mortgage with Fed Bank Financial Services Limited. If any person/bank/financial institution having any claim/right, lien, any objection whatsoever in regard to the above property, should notified to the undersigned/Adv. Vishal Mehan, E-713 Karkardooma Court, Delhi-110092 along with documentary evidence under address through ocumentary evidence under address through egistered advt. within 15 days from the date o ublication of this notice failing which any claim ien or objection shall be deemed to have beer waived. Adv. Vishal Mehan, E-713, Karkardooms Court, Delhi-110092; Mobile no. 9811215181

PUBLIC NOTICE

General public is hereby informed that We, Hirdesh Suri S/o Bhisham Suri, Shaunaq Suri S/o Hirdesh Suri and Upasana Suri D/o K L Anand R/o H No. 97. Navjivan Vihar, Near Arbindo Collage, Malviya Nagar, New Delhi, have lost original Property documents Plot Buyer's Agreement dt. 29.05.86 xecuted between DLF Universal Ltd. & MS Chawla & Karuna Chawla, Sale deed Vasika No. 328, dt. 30.03.88 favoring MS Chawla & Karuna Chawla, GPA vasika 523 dt. 28.08.98 favoring MS hawla, GPA Vasika No. 699 dt. 25.02.10 favoring Trilok Sharma, and in this regard lost information report has been odged vide LR Nos. 1306137/2024 1309017/2024 & 1309058/2024 dt. 03.01.24 & 04.01.2024 in P.S. Crime Branch Delhi. Finder may please contact at above address or call on nobile no. 9810016707.

Devendra Kumar (Advocate) Off. 38, Todarmal Road, Begali Market, New Delhi. (M) 9911999481.

(Rs. In Lacs unless otherwise stated

31.12.2023

60.30

(2287.21)

(2287.21)

(1641.01)

(6.613.53)

(6,612.53)

17,400

NA

(5,471.43) (5,471.43)

NA

0.00

0.02

Quarter

31.12.2022

19.9

(731.16

(731.16

(547.14

(4,440.01

(4,439.01

20,000

NA

(16,410.09) (16,410.09) (24,101.46) (24,101.46)

NA

NA

0.00

0.02

For and on behalf of Board of Directors of

(4,106.27)

Year

31.03.2023

(Audited)

(3,220.74)

(3,220.74

(2,410.15)

(4,972.52

(4,971.52)

20,000

NA

NA

NA

NA

0.00

0.02

177.99

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

party has told the panel

studying the matter that the his

party may back the proposal

only if its related ten proposals

were positively considered

Vanathi Srinivasan said the

resolution on the one nation

one election proposal was not

needed. Apprehensions in this

The proposal does not include

local bodies and opinions may

be conveyed to the relevant

panel and hence the resolution

regard were 'imaginary.'

was unwarranted.

parties including the Congress,

VCK, MDMK and the Left

government's two resolutions.

On delimitation exercise,

Thevan said if it was to be held

on the basis of the 1971 census.

his party would support it.

BJP's Vanathi Srinivasan said

'we share your concern,' and

assured the House that

necessary steps will be taken by

On the 'One nation, one

election' proposal, Thalavai

her party in this regard.

backed

the

Arunmozhi

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

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

Sr. No.	l	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Usha/ Deepak Singh Bhati/ LBNOD00004699590/ LBNOD00004749132	Unit No 937/ Gaur Atulyam, Floor 9, Tower E, Gaur Atulyam Situated at Plot No. GH 01A, Sector Omicron 1 Gautam Buddha Nagar Greater Noida/ Feb 09, 2024	September 18, 2023 Rs.28,00,515/-	Delhi/ NCR
2.	Harsh Wardhan/ Sachin Kumar/ LBNOD00006523888/ TBNOD00006520258	Unit No:1902, 19th Floor, Tower M, The Express Park View-2, Plot No. GH03, Sector- CHI-V, Greater Noida/ Feb 09, 2024	September 26, 2023 Rs.31,10,322/-	Delhi/ NCR
3.	Naveen Kumar Tyagi/ Anupama/ LBDEL00002361230	Flat No 1706, 17th Floor, Tower A, Gayatri Aura, Plot No. GH 11, Sector-1, Noida Extension, Greater Noida/ Feb 09, 2024	September 26,2023 Rs.32,92,412/-	Delhi/ Ncr & Muzaffar- nagar/ Jamnagar

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 15, 2024 Place: Delhi/ NCR Authorized Officer

HINDUSTAN AUTO FINANCE LIMITED

CIN:L65910DL1980PLC010617
E-mail: hindaf1980@gmail.com, Website: www.hindaf.in
Regd. Off: Cabin No. DA-8, 02nd Floor, Vikas Marg, Shakarpur, New Delhi-110092

EXTRACT OF STANDALONE UNAUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND NINE MONTHS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

SL. No.	Particulars	Quarter ended 31.12.2023	Nine months ended 31.12.2023	Quarter ended 31.12.2022
		Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited
1	Total Income from Operations	12.10	13.97	5.03
2	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period (before tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	8.19	-1.12	0.39
3	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	8.19	-1.12	0.39
4	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	8.19	-1.12	0.39
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit/(Loss) for the period (after tax) and other Comprehensive Income (after tax)	8.19	-1.12	0.39
6	Equity Share Capital	35.03	35.03	35.03
7	Reserves (excluding revaluation reserve) as shown in the Audited Balance Sheet as on 31.03.2023	-	-106.94	85
8	Earning per share			
	1. Basic	0.23	-0.03	0.01
	2. Diluted	0.23	-0.03	0.01

(1) The Above is an extract of detailed quarterly financial results for the Quarter and Nine months ended December 31, 2023 filed with the Stock Exchanges under Reg. 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full Quarterly Financial Results for the quarter ended December 31, 2023 are available on the Company' website www.hindaf.in and website of Metropolitan Stock Exchange of India Ltd (www.msei.in)

The above Unaudited Financial Results for the quarter and nine months ended December 31 2023 were reviewed by the Audit Committee and thereafter approved and taken on record by the Board of Directors at their meeting held on 14th February, 2024. The Statutory Auditors of the Company have carried out a limited review of the above financial results.

For M/s Hindustan Auto Finance Limited

Date: 14.02.2024 Place: New Delhi

Managing Director Subhash Sapra



PIRAMAL CAPITAL & HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED Registered Office Address: Unit No.601, 6th Floor Piramal Amiti Building, Piramal Agastya Corporate Park, Kamani Junction, Opp Fire Station, LBS Marg, Kurla (West), Mumbai-400 070 CIN: L65910MH1984PLC032639, Webside:www.piramalfinance.com

Branch Address: Dhiraj Baug, Building "A" Ground & 1st Floor, Beside Axis Bank, Opp.

Monalisa Building, Agra Road, Hari Niwas Circle, Naupada, Thane (West) – 400 602 <u>DEMAND NOTICE</u>

Under Section 13(2) of the Security Interest Act, 2002 read with Rule 3 (1) of the Security Interest Act, 2002 read with Rule 3 (1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. The undersigned is the Authorised Officer of Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited (PCHFL) under Security Interest Act, 2002 (the said Act). In exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) of the said Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, the Authorised Officer has issued Demand Notices under Section 13(2) of the said Act, calling upon the following Borrower(s) (the "said Borrower(s)"), to repay the amounts mentioned in the respective Demand Notice) issued to them that are also given below it connection with above, notice is hereby given, once again, to the said Borrower(s) to pay to PCHFL, within 60 days from the publication of the said Borrower(s) to pay to PCHFL, within 60 days from the publication of the said Borrower(s) to pay to PCHFL, within 60 days from the publication of the said Borrower(s) to pay to PCHFL, within 60 days from the publication of the said Borrower(s) to pay to PCHFL, within 60 days from the publication of the said Borrower(s) to pay to PCHFL, within 60 days from the publication of the said Borrower(s) to pay to PCHFL, within 60 days from the publication of the said Borrower(s) to pay to PCHFL, within 60 days from the publication of the said Borrower(s) to pay to PCHFL, within 60 days from the publication of the said Borrower(s) to pay to PCHFL, within 60 days from the publication of the said Borrower(s) to pay to PCHFL, within 60 days from the publication of the said Borrower(s) the said Borrowe

this Notice, the amounts indicated herein bel mentioned below till the date of payment and,	or realization, payable under the loan agreeme	n the said Demand Notice(s), from the date(s) ent read with other documents/writings, if any, sets have been mortgaged to PCHFL by the said
Name of the Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)	Demand Notice Date and Amount with NPA date	Property address
(LC No. M0035284 of Gurgaon Branch) Satish Kumar (Borrower) Babita (Co Borrower 1)	03-01-2024 /₹ 4164045 /-(₹ Forty One lakh Sixty Four Thousand Forty Five Only) NPA (04-10-2023)	Plot No. 49-B, Block B, Indrapuri Colony Abcd, Hadbast Gram Dharoti Khurd,Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, Pin Code-201001
(LC No. M0221580 of Lucknow - Gomti Nagar Branch) Kapil Gaur (Borrower) Neeru Gaur (Co Borrower 1)	03-01-2024 /₹ 4665775.34 /-(₹ Forty Six lakh Sixty Five Thousand Seven Hundred Seventy Five Only and Thirty Four Paise) NPA (04-10-2023)	lat no. 302A, 3rd Floor, Built on Plot no. 17 & 17A over khasra no. 1202, having area 1350 sq fts, Situated at Mohalla- Shiv Vihar Colony, (Gram- Gudiyan Ka Purwa), Ward- Jankipuram, Tehsil & Dist- Lucknow
(LC No. HLSA0000773B of Delhi - Dwarka Branch Sitina (Borrower) Rakesh (Co Borrower 1)	03-01-2024 /₹ 5374255.29 /-(₹Fifty Three lakh Seventy Four Thousand Two Hundred Fifty Five Only and Twenty Nine Paise) NPA (04-10-2023)	
(LC No. BLSA00008D20 of Delhi Branch) Surender Pal (Borrower) Dayawati devi (Co Borrower 1) Munesh (Co Borrower 2)	03-01-2024 /₹ 892573 /-(₹ Eight lakh Ninety Two Thousand Five Hundred Seventy Three Only) NPA (05-12-2023)	Khasra No 484 Tiranga Colony Near Nambardar Swimming Pool, Village Asalatpur Farakh Nagar, Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh 201003
(LC No. HLSA0000A60B of Delhi - Kalkaji Branch) Nadeem Miyan (Borrower) Farha (Co Borrower 1)	03-01-2024 /₹ 1074771.48 /-(₹ Ten lakh Seventy Four Thousand Seven Hundred Seventy One Only and Forty Eight Paise) NPA (04-10-2023)	Flat No. Gf-04, Ground Floor (back Right-Hand Side) Without Roofright, Lig, Plot No. A-52, Khasra No. 351, Rail Vihar Sehkari Awassamiti Ltd., Village Sadullabad, Pargana Loni, Tehsil & Distt.ghaziabad, Up 201102
(LC No. HLSA0002A40C of Agra Branch) Akhlesh Kumar (Borrower) Sashi Yadav (Co Borrower 1)	03-01-2024 /₹ 2775242.63 /-(₹ Twenty Seven lakh Seventy Five Thousand Two Hundred Forty Two Only and Sixty Three Paise) NPA (19-10-2023)	Part of Khasra No62 Situated at Saraswati Vihar, Saraye Moolakchand, Mauza- Chak Pancham, Tehsil & District Agra 282001
(LC No. HLSA0002CE72 of Delhi Branch) Vinod Kumar (Borrower) Deepa Saini (Co Borrower 1)	03-01-2024 /₹ 8120534.2 /-(₹ Eighty One lakh Twenty Thousand Five Hundred Thirty Four Only and Twenty Paise) NPA (19-10-2023)	Plot No. 47, Basement & Ground Floorwithout roof, Block - V, Eros Garden, Suraj Kund Road, sector 39, Faridabad, Haryana - 121009
(LC No. M0118495 of Delhi Branch) Vatan Kumar (Borrower) Dev Raji Devi (Co Borrower 1)	03-01-2024 /₹ 1589155 /-(₹ Fifteen lakh Eighty Nine Thousand One Hundred Fifty Five Only) NPA (03-09-2023)	Property No. 117 (New No. E-126), Ground & Second Floor (With RoofRights), Out Of Khasra No. 118/18, Block-E, Village Palam, Mahavir

our Only and Fifty Six Paise)NPA (04-01-2024) If the said Borrowers shall fail to make payment to PCHFL as aforesaid, PCHFL shall proceed against the above secured assets under Section 13(4) of the Act and the applicable Rules, entirely at the risks of the said Borrowers as to the costs and consequences. The said Borrowers are prohibited under the Act from transferring the aforesaid assets, whether by way of sale, lease or otherwise without the prior written consent of PCHFL. Any person who contravenes or abets contravention of the provisions of the said Act or Rules made there under, shall be liable for imprisonment and/or penalty as provided under the Act.

Sd/- (Authorised Officer)

Place: Delhi

15:00 HRS / RAISING OF 11KV INDOOR SUB-STATIONS IN 16:15 HRS For any query call on 011-49107235 or e-mail on Brpl.Eauction@relianceada.com For details in respect of Equipment/BOM/Services, Qualifying requirements, Terms & conditions, purchase/submission Head (Contracts & Materials tion No.: U40109DL2001PLC111527

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION, BHOPAL Water Work Department Municipal Corporation Rest House, Shyamla Hills, Bhopal

Ph. No. 0755-2701669

NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER

Online tenders are being invited for the following works. The bidder can obtained detailed information and

der documents on website https://mptenders.gov.in. Corrigendum for this NIT shall not be issued separately in newspapers. Corrigendum regarding correction can be seen on the website https://mptenders.gov.in

S. NIT No./ Call No. Tender ID. Estimated Earnest Bid Money Submissio (EMD) **End Date** 22/Store/W.W.D. 2023_UAD Supply of Ferric Alum Grade 4 ISI Mark in loose slab 2,01,12,400/-1,00,562/ 26.02.202 /BMC/2023-24 321530_2 as per IS 299/2012 with up to date amendment including, loading, unloading, stacking, transportation and all Duties and Taxes up to different filter plants

of Bhopal Water Works Dept., BMC

2. 23/Store/W.W.D. 2023_UAD Supply of C.I., M.S. material and other repairing

/BMC/2023-24 332434_1 fabrication works on Rate contract basis under WWD Executive Engieer (WWD) T.N.1584/023/024 Municipal Corporation, Bhopa

RAMPUR FERTILIZERS LIMITED

CIN: L15136UP1988PLC010084 Registered Office: Judges Bareilly Road, Rampur 244 901 (U.P.)

Email id- rkumar@rampurfert.com, Web.: www.rampurfert.com

EXTRACT OF UNAUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER ENDED ON 31ST DEC. 2023

			Standalor	Consolidated Results			
S. No.	Particulars Particulars	Qı	uarter Ende	d	Year Ended	Quarter ended	Year ended
No.		Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Audited	Unaudited	Audited
1 2		31.12.2023	30.09.2023	31.12.2022	31.03.2023	31.12.2023	31.03.2023
1	Total Income from Operations	566.41	547.85	544.81	3230.03	566.41	3230.03
2	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before tax, exceptional items)	-55.04	-26.76	-115.94	-331.55	-55.04	-331.55
3	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (after exceptional items)	-55.04	-28.62	-115.94	-331.55	-55.04	-331.55
4	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after tax	-55.04	-28.62	-115.94	-338.21	-55.04	-338.21
5	Net Profit / (Loss) after other comprehensive income	-27.95	-30.18	-129.26	-345.55	-27.95	-345.55
6	Net Profit / (Loss) after taxes, & Share of Profit / (Loss) of Associtates	-27.95	-30.18	-129.26	-345.55	-26.96	-334.76
7	Paid up Equity Share Capital	494.82	494.82	494.82	494.82	494.82	494.82
8	Earnings/(loss) per share (of Rs. 10/- each) (not annualised, in Rs.) Basic / Diluted	-0.56	-0.61	-2.61	-6.98	-0.54	-6.77

Date: 14/02/2024

The above is an extract of the financial results for the guarter ended on 31st Dec. 2023 filed with the stock exchanges under regulation 33 of SEBI (LODR) Regulation, 2015. The full Financial results for the quarter ended 31st Dec. 2023 are available on www.msei.in. www.cse-india.com and www.rampurfert.com.

By order of the Board Anshuman Khaitan (Managing Director)

(₹in lakhs)

COSCO (INDIA) LIMITED
CIN: L25199DL1980PLC010173

Regd. Office: 2/8, Roop Nagar, Delhi-110 007 Website: www.cosco.in Email: mail@cosco.in Tel.: 91-11-23843000 Fax: 91-11-23846000

EXTRACT OF STANDALONE UNAUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND NINE

MONTHS ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 2023

Particulars Nine Months Ended Year Ended Quarter Ended Nο 31.12.2023 30.09.2023 31.12.2022 31.12.2023 31.12.2022 31.03.2023 Unaudited Unaudited Unaudited Audited Total Income from operations 4,066.23 4,180.82 3,952.5 12.802.54 11,170.63 15,318.31 48.48 90.50 Net Profit for the period before 110.18 122.83 355.59 78.56 Net Profit for the period after tax 115.27 65.83 53.35 235.43 67.37 68.05 Total Comprehensive Income for 116.02 66.58 53.3 237.68 67.37 71.04 the period [Comprising Profit for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after **Equity Share Capita** 416.10 416.10 416.10 416.10 416.10 416.10 Other Equity 4,239.43 Earnings Per Share (of ₹10 each Basic (₹) 2.77 1.28 1.62 1.64 (a) 1.58 5.66

Notes: -

(b) Diluted (₹)

1 The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchange under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly / Annual Financial Results are available on the Stock Exchange Websites (www.bseindia.com/corporates) and on the Company's website www.cosco.in.

1.28

2 The above results have been reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of Directors of the Company at their respective meeting held on February 14, 2024.

1.58

2.77

for Cosco (India) Limited ARUN JAIN

DIN: 01054316

5.66

Date: 13.02.2024

period's presentation, wherever applicable

(Shailendra Nath Rai) Directo DIN: 00908417

Soio Infotel Private Limited

Date: 15-02-2024 Place: Delhi

(LC No. HLSA0004BFB3 of Warangal Branch) Ajay Kumar (Borrower) Kirti (Co Borrower 1)

Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited

22-01-2024/₹ 9572324.56 /-(₹Ninety Five lakh Seventy Two Thousand Three Hundred Twenty Near MCD School Dwarka New Delhi 110077

Date: 14.02.2024

Whole Time Director and CFO

1.62

1.64

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

Rude awakening

AAP mocks Congress by offering the biggest party in INDIA bloc just a single seat in Delhi

n a move which has sparked both intrigue and speculation, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) recently surprised everyone by offering the Congress just one Lok Sabha seat in Delhi, asserting that it does not deserve more. This statement has reignited discussions about the dynamics of political alliances in the run-up to the general elections. The proposal of AAP, led by Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, signals a strategic manoeuvre aimed at showing Congress its place in Delhi while simultaneously asserting AAP's dominance in the NCR. By offering just one seat to the Congress, AAP appears to be positioning itself as the primary challenger to the BJP in the Capital. There is no denying that at the State and corporation levels, the AAP is a force to reckon with. However, the same cannot be said about its hold on the masses when it comes to parliamentary elections. In 2019, it contested on all seats in Delhi and won none. Its latest move is likely to benefit the BJP, which secured all seats in the Capital. It will indeed be happy with the AAP's



deal breaking offer to the Congress. But it is not just about Delhi Lok Sabha seats, it has far-reaching consequences for the INDIA bloc and the Opposition's call for unity. With Nitish Kumar walking out, the INDIA bloc faces an existential crisis. At the heart of this move lies the question: Can the INDIA bloc work cohesively to challenge the BJP's dominance at the national level? While the idea of a united Opposition has gained traction, the differences in ideology and leadership have often hindered its effectiveness.

The AAP's offer to the Congress underscores the compulsions of electoral politics and how delicate seatsharing is. Forging alliances in a fragmented political

milieu is not an easy task. While both parties share the common goal of unseating the BJP, they also harbour deep-seated rivalries and ideological differences. Moreover, the success of the INDIA bloc hinges not only on the cooperation of political parties but also on their ability to mobilise voters and galvanise public support. With the Lok Sabha elections looming on the horizon, the Opposition parties must work tirelessly to bridge their differences, articulate a coherent vision for governance and present a credible alternative to the incumbent Government. In this regard, the preparedness of the Opposition to go to the hustings leaves much to be desired. While the BJP has enjoyed considerable electoral success in recent years, securing victories in key State elections and consolidating its hold on power, the Opposition parties have struggled to mount a cohesive and effective challenge. The upcoming election presents the Opposition with a crucial opportunity to demonstrate unity, resolve and ability to govern. It is imperative that they capitalise on this moment to present a compelling vision for the future of India, one that resonates with the aspirations and concerns of the electorate. Whether the Opposition can present a united front remains to be seen, but one thing is certain: If they take hasty decisions before elections, they will have enough time to repent at leisure.



Devotees offer prayers to Goddess Saraswati on the occasion of 'Saraswati Puja' festival, in Bengaluru

The UCC as a reform for women's rights

The UCC is often seen as an imposition of Hindu law on Muslims. The core issue lies in the disparities within personal laws, particularly concerning women's rights

he Uniform Civil Code (UCC), in the news again now after the Uttarakhand government passed a bill in the assembly for enacting a law, must be looked at as a reform of women's laws. Regrettably, everyone commenting on it appears to treat it as a Hindu-Muslim issue. A few experts have gone so far as to imply that the UCC is an attempt to impose Hindu law on Muslims, who have long adhered only to the Sharia law. Muslim scholars in India often brag that Prophet Mohammad thought of the welfare of women before Hindu rishis and Christian popes. He gave women property rights, which the adherents of other religions did not until much later.

This claim isn't wrong; Hindu women obtained the right to inherit property as late as 1955 when the Hindu Code Bill was passed. That doesn't mean polygamy should persist into the 21st century. Muslim apologists often argue by asking how many Muslims have more than one wife. That is not as relevant as the man having the legal right to marry and divorce as many times as he wishes. It is this threat rather than the existing reality. Even if this threat does not materialize into reality more than once in a thousand marriages, its existence is like a Damocles' sword on the heads of innumerable wives, all their married lives. The fear under which many wives spend most of their lives is tantamount to cruelty, and a punishment to innocent women who have committed no crime. In contrast, a Pakistani woman is at peace until her husband actually asks for a divorce, which has to be sanctioned by the district magistrate; no divorce is valid without magisterial approval.

A Hindu friend of a Muslim would possibly sympathize with the protest against a uniform civil code provided he had witnessed any Islamic bigwigs reform or nodernize Musiim iaws in India. But there has been no attempt to do so. The clerics have preferred taqlid (orthodoxy) to ijtihad meher, which is payment by (reinterpretation). Life must be the man at the time of nikah,



vive in an atmosphere of tension and fear. It is not only that divorcing a wife has been an easy matter for a husband. For the wife seeking a similar separation, she has the difficult option of khula, which is long, bothersome and expensive. On the other hand, the man's privilege was expensive. By merely pronouncing the word 'talaq' (divorce) three times over less than three months, he could literally throw his wife out of the gate, with all her children. And the women were mostly untrained for any special vocation. What could they do to feed them

of Islam. It is only during the

last few decades that the faith has started facing resistance.

Until then, Islam brought

wonders to its men, even if its

womenfolk have had to sur-

selves and their children?

Owing to the system of

TAKE DEFEAT IN YOUR STRIDE



OWING TO THE SYSTEM OF MEHER, WHICH IS PAYMENT BY THE MAN AT THE TIME OF NIKAH, THERE WAS NO NEED FOR THE HUSBAND TO PAY ANY ALIMONY. SHAH BANO WAS A VICTIM OF THIS FLAW there was no need for the husband to pay any alimony. Shah Bano was a victim of this

A minimum age of 18 for the girl before nikah has been proposed in the bill recently passed by the Uttarakhand assembly. Otherwise, the criterion has been puberty, which could be 8, 9 or 10 years. How very young an age to marry off a girl! The question of education or vocational career did not arise. On top of this was the Damocles' sword hanging on the girl's head. What wrong had the womanhood of Islam done to deserve such a potential fate? One cannot also forget nikah halala, which is more unfortunate than any of the other humiliations. If after divorce, the same spouse decides to remarry, there is an extraordinary procedure. The woman has to first marry another man and this marriage has to be consummated. Thereafter, they must divorce. Only after that, the woman can remarry her first husband. The word halala stands for making something halal or legitimate. Divorce is mostly at the husband's initiative, as we have seen above, and yet,

for reunification, it is the wife who has to suffer the humiliating punishment of sleeping with an alien man. What could have been the justification while drafting the Sharia? When it comes to distributing property or any other assets, boys and girls were treated as separate categories. Girls jointly got half of what the boys got. It is altogether a tale told by a senior cleric who had a punch of venom against the female gender. Why? Only the early history of Islam can tell us about the sociological circumstances that prevailed, which justified such discrimination against the women-

A man once came to Prophet Mohammad to seek his advice as to whether he should marry a woman of status and great beauty. The Prophet explicitly forbade him, saying: "Marry only those women who are loving and prolific, for I wish you to outnumber all other peoples through them" (Kitab Al-Nikah; No. 2045).

(I ne writer is a weii-known columnist, an author and a former member of the Rajya Sabha. The views expressed are personal)

Gender disparity in Indian science



DHARMAPALAN

Despite strides towards gender equality, female scientists continue to face challenges and barriers in India's scientific landscape

cience has been dominated by the male gender Since its origin. Even the image of a scientist is always depicted in the male gender in media. The disparity is even evident in the way our media covers the achievements of male and female scientists. In spite of this public shaming, many notable female scientists have made their mark in the history of science from 1900 BCE to the present day.

While many male scientists made it to the history of Indian science, very few female scientists can be observed on the long list, and that, too, is due to the initiatives by the government in recent times. The premier scientific organisation CSIR, which leads 38 national institutions, had to wait more than 75 years after independence to get a female Director General till Dr N Kalaiselvi took charge in 2022. Unfortunately, ICAR, which heads 113 research institutions, hasn't found a female Director General to date. Similar is the case with IITs, which found its first female director in 2023, and that too

campus IIT Zanzibar,

through Prof. Preeti Aghalayam.

According to recent statistics, India has a total of 56,747 female researchers, which is 16.6 per cent of the total researchers in the country. This is very low compared to advanced countries. The gov-Scheme-A Advancement

ernment of India has implemented women-specific schemes to provide opportunities to women scientists like the Women Scientists (WOS-A), Consolidation of University Research through Innovation and Excellence in Women Universities (CURIE) programme and the Gender Transforming Institutions (GATI). Even after providing various schemes for promoting women in science, very few stick to the scientific profession in the long run. It is very unfortunate that only in the new overseas even after having schemes

and rules to protect women in the workforce, many instances of female research scholars being exploited sexually and mentally go unnoticed. Most of the successful women scientists we see today are those who have come out

of this glass ceiling. In order to promote science and bring down the gender gap, we need to connect with these unfortunate groups and develop policy guidelines to support them. It is at this iuncture we need to appreciate the effort of National Science Academies' (INSA, IASc and NASI) in coming out with SWATI, or Science For Women: A Technology & Innovation Portal. The Portal is a complete interactive database and the first of its kind in India, which is developed, hosted and maintained by the National Institute of Plant Genome Research (NIPGR), New Delhi, under the leadership of leading women scientist of the country, Dr. Subhra Chakraborty, Director, NIPGR, New Delhi. The portal is open to the public, and every female researcher can join through the link https://bit.ly/JoinSWATI.

Irrespective of their position

or status, every Indian woman in science can update their details in their portal. The various Sections in the portal include Icons - Awardees & Directors, Secretaries Academy Presidents; Faculty; Research fellows- Postdocs, IRFs, SRFs, Technical Staff; Students-PhD Scholars, Research Interns, Graduates, Postgraduates Undergraduates; WiS Entrepreneurs, Startups, Business & Science Administrators; STEMM background professionals in alternate careers like science

It can facilitate connections between women in different stages of their careers, provide mentorship opportunities, and offer resources for professional development. By highlighting the accomplishments of women in science, it can help challenge gender biases and stereotypes. The database will act as a repository for future researchers and inspire young females to take up challenging roles in science.

(The writer is an adjunct faculty at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore, views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir — Winning and losing is part of the game but the way one loses is something that matters. How our U19 cricket team lost the finals to Australia after playing so wonderfully and formidably throughout the tournament, is something that needs to be studied and analysed seriously so that such debacles do not happen in future. The U19 team has very talented and energetic players like Uday Saharan, Adarsh Singh, Sachin Dhas, Musheer Khan, Saumy Kumar Pandey, Raj Limbani Naman Tiwari and many others who have a very bright future. Still, despite having such a strong team to lose the finals is a matter of concern. It is high time the players understand that the game of cricket is also a game to be played with the mind. The more brilliantly the brain works and the more the patience shown the team can taste success. It is high time that the BCCI focus on mind games and imparts mental training for the players with mental techniques so that mind-boosting can result in desired

M Pradyu | Kannur

IMPACT OF CONSUMERISM Sir — The simplicity of yesteryears has yielded place to gross consumerism due to liberalisation" and "globalisation" which have brought a drastic change in the lifestyle of the society. Individuals, who were careerists and earned high degrees have got flooded with new money. Almost the whole erstwhile middle class has been promoted to the status of rich. Costly cars, high-end villas, air travel, foreign tours -- all norms of luxury have been easily accessible to the "successful" lot. In contrast, life has become a hell for those who have missed the bus of "liberalisation". Despite a lack of resources, they will have to splurge money on luxurious items on the demand of disgruntled family members. Right from newspapers to TV to hoardings it is a call for enjoying luxuries all the way.

Vested interests redefine luxuries as "neces-

sities," ensnaring even the financially lim-

Monkey fever needs attention



onkey fever or Kyasanur forest disease (KFD) was first reported flowing ago in Karnataka from the forest of (KFD) was first reported nearly 67 years Kyasanur in Shivamogga district in a diseased monkey. Predominantly affecting the tribals of three districts of the state, especially between December and June, KFD has killed two in the region since it was freshly been diagnosed in

January, and more than 100 are reportedly infected. Man is infested with the KFD virus by the bite of infected ticks and deceased or sick monkeys that act as reservoir hosts. Luckily, there is no evidence of human transmission.

High fever and chills with rigours are typical symptoms of KFD that tend to be deadly once bleeding sets in. In the thick forests of Uttara Kannada and Shivamogga in Karnataka, due to the intense humidity prevailing for most of the year, workers are often found going about their work barechested, or with scarce clothes covering their lower limbs, and this can easily invite tick bites or contact with the infected monkeys. Authorities must educate KFD-vulnerable individuals on insect repellents and protective clothing. Address public concerns about vaccine shortages, as tribals reportedly flee due to vaccine unavailability, fearing for

Ganapathi Bhat | Akola

tiable, fuels perpetual desires. Instead of cherishing contentment, the less privileged succumb to incessant spending, enriching advertisers' coffers.

Valentine's Day, a modern mass brainwashing scheme, reduces the profound emotion of love to materialistic gestures—lavish gifts, restaurant dinners, and public displays of affection. Succumbing to this marketdriven frenzy, people measure love by consumerist standards. The merchants of love profit, turning a heartfelt connection into a tragic display of commercialism.

Kajal Chatterjee | Kolkata

SMARTPHONE ADDICTION

Sir — This had to happen. If not today or tomorrow, like in the village of Seine-et-Marne in France, public use of smartphones will have to be banned in every village, town, locality, city and district of the world. Mobile addiction is slowly making not only children but adults but also the elderly victims of its addiction. Just like the intoxication of alcohol makes us addicted ited. Consumerism, boundless and insato it. About 277 of these villagers, located

close to Paris and having a population of about 2,000, voted, with 54 per cent of them voting in favour of the new anti-tech measures. Now villagers in Seine-Porte will no longer be able to publicly scroll on their smartphones as part of the mobile crack-

The new rules ban everyone within the village limits from walking and scrolling at the same time, as well as browsing while eating in restaurants, cafes, and shops and sitting on benches in local parks. Also applicable to parents waiting outside of schools. If not today then tomorrow the whole world will have to be saved from the addiction to smartphones. Because due to this people are becoming sick mentally. The era of interaction and conversation between people is coming to an end. Anyone you see sitting in a bus, train or park is either watching a video with full sound or making a video for social media. Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshedpur

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Embracing the shelter of God's grace offers profound benefits



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

od has to help in this. Why? The odds are heavily stacked against us. Why? Sample these. Our entire being will oppose it, even if we, souls, wish to do so using our free will. First of all, we must develop a deep desire to pursue this ultimate goal for a human being, which brings everything desirable in our lives. Briefly, we qualify for opulence, victory, wealth and morality, as indicated by Sanjay of the Mahabharata fame in the Bhagavad-Geeta verse # 18.78. This is nothing compared to what we qualify for, which is, "We will cross all impediments by God's 'kripa' (grace)." (18.58) Can you imagine being able to successfully negotiate all kinds of troubles we all face throughout our lives? God even promises help in getting what one does not have and provides security of what one has if we make progress. (9.22) We get the elusive peace also. (18.62) To top it all, we will get liberated in a few births of practising God-consciousness. (6.45) Taking shelter from God is that wonderful.

What are our hindrances in achieving this noble goal? Beginning with the mind, 'kama' (lust) is seated on it. (3.40) This is not all, this faculty of ours shows us fearful dreams if we try to control them. Our intelligence is no better. It is also a seat of lust. (3.40) To make things worse it is mostly material, whereas it should ideally be spiritual. Surely, our consciousness is almost entirely material. Senses, which are also seats of lust, keep on troubling us with thoughts of a sense of enjoyment. Our 'ahankar' (ego) never tries to tell us that it is I who is all-important; who else? All these tendencies are from time immemorial, deeply embedded in our psyche. Finally, shelter-taking is a 'tapastya' (austerity), not easily acceptable to us.



So, are we lost? No, we are not. God is too kind to leave us helpless. We just have to get started. We should be determined that we are going ahead, period. I will practice even though I don't see much benefit. We must take inspiration from great people, who also struggled at the beginning of their spiritual journey. Once God is convinced that we are sincere, He steps in. This is the inflexion point; we are on our way. God begins to provide hints of His involvement. These hints though subtle, cannot be missed. In creation, nothing happens by chance or coincidence. Every occurrence is destined. The mind will not be so obstinate. Because God, sitting in our hearts, will give us intelligence to control the mind. (15.15)

With the mind and intelligence under some control, the senses will begin to behave better too. Habits will gradually become simple and steeped in goodness. Groundwork will be getting prepared for serious sheltertaking under God's supervision. Troubles will come and mysteriously disappear. We might feel that suddenly we have become great. We didn't in the real sense but did because we have come under God's protection. We will be inclined to do simple spiritual processes like spending time in God's presence, i.e. in front of a photo of God or a Deity in a temple. We will be inclined to sing a bhajan or chant a mantra. These are most important because God can only reward us if we become deserving. Just like there are pious acts, there are spiritual acts also. Fortunately for us, God will somehow manage to make us do them. I will cite a simple example. I teach my two granddaughters. Through constant encouragement, I have brought them to a stage where they are no longer afraid of studying. What is the conclusion? Let me refer to a popular saying, which is: "What man has done; man can do." This is very inspiring. Now consider: "What a devotee has done; a devotee can do." A non-devotee is extremely limited being one in eight billion. And a devotee? He will be helped by the unlimited God if we get started in shelter-taking. I have already started and gathering speed.

(The writer is a spiritual teacher, views are personal)

Balancing welfare and fiscal responsibility



UTTAM GUPTA

The Centre should go for a complete overhaul of its food subsidy programme. It should exclude from the beneficiaries' list those who are better off



een in the backdrop of 250 million persons coming out of poverty during the last nine-and-a-half years of incumbent government (as per a recent report released by Niti Aayog), Prime Minister Narendra Modi has faced flak from the opposition parties for his decision to continue with supply of free ration under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) scheme for five years (it was announced by Modi during a poll rally in Chhattisgarh late last year). They question the logic of supplying free food even to those who have crossed the poverty line. Modi has taken strong exception to it.

While replying to the debate on the Motion of Thanks to the President's address in the just concluded budget session of the Parliament, he opined that one can't rule out the possibility of such persons slipping back into poverty and leaving them in the lurch by denying access to food (albeit free) in such a scenario could have devastating consequences for their ability to meet both ends meet. Hence, he asserted, there was a dire need for retaining them in the beneficiaies list. The argument suffers from infir

At the outset, let us look at some facts. Prior to April 2020, the Union government was giving food mainly wheat/rice/coarse cereals at a heavily subsidized price of Rs 2/3/1 per kg to around 820 million beneficiaries covered under the National Food Security Act (NFSA). There were two types of ben-

As part of the Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY), the poorest of the poor households (HH) got 35 kg of food grains per HH each month or 7 kg per person per month taking 5 members per HH. There being 24 million AAY HHs, persons getting 7 kg a month were 120 million (24x5). The rest 700 million people got five kg a month. In addition to this, from April 2020 -December 2022, each of the 820 million beneficiaries got 5 kg per month for free under the PMGKAY to mitigate the hardship inflicted by the Corona – pandemic. From January 2023, even as the additional 5 kg for free under the PMGKAY has been withdrawn, all 820 million persons are



A RATIONAL MOVE WOULD BE TO EXCLUDE THE UNDESERVING BENEFICIARIES TO MAKE WAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE WAITING IN THE QUEUE SO THAT SUBSIDY IS KEPT IN CHECK. BUT IN VIEW OF THE STANCE TAKEN BY MODI, THIS IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY

getting their eligible quota (120 million AAY beneficiaries: 7 kg a month; 700 million non-AAY beneficiaries: 5 kg per beneficiary a month) under NFSA for free. This will continue till 2028.

The 820 million beneficiaries include 250 million who have come out of poverty. The Prime Minister doesn't want to exclude them. He bases it on the premise that 'something could go wrong in the future' pushing them into poverty and therefore, need continued support. This will be tantamount to extending the benefit perpetually as a day will never come when the government would think otherwise.

Analyzing the factors contributing to 250 million persons coming out of poverty, the Niti Aayog has opined that the supply of subsi-dized/free food under the NFSA was a major factor. In other words, the former is largely predicated on continuing with the latter. And, the moment the supply of free food is witnarawn, tnese persons will automatically slip into poverty. Is this what Modi was alluding to in the Parliament?

Another scenario could be: that a certain number say 'X' have genuinely come out of poverty; that their income is now adequate to enable them to buy their food needs at market-determined higher prices; hence they no longer need free supplies under NFSA. In such cases, the government must not retain them in the beneficiaries list merely on the presumption that 'something could go wrong'.

There are millions of undeserving beneficiaries under the NFSA. This was recognized way back in 2015 by the Shanta Kumar Committee which had recommended that the people eligible for subsidized food under NFSA shouldn't be more than 40 per cent of the population

comes to around 270 million. But, the government hasn't done anything to exclude them. Sadly, a large number of poor do not

have access to free food. The present list of beneficiaries is based on the 2011 Census even as the 2021 Census hasn't been done yet. If one were to go by the Supreme Court directive to take into account the population during 2021 instead of the present coverage, the government would have to give free food

to 100 million more persons.

Doing a back-of-the-envelope calculation, giving free food to a million persons increases food subsidy by Rs 200 crore per annum. Adding 100 million to the beneficiaries list will entail an additional subsidy burden of Rs 20,000 crore annually. A rational move would be to exclude the undeserving beneficiaries to make way for those who are waiting in the queue so that subsidy is kept in check. But, in view of the stance taken by Modi, this is highunlikely

There is also a lingering question of what the beneficiaries should pay. The NFSA legislation enacted in 2013 required them to pay Rs 2/3/1 per kg for wheat/rice/coarse cereals. It froze these rates for three years. Since 2016, there has been no legal bar on increasing the price. Yet, not only the price hasn't been increased, but Modi - the government has reduced it to zero. Are these mammoth persons (read: 820 million) so poor that they can't pay even a fraction of the cost of making it available (in the case of wheat at Rs 2 per kg, it was 1/15th)?

There are concerns over the manner of administering the food subsidy scheme. Under the existing mechanism, the Union government directs the Food Corporation of India (FCI) and other state agencies to procure food from the farmagainst the extant coverage of 59 per cent. The excess of 19 per cent tribution to the beneficiaries

through a network of fair price shops (FPSs) spread all over the country.

When over 60 million tons of food grains (quantity distributed through the FPSs) are available in the supply chain with zero price tag (prior to January 2023 also the price was ridiculously low at Rs 2/3/1 per kg) it is an open invitation to dubious operators to siphon off and sell in the open market raking in a moolah. The PDS scam in West Bengal involving diversion including smuggling to neighbouring countries of subsidized or free food grains meant for NFSA beneficiaries worth tens of thousands crore currently under investigation by the central agencies provides a classic example.

This mechanism also enables the government to use state agencies to extend price support to farmers. Under an 'open-ended' procurement system, it buys from farmers unlimited quantities - far in excess of the requirement under NFSA at MSP. This leads to burgeoning stocks with the agencies, high carrying costs, ballooning food subsidy bills and hassles of defending our subsidies at the WTO.

The Centre should go for a complete overhaul of its food subsidy program under NFSA. It should exclude from the beneficiaries list those who are better off. It can update the list at regular intervals to adjust for their changing income status (this should take care of Modi's concern in relevant cases). To address other major problems of misuse, storage, high cost and so on, it should disband the existing system of purchase, handling and distribution by the state agencies; instead, transfer the subsidy to the beneficiary's account using the DBT (direct benefit transfer) mecha-

(The writer is a policy analyst,

Interim Budget: Propelling green initiatives for climate action

India's commitment to sustainability extends beyond energy and transportation to encompass holistic environmental management

n the serene village of Gauripur, whispers of Learning floated in the air. Priya arrived with news that the sun was set to become the villagers' steadfast companion. The Interim Budget 2024 promised to solarise rooftops, bringing free electricity to every home. The village, once accustomed to dimly lit evenings, now stood at the threshold of a solar symphony that would illuminate lives and usher in a sustainable

In a groundbreaking move towards a net-zero carbon economy by 2070, Indian Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman unveiled key initiatives during the Interim Budget 2024, outlining a



budget emphasises solar energy adoption, offshore wind potential, and other sustainable practices, marking a significant milestone in India's journey towards a greener future. One of the flagship announcements involves the solarisation of rooftops for ten million households, aiming to provide up to 300 units of free electricity each

households but also contribute to significant savings, estimated at Rs 18,000 annually, by selling surplus solar electricity to distribution companies. The Council on Energy, Environment, and Water (CEEW) suggests that this effort could support the installation of 20-25 gigawatts of rooftop solar capacity.

With India standing fourth globally in renewable energy installed capacity, this move is poised to leverage the country's extensive coastline of about 7,600 km, especially off the coasts of Gujarat and Tamil Nadu, where an estimated 70 gigawatts of offshore wind potential has been identified. Similarly, to

would not only empower Government announced a phased blending of compressed biogas (CBG) in compressed natural gas (CNG) for transportation and natural gas (PNG) for domestic purposes. In this respect, a new scheme for bio-manufacturing and bio-foundry aims to promote eco-friendly alternatives. The government further aims to strengthen the electric vehicle ecosystem by supporting manufacturing and charging infrastructure, thereby encouraging the adoption of e-buses in public transport networks. This strategic move aligns with India's commitment to achieving 50% cumulative electric power installed capacity from noncomprehensive strategy to month. The Finance Minister address emissions from the fossil fuel-based sources by combat climate change. The highlighted that this initiative transport sector, the 2030. The budget therefore

tric mobility, with plans to expand and strengthen the electric vehicle (EV) ecosystem. The large-scale rollout of e-buses, supported by payment security mechanisms, is set to decarbonise the mobility sector and position India as a potential hub for EV manufacturing. The announcement of a significant INR 1 lakh crore corpus is expected to attract private investment in clean energy innovation and research.

Moreover, introducing the Blue Economy 2.0 scheme, the budget focuses on climate-resilient activities and sustainable development in coastal areas. Prioritising restoration, adaptation measures, and expanding coastal aquaculture and mariculture date for environmental and Energy Agency's statistics,

places a strong focus on electhrough an integrated approach, this initiative underscores India's commitment to holistic environmental management.

Finally, while controversial, the budget also allocates resources to set up a coal gasification and liquefaction capacity of 100 million metric tons by 2030. This move aims to reduce imports of natural gas, methanol, and ammonia, providing India with energy security amid global shifts towards cleaner energy sources.

In this respect, while applauding the budget's green initiatives, experts urge an increase in allocation to the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change (MOEFCC) to reflect the expanding man-

climate change initiatives. Advocacy for Green Budgeting as the third pillar of issue-based budgeting processes is emphasised to ensure the alignment of financial allocations with goals. environmental Moody's Investors Service has also praised the interim

budget for its fiscal restraint and commitment to fiscal consolidation goals. The rooftop solar scheme, offshore wind energy projects, and emphasis on electric mobility position India as a key player in sustainable development.

The global recognition of India's achievements in renewable energy capacity, as highlighted by the International Renewable

reinforces the country's commitment to a cleaner, greener future. In conclusion, India's Interim Budget 2024 emerges as a landmark in the nation's quest for a net-zero economy.

With a holistic approach encompassing solar energy, offshore wind potential, sustainable transportation, and environmental conservation, the budget lays the foundation for a resilient and environmentally responsible future. The initiatives outlined are not only crucial for mitigating climate change but also position India as a leader in the global transition towards sustainable develop-

(The writer is the founder of Earthood views are personal)

Subianto claims victory in Indonesia presidential polls

Defence Minister Prabowo Subianto, an ex-general linked to past human rights atrocities, claimed victory in Indonesia's presidential election on Wednesday based on unofficial tallies. The 72-yearold candidate, who was once banned by the United States from entering for two decades due to his human rights record, told thousands of supporters in a sports stadium in the capital, Jakarta, that the victory, according to an early, unofficial "quick count," was "the victory of all Indonesians."

There was no declaration by electoral officials and the two former provincial governors who also contested the election in the world's third-largest democracy have not conceded

Subianto was an army gen eral during the brutal period of the Suharto dictatorship that ended just over 25 years ago. He served as a special forces commander in a unit linked to torture and disappearances, allegations that he vehemently denies.

According to the unofficial tallies conducted by Indonesian polling agencies, Subianto had between 57 per cent and 59 per cent of votes, with more than 80 per cent of the vote counted in polling places sampled.

The quick counts are based on the actual vote count at a sample of polling stations across Indonesia. The laborious official count may not be finished for up to a month, but quick counts have provided an accurate picture of the results of all four presidential elections held in Îndonesia since it began direct

voting in 2004. "We are grateful for the quick count results," he said in the speech, broadcast on national television. "We should not be arrogant, we should not be proud, we should not be euphoric, we still have to be humble, this victory must be a victory for all Indonesian people." To avoid a runoff against his rivals, Anies Baswedan and Ganjar Pranowo, Subianto



Indonesian presidential candidate Prabowo Subianto casts his ballot at a polling station during the election in Bojong Koneng, Indonesia on Wednesday.

needs more than 50 per cent of all votes cast and at least 20 per cent in each of the country's

Subianto has presented himself as an heir to immensely popular sitting President Joko Widodo, whose son he chose as his running mate.

Widodo's successor will inherit an economy with impressive growth and ambitious infrastructure projects, including the ongoing transfer of the nation's capital from congested Jakarta to the frontier island of Borneo at a staggering cost exceeding USD 30 billion. The election also has high stakes for the United States and China, since Indonesia has a huge domestic market, natural resources like nickel and palm oil, and diplomatic influence with its Southeast Asian neigh-

Widodo's rise from a riverside slum to the presidency has shown the vibrancy of Indonesia's democracy in a region rife with authoritarian regimes.But with a leading candidate linked to a former dictator, and Widodo's son on the ballot, some observers fear that democracy is eroding.

Indonesians voted on Wednesday in an election that took just six hours. The logistics of the vote across the tropical nation's 17,000 islands inhabited by 270 million people were daunting: Ballot boxes and ballots were transported by boats, motorcycles, horses and on foot in some of the more far-flung

Aside from the presidency, some 20,000 national, provincial and district parliamentary posts were contested by tens of thousands of candidates in one of the world's largest elections, which authorities said concluded with no major problems. About 10,000 aspirants from 18 political parties eyed the national parliament's 580 seats alone.

Voters interviewed by The Associated Press expressed hope their next leader would help them achieve greater prosperity in a country where nearly a tenth of the population still lives in poverty. "I hope Indonesia can progress better and that I did not vote for the wrong person," said Indra Nurohim, a 17year-old high school student and first-time voter. "I hope we will have a better government."

Subianto, the oldest presidential candidate at 72, lost in two previous runs to Widodo but was the front-runner in independent surveys. His running mate, Widodo's eldest son, Gibran Rakabuming Raka, was allowed to run when the Constitutional Court made an exception to the minimum age requirement of 40.

Indian-American couple, twin sons found dead at their US home

New York (PTI): An Indianorigin family, including their 4year-old twin boys, has been found dead at their home in California with the police investigating the case as a murder-suicide, the second such incident in less than two months that has shocked the community in the US.

The victims, hailing from Kerala, have been identified by the friends as Anand Sujith Henry, his wife Alice Priyanka, and their 4-year-old twin boys, NBC Bay Area reported.

However, the victims' identities have not yet been released, police said. The incident took place in San Mateo on Monday, police were quoted as saying by the the report.

On Monday, Police said a 911 call spurred a welfare check at the location after someone reported they hadn't heard from the residents for some time. They arrived and checked the exits of the home and found no signs of forced entry.

"Unfortunately, we located four deceased people inside the home. One adult male. One adult female and two children," said Jerami Surratt, public information officer with the San Mateo Police Department.

The case is being investigated as a murder-suicide, police said on Tuesday.

According to court records, the husband filed for divorce in December 2016 but apparently did not go through with it. The two young children were found inside a bedroom

police said. "The children did not have gunshot wounds. Unfortunately, they were found deceased, so that will be part of the autopsy, to figure out the cause of (the children's) death," Surratt said at a Tuesday afternoon press conference. Sources with direct knowledge of the

investigation said police believe

the boys were smothered, stran-

gled, or given a lethal overdose

because there was no sign of

trauma on their bodies.

'NATO is sacred commitment' **PTI** ■ WASHINGTON protect you. In fact, I would NATO is a "sacred commitment" for the US,

President Joe Biden has said as he slammed his predecessor Donald Trump for his recent remarks encouraging Russia to attack certain nations of the 74-year-old military alliance by calling the comments "danger-

Biden said the remarks by Trump, his likely challenger in the November 5 Presidential polls, underscored the urgency of passing a USD 95 billion foreign aid package for US allies.

ous" and "un-American".

The bill just passed the Senate, but it faces political headwinds in the House. At the White House on

Tuesday, Biden said a failure to pass the package - which includes USD 60bn for Ukraine would be "playing into Putin's

"When America gives its word, it means something. When we make a commitment, we keep it. And NATO is a sacred commitment. Donald Trump looks at this as



if it's a burden," Biden said.

"When he looks at NATO, he doesn't see the alliance that protects America and the world. He sees a protection racket. He doesn't understand that NATO is built on the fundamental principles of freedom, security, and national sovereignty," he added.

Speaking at a rally in South Carolina during the weekend, Trump said he would ask NATO allies to increase their defence spending or else encourage Russian President Vladimir Putin to invade those nations. "You didn't pay? You're delinquent? No, I would not

encourage them to do whatever the hell they want. You bills," Trump said.

gotta pay. You gotta pay your Trump, who is the fron-trunner for the Republican Party's nomination, has called for NATO members to devote

two per cent of their gross

domestic product to defence.

In response, Biden said, "Because, for Trump, principles never matter. Everything is transactional. He doesn't understand that the sacred commitment we've given works for us as well. In fact, I would remind Trump and all those who would walk away from NATO, that Article 5 has only been invoked once, just once in our NATO history, and it was done to stand with America after we were attacked on 9/11."

"We should never forget it. You know, our adversaries have long sought to create cracks in the alliance," he added. Under Article 5 of NATO's mutual defence clause, all allies commit to help any member who

been invoked once — by the US following the attacks of September 11, 2001.

Biden said, "The greatest hope of all those who wish America harm is for NATO to fall apart. And you can be sure that they all cheered when they heard Donald Trump and heard what he said. I know this. I will not walk away. I can't imagine any other president walking away. For as long as I'm president, if Putin attacks a NATO ally, the United States will defend every inch of NATO territory."

The US president also described those remarks as shameful and "un-American".

"The former president (Trump) has sent a dangerous and shockingly frankly un-American signal to the world. Just a few days ago, Trump gave an invitation to Putin to invade some of our allies, NATO allies. He said if an ally didn't spend enough money on defence, he would encourage Russia to, quote, do whatever the hell they want end of quote," Biden said.

NATO chief hails record defence spending while warning that Trump's remarks undermine security

AP BRUSSELS

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said Wednesday that its European members and Canada have ramped up defence spending to record levels, as he warned that former US President Donald Trump was undermining their security by calling into question the US commitment to its allies. Stoltenberg said US partners in NATO have spent USD 600 billion more on their military budgets since 2014 when Russia's annexation of the Crimean Peninsula in Ukraine prompted them all to reverse the spending cuts they had made after the Cold War ended.

"Last year we saw an unprecedented rise of 11 per cent across European allies and Canada," Stoltenberg told reporters on the eve of a meeting of the organisation's defence ministers in Brussels.

In 2014, NATO leaders committed to move toward spending 2 per cent of their gross domestic product on defence within a decade. It has mostly been slow going,

but Russia's invasion of Ukraine two years ago focused minds. The 2 per cent figure is now considered a minimum requirement. "This year, I expect 18 allies to spend 2 per cent of the GDP on defence. That is another record number and a six-fold increase from 2014 when only three allies met the target," Stoltenberg said.

On Saturday, Trump, the front-runner in the US for the Republican Party's nomination this year, said he once warned that he would allow Russia to do whatever it wants to NATO members that are "delinquent" in devoting 2 per cent of GDP to defence.President Joe Biden branded Frump's remarks "dangerous" and "un-American," seizing on the former president's comments as they fuel doubt among US partners about its future dependability on the global stage. Stoltenberg said those comments call into question the credibility of NATO's collective security commitment — Article 5 of the organisation's founding treaty, which says that an attack on any member country will be met with a response from all of them. "The whole idea of NATO is that an

attack on one ally will trigger a response from the whole alliance and as long as we stand behind that message together, we prevent any military attack on any ally," Stoltenberg said.

"Any suggestion that we are not standing up for each other, that we are not going to protect each other, that does undermine the security of all of us," he said.

Trump's comments have not only sent wave of unease through Europe but are also likely to be a major topic of conversation at the annual Munich Security Conference, starting later this week in the

Both US Vice President Kamala Harris and Secretary of State Antony Blinken will be present at the event that American officials hoped would concentrate more on immediate security concerns in Ukraine and Gaza, as well as challenges posed by China and the importance of multilateralism in collective defense.

Hundreds of rescuers deployed in search for 9 missing at landslide-hit Turkish gold mine

Hundreds of rescuers on Wednesday pressed ahead with efforts to search trapped at a gold mine in eastern Turkiye that was engulfed by a massive landslide.

The landslide struck the Copler mine in the town of Ilic in Turkiye's mountainous Erzincan province on Tuesday. Footage seemingly shot by a worker showed a huge mass of earth rushing down a gully, overrunning everything in its path. The landslide involved a mound of soil extracted from the mine, Interior Minister Ali Yerlikaya said. Some 800 search and res-

cue personnel, including police and military teams, mine rescuers and volunteers. were deployed to find the mine workers, Yerlikaya said early Wednesday.

Other workers at the mine have also joined the efforts to rescue their colleagues, while



A general view of the Copler gold mine near Ilic village, eastern Turkey on Tuesday.

families of the missing waited at an area close to the mine for news of their loved ones. Haberturk television report-

An investigation into the disaster has been launched. Experts, meanwhile, have

may carry environmental risks. Geologist Suleyman Pampal said the soil that formed the landslide had been processed for gold and may contain dangerous substances such as cyanide that is used to extract gold. He also warned warned that the landslide of a threat to the nearby

Environment Ministry said in a statement that a stream leading to the Euphrates was closed to prevent water pollu-Aydoglu also said there was no leakage into the waterway.

The mine was closed down in 2020 following a cyanide leak into the river, which stretches through Turkiye, Syria and Iraq. It reopened two years later after the company was fined and a cleanup operation was completed.

Turkiye has a poor mine safety record. In 2022, an explosion at the Amasra coal mine on the Black Sea coast killed 41 workers. The country's worst mining disaster took place in 2014 at a coal mine in Soma, western Turkiye, where 301 people were killed.

In the wake of those incidents, engineers warned that safety risks were frequently ignored and inspections not adequately carried out.

South Korea says, North has fired cruise missiles

cruise missiles into the sea in South Korea and the United whelm missile defenses, supsince January, South Korea's military said, extending a streak in weapons demonstrations that's elevating tensions in the region. South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said the South Korean and U.S. militaries were analyzing the launches that were detected in waters northeast of the eastern coastal city of Wonsan. The South Korean military didn't immediately provide the exact numbers of missiles fired or how far they flew. It wasn't immediately clear either whether the missiles were fired from land or from sea assets.

"Our military has increased surveillance and vigilance and is working closely with our US partners and is closely monitoring signs for further activity from North Korea," the Joint Chiefs of

Experts say North Korea is planes, are among a growing North Korea on ramping up pressure on us number of margine to over-week whelm missile defenses, supof forcing Washington to accept the idea of the North as a nuclear power and extract security and economic concessions from a position of

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has also been issuing belligerent statements toward South Korea, including a declaration that he would abandon the North's long-term objective of reconciliation with its war-divided rival and threatening to annihilate the South with nukes if provoked. There's concern in the South that Kim may up the ante with a direct military provocation, possibly around the disputed western sea boundary between the Koreas that has been the site of deadly naval skirmishes in past years.

Cruise missiles, which are designed to be highly maneu-

Staff said in a statement. verable in flight like small airnumber of ballistic missiles designed to be fired from land and sea

The latest launches were North Korea's sixth missilelaunch event this year, including a Jan. 14 test of the country's first solid-fuel intermediate range missile, which demonstrated its efforts to advance its weaponry targeting remote US targets in the Pacific, including the military hub of Guam. The North earlier this year tested new cruise missiles designed to be fired from submarines and also long-range cruise missiles with potential range of reaching U.S. military bases in Japan. United States, South Korea and Japan have been strengthening their combined military exercises and sharpening their nuclear deterrence strategies.

'North Korean hackers breached personal emails of presidential staffer' Seoul (AP): South Korean

President Yoon Suk Yeol's office said Wednesday that presumed North Korean hackers breached staff members ahead of Yoon's trip to Europe in November. Yoon's office said the cyberattack only affected the personal account of the unidentified employee, who violated security protocols by partially using commercial email services to handle official duties. Officials did not specify what type of information was stolen from the staff member's personal emails but stressed that the office's overall security system was not affected.

"We detected the case in advance of (Yoon's) visit and took necessary measures," Yoon's office said in a statement to reporters. The office said it has been monitoring and defending against "constant" hacking attempts presumed to be related to North Korea but "it's not that the presidential office's security system got hacked."

Airstrike wipes out entire Palestinian family

AP ■ RAFAH (GAZA STRIP)

 $\mathbf{I}^{\mathrm{brahim}}$ Hasouna trudged over the rubble of the destroyed house, pointing out where family moments had taken place — where his mother and sister-in-law used to sleep, where he played with his five-year-old nieces, where he helped his one-year-old nephew take his first steps.

His entire family was now dead — his parents, his two brothers, and the wife and three children of one of those brothers. The house was reduced to rubble on top of them in the barrage of airstrikes that Israeli warplanes inflicted across Rafah before dawn on Monday as cover for troops rescuing two hostages elsewhere in the town on the southern Gaza border.

At least 74 Palestinians were killed in the bombardment, which flattened large swaths of buildings and tents sheltering families who had

fled to Rafah from across Gaza. Among the dead were 27 children and 22 women, according to the Palestinian Center for Human Rights, whose researchers compiled the list from Rafah hospitals. The Israeli offensive has taken a heavy toll on women and children, with more than 12,300 Palestinian children and young teens killed in the conflict, the Gaza Health Ministry said on The 30-year-old Ibrahim,

his parents and his brothers arrived in Rafah a month earlier, the latest of their multiple moves to escape fighting after fleeing their homes in northern Gaza. They rented a small, one-story house on the east side of Rafah.

"I was close to them," Ibrahim said of his older brother Karam's children. In the house, he would play cards or hide-and-seek with them to distract them from the war, he

said. The twin girls, Suzan and Sedra, often asked if they would go to kindergarten and if their teacher from kindergarten back home was alive or dead, he said. The strikes came at a

moment of joy. The families had just obtained three chickens — the first they would have to eat since the war started more than four months ago. The children were thrilled," Ibrahim said. The family was sick of canned food, which was the main thing they were able to get under an Israeli siege that has allowed only a trickle of humanitarian aid into Gaza.

They planned to eat the chicken on Sunday night. But during the day, Ibrahim went to visit a friend on the other side of Rafah, who convinced him to stay the night. Ibrahim called home, and they decided to put off the treasured meal so he wouldn't miss it. Ibrahim's mother, Suzan, put the chickens in the neighbour's fridge.



Neighbors inspect the rubble of the Hasouna family house, which was struck by an Israeli airstrike during an operation to rescue two hostages in Rafah, southern Gaza Strip on Tuesday

US Defense Secy Austin discharged from hospital

Washington (AP): US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin was released from Walter Reed National Military Medical Center on Tuesday, ending his second stay since surgery to treat prostate cancer, and he has resumed his full duties, the Pentagon said.

Austin (70) has had ongoing health issues since undergoing surgery in December. He was taken back to Walter Reed on Sunday for a bladder issue and admitted to intensive care for a second time. He underwent a non-surgical procedure under general anaesthesia on Monday.

Austin's doctors said on Tuesday that his bladder issue was related to the surgery.

"The bladder issue was not related to his cancer diagnosis and will have no effect on his excellent cancer prognosis," Dr John Maddox, trauma medical director, and Dr Gregory for Prostate Disease Research at the Murtha Cancer Center, said in a statement. On their advice, Austin will work from home before

returning to the Pentagon later

this week. His home has "full

access to the unclassified and

Chesnut, director of the Center

classified communications systems necessary to perform his duties", the Pentagon said in a statement. Austin is expected to host a virtual meeting on Wednesday of about 50 countries who meet monthly to coordinate military aid for

He had been scheduled to travel to Brussels on Tuesday for that Ukraine meeting, followed by a quarterly meeting with NATO defence ministers on Thursday. The US ambassador to NATO, Julie Smith,

will represent Austin in

Ukraine.

NEW DELHI I THURSDAY I FEBRUARY 15, 2024

Shehbaz Sharif likely to become next Pak PM

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD/LAHORE

Shehbaz Sharif, the younger brother of former premier Nawaz Sharif, is expected to become Pakistan's next prime minister as a post-poll alliance of leading political parties led by them struck a deal to form a coalition government after last week's elections produced a split mandate. The surprise move means the party of jailed former Prime Minister Imran Khan will not be in power, despite independent candidates backed by his Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) winning the maximum number of seats in Parliament in the February 8 elections marred by allega-

tions of rigging. Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) on Tuesday night nominated 72-year-old Shehbaz as the prime ministerial candidate instead of the party supremo and three-time former premier Nawaz Sharif. The 74-year-old veteran politician, who was seeking a record fourth term as prime minister, returned to Pakistan in October last year after ending a self-imposed exile in the UK.

Earlier, Shehbaz along with Asif Ali Zardari of Pakistan Peoples Party, Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui of Muttahida Qaumi Movement Pakistan (MQM-P) met at the residence of Shujaat Hussain of Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) for a consultative meeting and agreed on government forma-

"Today we have united to tell the nation that we all accept the split mandate. I am thankful to Zardari and Bilawal (Bhutto) that they decided for

43 Indians

among 186

Maldives

deported by

Male (PTI): The Maldives has

deported 186 foreigners, includ-

ing 43 Indians, after accusing

them of committing crimes like

visa violations and drug offences, according to a media report. The

highest number of people

deported was from Bangladesh.

At least 83 Bangladeshis were

deported followed by 43 Indians,

25 Sri Lankans and 8 Nepalis.

not yet known, Male-based news outlet Adhadhu reported. The underway in the Maldives to shut down businesses operated illegally. Homeland Security

Minister Ali Ihusan said that the

ministry was working together with the Economic Ministry to

party to vote for the PML-N," he said. PML-N Information Secretary Marriyum Aurangzeb has said that party supremo Nawaz Sharif has nominated the party president and his younger brother Shehbaz Sharif for the post of the country's prime

She added that PML-N Senior Vice President Maryam Nawaz, considered the political heir of Nawaz Sharif, was nominated for the post of the chief minister of Punjab province.

Earlier on Tuesday, the Pakistan Peoples Party chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said he was withdrawing his bid to become the prime minister and his party would support the PML-N candidate for the top post."Nawaz Sharif has thanked the political parties which provided support to the PML-N (in forming the upcoming government) and expressed hope that through such decisions Pakistan will come out of crises," she said.

Shehbaz, who was prime minister after the Imran Khanled government was ousted in April 2022, said the other parties that joined hands with the

PARADIP PORT AUTHORITY

e-Tender Call Notice (e-TCN)

Name of the work: Hiring of 01 No.60 ton Bollard pull Tug along with manning crew for Marine Operation at SPMs and inside Harbour at Paradip for a period of 07 (seven) years.

Estimated cost out to tender: Rs.86.35.39.812/

With reference to above e-tender, revised tende document has been published in the e

procurement website with extension. Last date

& time of submission of bids through on-line bidding is 15:00 Hours on Dt. 20/03/2024

Technical Bids shall be opened at 16:00 hours on Dt.21/03/2024. For details, please log on to the

/ebsite: https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app

Sd/- Deputy Conservator, Paradip Port Authority

MARINE DEPARTMENT

majority" of the Parliament after the elections. He also said that the new government would pull the country out of trouble.

Hours after Nawaz Sharif nominated Shehbaz for the post of prime minister, his daughter Maryam Nawaz on Wednesday sought to rebuff the impression that her father has quit active politics.

"In the next 5 years, Nawaz will not only participate in active politics but also oversee the PML-N-led governments in Punjab and at the Centre," Maryam, also the PML-N senior vice president, said in a post on X

According to the Election Commission of Pakistan's tally, the total number of general seats won by the six parties the PML-N, PPP, MQM-P, PML-Q, IPP (Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party) and Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) which announced their plans to form a coalition led by Shehbaz — comes to 152.

This clearly shows that these parties will easily achieve the minimum required number of 169 to form the government at the Centre after the addition of 60 women and 10 minority seats in their tally.

"Now our war is against the

challenge is the economy. We have to stabilise it which is a tall task. Nations move forward when their leadership unites and decides to end conflicts and take the nation forward to

eliminate problems," he said. The PML-N reportedly enjoys the backing of the powerful Pakistan Army. Reacting to the latest polit-

ical developments, the PTI said that the best option for the PML-N is to "accept [its] defeat gracefully" and let their party founder Khan "fix and heal the

Khan, a 71-year-old cricketer-turned-politician, is currently in jail and has been barred from running in the election due to his conviction in corruption cases.

Earlier, top PPP leader and former Pakistan President Zardari, speaking alongside Shehbaz, said that a coalition government would be set up.

"We have decided to form a coalition government and pull the country out of the economic crisis," he said and added that the new government would also try to reconcile with everyone including Khan's PTI. He promised to deliver the country out of these troubles and lead on to the road to prosperity.



NALCO Bhawan, Plot No. P/1, Nayapall Bhubaneswar-751013. Odisha (CIN: L27203OR1981GOI000920) A NAVRATNA COMPANY

NOTICE

The Board of Directors in their meeting held on 13th February, 2024 has approved 2th interim dividend @ Rs.2/-per share for the financial year 2023-24. In this connection, Notice is hereby given that ${\bf Friday}$, ${\bf the\,23}^{\rm rd}{\bf February}$, ${\bf 2024}$ has been fixed as 'Record Date' for payment of interim dividend for the financial year 2023-24. Interim Dividend will be paid to those shareholders whose names appear:

- a. as beneficial owners as at the end of the business hours on 23.02.2024 as per the beneficial owners position to be downloaded by NSDL and CDSL in respect of the shares held in the electronic form and
- as members in the Register of Members of the Company, after giving effect to transmission/transposition if any, in physical form lodged with the Company on or

Dividend income is taxable in the hands of the shareholders w.e.f. 01.04.2020 and accordingly, the Company will deduct tax at source (TDS) as per provisions under the Income Tax Act, 1961

Information about the record date is also available on the website of the Company i.e www.nalcoindia.com and on the websites of the Stock Exchanges i.e www.bseindia.com and www.nseindia.com.

For National Aluminium Company Limited

Place : Bhubaneswar Date: 13.02.2024

(N. K. Mohanty) **GGM & Company Secretary**

IST LIMITED

Regd. Office: Dharuhera Industrial Complex, Delhi- Jaipur Highway No.8, Kapriwas, Dharuhera, Rewari (Haryana)-123106 Head Office: A-23, New Office Complex, 2nd Floor, Defence Colony, New Delhi-110024 CIN: L33301HR1976PLC008316, Phone No.: 011-41044511-14; Fax: 011-24625694; Email:istgroup.ho@gmail.com; Website: www.istindia.com EXTRACT OF FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND YEAR ENDED 31⁵¹ DECEMBER, 2023

			Stand	lalone		Consolidated				
SI		Q	uarter End	ed	Year ended	Q	Year ended			
No	Particulars	31.12.2022 Unaudited	1	31.12.2022 Unaudited	31.03.2023 Audited	31.12.2023 Unaudited		31.12.2022 Unaudited	31.03.2023 Audited	
1	Total Income	1758.05	1559.38	983.40	3925.58	5776.62	4495.10	3548.64	16241.95	
2	Net Profit before exceptional items and tax	1172.86	1040.97	378.33	921.48	4781.84	3757.84	2679.10	10679.22	
3	Net Profit after exceptional items before tax	1172.86	104097	378.33	921.48	4781.84	3757.84	2679.10	10679.22	
4	Net Profitafter tax	914.63	835.18	310.93	777.50	3215.51	3211.97	2052.49	8130.42	
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period (Net of Tax)	915.11	835.64	311.93	779.38	5887.64	4904.34	2799.39	7687.45	
6	Equity Share Capital (Face Value Rs. 5/- per share)	584.68	584.68	584.68	584.68	584.68	584.68	584.68	584.68	
7	Other Equity	-	-	-	20900.75	-	-	-	110358.31	
8	Earnings Per Share (Face Value Rs. 5/- per share)									
	-Basic (Rs.)	7.84	7.16	2.67	6.67	27.66	27.61	17.67	70.07	
	-Diluted (Rs.)	7.84	7.16	2.67	6.67	27.66	27.61	17.67	70.07	

Notes: The above is an extract of the detailed format of the Standalone and Consolidated Financial Results for the Quarter ended 31st December, 2023 filed with the Stock Exchange (BSE Ltd.) under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Standalone and Consolidated Financial Results are available on the Stock Exchange website (www.bseindia.com) and company's website www.istindia.com

Place: New Delhi

(S.C. Jain) Director

ASHNOOR TEXTILE MILLS LIMITED

Registered Office: Behrampur Road, Khandsa Village, Gurugram, Haryana: 122001, India, Tel: +91 (0124) · 4809756 CIN: L17226HR1984PLC033384 | E mail: atml delhi@yahoo.com | Website : www.ashnoortex.com

Statement of Standalone Financial Results for the Quarter and Nine Months Ended 31 December 2023

SI. No.	Particulars Particulars	Three Mor	iths Ended	Nine Mon	Standalone Previous Year Ended	
				31-12-2023		31-03-2023
		(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Audited)
1	Total Income from Operations (Net)	3,267.06	3,287.94	9,752.14	14,192.36	17,778.83
2	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	198.55	198.77	739.21	365.19	781.20
3	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	182.37	198.77	723.03	365.19	797.21
4	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	104.06	153.93	498.19	300.56	612.41
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	104.06	153.93	498.19	300.56	612.41
6	Paid Up Equity Share Capital	1,274.58	1,274.58	1,274.58	1,273.95	1,273.95
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the Audited Balance Sheet of the previous year	-	-		-	4,388.01
8	Securities Premium Account	240.00	240.00	240.00	240.00	240.00
9	Net Worth	4,485.27	6,056.74	4,485.27	5,350.12	5,661.96
10	Paid up Debt Capital / Outstanding Debt	0.06	0.07	0.06	0.07	0.18
11	Outstanding Redeemable Perferences Shares				-	-
12	Debt Equity Ratio	1.33	1.22	1.33	1.31	1.25
13	Earnings Per Share (of Rs. 10/- each) (before and after extraordinary items)					
	1. Basic:	0.82	1.21	3.91	2.36	4.80
	2. Diluted:	0.82	1.21	3.91	2.36	4.80
14	Capital Redemption Reserve			-	-	-
15	Debenture Redemption Reserve				-	
16	Debt Service Coverage Ratio	1.07	1.25	1.38	0.99	1.82
17	Interest Service coverage Ratio	2.07	2.20	2.68	2.11	2.77
Not	e: The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly Financial Results filed with the Bombay	Stock Exchan	ae under Reau	lation 33 of th	e SEBI (Listina I	Obligations and

The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly Financial Results filed with the Bombay Stock Exchange under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations an Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly Financial Results are available on the websites of the Bombay Stock Exchange i.e www.bseindia.in and on web site of the Company i.e. www.ashnoortex.com

By Order of the Board of Directors For Ashnoor Textile Mills Limited

Suneel Gupta **Managing Director** DIN - 00052084

PPA/PR/86/PR/2023-2024

कायालय पारक प्रम्यक विश्वत सण्ड-प्रथम, उ०प्र० राज्य औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण

ई-निविदा सूचना

एतद् द्वारा सूचित किया जाता है कि बरेली जनपद में स्थित औद्योगिक क्षेत्र परसाखेड़ा में विद्युत विकास ए अनुरक्षण कार्यो हेतु सरकारी विभागों /सार्वजनिक उपक्रमों /निगमों / प्राधिकरणों /परिषदों /नगर निकाय में पजीकृत विद्युत लाईसेन्सी एवं अनुभूषी ठेकेंदारों /फर्मों से ईं-निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है जो दिनावृ भपरान्ह 04 00 बज़े से दिनांक 06 03 2024 को अपरान्ह 5 00 बज़े तक अपलोड हैं। निविदा को दिनांक 07.03.2024 को अपरान्ड 4.00 बजे खोला जायेगा। निविदादाताओं द्वारा श्राप्य पत्री की मूल प्रतियाँ दिनांक 11.03.2024 को सार्य 5.00 बजे तक कार्यालय में जमा की जा सकती हैं। ई—निविदा के माध्यम से आमंत्रित की जाने वाली निविदा सम्बन्धी विवरण निम्नवत् हैं.—

1.11001.	नाच्या राजानामा वर्ग जान वाला माववा राज्याचा प्रवरन मिनावर्स् छ=								
क्रमांक	कार्य का नाम	कार्य की लागत रू० (लाख में)							
	Upgradation of Street Light & High Mast at Industrial Area	62.14							

नोट:— 1. निविदादाता अपनी निविदाओं में समस्त कर सहित दरें अंकित करें । जी०एस0टी० अलग नाट—। . ।नायपारचा अपना नायपारचा न सारत कर साहत वर आकर्ष कर । जाएराघटाठ अल से देय होगी 2. विद्युत कार्यों हेतु निविदादाताओं को निविदा अपनी करते समय 'विद्युत सुरक्ष विभाग'' उ0प्र0 शासन, लखनऊ में श्रेणी 'क' अनुमोदित लाइसेन्स अपलोड करना अनिवार्य होग अन्यथा निविदा को Consider नहीं किया जायेगा ।

take action against illegal busi-एवं यूपीएलसी की website: http://etender.up.nic.in पर देखी जा सकती है | वरिष्ठ प्रबन्धक विद्युत खण्ड-प्रथम , उठप्रठराठऔठविठप्राठ , कानपु nesses. verka

h	Notice inviting render	www.verka.co
/sea	aled tenders are hereby invited for the purchase and supply of followi	ng items:-
Sr. No.	Name of Work/Item	Period/Tentative Qty
1.	For Verka Chandigarh Dairy Manual Tender for:- Job Contract of Contractor/Halwai for manufacturing and cutting of sweets.	Annual/ 50 MT per annum
2.	For Verka Mohali Dairy Hiring of :- Mahindra Pick up or equivalent (Capacity 2 ton). Cold Store for the storage of white Butter.	01 No. Annual
3.	For Verka Bathinda Dairy Disposal of unserviceable material on time auction basis.	(4)
4.	Supply of fresh cut fire wood. Colour Measurement Tintometer for Ghee. Labour Contract for Providing:- a) Un-skilled, Semi-skilled, Skilled, High skilled workers and eligible personnel for different postsa through outsourcing. b) Suitable/ eligible security personnel through outsourcing.	900 MT Two years
5.	For Verka Amritsar Dairy Allotment of Verka Milk Booth through draw system at Civil Hospital Majitha and Primary Health Center, Naushera Pannuan.	02 No's
5.	For Verka Jalandhar Dairy a) Disposal of unserviceable scrap material and machinery one time basis. b) Hiring of insulated Vehicles for supply of packed milk and fresh milk products.	Annual
7.	For Verka Sangrur Dairy a) Allotment of Verka Milk booths at different locations in distt. sangrur/ Barnala/ Malerkotla on Rent Basis. b) Supply of :- • Man Power. • Security Personnels. • Kjeldahl Apparatus(Protein Analyzer)	Three years/ 08 No's Two years 01 No.
3.	For Verka Faridkot Dairy Hiring of:- Insulated road milk tanker for transportation of milk from MCC's to various Milk Plants in Punjab. Pick up or its equivalent vehicle for lifting the milk from MPCS/DF to MCC at Route 62 (MCC Aulakh).	05 No's 01 No.
9.	For Verka Mega Dairy, Bassi Pathana Loading/ Unloading of Verka Milk & Milk Products, Corrugated Boxes, SMP bags etc.	Annual
10.	For Verka Cattle Feed Plant, Khanna. Pest/ Rodent control service.	Annual

For complete details regarding above tender (NIT), please visit our website i.e. www.verka.coop & e Tendering portal i.e. eproc.punjab.gov.in.
 Corrigendum, if any, will be uploaded on website only.

Dy. General Manager (Purchase)

Date: 14th February, 2024

OK PLAY INDIA LIMITED CIN: L28219HR1988PLC030347

Regd. Office: Plot No. 17, Roz-Ka-Meo Industrial Estate, Tehsil Nuh, District - Mewat, Haryana -122103, India

E-mail: investor.relations@okplay.in, Website: www.okplay.in EXTRACT OF STANDALONE AND CONSOLIDATED LINAUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND NINE MONTHS ENDED 31⁵⁷ DECEMBER 2023

												(F	Rs. in Lacs)
		Standalone									lidated		
SI		Q	uarter End	ed	Nine Mon	ths Ended	Year ended	Q	uarter End	ed	Nine Mont	ths Ended	Year ended
No	Particulars			31.12.2022 Unaudited			31.03.2023 Audited			31.12.2022 Unaudited			31.03.2023 Audited
1	Total Revenue from operations	3,621.14	3,073.50	3,622.36	10,178.03	9,700.19	13,305.86	4,092.83	4,044.71	4,700.40	12,462.67	12,831.56	18,169.37
2	Net Profit/(Loss) before Exceptional items and tax	8.92	57.75	451.73	151.07	131.35	30.53	174.30	68.89	431.51	296.04	34.03	308.11
3	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional items)	9.42	53.86	446.91	148.02	105.97	7.69	174.80	65.00	426.69	292.99	8.65	285.27
4	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional items)	9.42	53.86	446.91	148.02	105.97	(390.08)	106.79	41.47	448.68	184.46	6.94	(195.77)
5	Total Comprehensive Income / (Loss) for the period [Comprising Profit/ (Loss) for the period (after tax) and other comprehensive income (after tax)]	9.42	53.86	446.91	148.02	105.97	(446.66)	106.79	41.47	448.68	184.46	6.94	(252.35)
6	Equity Share Capital	2,856.61	2,646.10	1,920.81	2,856.61	1,920.81	1,919.61	2,857.61	2,646.10	1,920.81	1,919.61	1,920.81	1,919.61
7	Other Equity (Reserves excluding revaluation reserve)	-	-	-	-	2,589.13	2,036.51	-	-	-	7,962.44	1,968.31	1,708.88
8	Earning per share (of Rs.10/- each) (for continuing and discontinued operations)												
	(a) Basic (in Rs.)	0.03	0.20	2.33	0.52	0.55	(2.33)	0.37	0.16	2.34	0.65	0.04	(1.31)
	(b) Diluted (in Rs.)	0.03	0.16	2.33	0.41	0.55	(2.33)	0.29	0.13	2.34	0.51	0.04	(1.31)

The above is an extract of the detailed format of Unaudited Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of quarterly financial results are available on the Stock Exchange website (www.bseindia.com) and on the Company's website (www.okplay.in) 2 The above standalone and consolidated financial results have been reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of Directors at their meeting held on Wednesday, 14th February, 2024

Place : Gurugram, Haryana

Date: 13-02-2024

Rajan Handa anaging Director (DIN 00194590)

LOGIX BUILDTECH PRIVATE LIMITED Reg. Office:-DGL006, GROUND FLOOR, DLF GALLERIA, MAYUR VIHAR, PHASE-1, NEW DELHI-110091 Corporate Identification Number:-U70200DL2010PTC200042 E-mail:corporate@logixgroup.in

ANNEXURE I (Regulation 52(8), read with Regulation 52(4), of the SEBI (LODR) Regulations, 2015 Extract of Unaudited Standalone Financial Results for the quarter and nine months ended December 31, 2023

(All amounts in INR lakhs, unless otherwise stated) e months ende 31.12.2022 31.12.2023 31.12.2022 S.No Particulars Loss before tax, exceptional items (3,104.08 (3,251.01 (3,486.13) (9,743.21)(10,905.66 (13,883.90)(3,104.08 (9,743.21) (13,883.90) Loss before tax & after exceptional items Loss after tax, exceptional items (2.311.61) (2,420,50)(1.847.71) (7,239.31)(8,227,38) (10.446.85)(2,311.41) (2,420,30) (1,846.49) (7,238.72) (8,223.73) (10,446.07) Total comprehensive income/(loss) for the period/year (net of tax) 2.054.75 2.054.75 2.054.75 2.054.75 2.054.75 2.054.75 8,297.00 Reserves (excluding Revalution Reserve) (1,164.05)1,147.37 (1,164.05)8,297.00 6,074.67 3,202.12 10,351.75 10,351.75 8,129.42 Paid up Debt Capital/Outstanding Debt 117,450.00 117,450.00 117,960.00 117,450.00 117,960.00 117,720.00 **Debt Equity Ratio** 131.86 36.68 131.86 11.40 Earnings per equity share (i) Basic (in INR) (11.25)(11.78)(35.23)(40.04)(50.84)(ii) Diluted (in INR) (8.99)Capital Redemption Reserve Debenture Redemption Reserve

- a) The above is an extract of the detailed format of annual financial results filed with the Stock exchange under Regulation 52 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full
- format of the annual financial results are available on the website of the Stock Exchange (www.bseindia.com) and the listed entity (www.logixgroup.in). b) For the items referred in Regulation 52(4) of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, the pertinent disclosures have been made to the Stock exchange (BSE India) and can be
- accessed on the URL (www.bseindia.com) and website (www.logixgroup.in) The company was unable to redeem the debentures on the redemption date 04-11-2023, due to adverse market conditions in the real estate industry. Talks are in progress with the debenture trustee and debenture holders / lenders in order to mutually agree on an extension of the redemption date and also in talks with the lenders and potential third-party buyers to purchase the secured assets of the company to fund the redemption

For and on behalf of the Board of Director

Shakti Nath Director

Date: February 13, 2024

of the debentures

TOP GAINERS

0.24 Nestie India

0.18 - L&T

Finance Minister to review economy at FSDC meeting

¬inance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is scheduled to review the state of the global amid challenges at a meeting of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) on February 21.

The 28th meeting of the high-level panel to be held here will be aftended by all financial sector regulators, including RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das, sources said. This would be the first meeting

of the FSDC after the passage of the Rs 47.6 lakh crore Budget for 2024-25, focussing on capital expenditure with an outlay of Rs 11.11 lakh crore. In the meeting, the Finance Minister will review the current global and domestic economic situation financial stability issues.

Sitharaman is likely to stress key priorities highlighted in

The road ministry is planning to double the defect liabili-

ty period under engineering-

procurement-construction

(EPC) contracts to 10 years to

improve the quality of con-

struction, a senior government

Under the EPC model, the

responsibility for maintenance of

national highways lies with the

government after the defect lia-

bility period (5 years) is over,

during which the contractor is

The government funds the

entire infrastructure project under the EPC model, while the

private sector partner only pro-

vides engineering and construc-

"We are doing a consultation

with experts and stakeholders on

increasing the defect liability

period under EPC contracts to

responsible for maintenance.

official said.

tion assistance



the interim Budget, the way forward for various future policies and measures that the government has proposed to take in many sectors, sources

Road Ministry plans to double defect liability

10 years as the ministry is keen

on improving the quality of construction," the official said on

The official noted that increas-

ing the defect liability period for

contractors will force them to

make good quality roads, which

will last for a longer duration and

need less maintenance by the

Centre as in the case of roads

built under hybrid annuity

mode (HAM) and built-operate-transfer (BOT) mode. BOT pro-

the condition of anonymity.

period under EPC contracts to ten years

Besides, the council may also review the progress of measures approved earlier for further development of the financial sector, and to achieve inclusive economic growth

jects provide the risk of financ-

highway projects with a conces-

National Highways Authority of India and National Highways

and Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd (NHIDCL) are

mainly responsible for the con-

struction of national highways

and expressways in India.

Maintenance of national high

ways is financed by the Central

sion period of 20-30 years.

ing, building and operating

with macroeconomic stability. The FSDC meeting will also review activities undertaken by the FSDC sub-committee chaired by the RBI governor and the action taken by

Securities and Exchange Board

members on the past decisions

of India chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch, Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) chairman Debasish Panda, Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) chairman Ravi Mital and Pension Fund Regulatory and Authority's Development newly appointed chairman Deepak Mohanty will attend the meeting.

According to sources, the FSDC meeting will also be attended by Minister of State Finance Bhagwat Kishanrao Karad, Finance Secretary T V Somanathan, Economic Affairs Secretary Ajay Seth, Revenue Secretary Sanjay Malhotra, Financial Services Secretary Vivek Joshi and other top officials of the

Gold tumbles ₹750; silver nosedives ₹1,400

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices tumbled Rs 750 to Rs 62,350 per 10 grams in the national capital on Wednesday amid weak global cues, according to HDFC Securities

In the previous trade, the precious metal had ended at Rs 63,100 per 10 grams.

Silver also nosedived Rs 1,400 to Rs 74,000 per kg, while it had closed at Rs 75,400 per kg in the previous close.

Spot gold prices (24 carats) in the Delhi markets are trading at Rs 62,350 per 10 grams, down by Rs 750 taking bearish cues from overseas markets," Saumil Gandhi, senior analyst of commodities at HDFC Securities, said. In the international markets, spot gold at Comex was trading at USD 1,995 per ounce, down by USD 26 from the previous



Comex spot gold fell below USD 2,000 per ounce for the first time since December after hotter-than-anticipated US Consumer Price Index (CPI) data, which dashed optimism that the Federal Reserve might soon abandon its monetary policy easing, Gandhi added. Also, silver was trading lower at USD 21.97 per ounce, while it had closed at USD 22.82 per

Stock markets extend gains on fag end buying; SBI, Reliance shine

BSE Sensex

71,555.19

Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty reversed losses and closed higher for the second straight day on Wednesday following buying in energy, metal and utility stocks in the last hour of trade positive amid inflation data.

The 30-share BSE Sensex rose by 267.64 points or 0.37 per cent to close at 71,822.83 points, extending gains for the second day. The index opened lower and fell further to a low of 70,809.84 points during intra-day trades.

Positive inflation data helped the index recover losses and hit a high of 71,938.59 points.

The broader NSE Nifty also gained 96.80 points or 0.45 per cent to end the day at 21,840.05

points.
"Nifty opened gap-down tracking the weak US markets however strong recovery in the select heavyweights not only pared losses but also helped the index to close around the day's high," Ajit Mishra, SVP — Technical Research, Religare Broking Ltd said.

State Bank of India was the biggest gainer in the Sensex pack, rising 4.24 per cent, followed by Tata Steel, Axis Bank, Maruti, NTPC, PowerGrid, ITC and Nestle Reliance Industries jumped

1.15 per cent to end at Rs 2,962.60 apiece on BSE, taking its market valuation to a record of Rs 20 lakh crore.

Shares of SBI closed at Rs 743.35 apiece. In contrast, Tech Mahindra.

Sun Pharma, TCS, Infosys and HDFC Bank were among the laggards.

The wholesale price index (WPI)-based inflation eased to a three-month low of 0.27 per cent in January, mainly due to moderation of food prices, including vegetables. The WPI inflation was in the negative zone from April to October



Change -+267.64

71,822.83

and had turned positive in spending," Nair added. November at 0.39 per cent.

"The domestic market staged a

recovery from day's low, buoyed by renewed buying interest in banking stocks.

Improving asset quality and

the government's continued focus on fiscal prudence attracted PSU banks, yet

concerns lingered regarding

their elevated valuations, Vinod Nair, Head of Research,

Geojit Financial Services said.

"The optimism was further supported by favourable inflation figures from the UK,

contributing to a widespread recovery. However, IT shares

experienced selling pressure following the release of higher-than-expected US CPI,

prompting concerns over potential delays in interest rate

cuts and its impact on client

Among sectoral indices, oil & gas gained 3.61 per cent, followed by energy (3.02 per cent), metal (1.97 per cent), power (1.81 per cent), utilities (1.63 per cent) and telecom (1.59 per cent). Healthcare, IT and teck were

the losers, declining up to 0.88 per cent. BSE smallcap index inched up 1.16 per cent while midcap closed with a gain of 1.26 per cent.

In Asia, Japan's Nikkei 225 settled in the negative territory while Hong Kong's Hang Seng and South Korea's Kospi indices ended in the green. China's financial markets are closed for the Lunar New Year holidays.

European markets were trading on a positive note in early deals.

Act clause related to MSMEs

suggested a solution during the

In its memorandum, CAIT

welcomed the government's decision, highlighting the

significance of ensuring timely payments to the MSME sector

within 45 days to maintain

uninterrupted cash flow for

However, given the "lack of

traders and other related

provisions, CAIT called for



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $R_{\text{body}}^{\text{epresentatives of traders'}} \underset{\text{CAIT}}{\text{con}}$ Wednesday met Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman demanded implementation of a clause in Income Tax Act related to MSMEs payment rule be deferred by a year to April

In a release, Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) said a delegation led by its Secretary General Praveen Khandelwal conveyed the traders' concerns Income Tax Act until sufficient clarification and information dissemination are achieved "CAIT further appealed to the

of Section 43 (b)h of the

government to postpone the from April 1, 2024, to April 1, 2025, to provide traders with a one-year deferral period," the release said.

The clause in the Income Tax Act added through the Finance Act 2023 is aimed at addressing the issue of working capital scarcity in the MSME industry and promote prompt payments to micro and small businesses.

This clause is applicable when an enterprise is buying goods or taking services from an enterprise registered under the MSMED Act, 2006.

has reiterated the importance of addressing the financial challenges faced by the MSME sector.

It emphasised the need to clarify ambiguous provisions and enhance awareness among clarity" surrounding the applicability of the law to traders through collaborative efforts involving the Income Tax Department, Ministry of and trade organizations.

CAIT demands deferment of IT | Wholesale inflation eases to three months low in Jan; food prices cool

The wholesale price index inflation eased to a three-month low of 0.27 per cent in January, mainly due to moderation of prices, including s. The WPI inflation prices, food vegeta was in the negative zone from April to October and had turned positive in November at 0.39 per cent.

In January 2023, it was at 4.8 per cent and in December 2023 it was 0.73 per cent.

"The annual rate of inflation

based on the All India Wholesale Price Index (WPI) number is 0.27 per cent (provisional) for the month of January, 2024 (over January, 2023)," the commerce and industry ministry said in a statement on Wednesday. The previous low level of

inflation was recorded in October 2023, when it was (-) 0.26 per cent.

declined to 6.85 per cent, from 9.38 per cent in December 2023

Within food articles, inflation

In January, food inflation in vegetables eased to 19.71 per

cent from 26.3 per cent in December. Inflation in potatoes was in the negative zone. The prices of fruits, eggs, milk, fish, and milk have eased. In the fuel and power segment, inflation was (-) 0.51 per cent in January, as against (-) 2.41

per cent in December 2023.

In manufactured products, inflation was (-) 1.13 per cent, as against (-) 0.71 per cent in the previous month. The Reserve Bank in its bi-

monthly monetary policy earlier month held interest rates steady with a view to bring down Consumer Price Index (CPI) or retail inflation at 4 per cent. Retail inflation still rules over 5 per cent.

As per government data, the month-over-month change in WPI index for January, 2024 compared to December, 2023. The index for primary particles declined by 1.04 per cent to 181 in January, 2024 from 182.9 for December.

Prices of minerals (0.93 per cent) increased in January, this year over December 2023.

Prestige Estates Q3 profit rises to ₹165 crore

Realty firm Prestige Estates
Projects Ltd has reported a marginal increase in its net profit to Rs 164.7 crore for the quarter ended December. Its net profit stood at Rs 161.7

crore in the year-ago period. Total income, however, declined to Rs 1,970.5 crore in the third quarter of this fiscal year from Rs 2,347.5 crore in the corresponding period of the previous year, according to regulatory filing

On the performance during the third quarter and first nine months of this fiscal, Irfan Chairman and Razack. Managing Director, Prestige Group said, "We have crossed many milestones during the current period. The record collections successful launches affirm the customers' confidence and trust in our brand and our team's dedication, hard work and commitment." Building on the momentum of

delivering 12.23 million square feet during the first nine months of this fiscal, he said the company has already completed over 12 million square feet in the current quarter.

With this feat, our total completions have crossed an impressive milestone of 300 projects spanning 188 million square feet. The past nine months we achieved a sales performance totalling over Rs 16,300 crore, an impressive 81 per cent increase," Razack said.



Travel portal ixigo parent firm files draft papers for IPO

PTI NEW DELHI

e Travenues Technology Le Travenues recuire de Ltd, which operates travel booking platform ixigo, on Wednesday filed preliminary papers with Sebi to raise funds through an initial public offering.

Gurugram-based The company's Initial Public Offering (IPO) will be a combination of a fresh issue of equity shares worth Rs 120 crore and an Offer For Sale (OFS) of 6.66 crore equity existing shares by shareholders, according to the Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP).

SAIF Partners India IV Ltd, Peak XV Partners Investments V (formerly known as SCI Investments V), Micromax Ltd, Placid Informatics Holdings, Catalyst Trusteeship Ltd, Madison India Capital HC, Aloke Bajpai and Rajnish Kumar will be selling shares through the OFS.

purposes. Also, the company plans to raise up to Rs 24 crore in a pre-IPO round. If such placement is undertaken, the fresh issue size will be reduced. Axis Capital, DAM Capital

from the fresh issue will be used to fund the company's

working capital requirements and Rs 26 crore will be utilised for investments in technology

as well as data science,

including on cloud and server

Additionally, funds will be

used to support inorganic

growth through acquisitions,

and for general corporate

customer engagement.

technology on

intelligence and

hosting,

artificial

Advisors and JM Financial are the book running lead managers to the public issue. Le Travenues Technology was launched in 2007 by Aloke Bajpai and Rajnish Kumar. The company helps travellers plan, book and manage their trips across rail, air, buses and

suspension of implementation

meeting.



SRM MEDICAL COLLEGE INKS MOU ON PARKINSON'S RESEARCH

CHENNAI: SRM Medical College Hospital & Research Centre (SRM MCH & RC) Kattankulathur recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Parkinson's Research Alliance of India (PRAI), Kondapur, Telangana to work together and pave the way for collaborative research in Neuro Movement Disorders, especially Parkinson's disease.

The MoU was signed in the presence of Dr P Sathyanarayanan. Pro Chancellor (Academics), SRM Institute of Science and Technology (SRMIST) during the 2 nd International Neurology Symposium. The MoU will facilitate collaborative research and training, student training,

faculty exchange, in addition to sharing of instrumentation, national and international conferences and continued medical education programmes.

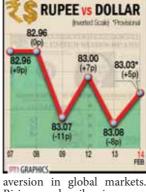
Rupee rises 5 paise to close at 83.03 against US dollar

The rupee appreciated 5 paise to close at 83.03 (provisional) against the US dollar on Wednesday, tracking positive domestic equities. Forex traders said strength of

the American currency in the overseas market and elevated crude oil prices weighed on the local unit and restricted a sharp uptick. At the interbank foreign exchange, the local unit opened at 83.11 against the reenback. It hit an intra-day high of 83.02 and a low of

It finally settled at 83.03 provisional) against the dollar, higher by 5 paise from its

previous close of 83.08. We expect the rupee to trade with a slight negative bias on strong US dollar and risk



Rising crude oil prices may also put pressure on the rupee, Choudhary, Anuj Research Analyst, Sharekhan by BNP Paribas.

Choudhary added that any bounce back in domestic markets may support the rupee at lower levels.

PV wholesales clock record 3,93,074 units in January PTI ■ NEW DELHI positive consumer sentiments, Dassenger Vehicles (PV)

sales in India kicked off on a strong note in 2024 with wholesales rising 14 per cent year-on-year to 3,93,074 units last month, the best-ever figure for January driven by robust demand for utility vehicles, industry body SIAM said on Wednesday.

As per the data issued by the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM), dispatches of passenger vehicles from manufacturers to dealers stood at 3,46,080 units

in January 2023. Two-wheeler wholesales rose 26 per cent to 14,95,183 units last month as compared with 11,84,376 units in January last

'Passenger vehicle sales have remained resilient led by

while the two-wheeler segment witnessed good growth in January as well as the rural market continues to recover, Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers President Vinod Aggarwal

vehicle sector did not grow in January 2024, it is likely to see he added.

January, General Director

Rajesh Menon said.

(SIAM)

Though the commercial

good offtake in the next two months of this financial year, Three-wheeler wholesales witnessed a growth of 9 per cent at 53,537 units as against

48,903 units in January 2023. "Passenger vehicles and threewheelers continue to post their highest-ever sales till date, in FY 24, for the period April to Proceeds worth Rs 45 crore

India fancy chances against Australia in men FIH Pro League

dheir confidence boosted after back-to-back wins, ■ India will fancy their chances against formidable Australia in their third match of the men's FIH Pro League hockey here on Thursday. India outplayed Spain 4-1

before registering a thrilling 4-2 shootout win - after 2-2 scoreline in regulation time – over defending champions and world number one the Netherlands to begin their season with a bang. Historically, the head-to-head

record between the two teams is heavily skewed in favour of Australia but the Indians have done better in recent times, especially in the last season of the FIH Pro League.

India had beaten Australia 5-4 and 4-3 in shootout (after 2-2 in regulation time) in the twolegged tie in Rourkela last season, and the Harmanpreet Singh-led home side would look to continue their rare winning run against their mighty opponents.

Australia are also coming into Thursday match at the Kalinga Stadium after two wins — 4-3 against Spain and 5-0 against Ireland — and they would be hoping to make amends of their two-match defeat to the Indians in the previous edition of FIH Pro League.

Reflecting on the performance



team chief coach Craig Fulton said, "It's been a good performance so far from the team, but there's a lot to

"Playing back-to-back matches against top teams is always tough, but we got a good break to recover and now the focus is on the last two games of the Bhubaneswar leg.'

Fulton knows how strong is the Australian team but he said his players are ready for the match on Thursday.

"It is surely going to be a tough match. They (Australia) are coming off solid back-to-back

"For us, there were a few learnings from the first two games, and our focus will be to improve and better our performance. We are up for the challenge and look to keep the momentum going?

The good news for India is that captain Harmanpreet Singh has been among goals with three strikes so far, and he would be looking for more. In the Indian goal, veteran PR Sreejesh turned was going strong as he turned out to be the saviour in India's 4-2 shootout win over the

India will then take on Ireland in their last match of the Bhubaneswar leg on Friday before moving to Rourkela for



Haokip last minute goal gives Namdhari FC full points

Debutants Namdhari FC registered their third win in the I-League season when they edged past NEROCA FC 3-2 here on Wednesday. The winners led 2-1 at half

time in the match played at Namdhari Stadium. Both Namdhari FC and

NEROCA FC are struggling in the ongoing league and languishing at 11th and 12th positions, respectively.

While this win gave Namdhari a sense of relief, it didn't make their position any more comfortable in the league table. After the win over NEROCA, the home side are still in the 11th position, though their

points tally has gone up to 12 from 13 matches.

NEROCA FC are currently staring at relegation, having collected only seven points from 12 matches. The last time Namdhari won a match was on December 17 last year, a 2-1 victory over TRAU FC.

Against Namdhari, however, NEROCA FC came close to snatching a point till a lastminute goal by substitute Peter Seiminthang Haokip (90+3') did the good turn for the hosts. The other two goalscorers for Namdhari were Akashdeep Singh (35') and Harmanpreet Singh (43').

For NEROCA, Sajal Bag (24') and Mohammed Sarif Khan (84') were the scorers.

When the rules changed for



Sakshi, Bajrang threaten fresh protest

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Wednesday alleged that national federation chief Sanjay Singh used devious means to get the suspension on WFI lifted by United World Wrestling (ÚWW) and threatened to restart their agitation against the body.

The UWW on Tuesday lifted the provisional suspension on India but directed the national federation to provide written guarantees that there would be no discriminatory action against the protesting trio of Punia, Malik and Vinesh Phogat.

The suspension was imposed by UWW in August last year after the WFI failed to hold

elections in time. Punia, Malik and Phogat have been protesting for more than a year, demanding the arrest of former WFI chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh for allegedly sexually harassing women grapplers.

"We came to know yesterday that Sanjay Singh had done some setting with UWW to get the suspension lifted. Brij Bhushan and Sanjay Singh have left no stone unturned to show that they are above the law," said Sakshi in a video

Olympiad Torch hand-off ceremony here, said, "We will let you know what we will do." Sakshi stressed that if the BJP MP's lovalists are allowed to run the affairs of the WFI, the protesting wrestlers will be left with no choice but to restart the agitation. "Our protest has only been

suspended. I might have retired from wrestling but I not will tolerate Brij Bhushan or his people running the federation and harassing women," she asserted.

"In the next 2-4 days, we will contact the people associated with our agitation and chalk out the future course of action. I urge the government (to ensure) that Brij Bhushan or his group are barred forever from (running) the federation and some good people are entrusted the task to do the job. Otherwise, we will have to restart the path of protest," warned Sakshi

Punia echoed the sentiment in his video message on the same platform.

Just 2-3 days back, Brij Bhushan's son became the president of the UP wrestling body despite him saying

saying no one from his family Olympic medal-winning Thakur, when asked about the and Bajrang Punia on sidelines of the Chess will come into wrestling administration. The government had promised that Brij Bhushan or anyone of his relatives or associates will not govern the sport," Punia

> Brij Bhushan has stated repeatedly that he has nothing to do with wrestling after completing his tenure as WFI president.

> December the During elections, his loyalist Sanjay Singh was elected president, but within three days of taking charge, the sports ministry suspended the WFI for violating its own constitution by announcing the dates of the age-group nationals at a short

> Sakshi also alleged that the Sanjay Singh-led WFI had misused the federation's funds conducting parallel nationals.

The (IOA-constituted) adhoc committee conducted the senior nationals in a very professional manner (in Jaipur earlier this month). We welcomed that. Brij Bhushan and Sanjay Singh started breaking all the rules by conducting parallel nationals (in Pune) and the rules by conducting parallel nationals (in Pune) and threatening the coaches and referees and misusing the federation's money," she said.

Lewis says it feels surreal to enter his last season at Mercedes with car launch

AP ■ SILVERSTONE (ENGLAND)

Ceven-time Formula Schampion Lewis Hamilton said Wednesday it feels "surreal" to be entering his last season with Mercedes before joining Ferrari for 2025.

Speaking as Mercedes unveiled its 2024 car at Silverstone, home of the British Grand Prix, Hamilton said it has been a privilege to work with the

Hamilton has driven for Mercedes since 2013, winning six of his seven titles with the team, but is leaving at the end of the season to join Ferrari. The move has shaken up F1 and surprised Mercedes team principal Toto Wolff.

"It has obviously be emotional," Hamilton said. "It's very surreal to be here,



given I came here in 2013, so 11 years with the team, starting my 12th, and it is such a privilege to work with a group of people where you see the work they're doing over the

Mercedes was due to do a brief "shakedown" run at Silverstone on Wednesday before heading to Bahrain for three days of pre-season testing next week. The focus will be on "getting the team back to where we

"I think we've had this difficult couple of years, which I think has been really grounding for us. It's helped us regroup."
Wolff said the 2024 Mercedes

once were," Hamilton said.

car, the W15, represents "a complete relaunch" of the design. The livery brings back a flash of Mercedes' traditional silver on the nose after last year's mostly-black look.

'It's very different, not only on the aerodynamic surfaces, but mainly underneath," Wolff

"There

are so

mechanical changes that we have done which we hope are going to translate into more performance, predictability, a car that the drivers can really push, and we should be seeing next week in

2022 to reintroduce ground-effect aerodynamics, Mercedes struggled to adapt. The team did not win a race last season as Red Bull and its driver Max Verstappen dominated all year. "We know it's difficult, we know it's a big mountain to climb because, if a team's far ahead like the Red Bull was last year, that's not easy," Wolff said. We have a superb driver combination, hopefully a fast car, the best people in the factory that are giving it all to succeed, I think there's some very good ingredients to be back in the front again."

Ferrari team principal Fred Vasseur said Tuesday that Hamilton's arrival would be a "huge opportunity" for the Italian team, which has not had one of its drivers win the world title since Kimi Raikkonen beat Hamilton in

Hamilton will team up with Charles Leclerc at Ferrari in 2025, leaving Leclerc's current

Ramkumar shocks top seed Luka to enter quarterfinals

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Indian Davis Cupper Ramkumar Ramanathan made a remarkable comeback to shock top seeded Luka Nardi to enter the singles quarterfinals of the Bengaluru Open here on Wednesday. Ramkumar, a wildcard entrant,

prevailed over the Italian 1-6, 6-4, 6-4 in little over two hours in their prequarterfinal match at the KSLTA Stadium The match began on an ominous note

for the Indian star as Nardi broke his serve in the very first game of the opening set. From that point onwards, Ramkumar

was not able to offer any kind of fight to his higher-ranked opponent, who used a heavy first serve and precise ground shots to choke his opponent. While Nardi landed a whopping 86

percent of his first serve inside the box, Ramanathan barely managed to cross the 50 percent mark.

But Ramkumar seemed a totally transformed player in the second set as he engaged Nardi more effectively in rallies, exploring the deeper areas of the court to keep the Italian pinned on the

After the first four games went by the serve, Ramkumar earned a crucial break in the fifth game to go 3-2 up and



he consolidated the position with a hold to make it 4-2.

The salient feature of Ramkumar's transformed game improvement in his first and second

services, as he found more zip in them

in this set.

Nardi struggled to return Ramkumar's serves that often breached the 200 kmph barrier.

It was evident in the 10th game when Ramkumar served out the second set, as two big serves down the T helped the

Frustration gradually seemed to have

Indian go level at a set apiece.

crept into Nardi's game as he began to make unforced errors regularly. After matching Ramkumar till the fourth game, Nardi crumbled against sustained pressure in the fifth game. Trailing 30-40, Nardi slammed an

overhead smash well over the baseline to hand Ramkumar a vital break as he went up 3-2. Ramkumar firmed up his position with

a hold in the sixth game and he had the simple job of retaining his serve in the 10th game to pocket the match. He began it with a thundering ace down

the middle, his ninth of the match, and moments later a lovely forehand approach volley positioned him at 40-0. Ramkumar kept Nardi in the baseline with a deep forehand and the latter smashed a forehand wide of the sideline

as the Indian let out a loud roar. However, it was curtains for fourth seeded Frenchman Benjamin Bonzi who lost 3-6, 4-6 to Maks Kasnikowski of Poland.

(Singles): Results Ramanathan beat 1-Luka Nardi 1-6, 6-4, 6-4, Roca Batalla beat Tristan Boyer 7-5, 6-3, Maks Kasnikowski beat 4-Benjamin Bonzi 6-3, 6-4.

ndia stun China 3-2 in BATC women compet

PTI SHAH ALAM (MALAYSIA)

Two-time Olympic medallist P V Sindhu made a winning return from a lengthy injury lay-off as India stunned formidable China 3-2 in the women's competition of the Badminton Asia Team Championships here on Wednesday.

With just two teams in Group W, India were assured of a

knock-out round berth even before their opening match but the team made its mark in style with the shock win over the top-seeded Chinese side. The Indian men's team, which lifted the Thomas Cup in 2022

medal at last year's Asian registered dominating 4-1 win over Hong Kong to qualify for the knockout round from Group A.

Hong Kong had lost to China 0-5 on Tuesday. India will take on top seeds China on Thursday to decide the group winner in the men's

section. Sindhu, who was missing in action since October last year due to a knee injury sustained at the French Open, led the way as she beat higher-ranked Han Yue 21-17 21-15 in 40 minutes to give India 1-0 lead

in the women's tie.

and secured a first-ever silver
The 28-year-old, who won a silver in the 2016 Olympics followed by a bronze in the Tokyo Games, is currently ranked 11th while Yue is world number eight.

The pair of Tanisha Castro and Ashwini Ponappa then lost to Liu Sheng Shu and Tan Ning 19-21 16-21, followed by Ashmita Chaliha's 13-21 15-21 loss to world number nine Wang Zhi Yi, as India trailed 1-2 after three matches.

India were on level terms when Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand beat the Chinese duo of Li Yi Jing and Luo Xu Min 10-21 21-18 21-17 in one hour and nine minutes in the



women's doubles.

In the deciding match against the second-string Chinese outfit, Anmol Kharb punched way above her weight as the 472nd-ranked Indian emerged 22-20 14-21 21-18 winner over world number 149 Wu Luo Yu in a gruelling one hour and 17 minute contest to give India a memorable win.

Meanwhile, in the men's competition, HS Prannoy lost the first singles against Ng Ka Long Angus 18-21 14-21 but that turned out to be the only blip for India who won the next four matches.

World number one men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj

were ruthless in their 33-minute-long 21-16 21-11 win over Lui Chun Wai and Yeung Shing Choi before Lakshya Sen easily beat Chan Yin Chak 21-14 21-9 to give India the lead. With momentum on their side, India quickly wrapped up the tie with the pair of M R Arjun and Dhruv Kapila making it 3-1 with a 21-12 21-7 win over Chow Hin Long and Hung Kuei Chun, before Kidambi Srikanth beat Jason Gunawan 21-14 21-18 to complete the

Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty

The top two teams from each of the four groups will make it to the knock-out round.

INDIA SEEK QUICK MIDDLE ORDER SOLUTIONS AGAINST FEARLESS ENGLAND

India will need to be ruthless and tactful in equal measure while dealing with an unpredictable England when the third chapter of a riveting Test series begins here on Thursday. After England shocked India

in the series opener at Hyderabad, the hosts came back strong in Vizag to get on level footing, leaving the fivematch series perfectly poised.
The brilliance of Yashasvi Jaiswal (321 runs) and Jasprit Bumrah (15) allowed India to make a comeback in the series but concerns remain over a misfiring middle-order, which will now be relying on the young talent to deliver the

goods.
Skipper Rohit Sharma's form with the bat before the eight-day break only added to the growing concern surrounding the Indian batting, which will be without K L Rahul in this game and Virat Kohli for the entirety of the series.

Over the last one year or so, Rohit's aggressive approach with the bat has not yielded him big scores and the current situation demands the Indian contemplate changing gears. Rahul's unavailability for the third Test has put forth the possibility of Mumbai batter Sarfaraz Khan getting his long awaited debut in the longest format. The domestic run machine could be teaming up with one-Test old Rajat Patidar to occur two of the most to occupy two of the most coveted batting spots in the middle order.

India's glaring inexperience in the middle-order would have been well noted by the English camp, whose robust research on opponents and aggressive play has time and again delivered results.

delivered results.

Wicketkeeper KS Bharat's persistent failures with the bat has raised the possibility of India turning to Uttar Pradesh's 23-year-old Dhruv Jurel, who is known for his aggressive batting aggressive batting. With an average of 46.47 in 15

First-Class matches, Jurel has given a fine account of himself. With the pitch here at Rajkot not expected to be a rank turner, a debut here would only help Jurel ease into the world of top flight cricket.

With Jocal here Cheteshwar

With local hero Cheteshwar Pujara no more in the plans of high anticipation from the



get back into the ring and

the selectors, there will be a local hero Ravindra Jadeja to deliver for India, whose spinners were outmatched by

England in the first two Tests. Numbers tell only one side of

the story and India's think tank will not be overly concerned with how their spinners have averaged collectively (38.39) compared to England's (33.90). Unlike in the past where spinners would rule the roost and fast bowling reduced to mere formalities, this series has witnessed. a stunning which has, witnessed turnaround fortunately for India, coincided with Bumrah being at his absolute best.

Bumrah's brilliance in the first two Tests has stood tall and to some extent saved the blushes for the celebrated spinners who have not thrived in the absence of rank turners.

or rank turners.
With the pitch at Rajkot being traditionally friendly to the batters, India will have to pick one among chinaman Kuldeep Yadav and Axar Patel, with the latter winning the vote purely on his batting credentials.

on his batting credentials. Sitting on 499 wickets, India's premier spinner R Ashwin will be expected to enter the elite 500-club over the course of the

England too are expecting the pitch to be batting friendly at least in the initial phase of the game, prompting one change to their playing eleven. They have brought in a second pacer in Mark Wood in place of

spinner Shoaib Bashir.
"Taking a bit of knowledge from the last Test we played here a long time ago (in 2016). It was a pretty flat wicket and looking at it today I think it looks good.," said skipper Ben Stokes on the eve of the game. "Bringing in an extra seamer is the option we have gone with the option we have gone with because we think that is going to give us the best chance of winning this week."

Back from their Abu Dhabi base where the players spent time away from the game, the relaxed mood in the England camp is easily perceptible.

Tom Hartley's confidence has grown multifold from the time he stepped on the Indian shores. His probing line and lengths have persistently questioned the Indian batters and with the bat, his aggressive approach has matched the team's philosophy. team's philosophy. It remains to be seen if sharing

spin bowling workload is taking more out of Joe Root than it should, but England will have no other option but to lean on the seniormost batter for wickets given Jack Leach is ruled out of the series with a knee injury. He will also be expected get back to his

Ollie Pope played an innings of a lifetime at Hyderabad to set up England's win but twin failures in the second Test put focus on him as well as Jonny

Bairstow. On the cusp of his 100th Test, Ben Stokes would like to look back at the fine 128 here he made at the SCA stadium in the drawn Test of the 2016 tour. His leadership has been inspiring thus for in the series inspiring thus far in the series and one can expect more bold calls from him over the course

TEAMS (FROM):

of the next five days.

INDIA: Rohit Sharma (c), Jasprit Bumrah (vc), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Shubman Gill, Rajat Patidar, Sarfaraz Khan, Dhruv Jurel (wk), KS Bharat (wk), R Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohammed Siraj, Mukesh Kumar, Akash Deep, Devdutt Padikkal. ENGLAND: Ben Stokes (c), Rehan Ahmed, James Anderson, Gus Atkinson.

Anderson, Gus Atkinson, Jonny Bairstow (wk), Shoaib Bashir, Dan Lawrence, Zak Crawley, Ben Duckett, Ben Foakes (wk), Tom Hartley, Ollie Pope, Ollie Robinson, Joe Root, Mark Wood.



Bumrah poised to unleash reverse swing magic in Rajkot: Khan

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Former India pacer Zaheer Khan feels the Rajkot pitch will be similar to the ones in Vizag, Hyderabad and bringing reverse swing into play once again. Jasprit Bumrah put up a

reverse swing masterclass in Vizag for a match haul of nine wickets as India levelled the "I hope the pitch is on similar

and Vizag," Zaheer **JioCinema**

"On that kind of a surface, we should be able to see a good contest between bat and ball for the first two days and spin comes into play on the third

"You'll see some reverse swing as well. And on the fourth and fifth days, you'll have the spinners dominating.

"If that is the pattern, it will make for a nice viewing experience for all the spectators and the fans will enjoy.

Former England batter Owais Shah could not agree more. "The big match-up will be between Jasprit Bumrah and

England's middle-order. That's

because Bumrah will be able to generate reverse swing in Rajkot," Owais said.

"When he bowls with the old ball, it becomes difficult for the England batters. That's because he's getting wickets and not giving away runs."

Keeping that in mind, the Ben Stokes-led side have chosen for a two-seam attack, bringing in speedster Mark Wood to pair up with veteran James Anderson.

only at toss. Zaheer feels India will need to make some "complex" decisions as spinner all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja is set to return at his home venue. "That's another headache once you have picked the squad! Whether it's going to be Axar (Patel), whether it's going to be Kuldeep (Yadav) or you are going to pick all of them,"

Zaheer said. "This is something India will be thinking about, whether you need that extra bowler along with Jasprit (Bumrah). "It will also depend on how the pitch is going to play, so some complex decision making will be involved. But there's a lot to think about for the decision makers," said Zaheer.

Rohit Sharma to captain India in T20 World Cup



PTI ■ RAJKOT

 $B_{\text{Wednesday}}^{\text{CCI secretary Jay Shah on}}$ that Rohit Sharma will lead the Indian team in the upcoming T20 World Cup being jointly hosted by the West Indies and the USA.

With all-rounder Hardik Pandya still recovering from an ankle injury suffered in October last year, the board feels Rohit must continue as skipper in the format.

past in other formats) and he back for Afghanistan series, which means we were going to let him continue forward," Shah told the media on the sidelines of the ceremony to rename the SCA Stadium after former board secretary Niranjan Shah.

"If Hardik was injured in the (2023 ODI) World Cup, who else can we give the captaincy?" asked Shah, indicating if the all-rounder gets injured during the course of the 2024 T20 World Cup, who will replace him as captain.

"In the third T20I against Afghanistan, India were 22/4 and the way he (Rohit

Sharma) took the team to 212/4, we can't question much about him, right?" he added.

"He (Rohit) has the ability, as I said, we won 10 games in the ODI World Cup. We didn't win the final, but it's part and parcel of the game. Whoever plays better, wins," Shah expressed.

Earlier during the function to rename the SCA Stadium, Shah said, "In 2023 (final) at Ahmedabad, even though we did not win the after 10 straight wins, we won hearts. I want to promise you that in 2024 (T20 World Cup) in Barbados (venue for the final), under Rohit Sharma's captaincy, ham Bharat ka jhanda gaadenge (we will hoist the Indian flag)."

Shah made the speech in front of a gathering of several dignitaries including former India captains Sunil Gavaskar and Anil Kumble and IPI chairman Arun Dhumal.

The event also featured current chief selector Ajit Agarkar, incumbent head coach Rahul Dravid, Rohit, Mohammed Siraj, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel and a few members of the Indian team support staff.

England captain Ben Stokes tried hard to be self-effacing on the eve of his 100th Test appearance, saying "milestones are what they are" but he is looking forward to the "theatre" that would come with playing the marquee game against a star-studded

Stokes will become the 16th England player to appear in 100 Tests when he will lead the side out in the third Test against India here on Thursday. In the pre-match press conference, the dashing big-hitter tried his best to downplay the hype around big achievement. his achievement.

"Milestones are what they are. I've always enjoyed playing against India because of the contest, the theatre it brings," he said in a brief reply when asked about his thoughts on the match.

The series is currently locked 1-1 after England won the opener in Hyderabad before India bounced back to claim the

second in Visakhapatnam. Stokes said his mind is focused on decoding the conditions and having a solid strategy in place for the crucial game. "You look down and there's a few cracks that meet up. Only time will tell if they will come into it. (I) don't want to have too many preconceived ideas about pitches, but you do have to have some sort of idea which informs the XI you pick," he said. India saw their fortunes take a turn for the better in Vizag thanks to a superlative effort by pacer Jasprit Bumrah, who Asked if England will have any special plans in place for the bowler, Stokes said," No not really." "Jasprit Bumrah is an unbelievable bowler. Ĥe's proven that for a very long time and has performed really well in the two games. I think everyone has to go their own way of not trying to deal with Bumrah but we do have to score runs off him as well and that's what we'll try to do," he said.

"But when that doesn't work, you just have to give credit to the bowler and Jasprit's been outstanding the first two games. We've all got our own processes against every single bowler and there's no team way of playing anyone.

"But as we always try to do we'll be trying to keep the focus around us," he added. Stokes was not particularly happy with the analysis that Virat Kohli and K L Rahul's absence from the series amounts to advantage England.



While Kohli has been ruled out of the entire due to personal reasons, Rahul is at the NCA in Bengaluru recuperating from a quadriceps tear injury which he suffered in the first Test at Hyderabad.

Enjoy theatre of playing against India: Stokes

"KL sustained an injury in the first game and that has kept him out. I said the other day that Virat not being here I don't like it being used as a benefit to us or a disadvantage to India," Stokes said ahead of England's training session.

There is some specific reasons as to why he is not playing in this series and it should be left to that as opposed to an advantage or disadvantage to any side.

"I wish Virat with everything that's going around and all our well wishes from the team. You want the best players playing and he is one of them. Hopefully he will be back on the field very soon," he added. Stokes said England's past experience of

this venue, having played a Test in 2016, combined with the nature of the pitch here resulted in spinner Shoaib Bashir being swapped with pacer Mark Wood. "Taking a bit of knowledge from the last

Test we played here a long time ago. It was a pretty flat wicket and looking at it today I think it looks good," he said.

"Bringing in an extra seamer is the option

we have gone with because we think that is going to give us the best chance of winning this week. Baz (coach Brendon McCullum) does all the good and bad news and I am there for the players to (have) any further conversations with that. "Bash (Shoaib Bashir) performed incredibly well in his first game for England, he will take it in his stride, he is a young lad and obviously no one has played every game possible," Stokes added. On how he would use his bowlers in the

match, Stokes said they should only target getting wickets. .Whenever you've got the ball think

about taking a wicket every ball...Obviously having an extra seamer this week will definitely allow us to use Woody's skillset in a different way to the first game when he was the only seamer. 'The way in which Jimmy (Anderson) bowled last week, he showed his class and that he can do it anywhere in the world regardless of the conditions.

Tom (Hartley) has performed so, so well on this trip not only with the ball but also with the bat and when someone has confidence like Tom has at the moment, you want to give them the ball as often as you can," he said.

received a ball from Piedt which

bounced unexpectedly and came off

the inside edge, onto the thigh pad

and flew to Raynard van Tonder at

"I think as a bowling unit we had

the discussion of bowling in pairs

and just trying to strangle them,"

Piedt said. Latham and Williamson

are two very good players and they

do fight through those tough

We said he just have to keep

grinding away and luck will go our

dragged a ball from Tshepo Moreki

back onto his stumps and Tom

Blundell fell in similar fashion,

way, and fortunately it did." Rachin Ravindra made 29, then

short leg.

periods.

ew Zealand

AP HAMILTON (NEW ZEALAND)

Dane Piedt took a career-best 5-89 as South Africa bowled out New Zealand for 211 to take an unexpected first-innings lead Wednesday on the second day of the second cricket test.

South Africa was bowled out for 242 after resuming Day 2 at 220-6 and New Zealand conceded a 31 run lead as bowlers dominated and 14 wickets fell in the day.

New Zealand had been 183-9 and the deficit might have been greater but for a late innings of 33 by the redoubtable Neil Wagner.

Piedt reached the high point of a checkered test career as he captured the wickets of Tom Latham, Kane Williamson, Will Young and Glenn Phillips to highlight an excellent bowling performance by the Proteas. Dane Paterson took the wicket of Devon Conway (0) in the first over of the New Zealand innings and finished with 3-39.

'My test career has been ups and downs with injuries and I'm seriously proud of the way we fought today," Piedt said. "We had a nice talk out in the middle, reflecting on the first test (which New Zealand won by 281 runs) and I'm glad everyone stood up today and put something forward for the

Four batters, two from each team, were out bowled off an inside edge and another was caught behind off an inside edge onto the pad on a day of inconsistent bounce at Seddon Park. There were signs the usually seamer-friendly pitch wasn't performing to character when parttime spinner Rachin Ravindra bowled 21 overs for New Zealand on the first day.

Off-spinner Piedt came into his own in the middle session when the ball turned sharply and he asked questions even the best New Zealand batters couldn't answer. The 33-year-old made his test debut

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against Zimbabwe in 2014 and played another six tests over the next two years. He dropped out of the team but was recalled for two tests in India in 2019 but took only wickets in two tests

appearances. Piedt had begun to explore changing his allegiance to the United States when he received his latest recall for the current series. Ruan de Swardt in his second test and Shaun von Berg, on debut at 37, shared an unbroken partnership of 70 for South Africa's seventh wicket before stumps on Day 1 in what is

proving to be a rare display of batting fortitude. Their defiance didn't last long on the second morning. Von Berg was out in the third over of the day for 38 and de Swardt followed soon after for 64 after reaching his maiden test half century on

Both de Swardt and von Berg chopped balls from Will O'Rourke



back onto their stumps. O'Rourke also took the last two wickets of the innings with consecutive balls and

finished with 4-59 on his test debut. The South Africa innings crumbled and its last three wickets fell for

eight runs including Piedt for 4. New Zealand got an early taste of the difficulty of batting on a pitch which was livelier on the second day than the first when Conway continued a run of poor form and was out to the fourth ball of the

innings. Paterson angled a ball into Conway from around the wicket and it straightened late, catching the edge and going on to wicketkeeper Clyde Fortuin. Conway now has gone seven innings and almost a year

without a test 50. Latham and Williamson steadied the innings in a partnership of 74 for the second wicket but they had to be constantly watchful and scoring was difficult. Neither team has scored above three runs per over so far in the test.

Latham fell for 40, bowled by Piedt as he pushed forward to a ball which turned past the outside edge and hit off stump. Williamson was 43 when he deciding too late to leave a ball from Paterson which bounced more than he expected.

Will Young fell to Piedt when he was 36, holing out to de Swardt at long-on. Wagner's late contribution might prove vital in a match of small margins.

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